

A research on independent reading of young children in the transition links of kindergarten

Zihan Li

College of Education, Fujian Normal University, Fuzhou, 350000, China

Abstract: *The transition link is an important part of a day's life in kindergarten. The transition link is the guarantee for the smooth progress of the day's activities and contains rich educational value. Independent reading is an important choice for young children in the transition links. Independent reading in the transition links can help children develop good reading habits and improve their self-management abilities. However, in practice, there are some problems with children's independent reading in the transition links, which are mainly manifested in the fact that reading without purpose, reading without experience, and reading without effect. The main reasons for these problems are inappropriate reading materials, limited transition time, and lack of teacher's guidance. Therefore, in order to improve the effect of children's independent reading in the transition links, teachers need to adjust the class reading materials, rationally organize the transition links, and strengthen the guidance of children's independent reading.*

Keywords: *Kindergarten; transition link; independent reading*

1. Introduction

The transition links refer to the time period that occurs when moving from one activity to another in the day-to-day life of kindergarten due to different rhythms of children's activities, such as before and after breakfast, before and after nap, etc. The reason why a day-to-day life in kindergarten requires a transitional link is, firstly, to adapt to the rhythmic replacement of children's daily physical and mental activities; and secondly, to adapt to the rhythmic replacement of daily teaching activities. ^[1] On the one hand, the transitional link provides children with opportunities to adjust, which can help children with different behavioral styles and activity rhythms prepare for the next activity and exercise children's self-management abilities. On the other hand, the transitional link is also conducive to teachers' on-site design, thinking and some temporary random processing measures, ^[1] which facilitates teachers' adjustment and preparation of teaching activities. Independent reading is an important choice for children in the transitional links. However, based on the observation of a day's life in kindergarten, we found that there are some problems with children's independent reading in the transitional links and the educational value of the transitional links has not been fully utilized.

2. The value of independent reading in the transition link

2.1 Conducive to improving children's self-management ability

The transition link contains rich educational opportunities. Children can use the transitional link to drink water, use the toilet, rest, etc. This provides children with opportunities for self-management, which is conducive to promoting the development of their self-management abilities and improving their autonomy and self-efficacy. On the other hand, the transition link is also an opportunity for children to learn. The transitional link helps children develop their potential and enhance their awareness of autonomy; it is also helpful for children to stabilize their emotions and reduce aggressive behavior. ^[2] Properly organizing transitional links can provide children with opportunities to adjust, help them release psychological energy, and promote the formation of children's self-management abilities. The transition link provides buffering opportunities for children with different behavioral styles and activity rhythms. It is a guarantee for the smooth progress of teaching activities and an opportunity for children to adjust independently. This kind of self-regulation, on the one hand, gives children space to express and develop their different personalities. For children, kindergarten life is less rigid, less institutionalized pressure, and more human element, which adds a family-like casualness and gentleness. ^[1]

2.2 Help children form good reading habits

The transitional link occupies a large part of a day's life. "A day's life is a curriculum." Children's independent reading in the transitional link can help children accumulate reading experience, guide and shape their reading behavior, and help children develop good reading habits. The transition link, with its flexible characteristics, gives children with different personality characteristics the opportunity to make independent choices. Those children who are interested in reading can use this opportunity to develop their own interests and deepen their knowledge and understanding of reading. Through teachers' guidance and help, children can develop good reading habits in daily life and learn correct reading methods. This is conducive to the formation of serious and focused learning qualities in young children, and is also conducive to the development of their language ability, laying the foundation for their future learning and life. Through exposure to written language, young children acquire attitudes, expectations, emotions and behaviors related to written language, cultivate their basic ability to understand the world, and develop their lifelong learning ability. [3] The core of early reading is the acquisition of independent reading ability. [3] The transitional link is an important opportunity to cultivate children's independent reading habits. Therefore, the transitional link plays an important role in the development of children's reading habits.

2.3 Conducive to teachers' teaching adjustments

The transitional link not only gives children the opportunity to adjust, but also gives teachers the opportunity to adjust. Observation is the prerequisite for teachers to understand children's development characteristics and needs. The information collected through purposeful and planned observation can help enhance teachers' true understanding of children's internal psychology and motivations, thereby promoting children's personalized development. [4] The transitional link is a good time for teachers to observe children. By observing children, teachers can clarify the effect of the previous activity and how well the children have mastered it. At the same time, teachers can also adjust and design the next activity. Such a flexible transition link makes daily life less rigid, and can be adjusted at any time according to the actual situation of the children, meeting the needs of the children's physical and mental development. Children's independent reading in the transitional period can strengthen their experience gained in the previous activity, while preparing for the next activity and establishing positive continuity. This positive continuity can help teachers constantly adjust teaching according to the actual situation of children in their class, thereby ensuring that teaching activities are on the path of promoting children's development and promoting the smooth development of teaching activities.

3. Problems existing in children's independent reading during the transition link

During the observation of the kindergarten, we found that children's independent reading was not effective in the transitional link, so we focused the observation on the transitional link. Through continuous observation of the progress of kindergarten transitional links, we found that children's independent reading in the transitional link mainly has three problems: reading without purpose, reading without experience, and reading without effect.

3.1 Reading without purpose

Research shows that children have a very high frequency of "doing nothing" behavior during the transition period. The main manifestations are: wandering around, being in a daze, waiting for a long time (waiting for more than 3 minutes) and chatting and joking. [5] During the observation of the kindergarten, we found that many children went to the bookshelves to pick and choose for a long time, and finally found a book to take away and read. Some children started chatting with their friends next to them while watching the books. Some children looked bored and went to do other things. Many more children held books in their hands, but their actual attention was on other things. Wandering around when choosing reading materials, picking up books in a daze, reading for a while and then chatting and laughing with other children, etc. These phenomena can all be attributed to the behavior of "doing nothing". This shows that children's independent reading in the transitional stage is often purposeless. If another thing more interesting than reading comes up, the children will definitely "abandon" reading. Reading at this time is simply to kill time or is forced by the teacher's request.

3.2 Reading without experience

Due to the time limit of the transition link and the limitations of children's own cognitive level, children cannot experience the joy of reading during independent reading in the transition link. Many children hold the books in their hands and browse them at will before putting them on the bookshelf. When we asked the child "Why didn't you watch it?", the child replied "I have watched it many times and it's boring." Of course, the reading here is nothing more than casual browsing and looking at the pictures. Another scene is when we said that we were going to tell a story to the children, other children gathered around after hearing it. However, at this time the teacher sent a signal to clear up, and the children all said "Ah, I haven't listened the story yet", and they could only put the books away regrettably. It can be seen that it is not that children do not like reading, but their cognitive level is limited and they cannot appreciate the joy of reading by reading alone. Therefore, reading becomes boring flipping. If things go on like this, children will no longer choose to read during the transition link, and will simply play games. We observed that from primary classes to senior classes, fewer and fewer children choose to read in the transitional link. The lack of good reading experience is an important reason.

3.3 Reading without effect

According to observation, most children's independent reading in the transition link is just to flip through the book and briefly look at the pictures in the book. Some children can read three or four books in a transition period of less than ten minutes. This kind of flowing reading is just an action of flipping through a book. Children have not entered the world of books, and reading at this time is ineffective. Some children, because their activity pace is relatively slow, have just picked up a book and put it in position, and the teacher will start the next activity. Independent reading in the transition link does not engage children wholeheartedly like other activities. Reading is only at the behavioral level and does not penetrate into the cognitive and spiritual levels of children. Therefore, the reading effect in the transitional link is not good, it does not play the role of cultivating children's good reading habits, exerting the educational value of the transitional link, and does not play the important role of reading in children's development.

4. Cause analysis

Through the observation of daily life in kindergarten and interviews with teachers and children, I found that there are three main reasons for the poor independent reading effect of children in the transition link, namely inappropriate reading materials, time limit of the transition period and lack of teacher's guidance.

4.1 Reading materials are not suitable

The quantity and type of reading materials will affect children's independent reading behavior. An important reason for children's poor reading performance in the transitional stage is unsuitable reading materials. On the one hand, unsuitable reading materials are manifested in the fact that the reading materials do not meet the needs of children's cognitive level to independent reading. According to observations, the reason why most children have short reading time and do not read deeply is that they are limited by their cognitive level. If they do not know the words in the book, they can only read the pictures. This results in a book with very little readable content, so young children can "read" many books in a short period of time. Another problem with reading materials is that they are updated infrequently. Children have read the books in the class many times and already know the contents of the books well. For these reasons, young children are not interested in books during the transition period. Even if they pick up the book, they only flip through it in a hurry, and their minds are already attracted by other interesting things. Therefore, inappropriate reading materials are an important reason for children's lack of interest in reading and low reading effectiveness during the transitional stage.

4.2 Limitation on the duration of the transition link

In addition, the time limit of the transition link is also an important reason for the low reading effect of young children in the transitional period. The transition link often exists to connect the previous and following activities. Therefore, the length of the transition link is relatively flexible, and its length will vary according to the specific activity arrangements. When the transition period is short and the rhythm

of children's activities is relatively slow, the teacher will send a signal for the next activity as soon as the children pick up the book and put it on their seats, and the children's newly ignited interest in reading will be extinguished. Randomly compressing the time of the transitional link will make the transition between various activities too rigid, and the planning of daily life will be too strong, resulting in the weakening of children's dominant position in the activities, which is far away from the original intention of kindergarten education.^[6]Therefore, too many transitional links and too short a transitional link are not conducive to the development of young children. This will lead to confusion in children and also waste the educational value of the transitional link. In practice, transitional links often serve to connect activities and focus on daily life content, causing children to miss learning opportunities.^[5]The lack of basic time guarantee for independent reading makes children unable to concentrate on reading and the reading effect is poor.

4.3 Lack of teacher's guidance in the transition link

At present, the transitional link mostly consists of daily activities such as going to the toilet, drinking water, and washing hands. The organization form is single. Teachers are busy preparing materials for the next activity and downplay the observation and guidance of children. This makes the organization of the transitional link ignore the interests and needs of children, leaving a hidden waste of time, resulting in children waiting passively and doing nothing. ^[6]We observed that teachers often do their own things during the transition period and lack guidance and attention to children. Teachers regard the transitional link as an opportunity for them to "take a breath" and ignore the educational value of the transitional link. Many teachers let children choose their own activities during the transition period, and most children choose to play with toys or draw pictures, and few children take the initiative to read. Reading ability is not innate to children. Teacher's guidance is indispensable in children's independent reading. Appropriate guidance of teacher can mobilize children's interest in reading. Children can actively read to acquire knowledge, gain a sense of accomplishment from reading, and improve their reading ability.^[7] If teachers do not often mention reading in the class, the bookshelves are placed in a very inconspicuous position and the books are not organized, then reading will be marginalized in class activities. Compared with other game activities, reading is something that requires more willpower. When there is no external environment to "put pressure on" children, reading will be collectively forgotten. Therefore, teachers, as supporters and guides of children's learning activities, need to guide children in developing good reading habits.

5. Strategies to improve the independent reading effect of children in the transition link

Kindergarten life should return to the life world of children, and try to avoid abrupt interruptions in activities or abrupt transitions due to institutionalized and collective management, which may cause children to be busy, confused and idle. ^[2]Therefore, independent reading in the transitional link should not be blind and ineffective, and the educational value of the transitional link should be fully utilized. From the author's investigation, it was found that young children do not lack interest in reading, but lack people to provide them with guidance and support. Therefore, teachers should adopt certain strategies to promote children to read better in the transitional stage and give full play to the value of the transition link.

5.1 Select suitable reading materials

One of the primary reasons for the poor independent reading effect in children's transitional links is that reading materials hinder children's independent reading. Due to the limitations of the actual situation of kindergartens, teachers do not have the time and energy to tell stories to each child in every transitional link. Therefore, reading materials play a very important role in the transition links. The selection of reading materials must not only meet the age characteristics of children, but also meet the interests and needs of children. Too simple content, too monotonous storylines, and too many words cannot truly stimulate children's interest in reading. ^[8]

When choosing reading materials, teachers can choose some wordless picture books, operable picture books, audio books, etc. These materials can enable children to read independently without the help of adults. As the name suggests, wordless picture books are picture books without words but only pictures. The biggest feature of this type of picture books is that the pictures contain rich meanings. Compared with the pictures in ordinary picture books, the pictures in wordless picture books are more valuable for reading and contain more clues. Such picture books can enable children to independently understand the

content of picture books by reading pictures without adult guidance, giving children more imagination space and autonomy. They are excellent materials for children to read independently in the transitional stage. Operable picture books are deeply loved by children because of their hands-on operation and strong interactivity. Because they have a meaning of game, they can maintain children's interest in reading. Audio books are also a good choice, as they can replace adult's storytelling and allow young children to read books with more text on their own. Moreover, audio books have a certain degree of novelty and can stimulate children's interest in reading. These three types of reading materials provide the possibility for children to read independently. Therefore, teachers should organize and update the reading materials in the class and select materials that are more suitable for children to read in the transitional stage.

5.2 Reasonably arrange transition links

Another reason for the poor reading effect of the transitional link is the length of the transitional link. The organization of the transitional link is very flexible and it is easy to have links that are too long or too short, which makes it difficult for young children to read independently. Therefore, teachers should include the transitional links in the daily life plan and reasonably organize the length and number of transitional links. Rushing the transition will bring pressure to children and adults. Only during the transition period of a certain length of time can children's accumulated psychological energy be released and different teaching activities can be smoothly transitioned. We should not simply reduce the duration of the transition, but in many cases extend it appropriately. We should not make the transition tight and efficient, but make its rhythm appropriately relaxed. We should not rigidly tighten the two rhythms in the transitional link, but should separate them so that they achieve a relationship of intersection and partial overlap, rather than a relationship of complete or basic overlap.^[1]Therefore, teachers should reasonably plan the flow of a day's life, eliminate unnecessary transitional links, and allow the transitional links to have a certain length of time.^[5]That is to say, we need to reduce the number of transition links, increase the duration of transition links, and improve the quality of transition links, so that the educational value of each transition link can be brought into full play. Only when the basic reading time in the transition period is guaranteed can the effect of children's independent reading be guaranteed.

5.3 Strengthen teacher's guidance in transition links

Teachers are the organizers and guides of transitional links.^[5]Teacher's guidance plays an important role in shaping children's behavior and developing habits. The status of independent reading in a class is directly related to the teacher's guidance. Teachers must first recognize the educational value of transition links, make full use of the advantages of various transition links, organize transition links scientifically and rationally, and promote the smoothness and effectiveness of children's daily life.^[5]Teachers can remind children to read during the transition period, introduce to children new changes in the class reading area, new reading materials, etc., to attract children's interest in reading. In addition, as mentioned earlier, time is an important factor that hinders children from reading in the transitional stage. Many children cannot finish reading a book. Therefore, teachers can let children use bookmarks to mark the places they read to continue reading for next time.^[8] In the kindergarten we observed, we found that there is a cloth bag behind each child's chair to put the books that the children read. This is also a good way to allow children to easily get the books the next time they read. In addition, when the transition period is short, teachers can also ask children to observe and discuss a picture in a certain book, and help children review knowledge based on their previous reading experience. In order to bring out the educational value of the transitional link and ensure the effect of children's independent reading, teacher's guidance is essential.

6. Conclusion

As the link and bearing of all aspects of daily life in kindergarten, the transition link can not only reduce the inefficient connection of various moving parts and play the role of transfer and connection; it can also meet the needs of children's physical and mental adjustment and ensure the smoothness and ease of daily life, which contains rich educational value.^[9]The core of early reading is the cultivation of children's independent reading ability. Therefore, the key to children's independent reading in the transitional stage is to create an environment that stimulates children's independent reading. This includes teacher's carefully selected reading materials, reasonably arranged transition links, and teacher's appropriate guidance. Through the creation and suggestion of the environment, children can develop the habit of independent reading, cultivate their self-management ability, and give full play to the educational

value of the transitional link.

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