Interpreting Text Knowledge

Michelle Anastasio
Indiana University South Bend

Introduction

Learning differences exist between traditional (18-24) and non-traditional college students (25+). Multiple studies have been completed to determine why these differences exist. Variations in the manner in which individuals learn were one of the factors that Burley, Turner and Vitulli (1999) reviewed in their research study. Their study employed methods of learning that were categorized as either performance or learning orientation. Performance orientation was described as a manner of learning based on the belief that an individuals' performance reflects their capabilities (Schraw, Horn, Thorndike-Christ, & Bruning, 1995). Learning orientation is depicted when a student wants to obtain a new skill or knowledge for the sake of learning (Bouffard, Bosvert, Vezeau, & Larouche, 1995). A variation in learning style was found. Non-traditional students displayed more characteristics depicted as learning orientation and traditional students attained knowledge based upon performance orientation (Burley, Turner and Vitulli 1999).

Dupeyrat and Marine 2005 completed a study comparing shallow-processing strategies and deep processing strategies. Shallow-processing strategies are study skills that consist of rote learning and memorization (Meece et al., 1988). Deep-processing techniques were described as elaboration or organization strategies (Ames & Archer, 1988). Their analysis found that students interested in developing competence utilized more active strategies and put additional effort in learning activities. In addition, the results concluded that age did not have any effect on strategies used or academic results (Dupeyrat and Marine 2005). The results of this study indicate academic success is not determined by age, but rather the integration of multiple studying techniques to improve learning opportunities.

Texting is a method of communication and is a skill that requires learning something new to be efficient.

Hypotheses
▪ Hypothesis 1: Traditional students (18-24) will have a faster reaction time than Non-traditional students when interpreting text language.
▪ Hypothesis 2: Non-traditional students (25+) that engage in routine texting will have a similar reaction time as traditional. students.

Method

Participants
▪ A total of 24 students (5 male and 19 females) participated. This included ten traditional aged students (41.7%) and fourteen non-traditional age students (58.3%).

▪ Traditional and Non-Traditional students were the Independent Variables. The Dependent Variable was reaction time.

Questionnaire
▪ A demographic questionnaire gathered data including: Age groups Traditional (18-24) or Non-Traditional 25 and older, gender, academic year and amount of weekly text messages sent.

▪ Students were timed with a stop watch to determine reaction time while completing two activities determining text knowledge.

▪ The first activity contained 20 text items containing a symbol or letters used to identify a word or an emotion. Examples: n00b, ADD, sh^

▪ The second document contained 20 text phrases and participants were asked to determine the phrase. Examples: BTDT, AYS, LH6

▪ Text knowledge activity designs were based off a texting quiz found on the website, "Text language" (n.d.). Content from a combination of four websites including "Text Messaging and Online Chat Abbreviations" (Beal, V. 2011), "How to understand your kids' text messages" (n.d), "Text message dictionary" (n.d.) as well "Lingo2word" (n.d.) were used to develop the activities.

Results

Accuracy was measured by determining which group correctly identified the highest number of text words, emotions and phrases.

▪ An Independent samples t test (two-tailed) was used to determine if there was a time difference between traditional and non-traditional students interpreting text language.

▪ The results of the test show no significance t (22) =.422, p >.05.

▪ A total of 10 traditional students (M= 228.60, SD=65.60) and a total of 14 non-traditional students (M= 251.35, SD= 69.17) participated.

▪ A 2(Type of student: Traditional or Non-Traditional) x 2(Text Knowledge: Novice or Experienced) factorial ANOVA was used to determine if there was a significance between the amount of weekly texts sent between novice and expert traditional and non-traditional students.

▪ The main interaction, Type of student and Text knowledge provided no significant results, F (3, 20) =.224, p = .641.
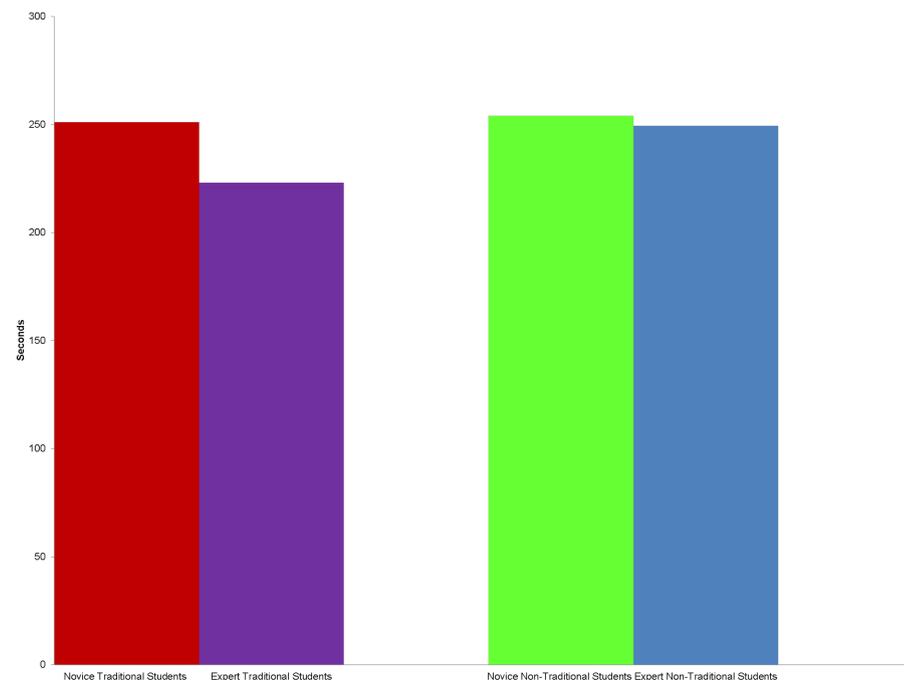

Figure 1. There is no significant difference in reaction time between the amount of weekly texts sent between novice and expert traditional and non-traditional students.

Discussion

Although neither of my hypotheses were supported, additional research should be done with a larger sample size to determine why differences exist in the methods in which Traditional and Non-Traditional students learn. These studies could either support prior research or find alternative reasons.

As college enrollment volumes fluctuate for Non-traditional students returning to college, research should continue to determine what drives their behavior. Do some believe that the time an individual takes to learn dictates cognitive aptitude or college success? The results of this research indicate there is not a significant difference in the manner in which traditional and non-traditional students learn.

Future Direction: Innovating research techniques should occur to determine why varying cognitive abilities occur.

References

Burley. R.C., Turner, L.A., & Vitulli, W.F. (1999). The Relationship Between Goal Orientation and Age Among Adolescents and Adults. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 160(1), 84- 88.

Dupeyrat, C. & Marine, C. (2005) Implicit theories of intelligence, goal orientation, cognitive engagement, and achievement: A test of Dweck's model with returning to school adults. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 30*, 43-59.

How to understand your kids' text messages. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.mahalo.com/how-to-understand-your-kids-text-messages/