

## A QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH OF PARENTING STYLE TO PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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**Abstract.** This study adopted a mixed method integrating corpus techniques and error analysis to investigate Vietnamese EFL learners' use of conjunction in English writing. The participants were ten-graders of a Hanoi-based high school. The results showed that additive and causal conjunctions were the most frequently used types, and the students encountered challenges mostly in using adversative and causal conjunctions. Besides, omission and misformation are the most common types of errors in the learners' use of conjunction. Both interference from first language and intra-lingual factors were found to be the sources of the learners' errors. Finally, several implications for teaching and learning conjunctions in Vietnamese high school context were drawn.

**Keywords:** conjunction, error, Halliday and Hassan (1976), Surface Strategy Taxonomy.

### 1. Introduction

Parenting style is developed relatively in a long time, affected by many factors such as family culture, learning process, value orientation, occupation, gender, etc.; and when it becomes stable, formed and unique in the education process provided by parents. Therefore, parents in each different family will have a different style. Even though, father and mother in the common family can also have their own parenting styles.

Parenting style is hypothesized to be one of the important factors affecting the formation and development of personality of children in general, and preschool children in particular. Therefore, many authors have interested in learning the parenting style with some main following research directions: focus on studying parenting style models [1-2]; develop tools to evaluate the educational style of parents [3-6]; find out the current situation of using parenting styles [7-9]; and learn about the influence of parenting styles to their children development [10-13]. Currently, some Vietnamese researchers have begun to carry out surveys on the influence of the parenting style to the children' development. Specifically, Vu Thi Khanh Linh has had a number of studies on the relationship between parenting style and positive communication to parents of adolescence [15], on parental capacity of parents of junior high school children [15-16]. In 2019, author Le Thanh Ha studies the parenting styles affecting to bully behavior of junior high school students [17]. However, the educational style of parents having preschool children - the group most affected by their family has not been referred yet.

Therefore, this article provides more findings on the parenting style of parents to educate their preschool children, which are the basis for parents to accomodate and practice appropriate

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educational styles as well as are implications to researchers to conduct further studies of the influence of parenting styles to the development of preschool children.

## **2. Content**

### **2.1. Background**

Parenting style is likely interesting topic to many researchers. Within variety of research perspectives, parenting style is defined in different ways by each author. In this study, *parenting style is understood as a system of methods, means and activities that used steadily by parents in the educational process to their children. It becomes their unique and the children can understand and absorb the system.*

Based on research works on parenting style by Maccoby and Martin (1983), Diana Baumrind (1991), Clyde C. Robinson et al (1995), Van Leeuwen and Vermulst (2004), Vu Thi Khanh Linh (2012), Le Thanh Ha (2019) etc., this study also relies on two corefactors of demandingness and responsiveness from parents to divide the parenting style into 3 categories as follows:

*Authoritative Parenting:* Parents with an authoritative parenting style often have a high degree of control over their children and a high level of support their children simultaneously. They often have a warm and close relationship with their children. They allow children to participate in discussions to come up with general rules and regulations, so children will voluntarily follow the rules.

*Authoritarian Parenting:* Parents with an authoritarian parenting style often provide little support to meet the needs of their children, whereas having higher expectations and demands for their children. Children must absolutely obey and follow. Parents educate their children mainly by rules and orders, but do not explain their children why they must obey those rules and commands. They use strict discipline as an educational method to their children.

*Permissive Parenting:* Parents with permissive parenting style often provide high or moderate support to meet their child's needs with less control to their children. They can set the rules and discipline for children, however, unfollowing them or easily ignoring undesirable behaviors of their children. They are often confused and inconsistent in addressing those behaviors.

However, the division of parenting styles given here is approximate. In the process of education for children in reality, parents may use variety of parenting types for a child, which depending on specific situations and their feelings and emotion at that time and extend of the undesirable behaviors in each child, ect. Nevertheless, the persistent parenting style frequently used by parents in any educational situations, is considered the typical parenting style.

During the interaction between parents and children, parenting styles create an emotional environment in which parents' educational reactions are expressed and children can feel and receive them subconsciously or consciously. Parents also make the closest influence to their children particularly preschool children, hence, all educational responses from parents have a great impact on the development of a child. At the same time, parents are becoming "models" that are imitated, learned, and standardized by their children. If parents have a reasonable parenting style, it will positively affect the child's development. In contrast, if parents have inappropriate parenting styles, it can negatively affect the child's development.

### **2.2. Research methodology**

#### **2.2.1. Participants**

In order to find out the current parenting styles in parents who have children at the age of

preschool, 178 parent-couples in Nam Dinh province, Vietnam were invited to participate in the survey in January 2020. 91 of them are fathers and the mothers of boys and the rest are the fathers and the mothers of girls.

### 2.2.2. Instruments

The parents were asked to answer 62 items in The Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) [4]. However, this tool was only translated in Vietnamese and used the self-assessment questionnaires on parenting style for parents without using the assessment questionnaires on parenting styles of their spouse. Items are rated on a five-level rating scale from “I have never performed this behavior” as the lowest level to “I always perform this behavior” as the highest level. The parenting style with the highest GPA will become the typical educational style of these parents. In addition, we also interview parents to collect information due to correcting results obtained through the questionnaire.

### 2.2.3. Data analysis

SPSS software is used to calculate the frequency, average point and correlation coefficients to process the research results obtained from the questionnaire, thereby drawing objective comments on parenting styles to preschool children.

## 2.3. Research results

### 2.3.1. Parents' self- assessment on parenting style for preschoolers

Parents assessed by themselves on the parenting style for the children at the age of preschool through the questionnaire form in 3 typical types as follows:

*Table 1. Parenting style status in parents having kids at preschool*

Parenting style	Father's		Mother's		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Authoritative Parenting</i>	94	52.8	103	57.9	197	55.3
<i>Authoritarian Parenting</i>	43	24.2	41	23.0	84	23.6
<i>Permissive Parenting</i>	41	23.0	34	19.1	75	21.1
<b>Total</b>	178	100	178	100	356	100

The results in Table 1 showed that: More than half of parents tend to use an authoritative parenting style in educating their children at preschool age (55.3%). Proportion of the mothers using this educational style is 5.1%, higher than that of the father. The remaining parents mainly use authoritarian parenting and permissive parenting styles with 23.6% and 21.1% respectively. Compared to the result of the study on parenting style participated by 661 parents in the city of Zagazig, Egypt, this result has a significant difference. This study showed that 87.62% of fathers and 90.91% of mothers tend to use an authoritative parenting. Very few parents use authoritarian parenting style (7.62% of fathers and 6.65% of mothers) and permissive parenting style (4.76% of fathers and 2.44% of mothers) [18]. The difference of these two studies attributed to the influence of cultural factors which can be focused to be clarified on further studies.

In fact, we suggested that 23.6% of parents having authoritarian parenting style should consider carefully to use this style to educate their children at preschool age. Due to many studies findings that children living with parents using authoritarian parenting style would do poorly in some respects such as: not playing well with friends [19]; lacking of confidence, dissatisfy action with society [20-22]; limiting in the social expression [6], [13]; exhibiting much more aggressive behaviors [18], [23], [24], [25]

To find out the similarities of parenting styles towards children at age of preschool among each pair of parents, we have listed parents with the same and different parenting styles. The results are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. The similarities of parenting style towards preschool children of father and mother in the family**

The similarities of parenting styles of parent couples		N	%	r
Parent couples with the same parenting styles	Authoritative Parenting	74	41.6	0.71
	Authoritarian Parenting	14	7.9	0.49
	Permissive Parenting	13	7.3	0.75
Parent couples with different parenting styles		77	43.2	- 0.15
Total		178	100	0.56

(Note: r is Pearson's correlation,  $p < 0.05$ )

In general, the parenting styles of the father and the mother in the study are significant and positively correlated with a correlation coefficient  $r = 0.56$ . Specifically, more than half of parent couples have the same parenting style (56.8%) and include all three parenting types. While the first rank (41.6%) is the father - mother pairs with the same authoritative parenting style, the second rank is the authoritarian parenting style (7.9%) and the final one is permissive parenting style (7.3%). The correlation coefficients for these three parenting style groups were respectively 0.71, 0.49 and 0.75. This result shows that the authoritative parenting and permissive parenting style are practiced highly by fathers and mothers. The agreement between mothers and fathers on parenting style will be a solid foundation to educating children in highly effectiveness

In addition, lots of parent couples have practiced different parenting styles to their children (43.2%). Parenting styles in the mother and in the father are weak and negative correlation with  $r = - 0.15$ . The parenting style in these families is either a combination of authoritative parenting and permissive parenting, or authoritarian parenting and authoritative parenting, or authoritarian parenting and permissive parenting. However, up to 67.5% of parents in our interviews believed that it is not necessary to practice the same parenting style by parents but must have the same educational goals when they want to educate children successfully. On the contrary, 33.5% of parents in a group of practicing different parenting styles stated that it will be the best if both mother and father act the same parenting style. In fact, parents do not have a consensus on using which style to educate their children for various internal or/and external reasons.

### 2.3.2. Parenting styles viewed by diverse criteria

Parenting styles can be changed depending not only on parents' characteristics but sometimes also child's gender and birth order, etc. Therefore, the study additionally examined parenting styles according to different criteria. The results are as follows:

**Table 3. Parents' self-assessment on their parenting style depend on child's gender**

Parenting style	Father's				Mother's				Total			
	Boy		Girl		Boy		Girl		Boy		Girl	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Authoritative Parenting	46	50.5	48	55.2	58	63.7	45	51.7	104	57.1	93	53.4

Aauthoritarian Parenting	24	26.4	19	21.8	19	20.9	22	25.3	43	23.6	41	23.6
Permissive Parenting	21	23.1	20	23.0	14	15.4	20	23.0	34	18.7	40	23.0
Total	91	100	87	100	91	100	87	100	182	100	174	100
r	0.56				0.57				0.56			

(Note: *r* is Pearson's correlation,  $p < 0.05$ )

The results in Table 3 indicated that: the parenting styles from father and mother have a positive correlation with the gender of the child at moderate degree, expressing in correlation coefficients respectively of 0.56 and 0.57 with  $p < 0.05$ . That can be seen as the parenting style depends partly on the gender of the child. However, there is a difference in parenting styles between the father and the mother. According to fathers, authoritative parenting is used more for girls (55.2%) than boys (50.5%); authoritarian parenting style is used more for boys (26.4%) than for girls (21.8). In contrast, mothers practiced authoritative parenting to boys (63.7%) more than girls (51.7%) and authoritarian education style to girls (25.3%) than boys (20.9%). Based on the interviews, we recognized that the difference in parenting styles between parents depends on the gender of their children. This could be explained: some fathers believe that boys are often stubborn at kindergarten age, then they need strict discipline from young age. Moreover, some mothers think that it is necessary to behave more strictly to girls than boys at this age to teach and shape their characteristics. Since girls are often thought and judged by a social norm when they grow up. Thus, culture is also one of the factors contributing to the difference in the behavior of parents towards boys and girls.

In addition, a self-assessment of parenting style towards children in the same family was conducted to test whether a parenting style is affected by which given-birth order of the child in a family. 128 out of 178 parents couples having two or more children answered the question "Have you often behaved differently to your children in a similar situation?". The results are showed in Table 4:

**Table 4. Parents apply different parenting style to children in the same family**

Parenting style	Always		Usually		Often		Rarely		Never		Mean
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Parenting style of the father	24	18.8	19	14.8	21	16.4	23	18.0	41	32.0	2.70
Parenting style of the mother	25	19.5	19	14.8	29	22.7	13	10.2	42	32.8	2.78
Total	49	19.1	38	14.9	50	19.5	36	14.1	83	32.4	2.74

Nearly half of the parents (46.5%) mentioned that they never (32.4%) or rarely (14.1%) behaved differently among their younger child and older child in a similar situation. They argued that treating children equally in similar situations is essential for them to feel the equity.

Besides, up to 53.5% of parents supposed that parents behave differently to their older child or the younger child in a similar situation from usually to always. According to these parents, practicing any behavior to each child needs to be fit with his psychological characteristics. Those parents also had many more rigorously and autonomously behaviors to their older kids while indulging their younger child. The father with the code F16 (personal

communication, January, 2020) explained that “I behave more often strict with my older child because it is only necessary to strictly teach the older child to become good one then the younger child will follow and not dare to be bad”.

It can be seen through table 4 that the behavior of parents towards children in the same family is quite similar with the mean score of the mothers (2.78) and 0.08 points higher than mean score of the fathers (2.70).

### **3. Conclusions**

Based on surveys and interviews with parents having children at preschool age, we found that:

Most of parents practiced the authoritative parenting style. However, there are still quite a large number of parents practicing the authoritarian parenting and the permissive parenting. Parents should consider carefully when using authoritarian style to educating children at preschool.

More than half of the parent couples in the study have the similar parenting styles, in which a high degree of similarity is between permissive parenting and authoritative parenting groups. In contrast, nearly half of parents have different parenting styles.

Parenting style is attributed by the children’s gender and birth order in their family. Hence, it should have further research to show stronger evidence based for the findings.

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