

摘要：《普通高中英语课程标准（2017 年版 2020 年修订）》重视学习者在英语学习活动过程中的情感因素，指出教师应设计具有综合性、相关性和实用性的英语学习活动，使学生能够通过这些活动表达自己的个人观点、意图和情感态度。外语焦虑，即学习者在学习和使用外语时产生的担忧和负面情绪，就是影响外语学习的一个重要情感因素。纵观前人研究，多是对外语焦虑现状，解决对策及外语焦虑对语言习得影响的探究，较少学者探讨教师提问对外语焦虑的影响。教师提问本质上是一种教学提示，其目的在于提示学生思维，启发学生学习，最后达到教学目标。为了探索教师提问和学生英语学习焦虑之间的关系，本研究以南充市某高中的两位英语教师及其授课班级的 120 名学生为研究对象，借助英语学习焦虑量表、教师提问对学生英语学习焦虑的影响调查问卷进行定量数据收集，同时通过课堂观察以及对八名学生的访谈展开定性研究分析。旨在回答以下三个问题：第一，高中英语课堂中，教师提问的问题类型对学生英语学习焦虑有何影响？第二，高中英语课堂中，教师提问方式对学生英语学习焦虑有何影响？第三，高中英语课堂中，教师提问后的等待时间对学生英语学习焦虑有何影响？

通过数据收集、分析与讨论，本研究发现：（1）该校高二学生英语学习焦虑程度处于中等水平。参阅型问题、封闭型问题、未知问题更容易引起学生焦虑。其中，参阅型问题对学生英语学习焦虑影响最大。学生对难度较低、有确定答案的封闭型问题也产生焦虑的原因主要是学生追求完美，害怕不能给和标准答案一样的答案。（2）教师不同的提问方式对学生英语学习焦虑有不同影响，其中，指定学生回答点名最能引起学生的焦虑。（3）该校教师提问后的等待时间总体偏短，只有部分学生认为老师提问后给的思考时间是足够的。思考时间不足会加重学生焦虑情绪，使学生的语言输出质量下降。

根据研究发现并结合高中英语教学实际，本研究提出了一些教学建议：加强对学生焦虑情绪的关注；合理调整各类型问题占提问总数的比例；合理利用不同的提问方式；恰当安排提问后的等待时间；采用恰当的评价方式。期望本研究能够引起相关学者和一线教师对教师课堂提问以及教师提问对学生英语学习焦虑影响的关注。

关键词：英语学习焦虑；教师提问；高中英语

Abstract: The Revised Version of Curriculum Standard of English attaches great importance to learners' affective factors in the English learning process and points out that teachers should design overall, relevant and practical English learning activities, through which students can express their personal views, intentions and affective attitudes. Foreign language anxiety, the worry and negative emotional reaction when learning and using a foreign language, is a significant affective factor influencing foreign language learning. There have been quite a number of academic works on the current situation of English learning anxiety, its solutions, and its impact on language acquisition. However, there are few studies on the influence of teacher questioning on English learning anxiety. Teachers' questioning is essentially a teaching prompt that aims to prompt students' thinking, inspire students' learning, and finally achieve the teaching goal. In order to explore the relationship between teachers' questioning and students' anxiety about learning English, this study takes two English teachers from a high school in Nanchong City and 120 students in their class as research participants. Quantitative data are collected by means of the FLCAS and the questionnaire on the influence of teachers' questioning on students' English learning anxiety. At the same time, qualitative research and analysis are carried out through classroom observation and interviews. This study seeks to answer the following three research questions: 1. What are the effects of question types on students' English learning anxiety? 2. What are the effects of teachers' questioning ways on students' English learning anxiety? 3. How does the wait time after teachers' questioning affect students' English learning anxiety?

Through analysis and discussion, it is found that: first, the English learning anxiety of senior two students in this school is at a medium level. Referential questions, closed questions and x-questions are more likely to cause students' anxiety in English learning. Among them, referential questions have the greatest impact on students' English learning anxiety. The main reason why students are anxious about closed questions with low difficulty and definite answers is that they pursue perfection and are afraid of failing to give the same answer as the standard answer. Second, teachers' different ways of questioning have different effects on students' English learning anxiety, among which, nominating arouses the most anxiety in students. Third, the wait time after questioning is generally short in this school, and only some students think that the thinking time given by the teachers after questioning is enough. Lack of thinking time will aggravate students' anxiety and degrade the quality of students' language output.

Based on the findings of the study and the actual situation of English teaching in senior high schools, this study brings up some suggestions: First, enhancing the attention to students' English learning anxiety. Second, adjusting

the proportion of various types of questions in the total number of questions reasonably. Third, making rational use of different questioning ways. Fourth, arranging the wait time after questioning appropriately. Fifth, adopting appropriate evaluation. This study is expected to draw more scholars' and front-line teachers' attention to teachers' classroom questioning and the influence of teachers' questioning on students' English learning anxiety.

Keywords: English learning anxiety; teachers' questioning; high school English

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Chapter One Introduction

The background of the study, its purpose and significance, as well as the thesis' layout, will be discussed in this chapter.

1.1 Research Background

Since the 1980s, with the increasing influence of humanistic psychology theory, more and more attention has been paid to affective factors in foreign language teaching.

In the Revised Version of the Curriculum Standard of English, Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China has pointed out that senior high school English curriculum should cultivate students' subject core competencies. Teachers should design English learning activities with overall, relevant and practical characteristics so that students can express their individual opinions, intentions and affective attitudes through these activities. Meanwhile, an evaluation system should be established, taking students as the main body and promoting students' all-round, healthy and personalized development. The evaluation for students should pay attention to their emotions, attitudes and values in the process of English learning (Ministry of Education, 2020). Guided by the new curriculum standard, teachers are required to improve their levels of professional development, and students' English learning is also faced with more challenges. Senior high students are in a crucial period of psychological development, and their psychology has many contradictory features, such as mature and immature, independent and dependent, and so on. As a particular group, they are easy to suffer from mental health problems (Wang, 2010). Learning anxiety is one of the common psychological states. Anxiety is a psychological state caused by excessive tension (Zhao, 2007). Previous studies have shown that anxiety may be one of the most important affective factors that affect students' learning. There are many reasons for senior high students' anxiety in English learning. In addition to their psychological characteristics, communicating in English, taking exams, and insufficiency of English knowledge are also possible reasons for their anxiety (Ying et al., 2021).

Classroom questioning, a bridge between the teacher and the students, is a vital teaching method for teachers. Teachers pass on knowledge to students and obtain feedback from students by asking questions in class. Proper questioning behavior can keep students in a moderate anxiety mood, stimulate their interest in learning, and bring out the best in students.

On the contrary, improper questioning may get students into a high degree of anxiety and have a negative impact on their learning. Among the factors that affect senior high students' English learning anxiety, teachers' questioning, which goes through the whole teaching process, also seriously influences their English learning anxiety, so it is of great importance to study the relationship between teachers' questioning and students' English learning anxiety.

Therefore, this thesis aims to study the causes of students' English learning anxiety from the perspective of teachers' questioning and discuss the countermeasures of relieving students' English learning anxiety so as to achieve the ultimate goal of improving the teaching effect and promoting students' English learning.

1.2 Research Purpose and Significance

The new curriculum standard requires that teachers should enable students to express their personal views, intentions and affective attitudes and develop multiple thinking and critical thinking by understanding, application and innovation. The standard also mentioned that it is necessary to perfect the English evaluation system and attach importance to the factors, like students' feelings, attitudes and values, in the process of English learning. Thus, it can be seen that the new curriculum standard pays close attention to students' affective factors in learning. As a common mood, anxiety plays a significant role in learners' English learning. In China, the great majority of students obtain knowledge from teaching in the classroom, so the learning state of students in the classroom determines the final learning effects to a great extent. As an essential bridge of teacher-student interaction, teacher questioning is inextricably linked with students' English learning anxiety. Therefore, this study aims to know the current situation and characteristics of teachers' questioning behavior and students' English learning anxiety in senior high English classes and understand the influence of teachers' questioning on students' English learning anxiety so as to adjust teachers' questioning and improve English teaching effects through classroom observation, questionnaire and interview.

This study investigates the actual situation of teachers' questioning and students' English learning anxiety. It also discusses the impact of teachers' questioning on students' English learning anxiety, which can enrich relevant research results and have certain theoretical significance to English teaching research. From the perspective of practice, this study puts forward suggestions on how to reduce students' anxiety according to the research

results, which is of great significance to make the teachers more concerned about classroom questioning and explore more reasonable ways of asking questions.

1.3 Layout of the Thesis

Five parts compose this thesis. The first chapter is the introduction, which presents the research background, purpose and significance and the layout of this thesis. The second chapter is the literature review, which intends to give a definition of teacher questioning and English learning anxiety, elaborate the theoretical foundation of the study, including the humanistic psychology theory and the Zone of Proximal Development theory, and introduce the relevant studies in China and abroad. The third chapter is about research design. The research questions, participants, instruments and data collection are explained in detail. The fourth part analyses the data collected from questionnaires, classroom observation and interviews. The final chapter is the conclusion, which presents some main findings, pedagogical implications, as well as the limitations of the study.

Chapter Two Literature Review

This part is about the definition of core concepts, the basic interpretation of the theoretical foundations and the research status at home and abroad.

2.1 Teachers' Questioning

The following contents mainly show the definition, classifications, wait time and the nomination ways of teachers' questioning.

2.1.1 Definition of Teachers' Questioning

Teachers' questioning, the primary carrier of language teaching, exists in classroom teaching from beginning to end and plays an irreplaceable role in classroom teaching (Lu & Hong, 2010). Effective questioning is a catalyst for students, which not only attracts students' attention and stimulates their interest in learning, but also guides them to think deeply. Jin (1997) thought teachers' questioning is a kind of teaching prompt. It refers to a stimulus of transferring the learning content or the instructions of what students should do and how to do it. Cohen (1998) held the opinion that teachers' questioning is a prompt in nature. With such prompts, students can pay more attention to the teacher's teaching, because the process of listening to the teacher in class becomes more purposeful and more interesting. Ur (2000) believed that teachers' questioning, the purposeful expression of a teacher, is widespread in teaching. Teachers design different questions in a purposeful, planned and step-by-step way according to the teaching materials and students' learning situation so as to encourage students to think, inspire them to learn and finally achieve the teaching goal. Qian and Zhang (2018) pointed out that classroom questioning includes the teacher's preparation before questioning, the questioning process, and the teaching reflection after questioning. It's an explicit behavior that can be observed, analyzed, evaluated, and optimized.

Based on the analysis of the above definitions, the author holds that the teachers' questioning is a teaching method that inspires students to think and promotes students to acquire knowledge.

The classifications of questions, the wait time after questioning, the distribution of questioning, the questioning tactics, and the feedback forms have frequently

been emphasized in studies on teachers' questioning at home and abroad. This study primarily discusses the classifications of questions, the ways of questioning, and the wait time after questioning.

2.1.2 Classifications of Teachers' Questions

In terms of the classifications of teachers' questions, the researchers classified teachers' questions from different perspectives.

For Long and Sato (1983), they classified the questions into two categories: echoic questions and epistemic questions according to the function of teachers' questions. The echoic questions are used to repeat something or confirm what students have understood. The epistemic questions are used to obtain information, which can be further categorized into referential and display questions. The referential questions are those that teachers do not know the answers to them, which aim to know the understanding and judgment of the respondents and promote the knowledge application of learners. The display questions refer to the questions that the teacher already knows the answers. The purpose of asking this kind of question is to practice what learners have learned (Xu, 2010). This classification has been accepted and adopted by many other researchers.

In terms of the forms of questions, Hakansson and Lindeberg (1978) divided questions into three types: nexus questions, alternative questions and x-questions. The first one, is nexus questions, that is to say, respondents need to answer this kind of question with Yes or No. The second type is alternative questions, which require the respondents to choose replies from the given options. The third type of question is called x-questions, also known as wh-questions, which begin with the words or phrases like who, what, when, how much etc. and require students to integrate information.

Besides, Barnes (1976) divided the questions into closed questions and open questions based on the difficulty of answers. Closed questions require students to think in a specific direction and have one or a few fixed and standard answers. On the contrary, questions with multiple answers are called open questions.

Lou (2010) classified the questions into two types: informative questions and creative questions. In Lou's point of view, the informative questions are relatively simple, most of which require students to retell the information they have gained and have clear answers. The answers given by different respondents are almost the same for this kind of question. As for the creative questions, students are required to make full use of their imagination and

make creative answers according to the materials. There are no fixed answers, but students are required to think abstractly and have the ability to analyze and solve problems.

The classification by Long and Sato (1983) is widely accepted by many researchers. This study also adopts this kind of classification and divides teachers' questions into display questions and referential questions. Besides, this study adopts the classification of open and closed questions, nexus questions and x-questions for it is more suitable for daily teaching and easier to operate.

2.1.3 Wait Time

There are two types of wait time. The first type refers to the time after teachers ask questions before students respond, that is, pausing after asking a question. The second one refers to the time before the teacher makes the evaluation for students' answers, that is, pausing after a student's response (Rowe, 1986). In essence, Rowe takes teachers as the main body to divide the wait time. Chinese scholars have also defined the wait time. Wei (2019) pointed out that the wait time means the teacher's timely pause after asking questions. If the teacher expects students to give reasonable answers, he should wait patiently. Silence in classroom teaching is often an excellent opportunity for students to think. After asking questions, the teacher should leave students a certain amount of time to think. The length of wait time depends on the difficulty of the questions. This study focuses on the effects of teachers' questioning on students' English learning anxiety, so this thesis just discusses the first type of wait time: pausing after asking a question.

2.1.4 Ways of Questioning

The ways of questioning refer to the teacher's ways of choosing someone to answer questions after questioning. Considering different types of respondents, Chen (2015) put forward four ways of questioning. The first one, nominating, which means the teacher assigns some students to answer. The advantage of this way of questioning is that teachers can choose different students to answer according to the nature and difficulty of the question. The second one, chorus answering, which means students give the answer to the question together. This way of questioning can help teachers know the learning status of most students, test their understanding of the course, save class time, and also liven up the classroom atmosphere. The third one is volunteering, which means some students answer the questions voluntarily. This way of questioning can effectively train students' logical thinking, cultivate

students' language organization and expression ability, and indirectly improve their English level. The last one is teacher self-answering, that is to say, the teacher answers his own questions. Although this way of questioning can save teaching time, it will affect the effect of classroom interaction. According to the actual situation of the school investigated, this study also explores the four ways.

2.2 Foreign Language Anxiety

This part concentrates on the following two issues, namely, the definition of foreign language anxiety, and the classifications of foreign language anxiety.

2.2.1 Definition of Foreign Language Anxiety

Anxiety is a complex emotional reaction consisting of nervousness, worry, or even fear. Anxiety is usually associated with the psychological situation of the anxiety subject, especially when the subject is experiencing or is about to face threats or has goals that are difficult to achieve (Meng & Chen, 2017). However, foreign language anxiety is a distinct psychological phenomenon associated with language learning. In China, English is one of the leading foreign languages that primary and secondary school students learn, so in this thesis, the “foreign language” refers to “English”.

Foreign language anxiety, according to Horwitz et al. (1986), is a distinct phenomenon of language learning that is tied to classroom learning and stems from the complex self-cognition, faith, emotion and behaviors in the language learning process. Based on the definition of foreign language anxiety by Horwitz et al. (1986), the author believes that the anxiety generated by Chinese learners in the process of learning English is a kind of foreign language anxiety. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) defined foreign language anxiety as the worry and negative emotional reaction when learning and using a second language.

Domestic scholars also have different opinions on the definition of foreign language learning anxiety. Li (2004) mentioned that foreign language anxiety describes the fear or uneasiness of learners when they have to express themselves in the target language. Wang and Wan (2001) believed that English learning anxiety refers to a series of negative emotions, such as tension and fear, which occurs when students want to use English without fully mastering the knowledge of it. Huo (2009) proposed that anxiety can be classified as trait anxiety, state anxiety and situation-specific anxiety. Foreign language anxiety belongs to situation-specific anxiety, because this kind of anxiety is generated in the specific situation

of foreign language learning.

From the above definitions, it can be concluded that foreign language anxiety refers to students' negative emotions in the process of learning and applying a foreign language, such as nervousness, fear and so on. Based on the purpose of this study and the reality of senior high English teaching in China, the author replaces "foreign language anxiety" with "English learning anxiety" during the research and defined "English learning anxiety" as "the negative emotions in the process of learning and applying English, such as nervousness, fear and so on.

2.2.2 Classifications of Foreign Language Anxiety

According to anxiety sources, Horwitz et al. (1986) proposed three components of foreign language anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication anxiety occurs when learners have to express themselves or communicate with others in a foreign language. Test anxiety is the unpleasant feeling that learners experience because of the fear of exams. Fear of negative evaluation means that people fear others' negative valuation of their language ability.

According to the effects of anxiety, Scovel (1978) defined anxiety as a state of apprehension, a vague fear and divided it into facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety. Facilitating anxiety encourages learners to learn more enthusiastically and promotes their language learning. In contrast, debilitating anxiety is not conducive to students' foreign language learning and has a strong negative impact on learners themselves. The nervousness before hosting a large-scale party, for experienced TV hosts, is often a sign of facilitative anxiety, and a sign of just enough tension to get the task done.

According to the stages of language learning, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) divided foreign language anxiety into input anxiety, processing anxiety and output anxiety. Input anxiety refers to the anxiety caused by receiving a second language. Processing anxiety refers to the anxiety that arises when learning and thinking about a second language. Output anxiety refers to the anxiety that occurs when speaking or writing in a second language.

Different scholars have classified foreign language anxiety from different perspectives. This study agrees with the classification method of Horwitz et al. (1986) because communication, examination and evaluation are three common elements in actual foreign language classroom learning.

2.3 Theoretical Foundations of the Study

This study takes the humanistic psychology theory and the Zone of Proximal Development theory as the theoretical foundations.

2.3.1 Humanistic Psychology Theory

As one of the most outstanding representatives of humanistic psychology, Rogers criticized traditional education that mainly imparts factual knowledge to students. In this kind of education mode, students are forced to learn under external pressure. As a result, students are always in a passive position. Rogers advocated that the purpose and goal of education are to facilitate students' change and growth and to cultivate students who can adapt to the change and growth. Based on this goal, he proposed that school education should establish the concept of being student-centered, that is to say, schools are designed for students, and teachers teach for students. In his view, "education", which aims to cultivate students' sound personalities and healthy minds, is more important than "teaching". Rogers put forward "non-directive" teaching, which regards students as the main body. He mentioned that students have innate learning potentials, and classroom teaching should make full use of students' internal motivation so as to stimulate students' desire for self-realization. Students should be the masters of learning. The focus is away from "teaching" and toward "learning" (Brown, 2001).

In classroom teaching, teaching contents, teaching methods, and evaluation of teaching effectiveness are not determined by teachers, but by students or by their experience, intentions, needs, interests, etc. (Cao, 2000). Rogers believes that the key to successful teaching lies not in teaching skills but in interpersonal relationships and emotional attitudes. Therefore, he paid special attention to the establishment of a new teacher-student relationship, which possesses three essential elements: sincerity, respect and understanding. That is to say, teachers should have genuine trust, place themselves in students' positions, and communicate openly and empathically with students. Rogers paid close attention to the overall development of students, especially the "inner life" of students, that is to say, the development of people's feelings, spirits and values (Zeng, 2003).

Maslow, a famous humanistic psychologist, also pointed out that the fundamental purpose of education is to assist individuals to achieve or realize their best state, namely self-realization. He criticized traditional classroom teaching and argued that it only focuses on giving students the knowledge they need in an industrial society, which stifles students'

autonomy, independence and enthusiasm for learning.

According to humanistic psychology theory, teachers should be student-centered in teaching and take learners' feelings into consideration when designing questions. Teachers should combine classroom teaching with students' interests and needs, provide students with a relaxing learning environment, and encourage them to participate in classroom activities actively so as to improve students' enthusiasm and confidence in learning.

2.3.2 Zone of Proximal Development Theory

According to Vygotsky, students' development level is segmented into two types, namely, the current level and the potential level. The gap between the two is called the Zone of Proximal Development. The present level denotes the ability of students to solve problems independently. The term "potential level" describes the level that can be attained with the guidance and assistance of adults or by collaborating with more competent peers (Vygotsky, 1978). ZPD theory indicates that the development of students is personalized and different, and appropriate teaching methods can help students transition from the current level to the potential level successfully and stimulate their development potential. Thus, the famous statements that "teaching should go ahead of development" and "teaching should create the zone of proximal development" is drawn. (Ding & Tong, 2022, p. 81). ZPD has built a dynamic path between the current development level and the potential development level. The essence of teaching is to encourage and build students' proximal development zones. Teaching should take the current development level of students as a foothold to predict the development level that students may reach. The current development level of students only represents their temporary development at a certain stage, but the most important thing is to explore and analyze the potential of students. Therefore, teachers should guide students to reach their potential development level with appropriate teaching methods and learning strategies.

Teachers' questioning in English classes is a process in which teachers continuously interact with students, provide students with understandable input and carry out meaning negotiation on the basis of an in-depth understanding of the text, which plays a very important role in helping students cross the zone of proximal development. Based on the theory of ZPD, teachers should accurately analyze the learning situations and design questions in terms of students' actual ability and cognitive level, so that teachers' questions can be understood and accepted by students. Meanwhile, teachers should take students'

potential level into account and design questions reasonably to stimulate students' thirst for English knowledge. When the teacher asks questions according to the theory of ZPD, learners will experience a change of thought. That is to say, learners can transition from asking the teacher for answers directly to thinking independently without the help of the teacher, which realizes the purpose of classroom teaching. In this process, learners can also raise questions, analyze and solve questions by themselves. Therefore, the theory of ZPD is very helpful to the study of English teachers' classroom questioning in this thesis.

2.4 Relevant Studies at Home and Abroad

This part mainly presents the relevant studies of teachers' questioning and foreign language anxiety at home and abroad.

2.4.1 Studies on Teacher's Questioning

Foreign scholars have done much research on teachers' questioning. Referring to mass literature, the author concludes that foreign research on teacher questioning mainly concentrates on the frequency of various types of questions, the impact of teacher questioning on learners' language output, teachers' questioning strategies and so on.

Regarding the impact of teacher questioning on learners' language output, scholars have done relevant research. Liu and Gillies (2021) investigated two types of questions: display questions and referential questions. Their research suggests that when a teacher asks questions properly, the teacher's talk can stimulate students' cognitive thinking and promote their learning. The study also mentioned that, compared with display questions, referential questions could provide opportunities for students to speak at a higher level and do meaning negotiation. They concluded that teachers are encouraged to use referential questions in both demonstrative and referential interactions. Mona and Abdullah (2017) discussed the influence of teachers' questioning on classroom interaction. The results of this study show that teachers' questioning results in different levels of classroom interaction due to the complexity, types and communication modes of questions. Brock (1986) aimed to determine if higher frequencies of referential questions have effects on adult ESL classroom discourse. The results showed that learners' responses to referential questions were on average more than twice as long and more than twice as syntactically complex as their responses to display questions. Referential questions may increase the amount of speech learners can make in

class.

With regard to the teachers' questioning strategies, Ashlee (2020) summarized the characteristics of excellent teachers in asking questions: combining high-level thinking with open questions so as to promote students' critical thinking; exploring and guiding students to think; encouraging peer interaction; providing oral feedback; providing students with wait time after questioning and so on. These strategies will be beneficial to the cultivation of normal students. Verplaetse (2014) emphasized the teacher's practice of asking big questions; that is, questions of personal, thematic relevance, provoking inquiry and requiring high levels of cognition, and provided some strategies, such as asking big questions regularly and frequently, providing abundant opportunities for students to produce and to practice extended output and so on. Alandeom (2010) stated that student-centered questions could motivate students to make longer and more precise answers and encourage them to think at a higher level.

About the frequency of various types of questions. Blything et al. (2020) explored how the types of questions asked by teachers affect the complexity of pupils' responses through the corpus. The results showed that teachers frequently asked high-challenge wh-questions. The more frequently the teacher asked high-challenge questions in class, the more linguistically complex the students' responses would be. Gartmeier et al. (2019) found that most of the questions raised by teachers were initial (rather than follow-up) questions, and their questions were often closed (instead of open). In addition, more reasoning (rather than reproductive) questions were raised.

Teachers' questioning, the link of teacher-student interaction, has a pushing effect on classroom teaching efficiency. Many domestic experts and scholars have also carried out a great deal of research on it.

In terms of the current situation and strategies of teachers' questioning, Zhang and Li (2022) conducted a study on preschool teachers' questioning. They discovered that teachers' questioning runs through classroom teaching and is the fundamental means of communication between teachers and children. Zhang also mentioned that most teachers could design problems around teaching objectives, and the questions are consistent with the teaching key and difficult points. Still, the setting of questions lacks logic and openness. Most teachers attach importance to knowledge transmission in the questioning process, but rarely allow children to explain new knowledge and describe their understanding in their own language.

Liu (2021) suggested that classroom questioning must form a complete and systematic logical structure, so as to integrate the questioning requirements of students' learning, teaching and disciplines. In order to make the classroom questioning structured, teachers must presuppose in advance according to the characteristics of the subject, consider various aspects, and design questions carefully.

Long's research (2017) explored the cognitive hierarchy of classroom questioning by college English teachers. The study found that the number of questions asked by the two teachers in the survey was not significantly different in the distribution of cognitive ability. The questions in college English teaching class were mainly about knowledge and understanding. However, from the classroom recordings and teachers' logs, higher-level analytical, synthetical and evaluative questions occupy more class time. The combination of these questions with the task-based teaching method, the project teaching method and cooperative learning promotes students' critical thinking and is helpful to the improvement of learners' language application ability.

Pan(2020) pointed out some problems in teachers' questioning: teachers design communication questions without considering the real situations; closed questions are used in high frequency; teachers use the questions in the textbook frequently but rarely create something new by themselves. Some researchers identified that students' responses to teachers' questions are influenced by topic difficulty and topic familiarity.

Yin (2020) mentioned that if the teacher adopts methods like "restating questions", "simplifying questions", "prolonging waiting time", and "providing response templates that are close to students' life", students' enthusiasm for responding will be stimulated.

Regarding the influence and role of teachers' questioning, the researcher indicated that the contents and forms of teachers' questioning determine the direction of students' thinking (Li, 2019). In order to better cultivate students' thinking quality, teachers should ask questions progressively, focusing on the students' zone of proximal development. Teachers' questioning should conform to students' cognitive levels, pay attention to students' needs, and closely associate students' life with the text.

Liu (2019) mentioned that classroom questioning is an effective means for teachers to guide students to study further. She believed that teachers should design high-quality questions according to the original ideas of the text and guide students to improve their thinking quality by taking part in activities like observation, comparison, analysis, reasoning, generalization, evaluation and innovation. The question design should conform to the

cognitive development of students and pay attention to the difficulty of the questions.

Tang (2019) mentioned that questions are the starting point of thinking, and the quality of classroom questioning will directly affect the quality of classroom teaching and the cultivation of students' thinking abilities. The classroom questioning oriented by high-order thinking should be purposeful and scientific. Besides, teachers should pay attention to the subject thought in setting questions.

Chen (2016) explored the relationship between teacher questioning and students' critical thinking ability and pointed out that teachers' guiding questioning must be aimed at students' zone of proximal development and provide the necessary support for the development of learners' specific skills.

From the above literature, it can be seen that a lot of analysis and studies have been carried out on teachers' questioning at home and abroad, including the frequency of various types of questions, the impact of teacher questioning on learners' language output, teachers' questioning strategies, the current situation of teachers' questioning and so on. Most scholars have studied teachers' classroom questioning in the lower grades. Therefore, based on the previous studies, this study will focus on the high school stage and analyze teachers' questioning in high school English classes in a more detailed way.

2.4.2 Studies on Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign scholars have done a lot of research on the present situation of foreign language anxiety and the correlation between foreign language learning anxiety and other factors, but the language they studied is not limited to English. For example, Onwuegbuzie et al. (1999) took Spanish and French learners as the research objects, exploring the correlation between foreign language anxiety and students' learning strategies. The results indicated that students' learning strategies negatively correlate with their foreign language anxiety. In addition, students' sense of responsibility is also negatively related to their foreign language anxiety, i.e., the more responsible the students are, and the less anxious they are. They found that students' personality is related to foreign language anxiety too. Introverted students have higher foreign language learning anxiety than other students.

Hussein (2005) investigated the correlation between Arabic learners' listening comprehension and listening anxiety. The results showed that there is a negative correlation between students' listening comprehension and listening anxiety. That means the higher the listening comprehension ability you have, the lower the foreign language listening anxiety

you get.

Botes et al. (2022) examined the relationships between the emotion variables of foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) and foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and the outcome variable of self-perceived proficiency (SPP) through nonlinear methods. They found that students with a lower FLCA and higher FLE had a higher level of SPP. However, FL learners who experienced FLCA and FLE at equal intensity produced complex SPP patterns in which the presence of one emotion sometimes compensated for the absence of the other. In addition, it is observed that anxiety has a greater impact on perceived proficiency.

Some researchers also considered the gender differences in foreign language anxiety. They mentioned that the level of foreign language anxiety of female learners is higher than that of male learners (Dewaele et al., 2016). In terms of the two anxiety factors: fear of making mistakes and lack of self-confidence in foreign language learning, female learners have higher marks than male learners. But female learners' pleasure in foreign language learning is generally higher than that of males.

Abdurahman and Rizqi's findings (2021) showed that five university students from non-English departments displayed different degrees of anxiety during the English presentation, which resulted in several accidents. Participants with high anxiety levels tended to use monotone coping strategies. This study suggested that when meeting highly anxious students, teachers could introduce them to alternative strategies for dealing with anxiety.

Language anxiety is a unique phenomenon in language learning. English and Chinese are members of distinct language families. For Chinese students, English learning is an extremely complex process. It is not only affected by the characteristics of English itself but also by the learners themselves (Lin & Wu, 2010). Students' negative feelings like nervousness and fear in the process of learning and applying English are called English learning anxiety. Chinese scholars have done a lot of studies on English learning anxiety. By reviewing the literature, the author roughly divides these studies into two categories: the investigation of the current situation and the correlational study of English learning anxiety.

In the current situation investigation, Jin (2022) analyzed the causes of English learning anxiety among college students in the new era. First of all, students with weak resistance to pressure and unfirm learning attitudes are prone to English learning anxiety. Secondly, there are still some problems in some colleges, such as emphasizing results over processes and having dull teaching content, which makes it easy for students to experience English learning anxiety. Finally, the arguments about English's uselessness will mislead students

understanding of English, thus forming resistance to English learning unconsciously, and resulting in learning anxiety. Ying et al. (2021) found that during class resumption during the COVID-19 pandemic, middle school students' English learning anxieties were in a normal distribution, and students' psychological states in English learning would affect their English learning anxiety significantly. Additionally, students have different levels of English learning anxiety in different grades. Guo and Xu (2014) found that English learning anxiety of non-English majors is at a moderate level in all dimensions. The anxiety values from high to low are classroom anxiety, oral anxiety, listening anxiety, writing and reading anxiety. An (2013) conducted a survey on the English learning anxiety of vocational college students. It is found that the English learning anxiety of vocational college students belongs to the middle level, and the order of anxiety is test anxiety, communication apprehension, other anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

Regarding the correlational research, Wang and Jiang (2021) found that English learning anxiety is negatively correlated with self-efficacy, while positively correlated with learning burnout. Huang (2021) found that under the flipped classroom mode, learners' classroom anxiety level is in a state of fluctuation, with obvious anxiety in the early stage and reduced anxiety values in the later stage. The anxiety level shows a downward trend. Flipped classroom teaching model can significantly reduce learners' overall classroom anxiety level, expression anxiety and classroom teaching anxiety, and improve their self-confidence. According to Xu's (2018) findings, there is a significant negative correlation between foreign language anxiety and language learning strategies, that is, students who use more language learning strategies have lower foreign language anxiety. Yu et al. (2015) found a significant negative correlation between students' scores on emotional intelligence and foreign language anxiety. Students with higher EQ scores tend to have lower scores of foreign language anxiety, indicating that students who can better control their emotions in different situations will have less foreign language anxiety in English classes. Some scholars have also studied the correlation between English learning anxiety and English learning motivation and found that intrinsic motivation, achievement motivation, individual development motivation and certificate motivation are significantly correlated with English learning anxiety (Zhou, 2011).

Through the review of domestic and foreign literature, it can be seen that scholars have carried out a large number of empirical studies on foreign language anxiety, exploring the influencing factors and mitigation strategies of foreign language anxiety. However, most

studies analyzed the influence factors of foreign language anxiety from the perspective of students, ignoring the influence of external factors. At the same time, most empirical studies chose college students as the research objects, but paid little attention to high school students. Therefore, it is necessary to start from the external factors and investigate the impact of teachers' questioning on students' English learning anxiety.

2.4.3 Studies on the Relationship between Teacher's Questioning and Foreign Language Anxiety

Through consulting literature materials, the author finds that few foreign scholars combined teachers' questioning with foreign language anxiety directly, but some foreign scholars have studied the influence of teachers' language characteristics on students' foreign language anxiety. Teachers' questioning is also an important part of teachers' language expression. The researcher indicated that not using a business-like tone can help learners relax and feel more comfortable and less anxious in L2 classrooms (Effiong, 2016).

By searching the domestic literature, it is found that some studies have been done so far concerning the relationship between teacher's questioning and foreign language anxiety.

Zhu (2020) took freshmen in senior high as the research object and found that students' English learning anxiety has reached a level above average, and teachers' negative feedback and improper correction would cause students' anxiety. Su (2017) introduced the "Think-Pair-Share" classroom questioning mode in the intensive reading class and literature reading class, and reformed the traditional mode of "teachers ask questions and students answer". The results showed that the TPS model is an effective strategy for classroom questioning, which can significantly alleviate the anxiety caused by "insufficient preparation" and "public speaking". Zhang (2017) surveyed the undergraduates' opinions on teachers' questioning. According to this survey, the majority of students said they would have little anxiety if the teacher asked them questions that interested them or stimulated their imagination. Zhang (2007) pointed out that inappropriate questioning might lead to tension and depression in the teaching atmosphere and increase students' psychological burdens. Zheng's study (2003) found that the more difficult the questions, the more anxious the students appear; a random nominating after questioning keeps students focused, but also causes some anxiety; negative evaluation leads to the generation or aggravation of anxiety.

To sum up, there are more and more studies on the influence of teachers' questioning on students' anxiety at home and abroad. Many scholars agree that different teachers'

questioning methods will have different effects on students' English learning anxiety. Therefore, based on previous studies, this study will further explore and study the relationship between teacher questioning and English learning anxiety, hoping to provide some ideas for teachers to teach and reduce students' anxiety.

Chapter Three Research Design

This chapter is an overview of research design. The research questions, research participants, research instruments and specific research process are all explicated.

3.1 Research Questions

This study aims to investigate teachers' questioning in senior high school English classrooms, learn about the present condition of students' English learning anxiety, and discuss the impact of teachers' questioning on students' English learning anxiety, hoping to improve teachers' reflection on their own classroom questioning and raise concerns about students' English learning anxiety. The questions discussed in this thesis are as follows:

- (1) What are the effects of question types on students' English learning anxiety?
- (2) What are the effects of teachers' questioning ways on students' English learning anxiety?
- (3) How does the wait time after teachers' questioning affect students' English learning anxiety?

3.2 Research Participants

In this study, 120 sophomores and two English teachers from a high school in Nanchong City were selected as research participants. Among the 120 students, there are 87 girls and 33 boys. The reason for choosing the senior two students is that compared with the freshmen who just entered high school life, these sophomores have accumulated and mastered certain knowledge of English language after receiving formal education in middle school. Besides, they have more time and energy to cooperate with this research than senior three students. The two English teachers involved in this study have rich teaching experience. One teacher has taught for 15 years, and the other has taught for more than 20 years.

3.3 Research Instruments

The research instruments include a questionnaire survey for students, classroom observation in real classes and an interview with students after class.

3.3.1 Classroom Observation

Referring to the Table of Questioning Skills by Gu and Zhou (1999), the author designed an observation scale based on the research purpose and research questions (see Appendix I). This classroom observation scale is used to record the types of teachers' questions, the wait time after teachers' questioning, teachers' questioning ways and students' performance to have a more comprehensive and clear understanding of the current situation and characteristics of English teachers' classroom questioning.

3.3.2 Questionnaire

Two questionnaires were used in this study (see Appendix II). In this study, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which was developed by Hortwiz (1986) and translated by Wang (2003), was applied to measure students' English learning anxiety. In order to avoid students' misinterpretation of questionnaire items, some descriptions of the scale were modified. According to the actual situation of students, it is learned that they have few opportunities to communicate with foreigners, so item 14 and item 32 related to foreigners in the scale were deleted. In addition, some items with repeated meanings, like item 18, item 23 and item 29, were also deleted. After deletion, there are 28 items in total. The author named the scale as "A questionnaire on English learning anxiety". According to Wang's research (2003), the scale contains four factors: worry (item 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 22); nervousness (item 5, 6, 16, 19, 20, 23, 25, 26); communication anxiety (item 1, 2, 21, 27); afraid of classroom questioning (3, 9, 12, 13, 18, 24, 28). The scores were assessed by a 5-Likert scale. If students choose "strongly disagree", they will get 1 point, and if they choose "completely agree", they will get 5 points. Item 2, 5, 8, 11, 20 and 25 are the reverse items. Before analyzing the data, it is necessary to revert these questions to forward questions, that is, the numerical values of these variables must be recoded. In other words, the original data 1 (meaning strongly disagree) is reduced to 5 (strongly agree), 5 is reduced to 1, 2 is reduced to 4, and 4 is reduced to 2. The numerical meaning of 3 does not change, so it does not need to be recoded.

Questionnaire 2 is about the relationship between teachers' questioning and students' English learning anxiety, which comes from Dong's survey (2020). Dong's questionnaire is a combination of the FLCAS and the Hamilton Anxiety Scale. According to Hamilton Anxiety Scale, anxiety can be divided into somatic anxiety and psychosomatic anxiety (Hamilton, 1959). They are specifically expressed as worries, tension, nervousness, dry mouth, flushing, sweating, tachycardia, trembling hands or voice and so on. Anxious

performance can help students know what anxiety is and whether they feel anxious. The author named it “A Questionnaire on the Influence of Teachers’ Questioning on Students’ English Learning Anxiety”. In order to make students understand the items better, the author made some changes to the description of some items. The scale has 16 items, among which, items 2, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 16 are the reverse items. Before analyzing, they must be reduced to forward questions, too. This questionnaire also adopts Likert five dimension scale, namely, strongly disagree (1 point); disagree (2 points); not sure (3 points); agree (4 points); completely agree (5 points). Before analyzing, Questionnaire 2 was divided into the following three dimensions: anxiety caused by the types of questions asked (items 1-6), anxiety caused by the ways of questioning (items 7-13), and anxiety caused by the wait time after questioning (items 14-16).

In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the data obtained from the questionnaires, the author conducted a reliability and validity test, and the test results are as follows:

Table 3.1 Reliability of FLCAS

Alpha	Terms No.
.938	28

From Table 3.1, it can be seen that the Cronbach’s Alpha of FLCAS is 0.938, which indicates that the scale has high internal consistency and good reliability.

Table 3.2 Validity of FLCAS

KMO	Barlett’s Test of Sphericity	
.895	Approximate Chi-Square	1689.630
	DOF	378
	Sig.	.000

Table 3.2 shows that the KMO value of FLCAS is 0.895 and the p value is less than 0.05, indicating the scale has good validity.

Table 3.3 presents the reliability test result of Questionnaire two: A Questionnaire on

the Influence of Teachers' Questioning on Students' English Learning Anxiety.

Table 3.3 Reliability of Questionnaire Two

Alpha	Terms No.
.733	16

According to Table 3.3, the Cronbach's Alpha of questionnaire two is 0.733. Although the internal consistency of questionnaire two is not as high as that of FLCAS, it reaches an acceptable level of reliability, indicating that the internal consistency of the questionnaire is also good.

Table 3.4 Validity of Questionnaire Two

KMO	Barlett's Test of Sphericity
.807	Approximate Chi-Square
	DOF
	Sig.

Table 3.4 presents that the KMO value of the questionnaire is 0.807, and the p value is less than 0.05, indicating the scale has good validity.

According to the tables above, it can be seen that the questionnaires used in this study have good reliability and validity.

3.3.3 Interview

In order to conduct an in-depth analysis, this study also adopts the interview for qualitative data collection. The author randomly selected eight students who participated in this study and interviewed them respectively. To guarantee the smooth progress of the interview, the author designed the outline of the student interview according to the questionnaire survey and research questions (see Appendix III). The interview questions are as follows: 1. What questions do teachers ask in English class that make you feel nervous and anxious? What kind of questions do you want the teacher to ask? (display and referential questions, open and closed questions, yes/no questions and wh-questions). 2. How would you like the teacher to ask students to answer the question? (the teacher assigns some

students to answer; students answer the questions together; some students answer the questions voluntarily; the teacher answers his own questions) 3. Do you think the teacher gave you enough time to think while answering the questions? How does the lack of time for thinking affect you? What do you think is the right amount of time for thinking? 4. Do you have any suggestions for teachers' questioning?

It is worth noting that, before interviewing, in order to facilitate interviewees' understanding of the interview questions, some definitions and examples are given to explain the question types and the ways of questioning.

3.4 Research Procedure

The four main stages of the research process are classroom observation, questionnaire survey, interview and data collation and analysis.

Stage One: classroom observation. The classroom observation was conducted from mid-May to early June 2022. The classroom observation of this study focuses on teachers' questioning behavior. After getting permission from the teacher, the author went into the classroom and listened to six regular lessons. Four aspects were observed and recorded, including types of questions, ways of questioning ways, wait time after questioning, and students' reactions.

Stage Two: questionnaire. The questionnaire survey was carried out in mid-June 2022. After obtaining the consent of the teacher, the author did a questionnaire survey in the classes where the classroom observation was conducted. A total of 120 students participated in the survey. Before filling in the questionnaire, the researcher explained the composition of the questionnaire and emphasized the points of attention to the students.

Stage Three: interview. The interview was done in late June 2022. In order to further understand students' opinions on teachers' questioning, the author conducted face-to-face interviews with eight students in their spare time.

Stage Four: data analysis. After the interview, the author will summarize and analyze all the data collected. SPSS is used for data analysis.

Chapter Four Results and Discussion

4.1 Results and Discussion of Classroom Observation

During observation, six lessons were observed and recorded. Based on the classroom observation, this chapter will analyze the questioning behavior of senior high school English teachers from three perspectives: the types of questions, the ways of questioning, and the wait time after questioning.

4.1.1 Results and Discussion of Question Types

The author recorded 147 questions raised by two teachers through induction and sorting. According to different methods of question classification, the recorded questions are classified, and the results are as follows:

Table 4.1 The Number of Display and Referential Questions

	Number	Percentage (%)
Display questions	103	70.1%
Referential questions	44	29.9%
Total	147	100%

In terms of the function of questioning, Long and Sato have divided the questions into display questions and referential questions. According to Table 4.1, it can be seen that 70.1% of the questions are display questions, which are far more than referential questions. It can be concluded that display questions still hold a dominant position in English classroom questioning. For teachers, asking display questions can test students' actual language proficiency. In this way, the teacher can ensure that the teaching activities are carried out in an orderly manner according to the teaching plan. For students, display questions are relatively simple, and the answers can be found in the textbook without much thought. For example, the teacher asked, "When did this story happen? Who are on the steamboats, and what did Jim and Huck do on the steamboat?" Students found the answer by reading the text and then answered the questions actively and loudly. From the classroom observation, it can

be seen that students are more active in answering display questions and are more willing to answer a display question voluntarily rather than a referential question. Referential questions are often used to obtain unknown information, requiring students to understand the text and then think about the answers based on their own knowledge and experience. When answering referential questions, most students showed different degrees of anxiety, such as avoiding eye contact with teachers, lowering their own voice, etc. For example, when the teacher asked, “If you were Huck, would you save the men lying on the floor?” Some of the students kept silent, and others just whispered.

Table 4.2 The Number of Open and Closed Questions

	Number	Percentage (%)
Open questions	37	25.2%
Closed questions	110	74.8%
Total	147	100%

Barnes has classified the questions into open and closed questions. The observations indicate that the closed questions are numerically superior to the open questions in the six lessons. Open questions require students to integrate existing information, and then create new information. The function of open questions is to cultivate students’ thinking abilities. Take a reading class as an example. The teacher asked, “What do you think of these characters?” Here, the teacher asked the students to summarize the characteristics of the roles according to their own understanding and then discuss them in the group. However, closed questions require little or no reasoning and judgment, and there is usually only one correct answer. For example, the teacher asked, “So, did Huck and Jim save the man lying on the floor?” “No,” the students answered in chorus. Most of these questions are the repetition of contents of the text, and what students need to do is to find out the answers in the text, so the process of questioning and answering is relatively smooth.

Table 4.3 The Number of X-questions and Nexus Questions

	Number	Percentage (%)
X-questions	98	66.7%
Nexus questions	49	33.3%
Total	147	100%

As shown in Table 4.3, the number of nexus questions and x-questions is unevenly distributed, among which x-questions account for 66.7%, and nexus questions account for 33.3%. X-questions are questions that begin with the words or phrases like who, what, when, which, where, why, how many, how long, how far, how much etc. Nexus questions are questions that can be answered with Yes and No, but do not require students to answer with complete sentences. If students have trouble answering x-questions, teachers usually use “Yes/No” questions to reduce the difficulty of the question. For example, the teacher asked, “How do you think of the small talk made just now?” but students had no idea about how to answer it. Then the teacher asked, “Do you think it’s the right kind?” “No, I think it’s a little wrong,” a student answered. “It’s a little wrong,” the teacher said. “Why do you think so?” As shown in the example above, when students are stumped on how to respond to a question, the teacher usually uses Yes/No questions to guide students to express their views and then keeps asking questions based on students’ views so as to inspire them to think.

4.1.2 Results and Discussion of Questioning Ways

The detailed results are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Statistic Results of Teacher’s Questioning Ways

	Number	Percentage (%)
Nominating	48	32.6%
Answering in chorus	47	32.0%
Volunteering	36	24.5%
Teacher self-answering	16	10.9%
Total	147	100%

It can be seen from Table 4.4 that the most commonly used ways of questioning in six lessons are nominating and answering in chorus, followed by volunteering and, finally, teacher self-answering. It is observed that teachers tended to assign students to answer questions when no one took the initiative to speak. When students were asked to answer questions suddenly, they showed different signs of nervousness, such as being unable to speak due to nervousness, or speaking in a low voice. For some simple questions, teachers tended to let students answer in chorus, which can improve the efficiency of questioning. And students were more willing to answer questions in this way. For example, “In situation

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