

The Use of Cooperative Learning in High School English Writing Teaching

Yuxin Ren

China West Normal University, Nanchong, Sichuan, 637001, China

Abstract

Against the backdrop of the new curriculum and college entrance examination reforms, the weightage of high school English writing scores in college entrance examination papers has increased significantly. Consequently, the expectations for high school English writing have also risen, making it an indispensable aspect of language learning. In this regard, teachers must prioritize students' autonomy, cooperation, and inquiry-based learning experiences, particularly in English classrooms, where they should create an enabling environment for effective English education. High school English teachers must emphasize cooperative learning in writing classes to enhance students' language expression and writing skills. Meanwhile, teachers must continually explore efficient methods of improving students' English writing ability. This paper addresses the challenges facing the current cooperative learning mode in high school English writing teaching and proposes measures to overcome them, hoping to inspire and assist the development of cooperative learning in high school English classes.

Keywords

Cooperative Learning; High School English; Writing Teaching.

1. Introduction

Traditional senior high school English teaching has always been based on Teachers' teaching and students' listening, and it is somewhat exam-oriented. Knowledge is instilled into students. They are silently passive receivers of knowledge, which is not conducive to students' English learning (Long, 2014, p.70). The New Standard of English Curriculum for senior high school requires students to optimize their learning methods, improve their autonomous learning ability, develop lifelong learning ability and obtain the ability of sustainable development (Jiao, 2018, p.68). The main goal of teachers is to teach students how to learn English autonomously and cooperatively, so as to help students develop lifelong learning ability. Once students master this skill, it is easy to acquire more knowledge and skills to meet the needs of social development.

At the same time, the ongoing high school English teaching reform also requires English teachers to change the traditional teaching methods, fully stimulate students' learning enthusiasm and develop students' autonomous cooperative learning ability. In addition, students are prone to anxiety while writing, which is not conducive to the normal improvement of students' English writing (Zhang, 2017, p.110). Autonomous-cooperative learning model can not only help to solve these problems, but also make students' feel more relaxed and comfortable in this learning environment. Therefore, we should actively carry out autonomous-cooperative-learning mode in English writing class (Kang, 2019, p.26; Shen, 2019, p.49).

This article mainly analyzes and studies the application of cooperative learning in high school English writing teaching, with the aim of improving students' comprehensive quality and avoiding the shortcomings of traditional teaching modes, which will contribute to further promoting the development of quality education in China.

2. The Importance of Cooperative Learning in Senior High School English Writing Teaching

In high school English education, many schools still adhere to traditional teaching methods that prioritize knowledge transfer rather than fostering students' language acquisition and development. Consequently, students may perceive classroom learning as monotonous and unengaging. In such cases, the advantages of the cooperative learning model become apparent. Cooperative learning represents a novel teaching approach that fundamentally transforms the instructional method. Unlike traditional models that primarily focus on the end results of students' writing, cooperative learning places emphasis on the teaching process itself. It prioritizes the cultivation of students' critical thinking and logical reasoning abilities throughout the English writing learning journey, encouraging active classroom participation and fostering a sense of enjoyment in learning. Therefore, in the context of high school English writing instruction, the selection of an appropriate teaching method is of paramount importance.

3. Challenges in Senior High School English Writing Teaching

3.1. Lack of Interest in Writing among Students

Irrespective of their Chinese background knowledge or English language proficiency, writing assignments present a considerable challenge for students. Many students struggle with writing due to a lack of interest in the subject. Moreover, some students are unfamiliar with the appropriate usage of words, sentence structures, and grammar in English writing, resulting in unsatisfactory compositions. As time passes, students gradually lose their enthusiasm for writing. In line with the new curriculum reform, high school English writing incorporates various forms, including rewriting and continuation writing, which undoubtedly intensify the difficulties for students and further compound their psychological pressure when confronted with writing tasks.

3.2. Lack of Writing Methods among Students

To enhance their writing skills, students must first acquire fundamental and essential techniques and methods. For instance, different genres of writing, such as expository, argumentative, and narrative writing, require distinct approaches. Unfortunately, many students often overlook the importance of genre in their writing practice, leading to issues like disjointed content and repetitive word usage due to a lack of proper methods. Furthermore, some students misinterpret the writing prompts, struggle to grasp key information and keywords, and face challenges when outlining their ideas. Additionally, students with weak foundations may struggle to effectively apply the writing methods and techniques taught by their teachers. Over time, writing proficiency becomes a significant factor influencing students' overall English language skills.

3.3. Single Teaching Guidance by Teachers

As high school students will eventually face the college entrance examination, many teachers prioritize improving students' grades rather than fostering their overall skill development, including writing. Some high school English teachers resort to having students memorize model essays, read examples in textbooks, or even copy them, which not only diminishes students' enthusiasm for writing but also fails to effectively enhance their writing abilities. Relying solely on such teaching methods also leads to student resistance towards English writing. From this perspective, the guidance and teaching proficiency of teachers emerge as crucial factors influencing students' writing proficiency.

4. Countermeasures for Applying Cooperative Learning Mode in Senior High School English Writing Teaching

4.1. Create Interesting Topics and Scenarios

High school students tend to be more engaged when presented with captivating topics and scenarios. To enhance English writing instruction, teachers can carefully choose intriguing subjects, such as current social issues, cultural disparities, and personal life experiences. By incorporating these stimulating themes, teachers can capture students' attention and foster their enthusiasm for writing in English. Additionally, teachers can empower students by encouraging them to independently select their own topics, thus instilling a sense of autonomy and joy in the writing process.

4.2. Fully Give Play to the Guidance Role of Teachers

Teachers play a crucial role in guiding students through cooperative learning. Firstly, teachers should guide students to gradually adapt to the group collaboration learning model. This instructional approach differs significantly from traditional English writing instruction, which some students may not be accustomed to. Therefore, teachers should identify the reasons for students' discomfort and provide personalized guidance, adjusting the pace of instruction to help students quickly engage in the learning process. Secondly, teachers should actively encourage students to support each other within their learning groups. As students' English writing proficiency levels may vary within each group, those who excel should assist those who are striving to overcome learning insecurities, fostering their participation. Ultimately, this will contribute to the collective growth of all group members.

4.3. Carry Out Diversified Teaching

When implementing the cooperative learning model in English writing instruction, teachers should continuously adapt and refine it based on evolving teaching objectives and content, aiming to create a diverse and effective English writing teaching approach. Firstly, teachers should cultivate a dynamic mindset, carefully observing, summarizing, and reflecting on the application of cooperative learning in English writing instruction. This allows for timely adjustments and improvements to the teaching plan. Secondly, teachers can actively teach practical English writing skills while fostering student autonomy, thereby enhancing their overall writing proficiency. Thirdly, teachers can strategically incorporate other English writing teaching methods, such as process teaching and situational teaching, into the cooperative learning model. By leveraging the strengths of different instructional approaches, the efficiency of English writing classroom instruction can be enhanced. Additionally, teachers can employ techniques such as model writing and essay correction to help students grasp the practical application of writing methods. All these measures can give full play to the guiding role of teachers.

5. Conclusion

The implementation of the cooperative learning model in high school English writing instruction holds great significance as it fosters students' initiative, creativity, and enhances the overall efficiency of teaching. Cooperative learning creates a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment, thereby improving students' writing learning efficiency. Simultaneously, this approach minimizes the challenges students face, gradually enabling them to master effective writing skills and techniques. Consequently, teachers should adeptly apply cooperative learning methods and integrate them into English writing instruction to achieve optimal teaching outcomes.

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