

The Use of Cooperative Learning in Senior High School English Writing Teaching

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Abstract

English writing level is an important indicator of the comprehensive quality of English. Traditional English writing teaching is inefficient, so the cooperative learning method has been applied to high school English writing teaching to cultivate students' awareness of communication and collaboration in writing. The present study aims to summarize the current problems in high school English writing teaching and the effects of cooperative learning. In light of these studies, it is concluded that the cooperative learning method plays a critical role in English writing teaching, and teachers need to combine it with other methods to improve students' writing ability and teaching quality.

Keywords

Cooperative Learning; English Writing Teaching; Teaching Method; High School Students.

1. Introduction

According to the *New English Curriculum Standard for General Senior High School* (2020), writing is an expressive skill and an important part of foreign language acquisition. In recent years, with the increasing level of internationalization, China has gradually increased attention to foreign language teaching. Nevertheless, for most learners in China, English writing is still the most difficult skill to master and improve. Some studies show that there are still some problems in English writing teaching in China at this stage (Dandan, 2023; Wang, 2019). Cooperative learning has received a lot of attention from educators worldwide and is a transformative system of teaching theories and strategies. Compared with traditional classroom teaching cooperative learning has many advantages. In the collaborative classroom, the communication activities between teachers and students and between students and students are varied and interactive. Cooperative learning in small groups provides students with more opportunities to express their own views, and at the same time, they can also receive different points of view from other students, which promotes the collision of ideas. In the current foreign language teaching, writing is still a teaching difficulty, and students think that writing is difficult. Besides, there is almost no interaction between students and teachers in the traditional classroom, which is contrary to the student-centered teaching concept proposed in the new curriculum standards. The present study aims to explore the problems existing in high school English writing and the effect of cooperative learning mode in writing teaching by summarizing a large amount of literature.

Theoretically, cooperative learning shifts the focus from teacher-centered learning to learner-centered learning, which is in line with the learning styles advocated by the new standards, such as independent, cooperative, and inquiry learning. Practically, for students, this study can help students understand more about cooperative learning. Cooperative learning allows students to participate in it, and in the process of writing, learners can be motivated to write and accumulate writing methods through cooperative interactions among group members. For teachers, this study can provide a reference for teachers to carry out writing teaching from various aspects.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is an educational concept with a long history. Scholars have done a lot of research on it, and they have different definitions of cooperative learning. According to Slavin (1994), cooperative learning happens when students work in small groups to help each other learn and are given rewards based on the group's performance. Johnson (1984) noted that cooperative learning is the use of small groups as a classroom teaching tool and interactions between students to maximize self and peer learning. Wang (1991) argues that cooperative learning is a kind of teaching method with group learning as the main body, according to the cooperative process and the way to make students work together in different groups and improve their cognition and emotion.

2.2. Research on Cooperative Learning Applied to English Writing Teaching

Cooperative learning is an educational concept and strategy that has been widely used, and this teaching method has attracted extensive attention from educators and scholars. According to Siddique and Singh (2016), cooperative learning can help students actively engage in the whole writing learning process and improve their writing skills. The study of Munawar and Chaudhary (2019) proved that cooperative learning is more effective for students than the grammar-translation method and will have a beneficial impact on classroom teaching and improve students' writing ability. In China, some scholars have also applied cooperative learning to writing teaching, and the results show that although cooperative learning fails to enhance students' motivation and interest in writing, it can help students overcome writing difficulties and writing anxiety, and help to improve their writing level. It improves students' language skills and writing strategies and promotes language output (Wu & He, 2014). Guo (2020) proved that carrying out cooperative learning in high school English writing classes is not only more convenient for high school English teachers to manage the class but also can help high school students cultivate cooperative consciousness so that they can exercise their ability to cooperate with others in their daily learning.

2.3. Problems Existing in English Writing in Current Senior High Schools

The new curriculum standard requires students to cultivate comprehensive English ability. English writing is a comprehensive skill, and many students think it is very difficult. At the same time, due to the great pressure of the College Entrance Examination, which focuses more on the summative assessment rather than the formative assessment, there are still some problems in senior English writing teaching.

First, the teaching mode is single. Traditional teaching method lacks creativity and makes it difficult to stimulate students' interest in learning. Many teachers ignore the creativity and flexibility of writing, and mechanically let students practice, which is easy to limit students' creative thinking, affecting the teaching effect of English writing class.

Second, lack of student initiative. Many students find writing difficult. Due to the limitation of class time, many teachers will teach the main points, contents and framework of English writing to students as much as possible in class so that they can memorize them, which also tends to make students lack the process of independent thinking and exploration.

Finally, student's fear. Many students do not have high scores in writing and find it difficult to improve, while the fear of making mistakes can lead to students becoming less and less interested in writing learning. This will not only affect the effectiveness of the teacher's teaching, but also affect the students' self-confidence, and they may become more and more reluctant to express themselves.

3. Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning Writing Instruction

Through understanding the cooperative learning teaching mode and analyzing the current situation of English writing teaching in high school, the author believes that the application of cooperative learning in English writing can effectively solve relevant problems and enhance students' writing ability. The effectiveness of the cooperative learning method can be seen in many aspects.

First, teachers and students communicate and cooperate in class. Teaching writing by means of cooperative learning can make students respect each other, build up mutual trust, and achieve common sharing and communication.

Second, cultivate thinking ability. Cooperative learning writing teaching respects students' initiative, promotes their active writing, and improves their attitude towards English writing. It helps them further understand knowledge and exercises their thinking ability.

Finally, cultivate good psychological qualities. Cooperative learning is mainly carried out in form of group discussion, which is conducive to promoting communication among group members. It helps to cultivate the excellent quality of students' mutual help, strengthen their interpersonal relationships, and promote the formation of the spirit of cooperation.

4. Conclusion

English writing can promote the effective application of language, which is the process of language use. For English writing, the cooperative learning method should be effectively used to turn students into the center of the classroom. It can help students find English learning methods based on practical activities, further improve their writing quality, and promote their comprehensive development. Of course, it is not easy to achieve a comprehensive improvement of group members in a short period. At the same time, it should also be combined with other teaching methods and be flexible. So that the English writing ability of high school students can be practically improved and the quality of high school English writing teaching can be continuously improved.

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