

English Writing Teaching Models in Chinese and Foreign Universities—Focusing on Formative and Summative Assessment

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Abstract. With the deepening of globalization and cross-border integration in the field of higher education, it has been discovered that the ability to express oneself in written English has become an essential core competitiveness for contemporary college students. There are significant differences in evaluation methods and frameworks between the East and the West, which pose substantial constraints on the effectiveness of teaching practice and talent cultivation. This study focuses on two evaluation models, process evaluation and outcome evaluation, analyzing the differences in English writing teaching between Chinese and foreign universities. It is found that outcome evaluation is commonly used in Chinese universities, which focuses more on the completeness of writing results and easily neglects the writing process. Western universities, on the other hand, place more emphasis on process evaluation, such as in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, which focus on the writing process, pay more attention to process feedback, and introduce diverse evaluation themes. Research has found that process evaluation can help enhance students' critical thinking and self-reflection abilities, but implementing this evaluation method faces problems such as a large workload and difficulty in unifying evaluation standards. Based on this research, suggestions are proposed to integrate the "process result" evaluation system, establish multiple standards, strengthen teacher training, and utilize information technology to assist in implementation, providing theoretical and practical support for the reform of English writing teaching in Chinese universities.

Keywords: College English Writing, Process Evaluation, Consequential Evaluation, Teaching Mode

1. Introduction

With the deepening of globalization and the continuous promotion of the "the Belt and Road" initiative, the status of English as an international language is becoming increasingly evident. The measurement of college students' international literacy also takes English writing ability as an important indicator [1]. According to statistics from the Ministry of Education, the number of students majoring in English and related majors in Chinese universities increased from 1.568 million to 1.783 million from 2019 to 2023, an increase of 13.7%. In current college English writing

teaching, there are significant differences in evaluation models between China and foreign countries. Chinese universities have mainly used a summative assessment model that focuses on grammar accuracy and structural integrity of texts. Most European and American countries carry out process evaluation that focuses on monitoring and feedback of the writing process. The different evaluation concepts directly affect the development of students' writing ability and innovative thinking. Therefore, it is necessary to find a more effective teaching evaluation model through systematic comparative research [2].

The report on the development of higher education in China from 2019 to 2023 shows that there are generally problems with the single evaluation method and slow improvement of students' writing ability in English writing teaching in Chinese universities. More than 70% of college students feel that the existing writing evaluation system cannot effectively promote their own ability development. Based on this, this study conducts an in-depth analysis of English writing teaching models in Chinese and foreign universities, enriches the theoretical system of second language writing teaching evaluation, and provides a new theoretical perspective for constructing a scientific and reasonable evaluation framework. In practice, the research results provide practical guidance for the reform of English writing teaching in Chinese universities.

2. Two models for evaluating English writing teaching

2.1. Process evaluation

In the monitoring of teaching quality, the evaluation of English writing teaching is an important part, and its evaluation philosophy and methods directly affect teaching effectiveness and student ability development. The evaluation method of process evaluation is to observe, record, and provide feedback on students' learning activities during the teaching process, and then focus on the initial conception and revision of students' writing process. The theoretical basis of formative assessment is mainly based on learning theory and formative assessment theory. In the process of initial knowledge emergence, the learner's subjectivity is emphasized by constructivist theory, which holds that learning is not a passive reception of information but an active, individual's independent construction process. This theory in English writing teaching supports the entire writing process of students from conception, initial draft to revision, and also emphasizes the development of students' thinking and the gradual improvement of their language abilities [3].

2.2. Consequential evaluation

Consequential evaluation is the process of evaluating the quality of a student's final submitted writing composition to determine their writing proficiency and achievement of teaching objectives. These two evaluation methods have essential differences in terms of evaluation timing, content, and function, and together constitute a complete English writing teaching evaluation system [4]. The theoretical basis of outcome evaluation mainly comes from the behaviorist learning theory and traditional educational measurement theory. From the perspective of behaviorist theory, the learning process is driven by the connection between external stimuli and responses, and it is believed that learning outcomes can be measured by the ultimate explicit behavior. In English writing teaching, outcome evaluation is presented as a judgment of students' final writing achievements, using unified evaluation criteria and quantitative scores to demonstrate students' writing proficiency [5].

3. Comparative analysis of process evaluation and consequential evaluation

In order to more clearly reveal the core differences and practical value of the two evaluation models, this section will take the teaching practice of typical countries as the starting point to compare and analyze the process evaluation model and the consequential evaluation model. It first focuses on the English writing teaching system in British universities, deeply analyzes the operational logic and implementation effectiveness of its process evaluation, and lays a solid foundation for subsequent mode comparison and experience reference.

3.1. Process evaluation--taking the UK as an example

The evaluation system for English writing teaching in British universities has distinct process-oriented characteristics. According to the Teaching Quality Report released by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education in the UK between 2019 and 2023, over 85% of English writing courses in UK universities have adopted a comprehensive evaluation model with process evaluation as the main body. Most British universities have established a comprehensive writing process monitoring system, with corresponding evaluation nodes set up at each stage from the initial draft of topic selection to the completion of revisions. In the UK, the specific manifestations of this model include regular writing workshops and peer reviews. Through these forms, continuous guidance and evaluation are provided to students' writing process, with a focus on cultivating their metacognitive awareness and self-reflection ability.

3.1.1. Writing workshop

The writing teaching practices of the English Department at Cambridge University and the School of Modern Languages at Oxford University both adopt a process evaluation model of "mentorship+workshop". Taking these two schools as examples, in the "Writing Development Programme" program at the University of Cambridge, three progressive writing tasks must be completed in one semester, and each assignment must go through four evaluation stages: pre-writing discussion, peer feedback, mentor guidance, and reflection and summary. There is data showing that after the implementation of this project, students' writing ability has improved by 32%, which is much higher than the 18% in the traditional consequential evaluation model. Oxford University uses the "Portfolio Assessment" portfolio evaluation method to allow students to establish personal writing profiles, recording the entire writing process from brainstorming to final draft. The mentor will comprehensively consider the students' writing trajectory, revision traces, and reflection logs to give an evaluation, with process feedback accounting for 60% of the total grade. Under this mode, students' writing confidence and critical thinking ability significantly improve. The 2023 student satisfaction survey also showed that 95% of students believe that process evaluation helps improve their writing skills and academic literacy.

3.1.2. Peer evaluation and self-evaluation

Foreign university English writing teaching regards peer evaluation and self-evaluation as important parts of the process evaluation and has established a relatively mature implementation system. In developed countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, the machine evaluation method of peer evaluation accounts for about 78% of English writing courses. This method is usually done after completing the initial draft of the writing. Students provide critical guidance to their peers' essays based on the evaluation criteria given by the teacher. The evaluation content

involves many aspects such as article structure, logical reasoning, language expression, and innovation. At the same time, self-evaluation runs through the entire writing process. Students need to determine their writing goals and methods, and record the entire writing and reflection content [6].

3.2. Consequential evaluation--taking China as an example

3.2.1. Teaching objective setting

The setting of teaching objectives for English writing in Chinese universities clearly has a test-oriented feature, mainly based on the needs of standardized tests such as the College English Test Band 4 and Band 6 and the final exam [7]. According to research data from the Foreign Language Teaching Research Branch of the Chinese Society of Higher Education in 2023, 89% of universities in China consider the passing rate of the CET-4 and CET-6 writing exams as their main teaching goal, and 78% of universities use the final writing exam scores as the standard for course evaluation. The teaching objectives mostly focus on the accuracy of grammar, the use of vocabulary, and the completeness of discourse structure and attach importance to enabling students to complete writing tasks of specific genres according to fixed templates and formats. However, this goal setting often overlooks the training of thinking and innovation abilities in writing, lacking attention to students' critical thinking, cross-cultural communication skills and personalized expression [8]. In recent years, with the continuous promotion of the construction of new liberal arts, some universities have begun to incorporate the cultivation of critical thinking ability and academic writing skills training into their teaching objectives. However, overall, it is still exam-oriented, so the hierarchy and diversification of teaching objectives still need to be further improved [9].

3.2.2. Teaching content arrangement

The teaching of English writing in Chinese universities focuses on the training of writing styles, including narrative writing, expository writing, argumentative writing, and applied writing. According to the "Guidelines for College English Teaching" released by the Ministry of Education in 2022, argumentative writing accounts for 42% of the class hours, applied writing accounts for 28%, while expository and narrative writing only account for 18% and 12%, respectively, in English writing courses in universities across the country. The design of teaching content often uses a linear model of "theoretical explanation model analysis imitation practice achievement display", focusing on enabling students to learn the basic structure, common sentence patterns, and writing skills of various literary genres. Vocabulary teaching focuses on the accumulation of high-frequency vocabulary and fixed collocations, while grammar teaching emphasizes the use of complex sentence structures and the correction of grammar errors. However, the current teaching content is relatively weak in academic writing, creative writing, and cross-cultural writing, and lacks effective connections with professional learning and practical application scenarios. In addition, the update of teaching content is relatively slow, and there is insufficient attention to modern writing forms such as new media writing and digital writing, which cannot well meet the diverse writing needs of students and the requirements of future career development.

4. The core differences between Chinese and foreign English writing evaluation models and the practical difficulties in implementing process evaluation in China

4.1. The core differences in English writing evaluation models between China and foreign countries

The evaluation concept of English writing teaching in Chinese universities is mostly based on traditional exam-oriented education and emphasizes standardization and unity. Guided by this philosophy, teachers often regard writing as a comprehensive assessment of language knowledge and skills, and place greater emphasis on whether students' final submitted works have correct grammar, accurate vocabulary usage, and a complete article structure. The evaluation concept of English writing teaching in Western universities has distinct constructivist characteristics, treating writing as a dynamic cognitive construction process. Under this philosophy, teachers no longer only focus on the outcome, but also place greater emphasis on the development of students' thinking and ability in writing. This philosophy highlights the students' subject status, advocates for diversified expression and personalized development, and evaluation has become a collaborative task involving both teachers and students.

In terms of evaluation effectiveness, both models have their own strengths. The outcome-based evaluation used by most universities in China has significant advantages in improving evaluation efficiency and ensuring objectivity in grading, especially in large-scale teaching environments. However, this model and the use of students' writing motivation still have shortcomings in cultivating innovative thinking and promoting personalized development. Students seldom use their own ideas to use writing in order to obtain high scores. The process evaluation used by most Western universities is beneficial for cultivating students' critical thinking and promoting their learning in writing courses. The workload for implementing this model is significant, and standard control becomes a problem, so it requires teaching staff and technical support to effectively implement.

4.2. The dilemma of implementing process evaluation in China

In recent years, education reform has emphasized the importance of process evaluation, but most universities in China still encounter many difficulties in implementing process evaluation in English writing teaching. The imbalance in the teacher-student ratio is a major obstacle. Most English teachers in universities have to lead several classes, with an average of more than 60 students being guided in writing per class. Such a large workload makes it impossible to follow up with each student in depth and provide personalized writing guidance. Moreover, traditional teaching management systems and assessment models also limit the promotion of process evaluation, and writing is mostly only used to cope with final academic exams, failing to truly serve students' personal growth. There are still many teachers who have not received professional process evaluation training, and their understanding of evaluation criteria, how to provide effective feedback, and guidance is not comprehensive enough. Moreover, Yuan et al. mentioned that Chinese university English teachers often experience emotional pressure when providing writing feedback to students, which has a significant impact on the effective implementation of process evaluation [10]. In addition, Li et al found that learners' personal factors, such as language proficiency, motivation, and metacognitive ability, have a significant impact on the reliability of self-evaluation and peer evaluation, making the implementation of process evaluation in China more complex [11].

According to a survey conducted by the Higher Education Department of the Ministry of Education in 2022, only 35% of English teachers have received systematic evaluation process training, which has a direct impact on the implementation effectiveness and sustainable development of process evaluation [12].

5. Inspiration and suggestions

The analysis of English writing teaching models in Chinese and foreign universities has provided great inspiration for the evaluation system of English writing teaching in Chinese universities. Although the traditional outcome-based evaluation model has advantages in standardized assessment, it places more emphasis on the final result and ignores the shortcomings of the learning process. The understanding of process tracking and multimodal feedback emphasized by the Western process evaluation model can be borrowed, but it does not need to be completely copied in the context of Chinese education and culture. The future development trend is to build a mixed evaluation system that integrates process and results as the ultimate goal. It not only holds the objective and standardized bottom line of outcome evaluation, but also allows process evaluation to truly stimulate learning ability and cultivate thinking literacy, and then uses information technology to reduce workload and improve evaluation efficiency, thus laying a good foundation for the improvement of English writing teaching quality and talent cultivation in Chinese universities.

5.2 Suggestions for Optimizing the Evaluation Model of English Writing Teaching in Chinese Universities

After a thorough comparison of English writing teaching in Chinese and foreign universities, it is found that Chinese universities actually need to establish a mixed evaluation system of process and result, retaining the objectivity of result-based evaluation while leveraging the advantages of feedback throughout the process-based evaluation. Universities should establish diverse evaluation criteria, taking writing content, language use, logical structure, and innovative expression as references. At the same time, combining student self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and teacher evaluation makes the evaluation more comprehensive. It also needs to strengthen teacher training, enhance teachers' professional ability and explanation level in process evaluation, ensure the implementation of evaluation standards, and then use modern information technology to develop an intelligent writing evaluation platform that automatically records and analyzes process evaluation data to help teachers reduce their workload. Evaluating reform practices should be carried out step by step, starting with pilot courses, accumulating experience, and then comprehensively promoting and establishing a sound quality monitoring and feedback mechanism. Only in this way can the optimization of evaluation models be effective and sustainable.

6. Conclusion

This article compares the evaluation models of English writing teaching in Chinese and foreign universities, and analyzes the theoretical basis, practical characteristics, and core differences between outcome evaluation and process evaluation. Research has found that although the Western process evaluation model has significant advantages in cultivating students' metacognitive and reflective abilities, it needs to be localized and transformed in conjunction with the Chinese educational and cultural background. The optimization direction of English writing evaluation in Chinese universities lies in constructing a mixed evaluation system that integrates "process result" to retain the objective and efficient advantages of consequential evaluation, while leveraging the formative feedback value of process evaluation. Future research can further explore the deep

integration path of information technology and the hybrid evaluation system, as well as differentiated practical solutions at different levels of universities, providing more targeted theoretical support and practical paradigms for improving the quality of English writing teaching in Chinese universities.

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