Educational and Humanities
ISSN Print: 3104-4352
ISSN Online: 3104-4360
CD ISSN: 3104-4379
https://doi.org/10.63313/EH.9056

The Practice of Community Language Learning Method in Junior High English Writing

Xialing Li
China West Normal University, Nanchong 637000, China
Email: 1926698085@qq.com

How to cite this paper: Li, X. L. (2026). The practice of community language learning method in junior high English writing. *Educational and Humanities*, 3(1), 31–39. ISSN Print: 3104-4352; ISSN Online: 3104-4360.
https://doi.org/10.63313/EH.9056
Published: 2026-04-16

Copyright © 2026 by author(s) and Erytis Publishing Limited.
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).
http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/
CC BY 4.0

Abstract

In the context of globalization, English writing, as an important part of junior high school English teaching, is facing numerous challenges, such as low student participation, insufficient language output ability, and rigid teaching methods. The traditional teacher-centered teaching model has been unable to meet the needs of cultivating the comprehensive qualities of contemporary students. This study, through case analysis, explores the application strategies of the Community Language Learning method in junior high school English writing teaching. This innovative teaching method relocates the roles of teachers and students, creates a low-anxiety learning environment, and strengthens the collaborative learning mechanism, providing an effective solution to the existing teaching problems. This research shows that the CLL teaching method has significant effects in reducing students' writing anxiety and enhancing individualized expression, but there is still room for improvement in aspects such as classroom time management.

Keywords

Junior high English writing; Community Language Learning; Comprehensive Quality

1. The status of English writing teaching in junior high

Writing is an important tool for learning and using language, and it is one of the more challenging parts among the four components of English language learning - listening, speaking, reading, and writing[11]. Currently, the implementation of junior high school English writing teaching faces many difficulties. From the perspective of students, many students have a sense of fear towards English writing and lack interest in it. On one hand, insufficient English vocabulary and poor mastery of grammar knowledge often cause students to encounter expression difficulties when writing and be unable to accurately express their thoughts in English. On the other hand, students lack training and guidance in English writing and are not familiar with the methods and techniques of English writing, making it

impossible for them to effectively conceive and organize language. From the perspective of teachers, some teachers adopt a single teaching method in English writing teaching, mostly by assigning writing topics, explaining writing requirements and model essays, and then having students complete the writing tasks independently, followed by teacher's correction and evaluation. This one-way teaching process neglects the students' dominant position, resulting in students lacking communication and interaction and being unable to identify their own problems. Moreover, the evaluation method is mainly based on scores and brief comments, lacking hierarchical evaluation for content, logic, and language expression, unable to precisely feedback students' progress space, and unable to stimulate writing enthusiasm and confidence.

2. Community Language Learning

2.1. The definition

The community language learning method was proposed by Corren and his assistants, and its core is to apply psychological counseling techniques to language teaching, also known as the “counseling learning method”[6]. This teaching method ingeniously compares the relationship between the teacher and the student to that of an advisor and a client: the teacher acts as an advisor to provide professional advice, while the student represents the client to express learning needs.

In the classroom practice of the community language learning method, students sit in a circle, and the teacher stands outside the circle. Taking a junior high school writing class as an example, students first share content related to the writing topic in their native language, such as memorable experiences. The teacher immediately translates it into the target language, and the students repeat and practice, then enter group discussions, and finally jointly evaluate the learning process.

This teaching method emphasizes “student-centered”, viewing language learning as a comprehensive and holistic process, which not only covers the acquisition of language knowledge and skills, but also deeply involves the development of emotions, attitudes, and many other aspects. As Curran advocated, language learning is not isolated knowledge input, but a process of the coordinated development of emotions and cognition. In the community language learning method, the emotional factors of students are placed in a crucial position. It focuses on creating a safe, trusting, and positive learning atmosphere, aiming to reduce the emotional barriers in the learning process, such as anxiety and tension, and thereby effectively improve learning effectiveness.

The application of the community language learning method in foreign language teaching can be summarized as SARD. That is, students reduce anxiety through their native language expression, gain security (Security), then focus on the process of language conversion (Attention), continue to output through repetition, translation, group discussions, etc. (Response), and finally improve the understanding of

language rules through evaluation and revision (Deliberation). Through this stage of learning, students can successfully acquire the ability to analyze and discriminate knowledge[10].

2.2. The theoretical basis

The theoretical basis of the community language learning method stems from Fogg' s views on language and learning. Fogg believes that language learning should start with phonetics, sentences, and abstract models, with the core being understanding the phonetic system, giving meaning to words, and constructing a grammar system[6]. This viewpoint offers an insight for writing instruction: students need to master basic sentence structures first in order to organize coherent texts[2]. Based on this language perspective, Fogg further proposed the unique learning perspective of the community language learning method, emphasizing that human interaction is bidirectional and interactive, and the teaching process is no exception.

The interaction in teaching mainly exists in two key levels. The first is the interaction among learners, which is based on equality and mainly centered around emotional communication. Through mutual communication among learners, they can create an intimate and interdependent feeling, thereby forming a positive learning atmosphere and motivating students to improve their learning effectiveness through mutual encouragement[6]. For example, in group discussions, students freely share their views on a certain topic, while also obtaining new ideas and information from others, thereby deepening their understanding of knowledge. The second is the interaction between scholars and knowers. This interaction often has unpredictable content and there is an unequal status between the two parties[6]. From relying on the teacher to gradually becoming independent, learners will go through stages of conflict and tolerance during this process, which is highly consistent with the process of "holistic learning", and teachers help students and teachers establish friendly, harmonious, and amicable teacher-student relationships[12]. Collin divided this process into five stages, similar to a person' s journey from childhood through adolescence to adulthood[1].

The first stage is the birth stage: The teacher' s task is to help students build a sense of security, such as allowing students to freely share materials in the writing class, alleviating the anxiety of "having nothing to write about"; the second stage is the self-reliance stage: Students attempt simple expressions, such as translating their Chinese sentences using basic sentence patterns; the next stage is the reverse stage: Students express independently and question, such as presenting different opinions on others' viewpoints in the group discussion and simply refuting them in English; the fourth stage is the adolescence stage: Students accept feedback and improve, such as modifying logical flaws in their essays based on teacher' s annotations; the final stage is the independence stage: Students can use language freely, such as independently completing writing tasks that are logical and grammatically correct.

3. Application of CLL in Junior High English Writing

This study takes the writing task "An Unforgettable Day" as an example, and combines the teaching process based on Collin's "Five-Stage" theory as follows:

Step 1: Establish a safe context

The teacher divides the students into heterogeneous groups based on their language proficiency, emphasizes the "community cooperation" concept, and clearly states that the writing should be completed by the group together. The teacher shares his own "unforgettable day", demonstrating the writing elements such as time, events, and feelings; students freely share their personal experiences in Chinese, and the teacher does not correct the language forms, only recording the content with a recorder to provide materials for subsequent language conversion. This stage aims to activate background knowledge and reduce writing anxiety.

Step 2: Native language conversion

Using the typical case shared by the group as an example, the teacher guides the decomposition of Chinese sentence structures. At this time, the role of the teacher as a counselor is to calmly and without criticism answer questions, showing a supportive attitude, using conventional and analysis of them to help the client better understand his problem[6]. Regarding this, Collin once proposed that one of the functions of counseling responses is to connect emotions and cognition, using "emotion" to understand language, and the counselor uses intellectual language to answer[6]. Taking the example of a student who said "I participated in the sports meeting for the first time, fell down while running, but I still persisted until the finish line", the teacher splits this sentence into different structural units. The main clause: I participated in a sports meeting for the first time; Time adverbial: for the first time; Parallel events: falling down and persisting until the finish line. The teacher translates the native language into English and writes it on the blackboard: "I took part in a sports meeting for the first time. I fell down while running, but I finished the race." Then the teacher analyzes the sentence structure, such as "but" connecting the contrast relationship, and asks students to imitate the decomposition and translation of their own experiences. The teacher provides immediate assistance. During this process, teachers and students should trust each other, and in a non-defensive relationship, students can connect the materials and personalize them[5].

Step 3: Collaborative composition

The group organizes the translated sentences and combines the writing elements provided by the teacher (time, place, cause, process, result), discusses the word order and conjunctions such as "first", "then", "finally", and the teacher plays the previous recording to guide students to adjust the English expression according to the Chinese logic and solve the logical confusion of the group as an "assistance" role.

Step 4: Collective review and correction

After the initial draft of writing is completed, the teacher shows some group initial

drafts, simultaneously plays the Chinese recording and the English translation recording, and guides students to compare and correct. Taking the sentence “A kind lady helped me find my cousin.” as an example, the teacher first plays the student’s initial Chinese expression recording “A kind lady helped me find my cousin”, and then plays the teacher’s correct English translation recording “a kind lady helped me find my cousin”, guiding students to compare and find that “found” should be changed to “find”. During this process, the teacher does not directly criticize the students’ mistakes, but through guiding students to independently identify problems, providing explanations among peers, thereby cultivating students’ language sensitivity.

Step 5: Presentation and reflection

Groups voluntarily present their results, and the teacher evaluates from three aspects: content authenticity, logical coherence, and language accuracy, emphasizing the importance of “personal voice”. Students complete the reflection task sheet: “What is my favorite Chinese sentence in the recording? How was it translated into English? How did I optimize this expression in writing?” These questions can help students deepen their understanding of the language transformation process by reviewing the recording, transforming the “writing” task into an experiential learning process.

4. Advantages and disadvantages of the application

4.1. Advantages

4.1.1. Alleviate writing anxiety

In foreign language teaching, students are often disturbed by various emotional factors, such as the fear of an all-powerful and omniscient teacher, the worry that they may not speak the language well or fail in a competition and lose face in front of their classmates. These factors can cause students to feel alienated, anxious, or even inferior, thereby seriously affecting their learning outcomes[8]. The junior high school stage is a high-risk period for students' language learning anxiety, especially in the writing domain, where the fear of grammatical errors and the dilemma of “having nothing to write” often lead students to develop a resistant attitude. The CLL can avoid these unfavorable emotional factors that are detrimental to learning through three different aspects, thereby alleviating students’ anxiety. Firstly, it continuously transitions from the native language to the target language, which reduces the expression threshold. Students can first freely express their thoughts in the native language and then convert them into the target language through translation intermediaries, avoiding the interruption of thinking due to language barriers. Secondly, the teacher's feedback is non-critical feedback, which builds a safe atmosphere in principle. In group discussions, direct negation of peers' viewpoints is prohibited, and teachers only use marks rather than accusations to indicate mistakes. This “non-critical” supportive environment is particularly

beneficial for introverted or weak students to dare to express their opinions, activating their writing motivation at the root[6]. Finally, the CLL has community support to strengthen emotional connections. Heterogeneous grouping enables students to gain a sense of belonging through complementary abilities. For example, students with weak English foundations can be responsible for collecting materials, while those with good foundations can undertake sentence optimization. Each role can receive recognition in this writing task.

4.1.2. Promote individual expression

In traditional writing teaching, the use of template-style essays often leads to homogeneity in students' content. For example, when describing “my school”, phrases like “big playground” and “kind teachers” are frequently repeated. However, the language learning method overcomes this limitation through the activity of brainstorming: in the theme writing about an ideal school, students share their unique experiences in Chinese, and after being translated by the teacher, they are transformed into English while maintaining the authenticity of the original perspective. The teacher guides the students to deepen the details through questioning, pushing them from general descriptions to specific expressions. This process ensures that the writing content originates from the learners’ real life experiences, avoiding the passivity of assigned essays, and making the essays present distinct individual characteristics, meeting the requirements of the new curriculum standards for expressing meaning in real contexts.

4.1.3. Strengthen the training from oral to written

Middle school students often encounter the problem of being able to speak but unable to write. The root cause lies in the discontinuity between the immediacy of oral expressions and the rigor of written expressions. The unique recording-transcription-reflection process of CLL is naturally suitable for writing instruction. It is equivalent to students expressing their thoughts orally, then the teacher translates and records the students’ thoughts in the target language, followed by the students transcribing the recorded text, and finally the teacher and students jointly revise. This chain naturally transitions from oral expression to written output, which is particularly beneficial for solving the gap problem of "being able to speak but unable to write" for middle school students. The recorded text serves as the initial draft, reducing the cognitive load of direct writing and allowing students to focus on language organization.

4.1.4. Develop meta-cognitive skills

During the group discussion, students corrected grammatical errors and optimized the logic through mutual evaluation, practicing the thinking process of “identifying problems - analyzing causes - solving problems”. Meanwhile, the teacher guided the comparison between “native language expression and English translation”, prompting students to actively discover the structural differences between Chinese

and English and developing their awareness of language comparison and self-correction ability[2].

4.2. Disadvantages

4.2.1. The conflict between language systematization and teaching efficiency

CLL emphasizes the principle of “prioritizing meaning”, which leads to the weakening of systematic teaching of language knowledge. During the writing process, explanations of grammar and vocabulary rely on the immediate needs of students, lacking a progressive system design. If teachers continue to implement such teaching for a long time, it may result in fragmented language knowledge for students. For example, in a certain class, only vocabulary related to "camping" might be covered, while the systematic teaching of genres such as argumentative essays and letters might be neglected. In the junior high school stage, core structures such as passive voice and relative clauses that need to be mastered are difficult to be naturally covered through random topics, which may cause knowledge system gaps and fail to meet the structured requirements of the new curriculum standards for writing ability[6]. At the same time, the CLL emphasizes students' autonomous learning and group cooperation. Therefore, in the teaching process, heterogeneous grouping is adopted, and this grouping method may lead to significant differences in progress, affecting the teaching plan. It is recommended to design writing tasks based on the theme of the textbook units to ensure the systematic coverage of grammar and vocabulary.

4.2.2. Require for the teacher’s qualifications strictly

The CLL places much higher demands on teachers’ capabilities than traditional teaching methods. Teachers need to transform from traditional knowledge instructors to “advisors”, which sets even higher requirements for teachers’ professional qualities and teaching abilities. Teachers must operate without conversation materials and form and promote classroom teaching based on students’ topics[9]. At the same time, teachers also need to have strong organizational and coordination skills, be able to effectively organize students for group cooperative learning, and guide students to actively participate in discussions and exchanges. In addition, teachers also need to spend a lot of time and energy on teaching design, preparing teaching materials, evaluating students' learning outcomes, etc., which poses a significant challenge to teachers' workload. In a class of 50 students, teachers cannot provide personalized translation support for each student, resulting in the practice often degenerating into “a few active students leading while the majority are passive observers”[4]. It is suggested to combine the “small teacher” system to alleviate teachers’ burden.

4.2.3. Rely on the native language

Although the community language learning method emphasizes the use of the target

language, initial reliance on the mother tongue for discussion may lead to insufficient input of the target language, and even excessive use of the mother tongue as a thinking medium may reinforce Chinglish thinking, thereby potentially inhibiting students' ability to organize logic directly in English. At the same time, a significant amount of class time is consumed in translation negotiations, reducing students' opportunities to access high-quality target language samples, which affects the accumulation of language authenticity[3]. It is recommended to control the proportion of mother tongue usage and increase the section of sample appreciation.

4.2.4. Lack of systematic evaluation

Although CLL adopts diversified evaluation methods, including self-evaluation by students, mutual evaluation, and teacher evaluation, there are still some problems in the actual operation of the evaluation system. The self-evaluation and mutual evaluation by students often lack professional evaluation standards and methods, and are therefore not accurate and objective enough. They are prone to be influenced by personal emotions and subjective factors. At the same time, in large-class teaching in junior high schools, teachers need to frequently switch between different groups, which makes it difficult to keep track of the dynamics of each group and provide in-depth guidance. It is suggested to formulate corresponding writing evaluation scales according to different themes, and set specific indicators in four dimensions: content, logic, language, and cooperation to improve the objectivity of the evaluation.

5. Conclusion

The CLL has significant advantages in junior high school English writing teaching. However, its shortcomings cannot be ignored either. In future applications, it is suggested to optimize from three aspects: First, design writing tasks in combination with the textbook system to balance priority of meaning and knowledge system; second, develop standardized evaluation scales to enhance the objectivity of self-evaluation and mutual evaluation; third, explore the integration with other teaching methods, such as integrating "real tasks" of task-based teaching into club activities to enhance the authenticity of language application. Through continuous practice and adjustment, this method will adapt to the needs of junior high school English writing teaching and provide an effective path for cultivating students' comprehensive English literacy.

References

[1] Curran, C.A. (1972). Counseling-Learning: A Whole-Person Model for Education. Grune and Stratton.

[2] La Forge, P.G. (1983). Counseling and culture in second language acquisition. Pergamon.

[3] Nunan, D. (1991). Language Teaching Methodology: A Textbook for Teachers. Prentice Hall.

[4] Stevick, E.W. (1980). Teaching Languages: A Way and Ways. Rowley. Newbury House.

[5] Rardin, J.P., Tranel, D.D., Tirone, P.L., Green, B.D. (1975). Education in a New Dimension. Counseling-Learning Publications.

[6] Richards, J.C., & Rodgers, T.S. (2014). Approaches and methods in language teaching. Cambridge University Press.

[7] Liu Zehai. (2008). Applying the Community-Based Learning Method to Address Foreign Language Learning Anxiety. Science and Teaching (Science Teaching Research), (07):23-24.

[8] Li Yaxuan. (2014). On the Advantages and Disadvantages of Community Language Learning. Times Education, (2):237.

[9] Elevation. (2014). Detailed Description of the Community Language Learning Method. Language Studies Magazine, (16):55-56.

[10] Ma Yaxing. (2019). Exploration of Teaching Strategies for Community Language Learning in the Context of University English Teaching Reform. Journal of Changchun Normal University, 38(01):176-178+186.

[11] Wu Haidi, Wang Guoguang. (2020). Research on the Application of Community Language Learning Method in High School English Writing Teaching. Zhiqizhuanjian, (28):70-71.

[12] Xiang Rong. (2012). A Brief Analysis of Community Language Learning Method and Its Application. Chinese Journal of Linguistics (Foreign Language Education and Teaching), (02):170-171.