

Research on the Application of Process Writing in the Teaching of Reading Con-tinuation Writing

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Abstract

This study focuses on the application of the process approach to writing in the teaching of reading continuation writing, aiming to explore how this teaching method can enhance students' English writing skills. The process approach to writing emphasizes that writing is a dynamic process that includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing. Through a literature review, the study analyzes the theory and practice of the process approach to writing and discusses its op-erational strategies in the teaching of reading continuation writing. The results indicate that the process approach can effectively improve students' critical thinking and creative expression abilities, helping students maintain coherence and consistency with the original text in continuation writing. This study pro-vides new perspectives and practical guidance for English writing teaching and is of significant reference value for educators and language learners.

Keywords

Process Approach to Writing; Reading Continuation Writing; English Writing Teaching

1. Introduction

The research background is set against the significant reforms in China's college entrance examination, known as the Gaokao, which have introduced the Reading Continuation Writing section. [4]This new policy emphasizes the integration of reading comprehension with creative writing, posing a fresh set of challenges for English language education.

The Reading Continuation Writing task requires students to extend a narrative in a way that is logically consistent with the provided text, demanding a deep understanding of the original material and the ability to craft a continuation that is both imaginative and aligned with the source. However, the current teaching methods, which often focus on rote learning and mechanical drills, do not foster the kind of analytical and creative thinking required for read-and-continue writing.

The Gaokao reform has introduced Reading Continuation Writing, requiring students to extend narratives while maintaining logical consistency with source texts. Current teaching relies heavily on formulaic imitation, failing to address the dual challenges of grammatical accuracy (38% error rate in tense consistency, Wang, 2015) and plot coherence (52% of continuations show character inconsistency, MoE, 2020). This creates an urgent need for process-oriented interventions.

This study aims to address the gap between the current teaching methods and the new Gaokao requirements. The study also holds theoretical significance as it explores how process writing can be effectively integrated into reading continuation writing instruction to enhance students' writing skills and overall language proficiency. This is particularly relevant given the new Gaokao's emphasis on comprehensive abilities and core literacy. The practical significance lies in the potential of this research to inform and improve teaching practices, leading to better student performance in the Gaokao and beyond.

2. Literature review

2.1. Theories of Process Writing

The evolution of process writing theory demonstrates a paradigm shift from individual cognition to social interaction, with complementary advancements in domestic and international scholarship.

Early cognitive theories focused on writing's psychological mechanisms, with Raimes (1983) introducing the "dynamic writing perspective" in *Teaching Writing as a Process: Practical Techniques*. This framework emphasizes writing as a cyclical "thinking-planning-transforming" process and advocates free writing to alleviate cognitive anxiety. Flower & Hayes (1984) further developed a classic cognitive model in *Cognition, Context, and Theory Building in Writing*, decomposing writing into "problem representation-goal setting-strategy execution," and revealing interactions between macro-conceptualization (e.g., theme development) and micro-execution (e.g., sentence formation). In the 21st century, Hyland (2003) posited in *Second Language Writing* that writing embodies a tripartite negotiation among "author-reader-disciplinary context," highlighting how genre knowledge (Swales, 1990) and reader awareness shape decisions like adhering to academic writing's "introduction-methods-results" structure.

Wang Qiang (2018) proposed a "Three-Stage Guidance Model" in *Foreign Language World*, using mind mapping in pre-writing to activate schemas, story chains in drafting to reduce writing pressure, and peer review rubrics in revising to enhance reflection. Empirical data showed this model improved high school students' writing coherence by 28%. Chen Shishu (2011) confirmed in a doctoral dissertation that process-based evaluation enhanced writing fluency, with peer review increasing effective revision rates from 21% to 58%. However, most research remains focused on general writing (e.g., narratives, argumentative essays), with no established pro-

cess guidance framework for "reading-continuation writing." A critical gap persists in empirically linking text deconstruction (e.g., analyzing original metaphors) to idea generation for continuation tasks.

2.2 The research paradigm of Reading Continuation Writing

Research on reading continuation writing centers on the "synergistic effect" between reading and writing and its pedagogical implementation, with domestic and international studies exhibiting distinct characteristics in theoretical exploration and technological innovation.

Internationally, Swain's (2005) "output-driven hypothesis" in *The Output Hypothesis: Theory and Research* provides a foundational framework, positing that continuation writing enhances language acquisition through the "Noticing the Gap" mechanism, which compels learners to align grammatical forms with semantic expressions—for example, using the past perfect tense to mirror the original text's temporal logic. Recent advancements have focused on technological empowerment: Bitchener (2019) demonstrated in the *Journal of Second Language Writing* that AI feedback systems can improve the linguistic accuracy of continuations, though their plot plausibility assessment accuracy remains at only 56%, underscoring the irreplaceable role of human cognitive judgment.

Domestically, Wang Chuming (2012) introduced the "reading-continuation writing synergy theory" in *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, demonstrating that the task's "linguistic input – meaning construction – creative output" cycle can increase grammatical complexity (e.g., compound sentence usage) by 41% and improve discourse marker accuracy (e.g., however, therefore) by 35%. Wen Qiufang (2019) emphasized its role in cultivating critical thinking in *Modern Foreign Languages*, with comparative experiments showing that process writing training reduced causal reasoning errors in student continuations from 32% to 17%. Technologically, Sun Shuguang (2022) developed a "Continuation Writing Coherence Analysis System" in *Foreign Language Teaching in Education*, which achieves 89% accuracy in plot consistency detection via text similarity algorithms but still requires manual annotation for character consistency assessment. Cai Jinting and Liu Zhenqian (2020) further revealed through eye-tracking experiments that process-trained students spent 23% more time fixating on original-text keywords, indicating enhanced ability to extract semantic cues for continuation writing.

These findings collectively highlight the multifaceted benefits of integrating process writing into continuation tasks while identifying persistent challenges in balancing automated feedback with human analytical depth, particularly in contextual and character-driven narrative extensions.

2.3. Summary

A systematic review of over 20 core literature sources reveals persistent gaps in the integration of process writing and reading continuation writing research, particu-

larly in school-level adaptation, model integrity, and assessment tool development. Current scholarship overemphasizes higher education contexts, with 85% of empirical studies focusing on college students (Hyland & Hyland, 2006), thereby hindering the development of targeted strategies for senior high school curricula that emphasize "reading-writing integration." The lack of empirical evidence for designing a "Read-Analyze-Write-Revise" closed-loop workflow within 45-minute classes has resulted in superficial pre-writing analysis and frequent logical discontinuities between original texts and continuations in teaching practice. Additionally, the fragmented nature of process writing applications—most studies isolate stages like peer review—prevents the formation of a holistic "pre-writing (text deconstruction) → drafting (idea generation) → revising (logical calibration) → editing (linguistic refinement)" cognitive model, making it difficult for students to master the dynamic thinking required to understand, extend, and stylistically align narratives. Further, the reliance on generalized writing rubrics ignores continuation-specific competencies: observable metrics for assessing language reproduction accuracy, character consistency, and plot foreshadowing are notably absent, reducing revision to inefficient error-checking cycles.

To address these gaps, this study proposes a "Three-Dimensional Synergy" teaching model grounded in Swain's Output Hypothesis and Halliday's Register Theory, aiming to bridge theoretical frameworks with practical instruction. At the linguistic level, a "Original Text Language Feature Extraction Table" in the pre-writing stage mandates the replication of 1 – 2 high-frequency grammatical structures (e.g., non-predicate verbs) or rhetorical devices (e.g., metaphors) to establish formal connections between reading and writing. Logically, a "Plot Consistency Checklist" in the revising stage systematically verifies causal relationships (e.g., whether a protagonist's decision aligns with established personality traits) to ensure narrative coherence. Stylistically, a "Stylistic Features Alignment Checklist" in the editing stage enforces consistency in tense, person, and narrative perspective (e.g., maintaining past-tense third-person omniscience), ensuring contextual unity with the original text. By tackling the core pain points of superficial analysis, logical fragmentation, and directionless revision, this model seeks to provide a scientifically rigorous and replicable framework for senior high school English continuation writing, advancing the application of process writing theory in foundational education settings.

3. Theoretical Foundation

3.1. Process Writing Theory

Process writing is an educational approach that treats writing as both a social activity and a cognitive process. It focuses on the various steps that make up the writing journey, starting from the initial planning phase known as pre-writing, all the way through to revising and editing the final draft. [6]This method motivates students to

participate actively in writing and to acquire a range of writing techniques and strategies.

Process writing theory has evolved with the influence of interactionist theories, which propose that writing is essentially a dialogue, an interactive communication between the author and the reader. This perspective highlights the importance of the reader's role in shaping the writing process, as the writer anticipates and responds to the reader's needs and expectations.

The process writing teaching model is structured around several key stages designed to foster the development of students' linguistic and cognitive skills. Brainstorming is the first stage, where students generate and explore ideas without immediate concern for structure or correctness. [5]This freedom to think creatively lays the foundation for the writing task.

Following brainstorming, students move into drafting, where they begin to put their ideas into written form. This stage is crucial for translating thoughts into text and establishing a structure for the piece of writing.

Rooted in interactionist theories, process writing views writing as a dialogic process where writers anticipate reader needs (Pickering & Garrod, 2004). The four-stage model—pre-writing (text deconstruction), drafting (idea flow), revising (logic calibration), editing (linguistic refinement)—aligns with Vygotsky's ZPD, as peer review facilitates collaborative meaning-making. Peer review is the next stage, involving the exchange of work between students who provide feedback on each other's drafts. This collaborative critique helps students to see their writing from different perspectives and to refine their work based on constructive suggestions.

Finally, the revision stage is where students revise their work, taking into account the feedback received and their own reflections on the draft. [1]This iterative process of revising and refining helps students to improve the clarity, coherence, and effectiveness of their writing.

Throughout these stages, the process writing approach equips students with the tools to become more independent and confident writers, capable of navigating the complexities of the writing process.

3.2. Reading Continuation Writing

Reading continuation writing is a specialized writing exercise where students are tasked with extending a narrative provided in a text. This activity integrates the skills of reading comprehension with those of creative writing, presenting considerable challenges for students. [2]They must not only grasp the essence of the original story but also craft a new story that is both logical and seamless. The objectives of teaching reading continuation writing are to boost students' command of language, sharpen their critical thinking, and stimulate their creative expression.

Despite these educational goals, the current state of teaching reading continuation writing highlights several concerns. One issue is the disconnect between reading and writing skills, where students may struggle to bridge the gap between under-

standing a text and producing a written response. Additionally, some teaching methods may not be well-suited to the task, and students often lack the foundational skills necessary to succeed in this type of writing. [4] These challenges can hinder students' progress and limit their ability to fully engage with the material.

The value of reading continuation writing in improving language acquisition is supported by influential theories.[1] Krashen's input hypothesis suggests that learners need to receive comprehensible input—that is, material that is slightly above their current level of proficiency—to advance their language skills. Meanwhile, Swain's output hypothesis posits that the act of producing language, such as in writing, is crucial for consolidating and deepening linguistic knowledge. Reading continuation writing offers a platform for both input and output, making it a potentially powerful tool for language development. Krashen's Input Hypothesis justifies pre-writing text analysis (comprehensible input), while Swain's Output Hypothesis underscores drafting's role in language consolidation.

4. Application of Process Writing in Reading Continuation Writing

4.1. Pre-writing Stage

The pre-writing stage is a critical initial step in the process of continuation writing, where the primary objectives are to stimulate creative thinking and to dissect the provided text in preparation for the task ahead.

To further organize their thoughts and plot out the continuation, students employ mind mapping, a visual tool that helps them see the connections between different elements of the story and how they can be developed further. This method aids in clarifying the flow of ideas and identifying the most promising avenues for exploration in their writing.

In addition to mind mapping, role-playing becomes an invaluable technique during the pre-writing stage. Through role-playing, students step into the roles of the characters, allowing them to experience the story from different viewpoints. This immersive approach is vital for crafting a continuation that is not only engaging but also authentic to the characters' voices and the story's world. It enables students to make more nuanced decisions about character actions and dialogue, ensuring that the continuation feels like a natural progression of the original text.

Overall, the pre-writing stage is where the foundation for a successful continuation is built. It is a time for students to explore, analyze, and visualize the narrative, equipping them with a clear vision and a solid plan to guide their writing in the subsequent stages.

4.2. Drafting Stage

In the drafting stage, students take the ideas they've generated and begin to craft them into written sentences and paragraphs, producing the first version of their

story continuation.

At drafting stage, students are advised to focus on getting their thoughts onto paper rather than striving for a perfect first draft. The emphasis is on capturing the essence of their ideas without being hindered by concerns over grammar or spelling. Free writing exercises encourage students to let their thoughts flow uninterrupted, which can lead to a more natural and uninhibited expression of their ideas. The story chain technique, where each student adds to the narrative in turn, promotes both creativity and a sense of collective effort in the writing process.

4.3. Revising Stage

The revising stage is about taking that initial draft and refining it to ensure it reads as a seamless extension of the original text. Students go through their drafts to check that the storyline is sensible, and that the characters' actions and dialogue are in line with their portrayal in the original story. This might mean rewriting sections to make the narrative more coherent and to improve the overall flow of the story.

Drafts are shared among peers for feedback, which is invaluable for spotting areas that need improvement. Workshop sessions offer a more formal setting where students can discuss their revisions, share their challenges, and receive constructive guidance from the teacher.

4.4. Editing Stage

The editing stage marks the final phase of the writing process, where students fine-tune their language, grammar, and word choice to produce a polished piece of writing. Students go through their work to ensure it is clear, consistent with the story's style, and fits the tone of the narrative. They pay close attention to the language used to ensure it suits the context and enhances the storytelling.

Students meticulously check their writing for grammatical errors and work on diversifying their vocabulary. This enrichment of language not only corrects mistakes but also adds depth and color to their writing, making the final draft engaging and free from errors.

5. Conclusion

This study addresses the challenges posed by the Gaokao's introduction of the Reading Continuation Writing task, where conventional pedagogical approaches relying on rote memorization and formulaic drills have proven inadequate to foster the analytical and creative competencies required for producing logically coherent and imaginatively extended narratives. By situating itself within the theoretical framework of process writing—emphasizing the dynamic interplay of pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing stages—this research constructs a systematic pedagogical model to enhance students' ability to generate continuations that seamlessly integrate with original texts while showcasing linguistic sophistication and narrative innovation.

Rooted in Swain's Output Hypothesis, which underscores the cognitive benefits of language production, and Halliday's Register Theory, which highlights the importance of contextual consistency, the study proposes a "Three-Dimensional Synergy" model to ensure alignment between continuations and source texts. This model operationalizes linguistic, logical, and stylistic coherence through targeted stage-specific interventions: pre-writing tasks facilitate the extraction of grammatical structures and rhetorical devices from the original text to establish formal continuity; revising stages employ coherence checklists to verify character consistency and plot logic; and editing focuses on aligning tense, narrative perspective, and discursive tone with the source material. By treating writing as a cyclical process of idea generation, collaborative refinement, and linguistic polishing, the model transcends the limitations of product-oriented approaches, fostering meta-cognitive engagement with the dual demands of textual fidelity and creative expression.

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