

The influence of peer feedback on students' German writing teaching under different grouping conditions

Mingqi Wu

Department of German, School of Foreign Languages, Shandong University of Finance and Economics,
Jinan, Shandong Province, 250002, China

Keywords: Peer feedback, Group type, German writing

Abstract: Foreign language teaching is an old topic. The academic circles have been studying it, but still can not get satisfactory results, which has affected the cultivation of foreign language talents in China, and even the promotion of China's international competitiveness. With the further promotion of foreign language teaching reform, higher requirements are put forward for German teaching. As an important part of German teaching, writing needs further and effective teaching reform to improve students' German writing ability. German writing, as one of the basic skills in German learning, is the key and difficult point in German teaching. German writing course is a comprehensive course. Combined with the questionnaire survey, this paper analyzes the feasibility of implementing peer feedback in German writing teaching, and expects this method to be popularized to promote the further reform of German teaching.

1. Introduction

As one of the basic skills of German learning, German writing is the focus and difficulty of German teaching. The German writing course is a comprehensive course. It requires students to master the basic skills of listening, speaking, and reading in German, and to use German to accurately express content and write articles that conform to German grammar standards, so as to successfully complete written communication tasks. [1]. Through the teaching of German writing courses, students can enhance their understanding and knowledge of various types of written language in German, cultivate students' interest in writing, so as to successfully complete the writing tasks of the basic stage of German, and complete written communication tasks with high quality for students in future work. Lay a solid foundation [2]. In the basic German teaching in China, correcting compositions has always been a difficult and inefficient part [3]. The emergence of peer feedback theory provides a new opportunity to improve this kind of situation. However, in the actual operation of the theory, due to the learners' different levels of German learning and writing, there will be a lot of grouping. Whether teachers should control the specific grouping situation according to the different levels of learners and how to control it is a controversial issue [4]. This paper analyzes the influence of peer feedback on students' German writing teaching under different grouping conditions, and further understands the practical significance of peer feedback among learners with different German writing levels, and discusses more effective methods of implementing peer feedback in practical teaching, so that students with different German writing levels can effectively participate in peer evaluation activities, and has some inspiration for German teachers to guide students with different German writing levels [5].

2. The concept of peer feedback and several common writing teaching methods

Compared with the teaching of German writing abroad, the teaching of German writing in China is lagging behind, which is mainly reflected in the teaching mode. At present, the teaching of German writing in China is still based on teacher feedback, which not only increases the workload for teachers, but also has little effect on teaching. Peer feedback refers to students who negotiate their opinions with each other and provide suggestions to modify the composition. Teachers, as trainers, assist monitors and evaluators to participate. Its theoretical basis comes from process

writing teaching theory, cooperative learning theory, Vygotsky's "recent time zone development theory" and "interaction theory of German acquisition", which have become an increasingly important form of feedback in the teaching of German writing[6]. In the past two decades, peer feedback has been implemented in German writing classes in many countries, and its effectiveness for learners of different German proficiency has also been widely concerned. Achievement teaching method, also known as goal teaching method, is one of the more traditional teaching methods. This teaching method takes the teacher as the center, pays attention to the genre learning and emphasizes the systematicness of learning. The general steps are to analyze the genre characteristics for the teacher, provide the learning model, instill the writing theory, and then the students write in imitation. Finally, the teacher corrects and scores, while the students improve their writing level by correcting their mistakes. The process teaching method is student-centered, advocates mutual help and learning among learners, and emphasizes the importance of writing process. Teachers play a guiding role, give students sufficient creative space, encourage students to give full play to their imagination, and enable students to master writing skills in the process of creation. The main steps are pre-writing preparation stage, first draft creation stage, rewriting stage and editing stage. Situational teaching method is guided by heuristic teaching thought. In the teaching process, teachers purposefully introduce vivid and concrete scenes to arouse students' attitude and experience, thus helping students understand and acquire knowledge. In the teaching process, teachers guide students to pay attention to the main aspects of learning objects, inspire students to use their brains and explore, and comprehend and draw conclusions in the process of exploration. The application of situational teaching method in writing teaching mainly includes multimedia teaching, picture display teaching, physical display teaching and group discussion teaching in specific situations. The above teaching methods have played an active role in a certain period and under certain conditions, but no teaching method can be perfect. Therefore, in teaching, teachers should make objective judgments based on the actual situation and use them comprehensively to achieve the desired teaching effect [7].

3. Research design

3.1. Subjects

There are 48 second year German majors in a university in China. They come from four classes of the same teacher. Among them, 24 are students with High German writing level, and the other 24 are students with Low German writing level. All subjects have some knowledge of this research and are willing to participate in it. After their Germanband4 composition scores in June 2020 passed the T test, it was proved that there were significant differences in German writing ability between the high-level and low-level subjects selected in the experiment.

3.2. Experimental method and experimental process

The 12 students in each class are divided into 4 groups, with 3 students in each group, called groups 1, 2, 3, and 4. The 3 students (S1, 2, 3) in Group 1 are all high-level students. Group 2 consists of two high-level students (S1, S2) and one low-level student (S3). Group 3 has one high-level student (S1) and two low-level students (S2, 3), and three students (S1, 2, 3) in group 4 are all low-level students. So we got 16 groups of four types of subjects. Each activity lasted 40 minutes. The instructor will provide a guidance form in advance to guide students to carry out activities. This form is based on previous studies by other scholars. Participants must give full consideration to the advantages and disadvantages of their peers' compositions, and record specific amendments. After that, they must exchange their feedback records and the first draft to the author, so that they can modify them. Finally, they will hand over the final draft, feedback records and the first draft to the teacher. The same experiment was carried out four times within two months.

3.3. Utilization of peer feedback

Since the test subjects participated voluntarily, everyone in the 4 types of groups would try their

best to use the available feedback points in revising the article.

Table 1 Utilization of peer feedback

Group	Available feedback points	Feedback points used	Unused feedback points
Group 1	299(100%)	275 (91.7%)	24 (8.3%)
Group 2	271(100%)	263 (96.9%)	8 (3.1%)
Group 3	259(100%)	243 (93.5%)	16(6.5%)
Group 4	111 (100%)	51(40%)	60(60%)

Table 2 The use of peer feedback by different types of groups

Test object	Available feedback		Feedback used	
	Got it	Which provided	Got it	Which provided
G1S1	93	89	81(87.96%)	89
G1S2	100	104	96 (96%)	96
G1S3	97	97	89 (92.98%)	81
G2S1	57	105	53 (93.86%)	105
G2S2	65	113	61(94.73%)	109
G2S3	140	44	140 (100%)	40
G3S1	37	65	29(78.79%)	161
G3S2	104	40	104 (100%)	72
G3S3	109	53	101 (93.65%)	41
G4S1	33	25	13(38.6%)	13
G4S2	29	41	13 (43.87%)	13
G4S3	40	36	16 (40%)	16

As shown in Table 1, there are significant differences in the number of available feedback points and the extent to which they are used in different types of groups. The reasons are as follows: first, the low-level students in the mixed group (group 2 and group 3) adopt the opinions of the high-level students in the same group, because they think that their peers have higher German writing level and "authority", and their opinions are "reasonable". Secondly, 71.32% of students in Group 4 said they could not accept their peers' opinions because they could not trust their German writing ability. Among the four groups, the students in group 1 get the most available feedback points, but the utilization rate of the available feedback points is lower than that of the mixed group. 22.35% of the students in Group 1 disagreed with their peers' revision opinions. The main reason is that members of group 1 have similar levels, and sometimes they are unwilling to believe the opinions of others whose level is not significantly higher than their own. Compared with teachers, their peer opinions are "not authoritative" or "unavailable". Table 1 shows that in the mixed group, the ratio of adopted feedback points is the highest, and group 2 is slightly higher than group 3. The main reason is that S1 in group 2 has a higher utilization rate of available feedback points than S1 in group 3 (see Table 3). The effectiveness of different types of groups to modify the composition.

Table 3 Effectiveness of different types of group modifications

Group	Feedback points used	Modified successfully	Unsuccessful modification
Group 1	275(100%)	248 (93.9 %)	27(6.1%)
Group 2	263(100%)	240 (95.2 %)	23(4.8%)
Group 3	243(100%)	220(94.8 %)	23(5.2%)
Group 4	62(100%)	31(50%)	31(50%)

According to table 3, the rate of successful modification in groups 1, 2 and 3 is very high, and the rate of successful modification in group 4 is much lower. Different from teacher feedback, enough interaction and equal communication in peer feedback activities, and few misunderstandings provide more possibilities for successful revision. In the interview, 79.15% of the students in groups 1, 2 and 3 admitted that they can get meticulous help from their peers and

have enough space to exchange ideas with each other. However, 71.246% of Group 4 members said that they did not completely distrust each other, but sometimes they did not know how to correct mistakes in writing. The proportion of successful modification in mixed group is even higher than that in group 1.

4. Conclusions

Although this study has certain limitations, there are still some findings in the grouping of peer feedback. (1) The research results show that in terms of improving the degree of student writing, whether it is a purely high-level student group, a purely low-level group or a mixed group, peer feedback is effective, but the different grouping types of peer feedback activities do affect To the effect of the activity and students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of the activity. (2) As far as the overall improvement of group writing quality is concerned, the effect of mixed group writing is the best. In the mixed group, as the readers of the articles, the high-level students can provide very specific and effective help to the low-level students, and gain a sense of self-confidence and respect. Low-level students can provide some general opinions, which is sometimes helpful to high-level students. The improvement of writing level is a long-term accumulation process, which cannot be achieved overnight. Therefore, in the teaching process, teachers should adopt flexible teaching methods according to students' knowledge level and acceptance, and do their best to improve students' writing ability.

References

- [1] Zhang Yang. On the use of Elfchen in German teaching. *Journal of West China Language and Literature*, no. 1, pp. 161-164, 2016.
- [2] Tao Zhuo. Real knowledge through practice-a style suitable for Chinese college students majoring in German to improve their ability to write scientific texts. *German Humanities Studies*, no. 2, pp. 44-50, 2019.
- [3] Shan Beilei. Analysis on the teaching of test-oriented composition in the German writing course of colleges and universities. *Knowledge Library*, no. 21, pp. 95-, 97, 2016.
- [4] Bian Hong. Thoughts on the curriculum of German professional writing. *Anhui Literature* (the second half of the month), no. 11, pp. 126-128, 2016.
- [5] Zhang Mo, Zhao Shuo. Research on Telford Writing Teaching. *Modern Linguistics*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 329-334, 2019.
- [6] Lawrence Jun Zhang, Cheng Xiaolong. Comparative study on the use of mother tongue and second language in peer feedback based on "activity theory". *Foreign Language Studies*, vol. 34, no. 5, pp. 53-60, 2017.
- [7] Wang Song, Zhou Wenshu. The application of project-based grouping teaching method in basic German teaching. *Education Teaching Forum*, no. 7, pp. 261-262, 2020.