

Study on How the Teaching of “College Writing” Adapt to the Higher Education Reform

Wang Yuling

School of Humanities and International Education, Xi'an Peihua University, Xi'an 710125, China

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Abstract: “College Writing” is an important specialized elementary course for Chinese majors. It aims to cultivate students' writing skills and has always assumed many expectations for the cultivation of writing skills. Based on the current reform of China's higher education, this paper explored the teaching reform of this course from the aspects of teaching concept, teaching content, teaching methods and teaching evaluation, with the purpose to better improve student writing in the teaching process.

1. Introduction

“College Writing” is one of the important fundamental courses and practical courses for students majoring in Chinese language and literature, aiming to improve the writing and expression skills of college students. However, due to the traditional curriculum orientation and other reasons, this course is kind of marginalized in actual teaching and the teaching goal is difficult to achieve. *The National Standard for the Quality of Undergraduate Professional Teaching in General Colleges and Universities* issued by the Teaching Steering Committee of the Ministry of Education emphasizes the fundamentality and practicality of the course “College Writing”. Based on this, in-depth thinking on the teaching of this course is an important premise and foundation for the course to be a “golden class”, and also an important measure to improve the basic writing ability and core literacy of Chinese Language majors. In the context of higher education reform, this paper made a preliminary reflection on the teaching reform of “College Writing” from the following four aspects.

2. To change the teaching idea

The basic goal of the teaching of “College Writing” is to teach students basic writing knowledge, improve their writing ability and promote their all-round development. However, there are various problems in the traditional “Fundamental Course of Composition”, which makes it difficult for both teachers and students to improve and maintain their enthusiasm. First of all, although the traditional writing class also requires students to carry out writing practice, it just focuses on the teaching of writing theories. The necessary writing theory is conducive for students to understand the writing rules and subject systems, but the improvement of their writing ability must lie on a large number of writing training as well as direct experience and feelings gained from in their writing practice. The emphasis on the teaching of writing theories leads to a more stunned writing consciousness of students entering college through exam-oriented education, and it is difficult to effectively wake up and inspire their writing consciousness. In other words, students' enthusiasm for writing has not been fully mobilized. Secondly, the course “College Writing” in most colleges and universities adopts large-class lectures, and the number of students is often over forty. Such a situation cannot guarantee timely feedback of classroom writing training and is also not conducive to the two-way communication between students and teachers. To solve this problem, the management department in colleges and universities must carry out corresponding adjustments and changes. Thirdly, the limitations of layout of the traditional paper media prevent students from having a good platform to create works and promote their creations. It is difficult for outstanding student works to be promoted in time, and thus a benign writing-publishing-criticism mechanism cannot be formed.

This inevitably dampens the enthusiasm of students for writing and affects the effective improvement of their writing ability. Fourthly, the professional status of teachers engaged in “College Writing” is marginalized. For the teaching of “College Writing” in most colleges and universities, the teachers who specialize in the teaching of the subject become a minority, and this task sometimes is assumed by the teachers of other specialized courses as a part-time job. This situation has led to the difficulty in the professional orientation of the “College Writing” teachers and the confusion of the professional direction. And it thereby affects the further development and improvement of the professional competence of teachers, which in turn affects the continuous exploration and reform of the teaching of the course.

In view of the above drawbacks in the traditional “College Writing” teaching, teachers and teaching management departments are required to update and adjust teaching concepts in the context of the current higher education reform in China, so as to ensure that this course can effectively improve students' writing ability. On the one hand, the teachers need to know and strengthen the development direction of their own teaching and research, and meanwhile maintaining an active teaching attitude and a strong reform spirit for the teaching of the course; on the other hand, related school leaders also need to pay attention to the particularity of the teaching of the course and provide targeted improvement strategies in terms of teaching scale and style.

3. To update course content

Reasonable and scientific teaching content arrangement is the basis and premise for carrying out teaching activities. “College Writing” teachers should develop a practical writing syllabus based on the teaching objectives of improving students' writing ability and combining with professional talent training programs. Then, they need to set up a gradual teaching content and writing training system according to the acceptance of students and the knowledge system of this course, and fundamentally change the tendency of “attaching importance to theories and neglecting practice” in traditional writing lessons. According to the existing teaching experience, college writing teaching can be divided into twelve modules, including general writing, skills and methods, language style, structural layout, prose writing, novel writing, poetry writing, script writing, methods of writing teaching, and so on. In the learning of each module, teachers are expected to lead students to learn basic theoretical knowledge in combination with their own writing experience, so that they can have active awareness of writing activities. Next, targeted writing exercises are needed to enable students to train systematic writing skills under the guidance of previous theoretical studies.

In addition to setting the theoretical teaching content according to the basic structure of this course, it is also feasible to conduct teaching according to different topics, so as to better promote the students' learning and their cultivation of writing skills. Each arrangement has its own advantages and disadvantages, and thus teachers should adjust according to the actual acceptance of the students.

4. To adjust the teaching methods

4.1 Combining the embodied cognition theory to enhance the training of students' body perception

As an expressive ability, writing requires students to grasp the inner initial impulsiveness. It can be seen from the Embodied Cognition Theory of cognitive psychology that body is an important channel for the subject to acquire information. In writing teaching, teachers can use the embodiment of information acquisition to awaken the sense of students' eyes, nose, mouth, ears and skin. This will make the students generate an intuitive first-hand expressional appeal, and then want to describe their feelings by words. By this way, the article they write will be more vivid, full of appeal.

4.2 Inspiring aesthetic perception by reading and sharing

Writing ability is ability to output knowledge and thought. Effective output is inseparable from

high quality input in advanced. Selective reading training can improve students' ability of language perception and aesthetic criticism, and then cultivate their thinking ability to analyze and solve problems. In the process of reading and sharing, the teacher can guide students to understand their reading orientation, protect their reading intuition and help them find out classic works that they are interested in and can go deeper, and thereby they can perform radiation-style. For example, students can read books of the social sciences such as literature, philosophy and history, and then read books in the natural sciences, thereby enhancing their aesthetic perception, enriching their life experiences and inspiring their internal implied expression.

4.3 Conducting effective communication and feedback through evaluation

According to the principle of information receiving and feedback in the teaching process, the teaching lacking feedback will discourage students from learning. “College Writing” is a subject with strong practicality, it is especially important to give feedback on the students' writing in a timely manner. Therefore, teachers should evaluate students' writing and give them corresponding feedback in time after writing training. It should be based on positive encouragement in the evaluation process. Teachers should be keenly aware of the bright spots in the students' writing, point outstanding parts, carefully excavate and appreciate them from the perspectives of emotions, thoughts and writing ideas, and make detailed and vivid comments on them. On the one hand, it can effectively improve students' cognition of their own writing status, and on the other hand, it can make the writing teaching classroom become friendly and interesting.

4.4 Expanding the promotion platform for excellent writing to stimulate students' enthusiasm for writing

Text creation is strongly social, and the text created by students can only be converted into works with independent existence value through communication. Readers' recognition of students writing can bring the satisfaction to these writers. In the era of traditional paper media, the publication of articles has a relatively high threshold. With the emergence and promotion of new media such as blogs, Weibo, WeChat public number, more works can enter the communication channels more conveniently and be read by more readers. Teachers engaged in “College Writing” can make full use of the great ability and eagerness of students in obtaining information to encourage students to independently create and develop a platform for the promotion of works that meets the characteristics of the era and knowledge structure of them own. On the one hand, it is helpful to exercise students' ability of reviewing and editing, and on the other hand, it makes it more convenient to promote excellent works of students. Over time, a group of writing enthusiasts will gather on the promotion platform, which will promote more students to write. And it may even mobilize a good atmosphere in the whole school for the reading and writing, changing the campus culture of the school.

4.5 Launching extracurricular activities to broaden the horizons of students

In order to better consolidate the effect of student writing training, teachers can lead students to carry out various extracurricular activities to cultivate their broad vision. For example, regularly creative competitions can not only stimulate students' enthusiasm for participation, but also mobilize the cultural atmosphere of the school and enrich the campus cultural life of students. It also feasible to invite famous writers and scholars to hold high-level lectures so that students can get close to their own “celebrities”, which can stimulate their creative enthusiasm. At the same time, schools can cooperate with cultural agencies in the society to provide practice channels for students with good writing skills, which cannot only allow them to experience the current situation of talent demand in the society but can also directly mobilize the writing enthusiasm of all students.

5. To enrich the evaluation system

A reasonable and scientific teaching evaluation system can effectively stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning. The traditional assessment methods for the course “College Writing” are

mostly exams. Such an assessment method is difficult to reflect students' training situation, and thus it is not in line with the teaching objectives of this curriculum. According to the subject orientation and teaching objectives of this course, schools can try to evaluate the students by examining the whole study process. For example, the evaluation can be carried out from the reading and sharing, writing training, writing evaluation and promotion and other aspects to mobilize students' participation in the daily study. The link of reading and sharing allows teachers to know the difference in students' ability of acceptance and appreciation. The link of writing training can distinguish students' awareness level of learning. Teachers can encourage students who have more articles in promotion, and the participation of students in extracurricular activities can also be included in evaluation. The process exam can avoid the disadvantages of the traditional exam system, so that students can develop active learning and training awareness in daily life, thus forming the habit of conscious writing and laying a good foundation for the improvement of writing ability. At the same time, the process exam also makes it easy for teachers to understand students' writing status at any time, so that they can provide timely communication and guidance.

6. Conclusion

As a specialized elementary course for Chinese Language majors, “College Writing” is much more practical than other specialized courses. Under the current reform of higher education, teachers engaged in “College Writing” should pay full attention to the important position of this curriculum in the cultivation of students' ability. It is needed for them to actively explore new teaching systems, so as to effectively improve the writing ability of college students and contribute to the cultivation of high-quality college students.

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