

摘 要

英语写作一向是大学英语教学中的一个薄弱环节, 作者认为应在大学英语写作教学中为学生提供有效的语言输入来弥补其不足。在基于大学英语写作的过程法教学的基础上, 作者提出将范文模仿与大学英语写作的过程法教学相结合的新的教学模式。作者对华北电力大学的 103 名非英语专业的三年级学生作为受试对象进行了为期 4 个月的教学实验。在实验前后, 分别有一个写作测验, 通过前后写作成绩的对比, 证明了应用新的写作教学模式的实验组成绩得到较大的提高, 从而证明其效果是显著的。此外, 在实验结束后对实验组学生的问卷反应出他们对这一新的写作教学模式的态度是认可的。希望此教学模式能对大学英语写作教学具有一定的借鉴作用。

关键词: 大学英语写作教学, 过程法, 范文模仿, 实验, 问卷

ABSTRACT

This paper puts forward that the integration of the model-imitation practice and the process approach in the teaching of writing to Chinese non-English majors. This new teaching practice will resolve the students' problem of not knowing how to write and what to write by putting more emphasis on their writing process and giving them more effective guidance. To testify the hypothesis, this paper undertakes an experiment carried out in two classes of random samples which are randomly selected from North China Electric Power University (NCEPU). The following tools are used in the experiment: a pretest, a posttest and a questionnaire. The empirical way of the study is assumed to offer some valuable implications for the college teaching of writing and the further research of it in the future.

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KEY WORDS: the teaching of College English Writing, the process approach, model-imitation, experiment, questionnaire

List of Tables

Table 3-1 The subjects for EG and CG	22
Table 3-2 The design of the experiment	23
Table 3-3 The Score of CG (Group 1)	25
Table 3-4 The Score of EG (Group 2)	27
Table 3-5 General Information in Questionnaire	29
Table 4-1 One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	30
Table 4-2 Group Statistics	31
Table 4-3 Independent Samples Test	32
Table 4-4 Questionnaire after Experiment	33

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Importance of Learning Writing and Teaching Writing

1.1.1 Importance of Learning Writing

In the course of foreign language study, writing is becoming more and more important. We have good reasons to think so.

Firstly, with the economic development of our country, with the enhancement of China's open policy and China's entrance into the WTO, English, as an international language, becomes more and more important. More and more talents who are skillful in English are needed greatly, especially those who are good at communicating with others. Writing, as a means of communication, will play an increasingly crucial role in international affairs. Personal letters, business letters, contracts, etc. are more and more frequently exchanged between companies and countries. Therefore, it is necessary for English learners to equip themselves with the skill of writing. Writing practice in colleges and universities provides a solid foundation for students' further control of the language as well as ability to use it as a means to obtain whatever information they need in their fields of specialization.

Secondly, in language study, the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are usually emphasized. Among them, in terms of the nature of the four skills, listening and reading are regarded as passive or receptive skills, whereas speaking and writing are said to be active or productive skills. Writing is especially hard for a language learner, for it is not simply memorizing the vocabulary, practicing the grammar exercises or understanding the meaning, it needs internalizing what you have learned and then producing things new. It is a complex and recursive process weaving through stages of planning, sentence generating and reviewing, with each stage containing additional recursive sub-processes, such as organizing and editing. Compared with other skills, writing is extremely complicated and needs more concern.

Thirdly, writing ability is helpful if one is to master a foreign language. In writing, people have to digest, apply and produce. What is more, writing helps to develop one's mind. It stimulates thinking, as it enables one to determine what one knows and what one does not know. It compels one to concentrate and organize one's ideas, and helps to

cultivate one's ability to summarize, analyze and criticize.

Fourthly, it is generally accepted that writing skill can reveal a learner's comprehensive proficiency in his study of a foreign language. It can reflect learners' general competence of using a language. So, many tests adopt writing as a means of judging learners. Take College English Test (CET) Band 4 and Band 6 as the example. The Testing Center prescribed the minimum score for writing; that is, if the examinees' writing score is less than 6 (the total score for writing is 15), they will fail in the whole test no matter how high their total scores are. So, more energy should be put to the learning of writing.

1.1.2 Importance of Teaching Writing

Teaching experiences indicate that students' writing ability is perhaps the weakest point in their language study. They do not know how to write, what to write, or they make many mistakes in writing, they frustrate with writing, and so on. Therefore, it sets us language teachers thinking about how to teach and what to teach.

The Revised College English Syllabus issued in 1999 states that "The final aim of this syllabus is to cultivate the communicative competence of the students in terms of spoken and written ability." So it already becomes the common concern of the whole teaching circle. It is also the educators' responsibility to make students have this ability.

Teachers' instruction and guidance is very important to the training of the writing; therefore, as language teachers, we should try to work out effective ways of teaching writing and become a best resource for students.

1.2 Current Situations of Students' Writing Performance

Even though writing is so important, the present situation of students' writing is far from satisfactory. The author tries to analyze some possible reasons from learning and teaching perspectives respectively.

1.2.1 Difficulties Students Encounter in Learning Writing

Students always complain that they do not know how to write and what to write. They made many mistakes in their compositions, or they just cannot express their ideas properly. Some students lose confidence in their writing ability and they do not think they can make any progress even though they do some writing exercises. They even give

up writing.

By analyzing student's writing exercises as well as their former test papers, and also by doing some interviews with the students, the author points out it is students themselves who are one of the causes of deficiency in writing. The difficulties students encounter in learning writing are mainly related to the following five aspects:

Firstly, most students hold a false belief that learning a foreign language means learning grammatical rules, remembering words and memorizing structures and patterns, and that writing is not as important as reading. These perceptions about English writing have greatly influenced how they deal with their learning tasks. That is why outside the classroom, students seldom spend time in practicing writing.

Secondly, students lack the knowledge about the characteristics of English writing. English discourse patterns are different from Chinese discourse patterns. When students are unaware of these differences, they cannot find appropriate strategies for learning to write and they do not know how to express and organize their ideas in English. What they do is just transferring discourse patterns from Chinese to English. So it is not surprising that some Chinese students' writing appears to be unclear or sometimes with confused logic. (Houston, 1994: 100)

Thirdly, lack enough training as well as being unfamiliar with the difference between Chinese and English, in turn, cause "Chinglish". Also, many problems occur due to this, such as lack of substance, improper way of textual development, having little to say or not knowing how to say properly.

Fourthly, writing is a complex process. It requires students to build the strategies of pre-writing, drafting, writing, editing and rewriting. But students are quite ignorant of this process. They do not take it seriously. It is often the case that teachers assign a topic in class, and students will, after class, spend some time completing it, then hand it in. Not writing a composition according to the natural writing process, students skip many steps, just write directly. They seldom do pre-writing and drafting, let alone editing and rewriting.

Fifthly, students lose confidence in writing especially when they see that their compositions are full of "red corrections". While teachers complain that correction of students' writings is very time-consuming and energy-consuming, students almost never bother to read the comments.

1.2.2 Problems Teachers Confront with in Teaching Writing

College English textbooks in China indicate that writing is one part of intensive reading, or more accurately, subordinate to vocabulary practice and grammar drill. On the other hand, the organization of writing tasks in college textbooks used in China is unsystematic. A general survey of intensive reading textbooks reveals that most writing tasks are based on the information form, or are associated with texts previously studied and are irrespective of the text types, i.e. regardless of the fact that whether they are, for example, narrative or argumentative. Students are asked to write compositions but they are not taught the knowledge that different types of writing require different techniques. Furthermore, up to now, there has not been any nationally used writing textbook suitable for non-English majors, thus there is nothing to rely on when undertaking teaching writing.

Teachers are also to blame for students' poor writing ability. Here, the author wants to emphasize three points:

1. Compared with other language skills, less than enough class time is allocated to writing. Moreover, college English examinations do not lay much emphasis on the testing of writing comprehension through knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. So some teachers still hold the belief that writing is not as important.

2. Teaching writing methods are obsolete and their effects are rather limited. They usually give students a topic and let them write. Besides traditional teaching methods, many new teaching theories and approaches have been introduced to the teaching field, such as communicative teaching and collaborative teaching. But it is still a problem of how these new teaching approaches should be put to practical use and how these should cater to individual students who are so different. Therefore, what is the effective way of teaching writing? It really needs investigating.

3. Teachers' time-consuming correction and students' indifferent feedback are big challenges that puzzle the teaching field. Is it worthwhile to correct all their mistakes? Are the comments helpful to students? Are there any other ways to do the corrections? These questions also need to be solved.

1.3 Some Enlightenment in Teaching English Writing

The analysis of students' present writing situation gives language teachers much food for thought. Some enlightenment can be drawn from the analysis. The knowledge of writing process is indispensable for language learners.

The fact that students do not know how to express themselves or the problem of

“Chinglish”, may be all due to their ignorance of writing process. Current research conducted on the teaching of writing has shown that the process of writing is cyclical and recursive. Usually it involves pre-writing, drafting, writing, editing and rewriting. “If our goal in teaching writing is not merely to teach learners to produce different kinds of texts but to develop fluent writers, it will be necessary to examine how people write, and to consider the implication of research in the writing process for teaching writing skills.” (Richards, 1990: 331) Therefore, research on writing process is worthy of teachers’ attention.

Research on effective methods of teaching writing is very important: In China, the past two decades have seen the evolution and co-existence of EFL (English as a foreign language) teaching approaches that range from grammar-translation, direct method, and audio-lingual to communicative teaching methods. As one of the four essential skills of language learning, writing in EFL teaching has also changed. Various teaching methods of EFL writing, such as process writing, communicative writing, controlled writing, guided writing, collaborative writing and creative writing are favorite methods of some EFL teachers in China. However, we see in China that there are different attitudes towards the teaching methods. Some hold negative views on the traditional methods while some accept them completely, on the other hand, some think highly of the new teaching methods while some deny the new methods completely. As far as the author is concerned, neither is advisable. Every approach has its advantage and disadvantage. It is EFL teachers who should work out the most effective method suitable for the learners.

So this thesis mainly focuses on the enlightenments and illustrates what EFL teachers should do on the basis of the enlightenment in order to work out methodological guidance in improving the teaching quality of writing course. This study aims to address the following questions regarding process writing:

Research question 1: Is model-imitation practice indispensable or not in the process teaching to the non-English majors?

Research question 2: To what extent is the new practice in teaching writing helpful in changing the students’ attitudes and beliefs towards writing?

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Theories about Writing

2.1.1 Definition of Writing

The English term “writing” may have at least two meanings. One is the act of writing.

The other is the more generally recognized meaning: to express ideas and opinions by use of written words and sentences. When English writing is taught as a university course, “writing which involves composing” (Grabe&Kaplan, 1996: 4) i.e. writing that involves the use of English vocabulary, grammar and text to express ideas in a meaningful and logical way. As Neufeld said,

The purpose of writing, in principle, is the expression of it is thought transformed into a visual form. In other words, writing is a visual expression of ideas. The process of writing begins with an idea, and ideas come from an individual reaction to events occurring within his environment and from within himself. By reconstructing his perceptions, feelings and knowledge, an idea is born and this is the substance of writing. Writing is the process of taking an idea from inside of one’s head and putting it into a code so that it can be shared with others ideas, the conveying of a message to the reader, so the ideas themselves should arguably be seen as the most important aspect of the writing. (1985: 4).

On the other hand, the writer needs also to pay some attention to formal aspects: correct spelling and punctuation, as well as acceptable grammar and careful selection of vocabulary.

The objective of teaching writing in a foreign language is to get learners to acquire the abilities and skills they need to produce a range of different kinds of written texts similar to those who would be expected to be able to produce in their own language. The learners have to master the written form of the language and to learn certain structures which are less used in speech, or perhaps not used at all, but which are important for effective communication in writing. Classroom teaching is to develop writing strategies and skills, and provide at least pseudo-communication situations to prepare the students for real communication so that the students can be expected to write logically and

effectively as well as accurately and appropriately. What is more, writing helps the students learn: firstly, writing reinforces skills in the use of grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary. Secondly, when students write, they also have a chance to be adventurous with the language, to go beyond what they have just learned to say, to take risks. Thirdly, when they write, they necessarily become very involved with the new language. As they struggle with what to put down next or a new way of expressing their ideas, gradually, they develop the skill of putting the right words in the right places.

2.1.2 College English Writing

According to the syllabus (1999) designed for the English teaching to all the non-English majors in the universities around China, there are two periods in the college English teaching: the elementary period (for the freshman and the sophomore), and the advanced period (for the junior and the senior). Concerning the elementary period, the teaching requirements can be graded into 6 bands, i.e. College English Bands 1-6. For college students in the elementary period, Band 4 is fundamental for their college English learning. College English writing here refers mainly to the writing that meets the requirement set for the writing ability of College English Band 4. These requirements are detailed in the syllabus (1999: 3) as follows, “a composition of 120-150 words can be finished within 30 minutes on a given topic or outline. Students can state ideas explicitly with no significant grammatical error”.

2.2 Introduction to the Process Approach

2.2.1 Background of the Process Approach

The mid-1960s constituted the turning point in writing instruction. The low efficiency in the teaching of writing and the limitation of the methodology itself brought the product approach under severe attack for the overemphasis on linguistic knowledge as well as the final product. It can be of little help to students in that it neglects the constructing process, in which students' problems mainly exist. Dissatisfaction with the product methodology gave rise to a resurgence of interest in research into writing instruction and a new teaching model about writing instruction termed “process approach”, which was looked on as a major improvement over traditional methods of writing instruction, came into being.

In the process theorists' point of view, well-written essays, after all, are the result

of a long, laborious, intensely personal process of thinking, verbal communication, and an interactive, socio-cognitive behavior. Meaning is not thought up and then written down. The act of writing is an act of thought because language and thought do not bear one another a sequential relationship but are simultaneous. Language and thought are inseparable. They are processes in which writers must address several questions, ranging from what do I write about to who is my audience to how do I structure my essay to what sort of language and voice should I use? Murray (1993: 346) holds that writing should be treated as a process, i.e., “a series of steps or stages an author goes through to develop a piece of writing.” Tribble (1996:160) defines the “process approach” as “an approach to the teaching of writing which stresses the creativity of the individual writer, and which pays attention to the development of good writing practices rather than the imitation of models”. Thus, the focus shifts from the final product itself to the different stages the writer goes through in order to create this product by breaking down the task as a whole into its constituent parts. Writing becomes less daunting and more manageable to the EFL students. Winterowd (1975: 33) made a very convincing argument about writing: “Writing is not only the exposition of ideas, but also the working out of ideas. Often we really don’t know what we want to say until we’ve said it.”

The most important principle of process pedagogy is that writing is the result of a very complex, highly individualized process. Before process pedagogy, writing classes generally ignored the writing process. Teachers assigned tasks, graded them, and then handed them back. They attended to the product—its clarity, originality, and correctness—but they did not attend to the writing process. Nor did they attend to the writers themselves. Instead of describing writing as a personal activity, the process approach, having the theory of communication as its basis, conceives writing as a communicative activity consisting of relevant recurrent classroom work including prewriting, drafting, revising and final drafting.

2.2.2 Stages in the Process Approach

So far, researchers have not reached an agreement on the stages of process. Emig (1971) describes the writing processes as prewriting and planning, starting, and reformulating correcting, revising, rewriting, stopping, and contemplating the product. Other writers describe the process differently. Koch and Brail, for example, report eight divisions: prewriting includes experiencing, discovering, and making formal choices; writing includes forming, making language choices, language structuring; post-writing

includes criticizing and proofreading. Although researchers have not reached an agreement on the stages of process, they generally identify three stages in writing process. For example, Murray distinguished between these three stages: pre-writing or rehearsing, drafting, and revising (Richards, 1985:333).

Pre-writing

During pre-writing, an author brainstorms ideas, decides on a text structure, and begins to organize how he/ she wants to present the ideas to the reader. Many teachers use story maps, webs, or lists to help students organize their ideas. Since students have so many different learning styles, it is a good idea to model a variety of pre-writing techniques from which students may choose.

Drafting

Drafting is the central stage of the writing process (Murray, 1980). During drafting, students create a rough draft of their writing. At this stage, writers need to get their ideas from pre-writing recorded into a kind of tentative, first-draft shape as easily and quickly as possible.

Revising

Revising is making changes to written work to make it better. It includes adding and /or deleting words or ideas, changing ideas, and moving ideas around so that the writing makes more sense. Revising is polishing a piece of writing to make it better for the reader.

These writing stages may appear linear, but they are truly recursive. When we observe a writing process in action, we find rehearsing, drafting and revising occur again and again through the process. For example, when the writer is drafting, he continues to discover and recall, and he constantly goes back to revise. By revising his draft, he starts rehearsing for a new draft. As we see above, successful writers appear to produce better quality products because they use more efficient writing processes. Their successful use of rehearsing, drafting and revising behaviors ultimately give them better control both of the content and form of what they write. Therefore, research into the processes of composition raises important implication for the methodology of teaching writing in a second or foreign language.

2.2.3 Teaching Procedures in the Process Approach

2.2.3.1 Assign a Communicative, Meaningful Theme for Writing

Think about our daily writing in Chinese and our experience of writing in English. We might have realized that there are a great variety of things we write in reality. Arthur

Brookes&Peter Grun (2000) once did an investigation asking 20 students who would be teachers to list all the different ways to which they had put their writing skills during the precious week. A 62-item list was produced. Comparing writing in our English teaching classroom with writing in reality, it is easy to end. Some major differences: writing in the ELT classroom (also as homework) is often seen as a means to consolidate language that is recently studied. This kind of writing is seen as “writing as language learning”. While in reality, most writing is for communication that is, to convey messages.

If writing tasks lack authenticity, they do not motivate students. In order to motivate students, we should advocate authentic writing; that is, ask our students to write things we write in reality or things they want to write about. We believe we should make students want to write in the first place, and then teach how to write. So we can design some writing tasks either writing for a specific recipient, e.g, writing a Letter to a friend or parent, or engaging in an act of creative writing where their work is intended to be read by other people, in other words, an intended audience. After every period of writing time, the subjects were assigned with a writing task that asked them to write one composition on the given topic or title.

2.2.3.2 Brainstorming

Many students spend a lot of time trying to come up with a topic that they would like to write about. And when they have decided on a topic, they try to rack their brain to come up with ideas that they can put on the paper. Working individually, this process may take a longtime and may not be so productive. It is suggested that if a group of students work together to brainstorm topics and ideas, it will be more productive, because their thoughts can be inspired by each other. To make the technique accessible to our students in the writing classroom, four steps are worked out.

Step 1: To think individually. The time length for individual reflection is five minutes. During these five minutes, all the information or fresh ideas about the topic come to the students' minds in random order. They are just raw materials. This is an absolutely necessary stage at which students realize what they already get and what they still need. The aim of the five-minute's reflection is to sharpen students' minds and get something ready for writing.

Step 2: To verbalize ideas in pairs or groups. During step I, students have already undertaken initiation of ideas, but these ideas may or may not be directly related to the topic assigned. Some of them may be narrow and obscure. At the moment, students need to benefit from each other, and they also need to organize their ideas into a new order in spoken language before they communicate them in written language. After discussing

among the classmates, they now have better composition contents and more appropriate ways to express their thoughts.

Step 3: To brainstorm ideas on the blackboard in note-form. Students are encouraged to speak out their ideas before class, and develop them publicly. In this way, the students can have a rich resource to draw upon. To save space on the blackboard as well as to ensure the density of the information, a note-form is employed. This will facilitate students to organize ideas in their own ways. What is more, when they share what they have jotted down, “they listen to other students making suggestions and to teachers’ explanations and corrections. They will learn the English words for the ideas which they have tried to jot down. This is an invaluable way in which to learn vocabulary.” (Hedge, 1988: 30).

Step 4: To arrange ideas into proper categories. After brainstorming ideas on the blackboard, students are expected to classify them according to their intrinsic. The students are asked to use logical connectors to organize these key terms or paraphrases into sentences.

2.2.3.3 Drafting Stage

To make the setting of the study more similar to a typical writing test, only 30 minutes was allocated for this stage. Actually, after going through the first brainstorming stage, a 30-minute period is quite sufficient for the subjects to think of thoroughly the intrinsic nature of the collected materials on the board, to choose the most appropriate connectors for the ideas and to pick out the best words to express their ideas. For the convenience of the latter step of peer-correction they are all required to write on every other line.

2.2.3.4 Organizing Peer-correction

The writing without any correction and comment is distributed randomly among the class and the students are encouraged to do the following work:

- to point out all the sentences that they think may have grammar and mechanical mistakes and correct the mistakes;

- to offer constructive suggestions if they think necessary;

- to put forward questions that come to their mind while reading.

Discussion is also allowed during the stage but they can only be in low voice. The classroom can be active and every student is fully involved but the classroom can not be in chaos. After the students finish their correction they are requested to sign their names on the bottom of the papers so that every one of them can be as serious as possible during the stage of correction.

This is a significant step that helps students reshape their writing. Students can correct any mistakes they might have made on such technical aspects as grammar, spelling and punctuation. They can even change some of the ideas in their writing.

This can be achieved through self-editing or peer editing. Therefore, students need to realize that what the final product, but that the form they write initially does not necessarily have to be and content can be modified and improved as they go along.

2.2.3.5 Offering Feedback

With the peer-correction is going on, the teacher walks around the classroom checking with them individually to make each of them be fully conscious of their problems.

Teachers are quickly read through without doing any correction or scoring. The compositions that still have structural problems are picked out. Due to the effort on the brainstorming stage, the students have again the problems like wrong paragraphing (deep-rooted writing habit), lack of topic sentences and even one of them still misunderstood the assignment and thus his writing is far off the point. Then the students are again divided into 2 groups: those who need to be offered with written feedback and those who do not need. The feedback is written in great detail for one thing the several students may really be comparatively slow in catching the teacher's meaning, for another, it is really not a heavy task to offer feedback to just a few students. The teacher should choose to use discussing language to communicate with the students rather than a tune of commanding or criticizing because he knows how vulnerable the students are to the criticisms(Li Baiqing, 2000). He says "Don't you think it is better..." or "Why not try..." instead of "Next time don't..." or "You should, ". In offering students feedback, he never takes it for granted that he knows everything and his students know little.

Feedback should be attached importance to in EFL writing teaching. Specifically, three types of feedback can be introduced to teachers for their references: peer review as feedback, conferences as feedback and teachers' comments as feedback (Muncie, 2000).

The most instructive teacher feedback is usually teachers' comments, the specific or summative, regarding the students' work. By doing so, the teacher can help students focus on aspects of writing to which they need to give special attention, getting the students to understand that the grades, scores, and other comments are varied form of feedback from which they can all benefit.

Peer feedback is complementary to teacher feedback. It also enhances cooperative language learning. Peer feedback is usually given after student's first draft. Students read each other's writing in small group and provide their comments and suggestions. This

process is called peer editing, which is a real sharing process. Students not only give each other feedback, but also get feedback from their classmates on their own writing. They develop to be better writers as well as better readers, improving writing skills and the skills of critical thinking. One thing worth mentioning is that peer editing should be guided. Guided peer feedback can help students understand that feedback is useful not only for evaluating their writing but also for creating new work. It helps them see that evaluation by teachers and by peers is really a form of collaboration.

Another way is to focus on each student individually through conferencing. Conferencing is a way to provide teacher feedback by fact-to-face teacher-student discussion about students' texts. In implementing conferences with students, Keh (1990) adopts both individual and group conferences. When individual conferences are used, students are given focus questions to prepare beforehand. The questions are designed to get students to focus first on content, then move on to the surface-type problems which in Keh's opinion "easier for students to identify and discuss" (ibid: 300). The questions may include: What's the main point of your essay? How have you organized your points? Who are you writing to? What specific area do you want the teacher to look at? Are there any words, phrases, etc that you feel insecure about? When group conferences are used, students are given sole responsibility in deciding the agenda for the conferences and how the conferences will be run. These agenda may include an outline of who will speak first, what questions will be asked and how they will be asked. Some groups read aloud portions of their own papers for feedback, others read aloud their peer's paper with a comment about where they feel the paper sounds "wrong", and make suggestions for improvements. The compositions with teacher's feedback are returned to the composers themselves and requested to be read carefully, so the students can get to know where the problem exists.

2.2.3.6 Rewriting Stage

The students are requested to write neatly again, correcting all the parts pointed out either by the teacher or by his peers that need to be improved. After they finish, their writings are collected for further assessment.

2.2.3.7 Sharing

At the end of the process students produce the final draft. Opportunities are created for students to share their final products with their classmates.

2.2.4 Advantages and Disadvantages of the Process Approach

There are several advantages in this approach. First of all, as teachers incorporate

process teaching into their classes, writing becomes “freer” as a result of those discovery activities. Students will feel at ease when they begin to write because they have pre-writing activities which help them start. The second advantage is that it emphasizes recursiveness in the writing process. Students talk about their writing with their fellow students and write several drafts to clarify their meaning. Each draft will help them improve. Thirdly, this approach is student-centered. The role of students is no longer a passive receiver. They will inevitably assume more responsibility for controlling their writing behavior. For instance, at the beginning, there is greater student involvement in determining the topic and audience for a writing task. And during the writing process, students help each other discover ideas and make suggestions for each other. Such kind of involvement will help motivate the students and encourage them learn actively. The role of the teacher is monitoring instead of controlling. It will create a light atmosphere in the context of class.

Discussing with the teacher and fellow students has another advantage. It will help them find the problems in their writing. And the students can solve their problems during the writing process. This kind of discussion will leave a deeper impression on the learners than written comments. Thus, it will avoid the problem that students do not read the teacher’s feedback carefully.

Finally, the procedure of classroom activities will help students become aware of the writing. They will know how a good piece of writing is produced and what it entails. For example, some unskilled writers often begin writing in hasty. They even start when they are still confused about the topic. This approach requires that students spend enough time in pre-writing. This will help them think more about the topic and explore the topic more deeply.

This approach also has its limitations. First of all, students are encouraged to write whatever comes into their mind in their first draft. Problems thus arise from organization. Just as Rose pointed out “the student generates a mass of ideas that can lead to more disorder than order, more confusing divergence than clarifying focus.” (Yu Fei, 1996:39). In addition, it can hardly solve the problem in vocabulary and expressions. Furthermore, this approach has the limitation on its application. It requires a large amount of time so it is not suitable for short-term training. And if there are a lot of students in one class, the teacher will not have so much time in discussing with every student. Lastly, it fails to prepare students to write examination essays because students will not have so much time to write so many drafts in the exam. For a SLA learner, the input is absolutely necessary. More effective native language input should be added in English writing

class.

2.3 Input

2.3.1 Definition of Input

According to Rod Ellis, input refers to the language that is addressed to the L2 learner either by a native speaker or by another L2 learner. It refers to the target language samples to which the learner is exposed. It contains the raw data, which the learner has to work on in the process of interlanguage construction.

2.3.2 Krashen's Input Hypothesis

This hypothesis holds that second languages are acquired by understanding messages or by receiving “comprehensible input”, which is a necessary condition for language acquisition. Here comprehensible input refers to the comprehensible language data the learner reads or hears, the difficulty of which should be a little bit beyond the learner's current level. The language data can be meaningless for acquisition if it contains only knowledge the learner has mastered; nor will it be meaningful if the data is far beyond the learner's current level. In the hypothesis, i represents the learner's current state, and $i+1$, the next stage. Thus the input a learner is exposed to must be at the $i+1$ level to be useful in terms of acquisition. “We move from i , our current level, to $i+1$, the next level along the natural order, by understanding input containing $i+1$ ”. (Stephen Krashen, 1985) Here the 1 is the gap between the current and the next level. Only when the level of the language data is about $i+1$, can it play a positive role in the learner's acquisition. The gap between the current level and the next one is to be filled by the relevant information provided by the environment and the learner's experience. Krashen maintains that language acquisition device not only functions in L 1 acquisition, but also in L2 acquisition. The role of language input is to activate the internal mechanisms, with the condition that the language input is characteristic of $i+1$.

2.3.3 Input Hypothesis and Writing

The Input Hypothesis may also apply to the acquisition of writing style. A number of research studies show a relationship between reading and writing. Good writers have done more reading for their own interest and pleasure than poor and programs that get

students “hooked on hooks” help develop writing skills (Krashen, 1984). Krashen has, as has Smith (1983), that writing competence comes only from large amounts of self-motivated reading for pleasure and/or interest. It is reading that gives the writer the “feel” for the Look and texture of good writing. In addition to studies showing that good writers have read more, there are other arguments in support of the “reading hypothesis”. The complexity of the writing as well as the fact that so little of it has been described makes it unlikely that it can be taught deliberately. Researchers are only now beginning to discover the often subtle grammatical and discourse differences between speaking and writing, and between good and poor writing. Instruction can give the student only the most obvious aspects of the written language.

2.3.4 Model -imitation Practice

2.3.4.1 Linguists’ Definition of “Modeling”

Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics defines “modeling” as “providing as an example for someone learning a language” (Richards, 1989: 181). It holds that “in L2 learning, some teaching methods emphasize the need for teachers to provide accurate models for learners to imitate, for example, audio-lingual method” (Richard, 1989: 181). Obviously, compared with socialists and educational psychologists, linguists put more emphasis on the role of modeling in teaching and teaming than in social behavior formation. Anyhow, they are common in the idea of the effectiveness of modeling through which the learners can learn more easily and quickly.

In the present study, modeling has the same meaning with imitating which is similar to the definition from the perspective of social learning theory or educational psychology. It refers to a kind of teaching activity by which, the teachers provide and explain examples for the learners to follow and imitate. Models, then, become the materials for modeling in the process of teaching and learning, which are usually essay models or writing samples in this study.

2.3.4.2 Behaviorists’ Ideas on Imitation

Behaviorists’ ideas on learning give birth to the product approach which gains popularity in a long term in writing teaching practice in China. Behaviorists state that all human behavior, including language acquisition, is achieved in terms of the development of sets of habits through process of stimulus and response (Bunyan, 2001:302). According to behaviorism, teaching writing is an activity containing a three-stage procedure: stimulus (the teacher’s providing of essay models and writing

assignments)-response (the students' writing of the compositions)—reinforcement (the teacher's responses to students' compositions which have influence on their next writing)(Yu Fei, Zhang Huifen, 1996: 38; Jia Aiwu, 1998: 74). The focus of behaviorist way of teaching writing is the writing samples through which the teacher can provide a clear, accurate and concrete example for the students' imitation, i.e., "in which the learner imitates, copies, and transforms models provided by the teacher and/or the textbook" (Bunyan, 2001:272).

Several decades passed, and there are disagreements on behaviorist views on teaching, "however, in educational circles behaviorist principles continued to be popular" (McDought, 1989:17), and its principle of using models in writing is still widely used in writing classroom, at least in China at present, according to the common sense and the open-ended interview in the study.

2.3.4.3 The Definition of "Model-imitation Practice" in the Present Study

In comprehensive reading class, some teachers are not aware of the relationship between reading and writing, regardless of the fact that original reading material should be used as good writing models. Reading passages in textbooks are carefully chosen, and its language is idiomatic. The writing techniques and rhetoric can be samples for writing. So teachers should make full use of these materials to develop students discourse awareness, and writing skills. Besides, teachers should encourage students to read widely.

The author will not specially differentiate between the above "modeling" and what the author call "model-imitation practice" in the present study. The reason is that though model-imitation practice in this study is not totally the same with that in socialism, which takes "model" as the capable teacher who is in charge of students' social behavior rather than essay samples that are used as teaching materials, it still shares much with the meaning in linguistics and behaviorism which view models as the materials of imitating for teaching purpose.

By "models", the author means writing samples or essay models, which are specially prepared by the teacher and used as teaching materials for students' utilizing and exploiting in working out their own compositions. Thus, "using models" means using writing samples or essay models.

By "model-imitation practice" the author means a way of teaching writing for pedagogical purposes. Model-imitation practice in this study is a way of teaching writing that is used in a writing classroom with the necessary applications of models. It

emphasizes more on the providing of essay models while those bestowed on a name of “product approaches” usually attach more importance to students’ final compositions rather than to the models offering and imitating activities. Another important reason for the choice of the name is its power in meaningful and distinctively expressive wording for the study. “Imitation” means “copying, taking or following as an example” (Oxford Advanced Learner’s English-Chinese Dictionary, 2000: 739), which is both concise and direct of pointing out the pedagogical purpose of the teaching activity as it in this study.

“Practice” is a kind of activity normally applied in foreign language learning. As the old saying goes, “Practice makes perfect”, the practice in present study is also expected to make progress, though not perfect. When put together, “model-imitation practice” is vivid and expressive in referring to a kind of teaching activity through which the teacher may provide and explain the writing samples and the students imitate them before working out their own writings. Obviously, “model-imitation practice” involves not only the teaching procedure during which there is the activity of modeling, but also the teaching materials that are used as essay examples for the students to imitate.

2.4 The Practice of “Model-imitation” to the Process Approach

The aforementioned writing detects can warn us of some problems with the current teaching of English writing in the classroom. Sufficient linguistic knowledge to a good piece of writing is bricks and sand to a well-constructed building. Too much attention to college English writing caused by the strong backwash effect of English tests of various kind results in the negligence of the basic language input activities in teaching pedagogy; English writing is in its essence different from that of Chinese and the existing writing rules and notions cannot be merely imitated. Hence we can draw the conclusion that students’ problems in writing are mainly problems of “do not know how to write and do not know what to write”. At this time some useful language input in target language is worthy to the students’ writing. The author presuppose here that all the problems mentioned above can be resolved through the process writing approach, by giving the students more effective guidance through some topic-related models during the constructing period and by organizing more useful group discussions.

The advocates of the process approach disaffirm the effects of the model-imitation practice while for the Chinese learners of English the effects cannot be neglected. English and Chinese belong to the different language families, so they greatly differentiate in sound, glossary, grammar, rhetoric, etc. When the Chinese graduates

taking up English writing, the influences of their Chinese thought are vast. For the gap between their cognitive abilities and foreign language's applying ability, the Chinese students are anxious to write a good article in foreign language and they cannot display their good ideas in a new language. Therefore, the teacher should provide appropriate language input at appropriate time in the process of the writing teaching such as when they feel the shortage of vocabulary and find it difficult to choose a perfect word to express their emotions. Before writing class, one of the tasks for the teacher is to give some related glossaries about the topic for the students to make a note when the teacher does some preparation for the specific contents of the writing class.

How to choose the right model is the focus, moreover, the teacher should achieve a master through a comprehensive study of the model and then he or she can instruct the students to integrate the model with their minds. Model should be considered as an effective resource which can be made full use of, but it is not the perfect sample which the students must imitate. The study has its criteria for the choice of the types of writing under investigation and the teaching materials for the treatments. The study made a choice of argumentation as the type of writing under investigation, because the college-level students have been bestowed on the ability of logical thinking. Moreover, argumentation was the writing which could combine the content, logical organization and grammaticality at the same time in a single composition to the fullest extent. This was a second reason for the choice. The third evidence supporting the decision of using argumentation as the writing topic lay in the fact that, all the students in the college in China have to face tests at last. According to the author's survey, the writing tasks in CET Band 4 test paper from the year of 1996 to the year 2000 were completely argumentative. Because testing was somewhat an effective way of arousing students' motivation in English study, to build up the choice on it seemed to be quite reasonable. The author suggests that during the drafting stage the teacher may take the model as a way of language input both from the lays of glossary and from the structure of the article, the aim of which is to train the students' shift from their Chinese thinking process to English thinking process. During the revising stage the students can be supplied with the topic-related model and compare their own first drafts with it, the aim of which is helpful for the students to study how to learn and adopt the writing style as shown by the model. As long as the practice of model-imitation is applied actively to the writing teaching processes, the students can get the consciousness of the way to express their ideas, the differences between the two languages, and the impossibility of copying the expressive method of their native language completely to the English writing. The author

will prove the practice of applying the model-imitation to the process approach by the experiment in Chapter 3 Methodology.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of model-imitation practice with the process approach, in EFL college context in China.

It attempted to answer the following research questions regarding the process writing:

Research question 1: Is the model-imitation practice plus the process approach a more effective way or not than the only process approach to the non-English majors?

Research question 2: To what extent is the new practice to teaching writing helpful in changing the students' attitudes and beliefs towards writing?

On the basis of the discussed in the preceding chapters, the following hypotheses were put forward:

Hypotheses 1: Pre-assuming that the students have grasped the basic constructing skills and are approximately at the same proficiency level, the process approach to writing instruction contribute to the gains of writing proficiency for Chinese EFL students.

Hypotheses 2: In the very distinctive EFL context in China, the model-imitation plus the process approach is more effective than only by the process approach to college non-English majors.

In this study, the effectiveness of a writing approach was measured by the writing proficiency of those college students participating in the experiment.

3.2 The Subjects of the Research

Since the survey study is only part of the whole project and it is exploratory in nature, a relatively small sample is selected, and the convenience sampling is used. The subjects in the survey consist of undergraduates who are using "College English Intensive Reading Course Book" as textbooks and teachers who are giving lectures based on the books. They are randomly selected from NCEPU. The 103 juniors from two classes of non-English major departments participated in the experiment. They have taken College English as textbook for college English study for at least four school semesters. None of the participants had been informed that they were to take part in a

writing study and the experiment was conducted in a way that can easily make the students believe that they were just going through regular writing practice. Due to the forthcoming CET Band 4 they were about to take and their eagerness to improve the writing ability, all the students showed a “good cooperation” in the long process of the experiment. The two classes were randomly chosen as the experimental group (EG) and the control group (CG).

Table 3-1: The Subjects for EG and CG

	The Accounting class (CG)	The Computer class (EG)
Group Label	Group 1	Group 2
Subject Number	51	52

3.3 Instruments of the Research

The instruments were used in this study: a questionnaire and two writing tests before and after the experiment to find students’ attitudes, beliefs, interest in writing; the first test was used as a tool to show the two classes’ differences in writing proficiency before the experiment; six compositions to assess their writing performance, and the final exam to use as a global measure of the students’ performance after the experiment.

3.3.1 Pre-test Measurement

The purpose of the pretest was to identify differences in writing proficiency of the two groups prior to the experiment. Identical pretest writing topic was assigned to both groups to be completed within the given time in as much similar settings as possible.

The author invited two college teachers who are quite skillful in rating the students’ writing to score the subjects’ writing paper according to the Global Scoring Method adopted by CET Band 4 (See Appendix 2). Since subjectivity is quite common in scoring and in order to minimize it, each piece of writing was to be read respectively by the two raters and scored independently and the data of the mean were collected. If there was a too wide gap between the two scores of a certain piece, the author read the paper the third time.

3.3.2 Post-test Measurement

A posttest was held exactly in the same form as the pretest after the experimental

test for the purpose of evaluating the extent to which students can apply and value the new writing approach, exploring its efficiency and testifying the urgent need to apply the approach in the college teaching of English writing.

In order to avoid probing too deep into the tests by discussing the validity and reliability of the writing topic, the author selected a published authentic CET Band 4 writing topic and its scoring criterion as well as the global scoring method was also employed in the study.

3.3.3 Questionnaire

The number of the students in experimental class selecting each alternative after the experiment was counted a week later. After all the data were collected, the analysis was carried out by computer with SPSS 13.0.

3.4 The Design of the Experiment

3.4.1 The Design of the Experiment

The experiment employed a nonequivalent group design, which could be described as the following table:

Table 3-2: The design of the experiment

CG	T1	Tr1	T2
EG	T1	Tr2	T2

In this table, T1 and T2 stand for the pretest and the posttest, which both the CG and EG subjects have to take while Tr1 and Tr2 stand for the treatment of only process approach and applying model-imitation practice to process approach respectively. Tr1 and Tr2 are separated by line, which means that the two different treatments were carried out in two different settings and the subjects are not assigned randomly to the treatments.

3.4.2 Procedure of the Research

The experiment lasted four months of the autumn semester. Students in both classes were assigned to write 6 compositions imitating the 6 essay samples with the same topics (See Appendix 1). All the classes were conducted by process approach. One of them is with the model-imitation practice. Each writing class lasts 100 minutes, conducted both in the experimental and the control class. But the instructional interventions were quite

different. In the control class, the process approach was integrated into curriculum according to the procedures mentioned in Chapter2 (2.3.2), while the experimental class used the model-imitation practice Chapter2 (2.5) and the process approach. After finishing the drafting stage, the author had given some necessary feedback. A model related to the topic of the composition was given to the students to have a reference. The author made it clear to the students the 4 important ingredients of a successful piece of writing:

- The purpose: Why the piece of writing is composed? For whom it is composed?
- The content: What materials can be chosen to fulfill the purpose? In conveying information, we have to find out what information is the most essential, what information is less critical and what information can be totally neglected. In persuading somebody to do something, we must pick out argument that is the most convincing, etc.
- The structure: In what way can the language be best organized to make up an organic persuasive piece of writing: comparison, cause and effect, division or classification?
- Rhetorical modes: A student should learn to use as many kinds of figures of speech as possible to make his writing more impressive or eye-catching.

By comparing the model and the students' own compositions, they can realize their own weak points and then go on the next peer-correction stage as same as for the control class. After the students took part in the final exam, both total scores and writing part scores in the two classes were collected. After that, a week after the final exam, the students in the experimental class were asked to complete a questionnaire (Table 4-4), in which 5 open-ended questions are added in an attempt to elicit students' views on the teaching method of the model-imitation plus the process approach. Then the author can compare the results of the questionnaires and find whether different teaching methods evoke different levels of attitudes and beliefs towards writing.

3.4.3 Data Collection

The data-collection was undertaken in a regular lesson. The pretest was employed in the first week of the time scale of the experiment for the EG and CG as mentioned above; the posttest, in the fifteenth week of the experiment. It took the subjects about 30 minutes to accomplish the tests at class. The questionnaire was done within 10 minutes

after the subjects in the EG finished their posttest a week later in the sixteenth week.

The administration of the data-collection took somewhat common forms—by tests and by a group questionnaire. The conditions for the measurement at different point of time were nearly the same. For example, all the subjects took part in the tests at the same period of time, in similar classrooms, with the same teacher monitored.

3.4.4 Data Analysis

The present study made use of SPSS (13.0 version)—the Statistical Package for Social Science, which is powerful and popular in both social science and educational analysis, to do the work of data-analysis of the experiment. The major purpose of the study was to compare the model-imitation practice with the non-model-imitation one, so as to see whether the model-imitation practice was a better way of teaching writing to non-English majors. Therefore, an independent samples t-test had been operated in this study to find out the difference independent between the two sets of scores of the two groups. All the total scores for the two groups, which entered the final analysis, could be shown as Table3-3:

Table3-3 the Score of CG (Group 1)

ID number	Group number	Score1 (on the pretest)	Score 2 (on the posttest)
1	1	6	6
2	1	9	8
3	1	7	7.5
4	1	8	8.5
5	1	6	6
6	1	9	10
7	1	11	9
8	1	6	7
9	1	10	10
10	1	5	6
11	1	10	9
12	1	10	9
13	1	9	10
14	1	7	8

15	1	11	11
16	1	8	7
17	1	9	8
18	1	6	7
19	1	12	12
20	1	5	6
21	1	10	9
22	1	6	6
23	1	8	8
24	1	9	9
25	1	11	10
26	1	9	11
27	1	12	13
28	1	8	6
29	1	8	9
30	1	9	7
31	1	7	7
32	1	7	6
33	1	12	11
34	1	10	11
35	1	9	8
36	1	9	10
37	1	10	12
38	1	6	7
39	1	5	6
40	1	12	12
41	1	11	12
42	1	5	6
43	1	7	8
44	1	6	7
45	1	8	8

Because the treatment of the model-imitation practice was special for the EG, now,

their changes in the two tests could be displayed in the following Table 3-4:

Table 3-4 the Score of EG (Group 2)

ID number	Group number	Score1 (on the pretest)	Score2 (on the posttest)
1	2	9	11
2	2	8	6
3	2	10	12
4	2	6	8
5	2	11	12
6	2	9	11
7	2	8	11
8	2	10	12
9	2	5	6
10	2	10	11
11	2	11	10
12	2	9	10
13	2	7	9
14	2	7	6
15	2	7	7
16	2	9	12
17	2	10	11
18	2	7	10
19	2	7	9
20	2	12	10
21	2	8	11
22	2	10	12
23	2	6	9
24	2	9	10
25	2	12	11
26	2	8	10
27	2	8	9
28	2	12	13

29	2	9	10
30	2	6	9
31	2	8	10
32	2	10	10
33	2	7	9
34	2	7	10
35	2	7	7
36	2	7	8
37	2	6	9
38	2	7	7
39	2	11	13
40	2	12	10
41	2	11	13
42	2	6	9
43	2	11	13
44	2	7	9
45	2	11	10
46	2	8	9
47	2	10	12

As is mentioned above, the scores on the compositions in the posttest were the dependent variable in the study. However, there were only a total of 92 (EG=47, CG=45) subjects included in the final analysis, due to the absence of several subjects in the tests or through the experiment. The EG lost 5 out of 52, CG, 6 from 51, which was a small number with no much influence on their whole performance in writing. Therefore, the missing values were deleted when the final analysis was done.

The students are also very active in filling in the questionnaire items. The author roughly arranged the answers and listed some of the items in the table below: Some items that indicate students' attitude toward process teaching of writing. The brief results of the questionnaire were counted by hand and the raw data were shown in Table 3-5.

Table 3-5 General Information in Questionnaire

Item	Choice		
你觉得提高英语写作水平的最有效途径是:	多读多练	多背范文, 多注重写作技巧学习	不需要做什么, 写作源于人的天生语感
	17/47(36.2%)	26/47(55.3%)	4/47(0.09%)
你认为过程写作法中是否应重视范文的导入呢?	应该	不应该	没有看法
	29/47(61.7%)	10/47(21.3%)	8/47(17.0%)
提供范文也有以下局限性:	结构单调, 束缚思想, 不利于自我发挥	由于范文有可能太优秀, 自信心受挫	有范文, 所以产生依赖思想
	24/47(51.1%)	10/47 (21.3%)	13/47 (27.7%)
经过一学期的写作练习, 我对英语写作的态度?	有改变	没有改变	英语写作容易了
	15/47(31.9%)	2/47(4.2%)	30/47(63.8%)
经过这学期的训练, 你觉得自己的写作在哪方面有显著提高?	逻辑思维	内容.语法.遣词造句	好像没有提高
	26/47(55.3%)	17/47(36.2%)	4/47(0.09%)

3.5 Limitations

The author was supposed to meet the conditions but had difficulties in implementing them. As with the other experimental researches, the study is subject to a number of methodological criticisms. It is a relatively small-scale quasi-experiment, despite involving more than 90 students in two classes, because:

.Sample: only a small sample size was used in the study, and the subjects were not randomly assigned to treatments;

.Data-collection: the rate of missing data was a little high, with the EG lost 5 from 52 ($5/52=.105$), the CC 6 from 51 ($6/51=.118$);

.Testing: only one form of testing writing proficiency—writing a piece of composition, was taken, and one type of writing—argumentation was discussed, so, there is no way of knowing if topics or types of writing assignment might affect the issue. And the study did not add an index of reliability and validity of the tests, though the test type is commonly chosen and easily manipulated for non-English majors in China.

Chapter 4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Data from Composition Scores

4.1.1 Normal Distributing Test

This is the precondition for the following analysis which is based on the scores gained from pre-test and post-test. Whether the data from the experiment for the research is effective or not will be tested through Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test (K-S Test). After inputting all the data from the experiment in SPSS 13.0, the following Table 4-1 can be calculated:

Table4-1 One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

group variable			pre-test	post-test
1	N		45	45
	Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	8.40	8.5333
		Std. Deviation	2.104	2.03213
	Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.123	.137
		Positive	.117	.137
		Negative	-.123	-.106
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.827	.918
2	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.500	.368
	N		47	47
	Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	8.64	9.9149
		Std. Deviation	1.936	1.66302
	Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.163	.141
		Positive	.163	.120
		Negative	-.121	-.141
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.115	.970
	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.166	.304

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

Conclusion:

Group 1:

The inspection results from Group 1 in the pre-test: the number of subjects is 45; the mean score in the pre-test is 8.40; SD is 2.104; K-S Z for the normal test is 0.827 and its corresponding Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.500>0.05. All the above data proves that the scores in the pre-test are normal. It is reasonable for the next research.

The inspection results from Group 1 in the post-test: the number of subjects is 45; the mean score in the post-test is 8.5333; SD is 2.03213; K-S Z for the normal test is 0.918 and its corresponding Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.368>0.05. All the above data proves that the scores in the post-test are normal. It is reasonable for the next research.

Group 2:

The inspection result from Group 2 in the pre-test: the number of subjects is 47; the mean score in the pre-test is 8.64; SD is 1.938; K-S Z for the normal test is 1.115 and its corresponding Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.166>0.05. All the above data proves that the scores in the pre-test are normal. It is reasonable for the next research.

The inspection result from Group 2 in the post-test: the number of subjects is 47; the mean score in the post-test is 9.9149; SD is 1.86302; K-S Z for the normal test is 0.970 and its corresponding Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.304>0.05. All the above data proves that the scores after the experiment are normal. It is reasonable for the next research.

4.1.2 Descriptive Statistics:

Table 4-2 Group Statistics

	group variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
pre-test	1	45	8.40	2.104	.314
	2	47	8.64	1.938	.283
post-test	1	45	8.5333	2.03213	.30293
	2	47	9.9149	1.86302	.27175

From the above Table 4-2, we can make the further research.

Pre-test:

The number of Group 1 is 45; the mean score is 8.40; SD is 2.104; SE is 0.314. The number of Group 2 is 47; the mean score is 8.64; SD is 1.938; SE is 0.283.

Post-test:

The number of Group 1 is 45; the mean score is 8.533; SD is 2.03213; SE is 0.30293. The number of Group 2 is 47; the mean score is 9.9149; SD is 1.86302; SE is 0.27175.

Conclusion:

The results indicate that the new approach in the experimental group was moderately successful. Table 4-2 shows that students' score in the experimental group was higher than that in the control group. The mean score of the experimental group was 9.9149, while the mean score of the control group was 8.5333. That is, students in the experimental group outperformed the students in the control group in the post-test.

4.1.3 Independent Samples Test:

The t-test for independent samples in the posttest reveals the mean, Sig., t-value and df value of the two kinds of practice by the two groups which is shown in Table 4-3:

Table 4-3 Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
pre-test	Equal variances assumed	.199	.657	-.565	90	.573	-.238	.422	-1.076	.599
	Equal variances not assumed			-.564	88.802	.574	-.238	.422	-1.077	.601
post-test	Equal variances assumed	1.401	.240	-3.401	90	.001	-1.38156	.40618	-2.18852	-.57460
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.395	88.494	.001	-1.38156	.40696	-2.19024	-.57288

Conclusion:

Pre-test:

F in Levene's Test for Equality of Variances is 0.199, and its corresponding Sig. is 0.657>0.05. Therefore the data meets the conditions of t-test for Equality of Means with T is -0.565, and its corresponding Sig.(two-tailed) is 0.573>0.05. All the above data proves that there is no significant difference between the EG and the CG in the pretest. That is to say the two groups are approximately at the same level of writing proficiency before the experiment.

Post-test:

F in Levene's Test for Equality of Variances is 1.401, and its corresponding Sig. is .240>0.05. Therefore the data meets the conditions of t-test for Equality of Means with T is -3.401, and its corresponding Sig.(two-tailed) is 0.001<0.05. Therefore, from the above data, the author can say that there is greatly significant difference between the EG and the CG in the post-test. Combination with the mean score 9.9149>8.5333 (from Table 4-2), we could say that it was the treatments which brought forth the obvious changes. i.e., it was the model-imitation practice which made the students get improved after the writing teaching.

In the posttest, even though the time allocated to subjects is not as long as that in the experimental test and also though no hand-by-hand guidance is given to the EG students: the author doesn't explain the writing topic and point out what should be

especially paid attention to; and doesn't list the students' ideas on the board and help to categorize them, they still could implement the process writing approach successfully and this conclusion can be drawn from the contrast between the mean scores, as is shown in the Table 4-2.

Research Question 1: Is the model-imitation practice plus the process approach a more effective way or not than the only process approach to the non-English majors?

From the discussing with the help of SPSS 13.0, Research Question 1 should be affirmed, i.e., the two groups are different from each other on test performance, and the two ways of teaching writing resulted in the different effect. In another word, the using of essay models in writing classroom is the major reason leading to the better score.

The above finding makes Research Question 1 settled.

4.2 Data Collected from Questionnaires

Research question 2: To what extent is the new practice to teaching writing helpful in changing the students' attitudes and beliefs towards writing?

Meanwhile, when the quantitative analysis above proves the cause-effect relationship existing between the model-imitation practice by the process approach and the students' writing achievements, the findings from the questionnaire reveals the students' attitudes and beliefs towards writing. (See Table 4-4)

Table 4-4 Questionnaire after Experiment

Questionnaire Statements	Numbers of Students	Cumulative Percentage
经过一学期的写作练习, 我对英语写作的态度? A. 英语写作容易了	30	63.8
经过这学期的训练, 你觉得自己的写作在哪些方面有显著提高? A.逻辑思维	26	55.3
提供范文也有以下局限性: A.结构单调, 束缚思想, 不利于自我发挥	24	51.1
你觉得提高英语写作水平的最有效途径是什么? B 多背范文, 多注重写作技巧学习	26	55.3

你认为过程写作法中是否应重视范文的导入呢？ A 应该	29	61.7
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As is shown in the above table, nearly 61.7% of the subjects treat model-imitation practice as a useful way to learn writing, though a small number (0.09% from Table 3-5) think they do not improve in writing, when still more than 55.3% s of the subjects suppose they really achieve in logical thoughts after the training. And more than a half of them (55.3%) admit the most effective way to improve their writing ability is to recite more essay models and put more attentions on the learning about writing skills. Through the four months, during which the incorporation of the model-imitation and the process approach to the English writing class, about 63.8% of the subjects become more confident in writing English compositions. About the disadvantages of using models in writing, half of them (51.1%) guess that they rely too much on the models and may be restricted by the samples too much. That means our EFL teachers should make proper use of the model input and help students aware of the role of the model in the EFL learning.

The main findings from the questionnaire are consistent with what have been found from the quantitative data through the experiment.

Chapter 5 Findings and Implications

5.1 Major Findings

For a long period, teachers and experts believe that imitations are of great help to English learning. But this is only based on personal intuitions rather than solid scientific evidences. Some studies show that imitation can help EFL learners a lot with their phoneme, vocabulary and even grammar (Crystal, 2000: 236). Socialists and linguists still advocate the effectiveness of modeling in the process of children's growing and learning (Blair, 1975:115; Child, 1986: 81; Borich, 1997: 192; Crystal. 2000: 234-236), but few are about the writing problem. Most of them are based on teaching experience or theoretical arguments. This thesis proved the effectiveness of imitation in students' processing English writing.

With a Pretest/Posttest nonequivalent groups design, this study attempts to find out if model-imitation practice is a better way of teaching writing to non-English majors than the way without imitating the essay models by the process approach. At the same time, a group questionnaire for the EG was employed to have some general ideas about the subjects' attitudes towards the model-imitation practice in writing.

The results of the group questionnaire conducted in the EG show that a great majority (63.8%) of the students believe that by analyzing and imitating essay models, the activity of writing will become much easier, and their writing performance will be improved a lot in this way of training. More than half of them think that writing samples are of great help in logical thinking, in structure and wording. The results from the data-analysis of the questionnaire are consistent with our common sense, which views imitating as a good way of learning.

The findings come from the present study. The process approach with the model-imitation practice to writing teaching stimulates students' interest and evokes their enthusiasm in writing. Their attitudes and beliefs towards writing changed dramatically.

The reasons are as follows:

(1) Authentic themes related to students' daily life can stimulate students to write more actively. Students are enthusiastic to write if the writing tasks are interesting, close

to their daily life, and within the reach of their language competence.

(2) Brainstorming is the most impressive process just as mentioned in Chapter 2. During brainstorming, students are put in the position of activating their cognitive faculty to think aloud, to call out what they have read and heard in English. They are the masters of the class, while the teacher, instead of dominating the class, works as a facilitator or guide for developing students' writing potential. In this way students become confident and productive step by step in their English writing practice.

(3) The process of "sharing" also promotes their writing ability. Since students need to share their writings with others, they need to tailor the messages for a particular audience and purpose. A great deal of excitement was generated when they knew that they would share their final product with others. The students see their writings read by others, the sense of achievement is aroused and this will encourage them to write more. Displays and sharing their works make their writing authentic and it is a good way to promote writing." (Peregoy and Boyle, 1993)

(4) Teacher's error treatment also influences students' attitudes and beliefs towards writing. As the teacher was more willing to take the risk of relaxing the demand on accuracy in exchange for students' confidence to write, the teacher was more tolerant with students' minor mechanical mistakes in writing. Students found that the teacher did not blame them for mistakes and this helped build up their confidence in writing freely.

In a word, the process writing can help students realize writing process is not a linear one, but recursive process. Besides, during the process writing, students all involve in different stages of writing. They not only constantly perfect their works but also learn a lot from others. More importantly, this approach provides students with a supportive and enjoyable learning environment. With the model-imitation input, students gain a sense of safety and achievement, which makes them feel relaxed and can, to a large degree, help them produce the best results. Therefore, their attitudes and beliefs towards writing changed greatly and their writing ability in content improved. Accordingly, they do better in the final exam as the study shows.

5.2 Implications for English Teaching

5.2.1 To Ensure Sufficient Language Input

Cheng (Cheng Jingying, 1994) did a research by analyzing students' writing errors and categorized them into three types:

Interlanguage caused by the first language interference is of the primary type. Items like articles, tenses, agreement between subject and verb, the singular and plural forms of nouns and punctuations are all hard for Chinese students to grasp;

Poor lexicon knowledge is the second problem. Word order, word form and collocations are among the most confusing areas where negative first language transfer occurs;

The third problem is the students' poor discourse organization ability. Incorrect discourse structures often result in the incomprehensibility of the message. Ye (Ye Yunping, 2002) did another error analysis research to prove the hypothesis that students' writing proficiency is closely related to their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Statistics in the research shows there is an average of about 7 errors in each composition of approximately 150 words, and lexical errors are four times more than syntactic ones.

From the writing samples collected during the author's teaching as well as from the experiment, conclusion can be made that a number of students are still quite weak in controlling freely their target language. Language mistakes still abound at lexical level or discourse level. Sometimes even the mistakes they made in their early stage of construction may last for quite a long period to the higher stage of writing.

Here the author does not want to diverge her stream of writing by probing into the various causes these phenomena result from, what she would like to point out and stress is that sufficient language input is the most fundamental thing in ensuring a successful piece of writing and thus teachers should try their utmost to strengthen the language input by all means.

5.2.2 To Make the Most of Sample Reading in the Process Approach

The stress on the importance of process writing approach does not necessarily mean some of the good points of the traditional product approach can be neglected. The selected sample is itself a successful final product. The process of the teacher's explanation of its language and structure and the students' learning to imitate the writing are at the same time a process of language input. The process of input can make the students have an even clearer understanding of some basic genre knowledge.

5.2.3 To Maintain the Teaching of Writing in Its Proper Sequence and Continuity

Proper teaching sequence should be maintained in the teaching of writing step by step from a lower level to higher one. Without proper and sufficient practice on the stage of sentences and short paragraphs, it is quite improper to teach the students knowledge of genre and theme. Without the foundation stone of language practice at the basic level, the teaching of writing is just like building a castle in the air.

The continuity of the teaching of writing is another key factor that should be attached great importance to. From the early stage the students learn to write till the advanced writing stage, writing should always be held as an integrated whole but not just as a short-termed activity that teachers and students have to practice for the writing item in the College Entrance Examination or in the College English Band Test.

Writing as a whole should have its target, and branch-targets at different writing levels should also be set up to guide the various teaching processes.

Writing, unlike walking and talking, is a difficult skill that cannot be learnt naturally and demands practice. Only by keeping putting ideas on paper every day can a person really attain his/her goal of improving the writing. If the time span between two pieces of assigned writings is too long, for example, as was responded by the students in the questionnaire, a whole month between two compositions, the students' writing competence cannot be developed.

5.2.4 To Improve Teacher's Effective Guidance

To improve the guidance, a teacher needs to reconsider his or her traditional role as a mere judge of students' writing product. He or she must first and fundamentally prepare himself or herself as an all-round teacher—a teacher who is not an authoritarian in the classroom, not one who believes he or she knows everything, not one who follows the theory dogmatically, but one who learns together with the students, uses theory as a guide, yet remains open-minded.

In the process approach, a teacher should always bear in mind the duty to guide the students through the composing process so that the students can be quite aware of what to do in each step, how they can cooperate with the teachers so as to achieve the most possible efficiency, especially in pre-writing stage.

5.2.5 To Organize Pre-writing Activities

"I have always been dreaming of being an efficient writer", some students may complain, "but no ideas can stream or ooze out of my brain". They made the complaint

that during the constructing stage, their brains are completely in a state of “blankness”. From the complaints, we can safely conclude that pre-writing activities should be organized to stimulate students’ ideas so as to settle the problem of “having nothing to write about”. Many process writing advocates (Wu Jin, Zhang Zaixin, 2000) stress the significance and a number of reasons are listed:

Through pre-writing activities, students can be instructed to make out the correct purpose of the given writing task. The purpose of a writing task, or, for whom the writing task is intended for, is as a matter of fact very crucial for different communicative purposes because different audience can give rise to product of totally different styles; Students sometimes need to do some writing before they know what their thesis will be. Some students work well from an outline, or a tree diagram. Others may benefit from generating a series of questions, or thinking about the questions their readers will have about their topic. Therefore, sufficient class time should be set aside for students to clarify their thoughts that are originally at a mess.

Through pre-writing activities, students’ possible wrong perception of the writing topic can be ironed out. They can be helped to get the clearest understanding about the topic and also in the late constructing period, their development of thought can be bound snugly on the correct point, or, of the right track.

Through pre-writing activities, sufficient information relevant to the writing topic can be pooled and students can be helped to work out the outline and to choose among the materials the proper supporting details to build up a well-planned writing.

Through pre-writing activities, writing can be fully integrated with such language skills as speaking, listening and reading. A balanced development of both the receptive skill and the productive skill is undoubtedly very essential for the students to improve their language proficiency as a whole because the two types of skills are closely interrelated and the successful acquisition of the either one can reinforce that of the other.

Through pre-writing activities, teacher’s heavy workload on students’ writing can be largely lessened for the pre-writing mistake-abolishing stage.

5.2.6 To Bring the Writing Classroom under Control

Process writing approach involves different classroom activities in which all the students are engaged. Writing approach, a teacher should have much stronger classroom management ability than before due to the increasing class size. In order not to bring the

class into chaos, the teacher should try his utmost to keep the various steps of the process approach: brainstorming, oral presentation, drafting, feeding back, etc, well on a smooth and sequential track toward a successful final product, yet this goal can not be attained at the price of reducing the effect of individual writing process.

First of all, a good plan and rational allocation of the class time to each step is of significant importance to a successful classroom organization. The precious classroom time should be well-planned beforehand and be allocated to the need of each step and the time allocated should be ample enough in order not to make the students have a sense of haste.

Secondly, students should be fully motivated and during the whole process, their enthusiasm should be consistently maintained. Hence, a teacher should seek to arouse the students' interests to the greatest possible extent. In Howard Gardner' Theory of Multiple Intelligences (1999), he challenges the traditional view of intelligence as a unitary capacity that can be adequately measured by IQ tests. He suggested that each individual possess at least seven such relatively independent mental abilities or intelligences. They are: linguistic intelligence, musical intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence. He further put forward that individuals are never endowed with only one kind of intelligence. Rather, all brain-unimpaired people possess all the intelligences, which they blend in various ways in the course of creating something that is meaningful or, in performing a meaningful role or task. Based on this theory, we can set out to do something to better stimulate the students in the commonly boring writing class.

By employing the logical-mathematical intelligence, a teacher can give clear explanation of some of the writing concepts and also he can have a good command of the time assigned; In giving a lecture, a teacher should know how to employ the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, for example, the use of body language, to make his speech more attractive; Most importantly, on the side of linguistic intelligence, a teacher should seek to use more distinct, more humorous and more exquisite language in a writing class to make his lecture more persuasive.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The same study can be carried out with some variables involved, for example, types of teaching materials, teaching procedures and teaching settings, which can be viewed as

different types of variables. By employing a series of such studies, an overall picture of teaching writing to non-English majors can be presented, and a set of principles of data-collection and data-analysis can be established. With more factors concerned, the findings obtained from them would make contributions to the establishment of more perfect and complex design of empirical studies.

For the types of writing under investigation, further studies can be undertaken in the other three types of writing—the narration, exposition and description. If the further studies reveal that there is difference existing in the effectiveness of model-imitation activity in other types of writing, the findings of this study and future studies might be combined into a perfect teaching writing pedagogy, i.e., using different ways to deal with different types of writing. This will present great implications for the future teaching of writing which may use essay models for the sake of students' imitation benefits in other writings.

In addition to the above areas, time lasted for the experiment is another important factor which should be attached more importance to in the further studies. The present study lasted only a term, about four months, which is not long enough for a language skill as writing that needs even life-long efforts of study. Future study can be undertaken through a whole academic year, or at least two terms. With a longer time, the effect of model-imitation in English process teaching methods might be more obvious.

In short, there are some general issues as well as specific research questions that need to be solved in the future. Further studies on the issue can be carried out with bigger sample size and more variables involved through a longer time. The findings further researches.

Conclusion

A writing teacher's job is very demanding and often exhausting and frustrating. Yet students are not grateful to their hard work for they do not think their hard job is of any sense in improving their writing proficiency. They complain that they need communication of some kind with instructors so that in the communicative process they can obtain concrete writing help. Escholz (Escholz, 1980 cited in Wu Jin, Zhang Zaixin, 2000) put forward the notion of new sample-reading approach in the teaching of writing. He suggested the full integration of the use of samples in process writing approach, that is, a teacher should not show the students the samples until actual composing problems occur. Only by presenting the samples to the students after problems emerge can the samples attain their desired goal. Most of them are based on teaching experience or theoretical arguments. In this thesis, the author proved the practice of the model-imitation into EFL process writing lessons, which is a practical and effective method, as can be drawn from the research conducted by the author from the empirical study perspective.

In view of current teaching and learning condition of Chinese colleges, the process approach to teaching writing has some obvious deficiency. The advocators of the process approach disaffirm the effects of the model-imitation practice while for the Chinese learners of English the effects cannot be neglected. English and Chinese belong to the different language families, so they greatly differentiate in sound, glossary, grammar, rhetoric, etc. More effective native language input should be added in English writing class. According to Rod Ellis, input refers to the language that is addressed to the L2 learner either by a native speaker or by another L2 learner. It refers to the target language samples to which the learner is exposed. As long as the practice of model-imitation is applied actively to the writing teaching processes, the students can get the consciousness of the way to express their ideas, the differences between the two languages, and the impossibility of copying the expressive method of their native language completely to the English writing.

The practice of the model-imitation into EFL process writing lessons will resolve the students' problem of not knowing how to write and what to write by putting more emphasis on their writing process and giving them more effective guidance. To testify

the hypothesis, this paper undertakes an experiment carried out in two classes of random samples which are randomly selected from North China Electric Power University (NCEPU). The 103 juniors from two classes of non-English major departments participated in the experiment. They have taken College English as textbook for college English study for at least one school semester. The two classes were randomly chosen as the experimental group (EG) and the controlled group (CG). The following tools are used in the experiment: (1) a pretest held to prove the assumption that the students of both groups have had the basic linguistic skill to construct a prose in English and that they are on the same writing proficiency level; (2) the experiment, in which the students in the experiment group compose a writing task of about 120 words by employing the new method while the students in the controlled group accomplish their writing still by using the only process approach; (3) a posttest held to further prove the efficiency of the new teaching practice. (4) a questionnaire distributed to the students in the EG group to find out their attitudes to the new approach.

In order to ensure the issues of validity and reliability, this paper selects 8 published CET Band 4 writing topics as the topics of the experiment. Through detailed analysis of the collected data, a safe conclusion can be arrived at that the new approach does function effectively in improving the students writing proficiency. The main findings from the questionnaire are consistent with what have been found from the quantitative data through the experiment.

Unavoidably there exist some limitations and uncontrollable factors in the experiment, but the empirical way of the study is still assumed to offer some valuable implications for college teaching of writing and the further research of it in the future. The same study can be carried out with some variables involved, for example, types of teaching materials, teaching procedures and teaching settings, which can be viewed as different types of variables. For the types of writing under investigation, further studies can be undertaken in the other three types of writing—the narration, exposition and description. Time lasted for the experiment is another important factor which should be attached more importance to in the further studies.

After the experiment, the author deeply feels that with the model-imitation practice the teaching process writing to students is enjoyable and the author deeply feels that teaching process writing to yet challenging. Quantitative changes are identified in students. But still the results of the present study have a number of implications in both language research and teaching. Given more authentic communicative and meaningful themes, the student writers' long time memory is stimulated and they have a lot to write.

The diversified and well structured input in terms of clear teaching and demonstration, a wide variety of teaching and learning materials, brainstorming, modeling, peer-editing and publishing all contribute to students' mastery of writing skills. The process they underwent has equipped them with the skills and confidence in writing. A change in the marking criteria has released the teachers and they become more tolerant of "minor" errors, and the students become more aware of their own accuracy in writing. Moreover, students were given the chance to share their own product and this adds incentives to writing. All these success makes the author firmly believe the incorporation of the process approach and the model-imitation practice into EFL writing's bright prospect in Chinese colleges.

In conclusion, it can be said that the incorporation of the process approaches and the model-imitation practice into EFL writing lessons can tackle some problems traditionally experienced by teachers and students mentioned in Chapter 1. What is more, they can turn the writing class into a stimulating, pleasurable and communicative learning experience, making a firm and valuable contribution to the language-learning experience as a whole.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Sample 1:

Getting to Know the World outside the Campus

With the rapid development of society, it is essential for college students to get to know the world outside the campus. There are a variety of reasons why we should do that. The primary one is that we can expand our horizons. Nowadays, as students, our knowledge is mostly derived from books, which is really limited. Only through contact with society will we learn more practical things. Second, it will enable us to be more sophisticated after graduation. Finally, knowing the world outside the campus may awaken in us a high sense of duty and help us make greater achievements in the future.

As is known to all, there are many ways we can know the society, such as through community service or keeping informed through TV, radio or newspapers.

As a university student, I will read newspapers and magazines to enrich my knowledge and do some volunteer work for the community or take up a part-time job in my spare time so that I can learn from my experience and prepare for my future work.

Sample 2:

Reading Selectively or Extensively?

Some people think reading should be selectively. First, they think that one's life is so limited that reading extensively is out of the question, one should only focus on the books closely connected with their majors, or which can bring them immediate benefits. Second, they think man is incompetent in the world of knowledge explosion, they believe reading without selecting is simply a waste of time, energy and money. Finally, those who select books to read think that not all books are worth reading.

However, there are many people who prefer reading extensively. First of all, they firmly believe that the more books one reads, the more knowledge one acquires. Another reason for those who like reading extensively is that the world is changing very rapidly, only by reading extensively that one can keep abreast of what is going on in other parts of the world.

In my opinion, people should read both selectively and extensively. On one hand, we should read selectively for special knowledge, which needs our concentration and careful study. On the other hand, we should read extensively for the information or entertainment, which leads to a colorful life. Therefore, Reading should be, according to my own understanding, both selectively and extensively.

Sample 3:

How I Finance My College Education

Nowadays, tuition and fees for college are much higher than ever before. How to finance your college education has become a matter of concern for many. You can deal with it in many ways. You can get all of the money from your parents. You can completely by yourself, doing a full time job in summer or winter holiday. In addition, you can ask your parents for most of it and earn the rest in your spare time in college, by doing a part time job.

In my opinion, I prefer the last way. Having acquired most of the tuition and fees from my parents, I needn't worry too much about the money and can concentrate on my study; on the other hand, a part time job in my spare time makes my campus life colorful. I can make a lot of friends, improve my abilities and learn lots of knowledge, So, I choose this way to cover my tuition and fees.

Sample 4:

Student Use of Computers

Students tend to use computers more and more nowadays. Reading this chart, we can find that the average number of hours a student spends on the computer per week has increased sharply. In 1990, it had less than 2 hours; and in 1995, it increased to almost 4 hours, and in 2000, the number soared to 20 hours.

Obviously computers are becoming more and more popular. There are several reasons for this. First, computers facilitate us in more aspects of life. Also, the fast development of the Internet enlarges our demands for using computers. We can easily contact with friends in remote places through the Internet. Besides, the prices of computers are getting lower and lower, which enables more students to purchase them.

However, there still exist some problems, such as poor quality, out of date designs and so on. And how to balance the time between using computers and studying is also a serious problem. Anyhow, we will benefit a lot from computers as long as we use them properly.

Sample 5:

It Pays to Be Honest

From the mass media and also with our own eyes, we know much dishonest behavior existed in our society. For example, businessmen sell fake products to cheat their customers; students copy other one's homework or download illicit paper from Internet to cheat their teachers; and even worse, there are medical person produce fake medicine harming the patients. Seeing our society is filled with so many dishonest phenomena, I can't help asking myself what's wrong with ourselves?

When we were very young we were taught the importance of being honest. I am sure everyone must still remember that story "wolf is coming". In the story the child kept cheating other people that wolf was coming, but when the wolf really came, nobody trusted his words and he finally suffered his own dishonesty. Also we have heard many stories that people benefit from their virtues of honesty.

So since we have already known being honest benefits both ourselves and other people, why many of us are still dishonest? I hope everyone to bear in mind that being honest is the basic quality of human being and then we won't be afraid of any "wolf".

Sample 6:

Volunteers Needed

Dear fellow students,

Attention, please! We are now recruiting volunteers to participate in (take part in / get involved in) a voluntary program held by the student union during the summer break.

The details of our activity are listed as follows. First, this activity is aimed at cultivating (giving a boost to) your sense of responsibility, broadening your vision and sharpening your edge because, as our economy evolves at an incredible speed, it is becoming increasingly vital for young adults in the Ivory Tower to get in touch with the real world. Second, our activity begins at July 10th and ends at July 20th. . Plus, the schedule involves blood donation, looking after senior citizens and conducting a survey on the city's traffic system to put forward our suggestions.

Any full-time or part-time students in our college are welcomed to join our team. For further information, please call us at 135***** or send your email to studentunion@asp.edu.cn.

Come on, guys!

Sample 7:

Positive and Negative Aspects of Sports

Sports benefit us in many respects. When taking part in sports, we get the chance to train almost all parts of our body. There is no doubt that properly balanced physical activities keep us physically fit. Furthermore, sports can enrich our life and maintain our psychological health. Through participation, everyone can learn that on the playing field he not only competes for himself but also for his team. Sports teach us about consideration, cooperation and optimism, and how to cope with difficulties.

But sports can do harm to those people who cannot balance their activities properly. Training too hard may hurt their body, exhaust their energy and even make them disabled.

Personally, I love sports. I enjoy participating in sports. I feel that I not only

gain a well-balanced life through sports, but also get more chances to move closer to nature. Sports have really added happiness to my daily life.

Sample 8:

A Brief Introduction to a Tourist Attraction

Good morning, ladies and gentleman, welcome to Beijing. To begin with, I would like to introduce myself: I am the tourist guide from China Travel Service and it's a great honor to stay here with all of you for a whole day. Just as the old saying goes, "It is always a pleasure to greet a friend from afar", I wish all of you to enjoy yourselves during this trip.

The following is schedule of the day. The first spot we are going to visit is the Great Wall, the grandest fortification in ancient China. The next sight to look around is the Ming Tombs, which is one of the best-preserved tombs for 13 emperors in Ming Dynasty more than one thousand years ago. In the afternoon, we will go for the Summer Palace, the royal park for Chinese ancient emperors.

Currently we are on the way to the Great Wall. Dating back to the seven century B.C., the Great Wall is constructed by respective states for fortifying against invasion of neighboring states. By the reasons of long history and its length, it becomes one of the eight wonders in the world and represents the highest wisdom and crafts. From the top of the Great Wall, we can enjoy a magnificent view of continuous mountains, green trees and blooming wild flowers. It is no doubt that one says, "He who has never been to the Great Wall is not a true man".

Above is my introduction to the Great Wall. If any of you have questions, please feel free to ask me at any time.

Appendix 2

全国大学英语四、六级考试作文题评分原则及标准

一、评分原则

1. CET 是检查考生是否达到大学英语教学大纲规定的四级和六级教学要求, 对作文的评判应以此要求为基准。

2. CET 作文题采用总体评分(Global Scoring)方法。阅卷员就总的印象给出奖励分(Reward Scores),而不是按语言点的错误数目扣分。

3. 从内容和语言两个方面对作文进行综合评判。内容和语言是一个统一体。作文应表达题目所规定的内容,而内容要通过语言来表达。要考虑作文是否切题,是否充分表达思想,也要考虑是否用英语清楚而合适的表达思想,也就是要考虑语言上的错误是否造成理解上的障碍。

二、评分标准

1. 本题满分为 15 分。

2. 阅卷标准共分五等:2 分、5 分、8 分、11 分及 14 分。

3. 阅卷人员根据阅卷标准,对照样卷评分,若认为与某一分数(如 8 分)相似,即定为该分数(即 8 分)。若认为稍优于或稍差于该分数则可加一分(即 9 分)或减一分(即 7 分),但不得加或减半分。

4. 评分标准

2 分—条理不清,思路紊乱,语言支离破碎或大部分句子均有错误,且多数为严重错误。

5 分—基本切题。表达思想不清楚,连贯性差,有较多的严重语言错误,且多数为严重错误。

8 分—基本切题。有些地方表达思想不够清楚,文字勉强连贯;语言错误相当多,其中有一些是严重错误。

11 分—切题。表达思想清楚,文字连贯,但有少量语言错误。

14 分—切题。表达思想清楚,文字通顺,连贯性好,基本上无语言错误,但又个别小错。

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