

THE COMPOSITE MODEL OF 'SPEAK-WRITE' FOR SUCCESS IN EFL WRITING CLASSROOM: A STUDY ON CHINESE UNIVERSITY FRESHMEN

(Model Komposit 'Cakap-Tulis' untuk Keberhasilan dalam Kelas Menulis EFL: Kajian terhadap Mahasiswa Baru Universiti Cina)

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Abstract

Written language emerges from spoken language and is a refined form of it. Certain oral activities can prepare for corresponding written expression. Based on this principle, this study carried out an action research to investigate the effectiveness of a composite model of 'Speak-Write' in EFL writing instruction in a mechanical engineering 1st year undergraduate class in a northwestern Chinese university. The study addressed the challenges faced by these students in developing fluency, confidence, and coherence in their writing. The model integrates speaking activities into the writing process, aiming to enhance vocabulary, fluency, and idea generation. The author has consistently used this model throughout the freshman year. Data analysis, including pre- and post-tests, writing sample analysis, teacher observations, and student surveys, revealed significant improvements in students' writing proficiency, confidence, and engagement. Students demonstrated increased fluency, vocabulary use, and grammatical accuracy in their writing, alongside enhanced participation and positive attitudes towards writing. The 'Speak-Write' composite model provides a valuable framework for EFL teachers working with Chinese university freshmen. The findings suggest that integrating speaking activities into EFL writing instruction can effectively address the specific needs and challenges of Chinese university freshmen, fostering a more engaging and effective learning environment, and promoting both language acquisition and confidence in written communication. This study has implication for university EFL learners and EFL writing teachers.

Keywords: 'Speak-Write' composite model, engineering students, classroom, effectiveness

Abstrak

Bahasa tulisan muncul daripada bahasa lisan dan merupakan bentuk yang lebih halus darinya. Aktiviti lisan tertentu boleh menyediakan asas untuk ekspresi bertulis yang sepadan. Berdasarkan prinsip ini, kajian ini menjalankan penyelidikan tindakan untuk menyiasat keberkesanan model komposit 'Speak-Write' dalam pengajaran penulisan EFL dalam kelas pelajar tahun pertama Kejuruteraan Mekanikal di sebuah universiti di barat laut China. Kajian ini menangani cabaran yang dihadapi oleh pelajar-pelajar ini dalam mengembangkan kefasihan, keyakinan, dan koherensi dalam penulisan mereka. Model ini mengintegrasikan aktiviti bertutur ke dalam proses penulisan, bertujuan untuk meningkatkan perbendaharaan kata, kefasihan, dan penjanaaan idea. Pengarang telah

menggunakan model ini secara konsisten sepanjang tahun pertama. Analisis data, termasuk ujian pra dan pasca, analisis sampel penulisan, pemerhatian guru, dan soal selidik pelajar, menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan dalam kemahiran penulisan, keyakinan, dan penglibatan pelajar. Pelajar menunjukkan peningkatan kefasihan, penggunaan perbendaharaan kata, dan ketepatan tatabahasa dalam penulisan mereka, di samping penyertaan yang lebih baik dan sikap positif terhadap penulisan. Model komposit 'Speak-Write' menyediakan rangka kerja yang bernilai untuk guru EFL yang bekerja dengan pelajar tahun pertama universiti China. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa mengintegrasikan aktiviti bertutur ke dalam pengajaran penulisan EFL dapat menangani keperluan dan cabaran khusus pelajar tahun pertama universiti China dengan berkesan, memupuk persekitaran pembelajaran yang lebih menarik dan berkesan, dan meningkatkan kedua-dua pemerolehan bahasa dan keyakinan dalam komunikasi bertulis. Kajian ini mempunyai implikasi untuk pelajar EFL universiti dan guru penulisan EFL.

Kata Kunci: Model komposit 'Speak-Write', pelajar kejuruteraan, bilik darjah, keberkesanan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing constitute an interdependent and mutually reinforcing organic whole in language learning and communication. Language learners receive language information through listening and reading, and express themselves through speaking and writing. EFL learners in Chinese universities often need to invest a significant amount of time in activities such as imitating model writing, using sentence templates, rewriting high-quality short texts, and translating from Chinese to English in writing so as to pass the National College English Test and meet the language requirements for their university degrees and diplomas (Wang, 2002; Li, 2006; Chen, 2022). EFL writing poses a considerable challenge for Chinese university students (Luo, 2003; Liu, 2006; Guo et al., 2021; Teng et al., 2022;).

1.1 Problem Statement

As an EFL teacher and researcher in EFL writing at Baoji University of Arts and Sciences (China), the author has observed that EFL writing instruction at the university level faces challenges such as inefficiency, monotonous teaching methods, lack of student initiative, and insufficient positive feedback (Wang, 2002; Chen, 2022). There is significant room for improvement in teaching methods and teaching effectiveness.

1.2 Research Objectives

This paper addresses two research objectives. Firstly, it will use the example of four consecutive writing classes based on the composite model of 'Speak-Write' as examples, so as to demonstrate the characteristics of this model. Secondly, the study aims to prove the effectiveness of the model with findings from data analysis. This method of speaking before writing, using speaking to promote writing, focuses on writing with spoken language as a supplement. The researcher has consistently used this approach for a year with mechanical engineering freshmen at Baoji University of Arts and Sciences, so as to gradually improve students' experience and perception of English writing, cultivate good learning habits of combining speaking and writing, and lay a solid foundation for their future English learning (Boiarsky, 2004; Geisler & Lewis, 2007; Du, 2020; Al Hilali, 2020). This research aims to be helpful to university students or other EFL learners and provide a reference for university EFL teachers.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Written language arises from spoken language and is a refined form of it. Firstly, we consider it from the perspective of language origin and development. In *The Growth and Structure of the English Language*, Otto Jespersen, points out that language initially appeared in spoken form, while written language emerged later. He believes written language is an "imitation" of spoken language, developed based on spoken language and gradually formed its own characteristics (Jespersen, 1926; 2013). Secondly, we consider it from the perspective of language structure and function. Noam Chomsky, in his transformational-generative grammar theory, argues that language structure is composed of deep structure and surface structure (Chomsky, 2011). Spoken language tends to rely more on surface structure, while written language relies more on deep structure. Written language requires more rigorous and precise expression, thus requiring more processing to conform to grammatical rules and logical relationships. Written language reflects the characteristics of spoken language in terms of structure, function, evolution, and communication, while also developing its own unique norms and forms. On the basis of spoken language output, it needs to undergo a longer period of contemplation, revision, and refinement to achieve the precise expression of written language.

From a language generation perspective, written language generation can be built upon the processing of spoken language generation content. On the one hand, according to the current working principle of large language models, whether it's spoken or written language, the language generation models share commonality. Existing language generation models, whether based on statistical machine translation or deep learning, generally employ a "encoding-decoding" framework. The encoding phase converts input text (whether spoken or written) into a semantic vector, and the decoding phase generates the target text based on this vector (see Zhao et al., 2023; Kaur et al., 2024; Minaee et al., 2024). This implies that spoken and written language share the same core mechanism in language generation models, namely, the transformation from the semantic level to the word level. On the other hand, semantic information and language form can be converted. Studies show that while spoken language and written language are different in form, they share the same underlying semantic information (Jespersen, 1926; 2013). For example, the same sentence can be expressed using different spoken language forms and different written language forms, but the semantic content is consistent. Language generation models can extract semantic information through the encoding stage and decode it according to the language style of the target text, thereby generating written text that meets specific requirements.

While spoken and written expressions differ in terms of expression methods, occasions, etc., they do not differ in terms of content or purpose of expression; a spoken language is the foundation of the related written language, and the written language is a variant form of the spoken expression. Spoken expression can transition to written expression, meaning that what students can say, they can also write. Students' spoken language skills are the foundation of their written language skills. Certain oral activities can prepare them for writing.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopts an action research approach to demonstrate the characteristics of the 'Speak-Write' composite model and verify the effectiveness of the model in EFL writing instruction in China. An action research approach allows us to systematically investigate the EFL writing performance of university freshmen and implement

measures to improve teaching practices within the context of the classroom environment (Kim & Kang, 2020, Saadi Ali, 2021). It employs qualitative data analysis throughout the whole study.

3.1 Sampling Procedure

The study is carried out in a mechanical engineering undergraduate class of 62 freshmen at Baoji University of Arts and Sciences, in the northwestern city of Baoji in China. Around 80% of the undergraduate students enrolled in mechanical engineering programme at this university come from senior middle schools in rural and suburban areas where teachers prioritize EFL exam scores over EFL speaking and writing skills. In the 1st year mechanical engineering undergraduate class chosen for the current study, 49 out of 62 freshmen come from rural or suburban areas and had very limited EFL speaking and writing training during their senior middle school study period.

As the EFL teacher of this class with responsibility of fostering an environment of English learning and facilitating the overall English progress of every students, the researcher attempts to engage the students through the 'Speak-Write' composite model in EFL writing instruction, which could lead to ongoing improvement of the students' writing performance in classroom context.

Guided by the idea that EFL writing can be achieved through the transformation of spoken expression, the author has implemented the 'Speak-Write' composite model to organize the mechanical engineering undergraduate EFL writing classes throughout the freshman year, taking into account the students' actual English proficiency and their learning psychology (Li, 2006).

The purposive sampling procedure involves four consecutive EFL writing classes. Each cycle includes four interconnected stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection (Reece & Cumming, 1996).

1. Planning

We identify the need to address the common challenges faced by Chinese university freshmen in EFL writing, specifically their lack of confidence and engagement in class, and lack of fluency and cohesion in their written expression. Then we review existing research on EFL writing instruction and the benefits of incorporating speaking into writing activities (Biber et al., 2002; Boiarsky, 2004; Geisler & Lewis, 2007; Horowitz, 2017, 2023; Du, 2020; Al Hilali, 2020). Finally, we develop the 'Speak-Write' composite model integrating speaking activities like collaborative discussions and oral presentations into the writing process, aiming to enhance students' vocabulary, fluency, and ideas generation (Sasaki, 2000; Lee, 2016; Kim & Kang, 2020; Dewi, 2021; Saadi Ali, 2021).

2. Action

We implement the 'Speak-Write' composite model in our EFL writing courses, introducing the model through explicit instruction and guided practice.

3. Observation

We analyze collected data using qualitative methods. Writing samples are analyzed for grammatical accuracy, fluency, coherence and others.

4. Reflection

We critically evaluate the effectiveness of the 'Speak-Write' composite model based on the collected data and student feedback. And we identify areas for improvement and adapted the model accordingly, making necessary adjustments to enhance its effectiveness and address specific student needs.

This action research methodology allows us to:

- (a) Engage in a cyclical process of planning, action, observation, and reflection.
- (b) Tailor the intervention to the specific needs and challenges of our students.
- (c) Gain insights into the effectiveness of the 'Speak-Write' composite model in our classroom context.
- (d) Continuously refine and improve our teaching practices based on the collected data.

By employing this approach, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the gains and challenges of integrating speaking activities into EFL writing activities for Chinese university freshmen, ultimately aiming to improve writing teaching and learning in EFL classrooms.

Cycle 1: Improving Student Engagement in EFL writing Class in an Integrated Way

The first writing class asked students to reflect on "What do we learn in English?" The author first presented questions like "What is English?", "Why do we learn a language?", and "Why do we learn a foreign language?", and used brainstorming to stimulate students' thinking. Brainstorming is an effective way to think before writing. Its feature is that it allows students to freely think of viewpoints, find materials, and gather ideas around the writing topic through group discussions or individual brainstorming. The teacher randomly divided students into groups of 3-4 and asked them to discuss the question "What do we learn in English?" in a Q & A format within their group. Students were usually actively involved in the discussion, constantly thinking about the value and meaning of language learning, gradually clarifying their thinking, and making the subsequent writing more organized and logical. Then, the teacher asked each group to choose a representative to report to the class, and the teacher provided feedback. Finally, the teacher supplemented the explanation about the current state of English learning. The oral communication was completed.

Immediately afterward, students organized their understanding and thoughts into a short paragraph, choosing a topic from the discussed questions. Students then exchanged and read each other's work, providing feedback and revisions before submitting to the teacher (Kim & Kang, 2020, Saadi Ali, 2021; Teng et al., 2022).

Cycle 2: Targeting Student Weaknesses

The second writing class focused on "Difficulties in English Learning." It combined individual statements and group Q & A to collect questions. The difficulties they encountered in their learning are classified as follows:

- (a) Too many words to memorize, resulting in decreased reading volume.
- (b) Pronunciation is inaccurate, afraid to speak English, no practice partners, and no opportunity to communicate with foreigners.
- (c) Poor English listening comprehension, unable to understand English, find English classes tedious.
- (d) Poor English writing skills, unable to write grammatically correct sentences.
- (e) Low test scores, feeling frustrated, losing interest in English.
- (f) Some students even bluntly say "I don't like (hate) the English teacher."

Facing these difficulties, oral communication activities fall into a trough, and students' emotions appear low and slow. At this time, the teacher's attentive listening to the discussions, as well as the teacher's language and demeanor, are key to providing students with the confidence to overcome difficulties. These learning difficulties, after being summarized and organized, are listed in order from most difficult to least difficult by students on their writing paper based on their own situation. This pre-writing communication activity serves as a mental warm-up, effectively

promoting the continuous improvement of students' cognitive understanding of language learning, strengthening mutual understanding between students and teachers, fostering interpersonal collaboration, and jointly creating a lively writing class atmosphere.

Cycle 3: Rectifying Misconceptions and Improper Learning Practices

The third writing class mainly focused on "How to learn." Similarly, under the teacher's guidance, students first discuss their own English learning methods and skills, as well as the learning methods of celebrities they admire, in groups of 3-4. Then, each group selects one representative to report to the class, and the teacher provides feedback. Finally, the teacher supplements the explanation about some effective classic English learning methods. The oral communication is completed.

After the exchange and comparison, students independently complete the written organization and improvement of their English learning methods, exchange and revise, and finally submit their work. In this process, whether it's macroscopic learning models like combining intensive and extensive learning, combining left-brain and right-brain learning, or microscopic methods such as imitating pronunciation, vocabulary memorization, paragraph memorization, reading aloud, and dictation, or learning attitudes like hard work and perseverance, students' English learning concepts have been liberated, and their thinking has been expanded (Kuiper & Allan, 2024). The real value of methods lies in practice. The mechanical engineering freshmen should focus more of their energy on practicing language learning, gradually mastering the rules of EFL learning through listening, speaking, reading, and writing exercises, and exploring a learning path that suits them.

Cycle 4: Activating the Learning Self and Empowering the Overall Progress

The fourth writing class centered on "Goals and Plans." The teacher asked students to discuss in pairs at their desks, followed by a few students reporting to the whole class. Some students set a goal of expanding their vocabulary, others expanding their reading, others improving pronunciation and spoken language, others improving listening comprehension, others strengthening their knowledge of American and British culture, and others aiming for postgraduate entrance examinations, TOEFL, IELTS, and other overseas study exams. The teacher then presents four major learning objectives: listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, test-taking skills, self-motivation skills, and cross-cultural communication skills. Through a brief explanation, students are made aware of the general direction of EFL learning.

Then, combining the students' actual situation, the teacher organizes and selects four representative English learning projects, discusses them with the students to clarify specific difficulties, and offers suggestions to help them develop realistic learning plans.

- (a) In terms of vocabulary and reading, some students plan to memorize 30-50 words a day and read an English story book a week to improve their vocabulary and reading comprehension simultaneously. The author believes that memorizing 5-10 words a day is more feasible and should follow the two basic principles of vocabulary learning: memorize words along with sentences; apply and practice the learned words, vocabulary, or sentences in life with classmates and family.
- (b) In terms of English pronunciation and spoken language skills, many students believe that poor English pronunciation is a fatal flaw in spoken language, often causing their interest in practicing spoken language to disappear. The author recommends using electronic dictionaries, listening to recordings, and trying to communicate with parents and classmates in English, as well as seizing opportunities to communicate with foreigners. Frequent application is the

unbreakable principle for learning any foreign language. To increase practice opportunities, students can also use a mix of English and their native language when talking with friends. When practicing alone, they can talk to themselves, or practice reciting one or two paragraphs of English in front of the mirror every day, keeping the learned vocabulary and sentences circulating in their minds. If there are English sentences in the mind, it becomes easier to speak.

- (c) Regarding English listening comprehension, there are abundant resources available in bookstores and online. The author advises students not to be greedy, but to choose a specific content and practice repeatedly and persistently. They can choose to listen to English programs like BBC, VOA, CRI every day, watch English movies with subtitles, and watch them eight times in a row – the first time without subtitles, trying to get the gist; the second time with Chinese subtitles; the third to fifth time with English subtitles and looking up some words; from the sixth time onwards, without subtitles, adding English subtitles when necessary; the last time with English subtitles, trying to follow along. With such repeated practice, listening comprehension and speaking skills will surely improve by leaps and bounds.
- (d) Strengthening English writing skills, besides following the 'Speak-Write' composite training, also requires practicing writing English diaries (Chen, 2022). Some students plan to write letters, emails, and diaries in English. To this end, the author suggests that students write three or more diaries a week, each diary divided into two parts: the first part lists 5-10 words or phrases learned that day, and the second part uses these words or phrases to describe the day's life, whether true or fictional. This approach of learning by applying proves quite effective.

Finally, students make a detailed list of their specific learning plans, posted on the classroom wall for self-reminder and mutual supervision. Through this writing activity, students' learning initiative has been enhanced, EFL learning has a plan of action, and there is some assurance for both their stage-based autonomous learning tasks and learning effectiveness.

The four consecutive EFL writing classes cover basic themes of English learning, progressively guiding the mechanical engineering undergraduate students to reflect on the core of English learning. Their significance lies not only in improving EFL writing but also in helping the mechanical engineering undergraduate students establish the correct concept of English learning, set clear learning goals, and formulate specific action plans.

3.2 Qualitative Instruments

We gather data through various methods, including:

- (a) Pre and Post tests: two tests to measure students' writing proficiency at the beginning and the end of the intervention.
- (b) Student writing samples: student writing work being collected and marked with scoring rubric for English writing assessment consisting of grading criteria (main idea, organization, vocabulary & word usage, sentence structure, mechanics & presentation, coherence, and fluency).
- (c) Teacher observations: observations being recorded in three forms (field notes, checklists, video recordings) to document student engagement, participation in speaking activities, and writing development.
- (d) Student surveys: using surveys with open-ended questions to gauge their perceptions of the intervention and its impact on their writing confidence and abilities.

3.3 Data Analysis

The author has long adopted an inductive teaching approach, consistently using the 'Speak-Write' composite model in mechanical engineering freshman English writing classes at Baoji University of Arts and Sciences. The results show that after a year, there is full understanding between students and between teachers and students, students have developed the habit of combining speaking and writing, and EFL writing has improved.

We analyzed the collected data using qualitative method. First, we analyzed the content and structure of pre- and post-test writing samples to identify specific areas of improvement.

Second, we analyzed student writing samples from both pre- and post-intervention periods with the following Scoring Rubric for Writing Assessment in Table 1.

Table 1 Scoring Rubric for Writing Assessment

Rubric	4	3	2	1
main idea	clear	focused	incomprehensible	limited
organization	logical	ordered	unclear	disconnected
vocabulary & word usage	wide	good	basic	inaccurate
sentence structure	variation	few complex sent.	repetition of simple sent.	run-on sent.
mechanics & presentation	proper	minor errors	misuse or misplacement	many mistakes
coherence	good	choppy	redundant	unrelated
fluency	noticeable	few errors	incomprehensible	broken

The assessment focuses on the following criteria.

- (a) Main idea: There is one main idea at the beginning or at the end of the writing which is to some extent clear to readers.
- (b) Organization: The writing is somewhat organized into introduction, body and conclusion.
- (c) Vocabulary & word usage: Choice of words shows attempts at weighing up the meaning, and matching the content theme. Use of idioms and collocations in the post-intervention samples are also graded.
- (d) Sentence structure: Variation either in length or complexity of sentence structure shows student's awareness of sentence building and development of complex ideas.
- (e) Mechanics & presentation: Mistakes of punctuation, spelling or capitalization are classified and graded.
- (f) Coherence: The use of transitional phrases, pronouns, and consistent referencing indicates coherence of writing.
- (g) Fluency: The flow and readability of the writing are measured by analyzing sentence structure, sentence length variation, and use of connectors.

Third, we analyzed our field notes and observations of student engagement during speaking activities and writing sessions.

Fourth, we analyzed student feedback from surveys, focusing on their perceptions of the 'Speak-Write' composite model.

Fifth, we triangulated the data from various sources (pre- and post-tests, writing samples, observations, and surveys) to validate our findings and obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the intervention's impact.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Addressing the first research objective, this action research demonstrates the characteristics of the 'Speak-Write' composite model, and reflects the complementary and mutually beneficial nature of speaking and writing in the model. This integrated teaching model, to some extent, achieves mutual generation, influence, complementation between spoken and written expression, and transformation of speech into writing (Biber et al., 2002; Geisler & Lewis, 2007; Horowitz, 2017, 2023).

At the meantime, the study proves the effectiveness of the model with findings through data analysis of the one-year practice in the mechanical engineering freshman EFL writing classes at Baoji University of Arts and Sciences in northwestern China.

4.1 The Effectiveness of the 'Speak-Write' Composite Model in EFL Writing Instruction

In assessing the pre- and post-test writing samples, we observed a noticeable increase in the use of complex sentence structures, a wider range of vocabulary, and enhanced clarity and coherence in the post-test writing.

Our field notes and observations indicated increased student confidence, active participation in group discussions, and a more comfortable approach to writing. Students demonstrated a greater willingness to express their ideas, take risks, and engage in self-correction.

Through student surveys, students generally reported positive experiences, citing the speaking activities as helpful in generating ideas, expanding vocabulary, and improving fluency. They expressed increased confidence in their writing abilities and perceived the model as engaging and enjoyable.

By data triangulation, the consistent findings across different data sources confirmed the positive impact of the 'Speak-Write' composite model on students' writing proficiency, confidence, and engagement.

To address the second research objective, the data analysis indicates that the 'Speak-Write' composite model positively impacts EFL writing instruction for the mechanical engineering freshmen in the Chinese university (Boiarsky, 2004; Geisler & Lewis, 2007; Du, 2020; Al Hilali, 2020). Sustained 'Speak-Write' composite training throughout the freshman year is significant, both for cultivating autonomous learning habits in the mechanical engineering freshmen and for improving the comprehensive English application ability of students in subsequent years. This integrated approach enhances students' writing proficiency, confidence, and engagement (Biber et al., 2002; Geisler & Lewis, 2007; Horowitz, 2017, 2023).

Oral expression or discussion not only helps students clarify their thinking, choose materials, and avoid writing articles that deviate from the topic due to misreading; it also helps students think deeply about the essay topic, cultivate theme-generating and language organization abilities; and it also helps students cultivate oral expression and interpersonal communication collaboration abilities (Du, 2020; Al Hilali, 2020). Students' written expression skills, on the other hand, are continuously strengthened through writing classroom exercises and the accumulation of diary writing, gradually enabling their essays to meet the basic requirements of clear thinking, reasonable structure, and coherent sentences. They also gradually avoid writing problems such as excessive vocabulary use, template sentence usage, empty content, shallow thinking, messy expression, and Chinglish. Long-term practice of this type, in turn, promotes the improvement of students' oral skills, making their expression more effective and more structured. Students can basically speak and write, write and speak, around the topic, ultimately achieving simultaneous improvement in students' English thinking, spoken language skills, and written expression abilities.

4.2 Limitation and Future Research

This research provides valuable reference to EFL freshmen learners and EFL teachers, however, it admits limitations, mainly including two aspects: a small sample size and the potential for teacher bias. Future research should involve larger samples and independent observers to further validate and expand the findings.

Of course, spoken and written language differ in stylistic features. The language used by students in discussions cannot be directly copied into essays. The language style of the mechanical engineering freshmen is in a transitional period from spoken language to written language, so the author recommends that students should maintain the advantages of easy and natural word usage and sentence construction, avoid using overly complex sentences, and get rid of oral features such as incomplete sentence structures, single sentence patterns, and overuse of words like "and," "but," "very," "because," and "so." The author also lists sentences with obvious oral features in students' essays, asking students to discuss in groups and provide sentences that are more suitable for written language, with the teacher providing corrections and supplements. This, to some extent, helps the mechanical engineering students recognize the formal differences and meaning similarities between spoken and written language, encouraging them to consciously adjust their expression strategies in future 'Speak-Write' composite training.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The 'Speak-Write' composite model English writing not only helps the mechanical engineering freshman at Baoji University of Arts and Sciences escape from traditional EFL writing difficulties, laying a good foundation for future English learning at the university level and even in their careers, but also breaks the traditional concept and teaching model of separating oral language classes from writing classes, exploring an effective pathway for integrated English expression ability training.

This action research study demonstrates the characteristics and efficacy of the 'Speak-Write' composite model in EFL writing instruction for the mechanical engineering freshmen in the northwestern Chinese university. Data analysis revealed significant improvements in students' writing proficiency, confidence, and engagement. The model effectively addressed common challenges faced by these students, including a lack of fluency, vocabulary, and confidence. The integration of speaking activities not only facilitated idea generation and vocabulary acquisition but also fostered a more interactive and engaging classroom environment. Students reported increased confidence in their writing abilities and expressed positive attitudes towards the model.

Despite the limitations, this study suggests that incorporating speaking activities into EFL writing instruction holds promising potential for enhancing students' writing skills and fostering a more effective and engaging learning experience.

The 'Speak-Write' composite model provides a valuable framework for EFL teachers working with Chinese university freshmen. By integrating speaking activities into the writing process, teachers can address the unique needs and challenges of these EFL learners, promoting both language acquisition and confidence in written communication.

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