Redesigned Close Reading: An Integrated Approach

to Improving the Writing of Chinese Learners

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Abstract

The study investigated the effects of close reading and writing among 13 Chinese English as a foreign language (EFL) learners over an 11-week course. The course was designed to focus on multiple close readings for writing summaries, craft writing, and writing planning. The results of standardised reading and writing tests were used to quantitatively analyse the data using a paired sample t-test. The results indicated a statistically significant improvement in English learners' writing and demonstrated a relationship between reading and writing after the learners participated in the course. Subsequently, qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were thematically analysed. Learners reported the benefits of repeated reading and annotating to written summaries, different reading purposes for developing writing skills, and the practice of after close reading discussions for writing planning and promoting independent writing. Therefore, the findings suggest that the implementation of redesigned close reading can be used to improve Chinese EFL learners' writing.

Keywords: close reading, craft writing, summary writing, writing, writing planning

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Close reading involves multiple readings of a given text, with each reading dedicated to analysing distinct aspects of the material, including its organisational structure, literary craftsmanship, and lexical choices. Close reading requires the formation of a connection between the reader and the text. Recently, researchers have focused on using close reading to enhance learners' writing abilities. For instance, Dollins (2016) used close reading to teach creative nonfiction writing. Timmermans and Johnson (2017) employed poetry reading for poetry writing instruction. Richeson (2019) required learners to read various materials and write an informational, history-based piece on Abraham Lincoln. Additionally, close reading has been further developed through the combination of close reading and self-regulated strategy development by Harris, Kim, Yim, Camping, and Graham (2019) and Harris, Ray, Graham, and Houston (2023), with the aim of cultivating learners' persuasive writing abilities. These studies suggest that close reading is an effective intervention to develop learners' writing regardless of differences in the types of texts and writing tasks.

Writing, which is one of the four basic language skills in foreign language learning, is of great importance not only in education but also in work, personal life, and citizenship (Bazerman et al., 2018; Hyland, 2018a). However, in China, despite the importance of learning English writing in secondary school, learners often fail to develop this skill (Huang, 2018; Wu, 2018). According to the official International English Language Training System (IELTS) website data for 2022, while the global average score for all the test takers was above 5.9, Chinese learners tended to score below this average, at approximately 5.8 (International English Language Training System, 2023). The reasons for this situation vary but can be categorised into linguistic, skill-related, and content challenges (Lin, 2019; Lv, 2015; Ngaji et.al 2018; Rbuiaee et al., 2019; Wingate, 2012; Zhai, 2016; Zhang, 2018).

Graham et al. (2013) underscored the importance of fostering a writing environment that supports students' learning, emphasising the significance of writing models and the emulation of writing samples. They advocated for the micro-level development of students' writing skills, strategies, and knowledge, which mirrors the foundational aspects of close reading. Close reading involves the comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the

content and writing techniques employed in texts. Additionally, Graham et al. (2013) emphasised the engagement of students in thoughtful activities. This aligns with the purpose of the third reading, which is a portion of close reading that emphasises classroom discussions and the integration of learning with personal reflection. Close reading not only facilitates comprehension but also provides opportunities for noticing, which is crucial for improving writing skills, as suggested by Ortega's (2014) concept of 'noticing' in language learning. Dollins (2016) affirmed this synergy, stating that 'close reading can assist students in creating their own nonfiction texts with a unique and engaging writing style' (p. 49) This connection between close reading and writing underscores its role in fostering an optimal learning environment in which students can develop their writing abilities while engaging deeply with texts, ultimately enhancing their analytical and creative skills in tandem.

Although the feasibility and contribution of close reading to improve English learners' writing has been reported, certain research gaps remain. First, most prior studies have been conducted in the United States. Furthermore, these studies have predominantly employed quantitative or qualitative methodologies regarding learners' writing score or writing content, without sufficiently exploring learners' opinions about close reading. Additionally, researchers have utilised various writing tasks and processes, which lack specific structured frameworks that use close reading to teach writing. To address these gaps, this study aimed to ascertain the applicability of close reading in China. Moreover, this study sought to gain insight into the student perspectives to further explore the feasibility of close reading and offer practical teaching strategies for frontline educators. Therefore, this mixed-methods study explored whether using a redesigned close reading framework could improve Chinese EFL learners' writing.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Close Reading

While close reading shares common objectives of pursuing in-depth comprehension, individualised approaches allow educators to customise their close reading instruction to meet specific needs. This study combined the two most-cited close reading frameworks of Shanahan (2012) and Fisher and Frey (2014). The two frameworks' similarities lie in using three readings, with the first two sharing similar objectives. Both frameworks aim for learners to grasp the article's main ideas in the first reading through annotation. Additionally, Shanahan (2012) emphasised using prior knowledge when necessary. Fisher and Frey (2014) acknowledged the significance of prior knowledge, suggesting that pre-reading instruction should be brief, strategic, and responsive to learners. Both frameworks employ text-dependent questions for the second reading to guide learners to focus on various aspects of the article. Fisher and Frey (2014) mentioned 'various aspects', whereas Shanahan's (2012) framework provides a more specific list regarding the organisation, literary devices, content evidence, and word choice. The most notable distinction emerges in the third reading. Shanahan (2012) emphasised deeper comprehension by discussing the article's underlying meaning, author's intent, and learners' analyses and sharing their understanding of the article's literary beauty. However, Fisher and Frey (2014) prioritised learner communication and applying what had been learned from previous reading activities.

The selection of texts for close reading differs from other reading methods, primarily in the following two aspects. First, the articles encompass different types of texts. For instance, Fisher and Frey (2012) and Welsch, et. al (2019) recommended using brief texts for learners to read. Fisher and Frey (2014) also suggested interleaving different text types for coherent ideas. The other requirement is text complexity, involving using challenging texts to promote in-depth analysis without diminishing interest. If an article is easily understood, multiple readings would be meaningless, and learners would likely lose interest during repeated reading (Fisher & Frey, 2014; Hinchman & Moore, 2013; Richel, 2018; Shanahan, 2012; Welsch et al., 2019). Hinchman and Moore (2013) also supported the idea of complex text selection, believing in its benefits for enhancing learners' literacy skills, motivation, and success.

2.2 Writing

Writing is a crucial skill in foreign language learning, especially for learners aiming to achieve further academic development. By examining writing from various perspectives, we can comprehensively understand what writing entails. Yi (2009) and He et.al (2021) emphasised writing as one of the most challenging skills in that it involves not only a collection of separate sentences but also the process of logically integrating information within an article. It encompasses thinking, composing, and encoding language into a coherent text. Graham (2018) highlighted that writing requires the techniques, skills, and knowledge writers use to produce effective and engaging written content.

Post-reading writing tasks are widely employed to enhance learners' comprehensive writing abilities, including summary writing, craft writing, and writing planning before independent writing. Scholars generally agree that summarising skills are crucial due to frequent summary assignments, their study aid potential, and their necessity in complex tasks involving source integration (Kirkland & Mary1991). Summarising entails extracting vital information by reading and succinctly presenting the article's core for quick comprehension (Hood, 2008). Close reading enables learners to underline key information and integrate it into summaries. Studies on close reading and writing include summary writing in class activities and its benefits (Dollins, 2016; Fisher & Frey, 2014). Moreover, craft writing is important. Rand (2016) likened successful writers to skilled carpenters, emphasising crafts in both cases.

Similar to carpenters, writers aim for meaningful and enjoyable art. Researchers have focused on diverse writing skills, such as creativity, nonfiction, and informative writing. Each genre is unique. For instance, nonfiction involves dialogue insertion, perspective use, and descriptive language (Dollins, 2016). Poetic craft involves form, repetition, and rhyme (Timmermans & Johnson, 2017). Concerning close reading, Shanahan (2012) defined craft as text techniques, literary devices, and evidence quality. He advocated identifying techniques in the second read to comprehend the author's intention. Learners apply one or two techniques to their writing to create useful and aesthetically pleasing pieces. Finally, writing planning or outlining involves the creation of structures, themes, key points, and logical connections prior to writing. This offers clear guidance, resulting in coherent and consistent essays requiring little effort. Despite advocating different approaches, scholars such as Flower and Hayes (1981) and Hyland (2019) have emphasised the role of planning. In close reading, Harris et al. (2023) found that learners set goals, mark texts for ideas, and make plans to enhance final writing quality. After understanding content and structure, insights from the discussion refine the techniques and ideas into an essay outline while boosting writing quality and information delivery.

2.3 Close Reading and Writing

In their meta-analysis, Graham and Liu (2018) reviewed 89 studies to determine whether teaching reading enhances language learners' writing performance. They found that approximately 95% of the reviewed studies reported a positive contribution in the post-test, indicating that reading interventions improved learners' writing quality, spelling, and overall writing output. In addition, according to Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis, careful and comprehensive teacher input increases learner output in reading activities. Recent research has shown that learners can collect information from reading materials to organise it along with their ideas during the writing process (Graham, 2018; Vandrick, 2018).

In addition, recent studies have examined the impact of close reading on learners' writing abilities across various text types and writing tasks. For instance, Dollins (2016) used mentor twin texts about frogs as reading material, encouraging learners to closely examine the articles and apply the acquired knowledge to enhance their creative nonfiction writing skills. The study found that by analysing the style, organisational features, descriptive language, academic vocabulary, and perspectives of the texts, learners could identify their strengths and successfully apply these crafting techniques to their writing.

Adopting a different purpose, Timmermans and Johnson (2017) focused on poetry and aimed to develop learners' ability to write poems. They demonstrated that explicit and cautious instructions and close analysis of poetry readings enabled learners to transfer their skills and knowledge to improve their poetry writing, focusing on form, repetition, rhyme, and variation in line length.

Richeson (2019) adopted a historic-based approach, in which learners read trade books and primary sources to gather information on Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the USA, and synthesised the information to write an informational, history-based writing piece. Using close reading and integrating information from articles, learners completed nonfiction writing tasks about this historical figure by applying text features learned from reading, such as adding bullets, pictures, timelines, and headers, to their writing. Richeson (2019) found that learners displayed enthusiasm for the course and a strong interest in learning.

Harris et al. (2019, 2023) explored the use of self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) for close reading to improve learners' persuasive and informative essays. Their findings revealed significant progress in learners' post-assessment scores for spelling, handwriting fluency, vocabulary, sentence proficiency, and discourse knowledge. SRSD aims to assist learners in learning and utilising close reading techniques, enhance learners' reading comprehension skills, and transfer learned content from reading to writing tasks, establishing the importance and feasibility of close reading for improving writing abilities.

These studies have demonstrated that integrating close reading practices into writing instruction can positively affect learners' writing skills regardless of the text and writing task type.

2.4 Research Objectives

This study assessed the contributions of the proposed approach using quantitative and qualitative data and sought to answer the following research questions:

(1) To what extent does a close reading and writing course contribute to EFL learners' writing?

(2) Is learners' reading associated with writing after participating in a close reading and writing course?

(3) What are learners' opinions of close reading and writing courses?

3. Methods

3.1 Research Design

This study used a quasi-experimental design to investigate the effect of a close reading intervention on the writing ability of Chinese learners. To comprehensively examine the research problem, qualitative and quantitative methods were adopted, as advocated by Creswell, J. W. & Creswell, J. D. (2014). The entire research had a duration of eleven weeks, during which learners participated in the pre-test in the first week, attended the course from the second to the tenth week, and completed the post-test and interviews in the final week.

3.2 Participant Characteristics

This study employed purposive sampling to recruit participants. Nineteen learners aged 16–30 years voluntarily enrolled in an English training school in Guiyang City, Guizhou Province, China. The school was advertised using posters. The participants included 13 women and six men. Among them, seven were college students, five were high school students, four were employees, and three were high school graduates. In purposive sampling, sites and participants are selected based on specific criteria. In this study, considering the required writing tasks and text difficulties, individuals lacking sufficient vocabulary and grammar knowledge and those who were unable to independently complete reading and writing tasks were excluded to ensure learning progress. Therefore, this study included participants who had passed the College English Test Band 4 or scored at least 120 out of 150 on the on-campus English exam, which is the final test formulated by the Guizhou Provincial Education Bureau. Among the 19 recruited participants, four did not participate in the entire course, and two did not take the post-test; therefore, they were excluded from the final analysis. Thus, 13 participants completed all the courses and tests and were included in the study.

3.3 Measures

Three instruments were used to evaluate learners' reading and writing abilities, including the General Training module of IELTS for reading and writing respectively and semi-structured interviews. To ensure test reliability, complete reading and writing test questions were utilised. The reading section comprised five articles with 40 questions, and the writing section included two writing tasks. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain insight into learners' opinions of the effects of close reading on writing tasks for each reading, and 11 structured interview questions were asked after the course.

3.4 Procedures

Before the start of the class, learners were instructed to complete a reading and writing pre-test based on task prompts within two hours. Subsequently, a nine-week course was implemented using a redesigned close reading framework with the corresponding required writing task. After the course, the learners were asked to complete the same test as in the pre-test. Of the 19 participants, 13 fully participated in the course and completed the tests, and six learners voluntarily participated in the interviews.

3.5 Intervention

This study integrated and applied two often-cited close reading frameworks (Fisher & Frey, 2014; Shanahan, 2012), referencing other research on reading and writing. The corresponding writing exercises were designed based on the key focus for each stage of the close reading, ultimately achieving the goal of fostering independent learner writing. Figure 1 presents the instructional framework used in this study.
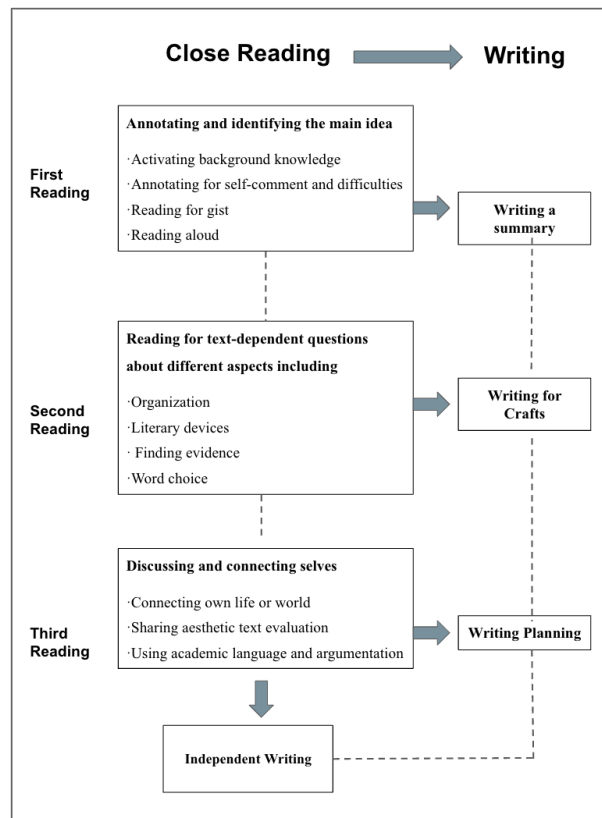
Figure 1. Research framework

3.5.1 First Reading

The goal of this reading stage was to annotate and comprehend the article's main ideas. After reading, learners were required to create a summary of the reading material. Before reading, they were provided with essential background knowledge and were tasked with independently reading the article and using self-designed symbols to annotate the text, including keywords, unfamiliar words, and comments. Subsequently, the learners used the highlighted keywords and their understanding of the text to write a summary of approximately 100–150 words.

3.5.2 Second Reading

In the second stage, learners were required to comprehend the article's content deeply, answer text-dependent questions, and provide evidence from the article. They were expected to consider the author's craft, including text organisation, literary devices, and word choices. As this stage focused on understanding how the author developed the article to achieve the writing purpose, the writing task for this stage involved practising prominent writing techniques employed in the reading material.

3.5.3 Third Reading

The objective of this stage was to enhance learners' appreciation of the article and engage them in discussions. When necessary, learners read specific paragraphs from the article. They were asked to use academic language and arguments from previous readings during the discussions. For the writing task, they were required to create a comprehensive plan for a complete article based on writing prompts provided by the teacher, integrating their learning and discussion outcomes from the first two stages. Following this plan, learners were expected to write complete articles independently.

3.6 Data Collection and Analysis

Learners' writing and reading pre- and post-tests were assessed according to the official guidelines, with two raters to ensure fairness. One rater was the author, and the other was an IELTS writing teacher with more than 10 years of working experience in China. Paired-sample t-tests were conducted in SPSS 22 to assess improvements in writing by comparing post- and pre-test scores and establishing correlations between reading and writing post-test scores. Although the sample size was small, de Winter (2013) validated regular t-tests with two

participants, ensuring data accuracy; therefore, this method was appropriate for this study. To obtain learners' opinions on close reading, interviews were conducted with six interviewees. The interviews were conducted using the voice feature of WeChat, a popular social app in China. The entire process was recorded and transcribed using the built-in software on an iPhone. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2012) approach.

4. Results

4.1 Contribution of Close Reading to Writing

As shown in Table 1, the mean score of the 13 learners on the writing pre-test was 4.69, which increased to 5.61 on the writing post-test, for an average difference of 0.92. When evaluating the disparity between the post- and pre-test final writing scores, the significance level was below 0.001. This established substantial variance between post- and pre-test writing scores. Cohen's threshold designates values exceeding 1 as indicating a significant effect. It recorded a value of 1.44, demonstrating a statistically significant outcome. This underscored the fact that close reading led to a significant enhancement in learners' writing performance.

Table 1. Results of English writing pre- and post-tests (maximum score = 9)

	n	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	df	t	sig	Effect Size
Pre-test	13	4.69	0.69	0.92	12	5.20	0.00*	1.44
Post-test	13	5.61	0.68					

Note. *p < .001.

4.2 Relationship Between Reading and Writing

To investigate the relationship between reading and writing, the post-test writing and reading scores of all learners were analysed using Pearson's correlation. As shown in Table 2, the mean scores for reading and writing were 6.08 and 5.62, respectively. The correlation coefficient (r) between reading and writing scores was 0.74, which was highly significant (P < 0.001). This indicated a strong positive correlation between these two variables. In other words, as the participants' reading scores increased, their writing scores also tended to increase. The strong statistical significance indicated the reliability of this correlation, demonstrating a robust and meaningful relationship between reading and writing among the 13 participants.

Table 2. Correlations of reading and writing pre- and post-test scores

	Reading (N = 13)	Writing (N = 13)
Mean	6.08	5.62
Std. Deviation	0.89	0.68
R	0.74	
P	0.00*	

Note. *p < .001.

4.3 Learners' Opinions on Close Reading and Writing

The thematic analysis of qualitative data revealed that the participants held a positive view of the course and felt that all three readings improved their writing (Table 3).

Table 3. Learners' opinions on close reading and writing

Close Reading	Theme	Definition
First reading	Repeated reading enhances comprehension for writing summaries.	Learners believed that multiple readings aid in comprehensively understanding the article's content, thereby facilitating the completion of the primary content summary.
	Annotating helps identify key information for summary writing.	Learners found that annotating during reading captures essential information and ensures accurate summary completion by utilising article-specific vocabulary.
Second reading	Reading with different intentions improves the transformation of reading to writing.	Learners stated that acquiring knowledge about the article's structure, author's writing techniques, and lexical choices contributes to understanding the article from a writer's perspective, encouraging them to apply similar techniques in their writing.
	Practising diverse writing crafts helps achieve distinct writing objectives.	Learners asserted that focusing on different articles' diverse writing styles and techniques contributes to achieving distinct writing objectives.
Third reading	Accumulating materials from articles and discussions aids the writing process.	Learners indicated that possessing relevant information and appropriate language related to the topic facilitates writing and mitigates writing apprehension.
	Efficient organisation and outlining increase writing confidence.	Learners opined that reading and writing exercises, along with information gathering, help them rapidly formulate the framework of an article.
	Outline-based writing fosters writing confidence.	Learners reported that adopting a well-structured outline for writing assists in expeditiously completing writing tasks and enhances the sense of accomplishment in writing.

4.3.1 Opinions on the First Reading

The participants acknowledged the significance of reading in summary writing. They perceived that the initial multiple readings enhanced their comprehension of the main ideas, forming a basis for summaries. Annotation while reading aided them in extracting crucial details, and using symbols to highlight key points aided in effective information gathering and expression in summaries.

Learner #1: I think that highlighting keywords while reading allows me to grasp the main information effectively, and then I have the information to finish the summary (writing).

Learner #4: The first stage requires more than one reading; (I think it) makes me understand (the text) more clearly, not ambiguously.

4.3.2 Opinions on the Second Reading

In the second stage, the learners grasped diverse writing crafts by reading texts and advancing their writing goals. The second reading also helped their reading and writing, aiding accurate knowledge application.

Learner #3: The most impressive thing for me was when you showed us those three videos and asked which one had a tense atmosphere. It was very useful. Using specific vocabulary to convey actions and describing the environment, like using words such as 'chill', 'figure', and 'noiseless', I remember all of them. This technique is highly useful.

Learner #6: I've learned that if you want to persuade readers, you can use some methods, like questions, examples, metaphors and so on... Like, the article uses 'a can of worms' to describe bad consequences, I think. As for another one, the story of the article structure is important to me. Although I knew it before in Chinese, I did not write it this way. This time, I was even able to write a short story in English. It wasn't hard.

4.3.3 Opinions on the Third Reading

Chinese learners recognised the reading process as a source of valuable information, language, and writing techniques. Combining post-reading discussions aided them with swift outline completion. A structured outline not only accelerated writing but also boosted their writing satisfaction.

Learner #4: Ahh... (it) is that I know more information from each reading, and then we discuss opinions and article content. (So,) I have enough information to write, coupled with the outline we wrote together, which accelerates my writing. (It is) unlike before, when I needed a lot of time and could only write a little.

Learner #2: From the whole process, I feel that what I can get from an article is the process from macro to micro... I know that a story or persuasive essay should contain a certain structure; they use different vocabulary. I also learned a new topic, the 'cancel culture'.

Learner #1: For me, I think the whole class is for the final writing. As we discussed in the last stage, I had something to write about. In particular, I had never heard of the 'cancel culture' before, and I was unable to write about it before your class. Now, I have something to outline, and I could write the whole thing without stress.

Thus, learners perceived that each reading stage of close reading improved their writing abilities, and they were able to provide specific examples in the interviews.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Effect of Redesigned Close Reading on Writing

Both the quantitative and qualitative results indicated that the redesigned close reading and writing programme improved English writing skills among the participants. First, the participants' writing scores noticeably improved after they participated in the course. This finding was consistent with those of previous studies (Dollins, 2016; Harris et al., 2019, 2023; Richeson, 2019; Timmermans & Johnson, 2017), despite their use of different texts and study instruments. The diverse objectives of close reading allowed the participants to focus on various aspects of good writing, leading to a comprehensive enhancement of Chinese learners' writing abilities. As Graham et al. (2013) found from a cognitive or motivational perspective, 'improvements in writing skills, strategies, and knowledge serve as catalysts to students' overall writing development' (p. 11). Chinese students face various linguistic, skill-related, and content-related challenges in writing. The data analysis applied in the post-course assessment of learners in this study, using the IELTS band description, included assessments of these writing abilities. This suggests that the intervention implemented in this study could help learners address these issues including linguistic, skill-related, and content challenges.

Second, assessments of the participants' reading and writing showed a significant positive correlation after completing the redesigned close reading course. This indicated that improving reading abilities benefits their writing abilities. This was consistent with the findings presented by Graham et al. (2018) and Vandrickr (2018), which suggested that students can gather information from reading materials on various aspects, allowing them to organise information and their own ideas during the writing process. Compared to other reading methods, close reading pays comprehensive and in-depth attention to the text, aiding students in transferring knowledge from the 'model essays' more effectively.

Lastly, these reasons were supported by the respondents in this study. The participants believed that after achieving the goals of the first reading stage, independent and teacher-guided multiple readings and annotating key article keywords contributed to their ability to accurately and quickly grasp the main ideas of articles, thereby facilitating the completion of summary writing. After the second reading, the participants could differentiate vocabulary, article structure, and techniques used to achieve writing objectives in various articles. They could then apply these techniques to their own writing tasks, mastering different writing approaches for diverse article topics. Following the third reading, the participants generally agreed that post-reading discussions, combined with prior learning, effectively assisted them in generating suitable content and outlines, enabling the swift production of independent writing. Consequently, learners perceived that this integration of reading and writing comprehensively enhanced their writing skills, effectively addressing vocabulary, writing techniques, and the expansion of relevant topic content.

5.2 Close Reading and Writing Implementation

Reading materials should be diverse and drawn from various genres to utilise this framework effectively. This study employed a mix of informative, narrative, and persuasive texts. The participants recognised the importance of grasping writing organisation across genres, although explicit differentiation was not required. This exposure to diverse articles was valuable. Previous research (Brewer, 2018; Dollins, 2016; Eppley, 2015) suggested that close reading integration guides learners in creating various article types. Learners acknowledged this approach positively. Learner 3 highlighted how it aided skill transfer across text types, addressing the writing difficulties identified by Wingate (2012) and Rbuiaee et al. (2019). This indicated that appropriate close reading and writing combinations could enhance writing abilities. As Bourque (2016, p. 22) states, 'The more students read and become aware of an author's craft, the more we see them using these techniques in their writing. Students who read the most are often their strongest writers. This is not a random coincidence'.

Previous research has used diverse writing activities without a standardised approach, with many studies suggesting tasks such as summarising, crafting, planning, and independent writing. Learners' post-test data demonstrated that task efficacy boosted writing skills. Assignments revealed adept utilisation of article information, linking reading benefits to writing tasks. The outline and final writing showed the techniques learned. Each writing phase aligned with the reading goals: the initial reading captured the main ideas and keywords, which aided data extraction; the second reading emphasised the structure and craft applied to learner writing; the third reading fostered the expression of opinions. Integrating thoughts from prior tasks enabled the learners to create outlines and complete their writing.

This study indicated that implementing close reading as an intervention method could improve writing, with the participants expressing positive opinions about this approach. The main contribution of close reading lies in its emphasis on in-depth text analysis, providing learners with ample writing materials and skills. From the micro to macro perspectives, close reading assists learners in comprehending text themes, thereby guiding them in structuring and independently crafting written work. These contributions differentiate it from other methods aimed at improving writing proficiency. Moreover, due to its multifaceted approach to reading, this redesigned method addresses various factors contributing to poor writing performance among Chinese EFL learners, such as authentic vocabulary and grammar usage, text organisation, and content deficiencies. Consequently, the results of this study have significant implications for enhancing language learners' writing performance.

Future curriculum design should incorporate various text types to help learners differentiate among genres and address different writing purposes. Reading activities should provide moderate background knowledge to engage learners' interest and aid in comprehending unfamiliar topics in the first reading phase. In the second reading phase, attention should be directed towards the multiple facets of the text, including its structure, author's intent, vocabulary, and writing techniques. Finally, in the third reading phase, learners should be encouraged to discuss the reading material and extend their understanding by incorporating personal insights. Writing tasks should employ diverse assignments, including summary, craft, planned writing, and subsequent independent composition. Moreover, encouraging learners to integrate their perspectives into their writing through discussions could facilitate in-depth comprehension.

6. Limitations

This study had some limitations. First, the sample size was small, which limits the representativeness of the test results. Second, the study employed a one-group pre- and post-test design, which has certain inherent limitations. Due to the absence of a control group, other factors could have influenced the examined variables, which may have resulted in less accurate outcomes.

In future research, it is advisable for researchers to, first, involve a larger number of participants to enhance the representativeness of the test results. Second, incorporate a control group and a comparison group is recommended. This allows for a comparison with the intervention group, which aids in isolating the specific impact of the intervention. Lastly, since this study focused on the overall improvement of learners' abilities and did not provide a micro-level understanding of the specific areas in which learners demonstrated the most significant progress, future research can explore various facets in more detail.

Acknowledgments

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