A study on the correlation between self-correction and the accuracy of high school students' English writing vocabulary

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Abstract: Writing ability is the basic component of reading and writing ability, and it is also one of the basic skills that English learners need to acquire. Improving students' English writing level is one of the focuses of senior high school English teaching. Students make more mistakes in vocabulary in the process of writing, and vocabulary has a great influence on the quality of students' writing. A large number of experiments and researches prove that self-correction is an effective way to improve students' writing level. Therefore, this study adopts the method of action research to study the correlation between self-correction and learners' English writing vocabulary accuracy.

Key words: Self-correction; English writing; Vocabulary accuracy

1. Relevant research background

The National English Curriculum Standards for Senior High Schools (2020 revision) points out the necessity and importance of cultivating learners' core English literacy. Among them, language ability is the basis of the subject. Language competence refers to a learner's ability to understand and express meaning through listening, speaking, reading, writing and looking in a social environment. Writing is not only the embodiment of students' language output, but also the demonstration of students' language ability. Vocabulary is the basis of English writing, and the accuracy of vocabulary is directly related to the effectiveness of writing. Error correction is an essential and effective part of English writing. At present, this method is widely used in the teaching of English writing in middle school. However, teachers' error correction has brought about some problems, such as students' neglect of their own mistakes. According to constructivist learning theory, such learning conditions are good if learners are actively involved in all stages of the educational process. Buchanan (2004) points out that self-correction can be a motivator for students to become more actively involved in their own learning process. At the same time, a large number of studies have shown that self-correction is helpful to language learning.

James (1997) divided lexical errors into semantic errors and formal errors. Lexical semantic errors refer to improper use of words, improper collocations and confusion of relationships. Formal errors include misspellings, incorrect forms and incorrect word formation. Therefore, this study will explore the correlation between self-correction and the accuracy of learners' English writing vocabulary from two aspects: lexical semantics and form.

2. Theoretical basis

Self-correction is closely related to error analysis, contrastive analysis and output theory. Contrastive analysis theory emphasizes on analyzing and predicting learners' possible language errors by comparing the differences between the mother tongue and the target language, so as to provide a certain basis for teachers' teaching. The theory of contrastive analysis came into being under the criticism of second language researchers. It holds that language learners' mistakes are mainly caused by the differences between the mother tongue and the target language system. The output theory proposed by Swain holds that language acquisition requires intelligibility output, which can help language learners pay attention to the gap between their mother tongue and the target language, thus improving the accuracy and fluency of language use. Based on contrastive analysis theory, error analysis theory and output theory, this paper adopts the method of action research to explore the correlation between self-error correction and the accuracy of high school students' writing vocabulary from different aspects.

3. Research design

This study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the relationship between self-correction and the accuracy of high school students' writing vocabulary from different dimensions, that is, what impact does self-correction have on the semantic and formal aspects of high school students' English writing vocabulary?

1. The object of study

The subjects were selected from a class of senior two of a middle school, with a total of 61 students. The English level of the students in this class is in the middle level of the whole grade. The students of this class have been able to adapt to the high school English curriculum after one year of high school learning, with certain operability.

2. Research methods and tools

This study explores the relationship between self-correction and students' vocabulary accuracy in English writing by means of action research. Before the experiment, the students' English writing vocabulary level was understood through the pre-test. In the whole process of the experiment, the students had four writing exercises, and the researchers collected the writing samples of the students, sorted out and analyzed the vocabulary errors and the error correction rate of the students. After the experiment, the pre and post test and the four writing practice samples were compared and analyzed to find out whether the students' vocabulary accuracy had changed.

The tools used in this study included a writing test, a vocabulary error classification list, and a vocabulary grading scale. A total of six tests were conducted in this study, and the reliability and validity of the test papers have been checked. Based on James' classification of

vocabulary errors, the researchers developed a vocabulary error classification table to help students correct their mistakes accurately. At the same time, based on ESL Profile, the researchers developed two different scoring criteria for lexical semantics and form.

3. Research process

Before the experiment, the students completed the pre-writing test, and the researcher collected and analyzed the vocabulary errors in the students' samples and scored them. During the experiment, the students completed four writing tests, the difficulty of which was similar to the pre-test and post-test. The researchers collected writing data four times. After the experiment, the students completed the post-test, and the researchers collected the relevant data of the post-test and compared and analyzed all the data in the whole experiment.

4. Data collection

In the whole process of the experiment, the researchers collected and collated the vocabulary data of different dimensions of the students' pre and post tests and four writing exercises, and conducted relevant analysis with SPSS software.

4. Analysis of research results

In the process of this experiment, in addition to the pre-test and post-test, the students underwent four times of writing training, and were asked to self-correct the vocabulary mistakes in the writing process according to the vocabulary error table. At the same time, the researchers scored the students' writing vocabulary according to the vocabulary scoring standards. The correlation between self-correction and the accuracy of students' English writing vocabulary mainly focuses on the semantic and formal aspects of vocabulary.

1. Semantic accuracy of vocabulary

The semantic accuracy of students' English writing vocabulary is mainly judged from the following three aspects: the accuracy of vocabulary use, the accuracy of vocabulary collocation and the confusion of vocabulary relations. Before the experiment, the researchers organized the students to take a pre-test, and the pre-test content was related to the "art" topic in the new English curriculum standard for high school. Through the collection of data, we found that vocabulary mistakes accounted for 60% of students' writing mistakes, which indicates that students are not good at accurately using vocabulary in writing. In terms of the semantic accuracy of words, the types of vocabulary errors of students in the pre-test mainly include improper use of words and improper collocation. During the experiment, the students conducted four writing exercises, and the writing contents were all selected from the relevant topics in the new curriculum standards. In the whole process of the experiment, the students corrected the semantic errors in their writing by using the vocabulary error check list. The research data show that the average error correction rates of students in the semantic level of vocabulary in the four times of writing training are 12%, 14%, 15% and 17% respectively, which indicates that students can not only find the semantic errors in their writing process through the vocabulary error check table, but also correct the semantic errors in their writing through self-correction. After the experiment, the researchers organized the students to take a post-test, which was related to the "art" topic in the new curriculum standard. The data showed that after a period of self-correction training, students made fewer semantic errors in vocabulary to some extent. At the same time, by comparing the pre and post test samples and data, the researchers found that the mean score of the students in the lexical semantic level changed from 8.58 to 10.27, with 95% confidence intervals of -2.786 and -2.393 and Sig. A value of 0.000<.05 indicates that students can find and correct lexical semantic errors to a certain extent through self-correction.

The semantic accuracy of words can also be qualitatively explained by self-correction. The researchers analyzed the writing samples of students who had improved their grades more during the study. By comparing the before and after test and the four writing training samples, the semantic accuracy of their vocabulary was greatly improved. For example: If you come to china, you can look at the skill of making papercuting. (pre-test), I look forward to your early reply (pre-test). the student was able to use relevant vocabulary accurately in the post-test. If you come to join in the festival, you will observe many interesting things. And I am looking forward to your reply. This shows that students begin to consciously choose the right vocabulary and can use vocabulary accurately through self-correction.

2. Formal accuracy of vocabulary

The formal accuracy of students' English writing vocabulary is mainly judged from three dimensions: spelling, form and word formation. By analyzing the relevant sample data before, during and after the experiment, the researchers found that students' accuracy in vocabulary form was greatly improved through self-correction. By analyzing the pre-test sample data, the researchers found that students made a lot of mistakes in terms of vocabulary forms, among which spelling errors and improper word formation accounted for the largest proportion. Throughout the experiment, the students underwent writing training four times. The researchers compared the data of the four studies and found that the error correction rates of the students in terms of vocabulary form were 24%, 26%, 28% and 30%, respectively, indicating that the students were able to find and correct their mistakes in terms of vocabulary form. After the experiment, through comparative analysis of the data of the whole experiment process, the researchers found that self-correction had a greater impact on the accuracy of students' vocabulary forms, and the average score of students' vocabulary forms changed from 3.31 to 6.77, with 95% confidence intervals of -2.633 and -2.117 and Sig. The value was 0.000<.05. This indicates that self-correction can promote students to improve the accuracy of vocabulary form to some extent.

Self-correction can also be qualitatively explained for the formal accuracy of vocabulary. The researchers analyzed the writing samples of students who had improved their grades more during the study. By comparing the pretest with the post-test, their scores on vocabulary form improved by four points. For example: I will give you some informations about papercuting. (pre-test), I sincerely regard you as one of my best friend, so I wish you can accept my apology. (pre-test). The student was able to accurately use relevant vocabulary in the correct form in the post-test. I will give you some information about this music festival. And I sincerely regard you as one of my best friends, so I

wish you can accept my invitation. This indicates that self-correction can effectively help students improve the accuracy of vocabulary forms to some extent.

Research data show that students make more semantic and formal errors in vocabulary, which can be partly explained by error analysis theory and contrastive analysis theory. First of all, the reason for students' vocabulary errors is the negative transfer of mother tongue. Knowledge of learners' mother tongue will interfere with their second language learning. In the process of writing, students tend to translate word for word under the influence of their native language thinking. In addition, the difference between different types of vocabulary will also cause interference to students. Some researchers show that the main reason for vocabulary errors is word-for-word translation from Chinese to English; Misuse of similar words; Inability to clearly distinguish between synonyms or synonyms, and inability to distinguish parts of speech. In addition, Chinese and English belong to different language systems, and the incomplete equivalence between Chinese and English may lead to confusion in the use of words by students.

5. Conclusion

In order to explore the correlation between self-correction and the accuracy of written vocabulary, the researchers conducted experiments to explore the relationship between the two aspects from the semantic and formal aspects of vocabulary. Through comparative analysis of the sample data in the whole experiment, the researchers found that there was a certain correlation between self-correction and the accuracy of students' writing vocabulary. Self-correction can improve the accuracy of students' vocabulary, and has a greater impact on the formal accuracy of students' vocabulary.

There are still some shortcomings in this study. Although this study has proved the correlation between self-correction and students' vocabulary accuracy in writing from two dimensions, there are still some limitations. First, the sample size of this action study may not be representative of the whole. In addition, the duration of this action study was limited, and the results would have been more reliable if the experiment had been longer. Second, the study did not stratify learners, so the effectiveness of self-correction for students at different levels was not measured. At the same time, considering the detectability of the experimental results and the operability of the experiment, only two aspects of vocabulary accuracy were considered in this study. Finally, although students' personality, attitude towards English vocabulary learning, learning habits and other aspects may have an impact on this study, thus affecting the experimental results.

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