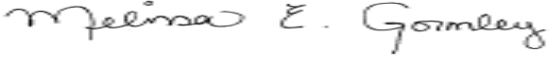


‘ENHANCING OR DEPRESSING’? AN INVESTIGATION INTO INFLUENCES OF THE
‘COOPERATIVE FLIPPED CLASSROOM’ UPON ACADEMIC WRITING OF CHINESE
COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Yang Zhao (Patrick)

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Abstract

‘ENHANCING OR DEPRESSING’? AN INVESTIGATION INTO INFLUENCES OF THE ‘COOPERATIVE FLIPPED CLASSROOM’ UPON ACADEMIC WRITING OF CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS

Yang Zhao (Patrick)

Under the Supervision of Dr. Melissa Gormley, Ph.D.

This paper seeks to explore the influences exerted by the innovative “cooperative flipped classroom” mode, as one combination of flipped classroom and cooperative learning, upon academic writing of Chinese college students from the viewpoints of social constructivism and communicative language teaching (CLT). Initially, it provides a comprehensive introduction of flipped classroom and reveals prominent benefits as well as drawbacks surrounding this teaching approach when conducted in the academic writing classroom of Chinese colleges. In addition, this paper examines the significance of each element in cooperative learning and various scholarly resources around the relationship between this teaching approach and ESL (English as a Second Language) writing would be carefully considered. Moreover, in order to complement and optimize the two methods above, one mixed mode called “cooperative flipped classroom” is expected to be thoroughly identified in terms of its rationale as well as academic support towards ESL writing. In addition, widespread and effective strategies of implementing the “cooperative flipped classroom” by international educators in Chinese college writing class would be further illustrated and evaluated. Following that, this paper suggests significant concerns involved in the process of conducting the “cooperative flipped classroom”, such as needs analysis and the design of group writing projects. Eventually, the researcher is forecast to mainly underline positive factors of this innovative mode regarding ESL academic writing and advocates its extensive application in Chinese colleges.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The official and public recognition of English as the second language, rapid growth in the market of English language teaching nationally and soaring migration of students and merchants to study as well as work abroad, continually arouse the heated debate of linguistic scholars and educationists surrounding the optimal method of teaching ESL (English as a second language) academic writing towards Chinese college students (Zhao & Hirvela, 2015). Evidently, ESL academic writing is widely recognized as a major challenge in the process of communicative language teaching (CLT). According to the latest survey conducted in three China's prestigious colleges, more than 57.21% of full-time interviewees claim that the absence of prior knowledge and experience hampers their performance in ESL academic writing, almost 40.89% report that they are frustrated with the logical organization as well as discourse conventions and approximate 32.17% deem that mechanics like citation of references and intercultural rhetoric should be figured as undeniable challenges as well (Wu, 2017). In addition, the distinguished subjectivity of each learner is consistently undermined in the context of teacher-hegemony classroom (Rui, 2018). Furthermore, the lack of collaborative output and frequent feedback also stifles students' engagement into the learning process (Lee & Wallace, 2018).

Therefore, for the sake of tackling all the above mentioned, this research casts light upon the innovative "cooperative flipped classroom" method. This blended teaching method, as Grabe and Zhang (2013) claim, is increasingly gaining prominence in ESL academic writing classes and can be divided into three primary stages: 1) self-tutoring and group discussion surrounding online materials (Pre-class stage); 2) task-based learning via various group activities as well as

individual practices (In-class stage); 3) Feedback on the final written product from the self, peers, other groups along with the instructor and the assignment of the group portfolio as the homework (Post-class stage).

This study employs the research method of literature review to explore the rationale of the “cooperative flipped classroom” and appreciates its remarkably facilitating role in the development of college students’ academic writing skills. Above all, numerous scholarly resources around benefits and drawbacks of flipped classroom and cooperative learning will be reviewed respectively. Subsequently, this paper would introduce the “cooperative flipped classroom” as one complementary hybrid of two prominent methods above and reveal outstanding academic support for this blended approach. Thereafter, the substantial ways to implement the “cooperative flipped classroom” in ESL academic writing classes of Chinese colleges would be identified and inevitable concerns related to practices on this innovative approach in China summarized finally.

Evidently, this research will seek to criticize all the issues associated with the “cooperative flipped classroom” and provide reasonable recommendations for ESL academic writing courses of Chinese colleges.

Statement of the Problems

The problems to be addressed can be stated as: 1) What do researchers claim regarding the “cooperative flipped classroom” as one teaching method in college ESL academic writing classes?

2) How to apply the “cooperative flipped classroom” for academic writing of Chinese college students? 3) What concerns should be considered during the process of conducting the “cooperative flipped classroom”?

Definition of Terms

Flipped classroom. One particular teaching approach which refers to the arrangement of teaching materials prior to the formal class, and the utilization of classroom time for clarifying problems faced by students and undertaking dependent as well as independent practices guided by instructors (Baker & Mentch, 2000, as cited in Mehring, 2016).

Cooperative learning. A group-based learning activity in which active learning is dependent upon the effective exchange of information among learners, each of whom is responsible for his or her own learning and works cooperatively to accomplish shared learning goals (DelliCarpini, 2008).

Cooperative flipped classroom. The combination of flipped classroom and cooperative learning which concentrates on positive interdependent learning via digital technologies, collaborative output of creative students and constant reviews from several parties (Wu & Zhang, 2017).

Communicative language teaching (CLT). One typical method of language teaching that seeks to achieve the ultimate goal of superior interaction between learners (Hu, 2014).

ESL. English as a second language

TESOL. Teaching English to speakers of other languages

L2. Second language

Purposes of the Study

The primary purposes of the study can be summarized as follows:

- Test whether flipped classroom and cooperative learning can be integrated and complemented with each other.
- Measure the effectiveness of the “cooperative flipped classroom” in teaching ESL academic writing in Chinese colleges.
- Explore some possible suggestions for improving the “cooperative flipped classroom” upon academic writing of Chinese college students.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this library research are expected to make significant contribution to Chinese society as a whole regarding the essential role ESL academic writing plays in cross-cultural communication between international scholars and Chinese ones. The stronger demand for college graduates with sound writing skills justifies the urgency for more student-centred, communicative teaching approaches.

Thus, Chinese colleges which apply the recommended “cooperative flipped classroom” approach derived from the results of this study would improve communicative competence, studying motivation, problem-solving skills and cooperation awareness towards ESL academic writing of students. Besides, from the perspectives of teachers and administrators, this research would help them explore various kinds of teaching strategies around the “cooperative flipped classroom”

when implementing the writing curriculum reform. Last but not least, for educational researchers, this study might uncover the future implications of applying this blended teaching approach into other sections of TESOL (such as speaking and reading) and even other subjects.

Delimitation of the Study

This research will be conducted completely online over a period of ninety (90) days, through key research topics including “cooperative learning”, “flipped classroom”, “cooperative flipped classroom”, “ESL academic writing”, “second language (L2) writing” and “Chinese colleges”. Thus, the limited time might lead to the inconsistency of the data increasingly involved with cutting-edge digital technologies such as Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR). Besides, considering different rates of economic development and internet accessibility, outcomes of this study are not likely to be generalized to college students in other countries.

Methodology

The methodology I utilize in this seminar paper is channeled to literature review through EBSCO host (Karrmann Library, University of Wisconsin-Platteville), CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) and DERA host (UCL Institute of Education Library). Initially, a brief review of literature on relevant issues around flipped classroom and ESL academic writing is included. Following that, the critical role of cooperative learning in improving ESL academic writing skills of college students is investigated in the second literature review. Moreover, in regard to the third literature review, benefits of the “cooperative flipped classroom”, as one

complementary combination of two teaching approaches above, are to be explored in relation to ESL academic writing of Chinese college students. After that, the fourth review of literature displays the prevalent methods to apply the “cooperative flipped classroom” in the organization of ESL academic writing classes in Chinese colleges. Moreover, outstanding issues and concerns linked to classroom practices are to be identified in the fifth review of literature. Finally, the findings will be summarized and recommendations made.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Below is a well-organized review of plentiful academic resources concentrating upon three core factors — cooperative flipped classroom, ESL academic writing and Chinese colleges — provided. Above all, this chapter will review and analyze the alternative mode of teaching ESL academic writing in Chinese colleges via either flipped classroom or cooperative learning respectively. It will also identify the theoretical foundation as well as scholarly appreciation surrounding cooperative flipped classroom, and displays prevalent practical strategies of high efficiency. Lastly, relevant concerns and recommendations will be highlighted and one situational summary drawn.

The Definition and Research Findings of Flipped Classroom

The flipped classroom, or called the flipping teaching mode, distinguishes from the traditional teacher-hegemony curriculum and throws light upon active participation as well as individualized feedback (Lin, Hwang, Fu & Chen, 2018). Being increasingly used in the scenario of ESL academic writing, the typical mode of flipped classroom is channeled to the initial automatic learning of students themselves through digital as well as physical teaching materials in advance, and subsequent explanation, discussion, collaboration along with practices assisted by instructors within the flexible classroom.

Essentially, primary benefits of the flipped classroom can be summarized in the following three aspects: 1) provide instructors with invaluable opportunities of efficient interaction with students

targeting at knowledge scarcity as well as confusion (Zainuddin & Perera, 2018); 2) encourage the automatic learning of active learners among the student-centred circumstance which substantially overcomes temporal and spatial barriers (Mehring, 2016); 3) promote the mechanics of conducting constant teaching assessments and monitoring diverse learning activities (Hung, 2015). These benefits above, according to worldwide educationists and linguists such as Hao (2016) in The University of Hong Kong and Cunningham (2017) in The University of Auckland, make significant contribution to the improvements of teaching ESL academic writing of Chinese college students, which would be thoroughly illustrated below.

Foremost, large quantities of researchers emphasize the fact that the arrangement of textual materials ahead of time makes it much easier for students to prepare adequate academic discourses and background knowledge. According to Gill (2009), the most apparent constrain which Chinese college students are usually confronted with in the process of ESL academic writing is channeled to the scarcity of prerequisite discourses and knowledge. Those discourses and knowledge, which are essential to stimulate individualized learning as well as continuous outputs of ESL learners, seem to be consistently overlooked and outweighed by sophisticated templates and strategies among Chinese colleges (Zhao & Coombs, 2012). Fortunately, the learner-centred, instructor-facilitated mode of teaching is notably reflected in the flipped classroom that allows students to gather, classify and evaluate abundant resources around the assigned writing topic prior to the classroom time, then to independently produce their own creative works with previously mastered discourses as well as knowledge, and eventually to receive personalized feedback and tutoring from the instructor repeatedly until the final paper is completed.

Besides, the accelerating influences exerted by the flipped classroom upon Chinese students' abilities of self-expression, self-enterprise and self-actualization have been proven by a large sum of scholars as well. As Hu (2007) claims, from the viewpoint of Chinese college students, creativity scarcity and motivation lacking pose significant obstacles to literacy competency as well as composition engagement. As one efficient solution to these two challenges above, the flipped classroom arouses the excitement of ESL learners in aspects of interest-based learning (Pre-class), presentation of appraisal and achievement (In-class) and problem-targeted interaction (Post-class). In addition to Hu's claim, Kim and Song (2017) regard the flipped classroom as one teaching mode of self-learning management and critical thinking skills since teaching schedule is adaptable to meet students' own levels as well as demands, and promote instant revisions and restructures assisted by comments of the instructor.

Moreover, some studies throw light upon the advancement of digital technologies, which play a vital role in the organization of the flipped classroom. Yu and Wang (2016), two famous Chinese educationists majoring in E-learning, attribute main advantages of the flipping mode to the free culture of the virtual world. Putting it into details, the flipped classroom makes it convenient for ESL learners to clarify any concern related to content, expressions and rhetorical conventions via search engines such as Google scholar and Youdao online, and to interact with peers and the instructor immediately through social media when faced with diversified difficulties in academic writing. Last but not least, other studies advocate the flipped classroom is fairly beneficial to the construction of students' individual identity and voice. On the one side, Fu and Townsend (2010) recognize independent knowledge absorbing (Pre-class) based upon students' own backgrounds leads to the establishment of self-identity. On the other side, differentiated from Fu and

Townsend (2010), Strayer (2012) deems that personalized evaluation and feedback towards the academic paper of each ESL learner are considered to be the leading driver in shaping their distinguished identity.

Nonetheless, the flipped classroom itself owns undeniable drawbacks which can be divided into two categories in general. The absence of collaborative learning, as Cumming (2018) claims, derives from the essence of CLT and still heavily hampers active participation and studying efficiency of ESL learners. In other words, without the involvement of cooperative learning, college students are increasingly losing their favour on 'flipped' academic writing, which is crucially lying in the knowledge-based transmission of L2 rather than the communication-based one (Nunan & Carter, 2001). Furthermore, Lam (2014) points out the underlying complexity is due to the overwhelming pressure of the instructor. Except that the instructor has to manufacture pre-sessional academic materials of outstanding quality and perform sustained surveillance over the entire teaching process, he/she is much likely to be frustrated by massive academic papers embedded with different sorts of mistakes from students.

Significant Factors and Scholarly Research on Cooperative Learning

Another popularized teaching mode, Cooperative Learning (CL), is first coined by American educator David Koonts in the early 20th century and gradually immigrated into the circumstance of China's higher education since 1980. Differentiated from the flipped classroom, CL is equipped with three distinguished features: Collectivism-based learning, Motivational theory of self-esteem and peer pressure, and Organizational capabilities (Allen & Widdowson, 2000). Thus,

international researchers and educators commonly reach a consensus upon the definition of CL, which refers to “... a group learning activity organized in which learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups ... in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others” (Olsen & Kagan, 1992, pp. 121-123). In addition, some scholars emphasize its characteristics of collaborative goals and shared learning outcomes, indicating “... students working together to achieve their same learning goals and the whole instructional procedures aim to foster the students’ collaborative efforts” (McCafferty, Jacobs & DaSilva Iddings, 2006, p. 27). Furthermore, other studies highlight the stimulus role of CL in the sector of learning efficiency, demonstrating that CL incorporates mutual achievement from both the self and the whole group (Johnson & Johnson, 1999), stimulates competitiveness against other groups (Meng, 2005) and maximize individual progression through group-scale tutoring as well as supervision (Horwitz, 2010).

In terms of significant factors embedded into the successful CL, DelliCarpini (2008) and Willis (2007) reach an agreement on five significant components, each of which would be briefly illustrated via the following table (please view Table 1.1).

Component	Meanings
Positive interdependence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Each group member understands assigned teaching materials and guarantee all other members with the same sense (Jalilifar, 2010); ➤ individual contributions of each group member are highly appreciated in order to achieve the mutual goals (Fushino, 2011); ➤ group members promote achievement of each other and support their group mates consistently (Cullen, Kullman & Wild, 2013).
Individual accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ every group member would be assigned different tasks in the learning process (Wette, 2014); ➤ every group member would be measured against standard requirements (DelliCarpini, 2008).
Face to Face promotion interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ students authentically cooperate with each other to resolve problems through negotiation, persuasion, clarification seeking and other language interactive strategies (Halbach, 2015); ➤ group members praise, encourage, support and care about each other (Jalilifar, 2010).
Social skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ social skills, such as trust-building, conflict-management, leadership and decision-making, are reinforced (Willis, 2007); ➤ group cohesiveness is expected to be increased.
Group processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ group members are given adequate time and guidance to measure how well their cooperation functions and what quality their work counts (Gardner, 2017).

Table 1.1 Five Significant Components of Cooperative Learning

Moreover, Geyte, a well-known linguist in Australia, puts forward the sixth key factor of CL: the motivational theory of intrinsic as well as extrinsic incentives (2013). On the one hand, considering the intrinsic level, self-esteem and the desire of being valued are forecast to drive each group member to make every effort to achieve success. On the other hand, regarding the extrinsic level, peer pressure and team competition require cooperative learners to maximize their own studying efforts, learn from each other and pursue common goals.

Evidently, because of these six significant factors above, the effectiveness of CL in ESL academic writing of Chinese college colleges has been well documented. Large numbers of academic studies have reported that CL is figured as the ideal teaching mode of CLT which symbolizes the communication-based transmission of L2. A report from Ur (2012) who conducted one experiment on 50 Chinese college students in The University of Ningbo demonstrates that task response and logical sequence of students taught in the CL classroom are remarked to be much better than corresponding performance of students in the traditional classroom. Besides, CL has the unique ability to cultivate students with outstanding organizational capabilities. Attle and Baker (2007) states that detailed tasks would be attributed to each member by the group leader according to academic strengths and cultural identities; subsequently, each of them proposes own learning schedule for the sake of accomplishing respective targets such as the findings of relevant statistics and the integrated summary of experts' opinions. Moreover, ESL learners' senses of responsibility and obligation could be optimally enhanced in the CL classroom. According to Zhang and Sun (2000), levels of lexical resources and grammatical range as well as accuracy are remarkably improved in argumentative

essays of Chinese college students since formative assessment as well as peer review frequently occurs under the condition of shared achievements.

On the contrary, some other researchers examine the impacts of CL upon ESL academic writing of Chinese college students from another angle. Most obviously, the dominant status of teachers' involvement is discursively undermined in the majority of CL trials. As Hill and Flynn (2006) claim, instructors situated in the CL classroom are always ambiguous about what kind of assistance they are reasonable to offer, when they should provide direct feedback and more essentially, how to tailor specific comments based on the distinct background of each learner. Likewise, Zhang (2009) points out the over-exploitation of classroom time entirely set for group activities and concretely argues that knowledge clarification as well as extension of the instructor in the classroom is mandatory and invaluable. On top of that, the successful CL classroom demands sound preparation of both ESL students and the instructor, which seems to be remarkably challenging in the context of college writing class where the scale of student number (almost 90) is too massive to be handled and the instructor is tied with excessive academic materials to be distributed during the limited classroom time (Lustig & Koester, 2007).

Rationale and Academic Support for the “Cooperative Flipped Classroom”

Drawn from strengths as well as weaknesses surrounding the flipped classroom and CL illustrated in the previous two sections, increasing researchers come up with one complementary breakthrough called the “cooperative flipped classroom”. Initially, the “cooperative flipped classroom” established on the theoretical foundation of social constructivism along with CLT,

truly represents student-centred learning and makes the most of students' autonomy as well as multidimensional assistance (Carroll & Williams, 2007). Besides, this mixed teaching mode helps the instructor further analyze the needs of learners in order to manufacture appropriate assignments which subsequently improve the interactive quality of teacher-student dialogues and guarantee the completion of designated activities (Strayer, 2012). Moreover, group construction and assessment system could be largely upgraded through this innovative mode, such as organizing problem-oriented cooperative groups and shaping progression-directed assessments (Mi & Gu, 2009). All of these merits of the "cooperative flipped classroom", compared with either the flipping mode or CL solely, are significantly embodied in the following chart (please view Table 1.2).

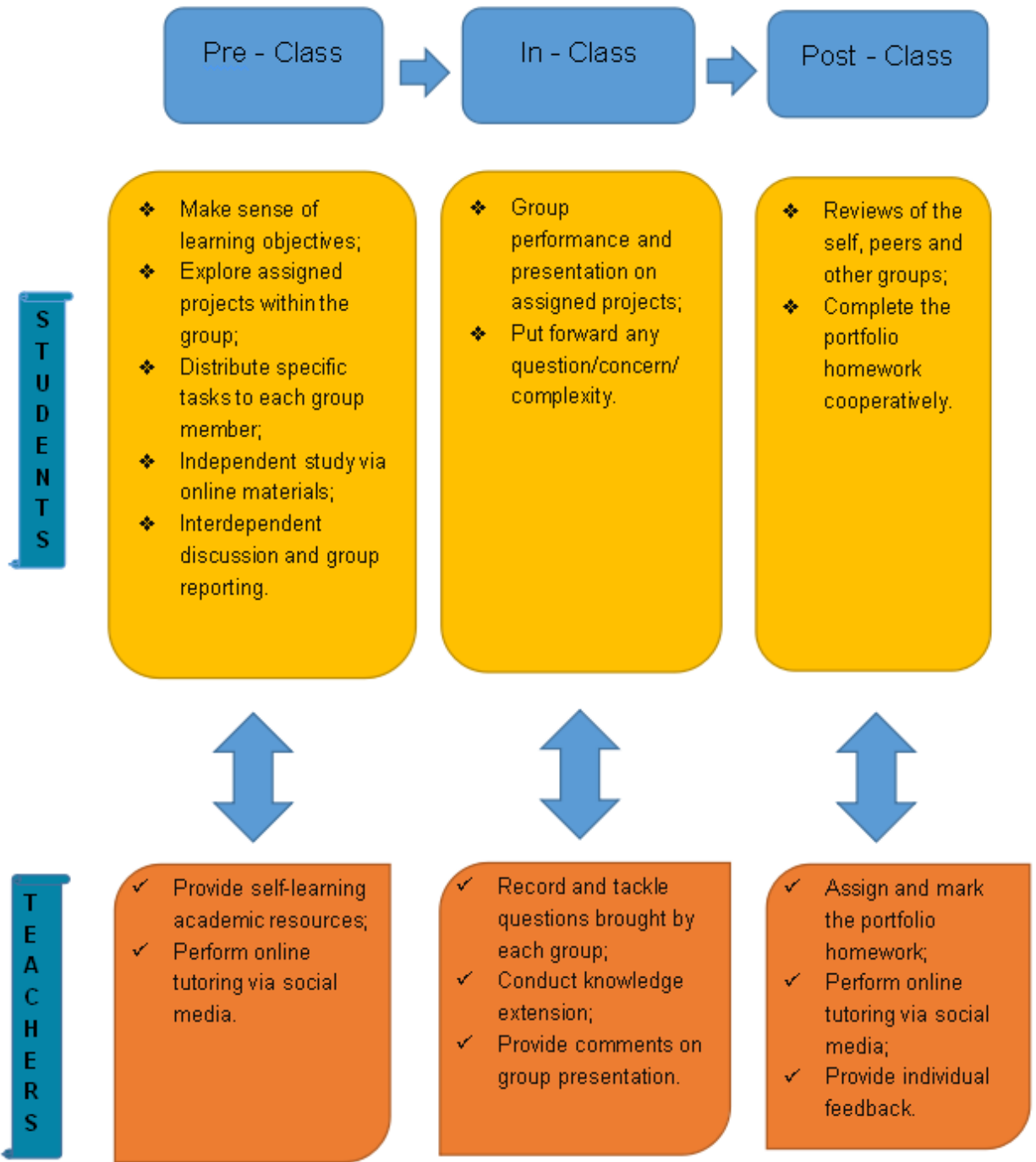


Table 1.2 The widely-accepted design of the “cooperative flipped classroom”

As evident in the prevalent layout of the “cooperative flipped classroom”, a large amount of academic support have been raised in the domain of ESL academic writing during the past decades. Marzno, Pickering and Pollock (2001) strongly recommend the “cooperative flipped classroom” because this teaching mode substantially gives respect to the individualized identity of each learner. It is widely recognized that differences in abilities of applying writing strategies, utilizing rhetorical forms as well as written discourse and grasping grammatical rules, result in the inconsistency in writing performance of each learner. In addition, some learners might encounter the difficulty of consulting the instructor due to their bashful characteristic. The “cooperative flipped classroom” provides outcome-based assistance from peers and the instructor over the whole teaching process, and the needy could receive targeted tutoring around organization, syntax and discourse in the private sphere without the interruption of group activities (Basal, 2015). Apart from the aspect of learners’ identity, the participatory rate of each learner has been proven to be sharply increased in one experiment of Putintseva (2006). This is due to the fact that autonomous learning, interpersonal discussion, collaborative presentation, and dependent as well as independent practices sparkle learners’ strong involvement into every phase of the whole lesson plan.

Last but not least, the directory as well as management status of the instructor is much likely to be remarkably strengthened through the “cooperative flipped classroom”. As Zheng (2012) claims, instead of being treated as one facilitator, the accurate role of the instructor in CLT should be one director or one manager who not only designs and supervises diverse interaction-oriented activities among the learning community, but also proposes highly-effective solutions to overt problems (for example, the difficulty in creating persuasive topic sentences)

encountered by learners and initiates knowledge extension towards their potential uncertainty (for example, the scarcity of terminology and background information regarding different essay themes).

Methods of Implementing the “Cooperative Flipped Classroom” in College Writing Class

Generally speaking, echoing with enormous advantages of the “cooperative flipped classroom” mentioned above, there are existing a great deal of approaches to implementing this mixed teaching mode. Prior to an overview of widely-circulated methods in the worldwide scope, group structure acts as the primary issue which should be carefully considered.

Group Structure.

According to Salvin, one American pioneer of advocating the “cooperative flipped classroom”, the organization of each cooperative group must follow the supreme guideline of ‘differences among group members but similarity between each group’ (1990). In other words, regarding the inner organization of each group, levels of academic skills, learning motivation, strengths as well as weaknesses, leadership, communicative competency, interests and even gender need to be moderately varied among ESL learners. And, in terms of the outer exhibition of each group, few significant differences around these criteria should be deliberately set.

On the basis of the supreme guideline explained above, academic scholars such as Zhang (2010), Cunningham (2017) and Mehring (2016) set forth the classification of key member roles

functioning in the “cooperative flipped classroom”, which can be best indicated via the proceeding diagram (please view Table 1.3).

Roles of Group Members	Functions
Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Help team members better understand the assign project; ◆ Distribute tasks to each team member; ◆ Supervise the learning efficiency of the whole group; ◆ Boost studying motivation and cooperative atmosphere; ◆ Increase the rates of peer interaction and group discussion; ◆ Review and proofread the final work.
Recorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Produce weekly working journals of group cooperative learning; ◆ Record any question/concern/complexity encountered by each group member during the learning process; ◆ Take notes on any essential point highlighted by the instructor.
Time Keeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Strictly monitor the timing of each group discussion; ◆ Strictly monitor the length of each member’s performance and presentation; ◆ Continually remind group members of deadlines set by the leader or the instructor.
Critic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide opposite views towards thoughts and works of others reasonably; ◆ Provide ongoing feedback on drafts of the assigned project and the portfolio homework.
Communicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Promote positive interaction between members and the instructor; ◆ Increase opportunities of

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication among members; ◆ Report achievements and challenges to the instructor.
Folder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Save physical copies of teaching materials and working documents; ◆ Save physical copies of progressive drafts; ◆ Integrate and propose the final work.

Table 1.3 Key member roles of the “cooperative flipped classroom”

Primary Methods of Implementing the “Cooperative Flipped Classroom”.

Until the end of 2010s, there are approximate 76 types of lesson plans around the “cooperative flipped classroom” and more than 23 tailored categories in the domain of ESL academic writing. In Chinese colleges, a total of three popular writing templates are channeled to the ‘Teaching-others’ model, the ‘Information-exchange’ model and the ‘Multidimensional appraisal’ assessment, which will be demonstrated through three following graphs (please view Table 1.4, Table 1.5 and Table 1.6).

The 'Teaching-others' model.

		<u>LEARNERS</u>	<u>INSTRUCTORS</u>
Pre-Class Stage		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Each group is assigned one writing project with a particular question; ■ The leader commits specific tasks to each group member (for example, one responsible for argument development and the other for supporting evidences); ■ Self-learning through online academic materials and tutoring services; ■ Group discussion on content, organization, discourse, mechanics and authenticity; ■ Record any challenge encountered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Divide the whole class into a certain number of groups which obey the supreme guideline and typical roles of the “cooperative flipped classroom” (Please view the former section called ‘Group Structure’); ■ Create and upload online academic materials; ■ Offer online tutoring services targeted at urgent problems faced by each group and record those problems.
	Lesson One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Each group member is likely to be selected to present the writing project belong to his/her group in front of the whole class as well as the instructor; ✓ Each group member is likely to be selected to teach others around the rationale of the writing project belong to his/her group (especially topic sentences and supporting evidences); ✓ Respond to criticism and questions from other groups and the instructor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Randomly select one representative among each group for presentation; ✓ Randomly select one representative among each group for teaching the rationale of the writing project; ✓ Put forward any question towards the presentation as well as the teaching demonstration of each group.

In-Class Stage	Lesson Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The communicator of each group reports any challenge on the respective writing project (for example, the authenticity of report writing); ❖ Take notes on the solutions of the instructor to all those challenges mentioned; ❖ Comprehend and master extensive knowledge imparted by the instructor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Understand and record those challenges reported by the communicator of each group; ❖ Provide cost-effective solutions to those challenges reported by the communicator of each group; ❖ Conduct knowledge extension on potential uncertainty and demands.
	Lesson Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Make sense of strengths as well as weaknesses of the writing project of their own group and those of others; ◆ Actively participate into guided practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide comments on the presentation as well as the teaching demonstration of each group; ◆ Lead students to participate into guided practice; ◆ Give individual feedback on guided practice in terms of task response, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource and grammatical range as well as accuracy.
	Lesson Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Actively participate into independent practice; ◇ Receive the portfolio homework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Lead students to participate into independent practice; ◇ Give individual feedback on independent practice in terms of task response, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource and grammatical range as well as accuracy; ◇ Help students review today's knowledge and assign the portfolio homework.

<p style="text-align: center;">Post-Class Stage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The leader commits specific tasks of the portfolio homework to each group member; ● Consult the instructor through online tutoring services when faced with any difficulty; ● Integrate the portfolio homework and submit it to the instructor; ● Complete reviews of the self, peers and other groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Perform online tutoring via social media; ● Receive and mark the portfolio homework; ● Provide individual feedback.
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Table 1.4 Details of the 'Teaching-others' model

The 'Information-exchange' model.

Stage One

Activity: Self-exploration upon terminology of theme-based essay questions

- Divide the whole class into a certain number of groups which obey the supreme guideline and typical roles of "cooperative flipped classroom" (Please view the former section called 'Group Structure');
- Distribute online learning materials about specialized terms and expressions to students one week before the lesson;
- Command group members to recite those terms and expressions via collaborative learning;
- Announce the mini-presentation activity in advance.



Stage Two

Activity: Warm-up (Quiz & Homework Feedback)

- Review knowledge of specialized terms and expressions set in the flipped classroom through one oral dictation activity (between-groups competition) performed by learners themselves;
- In-depth analysis of the portfolio homework of the last class and clarify any concern.



Stage Three
Activity: Input and guided practice

- Lead students to discuss and practise one particular essay question with one particular theme;
- Direct students to participate into one information exchange activity: 1) each group will be attributed with another essay question with the same theme; 2) each group will be allowed 15 minutes to prepare topic sentences and supporting evidences of the assigned question; 3) circulate the classroom for support; 4) randomly prompt any group member to present the result of group work within 10 minutes; 5) the mini-presentation of each group will be evaluated and criticized by the instructor and peers.



Stage Four
Activity: Independent practice

- Distribute one worksheet with six essay questions to each group;
- Require each group member to create topic sentences and supporting evidences of the essay question nominated by the instructor;
- Guide the correction of students' work and provide feedback as responses to students' commitments;
- Circulate the classroom for support.



Stage Five

Activity: Review and homework assignment

- The instructor helps students review today's knowledge and assign the portfolio homework;
- Each group member is required to complete reviews of the self, peers and other groups;
 - The instructor provides individual feedback.

Table 1.5 Details of the 'Information-exchange' model

The 'Multidimensional appraisal' assessment.

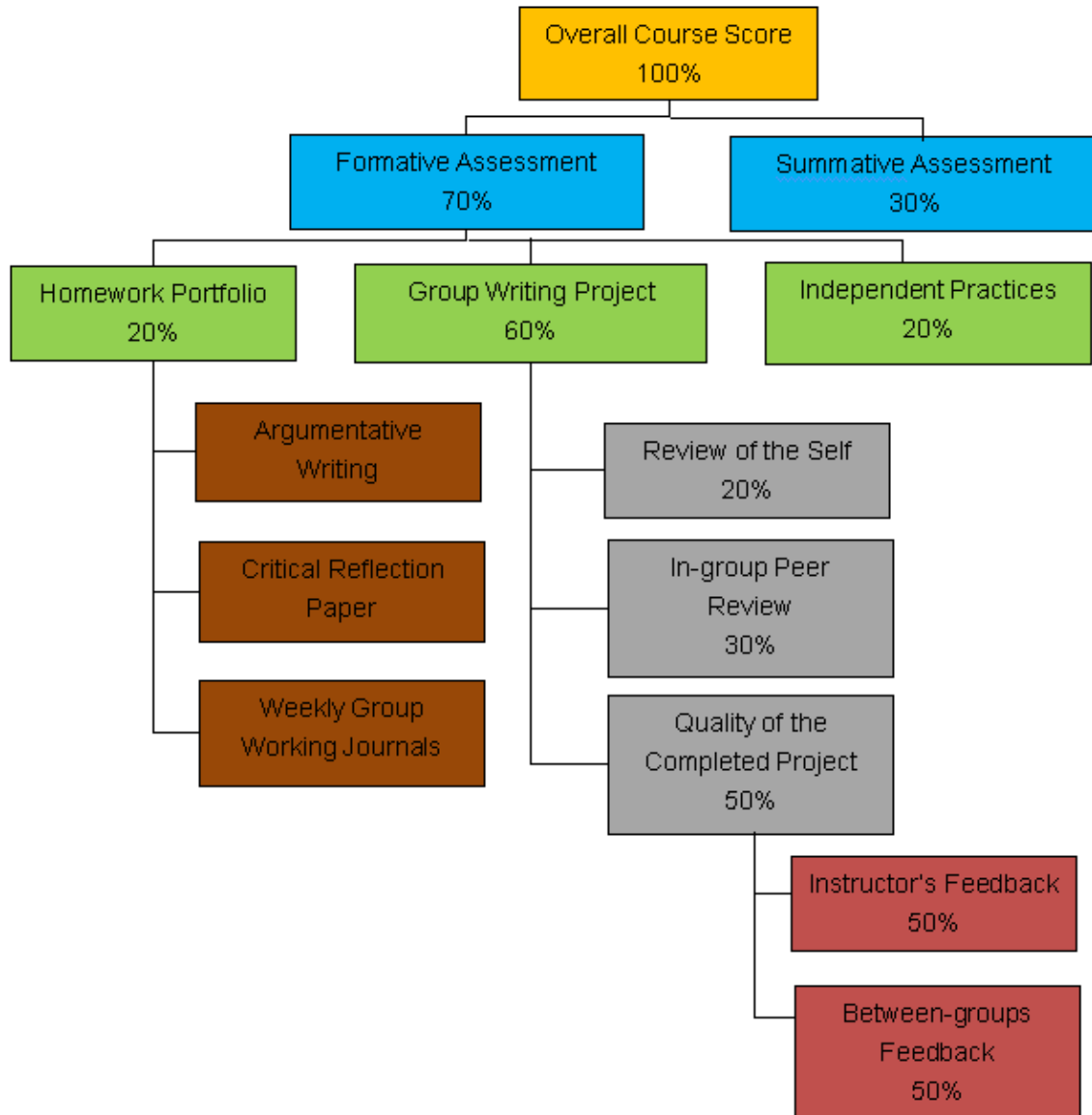


Table 1.6 Details of the 'Multidimensional appraisal' assessment

Concerns related to Practices on the “Cooperative Flipped Classroom” in China

It is widely recognized that the “cooperative flipped classroom” gains popularity among educational institutions and academic researchers; however, relevant drawbacks and concerns surrounding this mixed mode are undeniable as well and worthwhile to be investigated as follows.

(1) The balance of students’ participation among cooperative groups.

Due to those differences in personal character, studying motivation, background knowledge as well as language competence, the phenomenon of ‘imbalanced participation’ might appear. As Huss (2006) claims, especially for ESL writing courses, the working intention of Chinese students with inferior academic performance demonstrate approximate 75.54% lower than corresponding figure of those with superior performance. Therefore, situated in the “cooperative flipped classroom”, motivation-lacking students would become increasingly ‘hidden’ and losing their voice but highly-motivated ones sharply ‘highlighted’ and empowered.

(2) The design of group writing projects.

Group writing projects, assigned by the instructor and collaboratively completed by group members during the flipped stage, need to be carefully designed. According to Zhao and Coombs (2012), the majority of group writing projects constructed in Chinese “cooperative flipped classroom” are either rather superficial or excessively complicated, and some even deviate from

online academic materials. Instead, echoing with students' needs as well as teaching objectives, the designing target of group writing projects should be in accordance with the 'Zone of Proximal Development' and the subconscious principle of L2 acquisition (Zhao & Coombs, 2012). In other words, those writing projects should closely match with designated self-learning materials, and meanwhile maximize the sense of studying achievements of each learner as well as interdependent communication among each group.

(3) The temporal and spatial barriers.

Even though the flipped classroom is equipped with the overt advantage of overcoming temporal and spatial barriers (Please view the former section about the flipped classroom), collaborative learning necessarily takes these two factors into consideration yet. As Gill (2009) claims, on the one hand, the cooperative time allocated on positive interdependence and face-to-face promotion interaction is always limited by spatial issues such as the circumstance of group conference, accommodation and transportation. On the other hand, the availability of appointed location is confronted with temporal difficulties such as independent studying period, timing for peer assistance and rehearsal hours of presentation and/or teaching demonstration.

(4) The enrichment of the assessment system.

The assessment system of the "cooperative flipped classroom" is consistently undermined in Chinese colleges, most of which follow test-driven education and place a premium on grades. In fact, Jolliffe (2007) lays emphasis upon the enrichment of the assessment system, as illustrated in

the Table 1.5 above, and criticizes the over-exploration on the forms of assessment including associated subjects, procedures and strategies. Instead, educationalists should cast sight on the inner quality of assessment (namely measurement standards and feedback content) covering recommendations of the instructor, peer reviews, between-groups comments and self-reflection.

(5) Needs analysis.

Finally but most importantly, a large number of Chinese instructors fail to recognize the importance of needs analysis during their “cooperative flipped classroom” experiences. According to Kim and Song (2017), the needs analysis arranged for the “cooperative flipped classroom” involves three consecutive phases in total. Specifically, the first phase concentrates on the examination of the learning efficiency of group members after their self-learning through online academic materials and tutoring services. Such kind of examination helps the instructor design more specialized in-class activities. Then, the second phase gives priority to learners’ group presentation and challenges reporting, thereby implying their current weaknesses and potential uncertainty. Last, the third phase seeks the discovery of individual demands through guided practice, independent practice and the portfolio homework.

Summary

It is the appropriate time that we lay premiums on the facilitating impact of the “cooperative flipped classroom” upon ESL academic writing of Chinese college students. Above all, two essential components of this mixed teaching mode, the flipped classroom and cooperative learning, have been substantially investigated respectively. On the one side, the flipped classroom helps students prepare adequate academic discourses, stimulate their desire of self-expression, and promote autonomous learning. On the other side, cooperative learning owns distinguished features of shared learning goals, improved learning efficiency, guidelines around responsibility as well as obligation and organizational capabilities. In order to further strengthen these benefits around the two teaching modes and overcome their respective drawbacks, the “cooperative flipped classroom” as one complementary hybrid has been documented and analyzed. In terms of academic writing of Chinese ESL learners, academic support around this innovative method include the priority of each learner’s individualized identity, the enhancement of their participation into various group activities, the advancement of the role of the instructor, constant assessment and multidimensional appraisal. And three primary methods of implementing the “cooperative flipped classroom” in college writing class (namely the ‘Teaching-others’ model, the ‘Information-exchange’ model and the ‘Multidimensional appraisal’ assessment) have been identified. Nevertheless, significant concerns on the “cooperative flipped classroom”, such as needs analysis and the balance of students’ participation, should be carefully considered.

CHAPTER III CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking into account all related literature having been reviewed previously, the conclusion that “cooperative flipped classroom” substantially promotes the improvement of the competency in ESL academic writing of Chinese college students, can be wholeheartedly and safely drawn.

In order to further enhance the positive effects of “cooperative flipped classroom” upon ESL academic writing, three primary recommendations could be put forward in aspects of group structure, appraisal system and cooperative learning skills. Initially, the organization of each learning community is expected to be much more flexible, in which group members converge and interact on the basis of the same question. Such kind of challenge-based group organization makes it easier for the instructor and learners to provide highly-effective solutions and to conduct clarification-oriented interaction respectively. Besides, the multidimensional appraisal system mentioned above is forecast to be installed with the developmental concept which throws light upon the degree of progression of each learner in the comprehensive quality of his/her product writing. Moreover, cooperative learning skills of each learner, covering components from positive interdependence as well as promotional interaction to task responsibility and communal achievement, are predicted to be persistently upgraded.

Thus, there is little denying that considerable prospective attention of scholars and researchers is forecast to be devoted to team competition mechanics, the motivational stimulus of ESL learners, the design of writing projects, multidimensional techniques for assessing writing, and cultural/literacy backgrounds of each learner.

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