

# A Research on Senior English Writing Strategies based on CSE

Furong Yang<sup>1, \*</sup>, Hongyuan Wang<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> postgraduate in Sichuan University of Science and Engineering, China

<sup>2</sup> master supervisor in Sichuan University of Science and Engineering, China

\* Corresponding author: Furong Yang (Email: 2518042429@qq.com)

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**Abstract:** English writing has become increasingly important in Senior English Teaching, which attracts more researches. However, there is a lack of research on English writing strategies at present, especially from the perspective of China Standards of English (CSE). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the application status of English writing strategies of senior high school students through questionnaires and analyze the relationship between their writing strategies and their writing interest. The results show that their English writing strategies have not yet reached the CSE-4 standard, and they are significantly related to students' interest in English writing. These findings are of great significance to improving English writing teaching strategies and promoting the all-round development of students' English ability.

**Keywords:** English Writing; Senior English Teaching; CSE; Writing Strategies.

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## 1. Introduction

Due to the different examination standards, a fair and authoritative measurement system is particularly critical. For this reason, the Ministry of Education has launched the China Standards of English (CSE), which divides English proficiency into 9 grades based on the needs of each period, and describes the characteristics of each grade in detail, among which grade-4 correspond to the senior level. As an important way to evaluate students' comprehensive language ability, English writing has attracted much attention. However, the research on senior English writing strategies is still insufficient, especially in the lack of in-depth exploration from the authoritative standard of CSE. It constructs a unified framework for English learning, teaching and evaluation, which provides a clear guiding direction for research.

The purpose of this study is to systematically investigate the actual situation of senior students' application of English writing strategies by using the framework of English writing strategies in CSE. It aims to facilitate students to self-evaluate writing strategies and identify potential room for improvement, providing teachers with detailed data to adjust teaching strategies accordingly. Through empirical research, it provides a new perspective and empirical support for the theoretical research of English writing strategies. Theoretically, this study is conducive to enriching the content of English writing strategy research. From a practical point of view, the research results are helpful to improve the pertinence and effectiveness of English writing teaching and promote the all-round development of students' English writing ability.

## 2. Theoretical Basis

Flavell initiated the concept of metacognition in 1976, and later defined it as a process of knowledge and regulation involving cognitive activities in 1981. In O'Malley & Chamot's classification, metacognitive strategies are composed of planning, monitoring and adjustment strategies, which directly affect the pre-, while-and post-learning stages.

Planning strategy sets learning objectives in advance, foresees problems and prepares solutions. The monitoring strategy monitors the writing quality, speed and direction in real time during the process. The adjustment strategy is to adjust the strategy in time according to the monitoring results to ensure the achievement of learning goals.

The remedial strategies of planning, execution and evaluation in CSE are closely related to the metacognition theory. Planning strategy reflects the overall thinking and preparation before writing. The implementation strategy emphasizes the use of cognitive structure to clearly express views. Evaluation of remedial strategies optimizes the final results through self-monitoring and adjustment. These strategies not only embody the core elements of metacognitive theory-cognitive monitoring and adjustment, but also reveal the guiding role of metacognitive theory in the formulation and implementation of students' English writing strategies. Therefore, metacognition theory provides a solid theoretical basis for studying students' English writing strategies, which is helpful to deeply understand and optimize students' writing process.

## 3. Literature Review

### 3.1. Research on Classification of Writing Strategies

The classification of writing strategies is the key to study students' writing ability, and it is very important to review the relevant research for a deeper understanding of this field. Foreign research started earlier, and Arndt (1987) took the lead in dividing writing strategies into 8 categories, which, although slightly broad, laid the foundation for the follow-up research. Scholars such as Wenden (1991) and Sasaki (2000) further refined and put forward the classification of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, as well as pre-writing, mid-writing and post-writing strategies respectively. However, most of these classifications are based on specific behavior descriptions, lacking completeness, and the stage division is overlapping, which is not clear enough.

Although domestic research has a relatively late start, Yang

(2006) and other scholars have also conducted fruitful explorations, proposing classification strategies such as preparation, drafting, and revision. However, they face the challenge of insufficient logical rigor. Liu (2006) started from the essence of writing and proposed a classification framework of learning strategies and output strategies, as well as the brainstorming-writing-revising framework, which was adopted by the CSE. Although these studies have enriched the theoretical system of writing strategy classification, there are some significant shortcomings. Firstly, the classification is mostly based on behavioral descriptions, lacking in-depth exploration of the psychological mechanisms of writing. Secondly, although the stage division is convenient for operation, it cannot fully reflect the complexity and dynamic nature of writing strategies. Thirdly, the classification criteria are inconsistent, making it difficult to directly compare and integrate the research findings.

### 3.2. Research on Application of Writing Strategies

Foreign scholars have conducted extensive and in-depth research on writing strategies, mainly focusing on the level of second language writing, individual strategy differences, the influence of native language strategies and strategy training. Flower & Hayes (1981) reveals the significant difference in strategy application between successful and unsuccessful learners. In addition, Cohen (2000) confirmed the effectiveness of strategy training in improving writing skills. Although foreign studies are comprehensive, most of the research objects are non-native Chinese speakers, and the research on students' English writing strategies in Chinese background is relatively scarce, which is difficult to directly apply to Chinese students.

Since 1997, the domestic research on writing strategies has mainly focused on vocabulary, sentence and word structure. Wen and Wang (2004) pointed out that there was almost no initial research on English writing strategies. Subsequently, Cheng (2009) confirmed the effectiveness of classroom strategy training. Zhang (2009) believes that in terms of differences in the use of strategies, despite abundant domestic studies, there are the following problems. Firstly, there are few studies on the assessment of high school students' English writing strategies based on the scale, which is difficult to quantify. Secondly, most of the research objects focus on college students or English majors, and pay insufficient attention to high school students. Pan (2018) believes that the lack of in-depth integration of CSE and writing strategies limits the application of research results. Therefore, based on the framework of it, this study aims to explore the use of English writing strategies by senior students from three dimensions: planning, implementation, assessment and remediation, in order to provide more targeted guidance for English writing teaching.

## 4. Research Design

### 4.1. Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate the current situation of the application of English writing strategies in high school students based on the CSE, and then propose

countermeasures to optimize strategies and improve writing ability. Specific research questions are as follows:

- (1) What is their English writing strategy level?
- (2) What is the correlation between students' interest in English writing and their writing strategies?

### 4.2. Research Subjects

The purpose of this study is to investigate the current situation of high school students' English writing strategies, so 60 students from Grade Three of a senior high school in Sichuan Province are selected as the research objects. A total of 60 students filled out the questionnaire.

### 4.3. Research Instruments

#### 4.3.1. Questionnaire

A questionnaire survey was conducted on 60 students, and 60 valid questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire was used to collect data, mainly to understand students' English writing achievement level and the status quo of using English writing strategies. It was compiled according to the CSE, and then the reliability of the questionnaire was analyzed according to Klonbach coefficient. It is 0.976, indicating the high reliability of the scale. In addition to the basic personal information questions, such as gender, grade and English composition score, the questionnaire also sets 20 questions showing as Table 1. These questions are about the English writing strategy planning strategy, implementation strategy and evaluation and remedy strategy, each question set 5 options, respectively, always, often, sometimes, rarely and never.

**Table 1.** Number of English Writing Strategy Questions

Subject	Planning	Implement	Evaluation	Overall
Title number	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Number of questions	5	6	4	5

#### 4.3.2. SPSS 27.0.1

According to the purpose of the research, a questionnaire on English writing strategy use for senior high school students was designed according to the writing strategy scale in CSE and distributed to senior high school students to fill out. Then, valid questionnaires were collected, and the standard deviation and mean value of the questionnaire results were obtained by using SPSS for frequency analysis and descriptive statistics. The actual level of senior high school students' English writing strategies is obtained. At the same time, the correlation between writing interest and writing strategy will be analyzed.

## 5. Results and Discussion

### 5.1. The Use of English Writing Strategies

#### 5.1.1. Planning Strategy

According to the specific performance of CSE-4 in the planning strategy, Part 1 of the questionnaire is designed with 5 questions. And the questionnaire data was sorted out and statistical analysis of the data was carried out with SPSS as follows.

**Table 2.** Research Results of Planning Strategy

	Question	Percentage					Mean	SD
		A	B	C	D	E		
Planning strategy	1	45	10	23.33	18.33	3.33	2.25	1.297
	2	15	23.3	26.67	21.67	13.33	2.95	1.268
	3	13.33	26.67	21.67	30	8.33	2.93	1.205
	4	18.33	31.67	23.33	15	11.67	2.70	1.266
	5	11.67	20	26.67	28.33	13.33	3.12	1.223

As shown in Table 2, regarding Question 1, nearly 78% students can reasonably arrange the structure of the article, and nearly 22% students have problems. The standard deviation is close to 1.3, which can explain to a great extent that students have great differences in choosing this question. Regarding Question 2, nearly 65% of the students can list the writing outline with keywords before writing, and nearly 35% of the students fail to do that. Students' abilities may be very different in outlining, so teachers need to do differentiated exercises to promote students with different abilities. Regarding Question 3, nearly 62% students can conceive the structure of the article according to the importance and priority of the content. Regarding Question 4, more than 73% of the students failed to formulate a suitable composition topic according to the theme and content requirements of writing. And the standard deviation of using this strategy is the highest. This may be because some students' cognitive

ability is biased, which leads to extreme mistakes in the examination of questions. Regarding Question 5, nearly half of the students failed to list the main points and keywords of the article they read in order to write a summary of the article. And the standard deviation of this problem is the smallest in the planning strategy, which shows that students' choices are similar, so students are weak in analyzing and summarizing articles. Judging from the average and standard deviation of Part 1, the average is above 2, even as high as 3. It can be concluded that there are still many students have not yet reached the CSE-4.

### 5.1.2. Implementation Strategies

In this part, the implementation strategies are mainly discussed. There are six questions and the following results are obtained:

**Table 3.** Research Results of Implementation Strategy

	Question	Percentage					Mean	SD
		A	B	C	D	E		
Implementation strategy	1	25	18.33	26.67	16.67	13.33	2.75	1.361
	2	5	15	31.67	26.67	21.67	3.45	1.141
	3	10	26.67	20	23.33	20	3.17	1.304
	4	10	23.33	30	13.33	23.33	3.17	1.304
	5	10	20	23.33	30	16.67	3.23	1.240
	6	10	20	18.33	15	36.67	3.48	1.420

As shown in Table 3, about Question 1, nearly 70% of students can use topic sentences to highlight the central idea of the paragraph. The average value is 2.75, which shows that students have a relatively good grasp of this skill. But there are still nearly 20% students who can't meet this requirement at all, so there is still room for further improvement. Regarding Question 2, nearly 52% can use different methods to make the beginning of the article more attractive, while nearly half of them are still not skilled in this field. Regarding Question 3, nearly 63% of students can organize the content according to time and space order. But there are also nearly 27% students who have little or no such consciousness. Regarding Question 4, nearly 50% of students can sometimes or rarely use examples in daily life to explain their views and support their articles, with an average of 2.73. This shows that students have separated learning from application. Regarding Question 5, nearly 53% can basically use the contents related

to reading materials to support their views, which shows that half of the students have a relatively good grasp of this skill. Regarding Question 6, nearly 52% of the students can't skillfully use graphics, text modification and other ways to highlight the key points or difficulties in the presentation. The average value is 3.48, which is higher than the other five questions, indicating that students are really weak in using it. In addition, the standard deviation of this aspect is the highest, indicating that students have great differences in making choices. By analyzing the data of the questionnaire of the above questions, quite a few students can't meet the standards required by the scale.

### 5.1.3. Evaluation and Remedial Strategies

The evaluation and remedial strategies will be analyzed in this part. And the results are showed in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Research Results of Evaluation and Remediation Strategy

	Question	Percentage					Mean	SD
		A	B	C	D	E		
Evaluation and remedial strategy	1	13.33	15	31.67	20	20	3.18	1.295
	2	8.33	18.33	30	26.67	16.67	3.25	1.188
	3	11.67	15	16.67	20	36.67	3.55	1.419
	4	13.33	25	16.67	20	25	3.18	1.408

With regard to Question 1, nearly 60% of students can't modify sentences or adjust words according to requirements

or with the help of others, indicating that students still need to improve their ability to modify their compositions for the

second time. Regarding Question 2, only nearly 40% can change simple sentences into complex or complex sentences by using appropriate conjunctions or verb forms, making the expression more compact. Regarding Question 3, nearly 57% of the students chose D and E with an average of 3.55 and a standard deviation of 1.419. This shows that students' ability to modify articles with the help of word processing software is very weak, and the difference in forming this ability is the biggest. Regarding Question 4, 55% have relatively strong

ability to find and correct inappropriate language expression and cohesion problems through inspection. But its standard deviation is 1.408, which shows that students have great differences in choosing this strategy. Through the research on the above four aspects of evaluation and remedial strategies, it can be concluded that students still do not reach the CSE-4.

#### 5.1.4. Overall Strategy

**Table 5.** Overall English Writing Strategies

	Question	Percentage					Mean	SD
		A	B	C	D	E		
Overall strategy	1	11.67	23.33	16.67	26.67	21.67	3.23	1.345
	2	13.33	26.67	20	16.67	23.33	3.10	1.386
	3	8.33	25	26.67	20	20	3.18	1.255
	4	13.33	20	20	21.67	25	3.25	1.385
	5	15	18.33	25	25	16.67	3.10	1.311

The first and second questions are the presentation of the overall description of the implementation strategy, the third and fourth questions are the presentation of the evaluation and remediation strategy, and the fifth question is the presentation of the planning strategy. From the perspective of the percentage of each option and standard deviation, many students still choose C, D and E, the standard deviation is greater than 2, showing that most students have not reached the CSE-4. From the perspective of standard deviation, the standard deviation is greater than 1, which shows that students'

choices are quite different.

## 5.2. The Correlation between Writing Interest and Strategies

The questions related to planning strategy, implement strategy and evaluation of remedial strategy are selected for the analysis, and Pearson correlation analysis is conducted with the results of English writing interest. The analysis results are normally distributed as follows:

**Table 6.** Correlation Analysis of English Writing interest and Writing Strategies

		Writing interest	Planning strategy	Implement strategy	Evaluation and remedial strategy
Writing interest	Pearson correlation	1	.713	.752	.764
	Sig.		.000	.000	.000
Planning strategy	Pearson correlation	.713	1	.608	.638
	Sig.	.000		.000	.000
Implement strategy	Pearson correlation	.752	.608	1	.768
	Sig.	.000	.000		.000
Evaluation and remedial strategy	Pearson correlation	.764	.638	.768	1
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	

As shown in Table 6, all the significances are .000 (less than 0.05), indicating that there is significant correlation. This shows that English writing interest is related to planning strategy, execution strategy and evaluation and remedy strategy. Among them, the Pearson correlation with the evaluation of remedial strategies is 0.762, which has a strong correlation, followed by implementation strategies and planning strategies. In addition, it is found that the Pearson correlation between the implementation strategy and the evaluation remedy strategy is 0.768, which shows that there is also a strong correlation. It shows that the higher the students' interest in English writing, the better their mastery of English writing strategies, especially the implementation strategies and evaluation and remedy strategies.

Through the analysis and discussion above, and according to the descriptive words of the writing strategy scale for CSE-4 learners, it is clearly observed that the English writing strategy level of senior high school students has not reached the standard of CSE-4 set by the scale, regardless of the

overall application of English writing strategies or the mastery of specific planning, implementation, evaluation and remedy strategies. By further integrating the data, it can be concluded that there are two problems in the use of English writing strategies. Firstly, students are poor in evaluating remedial strategies, which may be attributed to their insufficient ability to find problems and their lack of awareness of checking and revising their writing. Secondly, when students use English writing strategies, their effectiveness is influenced by their interest in English writing, especially in the evaluation and remedial strategies.

## 6. Conclusion

Through the questionnaire survey, this study has found that the English writing strategies of the senior high school students are still relatively weak and have not reached the CSE-4 level. Through data analysis, it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between English writing interest

and writing strategies. From the teacher's point of view, teachers should carefully design writing teaching plans, strive to stimulate students' interest in English writing and enhance their awareness of applying English writing strategies. In addition, they should adopt peer evaluation or self-evaluation to cultivate students' writing evaluation. From the students' point of view, on the one hand, they should pay attention to the accumulation of English writing materials, cultivate good writing habits and plan the article structure reasonably. On the other hand, the writing process should be highlighted, and the good habit of checking as well as revising should be formed so as to improve English writing.

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