A study on the application of lexical chunks teaching in senior high school English writing under the i+1 input model

Lidan GOU, Luying MA, Ziyu ZHANG

Jilin International Studies University, Changchun 130117, China

Abstract: This study examines the application of lexical chunks teaching in high school English writing under the i+1 input model. English writing assesses linguistic ability, logical thinking, and cultural comprehension, yet students often struggle with vocabulary use and sentence diversity. To address these challenges, this research integrates lexical chunks teaching with the i+1 model to enhance writing skills. A systematic literature review and empirical data analysis confirm its effectiveness in improving accuracy and fluency. Additionally, the i+1 model supports vocabulary acquisition and language learning. This paper provides new insights and practical guidance for high school English teachers.

Key words: lexical chunks teaching; i+1 input model; senior high school English writing; teaching strategies

1 Introduction

High school English writing assesses language ability while reflecting students' logic and cultural knowledge. However, common issues like improper vocabulary use and monotonous sentence patterns hinder progress [1]. Lexical chunks, as prefabricated language units, can enhance vocabulary accuracy and sentence diversity [2]. The i+1 input model advocates slightly advanced language input to foster learning. Combining lexical chunks teaching with the i+1 model provides rich, structured input, improving students' writing skills. This study examines their combined impact and explores strategies to optimize lexical chunks teaching, offering effective learning paths for high school students.

2 An overview of two basic theories

2.1 Lexical chunks theory

Lexical chunks, or prefabricated language units, are crucial for language acquisition. According to Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992), they are multi-word units stored and retrieved as wholes, including phrases, collocations, and idioms [3]. Categorized into polywords, phrasal constraints, institutionalized utterances, and sentence builders, they enhance fluency and accuracy. In writing, lexical chunks improve coherence, vocabulary richness, and syntactic variety (Cortes, 2004).

2.2 The i+1 input model

Krashen's (1985) i+1 model posits that learners advance best with slightly challenging input. Comprehensible input, slightly above the learner's current level, fosters gradual language development [4]. This model is widely applied in language teaching, guiding material selection and lesson design. In writing instruction, i+1 encourages exposure to advanced texts within a learner's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), enhancing writing skills progressively.

2.3 Theoretical integration: lexical chunks teaching and the i+1 input model

Integrating lexical chunks teaching with the i+1 input model enhances high school students' writing skills by providing structured yet challenging language input. The i+1 model helps sequence lexical chunks slightly beyond students' proficiency, ensuring comprehension and motivation. Teachers can embed these chunks in tailored texts and writing prompts, promoting deeper processing and active use [5]. Lessons should incorporate various chunk types, encouraging students to analyze and apply them in writing. This combined approach fosters a rich learning environment, improving accuracy, fluency, and coherence in students' written expression.

3 Relevant studies at home and abroad

3.1 Relevant studies at home

In China, research confirms that lexical chunks teaching and the i+1 model enhance vocabulary expansion and writing coherence [6]. Zhao Yi (2009) emphasized its role in structuring essays, while Ji Hua (2016) found listening-as-input improves writing. These studies guide further application strategies.

3.2 Relevant studies abroad

Foreign research integrates lexical chunks into textbooks and grammar teaching, strengthening vocabulary and fluency [7]. The i+1 model emphasizes comprehensible input through tailored reading and listening. Foreign research balances theory and practice with engaging teaching methods.

3.3 Comparative analysis

Domestic research excels in understanding local teaching environments and tailoring strategies to students' needs. However, it requires further innovation in teaching methods and material development to adapt to evolving educational demands. Foreign research, with its strong theoretical foundation and diverse teaching approaches, emphasizes student engagement and confidence. Yet, localization challenges arise when applying foreign findings to Chinese contexts. This study integrates advanced foreign research with China's practical needs, prioritizing innovative teaching, student motivation, and confidence-building [8]. Additionally, it addresses gaps in teaching methods, textbook development, and localization challenges, proposing targeted solutions for improvement.

4 Summary and comment based on the previous research and gap-finding

4.1 Summary

Research on lexical chunks and the i+1 input model in English writing shows positive progress. In China, scholars emphasize lexical chunks as key to improving accuracy and fluency. Wang Chuming (2009) found that lexical chunk teaching enhances writing authenticity and richness, supported by empirical studies. Internationally, Krashen's i+1 model is widely applied in second language acquisition [9]. Nattinger & DeCarrico (1992) highlighted its role in structured input, providing slightly advanced linguistic exposure. Numerous studies confirm the i+1 model's effectiveness in improving writing skills.

4.2 Comment and reflection

Research on lexical chunks and the i+1 model employs quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Quantitative studies use statistical analysis but face sample and regional limitations. Qualitative research explores learners' cognitive and emotional changes but is subject to researcher bias. Mixed methods offer comprehensive insights but are complex to implement [10]. While literature highlights the benefits of these approaches, research variations may impact objectivity. Sample size, data collection, and methodology constraints limit generalizability. Therefore, findings should be critically evaluated, considering potential biases, to develop a more accurate understanding of their impact on English writing.

4.3 Research gaps and solutions

This study identifies several research gaps. First, the integration of lexical chunks teaching and the i+1 input model in improving writing remains underexplored. Second, limited research examines their long-term effects. Third, the impact of learner differences, such as cognition, motivation, and strategy, is insufficiently studied.

To address these gaps, this study aims to construct and empirically test an integration framework. A longitudinal design will track students' writing progress, assessing lasting effects. Additionally, it will analyze individual differences through data-driven research, providing a scientific basis for personalized teaching strategies.

5 Implication for possible application in schools

5.1 Teaching strategies

To integrate lexical chunks teaching and the i+1 input model effectively, teaching materials should be diverse and practical. Teachers can select relevant topics and extract commonly used lexical chunks with a difficulty gradient to meet i+1 requirements. Mind mapping, situational dialogues, and multimedia tools can enhance comprehension.

Teaching methods should focus on input, internalization, and output. Explanation, discussions, and writing tasks help students apply lexical chunks in writing. Assessments should combine formative and terminal evaluations, emphasizing accuracy, variety, and coherence. Additionally, evaluating writing structure and style ensures comprehensive skill development.

5.2 Teacher training

Teachers must understand and apply lexical chunks teaching and the i+1 input model effectively. They should engage in theoretical learning through conferences and seminars, analyze successful cases, and apply theories in practice. Collaboration with peers helps share resources and methods. Continuous learning of new research and teaching trends is essential for improving professional skills. Regular participation in teaching activities and adaptation to new methodologies enhance instructional effectiveness, ensuring students receive well-structured and effective writing guidance.

6 Conclusion

This study examines the impact of lexical chunks teaching on high school English writing under the i+1 input model. Findings indicate that lexical chunks instruction enhances accuracy, fluency, and overall writing quality. The i+1 model provides structured input, balancing challenge and comprehension, supporting effective learning.

At the theoretical level, this study highlights the combined benefits of these approaches, guiding material design and teaching methods. Practically, it offers strategies for educators. However, limitations remain, including the lack of empirical research and consideration of individual learner differences. Future studies should incorporate quantitative and qualitative research, such as case studies and interviews, to explore practical applications and challenges in teaching implementation.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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