

# Visual Analysis of Continuation Writing Teaching in Chinese High School English under the New College Entrance Examination Pattern

Zhao Tianzheng, Zhang Shaoyun

[ **Abstract** ] This paper uses the CiteSpace visualization analysis software and the bibliometric method to statistically analyze the literature related to continuation writing from 2012 to 2024 in the CNKI database. It introduces the development of continuation writing, comprehensively reviews its domestic development process, and divides the more than ten years of development into three stages: proposal and development, application and development in the college entrance examination, and future prospects and reflections. The authors believe that domestic continuation writing is limited to written materials, with a single research method and a focus on exam-oriented purposes, failing to fully leverage the educational function of fostering moral and intellectual growth. Finally, the paper looks forward to future research trends in continuation writing for the Chinese college entrance examination English section, aiming to promote in-depth research in this area.

[ **Key words** ] Chinese college entrance examination English; bibliometric method; continuation writing; prospects

[ **About the author** ] Zhao Tianzheng (1999—), male, from Chaoyang, Liaoning, China, master in School of Foreign Language, Bohai University, majoring in Foreign Language and Literature. Research interests: applied linguistics, foreign language teaching methods. Zhang Shaoyun (1976—), male, from Jingzhou, Hubei, China, associate professor in Anqing Normal University, doctor. Research interests: applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, geolinguistics.

[ **DOI** ] <https://doi.org/10.62662/kxwxy0205001>

[ **Website** ] [www.oacj.net](http://www.oacj.net)

## 1 Overview

Continuation writing, first proposed by Wang Chuming (2012), has a development history of more than ten years. The continuation writing tasks in the college entrance examination English section help students improve their written expression and reading comprehension abilities. The design of continuation writing tasks is conducive to assessing students' critical thinking, understanding of new materials, and written expression skills. In 2016, the continuation writing task first appeared in the Zhejiang college entrance examination. From 2016 to 2020, this task type had been piloted in the Zhejiang college entrance examination English reform for four years and was later promoted to multiple provinces after gaining recognition. In 2021, a noteworthy phenomenon in the national college entrance examination was the first-time adoption of continuation writing tasks in the English exams of multiple provinces. We used "continuation writing" as the keyword to search the CNKI database.

Based on a preliminary survey of research results, we selected the Chinese keyword "continuation writing" for an advanced search in the CNKI database, with a time range from January 1, 2012 to December 1, 2024. After filtering out papers unrelated to high school English and continuation writing, this study collected more than 100 relevant articles. Based on the statistical analysis of the number of publications and specific research results, we

divided the research on language adaptation theory in China over the past thirty years into three main stages: the first stage is the theoretical proposal and development period (2012—2016); the second stage is the college entrance examination application period (2016—2021); and the third stage is the in-depth research and future prospects period (2021—2024). The authors will discuss these three stages in detail below.

## **2 Proposal and development stage(2012—2016)**

The research results at this stage mainly introduced continuation writing and attempted to integrate it with reading and writing. The main researchers include Wang Chuming, Wang Qi, Wang Min, Jiang Lin, and others. In 2012, Wang Chuming first proposed the concept of continuation writing and emphasized its role in promoting foreign language learning. Subsequently, Wang Chuming (2013, 2014, 2015) conducted systematic research on this theory over three consecutive years, pointing out that continuation writing should effectively promote learning. In addition to Wang Chuming, Wang Min (2014), Wang Qi (2016), and Jiang Lin (2015) also conducted research on continuation writing. Wang Min and Wang Chuming (2014) first revealed the synergistic effect in continuation writing through empirical research. Jiang Lin (2015) further pointed out that continuation writing helps improve students' performance in accuracy, complexity, and fluency in English writing.

Research at this stage confirms that there is indeed a synergistic effect in continuation writing tasks, mainly stemming from the close connection between comprehension and production. The combination of the two not only strengthens the coherence and coordination between input and output but also creates communicative needs prompting learners to deeply understand the author's communicative intentions and stimulating interaction and synergy between learners and the text. This new theory has promoted continuous in-depth research by many scholars and its application in the teaching practice of college entrance examination English.

## **3 Application and development of continuation writing in college entrance examination English (2016—2021)**

### **3.1 Emergence and development in college entrance examination English**

After the initial introduction and exploration of continuation writing in the first stage, academic research on continuation writing has deepened, with a surge in the number of studies, an increase in research topics, and an expansion in research depth, but it has not yet involved the college entrance examination level or primary and secondary school English teaching. In 2016, the continuation writing task first appeared in the Zhejiang college entrance examination English section. Subsequently, the journal *Primary and Secondary School Foreign Language Teaching* published a large number of papers studying the use of continuation writing tasks in college entrance examination English. The authors list the main scholars' assertions on continuation writing, but due to space limitations, not all assertions are listed.

Liu Qingsi and Chen Kang (2016) first conducted a series of studies on the reliability and validity of English test questions. The two authors believed that continuation writing is an assessment method that closely integrates reading and writing, aiming to assess students' comprehensive language abilities. This task type responds to the need for comprehensive language ability assessment in foreign language exams and has been proven through empirical research to effectively promote learning through assessment. It has a very positive impact on language teaching and is therefore suitable for use in exams such as the college entrance examination.

Subsequently, Ling Yong (2016, 2017a, 2017b) proposed corresponding teaching strategies for the newly added continuation writing task in the Zhejiang college entrance examination, from the selection of continuation materials, the cultivation of continuation thinking, to the determination of continuation prompts. In 2017, Ling Yong used the continuation writing task from the October 2016 Zhejiang college entrance examination as a case

study to examine the impact of four elements—paragraph opening sentences, keywords, continuation direction prompts, and character traits—on the development of continuation stories. Based on this research, he proposed teaching strategies aimed at improving the logical consistency of continuation content. He believed that in the subsequent teaching of continuation writing, teachers should focus on guiding students to analyze the factors affecting plot development, analyze the logic of opening sentences, classify keywords by elements, pay attention to non-underlined information words, and finally refine character traits to better promote students' test-taking skills and teachers' continuation writing teaching abilities.

Since the introduction of the continuation writing task in the college entrance examination English section in 2016, Chen Kang (2019) conducted long-term tracking research on high school English teachers to understand their comprehension and application of the task's assessment objectives and scoring criteria, as well as the strategies and methods they adopted in teaching. He scored 20 typical continuation writing samples from 12 ordinary high school English teachers in Zhejiang and combined interview data for quantitative and qualitative analyses, verifying the positive effects of the continuation writing task in the college entrance examination. At the same time, he also proposed specific suggestions on how to correctly apply continuation writing tasks in teaching.

The text types for continuation writing are mostly literary and narrative, based on which Luo Shaoqian and Zhang Huaqing (2020), based on the *2017 Ordinary High School English Curriculum Standards*, explained how to teach literary works in high school English textbooks from the aspects of work selection, teaching objectives, teaching models, main teaching activities, and main teaching principles. They detailed the operational plans for three teaching activities: literature circles, continuation writing, and debates, and pointed out that literary teaching should be based on three main principles: student-centered, meaning-centered, and thinking-oriented, to promote the better development of continuation writing in the college entrance examination.

### 3.2 Contributions and continued development by domestic scholars

From 2016 to 2021, with the continuous development of continuation writing in the college entrance examination, domestic scholars (such as Wang Chuming, Jiang Lin, Wang Qi, and Xin Sheng) conducted in-depth and systematic research in the field of continuation writing from different perspectives, providing theoretical support for the continuation writing task in college entrance examination English.

Continuation writing is a common operational method of "promoting learning through continuation" (Wang Chuming, 2016). Wang Chuming (2017) first proposed moving from "promoting learning through writing" to "promoting learning through continuation". Subsequently, Wang Chuming (2018) continued to propose that continuation writing is a widely used foreign language learning promotion method among continuation methods, and its learning promotion effect depends on the intensity of interaction between learners and reading materials. He also proposed two continuation variants, "multi-round continuation" and "comparative continuation" to maximize the effectiveness of continuation and better promote foreign language teaching.

Wang Qi (2016) analyzed the synergistic effect of continuation writing from the perspective of Chinese, combined with relevant theories of second language acquisition, through empirical research. Wang Qi's research verified the applicability of continuation writing in Chinese second language teaching and provided new ideas for initiation research. Based on the shortcomings of research in the field of the applicability of continuation writing in Chinese second language teaching, Wang Qi (2019a) empirically examined the impact of word segmentation on the synergistic effect of continuation writing. The selection of pre-reading materials, including text layout, affects the synergistic effect of continuation, which has similar or identical effects on continuation writing in any foreign language. Wang Qi (2019b) studied the effectiveness and feasibility of using continuation writing methods to learn

and apply English relative clauses through empirical research. The experimental results have implications for how to teach and learn English complex syntactic structures effectively.

However, current college entrance examination English teaching often separates comprehension exercises from production exercises. This separation of learning and use, which is also reflected in the task types of foreign language exams, has a negative backwash effect on foreign language teaching and learning and is the main reason for the inefficiency of foreign language learning. Based on production exercises, Wang Qi (2020) further analyzed whether the level of foreign language learners can produce a priming effect. Wang Qi (2021) empirically examined the impact of synergistic production in continuation writing on second language learning, arguing that “promoting learning through continuation” should not only enhance learners’ spontaneous synergy but also cultivate learners’ conscious synergy awareness to maximize synergistic production.

Jiang Lin and Tu Mengwei (2016) believed that continuation writing is beneficial for English vocabulary learning. Continuation writing conforms to the laws of language use and learning, promoting the continuous development of foreign language abilities in the process of creative content writing. Jiang Lin (2019) and other scholars analyzed the correlation between native language thinking and text length in continuation writing through empirical research. Xin Sheng (2017) believed that the interaction triggered by basic continuation writing tasks cannot guarantee that high school English learners notice the target structure and interact with it effectively. On the contrary, enhanced continuation writing tasks can significantly improve learners’ attention to the target form, enhance the synergistic effect, and promote the acquisition of grammatical structures. Xin Sheng (2020) examined the synergistic phenomenon of text complexity in continuation writing tasks and its impact on the accuracy of continuation works.

Looking back at the five-year development from 2016 to 2021, domestic continuation writing research has gradually transitioned from the initial introduction and exploration stage to the deepening of theoretical research and in-depth discussion of the continuation writing task in college entrance examination English. With the increasing application of synergistic effects, research not only focuses on theoretical exploration but also begins to emphasize reflection and summary, achieving significant progress. However, these studies have not yet fully integrated with high school English teaching practice and high school English curriculum standards. In addition, the main subjects of existing empirical research are mostly college students, and empirical research targeting high school students is still relatively scarce.

#### **4 In-depth research and reflection stage on continuation writing (2021—2024)**

In 2021, a noteworthy phenomenon in the national college entrance examination was the first-time adoption of continuation writing tasks in the English exams of multiple provinces. Previously, this task type had been piloted in the Zhejiang college entrance examination English reform for four years and was later promoted to multiple provinces after gaining recognition (Wang Chuming, 2022).

In 2021, multiple provinces also adopted the “3+1+2” subject selection model for the college entrance examination, and the English task type was changed from error correction to continuation writing, which is also an innovation and adjustment of the college entrance examination English task type. Wang Chuming (2022) analyzed the shortcomings of the current continuation writing task in college entrance examination English, mainly the lack of language communication elements and the separation of reading and writing, which points out some directions for the future development of continuation writing in college entrance examination English.

Chen Kang (2022) explored the quality evaluation standards of continuation writing in college entrance examination English from the perspective of teachers, making full use of continuation writing tasks to strengthen the

educational function of the English subject. Wang Qi and Miao Haiyan (2023) analyzed the impact of situational orientation on the communicative willingness and synergistic effect of second language continuation writing. Situational orientation is conducive to further enhancing the synergistic effect of second language continuation writing.

In summary, after 2021, the development direction of continuation writing needs to move from an exam-oriented perspective to achieve the separation of teaching and testing, better leverage the educational function of fostering moral and intellectual growth, and better promote students' comprehensive English reading and writing abilities.

## 5 Frontier topics in continuation writing research

The authors used CiteSpace software (version 6.1.R6) to analyze the keywords of continuation writing-related papers. By setting specific parameters, high-frequency keywords were clustered, and a keyword co-occurrence map was generated, visually displaying the research hotspots in this field. Based on the hotspot statistical analysis of the keyword co-occurrence map, this paper summarizes the hot topics and research characteristics of continuation writing research as follows (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. The keyword co-occurrence map

### 5.1 Continued focus on the exploration of synergistic effects

According to the hotspot statistical analysis of the keyword co-occurrence map, the keyword “synergistic effect” appears frequently in both the initial research stage and the in-depth exploration stage. Research teams represented by Wang Min, Wang Qi, and Wang Chuming have gradually expanded the theoretical exploration of the synergistic effect in continuation writing from theoretical introduction, core viewpoint analysis to systematic research, laying an important foundation for the research in this field.

Wang Min and Wang Chuming (2014) proposed: Does the language use of Chinese learners in English continuation writing have synergy with the reading text? They first explained the synergistic effect in continuation writing. A series of research results published by Wang Min, Wang Qi, and Wang Chuming from 2014 to 2022 have conducted detailed discussions on the synergistic effect in continuation writing, for example, the synergistic effect of continuation writing in Chinese (Wang Qi 2016, 2019a), the learning promotion effect of continuation writing production (Wang Qi, 2021), and the learning promotion effect of situational orientation on continuation writing (Wang Qi, 2022; Wang Qi, 2023).

### 5.2 Focus on applied research on continuation writing

The application of continuation writing in primary and secondary school English teaching mainly focuses on research related to the college entrance examination, English classrooms, and test-taking skills, discussing college

entrance examination questions, mock questions, and other materials to promote continuation writing teaching. The literature mainly comes from *Primary and Secondary School Foreign Language Teaching*. For example, Ling Yong (2016, 2017a, 2017b) discussed the teaching strategies of continuation writing and the use of keywords, as well as suggestions for English teaching. Chen Kang (2022) analyzed the quality evaluation standards of continuation writing from the perspective of teachers. In addition, Wang Chuming (2022) emphasized the importance of the separation of teaching and testing for English continuation writing.

## 6 Research shortcomings and prospects

After more than ten years of exploration and practice, domestic continuation writing research has greatly expanded and deepened in both theory and application, but there are still areas that need improvements.

Further integration with primary and secondary school English teaching: According to research statistics, continuation writing is closely integrated with second language writing and language teaching. However, among CSSCI core journals, only Wang Chuming (2022) emphasized the separation of teaching and testing and the fostering of moral and intellectual growth in college entrance examination English teaching. Other journals rarely involve college entrance examination English. As an important baton of exam-oriented education in China, the college entrance examination can be combined with the synergistic effect of continuation writing.

Innovation and diversity of written materials: Currently, the materials used in continuation writing research and testing are mostly narrative texts, with less attention paid to materials from daily life and actual communication scenarios. In addition, with the rapid development of the Internet and various social platforms (such as Douyin, Weibo, and Bilibili), materials from virtual social networks are also worth in-depth research. Wang Chuming (2022) pointed out that continuation writing needs to incorporate communicative elements, which is both a current shortcoming and an important direction for future research.

Single discipline and field of current research: Current research is mainly concentrated in the field of foreign language and literature, with weak integration with other disciplines and fields outside Chinese and foreign language and literature. The development of interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research is not balanced. Although many emerging disciplines have sprung up in recent years, the depth and breadth of their research are still far from that of the foreign language and literature field. Continuation writing research should not be limited to the English language but should expand to more languages and related fields. At the same time, the role of Chinese continuation writing should be emphasized to promote the comprehensive development of interdisciplinary abilities.

## 7 Conclusion

This paper begins by reviewing the evolution of research on the continuation writing task in the Chinese college entrance examination from 2012 to 2024 through a literature review. Based on over 100 journals included in the CNKI database, the study employs the bibliometric method to divide the more than ten years of development of continuation writing into three stages: the introduction and preliminary exploration stage, the college entrance examination application and development stage, and the in-depth research and critical reflection stage. Subsequently, the study uses CiteSpace visualization software to construct a keyword co-occurrence knowledge map, systematically organizing research hotspots such as the synergistic effect, advancements in theoretical research, and applied research in college entrance examination English.

On this basis, the paper evaluates the current status and limitations of the field and looks forward to future research directions. Although continuation writing research started relatively late in China, it has developed rapidly and achieved significant accomplishments. Theoretical research continues to advance, and applied research is increasingly abundant, with the breadth and depth of research on college entrance examination English being

particularly notable. However, there are still some challenges, such as the reliance on written narrative materials and the lack of diversity in research methods. Therefore, future research should focus on summarizing, reflecting on, and critically evaluating continuation writing.

At the same time, the research field should move beyond its current narrow scope to explore new directions, ultimately enhancing students' reading and writing abilities. Additionally, it is necessary to deepen the application research of continuation writing in high school English teaching and exam preparation, strengthen academic exchanges and collaboration, and promote the sharing of open classes.

Finally, the unique characteristics of continuation writing in the college entrance examination should be fully utilized to implement the educational goal of fostering moral and intellectual growth in the new era, cultivating students' comprehensive English learning abilities throughout the entire process.

## References:

- [1] Chen Kang. A Study on the Effectiveness of the Continuation Task in the College Entrance Examination English Test[J]. Foreign Language Teaching in Schools (Secondary Edition), 2019, 42(11): 1-6.
- [2] Chen Kang. Exploring Quality Evaluation Criteria for Continuation Writing from Teachers' Perspectives [J]. Foreign Language Teaching in Schools (Secondary Edition), 2022, 45(3): 61-65.
- [3] Ling Yong. Teaching Strategies for Continuation Writing [J]. Foreign Language Teaching in Schools (Secondary Edition), 2016, 39(5): 31-35.
- [4] Ling Yong. The Role of Key Words in Continuation Writing and Strategies for Their Application [J]. Foreign Language Teaching in Schools (Secondary Edition), 2017, 40(4): 1-4.
- [5] Ling Yong. Analysis of Factors Influencing Story Development in Continuation Writing and Teaching Suggestions [J]. Foreign Language Teaching in Schools (Secondary Edition), 2017, 40(8): 47-51.
- [6] Liu Qingsi, Chen Kang. Research on the Design of Continuation Writing in the Twice-a-Year College Entrance Examination English Test [J]. Foreign Language Teaching in Schools (Secondary Edition), 2016, 39(1): 1-5.
- [7] Jiang Lin, Chen Jin. The Impact of Continuation Writing on the Development of Accuracy, Complexity, and Fluency in English Writing [J]. Modern Foreign Languages, 2015, 38(3): 366-375, 438.
- [8] Jiang Lin, Tu Mengwei. The Role of Continuation Writing in Second Language Vocabulary Learning [J]. Modern Foreign Languages, 2016, 39(6): 819-829, 874.
- [9] Jiang Lin, Chen Yan, Zhan Jianling. A Study on Native Language Thinking in Continuation Writing [J]. Foreign Languages and Their Teaching, 2019(3): 8-16, 143.
- [10] Luo Shaoqian, Zhang Huaqing. Discussion on Teaching Methods for Literary Works in the New Edition of High School English Textbooks [J]. Foreign Language Teaching in Schools (Secondary Edition), 2020, 43(3): 35-39.
- [11] Sun Qinmei, Wang Yu. The Effect of Continuation Writing on English Article Learning and Influencing Factors [J]. Technology Enhanced Foreign Language Education, 2018(2): 18-24.
- [12] Wang Chuming. Continuation Writing: An Effective Method to Improve Foreign Language Learning Efficiency [J]. Foreign Language World, 2012(5): 2-7.
- [13] Wang Chuming, Qi Luxia. Research on Continuation Writing Task Types [J]. Foreign Language Teaching and Research, 2013, 45(5): 707-718, 800.
- [14] Wang Chuming. Why Continuation Writing Effectively Promotes Learning [J]. Foreign Language

Teaching and Research, 2015, 47(5): 753-762, 801.

[15] Wang Chuming. Promoting Learning Through Continuation [J]. Modern Foreign Languages, 2016, 39(6): 784-793, 873.

[16] Wang Chuming. From “Writing to Learn” to “Continuation to Learn” [J]. Foreign Language Teaching and Research, 2017, 49(4): 547-556, 639-640.

[17] Wang Chuming. How to Increase Interaction Intensity in Continuation Writing [J]. Foreign Language World, 2018(5): 40-45.

[18] Wang Chuming. Separation of Teaching and Testing, Focusing on Promoting Learning [J]. Foreign Language Teaching and Research, 2022, 54(3): 425-432, 480-481.

[19] Wang Min, Wang Chuming. The Synergistic Effect of Continuation Writing [J]. Modern Foreign Languages, 2014, 37(4): 501-512, 584.

[20] Wang Qi, Wang Fenglan. The Synergistic Effect of Continuation Writing in Chinese as a Second Language [J]. Modern Foreign Languages, 2016, 39(6): 794-805, 873.

[21] Wang Qi. The Impact of Synergistic Effects in Continuation Writing on Chinese as a Second Language Learning [J]. Foreign Languages and Their Teaching, 2019(3): 38-46, 144.

[22] Wang Qi, Wang Chuming. Promoting Learning of English Relative Clauses Through Continuation [J]. Foreign Language Learning Theory and Practice, 2019(3): 1-5, 18.

[23] Wang Qi, Cao Qin. Structural Priming in Second Language Continuation Writing: A Case Study of English Passive Sentence Production [J]. Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages, 2020, 43(1): 25-32.

[24] Wang Qi. The Learning-Promoting Effect of Synergistic Output in Continuation Writing [J]. Foreign Language World, 2021(6): 15-22.

[25] Wang Qi, Zhong Lizhen, Wang WeiQuan, Yang Hang, Zhong Wenbei. The Influence of Contextual Reproduction Cues on Synergistic Effects in Second Language Continuation Writing [J]. China Foreign Languages, 2022, 19(4): 62-69.

[26] Wang Qi, Miao Haiyan. The Influence of Situational Orientation on Communicative Willingness and Synergistic Effects in Second Language Continuation Writing [J]. Modern Foreign Languages, 2023, 46(1): 29-41.

[27] Xin Sheng. The Impact of Continuation Writing Task Conditions on Second Language Grammar Structure Acquisition [J]. Modern Foreign Languages, 2017, 40(4): 507-517, 584.

[28] Xin Sheng, Li Lixia. Text Complexity Alignment in Continuation Writing Tasks and Its Impact on Accuracy [J]. Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages, 2020, 43(1): 33-41.