



Development of a Training Course Based on Task-based Learning to Cultivate Film Academic Paper Writing Ability at Xi'an University

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Abstract

Background and aim: University students in China are required to complete an academic graduation thesis during their undergraduate studies. Therefore, it is particularly important to cultivate the academic paper-writing ability of undergraduates. The purpose of this study is to improve the film academic paper writing ability of students majoring in film literature at Xi'an University through the film academic paper writing training course. The purposes of this research were: (1) compare the film academic paper writing ability of students after the implementation of the training course based on task-based learning with the determined criteria at 70 % of each time. And (2) assess the students' satisfaction with the training course based on task-based learning to cultivate students' film academic paper writing ability.

Materials and methods: The sample of this study was 12 students of film literature at Xi'an University, in the Xi'an City of Shaanxi Province which were selected by using a purposive sampling method. Set the sample size by using the G*Power program and set effect size = 0.80 (choose a large effect size), error prob. = 0.05 and power (1-B error prob.) = 0.80. After calculation, the size of the sample was 12. The instruments used in this research were 1) a Film academic paper writing training course based on task-based learning, 2) 8 lesson plans, 3) 4 film academic paper writing learning achievement tests (the reliability of each test was between 0.80 – 0.85), 4) film academic paper writing ability test with 0.84 of reliability, and 5) students' satisfaction questionnaire with 0.85 of reliability. Data were collected four times during the implementation and one time after the implementation. The statistics used to analyze the data included the mean, standard deviation, and t-test for one sample.

Results: From the study, it was found that: the results of the film academic paper writing ability of students after learning through the film academic paper writing training course, with the full score of 20. The mean score (time 1) of film academic paper writing ability was 16.83, SD was 1.70. The mean score (post-test 2) of film academic paper writing ability was 15.58, SD was 1.00. The mean score of (post-test 3) of film academic paper writing ability was 16.25, SD was 1.14. The mean score of (post-test 4) of film academic paper writing ability was 16.67, SD was 1.30. The mean score of the final test of film academic paper writing ability was 16.83, SD was 2.29. The finding of this table revealed that after learning through the film academic paper writing training course, every post-test score of students' film academic paper writing ability after implementation of the training course is higher than the criterion set at 70% (14 scores) and the difference was statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). The student's satisfaction with the film academic paper writing training course based on task-based learning was very high level ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.64$).

Conclusion: According to the research, the film academic paper writing training course based on task-based learning can effectively improve the academic paper writing ability of students majoring in film literature at Xi'an University and cultivate their ability to consult literature and integrate resources, ability to use the correct academic paper writing norms, ability to use words and organize language, ability to apply academic theories to analyze film and film phenomena.

Keywords: Training course; Task-based learning; Film academic paper writing ability

Introduction

The report of the 16th and 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China both proposed to optimize the educational structure and improve the quality of higher education development. At present, the development of higher education in our country has entered a new stage. The report of the 18th National Congress proposed to promote the conformal development of higher education. The report of the 19th National Congress proposed to realize the connotative development of higher education. The Proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Formulating the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-range Goals for 2035 proposes to improve the quality of higher education, accelerate the training of talents in short





supply, and establish a high-quality education system. Zhong (2020) pointed out that to promote the high-quality development of higher education, we must improve the quality of personnel training. Early the national medium and long-term education reform and development plan outline (2010-2020) is put forward, we should support students to participate in scientific research and strengthen practical teaching. Having good scientific research ability is the basis for undergraduates to develop university research-based learning. University undergraduates should have good academic research ability and academic paper writing ability. The writing of professional papers is an important part of scientific research ability, and also an important standard for the assessment of scientific research ability.

In the above background, there is no doubt that the research ability of Chinese university students and postgraduates has put forward higher requirements. In China, both undergraduates and postgraduates are required to submit a dissertation upon graduation, and the writing of academic papers is an important reflection of students' research ability. Nowadays, students in many Chinese universities, including Xi'an University, still have some difficulties in writing academic papers, which is not conducive to the quality improvement of China's higher education.

The researcher decided to develop a training course to cultivate the academic paper writing ability of film literature undergraduates at Xi'an University and enhance the student's research ability through the cultivation of writing ability. Task-based learning is driven by the completion of tasks and encourages learners to take the initiative to complete tasks to motivate students to have the autonomy of learning. This teaching method emphasizes the task set, which requires that the tasks set should be included in the student's proximal development zone and can effectively stimulate the student's enthusiasm for exploring knowledge, and improve the students' innovation ability and innovation consciousness. The task of exploring knowledge is hidden in it so that students can take the initiative to acquire knowledge and complete the self-construction of knowledge. In the whole teaching process, the emphasis is placed on the educational concept of "student-oriented". "Task-based" means that students build their own relevant abilities and knowledge system by improving the tasks carefully designed by teachers (Chen, 2016)." the whole teaching process, is a process of constantly raising questions and solving problems to try to carry out experiments.

In combination with the teaching and research of academic paper writing for film literature majors at Xi'an University, the researcher set up a film academic paper writing training course to cultivate students' academic paper writing ability. So, as the teacher of this training course, I will enhance students' participation and initiative in learning through task-based learning. Task-based learning methods can allow students to participate in it. Through the four tasks of the training course, students' academic paper writing ability is improved from four aspects:1) Ability to consult literature and integrate resources;2) Ability to use the correct academic paper writing norms; 3) Ability to use words and organize language; 4) Ability to apply academic theories to analyze film and film phenomena.

Research Question

The research questions addressed by this research were as follows:

1. What are the effects of implementing the training course based on task-based learning to cultivate film literature students' writing ability?
2. What is students' satisfaction with the film academic paper writing training course?

Research Objective

1. To compare the film academic paper writing ability of students after the implementation of the training course based on task-based learning with the determined criteria at 70 %. Of each time.
2. To assess the students' satisfaction toward training courses based on task-based learning to cultivate students' film academic paper writing ability.

Literature Review

Film academic paper writing training course

Cao (2016) points out that the film academic paper mainly refers to the writing body of university teachers, researchers in scientific research institutions, and undergraduates, masters, and doctoral students in film-related majors. Taking academic journals as writing and research bases; Adopting an





objective and rational evaluation and analysis attitude; In the evaluation method, the use of professional conceptual terms and theoretical analysis framework, the pursuit of rigorous writing, accurate wording, logical rigor, emphasis on notes and citations and other academic norms. Film academic papers emerged in the late 1980s, along with the application of modern Western film theory. After the 1990s, with the further institutionalization of colleges and universities and the emphasis on academic norms in the academic circle, especially the expansion of the number of teachers and students in colleges and universities brought about by the expansion of college enrollment, the quantification of scientific research work, the construction of subjects and the mandatory requirements on the number of academic

papers published by the awarding of doctoral and master's degrees, the number and scale of film academic papers have become increasingly large. Wang (2015) believes that "the academicization of film criticism means that criticism should not only be used as a record of direct reading impressions but should be interpreted according to a certain academic framework or model on this basis."

Therefore, the development of film paper writing training courses is in line with the development trend of academic research on film majors in Chinese universities. The predecessor of the film academic paper writing training course is the Classic Film Analysis course, which used to be the core course of the film literature major at Xi'an University. In the reform of the major in 2022, the major of film literature added many practical courses in script writing and short film shooting, and the course of Classic Film Analysis was removed due to the emphasis on theoretical teaching. Therefore, I set up the Film Academic Paper writing training course in 2023 as a supplement to practical teaching. The film academic paper writing training course is mainly for freshmen and sophomores majoring in film literature, and the students participating in the training are undergraduates under my tutorial system. The main content of the course is divided into four parts: 1) the analysis of film audiovisual language and film theory; 2) Literature retrieval, resource integration, and literature review writing; and 3) academic paper writing norms. 4) academic paper writing skills and writing training.

Task-based learning

Prabhu, N.S. (1979-1984) conducted communicative teaching experiments in India, which is the initial form of TBL. He defined tasks in his book *Teaching as a Second Language* and divided the task process into "pre-task, task and feedback". He is considered to be the founder of task-based language teaching. When he conducted this experiment, he paid great attention to "learning by doing." Crookes (1989) believes that a task is a work or an activity with a specific purpose. In educational curricula, it is mainly used to collect data for research. Task-based learning method originated in the United States in the 1980s and is based on the building Brown (Brown, 1994) described TBL as follows: "TBL places task at the center of teaching method and regards the learning process as a series of tasks directly related to and serving the curriculum objectives, the purpose of which goes beyond practicing language for language's sake."

Willis, a British linguist, believes that a task is an interactive activity in which students work towards a goal with a purpose. The result of a task can be concrete or intangible (Willis, 1998). Task refers to the assignment activities carried out to complete the clear teaching objectives in teaching, which can be divided into knowledge tasks, experience tasks, inquiry tasks, operation tasks, and exercise tasks. Skehan (1998:116-117) summarized the research results and findings of TBLT conducted by foreign scholars from 1984 to 1997 in four aspects: teaching tasks, proficiency of teaching tasks, goals set by teaching tasks, and relevant participants. Task-based learning method refers to the teaching method with "task" as the main body. It improves the whole teaching method through the process of proposing tasks, solving tasks, completing tasks, and evaluating.

Rod Ellis's book *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching* (2003) puts forward the teaching concept of Task-based learning, which is embodied in the aspects of teaching objectives, language learning process, creative communication, and expression. In 2004, Nunan (2004) gave a clear definition of the TBLT (task-based language teaching) model in his book *TBLT*, which provided a theoretical basis for the practice of TBLT in the field of language teaching.

In summary, Task-Based Learning (TBL) is a teaching method that focuses on learners develop their ability when completing meaningful tasks. In the teaching process, students can master learning content and improve professional skills through assignments, completion, and feedback on tasks. It also enables teachers to keep abreast of the course development.



Film academic paper writing ability

It is noted that the writing of film academic papers can sometimes involve multiple categories of content at the same time, not only a single content and research object. Therefore, the writing of film academic papers requires students to have a solid theoretical foundation, find literature and integrate data, comprehensive writing ability, and academic research thinking. It is divided into the following four parts:

1) Ability to consult literature and integrate resources

Xu (2008) believes that literature retrieval is a necessary means to obtain knowledge, information, and intelligence, and plays an extremely important role in scientific exchange and social life: 1) Literature retrieval can greatly reduce the time spent by researchers searching for literature; 2) Literature retrieval is helpful to acquire the latest knowledge, timely understand the development trend of the major and related disciplines, facilitate the inheritance and reference of previous achievements, and avoid repetitive research; 3) Literature retrieval is helpful to solve difficult problems in study and work; 4) Literature retrieval is conducive to promoting the development and utilization of information resources.

2) Ability to use the correct academic paper writing norms

"Writing norms" should focus on writing format, register, and other aspects. Yuan (2019) believes that academic papers are an important link in the teaching of institutions of higher learning and reflect the teaching quality of institutions of higher learning. The standardization of the format and content of academic papers is one of the important manifestations of the quality of dissertations. The ability to use the correct academic paper writing norms means mastering the correct format of academic papers, including mastering the writing methods of title, abstract, text, keywords, notes, and references.

3) Ability to use words and organize language

"Linguistic expression" focuses on the accuracy and complexity of vocabulary, sentence patterns, and grammatical structures. The dimension of language expression in this paper refers to the accuracy and appropriateness of common vocabulary and grammar used in academic Chinese writing. The ability to use words and organize language means to organize and use Chinese to write academic papers, use appropriate words, smooth writing, and coherent language, and use correct academic language to express their arguments, including the correct use of punctuation.

4) Ability to apply academic theories to analyze film and film phenomena

The ability to apply academic theories to analyze film and film phenomena means correctly using film theories, audio-visual language analysis, film author theory, feminist theory, meta-film theory, and other film academic theories., to establish academic thinking to analyze film or film phenomena. It includes 3 stages, 1) the writing preparation stage: film selection, argument induction, and writing strategy selection; 2) the writing process: argument organization and reasoning process rationalization; 3) The later stage of writing: the adjustment and modification of the paper, the adjustment of the point of view and the adjustment of the text language, the correction of punctuation.

Conceptual Framework

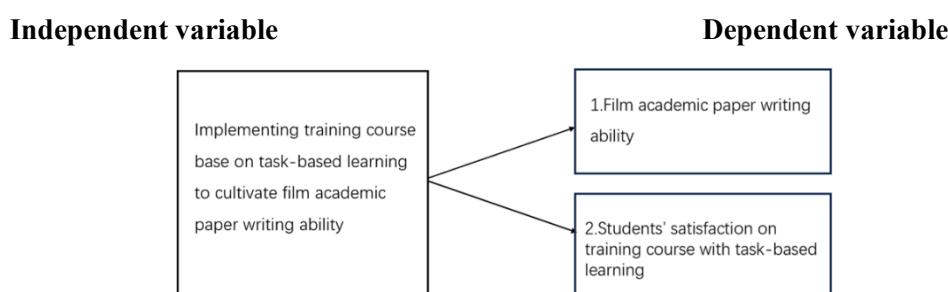


Figure 1 The conceptual framework of determining the effectiveness of implementing the training course based on task-based learning to cultivate film academic paper writing ability.



Research Methodology

Population and samples

The population and sample population were 120 students of film literature at Xi'an University, in Xi'an City of Shaanxi Province. The sample of this study was 12 first-year students and second-year students at Xi'an University in 2023, derived by purposive sampling method. Set the sample size by using the G*Power program and set effect size = 0.80 (choose a large effect size), error prob. = 0.05 and power (1-B error prob.) = 0.80. After calculation, the size of the sample was 12.

Research Instruments: Research instruments were the tools for researching to collect data. The research instruments which were used in this study were:

Experimental instruments

1) The Film Academic Paper Writing training course: The course included 6 components, namely (1) principles, (2) objectives, (3) content, and (4) instructional strategy consisting of 3 steps which were namely step 1. The pre-task phase consists of framing the activity, doing a similar task, and planning time. step2. the task cycle consisting of task, planning, and report. And step3. the post-task phase consisting of analysis, consciousness-raising, and repeating the task., (5) media and resources (6) evaluation. Five experts evaluated the draft course, the lowest mean score was 4.0 (SD=0.89), and the highest mean score was 4.6 (SD=0.55). It was revealed that the Film academic paper writing training course based on Task-based learning was high level ($M=4.43$, $SD=0.62$).

2) Lesson plans: Five experts evaluated the eight lesson plans. According to the expert evaluation form, the lowest mean score was 4.52 (SD=0.49), and the highest mean score was 4.68 (SD=0.55). It was revealed that lesson plans were very high level.

Instruments for collecting data: Instruments for measuring students' innovative ability and students' satisfaction:

1) 4 film academic paper writing learning achievement test:

The 4-film academic paper writing learning achievement test for 4 times between implementing. Each test consists of 2 items (short answer), and the full score of each test was 20 marks. The quality of the tests is considered from the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), the result of analyzing the IOC index showed that the IOC of each item of the achievement tests was between 0.80-1.00 higher than 0.5, and after obtaining the result from try out. It was found that the Item difficulty (p) of each item was between 0.53-0.65 (Item difficulty (p) should range from 0.20-0.80), the item discrimination (r) of each item was between 0.90 – 0.95 (Item discrimination (r) should range from 0.20-1.00) and the reliability of each test was between 0.80 – 0.85 higher than 0.8.

2) the film academic paper writing ability test (essay test):

The quality of the test is considered from the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), the result of analyzing the IOC index showed that was found that the IOC of the film academic paper writing ability test (essay test) was 1.00 higher than 0.5. After obtaining the result from try out. It was found that the Item difficulty (p) was 0.65 (Item difficulty (p) should range from 0.20-0.80), the item discrimination (r) was 0.93 (Item discrimination (r) should range from 0.20-1.00) and the reliability was 0.84 higher than 0.8. The result of the analysis showed that the film academic paper writing ability test (essay test) was appropriate and could be used in the final test.

3) Students' satisfaction questionnaire

The questionnaire is provided to 5 experts for content validity check and suggestions. The quality of the questionnaire is considered according to the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC). The result of analyzing the IOC index is between 0.80-1.00 higher than 0.5. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the reliability of the student satisfaction questionnaire is 0.96.

Data Collection

The procedures of data collection were as follows:

1) The sample which is assigned as an experimental group will be Taught by using a task-based method through a film academic paper writing training course.

2) The samples will be taught according to the 8 lesson plans (2 hours per lesson plan, and 16 hours in total) of the training course.

3) Between the instructions, the sample will be evaluated 4 times by using the film academic paper writing ability learning achievement test. (After completing the taught of lessons 1-2, the sample



received the first post-test1, after completing the taught of lessons 3-4, the sample received the second post-test2, after completing the taught of lessons 5-6, the sample received the third post-test3, and after completing the taught of lessons 7-8, the sample received the fourth post-test4.)

4) After finishing the instruction, the samples will be evaluated by using the film academic paper writing ability test (essay test).

5) The samples will be given the students' satisfaction questionnaire.

Data Analysis

In this study, data were analyzed by using the statistical method according to the research objectives.

Compare the film academic paper writing ability of students after the implementation of the training course based on task-based learning with the determined criteria at 70 %. Of each time by using a t-test for one sample.

Assess the students' satisfaction with the film academic writing training course based on task-based learning by using arithmetic mean and standard deviation.

Results

According to the research objectives, the research results are as follows:

The finding of the result of comparing film academic paper writing ability of students after the implementation of the training course based on task-based learning with the determined criteria at 70 %. Of each time.

Table 1 The result of the writing ability of students after the implementation 4 times with the criteria at 70 % of each time

Time	N	Post-test scores		t	p
		M	SD		
Time1 (post-test1)	12	16.83	1.70	5.785	.000
Time2 (post-test2)	12	15.58	1.00	5.506	.000
Time3 (post-test3)	12	16.25	1.14	6.848	.000
Time4 (post-test4)	12	16.67	1.30	7.091	.000
Time 5 (Final test)	12	16.83	2.29	4.287	.001

The finding of scores of academic paper writing ability after learning through the Film Academic Paper Writing training course (Total score = 20) * p <.05

As presented in Table 1, shows the results (first time) of the film academic paper writing ability of students after learning through the film academic paper writing training course, with a full score of 20. The mean scores (time 1) of film academic paper writing ability were 16.83, SD was 1.70. The mean scores (post-test 2) of film academic paper writing ability were 15.58, SD was 1.00. The mean score of (post-test 3) of film academic paper writing ability was 16.25, SD was 1.14. The mean score of (post-test 4) of film academic paper writing ability was 16.67, SD was 1.30. The mean scores on final tests of film academic paper writing ability were 16.83, SD was 2.29. The finding of this table revealed that after learning through the film academic paper writing training course, every post-test score of student's film academic paper writing ability after implementation of the training course is higher than the criterion set at 70% (14 scores) and the difference was statistical significance (p<0.05).

Table 2 The findings of the satisfaction questionnaire of students after learning Film Academic Paper Writing training course based on task-based learning

Question number of satisfaction questionnaire	M	SD	Satisfaction level
1. The teaching objectives of the film academic paper writing training course are clear and precise.	4.42	0.67	High level

Question number of satisfaction questionnaire	M	SD	Satisfaction level
2. The teaching objectives of the film academic paper writing training course cover theoretical knowledge, skill performance, and attitude aspects.	4.08	0.79	High level
3. The teaching objectives of the film academic paper writing training courses can be implemented in the classroom teaching situation.	4.5	0.80	Very high level
4. The teaching content of the film academic paper writing training course is easy to understand.	4.42	0.79	High level
5. Satisfaction with whether teachers of film academic paper writing training courses explain the teaching content clearly.	4.33	0.75	High level
6. The teaching content of the film academic paper writing training course is new and can stimulate learning interest.	4.67	0.78	Very high level
7. The teaching content of the film academic paper writing training course has practical significance.	4.58	0.65	Very high level
8. The teaching content of the film academic paper writing training course is useful to enhance the academic paper writing ability.	4.58	0.51	Very high level
9. The communication between the teacher and students is in a good atmosphere during the learning and teaching process.	4.67	0.69	Very high level
10. The students are satisfied with the steps of the film academic paper writing training course	4.58	0.65	Very high level
11. Satisfaction with the teaching approach (task-based learning) of the film academic paper writing training course to improve the classroom's effective	4.67	0.67	Very high level
12. The students are satisfied with the class hour allocation of the task-based learning approach.	4.58	0.67	Very high level
13. Satisfaction with the teaching method of film academic paper-training course to improve students' film academic paper writing ability.	4.42	0.51	High level
14. The students were satisfied with the combination of teaching resources and media used in the training course.	4.75	0.45	Very high level
15. The teaching resources and media can help improve film academic paper writing ability.	4.83	0.39	Very high level
16. The teaching resources and media used in the film academic paper writing training course are interesting and practical.	4.75	0.62	Very high level
17. Satisfaction with the difficulty of the achievement test of film academic paper writing	4.5	0.67	Very high level
18. Satisfaction with the after-class assignments for the film academic paper writing training course.	4.67	0.49	Very high level
19. Satisfaction with the effectiveness of the evaluation system.	4.58	0.67	Very high level
20. The evaluation form of film academic paper writing ability.	4.5	0.67	Very high level
Total/Overall	4.53	0.64	Very high level



As presented in Table 2, in the 20 items of the satisfaction questionnaire, the lowest mean score was ($M=4.08$, $SD=0.80$), and the highest mean score was ($M=4.83$, $SD=0.39$). The result of Table 4-5 showed that the student's satisfaction with the film academic paper writing training course based on task-based learning was very high level ($M= 4.53$, $SD=0.64$).

Discussion

Targeted training of students' paper writing ability can help them systematically learn professional knowledge and deeply understand relevant theories. The quality of the paper can test students' mastery of professional knowledge and related theories, so that teachers can effectively evaluate and continuously improve the teaching status of this course (Smith, 2020; Johnson & Wang, 2019). Therefore, teachers should choose teaching content, design teaching processes reform teaching methods based on professional characteristics, and focus on improving students' academic paper writing ability (Brown, 2018).

The teachers of Xi'an University, through the construction of the curriculum system and the reform of the teaching mode, established a film academic paper writing course based on task-based learning to improve students' academic paper writing ability, to enable undergraduate students to get systematic and specialized thesis writing training, and lay a solid foundation for undergraduates majoring in film literature to write high-quality graduation papers (Zhang et al., 2021).

Film academic paper is an important part of the process of film appreciation. A film academic paper is an art research activity that makes rational analysis and scientific evaluation of film and television works according to certain ideological principles and artistic aesthetic standards (Miller & Thompson, 2017). The film academic paper should take the specific film as the research object, and conduct rational analysis, research, and evaluation from multiple angles such as the audio-visual language of the work content (Liu, 2020). As an advanced stage of art appreciation, it is necessary to master the writing methods of academic papers and improve the ability of film criticism (Chen, 2019). The writing of film academic papers is conducive to the enrichment and development of Chinese film culture and is also one of the important ways for the audience to comprehensively improve their own cultural and artistic accomplishment (Wang & Li, 2020).

The major film literature of Xi'an University is temporarily unable to modify the talent training program and change the formal course structure. Therefore, conducting short-term training courses is the most effective plan at present. This course adopts a task-based teaching method and sets four achievement tests in the course. Through the phased assessment of tasks, students' learning effect is tested and real-time feedback can be achieved (Zhou et al., 2021). Film academic paper writing ability of students after the implementation of the training course based on task-based learning with higher than the criteria at 70%, the Development of ability of students after the implementation 4 times is higher than the criteria at 70% of each time, Students' satisfaction toward training course based on the task-based learning to cultivate students' film academic paper writing ability (Zhou et al., 2021). Twelve students majoring in film literature at Xi'an University were able to correctly evaluate this course after learning the film academic paper-training course, expressing the course's affirmation of the improvement of students' film academic paper writing ability. Students generally recognized the design of the course, including course duration, course objectives, teaching content, task-based teaching experience, etc., and had a high degree of satisfaction with the film academic paper writing training (Zhou et al., 2021).

Recommendations

University presidents or administrators should attach importance to the cultivation of students' interest and ability in academic research, and add some courses for academic paper writing during the undergraduate period. In this way, we can carry out in-depth research on the problem and effectively cultivate students' critical thinking and writing ability. The addition of these courses can not only help students deepen their knowledge but also guide their research thinking and lay a good foundation for the writing of graduation academic papers.

For students majoring in film literature, practical creative ability is important, but the mastery of knowledge should not only stay at the level of technical application, the thinking of theoretical



knowledge is also important. Xi'an University should provide appropriate venues, teachers, and management support for the film academic thesis writing training course.

The teaching mode of task-based learning can effectively improve the learning effect and can be widely applied to the courses of other majors besides language teaching. In the teaching mode of task-based learning, students, as the subject of learning, become the subject of completing tasks. Teachers play an important role in the teaching process, especially as guides, helpers, and observers, helping students to complete the corresponding tasks, and giving guidance and feedback on the learning results. The form of an academic paper writing training course can be extended to the teaching of other majors at Xi'an University because the teaching of each major needs to cultivate students' academic research spirit and academic paper writing ability. The success of this experiment proves that it is possible to set up a training course for undergraduates to improve their learning ability in Chinese universities, which can be used as a successful experience to be extended to other universities in China to improve the curriculum structure through the construction of flexible training courses.

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