

The POA Application in the Teaching of Chinese Writing as a Foreign Language

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Supported by the Research on the Reform of Writing and Communication Course Based on Output Orientation (OBE) (M2018X250), and the Effectiveness of Course Teaching Based on Output Orientation (OBE) — Taking Applied Writing and Communication Course as an Example (2018Z09).

Received 12 June 2020; accepted 8 August 2020
Published online 26 September 2020

Abstract

The old style of traditional teaching mode is to take “text as the core”. A whole new teaching approach was put forward by a famous professor and the approach is named as production oriented approach (POA), which is pulling people’s attention on both “input” and “production”. From the essence of these two elements, we know that it is for sure the innovation and development of traditional teaching mode is great. Also, there is also a disjointed situation between learning and using during the teaching. Based on the POA, this paper selects lesson 25 “developing Chinese intermediate Writing II” as an example, expects to explore the effective way of production so as to provide a series of reference for the subsequent writing teaching design from three aspects including driving, facilitating and evaluating.

Key words: Theory of POA; Chinese as a foreign language; Writing teaching

Shi, J., & Wang, W. J. (2020). The POA Application in the Teaching of Chinese Writing as a Foreign Language. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 19(1), 17-20. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/11822> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/11822>

For Chinese learners, it is a basic requirement for them to master all kinds of skills during study. On that point,

the writing ability is not only the most important one but also the difficult one. During teaching such course, we shall take “the occurrence of of the effective learning” as a goal, carry out the teaching concept of “integration of learning and application”, and adhere to the production oriented approach of “use in learning, learn in using, and integrating learning with using”, so as to provide a referential model for its application. During writing teaching, we shall set the actual teaching case as an example, reasonably organized the language input and production around the production task requirements, and construct a whole train of teaching hypotheses of “production driven”, “input facilitation” and “selective learning”. Thus, students will be guided to carry out targeted reading and practice, and finally complete the production task in the specific teaching design.

1. THE FRAMEWORK OF “PRODUCTION ORIENTED APPROACH”

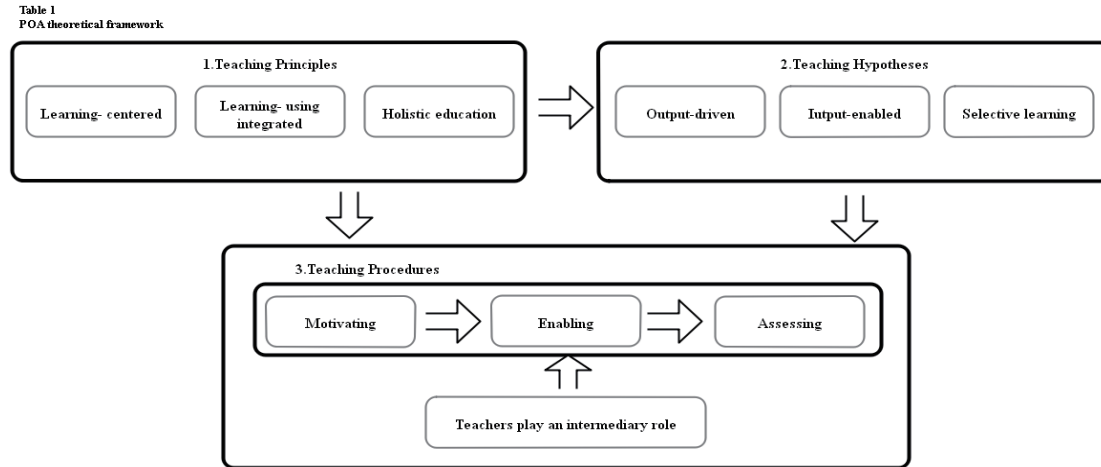
The “production oriented approach” was jointly established by the China foreign language and education research center of Beijing Foreign Studies University, a Chinese scholar. It advocates the “learning centered theory” and other things that useful for teaching. Furthermore, it lays stress on the combination between learning and using. That is to say, to put one into using during learning and to put it into learning during using, so as to solve the drawbacks of “separation of learning and using” in education of old ways.

Here are the introduction of three core teaching links of POA. In “motivating” link, teachers need to set up tasks with potential communicative value, so as to promote students’ learning interest and motivation; in “enabling” link, teachers need to provide students with necessary input materials in the light of the previous link, so as to guide students to carry out selective learning and facilitate

the completion of production tasks; in “assessing” link, teachers need to do immediate and delayed assessment

on students’ production. The specific theoretical system is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
POA theoretical framework



Quoted from The POA theoretical system of Wen Qiufang

2. TEACHING DESIGN OF POA IN TCFL WRITING

The core goal of developing Chinese intermediate Writing II is to train and improve the writing ability of intermediate Chinese learners. The teaching materials lay stress on the students’ learning for practical use, which is in line with what advocated by theory of POA. No matter what we believe and no matter what we do not believe, when it comes to teaching design, taking “developing Chinese intermediate Writing II” lesson 25” as an example, we carry on the teaching activities from two aspects of teaching objectives and task design according to the three links of motivating, enabling and assessing.

2.1 Teaching Objectives

As a key part of teaching, teaching objectives provide directional guidance for classroom teaching. It includes communicative goals and language goals. The former refers to what kind of communication task can be completed, while the latter refers to the specific knowledge that is required to be mastered including Chinese characters, new words, grammar and so on. Based on the theory of POA, the specific knowledge like Chinese characters, new words and grammar that students master should serve for the completion of communicative tasks. That is to say, as a result of “selective learning”, language goals should serve the communicative goals, and what meets the needs of communicative goals is the goal of students’ language learning.

Table 2
Teaching objectives of this course

Communicative goals	Cultivating students’ intercultural communicative competence	Conduct multi turn communication in Chinese on the topic of “whether to restrict the use of private cars”, and learn to write argumentative papers. Be able to understand and discuss the problems related to urban transportation in China, and compare them with their own countries, and summarize the cultural differences reflected.
Language goals	Master the words, phrases, grammar and Expressions related to communication goals	Master the relevant words and phrases in this lesson, E.g following. Energy resources, attempt, delay, disabled person and so on. Analysis of model writing ideas

2.2 Task Design

Taking the topic of “should we restrict the use of private cars” as the teaching theme, we set it as the argumentative writing of “point of view opposition”, which requires 600-700 words. And it is also required to present the language knowledge and grammar, etc. learned here.

2.3 Teaching Process

2.3.1 Motivating Link

Motivating link is the first step of POA teaching mode. Teachers should take the initiative to design and present the arrangement of the class. For instance, at firstly, play

a video about “the impact of traffic on urban life” and ask students like “what’s the traffic situation in China? What measures do you think can be taken to reduce traffic congestion?” before introducing the topic. Then play the foreign students’ comments on the topic on it. Of course, the selected videos should be good in Chinese, which is mainly to arouse students’ sense of urgency in learning, make them face complex problems, and stimulate students’ productive ability. After playing the video and having students have a preliminary understanding of this topic, carry out a 10 minute group discussion activity. After the discussion, students need to write the key words

about the traffics, and the time should be controlled within 10 minutes. Surely the aim of this link is to help students know their own deficiencies in the respective aspects, so as to produce a “sense of hunger” and improve students’ interest in this kind of studying. Meanwhile, it also provides the basis for teachers’ subsequent “enabling”.

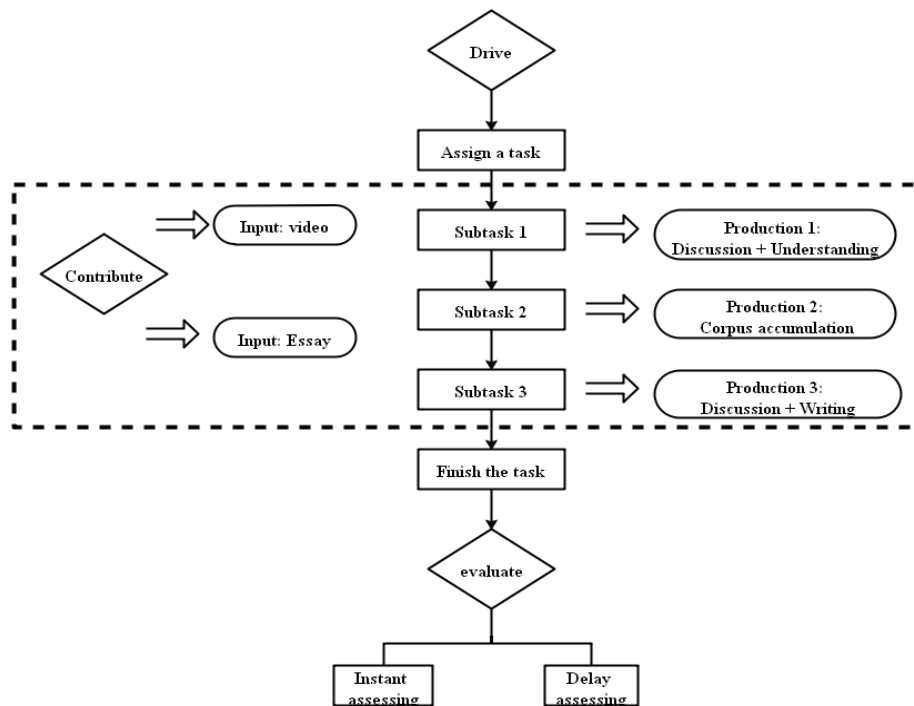
2.3.2 Enabling Link

As the core link of POA, it is obvious and necessary that teachers need to play an important part in this link

to a certain degree. Based on the different situations for students, teachers plan the different teaching objectives, clarify the important and difficult points of the course, and input relevant materials according to the production of the motivating link. As a following step, teachers are required to carry out selective learning, and urge the students to complete the three sub-tasks. The specific teaching process is shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Teaching process

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Subtask 1: Model text analysis. Students should read the model text silently or teachers should lead students to read it together, so as to let students understand the structure of the text. As a necessary step, students need to understand the text at first, and then carry on discussion in groups and answer questions like the author’s opinion. In this link, the students have made clear the production goal of this class, and they will draw on the structure of the text to design their own text accordingly.

Subtask 2: Accumulate corpus. In subtask 1, students have understood and mastered the structure of the text. Next they will learn about the knowledge of words and other useful things. In the light of the model text and production needs, teachers are required to have some matters of transportation on urban environment, such as following, energy, attempt, delay, malpractice, etc., and the usage and collocation of “through, therefore, comprehensive view, along with”. Since students have already made clear their production goal in the last

link, they will selectively learn and accumulate relevant vocabulary and grammar, and consciously prepare for their next writing output.

Subtask 3: Motivate production. Through learning subtask 2, students have accumulated relevant corpus and grammar knowledge. Teachers need to design oral expression and finish writing practices. That is to say, this mode emphasizes more on the auxiliary combination of topic awareness and practice. Take the two practices designed in this class as example:

(1) Discuss in group and answer questions:

Q1. What is your opinion on the government’s restrictions on the use of private cars.

Q2. Let’s talk about the policies your country has adopted on this the car traffic issues .

(2) Choose one topic from below and write a composition of 600-700 words.

- Whether should private cars be restricted or not?
- Why are there traffic jams in cities?
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2.3.3 Assessing Link

Assessing link is the last step of POA teaching mode. In this link, teachers need to use theory of POA to assess students' "production", including immediate assessment and delayed assessment. Delayed assessment refers to that students will submit the exercise results to the teacher according to the requirements of the teacher after class practice, and the teacher will assess it. Immediate assessment is happening in the first part of teaching design. In this stage, students input relevant materials pertinently and complete the three subtasks including model text analysis, corpus accumulation and production promotion. And then teachers give timely, appropriate and effective assessment. And for the learning effect output on discussion of oral presentation and writing discussion of the two aspects, teachers need to make classroom quality feedback; delayed assessment refers to that students will submit the exercise results to the teacher after class practice, and the teacher will assess it. Taking the assessment of writing course as an example, we will make a detailed description in the following:

Firstly, for the first draft of the composition, it applies the way of students' mutual evaluation. The evaluation focuses on whether the content (words, terms and grammatical structure) of the composition is accurate, whether the theme is appropriate, and whether the knowledge learned in this lesson are effectively written in their works. Secondly, modify the draft and submit the revised draft in time specified by the teacher. Teachers' evaluation should play an active role in this process. Teachers can make a preliminary evaluation on the students' revised draft, and focus on discussing the representative topics with the students or summarizing the simple and fallible points to explain to students. Furthermore, teachers can delay the evaluation of students' content according to the situation, thus it is good

for improving students' ability on writing. With the above multiple approaches, students can modify and constantly improve the final production.

On the whole, for one thing, it mainly lays emphasis on the diversified approaches on assessment, such as teacher-student evaluation, student's mutual evaluation, and group mutual assessing. For another thing, it combines the immediate and delayed assessing approaches successfully. Hereby, it can comprehensively evaluate the effectiveness of students' learning goals.

POA is applied to this kind of teaching mode with the teaching concept like "integration of learning and using" and the teaching mode like "motivating - enabling - assessing". The systematic teaching design paradigm further deepens the understanding of POA teaching theory. This approach and what it affects have promoted the production of TCFL writing course and provided reference value for the realization of its teaching objectives. It still needs further research and discussion on how to better rely on teaching theory and use modern teaching technology to provide a clear direction in the future of teaching circles.

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