The Designing and Effects on the Application of POA in ESP Teaching

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Abstract. The Production-oriented approach emphasizes learning with the effective output by optimizing its input. Based on POA, this paper intends to explore whether the implementation of production-oriented approach has a better effect on students' ESP production. Besides, it also tries to find out the ways and aspects of designing and implementation in ESP teaching, which includes basic procedures of driving, optimizing and evaluating of information input. Through quantitative and qualitative methods, this paper also studies how POA stimulate students' learning desire in ESP. In a word, this paper aims to promote the quality of ESP teaching as well as foster students' comprehensive ability production with the application of POA in ESP.

1 Introduction

In the late 1990s, student-centered teaching principles became popular in the education, and teachers were given multiple identities like facilitator, helper, consultant, and so on. Although they were given a variety of new titles, their most important duties are not clearly demonstrated. These important responsibilities include being the professional designers, organizers or director of English teaching[1]. College English teaching has always being under reformation for decades, and has made a lot of achievements, but there are still many shortcomings. Many teaching methods and theories like Tasked-based language learning, communicative language teaching, situational teaching, etc., have been introduced and valued in the past ten years, and have been used widely in the teaching. But all in all, the unfavorable language production has not been greatly improved.

Professor Wen Qiufang thinks that the teaching in school must be "carefully planned, effectively organized, and professionally guided to achieve high efficiency[2]". In 2008 based mainly on the "output hypothesis" by Swain[3], she put forward the theory of "output-driven hypothesis" to reform the English major curriculum (Wen, 2008) and expanded the theory to college English teaching (Wen, 2013). And then it was officially named POA (Wen, 2014) in the Seventh International Symposium on English Teaching in China[4].

POA is the theoretical exploration and practice on how to carry out foreign language teaching with Chinese characteristics, which had been developed and improved by Professor Wen and her fellow workers for over 8 years. It includes three parts: 1) teaching principles; 2) teaching hypothesis; 3) teaching process. Teaching principles are the guidelines of the other two; teaching hypothesis is the theoretical support of teaching process; and teaching process is the realization of the teaching principles and teaching hypothesis. The role of teachers is reflected in all aspects of teaching[5].

2 Research Background

Under the guidance of Wen Qiufang's POA theory, a new teaching model was attentively put into the teaching of ESP and thus an empirical study is conducted in Jiangsu Police Institute. Our ESP course is offered in the second year of the university. There are altogether 136 periods in two semesters, 4 periods per week and 17 weeks each semester. The subject of the study is the first half of the ranking of CET 4 in two classes. Here I'm trying to investigate whether the implementation of production-oriented approach has a better effect on ESP teaching and learning for non-English majors. To be specifically, I'm still holding wonders like:

1.   How much teachers should give students in enabling stage;

2.   What topics can be set to expect effective production?

3.   How to balance teachers' role in class and in Flipped classroom?

And by practice, I'm trying to find the proper way based on POA to enlighten college students' ESP learning as well as to improve the development of ESP course.

It is because of the special characteristics and roles of ESP that I set it as the subject of study. ESP courses are much more closer to college students and ESP can offer students more employment guidance and more sense of profession.   ESP is the necessary channel between the general English learning and the learning of professional skills or knowledge in English. ESP can broaden their understanding towards their profession. With English as the tool, students can have more opportunities to use English to express thoughts on their own profession.

ESP course is set in our college for sophomore students, most of whom (around 97% have passed CET 4 and above 60% have passé CET 6 in their second semester as freshmen) have a certain self-learning ability, with a certain degree of information retrieval capabilities, and they have a certain ability of information integration and analysis. But they lack adequate effective out-put and input in ESP.

POA advocates "Whole-person education", that is to say the cultivation of "the communication of Chinese and foreign civilization and the relevant mutual understanding, of dissemination of Chinese culture, of the awareness to promote cultural exchanges between Chinese and foreign society".   This is the new requirement of college English teaching and one target of ESP teaching.

Guided under POA, combined with a variety of teaching methods and the optimal allocation of teaching resources, ESP can satisfy students' demand of learning effectively and efficiently. Through the learning of each unit in ESP course, students can have a better sense towards their majors, enhance the understanding of the profession, develop their professional potential, can also form an international perspective and thus achieve the overall goal of higher education in China-------- to cultivate socially developed and globalized citizens[6].

3 Teaching Designing and the Teaching Content

How can an English learner apply various knowledge he has got in the classroom learning into professional practice? How can students use English language and cultural knowledge to clearly and accurately express their own ideas? How can students combine their existing English and Chinese backgrounds information with their expertise to form a broader international perspective?

All these are what the English teachers need to think over in designing the teaching of each lesson and choosing the appropriate classroom activities. And thus, I, through multi modes like personal performance, team work and whole class activity to carry out the teaching of each unit, which is set according to every situation in practice.   With the platform of internet, by the mini-lectures and moocs created online, the blended ESP teaching can put POA into practice, stimulate students' language output through encouraging students to listen more attentively, think more speculatively, and speak more actively, and thus realize the learning-using integration in ESP.

The teaching mode includes 3 phases: warming up; in class, after class; and 2 teaching environment: traditional classroom teaching and flipped class through the internet. Accordingly, the learning of students also consists of 3 parts: self-learning and evaluation through the online learning system, the traditional teacher teaching and evaluating and the communication task with partners in classroom and on internet.

During the warming-up phase, every student needs to finish an oral-presentation on the topic chosen on his or her own interest.   Although the students have the right to select topics on their own, the topics of output must fall into the category of ESP.   The teachers may offer help to

students to establish a correct outlook towards their profession; chose seriously appropriate input materials and provide necessary help in communication and presentation skills. The presentation of students can vary with what they want to produce, either monologue, or interview, or lecture or debate.

Besides the oral presentation, students still need to finish a teamwork with classmates joined freely on their on will.   The team work is about a play or a video show inspired by either domestic or foreign films or TV series on their professional theme.   Students need to make adaptation and with the discussion with teachers and teammates, a drama should be shot and then broadcast in the class network repeatedly.   Each student can share their review on the platform and the modification is allowed to each group.

Teamwork Task

teacher	students	evaluating
Help students conceive a drama, set the standard of evaluation	Create drama; make video; help set the evaluation standard,	Teacher evaluating Students evaluating

The tasks are divided into two parts, e within-classes and extracurricular tasks. Tasks within-class refers to the input should closely related to the exercise of output, while extracurricular refers to the exercises that students are required to finish after classes.

Students need to read the input materials intensively and think critically.   After that, they can put down their understanding, thoughts or questions, they can make some research on them, and finally share and discuss with classmates. According to the output needs [7], students can consciously select useful part of the knowledge for in-depth learning and practicing. The practice to let students decide the topic to discuss, think independently and even organize class discussion towards their performance can fully mobilize their enthusiasm in ESP learning.

Students must also complete in warming-up phase the task of network learning and the learning materials are mostly the mini-lectures or Moocs made by teachers in advance. After learning and finishing the relevant exercises, the students can obtain the necessary credit for the ESP course. As to the in class phase and after class, teachers still need to spare enough time for the pre-class tasks evaluation and the assignment of after-class activities.

Under the guidance of POA, ESP course has the process of warming up, fast reading, intensive reading, analyzing the text and structure, theme summarizing, language explaining, writing or speaking, and so on.   The goal of teaching is the students' comprehensive ability especially their professional qualification nurturing.   And the text is never the goal of teaching. Language goals must be practiced to serve the communicative goals. Professor Wen said: "all the new words, phrases or grammatical forms that are not related to the communicative goals of the material are not listed in the language input target, which is the requirement of selective learning". (Wen, 2015) Teachers provide different output tasks and teaching materials based on the level of students to stimulate the potential of the students. The output tasks selected must be appropriate with the teaching target, and what's more the output scenes must be designed according to the objectives to stimulate students' learning motivation.

4 The Role of Teachers and Students in POA Theory

POA theory defines teaching processes as motivating, enabling, and assessing. Under the guidance of this theory, teachers in the teaching process are not only the person who teaches students, or the organizers or managers, teachers should play an important role of mediator, guider, designer, advisor, and consulter or to offer scaffolding.

Different from General English teaching, ESP teaching is not just language knowledge, but more professional English knowledge or skills. ESP teaching often starts with a certain task. The design of the teaching activities and the completion of the teaching objectives and expectations of the

students must be very clear. Take the media reply in ESP as an example, there's a topic about how to hold a press conference. With the task for students to consider the preparatory work for a news conference, teachers can allow students to participate in the discussion on this topic and students must read more materials and act them out in an appropriate way in front of the whole class. Students' participation is more conducive to understanding of the teaching objectives. Of course, it is better for both students and teachers have a good understanding on how to accomplish teaching tasks, how to discuss and interact, and how to evaluate the students' performance.

4.1 Teacher's identity and role

Teachers working together can efficiently work out the designing of each teaching unit according to different output target, design the actual task, and decomposition tasks. Teachers in ESP teaching to give full play to the role of the team, several teachers to form a team; the teaching materials are being used in the teaching unit to export-oriented teaching method as a guide to the teaching part of the redesign. The tasks will be released to students before the course of each unit, so that students can get a clear goal and motivation to start learning.   With the task to be completed, and the input of listening or reading, students will be interested in the materials. Teachers completed the teaching process through tasks designed in advance. In addition to the use of teaching materials, teachers can also make and upload useful min-lectures or other online learning materials through the network and other resources.

Professor Wen mentioned in her "input enabled Hypothesis" that in the case of output-driven conditions, it is possible to provide a better learning effect when the appropriate input can be provided timely compared to the absence of the appropriate input.   It is of special importance for teachers to provide clear directions and objectives and what's more, students can work together with teachers to discuss the possible teaching content and model in ESP teaching.   This kind of participation can be helpful for students to understand the teaching target of each unit and the expectation of teachers for the teaching model, be useful for students to know how to complete task and how to carry out discussion and get evaluated. As POA requires, output should be carried out gradually. It is not suggested for teachers to offer too much or too less help to students because it will do no good to cultivate their learning autonomy and efficiency.   But in fact, teachers should slowly reduce their scaffolding role with consciousness [8] (Vande Poletal, 2010).   At the beginning, since the students are not familiar with the method to extract useful materials from the input teachers offer, teachers can transform their identity of the organizer into one participants and demonstrate to guide students how to discuss, how to ask questions and how to make appropriate appraisal.

On the other said, the output-driven hypothesis of POA says that output is the drive and the goal of language learning.   Output can stimulate students' learning desire and passion. Output tasks can be set as the starting of learning. When students confront with difficult topics, they will realize their deficiency of language ability, thus reinforce learning with sense of urgency. Once students have cleared the meaning of the output tasks and their own shortcomings, they will be more proactive to complete the production tasks in order to compensate their own weaknesses (Wen , 2014b).

4.2 The Student's identity and role

According to the "output-driven hypothesis", output is the drive of language learning and the goal of language learning.   It can stimulate students' learning desire and passion because output driven tasks can shorten the distance from input to output, which makes students have a sense of achievement, arouse their learning enthusiasm, improve the learning efficiency. . Upon receiving the output tasks, students must be aware of the value of the task and in the completing of the task, they will realize their language deficiency and thus sense the urgency of reinforce their knowledge or skills.   Once students have cleared the meaning of the output tasks and their deficiency, they will be proactive to finish the tasks in order to compensate their own weakness [9]. (Wen , 2014b)

Just like the teachers changing their identities in POA-guided ESP teaching mode, students also need to change their model of learning and they need to adjust themselves in good mood as well as

being strong-willed enough to keep on the blended learning channel. Only in this way, can they complete in time learning tasks step by step. What's more, in this kind of learning, students should learn to cooperate with classmates.

Students in the future career, need not to have only the ability to filter and extract information, but also to convey their thoughts appropriately, they are required to be able to read and catch the required materials either in print or through vocal media ESP teaching and learning emphasize enough on the training of these abilities and with the guidance of POA, the blended teaching aims at to prompt students' effective input and thus enhancing students' critical thinking and active communication by encouraging students to practice more and have a timely review.

5 The Establishing and evaluation of ESP courses

The unipus platform offered by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, on this platform ,teachers can make class management, release teaching plan and update teaching materials. The completing of assignments can also be evaluated through this platform.

Social media like we-chat or QQ can be used to achieve real-time online communication, so that teachers and students can exchange with each other, and expand the communication to the network space. Almost for each of the online module, an oral presentation or a topic discussion task are reserved. Instant communication media can bring a lot convenience to exercises like that.

The traditional student-centered teacher-organized classroom teaching still plays its unique role in teaching. The realizing, the completion and the evaluation of teaching activities need to be discussed in traditional classroom and maybe still in traditional classroom can teachers make amendment of students' performance and supplement to the difficulties of each unit.

For ESP courses in our college, we have set up a special teaching and researching team to organize the development of it. Teachers divide this course into many units and for each teaching unit, a mini- lecture will be made by using a variety of high techniques and teaching resources. All units are independent to each other and can be linked with the other inextricably. Students, according to the teaching plan, need to have a pre-class preview, and after class room learning with the teachers, they still need to come back to the internet to finish exercises, some of which are discussion with classmates. Online mini-lectures act as the supplement to the traditional teaching. And online courses also allow students to multiple materials, repeated reviews, and more targeted.

6 Conclusions

After the qualitative research through semi-interview with the purpose of finding out whether it is effective to implement POA in ESP learning and teaching, both the teachers and the students hold a positive attitude.

Based on the data collected from the study, the major findings are summarized as follows:

1. The POA is effective in improving the ESP learning of non-English major students

2. The POA has a better effect in prompting college English teachers to develop ESP courses

3. in terms of accuracy. And the reasons need to be further investigated.

Through a year of ESP teaching based on POA theory and the relevant empirical research, it can be verified that students can not only improve their competence of English through various ways and means, but also strengthen their critical thinking, their communication skills and cooperation with each other, which in the end result in their enhancing of career awareness and social awareness.

In terms of the output of students, the use of POA theory in teaching can play a more obvious role. Under the guidance of the POA theory, this model of teaching has achieved a lot in at least the following aspect: 1. the setting and refining of clear teaching objectives; 2. the participation of both teachers and students in the design of teaching process; 3. the blended communication of new media network platform and traditional classroom, either oral or in written form; 4. the timely evaluating of both teachers and students.

Of course, the new media network platform for oral communication of students needs to be further improved in real-time management and evaluation, especially in aspect of technology.

Although students who participate in this model of teaching agree with it, it is inevitable for them to encounter difficulties and barriers in practice. And this is what we need to overcome and income in the future teaching practice and research.

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