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# The Application of Production-Oriented Approach in College English Speech Teaching

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**Abstract:** This essay tries to apply the Production-Oriented Approach into University English Speech Class, and explore the effect of this teaching theory on improving students' speech ability, and the responses of students to this course. In this research, POA method has been used in the speech course for English majors for one semester. By comparing students' speeches drafts before and after class, and collecting students' reflection records and interview feedback, teaching effect and students' reactions will be analyzed. This article tries to draw a conclusion that students' speech ability has been significantly improved, and most students think that it is good to pay attention to practical application and constantly revise their speech production under the guidance of teachers. At the same time, we also found that the application of POA may impose more learning burden on some students than before.

**Keywords:** Production-oriented Approach; English Speech Teaching.

## 1. Literature Review

### 1.1. Production Oriented Approach

"Production-oriented approach" (hereinafter referred to as POA) takes output-driven, input-enabled, and selective learning as the teaching assumptions, and driving, enabling, and assessing as the teaching process, and attaches importance to Learning-centered Principle, Learning-using Integrated Principle, and Whole-person Education Principle (Wen, 2015).

Learning-centered Principle advocates that teaching must achieve the teaching goals and facilitate the occurrence of effective learning (Wen, 2015). POA emphasizes the effective achievement of teaching goals and gives teachers a certain degree of freedom, teachers can flexibly choose different forms of activities according to different teaching goals, such as: classroom lectures, group discussion, presentation, etc. Learning-using Integrated Principle advocates that input and output are closely integrated, and learning and using are integrated (Wen, 2015). POA emphasizes the cultivation of students' output ability through selective input. Therefore, from a theoretical point of view, POA are more likely to be suitable to apply in English speech teaching, which is highly practical and emphasizes students' performance of speeches. Whole-person Education Principle emphasizes that teachers can Cultivate students' comprehensive ability by 1) carefully choosing the topics for output tasks, 2) carefully selecting the input materials to serve the output tasks, and 3) skillfully designing the organization of teaching activities.

The driving is the first step of the POA teaching steps, including three steps: 1) the teacher presents the communicative scenarios, 2) students try to complete the communicative activities, recognize the deficiencies and generate the desire to learn, and 3) the teacher explains the teaching objectives and output tasks (Wen, 2015). The driving step is also considered as a pre-assessing, students can recognize where can be improve and get motivated to learn in this step. And at the same time, the teacher can accurately and effectively set teaching objectives. Teachers should design different output scenarios according to the level of learning of the target students based on their teaching experience and reasonable prediction. The enabling consists of three parts: 1) the teacher describes the output task; 2) the students carry out selective learning under teacher's guidance; 3) the students practice the production task (Wen, 2015). The assessing step contains two types, which are immediate and delayed assessment. Immediate one helps teachers adjust the teaching progress speed, while delayed evaluation requires students to revise their production after class according to the teacher's requirements, and then submit the results of the practice to the teacher.

### 1.2. The Application of Production-Oriented Approach in College English Speech Teaching

The applications of POA in English speech teaching have been studied from different perspectives. Some researchers theoretically argue the feasibility and significant advantages of POA applied to English speech courses. POA theory coincides with the general goal of university English speech teaching (Qian, 2018). The focus of POA is to drive the task output ability with enabling input, and improving the ability to deliver proper English speech is the core of improving English speech ability. In their exploration of the teaching reform of English Speech, Ning, Su & Chen et al. (2022) pointed out the problems prevailing in the current English Speech course and put forward the teaching reform measures based on POA. For example, POA is more likely to solve the problems that traditional classroom fails to stimulate students' willingness to express themselves. It might be the case that traditional English speech class focuses more on language knowledge but neglects the cultivation of higher-order abilities sometimes, as a result the old-fashioned teaching content not attractive enough to engage students. Therefore, the application of POA, which emphasizes the combination of learning and practical using is bound to enhance the effectiveness of English speech teaching.

Some studies have focused on the design of different steps of POA. Among the studies on the setting of teaching objectives, Sun (2017) focused on the use of POA teaching materials and described the process of teachers setting output

objectives under the guidance of POA. Yu (2018) points that the subdivision and refinement of the teaching objectives of each unit is positively correlated with the likelihood of achieving the output objectives, which shows that in addition to the overall task, a unit needs to set sub-tasks and subdivided goals. Besides some research focuses on the implementation of the teaching processes of "driving-enabling-evaluating". For example, Qian (2018) believes that designing teaching tasks with moderate difficulty and flexible learning contents and methods are the starting point and key to realizing the output-driven through teaching practice. Wang & Liang (2023) discussed in detail how to apply POA. They highlight the thoughtful design of cross-cultural communication scenarios which is close to the students and the production driven selection of input materials. And it is indicated that through this way a healthy outlook of life and will be conveyed to the students in a natural way without explicit preaching. Wen (2015) suggests that the demonstration of excellent students' works such as award-winning speeches of the National Speech Contest is suitable to be used as input materials for English speech teaching, because they are imitable. Wang & Liang (2023) use the award-winning speeches of the 2019 National English Speech Contest, *Round Table,* for students to learn how to introduce China by using symbols to associating the hidden culture factor. Sun (2020) argues that the principles of teacher-student collaborative assessment (TSCA) could be used in the assessing section. All of these studies provide reference value for the use of POA in English speech teaching.

There are also some empirical studies that explore the specific teaching effects of POA. Zhang (2020) evaluates the teaching effect through a quantitative study by collecting data from writing tests, self-reflections and semi-structured interviews. And it shows that students' academic speech proficiency could be significantly improved by the course with POA as teaching guide. This study will continue to explore whether the application of POA can improve the teaching effectiveness of English speech classes, as well as the teachers' and students' experiential feelings as well as opinions.

# 2. Research Design

## 2.1. Research Questions:

Whether the application of POA in English speech course will improve to the teaching efficiency?

1) The responses and attitudes of students about the use of POA in speech classes?

## 2.2. Research Design:

The entire sophomore Taishan College served as research targeted students, a total of 27 students. This research will last for one semester, which includes 36 class hours of English speech instruction. Student feedback and study assessment will be all recorded as the research materials.

## 2.3. Research Process:

### 2.3.1. Selection of Teaching Topics (based on the Textbook)

This teaching design chooses the first unit of Understanding Contemporary China English Speech Tutorial, *making people's life better*, as the teaching material to lead students to explore the essence and components of the Chinese Dream, and the responsibilities of of the young Chinese generation. The objective of the textbook is to cultivate a group of English major students who are familiar with national policies, understand the national conditions of China, have a global vision, are proficient in the use of foreign languages and international rules, and are well versed in international negotiation, which reflects POA's philosophy of whole-person education. The selection of topics and tasks in the textbook is organized scientifically and carefully, which is convenient for teachers to prepare lessons.

### 2.3.2. Design of Output Tasks

The textbook has a clear description of the output task of this unit: Give a 5-minute speech on the Chinese Dream and the responsibilities of the young Chinese generation at the International Youth Forum. Since the target students are English majors who generally have experience in teaching in the countryside, when designing the output task of the course, the teacher recommends that the students talk about the Chinese Dream and the responsibilities of the young Chinese generation a from their own personal experience of teaching in rural area and educational poverty alleviation in the countryside.

### 2.3.3. Setting of Teaching Objectives

1.) Knowledge Objectives: Discuss and elaborate the responsibilities that young Chinese people are expected to shoulder in the course of realizing the Chinese Dream. Chinese Dream.

2.) Skill Objectives: Have a good grasp of the tips for becoming an inter-culturally competent public speaker.

3.) Emotional Objectives: Cultivate students' patriotism and international vision, and enhance the ability of intercultural English the aim is to enhance the ability of intercultural English communication competence.

### 2.3.4. Teaching Procedures

**Step 1: Driving**

Pre-Class Assignment: Search on the internet for the achievements made in the past decades in your hometown and see the series of short videos See China in 70 Seconds. Take notes on Take notes on the achievements that have been made.

And write a speech draft about the essence and components of the Chinese Dream and the achievements that have been made.

Pre-assessment: The teacher provides checklist to guide the students to find the areas that need improvement in their speech.

**Table 1.** Teacher pre-assessment checklist

| CHECKLIST | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Does the student's speech or speech contain an explanation of the Chinese Dream? | √ | |
| 2. Do students use storytelling, comparison and other expressive techniques? | | |
| 3. Can foreigners easily understand the meaning and value? | | |
| 4. Does the presentation include plenty of valid evidence? | | |

**Step 2: Enabling**

Activity 1: The Story of Liang Jiahe

1) Analyzing the speech techniques, such as storytelling, making comparison, and using evidence to support ideas. Ask students to explore how did the speech techniques above help the expression of the Chinese Dream?

2) Analyzing the targeted audiences of this speech. Inspire students to analyze in depth what impressions could be left to foreign audiences after this speech? In addition, encourage

students to imagine after listening to the speech, how would foreign audiences understand the concept of the Chinese dream?

Activity 2: Telling a story in an intercultural context

1) List the changes that have taken place in China during the past five to ten years. Following the tips on Page 13, you are encouraged to tell stories of your family or your relatives as examples. Compare their lives in the past to how they are now.

2) Work in pairs. Tell your partner how you would present your ideas and what key points or values you would like to convey to your foreign friends by using these stories

**Step 3: Assessing**

Students are asked to complete the task of this lesson: Deliver a speech about the essence and components of the Chinese Dream and the achievements that have been made. Students will be guided by the teacher to assess each other in small groups according to the checklist which have shown in the driving step.

# 3. Data Collection

This research will mainly collect students first speech draft, revised speech draft, studying self-reflection, and students' responses of interview as research material.

Students' first speech draft presentation:

*China has full confidence and a long-term vision for realize the Chinese dream, because the Chinese government and society have taken various determined measures. As a result, China has made many remarkable achievements in solving different kinds of social problems. So I believe The Chinese Dream will definitely come true, and the people will live a happier life.*

Students' final revised speech script:

*When I was a little girl, the primary school in my home village had no facilities but blackboard, irregular tables, wobbly chairs and a dusty playground. And my only wish was to quickly graduate from school and work in the city to earn money to support my family.*

*In my first class as a teacher there, I learned about the children's dreams, some wanted to be Gu Ailing to win the Olympic gold medal for China, some wanted to be a software developer, because he was encouraged by the teacher in the computer class.*

*A very important part of the Chinese dream is to let the people enjoy a happy life. And I think when urban children and rural children share the same dream, it shows that Chinese Dream never leaves anyone behind.*

## 3.1. Students' Self reflection

Student 1: In the speech class this semester, I dug deep into my personal experience and realized that if I want to make my story understood by audiences with different cultural background, I need to use some skills in the delivery of my speech.

Student 2: I always thought that I had no experience worth sharing, but with the encouragement of this speech class, I was surprised to find that some of my experiences were also quiet unique and can help people understand the life of Chinese people. After my speech, teacher and my classmates were very interested in my stories. So, I also found that I was a very unique existence.

Student 3: This class might be helpful in preparing for the National Talent Cup speech contest. But I feel that it is not very helpful for the Tem-8 and Postgraduate entrance examination.

Student 4: I've always felt nervous about speaking. Every time when I attended the class, although I feel like I want to express myself, I still have some timidity and don't know how to open my mouth. I hope to improve my oral English in the speech class.

## 3.2. Student Interviews

Question 1: Compared to traditional teaching models, what do you think is the difference between the POA model in this course? Do you like the application of POA in this course? Please tell me how you feel about it.

Student 1: Traditional one emphasizes more on theoretical learning and POA highlights the practical application of knowledge.

Student 2: The teacher used to assign homework at the end of the class, but now teacher assigns homework before the class, and after writing the first draft, the teacher will point out some problems in the homework during the class, and then will give us a lot of chances to revise it. I think revising makes progress.

Student 3: I feel that the speech tasks assigned by my teacher are all very close to our real life, which gives me a new interest in the speech knowledge, which seemed boring to me before. I feel that each task is particularly motivating because I will imagine the real scenarios of that task.

Student 4: The teacher assigns pre-class tasks before class. During class, I can continue to improve my speech under the guidance of the teacher. However, I feel that the amount of homework has increased because I need to spend more time on writing and revising my speeches, and I often feel that time is not enough.

# 4. Discussion and Analysis

By comparing the students' speech script, we are able to evaluate the achievement level of the course objectives of this lesson. Through comparison, it is easy to see that the students' speeches before the class are a bit shallow in intention, old-fashioned in viewpoint, lack of evidence and detailed analysis and reasoning. The main reason might be the lack of in-depth thinking about the significance of the Chinese Dream and its influence of its achievement. The revised speech script submitted by the students after the class showed that the students had thought carefully and were able to connect their own experiences with the theme of the Chinese dream. By giving examples, the speeches were enriched and attractive. By comparing the situation of rural education many years ago with the present situation, the speech illustrated in detail that the Chinese dream is the dream of every Chinese person, and the realization of the Chinese Dream associating with every Chinese people. At the end of the speech, it could leave a strong and position impression for the audiences. From the perspective of cross-cultural communication, after listening to the speech, the global audience will have a better understanding of the Chinese dream, which is to make people have a happier life and to bring higher quality education to children in rural areas. It has a accord with the world dream of lasting peace and common prosperity. The Chinese dream is a dream of peace, development, cooperation and win-win situation, which is closely related to the dreams of people all over the world. Therefore, it could be the case that the application of POA in English speech class can successfully improve students' speech ability. Although students' ability has been enhanced, the attribution of POA still need to be

prove because this research did not set a control group, which should be used to analyzing the different effects of POA and other teaching model.

Moreover, by analyzing the results of the students' learning reflection and interviews, we could try to figure out students' attitudes toward the POA English speech class. For one hand, most of the students agreed that POA English Speech class could help them improve their speaking skills, prepare for English speech competitions, improve their expression skills, and even develop higher thinking habits, which might reflect that most of the students hold generally positive and approving attitude towards POA English Speech.

Besides, it shows that the majority of students believe that the improvement of their ability is because this course guided by POA placed a lot emphasis on the practical using of knowledge. It might reflect that because the tasks were often set in real-life scenarios, students' motivation was also greatly stimulated. It also shows that POA's English Speech classes place emphasis on the practical application of knowledge, students are guided to focus more on the delivering speech task instead of rote memory of the theoretical concepts. However, there are still a few students pointed out that they often felt that their learning burden had increased because they needed to spend a lot of time on the conceptualization and revision of output tasks.

# 5. Conclusion

This research mainly explored two research questions about the evaluation of the application of POA in English speech course, and students' responses and attitudes towards this teaching theory. By reviewing the prior studies of the application of POA, this paper put forward a certain course design applying POA theory, and implemented this course for one semester. A significant improvement on students' speech ability has been found through the evaluation of the students' speech works. In addition, this paper found that most of students held a relative positive attitude, which was shown from the data collected from student's self reflection and interview. There are some limitations in the study design. In future studies, researchers can set up control groups to compare the effects of POA with traditional teaching methods. This paper could provide certain educational references to the later teaching and research.

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