



Research on Strategies for High School English Reading and Writing Instruction from the Perspective of Production-Oriented Approach

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Abstract

In high school English teaching, reading and writing are key skills for improving students' pragmatic competencies. However, current high school English reading and writing instruction suffers from issues such as “the separation of reading and writing” and “the segregation of learning and application”, which hold much sway over the effectiveness of teaching and the enhancement of students' abilities. To address these issues, this paper introduces the Production-Oriented Approach (POA) with the aim of optimizing high school English reading and writing instruction through its theoretical framework and teaching strategies. Firstly, the paper analyzes the shortcomings of traditional teaching models, pointing out that “the separation of reading and writing” leads to a lack of effective input support for students, while “the segregation of learning and application” makes it difficult for students to apply their knowledge to real-life situations. The paper then elaborates on the theoretical connotations of the POA, including its core teaching processes and four teaching hypotheses, emphasizing the use of output tasks as a driving force to achieve a close integration of input and output. Based on this, the paper proposes specific application strategies, such as creating real-life contexts to stimulate students' interest, clarifying output tasks to guide students to read purposefully, providing targeted input to build a “scaffolding” for reading and writing, and enhancing students' reading and writing quality through diverse evaluation methods.

Keywords

Production-Oriented Approach; Reading and Writing Instruction; Strategy Research; Teaching Hypotheses; Teaching Processes

1. Introduction

Reading and writing, as pivotal language skills, play a crucial role in the development of students' abilities of language use. Thus, in the process of English teaching, strengthening the two skills of students gravely counts. However, the

current state of reading and writing instruction in senior high school English is not optimistic, with many problems needed to be tackled. For one thing, the phenomenon of separation between reading and writing instruction is quite prevalent. Influenced by traditional teaching models, reading and writing instruction are often separated. In reading classes, teachers pour more attention to explaining vocabulary and grammar knowledge, as well as understanding the main ideas of texts. Under this circumstance, students are mostly in a passive state of receiving information, lacking in-depth exploration of text structure, writing techniques, and language use. In writing classes, writing skills are taught in isolation. It is usually the case that students are given a topic, then they need to finish their writing within a time limit. Due to the lack of effective reading input support, students often find it difficult to express themselves, resulting in empty content and low-quality writing. For another thing, the problem of the segregation of learning and application is prominent. In the teaching process, teachers place too much emphasis on imparting test-taking skills to cope with reading and writing question types in exams, neglecting the cultivation of students' ability to use English for reading and writing in real-life situations. The language knowledge and skills students learn are not closely integrated with real-life and learning needs, leading to their inability to handle real reading and writing tasks effectively.

The Production-Oriented Approach, proposed by Professor Wen Qiufang (2015), offers a new perspective to settle down these issues. It emphasizes that foreign language teaching is supposed to be output-oriented, closely integrating input-based learning with output-based application. By completing output tasks, students can effectively internalize and apply knowledge. Introducing POA into high school English reading and writing instruction can contribute to breaking the deadlock of separation between reading and writing, making reading and writing closely intertwined. To put it in another way, reading can provide rich materials and examples for writing, while writing in turn promotes students' deeper understanding of reading texts. Moreover, it can encourage teaching to be closely linked to reality, enabling students to use English in real-life situations and truly improve their reading and writing abilities, achieving an integration of learning and application. Therefore, this study focuses on exploring teaching strategies for high school English reading and writing under the POA framework, aiming to provide valuable references for improving the quality of high school English reading and writing instruction and fostering students' comprehensive language literacy.

This study is targeted at deeply exploring effective application strategies of the Production-Oriented Approach in senior high school English reading and writing instruction, striving to resolve the stumbling block in current reading and writing teaching. It also intends to look for methods of enhancing the quality of teaching, assisting in the cultivation of students' comprehensive language literacy and making reading and writing instruction complementary and co-developmental.

2. Literature review

2.1. Related research on POA abroad

Countless second language acquisition theories abroad have provided a solid foundation for foreign language teaching, and some of these theories share certain similarities with the concepts of the Production-Oriented Approach. For example, Krashen's (1985) "Input Hypothesis" emphasizes the crucial role of sufficient comprehensible input in language acquisition, while Swain's (1995) "Output Hypothesis" highlights the importance of language output in promoting learners' attention to linguistic forms, testing hypotheses, and enhancing fluency. These theories focus on the relationship between language input and output from different perspectives, providing theoretical nourishment for the formation and development of POA. Many foreign scholars regard this method as a cornerstone for exploring issues in English teaching. For instance, Hu M & Jin B (2024) discusses the application effects and teaching design of POA in English major listening instruction. Wang L & Sun J (2021) suggests that under the drive of writing production tasks, students' comprehensive learning motivation is stimulated, which inevitably leads to satisfactory writing. In addition, Li S (2024) elaborates in detail on how to design the three stages of motivating, enabling, and evaluating. The author also points out that academic English writing instruction guided by POA can help students reduce anxiety, make their input-based learning more targeted, and greatly improve their reading and writing abilities.

2.2. Related research on POA at home

Compared with national studies, there are more domestic studies. Since the introduction of POA by Professor Wen Qiufang, it has captured national attention and in-depth research in the field of foreign language education. Many scholars focus on the application of the theory in college English teaching, covering various skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation. In writing instruction, research often revolves around how to design writing tasks and build scaffolding based on POA, guiding students to overcome writing obstacles and improve writing quality. Empirical studies have verified its effectiveness in enhancing students' writing levels (Shi Jing, 2020; Wang Shigui, 2024; Xue Haiyan, 2020). However, some scholars like Yan Juhuan (2023) hold the belief that current research mostly targets students in key universities, and the applicability of POA theory in local colleges where students generally have weaker English foundations and poor autonomous learning abilities remains to be confirmed. In speaking instruction, there is exploration on using this method to create real-life communicative situations, stimulate students' desire to express themselves orally, and enhance their fluency and accuracy in speaking.

However, in the field of high school English teaching, especially in the reading and writing instruction section, the application research of POA is relatively weak.

Although existing research recognizes the importance of integrating reading and writing, there is still much to explore in terms of how to precisely apply POA in teaching practice to break the dilemma of separation between reading and writing, optimize the teaching process, and make reading and writing promote each other. Most studies are in the initial stage of exploration, lacking systematic, in-depth, and empirical research that combines the actual situation of high school English teaching. Research on the adaptability differences of students at different levels in the practice of POA and how to adjust teaching individually according to the learning situation is also insufficient.

3. Theoretical Basis

3.1. Introduction to POA

The Production-Oriented Approach (POA), proposed by Professor Wen Qiufang (2015), aims to innovate foreign language teaching models and break the dilemma of "separation between learning and application" in traditional teaching. According to Wen Qiufang(2017), this method draws on the essence of traditional Chinese educational theories and Western teaching theories, and is tailored to the specific national conditions of China, making it a comprehensive and effective approach with distinct Chinese characteristics. It emphasizes that teachers should promote students' language development through practical language production tasks. Its core philosophy is "learning for application and promoting learning through application," which means that students acquire language through actual language use and enhance their language abilities through production activities. Generally speaking, it is made up of three key elements: four teaching philosophies; four teaching hypotheses and teaching process.

3.2. Key Elements of POA

3.2.1. Four teaching philosophies

The theory is based on four teaching philosophies: "Learning-Centered Theory," "Integration of Learning and Application," "Cultural Exchange Theory," and "Key Competency Theory." Bi Zheng (2020) explained the meaning of the four teaching philosophies as follows. The "Learning-Centered Theory" emphasizes that all classroom activities should revolve around students' learning, highlighting the collaborative role of teachers' guidance and students' subjectivity, ensuring students' gains in the learning process. The "Integration of Learning and Application" lays much emphasis on the close connection between input and output, applying learning content to practice immediately. It views output goals as the orientation of learning, making "learning" serve "application." The "Cultural Exchange Theory" focuses on the carrier function of foreign language teaching in cross-cultural communication, cultivating students' awareness and ability for cross-cultural communication, and helping students to express and communicate

accurately in the collision of diverse cultures. The "Key Competency Theory" is fixed on improving students' comprehensive quality, cultivating students' critical thinking, innovation ability, and autonomous learning ability, laying the foundation for their lifelong development.

3.2.2. Four teaching hypotheses

Based on the above teaching philosophies, POA constructs four teaching hypotheses: "Output-Driven," "Input-Enabled," "Selective Learning," and "Assessment-Driven Learning." The "Output-Driven" hypothesis breaks the traditional foreign language teaching model of "input first, output later," using output tasks to stimulate students' motivation to learn and encouraging students to learn actively to complete tasks. "Input-Enabled" emphasizes providing precise input materials that are conducive to output tasks, covering knowledge and strategies, to help students complete their output. "Selective Learning" advocates students to autonomously select learning content according to output goals and their own needs, improving learning efficiency. "Assessment-Driven Learning" uses diverse evaluation methods, such as collaborative evaluation between teachers and students, formative assessment, etc., to provide timely feedback on learning outcomes, guide students to reflect and improve, and promote the learning process.

3.2.3. Teaching process

In terms of the teaching process, POA mainly includes three stages: "Driving", "Enabling" and "assessing" which are closely connected and form a dynamic teaching process through a cycle. In the "Driving" stage, teachers create real and attractive communicative situations to introduce output tasks, clarify learning goals for students, and stimulate their internal motivation to learn. In the "Enabling" stage, teachers provide a variety of input materials and learning scaffolds according to the needs of the output tasks, such as language knowledge explanation, example demonstration, and strategy guidance, to help students gradually accumulate the knowledge and skills needed to complete the tasks. In the "assessing" stage, diverse evaluation subjects and methods are used, with teachers and students participating together, to evaluate students' output results from multiple dimensions such as content, language, and structure, providing timely feedback to promote students' reflection and improvement, and offering experience for the next round of learning.

4. Analysis of the current state of reading and writing instruction in high school English

In the process of reading and writing instruction in senior high school, students' lack of enthusiasm for learning is a widespread and pressing issue that greatly hinders the improvement of teaching effectiveness and the development of students' language literacy. Specifically speaking, students' low enthusiasm for learning

derives from the following three problems.

4.1. Lack of Authentic Contexts

When it comes to creating contexts, teachers are mainly confronted with two puzzles. One is the lack of authenticity in contexts. Some teachers fail to fully consider students' real-life experiences when creating contexts, choosing materials that are outdated, monotonous, or disconnected from students' daily campus experiences. For example, some teachers rely solely on static images in textbooks, neglecting to use multimedia resources to display vibrant campus scenes, which makes it difficult for students to resonate and truly stimulate their interest in participating in reading and writing learning. Another is the lack of depth in contexts. Some teachers seem to create contexts that are close to students' life, but they often remain superficial, which means they do not delve into the educational value behind the contexts. They fail to guide students to think independently and ask questions during the contextual experience, making the context merely a brief "embellishment" in the introduction phase, unable to run through the entire reading and writing teaching process and continuously promote the improvement of students' reading and writing abilities.

4.2. Inappropriate exploration of input materials

In the teaching process, some teachers do not delve into the text on the basis of the writing task. They select reading materials that are highly relevant to the writing topic, but when guiding students in reading, they focus on the reading itself and neglect to explore the content needed to complete the writing task. This obviously deviates from the reading-writing objectives of the lesson, making it difficult to establish an effective "bridge" between reading and writing. Moreover, teachers do not fully guide students to explore key vocabulary, phrases, sentence patterns, and writing techniques in the text, but merely ask students to understand the general idea of the text. This results in students being unable to deeply learn and master the essence of the content that can be used for writing, thereby greatly reducing the input effect of teaching.

4.3. One-sidedness of evaluation

In high school English reading and writing instruction, there are some problems in the evaluation stage that affect the effective implementation of the Production-Oriented Approach. On the one hand, the evaluation scales are often too simple and vague, mainly focusing on basic language aspects such as grammar and vocabulary, while neglecting the richness of writing content, the rationality of structure, and emotional expression. This leads to evaluation results that cannot fully reflect students' writing levels and cannot provide specific suggestions for improvement, which is not conducive to the comprehensive improvement of

students' reading and writing abilities. On the other hand, the subjects of evaluation are far away diverse. In traditional teaching, teachers are the main evaluators, and students' self-evaluation and peer evaluation often become formalities, failing to fully exert students' subjective initiative. Students mechanically follow the teacher's requirements to score and write comments without deeply reflecting on their own writing problems or learning from their peers' works, which limits the role of the evaluation stage in improving the quality of reading and writing teaching.

5. Application strategies of POA in high school English reading and writing instruction

Integrated reading and writing instruction requires the organic integration of reading input and writing output. In classroom teaching, only when reading is done appropriately can writing flow naturally; only when the drive to write is strong can reading have clear objectives. This dialectical and unified process is precisely the concept advocated by the Production-oriented Approach. In the following part, the article "My First Day at Junior High", from the first unit of the compulsory textbook published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, will be used as a reference.

5.1. Precise Driving: Stimulating Intrinsic Motivation For Reading and Writing

5.1.1. Creating authentic contexts

In high school English reading and writing instruction, creating authentic contexts that align with students' real-life experiences is key to stimulating their interest in learning and desire to write. Teachers can make full use of information technology to play videos and audios related to the teaching content, such as movie clips, news reports, and songs, allowing students to have an immersive experience. Therefore, when teachers design the lesson, they can use multimedia platforms to display a series of vibrant campus opening scene images, to name only a few, the busy figures of new students, the solemn scenes of the opening ceremony, and the joyful interactions among new classmates, covering the unique opening styles of different schools. These intuitive and familiar images instantly bring students back to their own opening experiences, triggering their search for past memories, thereby fully warming up the classroom atmosphere and igniting their enthusiasm for exploring the opening theme focused on in this class. This creation based on real campus life contexts allows students to deeply feel the close connection between English learning and their own lives, making it no longer an unattainable accumulation of knowledge, greatly enhancing their enthusiasm for actively participating in reading and writing learning.

5.1.2. Clarifying Output Tasks

With an eye to effectively completing the writing task, teachers ought to clarify the writing task from the word go. Only this, students can obtain useful information when they read. Besides, combining the reading and writing sections of the textbook, teachers need to set clear, specific, and challenging output tasks to guide students to read purposefully. For instance, in the design of this reading and writing class, the teacher presents the output task for this class: "Write a passage about your first day of school, including your morning, afternoon, and evening experiences, as well as your feelings." This task precisely fixes on the theme of campus life, requiring students to organize and present their experiences and feelings on the first day of school according to a timeline. It provides students with a certain writing framework while leaving ample room for personal expression, encouraging them to read the text with a clear goal, actively explore information and knowledge that can support their writing, and lay a solid foundation for the subsequent output stage.

5.2. Effective Enabling: Building A "Scaffolding" For Reading and Writing

5.2.1. Providing targeted input

In the "enabling" stage, teachers provide students with precise and targeted input materials based on the needs of the writing task, helping them accumulate knowledge and master skills to successfully complete the output task. The crux of the enabling stage is to guide students to selectively explore and learn from the input materials. It is obvious that the reading passage "My First Day at Senior High" is highly related to the writing task, both describing the initial experience of campus life. During the reading guidance, teachers can ask detailed questions in time, such as: "How did the author feel at the first day? What happened on that day? and how did the author react?" Through these questions, students are helped to accurately grasp the pivotal information in the text and become familiar with a rich vocabulary and phrase expressions in campus life contexts, such as "nervous," "excited," "curious" for describing feelings, "get to know," "take part in" for phrases used in opening scenes, and "As soon as I entered the campus, I saw..." for sentence patterns used to introduce campus scenes at the beginning. (Zhang Wenjuan, 2016) says that such targeted input allows students to have a clear direction in reading, quickly accumulate language materials and writing ideas, and ultimately transform the provided input materials from receptive knowledge to productive knowledge.

5.2.2. Collaborative group learning

Organizing students to engage in collaborative group learning is an effective strategy in the "enabling" stage. Teachers can reasonably group students based on factors such as learning ability and personality traits, with 4-6 people per group, ensuring complementary strengths among group members. In this reading and writing class, students discuss their experiences on the first day of school in groups,

organizing them according to the morning, noon, and evening timeline. And then they can share the people they met, the events they participated in, and their inner feelings. During the process of communication, students with active minds can propose new ideas and creativity, adding highlights to the writing. This can also be good for students who are slightly weaker than others. Within groups, students with slightly weaker foundations can draw experience from others' sharing, learning how to organize language smoothly to express their thoughts. At the same time, collaborative group learning also cultivates students' teamwork and communication skills. Everyone inspires and complements each other, jointly accumulating sufficient materials for writing. When students hotly discuss in groups, teachers are supposed to circulate among the groups, providing guidance and inspiration in real-time to ensure the efficient progress of collaborative group learning.

5.3. Diverse assessment: enhancing reading and writing quality

5.3.1. Teacher-Student Mutual Assessment

In the evaluation stage of the Production-Oriented Approach, teacher-student mutual evaluation can be extremely important. Teachers and students together evaluate the content of writing, language use, and text structure in multiple dimensions comprehensively and deeply on the basis of the detailed evaluation scales set in advance. Taking the essays produced in this reading and writing class as an example. When teachers browse students' works, they not only pay attention to basic language issues such as grammar errors and vocabulary spelling but also focus on whether the article fully presents the experiences of the first day of school, whether the emotional expression is sincere and full, and whether the paragraph transitions are natural and smooth. When students participate in mutual evaluation, they can learn evaluation standards and skills from the teacher's professional perspective, improving their own appreciation ability. For example, when a teacher points out that the introduction of a student's essay is too plain, they can suggest borrowing the technique of quickly grabbing the reader's attention with scene description from the reading text, making the student suddenly realize the direction for improving writing. Through teacher-student mutual evaluation, students and the teacher form a positive state of interaction, jointly promoting the advancement of students' writing quality.

5.3.2. Self-Evaluation and Peer Evaluation

The self-evaluation and peer evaluation stage provides students with valuable opportunities for self-reflection and mutual learning. During the process of self-evaluation, students are endowed with a chance to compare their works with the evaluation standards and calmly analyze the strengths and weaknesses of their own works. For example, after completing a narrative essay about the first day of school, students reflect on whether the plot setting is full of ups and downs and

engaging, whether the vocabulary and rhetorical techniques used in describing scenery and characters are vivid and lifelike enough to make readers feel as if they were there, and whether the emotional expression in the article is sincere and full, touching people's hearts. In the peer evaluation stage, students exchange their works in pairs and evaluate each other strictly according to the evaluation scales carefully customized by the teacher, from different dimensions such as content richness (clear timeline, complete experiences), language accuracy (accurate grammar, appropriate word choice), structural ingenuity (clear paragraphs, natural transitions), and neat handwriting. They can use colored pens to clearly mark the strengths and weaknesses and attach heartfelt comments. For instance, when a student evaluates other's work and finds that the description of the afternoon physical education class is too brief, they suggest adding details such as classmates' sports performance and their own participation feelings to make the article richer and more vivid. The self-evaluation and peer evaluation among students fully exerts their subjective initiative, allowing them to continuously optimize their writing and improve their comprehensive reading and writing literacy through mutual learning.

6. Conclusion

This study concentrates on the application of the "Production-oriented Approach" in senior high school English reading and writing instruction. First and foremost, this paper introduces the "Production-oriented Approach", including its connotation, teaching philosophies, four teaching hypotheses and teaching process. This demonstrates that POA can effectively resolve the drawbacks of traditional teaching, such as "the separation of reading and writing" and the disconnection between learning and application. It is driven by production tasks, which prompts the teaching objectives to closely revolve around the improvement of students' actual reading and writing abilities, making reading and writing complement each other. Students no longer learn knowledge in isolation, but rather achieve the internalization and transfer of knowledge in the process of completing real-situation tasks, thereby effectively enhancing their comprehensive language application ability.

After that, this paper deeply analyzes the current situation of high school English reading and writing instruction, pointing out that there exist three problems: lack of authentic context, inappropriate exploration of input material and one-sidedness of assessment.

Based on this, this paper puts forward corresponding teaching strategies in response to the existing problems. At the beginning of the class, teachers stimulate students' interest by creating real-situation contexts, thereby accurately driving the internal motivation for reading and writing; in the enabling stage, teachers should provide targeted input to help students build a solid "scaffolding" from reading to writing, and promote knowledge sharing and coordinated ability development

through group cooperative learning; in the assessing stage, teachers should adopt diversified evaluation methods, such as teacher-student mutual evaluation, student self-evaluation and peer evaluation, which can provide comprehensive and timely feedback on learning outcomes. Teachers then guide students to continuously improve based on the evaluation results.

In summary, the "Production-oriented Approach" breaks the shackles of traditional single-lecture and template-style teaching, providing a new teaching idea for promoting the integration of reading and writing. Its teaching process forms a dynamic and efficient teaching closed loop, optimizing the teaching process and making the combination of reading and writing more natural, smooth, and effective.

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