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An Empirical Study on the Application of Production-oriented Approach in Junior High School English Writing Teaching

Siyu Wu
China West Normal University, Nanchong, 637000, China
Email: 1193918017@qq.com

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Abstract

Junior high school is a critical stage for English learning, and writing teaching occupies an irreplaceable position in junior high school English curriculum. Traditional English writing teaching is teacher-dominated, focusing on knowledge indoctrination while ignoring the cultivation of students' practical output ability, resulting in low learning enthusiasm and unsatisfactory teaching effects. As a localized foreign language teaching theory in China, the Production-oriented Approach (POA) advocates the teaching logic of "output-driven, input-facilitated and assessment-promoted", which is mostly applied to senior foreign language learners at present. This paper takes junior high school students as research objects, adopts experimental research method to explore the application effect of POA in junior high school English writing teaching. The results show that POA can effectively improve students' English writing performance, optimize their learning attitude and cultivate good writing habits. On this basis, this paper puts forward targeted teaching suggestions, so as to provide practical reference for the reform and innovation of junior high school English writing teaching.

Keywords

Production-oriented Approach; Junior High School English; Writing Teaching; Empirical Research

1. Introduction

English writing is an important embodiment of students' comprehensive language application ability, and the 2022 Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standards clearly puts forward higher requirements for junior high school students' writing ability, requiring students to express emotions, attitudes and personal opinions independently in written language and form the ability of self-correction in expression. However, the current junior high school English writing teaching still has prominent problems: most classrooms adopt the mode of reciting model essays and mechanical training, the separation of learning and application is serious,

students lack independent thinking space, their writing ideas are rigid, and their learning initiative is generally low.

The Production-oriented Approach, proposed by Professor Wen Qiufang's research team, is a foreign language teaching theory with Chinese characteristics. It breaks the traditional teaching mode of "input first and output later", takes output as the starting point of teaching, and realizes the organic combination of learning and application through three core links: motivating, enabling and assessing. At present, domestic and foreign researches on POA mainly focus on college English and senior foreign language teaching, while the researches targeting junior high school basic education are relatively insufficient.

Combined with the current situation of junior high school English writing teaching, this paper applies POA to junior high school writing classroom through teaching experiments, verifies its teaching effectiveness, analyzes the existing problems in the application process, and explores feasible implementation paths, so as to enrich the practical research of POA in basic foreign language education and improve the quality of junior high school English writing teaching.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Connotation and Theoretical Framework of Production-oriented Approach

The Production-oriented Approach was formally put forward in 2007. After more than ten years of theoretical exploration and classroom practice, it has formed a complete theoretical system. POA adheres to the educational concepts of learning-centered, integration of learning and application, and whole-person education, and puts forward four major teaching hypotheses: output-driven hypothesis, input facilitation hypothesis, selective learning hypothesis and assessment for learning hypothesis.

Different from traditional teaching, POA takes "output task" as the driving force of the whole teaching activity. In the motivating stage, teachers create real situational tasks to make students realize their own language deficiencies and generate learning desire. In the enabling stage, teachers provide targeted input materials, and guide students to carry out selective learning from the three dimensions of content, language and discourse structure to lay a foundation for completing output tasks. In the assessing stage, combined with timely evaluation and delayed evaluation, students are guided to revise their works, so as to realize the purpose of promoting learning through evaluation. In the whole teaching process, teachers play the role of leader, designer and facilitator, and students are the main body of learning.

2.2. Current Problems of Junior High School English Writing Teaching

Through sorting out teaching practice and relevant literature, the main problems of current junior high school English writing teaching are summarized as follows: First,

students have low interest in writing. Traditional teaching overemphasizes model essay recitation and rigid writing templates, restricts students' thinking, and students cannot express true feelings, resulting in weariness of writing. Second, students have vague writing ideas. Influenced by rote learning, most students rely on templates to write, lack independent idea sorting ability, and often have the problems of empty content and single expression. Third, students have weak text structure organization ability. Due to insufficient effective language input and discourse training, students have problems such as disordered sentence logic and unclear theme in writing. Fourth, the teaching mode is single. Most teachers adopt the traditional PWP (Pre-writing, While-writing, Post-writing) mode, which is single in form and lacks interaction and situational experience, and cannot stimulate students' subjective initiative.

2.3. Research Status of Production-oriented Approach at Home and Abroad

Domestic research on POA started with the theoretical construction by Wen Qiufang's team. After years of development, domestic scholars have gradually expanded the research scope, and applied POA to college English, business English, audio-visual speaking and other courses, focusing on teaching mode design and effectiveness verification. In recent years, a small number of scholars have tried to apply POA to junior high school English reading and writing teaching, but the overall research volume is small and the empirical research is not sufficient.

Foreign scholars have paid wide attention to POA as a localized Chinese teaching theory. Foreign researchers affirmed the advantages of POA in creating language application scenarios and stimulating learning motivation, and suggested expanding the application of POA to foreign language beginner groups and enriching practical research. On the whole, foreign researches mainly focus on theoretical comment and prospect, and there are few practical application studies combined with basic education.

3. Research Design

3.1. Research Subjects

This research selects two Grade 8 classes from a foreign language middle school in Kunming as the research objects. Among them, Class 1 (39 students) is set as the experimental class adopting POA teaching mode; Class 5 (38 students) is set as the control class adopting traditional PWP writing teaching mode. The two classes are taught by the same English teacher, with the same teaching schedule, textbooks and class hours, and the experimental cycle lasts for 8 weeks, which effectively controls irrelevant variables.

3.2. Research Methods

1. Questionnaire Survey Method: A questionnaire is compiled from three dimensions: emotional experience, behavioral tendency and cognitive level, with a total of 18 questions. The Likert five-point scale is adopted for scoring. The questionnaire is distributed to the experimental class before and after the experiment to investigate the changes of students' writing attitude. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire is 0.9, which has good reliability.
2. Test Method: Take the final examination writing scores of the last semester as the pre-test data and the mid-term examination writing scores as the post-test data. The full score of the writing test is 15 points. SPSS 25.0 software is used to conduct comparative analysis on the scores of the two classes before and after the experiment to verify the changes of students' writing ability.

3.3. Specific Teaching Implementation

3.3.1. Authors and Affiliations

The control class follows the conventional pre-writing, while-writing and post-writing process. In the pre-writing stage, teachers introduce topics through videos and dialogues, carry out vocabulary and translation exercises, and explain writing outlines combined with model essays. In the while-writing stage, students complete writing according to templates, and teachers provide individual guidance. In the post-writing stage, teachers select compositions for comment, and students complete self-correction and mutual correction. The whole teaching is dominated by knowledge explanation and imitation writing.

3.3.2. Teaching Implementation of the Experimental Class (POA Mode)

Taking the writing topic of "volunteer activities" as an example, the experimental class carries out teaching around the three core links of POA:

1. Motivating link: Teachers create real communication scenarios by playing videos: foreign friends want to participate in volunteer activities in China, and ask students to introduce their volunteer experience and recommend meaningful activities. The situational task makes students find their own deficiencies in vocabulary and expression, and stimulates their learning motivation.
2. Enabling link: Divided into content promotion, language promotion and structure promotion. Teachers provide reading materials related to volunteer activities, organize students to learn core vocabulary and sentence patterns in groups, sort out the writing structure of "phenomenon description - activity introduction - appeal initiation", and guide students to carry out selective learning for output tasks.
3. Assessing link: Combine in-class timely evaluation and after-class delayed evaluation. Teachers select typical compositions for comment, clarify scoring standards from the dimensions of content, structure, vocabulary and grammar,

organize students to conduct self-evaluation and peer evaluation, and finally teachers give unified feedback to promote students to revise and improve their works.

3.4. Data Results

1. Questionnaire data: The average score of the experimental class before the experiment was 3.14, and the average score after the experiment rose to 3.36, indicating that students' interest and initiative in writing were significantly improved.
2. Test score data: Before the experiment, the average writing score of the experimental class was 7.34, and that of the control class was 7.39. The writing level of the two classes was basically the same. After the experiment, the average score of the experimental class was 8.79, and that of the control class was 7.75. The writing performance of the experimental class was obviously better than that of the control class..

4. Research Findings and Discussion

4.1. Research Findings

First, the application of POA can effectively improve junior high school students' English writing performance. After an 8-week teaching experiment, the writing scores of the experimental class have a significant increase compared with the control class. The output-oriented teaching logic makes students have clear learning goals, and targeted input and training effectively make up for students' writing deficiencies.

Second, POA optimizes students' learning attitude and cultivates good writing habits. The real situational tasks in the motivating link change students' passive learning state; diversified input and multi-dimensional evaluation enable students to gradually form the habits of active thinking, careful revision and mutual communication, and their recognition of English writing is significantly enhanced.

4.2. Discussion

Compared with the traditional writing teaching mode, POA breaks the solidified model of "reciting model essays + mechanical writing". The real output tasks create a vivid classroom atmosphere, fully mobilize students' learning enthusiasm. In the enabling link, teachers play a leading role to help students select effective learning content, realizing the integration of learning and application. In addition, the diversified evaluation system lets students understand writing standards from multiple perspectives, and the evaluation feedback runs through the whole process of writing, which plays a positive role in improving students' comprehensive writing literacy.

In the teaching process, it is found that junior high school students have weak ability

of independent selective learning due to their limited English foundation. Therefore, teachers need to strengthen guidance in the input link to avoid the disconnection between learning content and output tasks.

5. Conclusion

The study verifies that the Production-oriented Approach effectively improves junior high school students' English writing performance and learning attitudes, and fosters good writing habits. It offers a feasible new approach for junior high school English writing teaching. Given students' limited learning capacity, teachers should provide proper guidance during teaching practice.

This research has limitations including insufficient sample coverage and a short experimental period. Future studies may expand research samples, extend experimental time and explore the application of POA with different textbooks, so as to further promote the development of basic English writing teaching.

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