The Analysis on Blended Teaching in College EFL Writing Course Based on The Production-Oriented Approach

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ABSTRACT

The production-oriented approach is concerned with learning output and the attainment of learning objectives. The combined style of classroom-teaching and the online education-assisted platform is gaining popularity among instructors and students. It maintains the benefits of traditional teaching methods. Meanwhile, it has the advantages of high efficiency, variety, scientific rigor, and customization, which increases the fascination and diversity of the learning process and accentuates the learning impact. Unlike conventional writing instruction, which concentrates on input rather than output, a blended English writing model based on the production-oriented approach can motivate students to apply what they have learned and sustain long-term production. One teaching unit of blended college English is taken as an example to demonstrate the POA teaching steps which are the interlocking sessions of, acquisition and assessing.

Keywords: the production-oriented approach; blended EFL writing course; output-driven; input-enabled

1. INTRODUCTION

The production-oriented approach (POA) is proposed by Professor Wen Qiufang (2015) drawing on the theories of second language acquisition and applied linguistics. It encompasses the interpretation of the three facets of instructional behaviour: instructional philosophy, instructional assumptions, and teacher-mediated teaching steps. Teaching philosophy includes "learning center theory", "learning-use integration theory" and " whole-person education theory"; teaching assumptions comprises "output-driven", "input-enabled" and "selective learning"; teaching process consists of three stages: "driving", "enabling" and "evaluation". Throughout the process, teachers are expected to serve an appropriate mediating role. The teaching philosophy is the guiding idea of the other two sections, the teaching assumptions serve as the theoretical support of the teaching process, and the teaching process is the means by which the teaching philosophy and assumptions are realized.

Swain's Output Hypothesis (1985) postulates that output drives foreign language growth more than intake. Not only does the output drive increase receptive language information, but it also increases pupils' motivation to acquire additional language knowledge, which serves as the theoretical foundation for POA. The "learning center theory" regards "effective acquisition" as the target of all teaching activities; the "moral education theory" aims to emphasize the importance of enhancing students' comprehensive literacy and humanistic feelings when teaching specific subjects; The "learning center theory" considers "effective acquisition" to be the goal of all teaching activities; the "whole-person education theory" views the importance of enhancing students' comprehensive literacy and humanistic cognition when teaching specific subjects, and the "learning-use theory" emphasizes the correspondence between "drive" and "output," and the acquisition of knowledge should lead to ultimate application and use.[1] In the driving process, teachers design and deliver "output-driven" tasks with potential communicative value through face-to-face classroom instruction and offline tutorial software to stimulate students' interest and motivate their desire to learn. Furthermore, teachers provide multimodal learning materials via a variety of media, guide students in selectively processing and absorbing English language materials, mobilize multiple senses to complete the primary learning content, and complete "facilitation" and "output" by assigning step-by-step tasks and assignments in accordance with the step-by-step progress during the facilitation session of POA. The evaluation session includes process evaluation and summative evaluation, and the evaluation form covers self-evaluation, group mutual evaluation, teacher-student collaborative evaluation, and teacher evaluation, which significantly compensates for the shortcomings of the traditional English writing teaching methods of project-based teaching, case-based teaching, and task-based teaching, and forms a student-centered teaching model with the teacher's "scaffolding" as the intermediary of the "drive-facilitate-evaluate" process.[2] The teaching model is based on the process of "drive-facilitate-evaluate" and the teacher's "scaffolding" function.

2. BLENDED ENGLISH WRITING INSTRUCTION BASED ON THE PRODUCTION-ORIENTED APPROACH

2.1. The Analysis of Learning Situation

The target group of the course is designed for sophomores in non-English majors, who are more intensive in their major courses and generally lack time and motivation to learn English. Many students lack qualified English writing skills and a working knowledge of effective strategies for improving their overall English literacy, and their English writing skills require reinforcement. Composing professional academic papers and answering subjective questions on English proficiency exams both place high demands on students' English writing skills. Although students have a certain foundation in the English knowledge system, communicative ability, and moral and emotional development, English writing necessitates good fundamental language abilities as well as expressive ability. For language learning, listening, reading, writing and writing inextricably linked, complementary, and interchangeable. Therefore, in order to improve students' English writing, their English skills need to be strengthened in all aspects and improve their overall English literacy, based on which they can conduct special training in English writing with clear directions.

2.2. Blended English Writing Teaching Model

The blended teaching mode can combine the teaching of English writing in class and out of class, online and offline in an organic and diversified way, thus forming a three-dimensional teaching-learning-practice-testing-evaluation all-around multi-level complete teaching loop. It is possible to utilize a combination of online tutorial software and traditional face-to-face instruction. Face-to-face classroom as the main mode, supplemented by teaching software, teachers upload teaching resources and conduct supplementary lectures online along with online question and answer tutoring, after-school homework assignment, homework correction, and statistical analysis of process data, all of which are capable of reinforcing teaching effectiveness and tracking student acquisition feedback.[3] Additionally, the blended English writing model has been shown to significantly stimulate students' interest and motivation in learning. Along with multimedia presentations in the face-to-face classroom, the use of blended learning software tools is not limited to the classroom but can be interspersed in offline writing teaching through well-designed instruction sessions. Students can interact with teachers and classmates through cell phones or computers, and participate in pre-study and introduction sessions prior to class via questionnaires and polls. Meanwhile, students can document their learning results after class by completing assignments or quizzes, and they

can also consolidate and expand on the important concepts covered in class by using supplementary materials.

The instructor cannot monitor each student's learning in real-time while teaching in a face-to-face classroom. While teachers can access objective statistics such as activity participation, writing exam results, and model essay learning using the hybrid tutoring platform. Thereby an individualized writing course learning analysis report for each student has been resulted in for both students and teachers. It enhances teaching effectiveness and assists students in achieving self-education, self-management, and self-learning in order to promote rapid progress in their understanding and thinking. Students can use this personalized, blended learning modality, which breaks down time and space barriers, to acquire writing techniques and skills in conjunction with the teacher's pre-, during-, and post-class teaching sessions.

3. APPLICATION OF POA IN BLENDED WRITING INSTRUCTION

The production-oriented approach's teaching guiding theory is consistent with the basic idea and objective of college English teaching, and it provides a scientific method and successful operation stages for the practice of teaching English writing to non-English majors, providing a strong theoretical foundation and practical methods.

3.1. Teaching Objectives

College English Writing is a required foundation course for non-English undergraduates in their second year of college. The overall objective of this course is for students to improve their English writing skills and overall English proficiency, as well as to form purposeful, efficient, and self-disciplined study habits, to strengthen their cultural confidence and improve their language skills, humanities, and overall literacy likewise.

3.1.1. Language Objective

To improve students' basic language skills and English writing skills. To systematically acquire basic English language knowledge, including vocabulary, collocation, grammar, chapter, rhetoric, and writing, etc. Students are equipped with good English writing skills, free from negative native language transfer, and proficient in writing skills, word combinations, and sentence expressions in different genres.

3.1.2. Competence Objective

To improve students' intercultural communication skills and English writing skills, ability to process and select information, ability to judge and think critically, and ability

to analyze and solve problems and prepare scientific thinking. To enhance scientific and humanistic literacy, to guide students to establish correct ideological values, and to equip them with the ability to self-promote their growth and advancement. To cultivate students with a proactive awareness of intercultural communication and the ability to communicate and converse. Students can rationally recognize the differences among diversified cultures and ways of thinking and have the ability to perceive things from diverse perspectives.

3.1.3. Morality Objective

Along with language acquisition and writing skill improvement, students will comprehend the fundamental etiquette and rules of intercultural dialogue, properly perceive the distinctions between cultures, and develop an accurate perception of the country, nation, history, and culture. To be conscious of intercultural communication and cultural equality, to seek common ground while reserving distinctions, to coexist with differences, and to accept and tolerate diversity. To achieve the organic combination of language training objectives, ability training objectives, and nurturing training objectives. It integrates international perspective, national sentiment, cultural confidence, and personality development into language instruction so that students can develop scientific thinking and spiritual growth while learning and using a language, as well as to promote their overall development.

3.2. Teaching Steps

3.2.1. Output-driven

Take a unit in a college English writing textbook as an example. The topic of this unit is "social behavior" and writing skill is "comparison and contrast". The first output-driven is that teachers post voting activities for unit vocabulary and the whole new text on the online teaching-aid platform to require students to watch the lead-in video and vote out the 10 most difficult words from vocabulary list in new unit and the most incomprehensible passage in text. As for the second output-driven, topic-related micro-lesson video called "the art of good manners" is posted online for students to watch. Students are required to accomplish the writing task: describe one of the most overlooked etiquettes during cross-culture communication and then upload the assignments online with the "student mutual evaluation" and "teacher-student joint evaluation" functions open. Teachers post video learning materials online, monitor students' progress, and post assignments as the third output-driven. The assignment is to compose an essay comparing the different customs between two different cultures. For the sake of output-driven 4, the small group consisting of several

students is responsible for the class presentation on the corresponding paragraph in the text.

3.2.2. Input-enabled

Teachers conduct warm-up trivia question "find out the countries responding to their way of table etiquette" in a face-to-face class. To have students point out on a map the countries corresponding to the different etiquettes shown in the video. Thus, the topic is introduced naturally. As the first input facilitation, the teacher explains the important language points of the text and the top 10 words in output-driven 1 that the students voted to understand the least. Teacher lectures on the text, focusing on the passage with the highest number of votes in output-driven 1, and conduct a retell activity in-class oral presentation, paraphrasing the passage in your own words and dictating the core key vocabulary on the blackboard. Furthermore, as to input-enabled 2, to select and grade the 3 most representative assignments in output-driven 2, then display and elaborate them in class, commenting on their correct and incorrect points. Introduce the proper linguistic terms for formal writing when and guide students to accept and respect cultural differences by discussing the topic of different table etiquettes. In terms of input-enabled 3, before being asked to make sentences by using a new expression, students are explained in detail about the high-frequency expressions, writing technique, and common vocabulary and sentences of the genre "comparison and contrast" firstly. The teacher comments on the excellent sample essays in output-driven 3, and asks students to perform their presentation.

3.2.3. Acquisition output

The serialized output is the result of prior input-facilitation. The teacher gradually introduces the language topic through the warm-up session and the homework. Under exquisite teaching design, students are the absolute protagonists of the whole learning process while teachers are the director. Output-driven and input facilitation motivate acquisition output progressively. Output-driven activities are used as the driving means and teaching objectives advocated by POA, accordingly, using input activities as a means of input-enabled. In terms of teaching objectives, it uses output as the beginning point to motivate students to learn, and output as the aim to learn to utilize. It highlights the significance of output activities in language acquisition and links output with input, providing new teaching concepts for enhancing the efficiency of college English classroom instruction. It highlights the significance of output activities in language learning and links output and input, presenting a novel teaching approach to increase the efficiency of English classroom instruction in college.

3.2.4. Evaluation and feedback

The evaluation sessions can be divided into pre-class, in-class, and post-class according to chronological order, and into formative and summative evaluations according to the type. Before the class, teachers determine the writing instructional design and assessment criteria. Teachers post assignments both online and offline with clear deadlines. Students submit the tasks assigned in the acquisition-driven and input-enabling sessions through the online writing platform and other teaching-assistance software. The forms of evaluation are characterized by diversity as teachers and students collaborate to evaluate writing output, either in class for immediate assessment or at the end of class or online for delayed assessment. The focus is on writing skills, accuracy, and standardization of language expression, etc. Thoughtfulness should also be included as one of the evaluation criteria. Concerning student mutual evaluation. The class can be divided into groups, with members of the group evaluating each other in pairs, allowing the group leader to supervise the evaluation session, and selecting the group leader to report on the presentation. The instructional sessions guided by POA cover the full range of listening, speaking, reading, and writing dimensions, with students engaging in interactive discussions followed by appropriate input from the teacher. Teachers should provide input materials that connect old and new knowledge to expanding students' writing knowledge.[4] Students can only effectively provide an acquired output if they receive sufficient comprehensible input.

In terms of evaluation subjects, individual self-evaluation, inter-group mutual evaluation, and teacher's final evaluation are combined, while quantitative evaluation is realized by using the functions, of course, points, tests, assignments, voting, brainstorming, and classroom discussion in the teaching-assistance platform to inspire students' engagement and learning enthusiasm. Comprehensive, objective, and effective evaluation of students' learning processes aids in the enhancement of teaching effectiveness.[5] The key purpose of assessment is to foster teaching using evaluation with multiple evaluation methods as artificial intelligence evaluation, teacher evaluation, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, teacher-student mutual evaluation. To be more specific, machine assessment and teacher evaluation in the classroom are instantaneous evaluations, peer evaluation and teacher-student mutual evaluation are mostly used for post-class tasks, and self-evaluation is used for stage learning reflections. Self-assessment questions related to writing ability are designed in the self-assessment form to guide students' self-evaluation and self-reflection aiming to build a virtuous circle about learning promotion through evaluation and assessment feeding evaluation.

4. CONCLUSION

Using collegiate English writing instruction as a foundation based on the principles and theories of the production-oriented approach, the "online and offline hybrid teaching" method and means are adopted to achieve continuous interaction between teachers and students online and offline through the "drive-facilitate-evaluate" interlocking teaching steps. The output assumptions and input contributions are elicited through a recursive driven-design. Accordingly, acquisition output arises naturally. In addition, the selection of language materials and the design of teaching activities follow a scientific pattern from easy to difficult and from simple to profound. Rather than providing isolated writing instruction, the blended teaching mode under POA aims to integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with the unit topic in the textbook serving as an item that focuses on writing techniques and language knowledge led by the theme. Moreover, course evaluation criteria turn to be more personalized empowered by the POA.[6] Teachers can use the online learning platform to monitor students' self-learning status in real-time and give tailored evaluation and feedback to students via the online learning platform's big data learning analysis reports. The blended teaching model involving both online and offline instruction retains the teacher's role as the designer and instructor of the course while maximizing the teaching support function of the AI teaching software. Students' attention span, power allocation, activity participation, and content preference are all scientifically recorded as learning data, providing a strong reference for teachers' evaluation of lessons and feedback. The blended teaching approach supplies a vast number of learning resources, and the instructor selects and uploads the information at an organized level of difficulty, giving students greater learning flexibility. Effective "selective learning" and "learning to use" complement one another and contribute to students' ultimate output.

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