

The Production-oriented Approach to Teaching Translation Between English and Chinese in Vocational and Technical Colleges

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ABSTRACT

The research is about applying Production-oriented Approach to teaching translation between English and Chinese in vocational and technical colleges. Starting from general introduction of POA and the current situation of teaching translation, this paper analyzes the reasons why to apply POA to teaching translation and also suggests making a micro-lesson in motivation, to create a situation when enabling, and to apply Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment when assessing. At the same time, teachers need to guide students to make full use of mobile technology to select the updated information and to learn knowledge they need, or they want.

Keywords: *Production-oriented Approach; translation teaching; vocational and technical colleges*

1. INTRODUCTION

In vocational and technical colleges, translation between English and Chinese is an important course for English majors. This course is usually for the third-year student, because it is a little bit difficult for students in vocational and technical colleges. To be good translators, students need to integrate and apply all what they learned in the past years, including knowledge about languages, skills about translation, and the differences between English culture and Chinese culture. In spite of the difficulties, translation between English and Chinese is an important skill for students. That's why many scholars, experts, and teachers have done much research about translation teaching in vocational and technical colleges.

On the other hand, Production-oriented Approach (POA) has been a hot topic for many experts and foreign language teachers since it was developed into output-driven, input-enabled hypothesis in 2014. POA has been adopted in College English teaching, in oral English teaching, in writing English teaching, as well as in translation teaching. After research, the author finds almost all the application research of POA to translation teaching are about the college translation teaching, few of them are about translation teaching in vocational and technical colleges. For example, Wang Ying (2021) did an experimental research on the teaching effect of "Production-oriented" Approach in college English Translation Teaching, and found that students' translation skills and techniques were progressed greatly and their scores for translation in CET-4

are higher after adopting the Production-oriented teaching method for 12 weeks, during which 2 translation classes were given each week.[1] Dong Caihua (2021) did some practice research on teaching translation to non-English majors, and it proves that POA can motivate students enthusiasm, can improve students' output capacity, and can optimize teaching efficiency.[2] When talking about translation teaching, there must be big differences between colleges and vocational and technical colleges. And this article focuses on the application of POA to translation teaching in vocational and technical colleges.

2. THE GENERAL INTRODUCTION OF POA

In 2007, Professor Wen Qiufang put forward output-driven hypothesis, which was developed into Output-driven, Input-enabled Hypothesis in 2014, and was firstly called Production-oriented Approach (POA) in 2015. POA aroused

POA is a new approach with Chinese characteristics for teaching foreign languages in colleges and universities. On a theoretical basis of Output Hypothesis by Swain, Professor Wen Qiufang put forward output-driven hypothesis in 2007. With the joint efforts of Professor Wen and the other related scholars and experts, output-driven hypothesis was developed into and the theoretical system of POA was firstly introduced in 2015, which was revised in 2017 and further revised in 2018. The following figure is the theoretical system of POA in 2018.

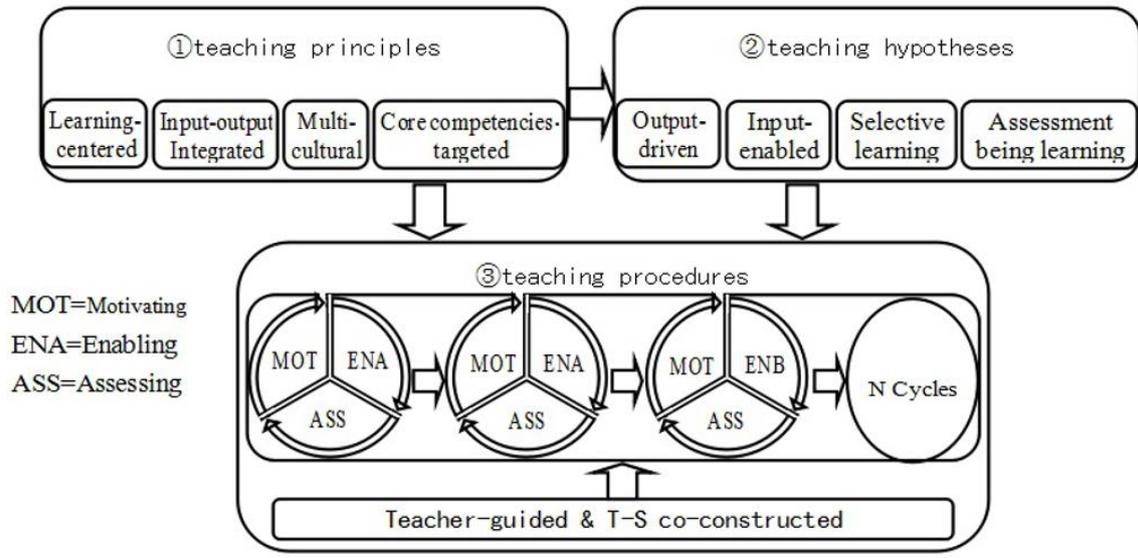


Figure 1. Theoretical System of POA in 2018

Teaching principles are the guidelines, teaching hypotheses are the theoretical basis, and teaching procedures are they ways of applying POA to teaching. POA has been widely used in university English teaching and has been proven effective to improve students' linguistic competence, especially to improve students output competencies such as speaking competency and writing competency. Because of its good teaching effects and the great influences from important international forums, there will be more and more applications and related research of POA in the future.

3. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF TEACHING TRANSLATION BETWEEN CHINESE AND ENGLISH

Nowadays, online translation and software translation are making communication with foreigners easier than before, but the demands for human translation have been greater than ever before. Translation Between Chinese and English is a required course for all English Majors, even in vocational and technical colleges. Translation, one of the five English skills is becoming more and more important for all English major, and the teaching of it has long been a hot topic for many experts and teachers. Although many methods have been tried to improve translation teaching, there are still some problems to be solved urgently.

3.1. Output is separated from input

In translation teaching, too much time is spent on input. In other words, teachers spend too much time on teaching theories and skills. It is quite often for teachers to give students some output tasks, but the students usually finish the task mechanically, not knowing how to adopt the

theories and skills properly in translation practice, which is called output-input separated. In traditional teaching, students are required to finish the task after class, and teacher will share the translation version for reference to students, the students then check their own translations and do some correcting if necessary. After that, teacher would go on with new theories or skills. During this process, students cannot understand thoroughly how the theories and skills are applied in practice.

3.2. Teacher is the center

When teaching translation, with so many skills and theories to teach, teachers have to make full use of every minute to teach, leaving little time for students to think, to discuss or to reflect. On the other hand, students must concentrate on the class passively, turning a blind eye and deaf ear to the problems they may have, or their peers may have in practice.

3.3. The teaching material and practice is out-of-date

Generally, teachers like to use the same book for several years, and it doesn't matter when teaching theories and skills, because they don't change much. But the examples and practice materials are old-fashioned. The students like new information and they may feel excited and satisfied when they can translate the materials related to current situation, or when they can use hot words.

3.4. Teaching periods are not enough

Generally speaking, vocational and technical colleges require students to study for three years. And during the first two years, students need to take many fundamental courses such as basic English, grammar course, oral English class, phonetics class, etc. And translation comes in the fifth semester, which is the first half of the third year. Apart from several weeks for short-term internship, translation class can only last for 14 weeks, with 2 classes each week. It is really difficult to teach students all the theories and skills in such a short time

4. WHY TO APPLY POA TO TEACHING TRANSLATION

Because of the problems above, an efficient approach is needed to teach translation. Product-oriented approach is a good choice for the following reasons:

4.1. Teaching principals of POA correspond to requirements of translation teaching.

Learning-centered principle requires teachers to guide students according to students' needs. Input-output integrated principle can help solve the problems of output-input separated. Multi-cultural principal is also important for all translators. Core competencies-targeted principal is essential for translation, because translating is one of the five English competences for English majors.

4.2. POA can help improve teaching efficiency.

Output-driven is a good theory to make students know what to learn at the very first beginning. After knowing the objectives, students may be well motivated for new knowledge. Therefore, the learning will be more efficient. Besides, teachers can create situations, or make micro lessons related to teaching goals in advance, which can help teacher save much time in class.

4.3. POA can help update teaching materials.

The third hypothesis of POA is selective learning, which is a good way for teachers to choose what to teach, and for students to choose what to learn according to their needs. For the teachers, they can choose some materials related to current situations, news and the report on the work of government are therefore good teaching materials. For the students, they can choose some materials according to their interests and needs. For example, students who are preparing CET-4 can choose some materials related Chinese culture, which is frequently met in the test.

4.4. The requirement of teacher-guided conforms to Chinese-style teaching.

It's China's tradition to respect teachers and attach great importance to education, and it would be difficult for students to learn totally on themselves. During the procedures, the students can learn better with the guidance of teachers. That's way Professor Wen Qiufang called POA a new approach with Chinese characteristics for teaching foreign languages in colleges and universities.[3] Respecting teachers doesn't mean the students would be ignored. Instead, effective classes need both teacher and students to take part in actively, need students and teacher to interact with each other well, that's what is called teacher-students co-constructed in POA.

5. THE APPLICATION OF POA TO TEACHING TRANSLATION

Most translation classes follow traditional steps: theory teaching --- analyze examples ---- do exercises --- check answers, which is too passive for students. We are familiar with PPP teaching methods, which means preparation, presentation and practice. There are also three procedures when applying POA, which are motivating, enabling, and assessing. Next, this paper will talk about how to conduct the three procedures in translation teaching.

5.1. Apply POA to Motivate Students

According to the first teaching hypothesis --- output-driven hypothesis, teachers need firstly to make students know the output task for the new lesson. When trying to produce output task, students would make many mistakes, which should be the main focus during the process of enabling. A good motivation is very important for a lesson, because it may lay a good foundation for enabling. Therefore, teachers need to prepare some typical output tasks for students and need to classify students normal mistakes into several groups in advance. Besides, before enabling, teachers need to find out some suitable examples from students' output products, correct them, and share both students' products and teachers' modified versions to the class for their discussion. For example, when teaching the technique of amplification, teachers can firstly make a micro lesson to teach the theory of amplification, and give students an exercise like this:

Example 1: Translation the sentences into Chinese with the technique of amplification.

As the global labour force increases, not enough new jobs are being generated to absorb new entrants to the labour market. Almost half a billion people are working fewer paid hours than they would like or lack adequate access to paid work.[4]

Both the micro lesson and the exercise should be given to students about 2 days in advance. It is suggested for teachers to use Moso Teach to upload learning materials

and exercises and collect students' output products. Moso Teach, a mobile teaching assistant launched by Beijing Qizhi Mosoink Technology Co., Ltd. in 2014, is based on the mobile network environment and cloud service platform, using mobile intelligent devices to organize classroom teaching.[5] Before class, teachers need to check students answers, classify their problems, and find out the proper solutions to each question, which is real preparation for the class. With this preparation, the whole lesson will focus on students' problems, which conforms to the learning-centered principle. In this way, students will be better motivated for new lessons, and they can choose what to learn and focus on their own shortcomings.

5.2. Apply POA to Enable Students

In the process of motivation, teachers know what to teach, and students know what to learn in the class, and the class would be absolutely much more efficient. During motivation, the most technical thing for teachers is to guide students to optimize their own products, instead of giving them reference translation version directly. For example, when teaching the importance of refining, we lead to guide students to read translation version for more times and think about how to refine their translation versions.

Example 2: He will come again in autumn to discuss business for next year.

There is no difficult words in this sentence, it is easy to get the it's Chinese meaning “他秋天将再来讨论明年的生意。” At the first reading, it is quite right, but if we try to translate back, we may get its English meaning “He will discuss business for next year in autumn.”. Compared with the original sentence, it is easy to find that the predicate verb “come” is omitted. How to deal with it? After discussion, students may find a good way to solve the problem and find a better Chinese sentence “他秋天将再来，讨论明年的生意。” With a comma, the predicate verb “come” can easily be focused. But that is not enough, teachers need to create a situation for students. It may be used by an employee to report to his employer the progress of one deal, which means some formals words related to business English should be used. Maybe teachers can directly tell them another 2 words can be changed for better translation. Then, after discussion and thinking carefully, the students may get a better Chinese sentence “他秋季将再来，洽谈明年的生意。” From the first Chinese sentence to the third one, teachers guide students to think, and to discuss, and even create a situation for the students. With teachers' guidance, students get to the proper translation gradually. The whole process was guided by the teacher, and teachers' guidance may provide students a way of thinking, which will be useful when students are producing their future tasks.

5.3. Apply POA to Assess Students

Assessment being learning is the fourth teaching hypothesis of POA. The assessment for POA is a comprehensive one, which involves the students themselves, their peers and teachers. In 2016, Professor Wen Qiufang introduced a new assessment method, Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment (TSCA). From the Figure 1: theoretical system of POA in 2018, we know assessment is the third procedure, which comes after enable. Because there may be N recycles of motivation, enabling and assessing in one class, assessment doesn't come only once. TSCA runs from the first beginning of the course and doesn't end until the end of the semester. When applying TSCA, scores are not enough when assessing students' products, some useful comments are also necessary for students to know their shortcomings and to know their learning objectives for a new round. TSCA requires students' self-assessment, peer assessment and teachers' assessment.[6] Assessments from different people may have different perspectives, which may provide a comprehensive assessment for a certain product. During the process of assessing peers' products, students can get a good chance to think over about their own product, which is a good way to learn. And the whole process conforms to the fourth teaching hypothesis of POA --- assessing being learning. In order to avoid random assess, teachers need to choose several typical products and assess carefully, including giving scores and comments, because these samples can be served as samples for students' reference. At the same time, a set of assessing standards should be given to students. By the way, Moso Teach is also a good auxiliary tool for assessing, because assess between and within groups, mutual assess, teachers' assess are all available on Moso Teach.

6. SOME OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS FOR IMPROVING TEACHING EFFICIENCY

6.1. Choose updated teaching materials

Theories can be taught according to the clues of textbooks, but the materials in the textbooks cannot be updated with the current situation. Therefore, teachers need to keep pace with the development in political, in science, in economy, in culture, etc., and choose the updated teaching materials for students. It can definitely improve students' interest and can build their confidence, on the other hand, updated teaching materials is much more for students' future examinations and jobs.

6.2. Make full use of online learning

As what mentioned in the former part, the class hours are too limited, it is very important to guide students make full

use of their time segments to learn new knowledge from different subscriptions in WeChat, from different Apps, or to attend some online lectures. In the information era, whether to waste much time playing smart phones or to make full use of it to get knowledge you need? Teachers may give students some requirements so as to help them make full use of online learning.

7. CONCLUSION

Translation between Chinese and English is important for college students, and translation teaching is a difficult task for teachers, especially when class hours are limited. Production-oriented Approach, with Chinese characteristics, can help improve class efficiency and can guide students to make full use their time segments to get updated knowledge according to their interests and needs. This article also suggests making micro lessons to motivate, to create a situation to enable students, and to apply Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment when assessing. Besides, Moso Teach, a useful teaching auxiliary tool can be thoroughly used when applying POA in translation teaching.

The research finds it good to apply POA to translation teaching in a broader way, some more detailed research should be done, such as how to undertake multi-cultural principle in translation teaching, and how to guide students to put selective-learning hypothesis into practice. The author hopes more experts and teachers will do some more research, so as to improve translation teaching in a broader way.

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