The Construction of Business English Blended Teaching Mode from the Perspective of Cloud Teaching-Research Community and Production-oriented Approach

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Abstract

The construction of Business English online and offline blended teaching mode is directly related to the cultivation of English teachers' professional knowledge, cloud teaching technology and teaching evaluation ability, which is of great significance to the cultivation of English input and output ability for Business English majors. Production-oriented Approach (abbreviated as POA) is an innovative, representative and practical theoretical system that has continuously developed and promoted the reform of College English teaching in China in the past decade. Based on this, this paper starts with POA and Cloud Teaching-Research Community (abbreviated as CTRC), as well as teacher's experiences in the National Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (abbreviated as FLTRP) Teaching Competition and the Provincial Foreign Language Ideological and Political Course Teaching Competition, which explores the blended teaching mode of Business English, and proposes the ways to optimize and reconstruct the blended teaching mode of Business English.

Keywords: Cloud Teaching-Research Community, Production-oriented Approach, Business English, Online and Offline Blended Teaching Mode, Construction

1   INTRODUCTION

In China, teachers and scholars who engaged in college English teaching and research have been constantly exploring and developing effective, targeted and suitable college English teaching theories and methods in accordance with China's national conditions and students' learning conditions, which have achieved certain results. In the past decade, a Production-oriented Approach (POA) has been proposed, which is innovative, representative and practical, as well as continuously developed and promoted the reform of College English teaching in China [1].

Professor Wen Qiufang proposed "Cloud Interconnectedness Theory" (CIT) for construction of Cloud Teaching-Research Community (CTRC). There are three overlapping hypotheses of cognitive connection, social connection and emotional connection. The explicit goal of CTRC is to promote the application and research of POA in the whole country. The implicit goal is to train a backbone team of foreign language teaching and research in China. The theory asserts that the effectiveness and sustainability of cloud teaching and research community learning depends on the intensity of the cognitive-social-emotional connection [7].

Prior to this study, the research team of this paper conducted a survey on demotivation in English learning among Chinese college students. The study holds that teachers' ability, responsibility and teaching methods have an important impact on students' learning motivation [2].

Therefore, this paper aims to search and construct a suitable and scientific English blended teaching mode for college students, which is important to motivate students' English learning and improve their condition of demotivation in learning.

Based on teacher's experiences of participating in the National FLTRP Teaching Competition and Provincial Foreign Language Ideological and Political Course Teaching Competition, combining the teaching cases, this paper puts forward the blended teaching mode of

Business English reading course from the perspective of CTRC and POA.

2   POA AND ENGLISH TEACHING

"Production-oriented Approach" (POA) was proposed by the POA research group led by Professor Wen Qiufang from the National Research Center for Foreign Language Education, Beijing Foreign Studies University. This teaching theory has Chinese characteristics [3].

It not only inherits China's excellent educational tradition, but also takes root in and is committed to solving China's tendency of "emphasizing learning over using" or "reusing over learning" in foreign language teaching. It also absorbs excellent foreign language teaching practices and theories abroad.[4] After nearly ten years of studying, it has carried out many teaching practices. At present, the theoretical system and practical mode of POA have become mature and basically formed. [5]

Based on the "Output-driven Hypothesis", POA was extended to college English teaching in 2013 and revised to "Output-Driven, Input-Enabled Hypothesis" at the beginning of 2014. It was officially named POA in the "7th International Symposium on English Teaching in China" in October of the same year.

First of all, POA is mainly for intermediate and advanced foreign language learners. As measured by the Common Framework of Reference for European Languages, the target must be at least A2 or above. Second, production has a different meaning from output. "Output" includes not only speaking and writing, but also interpretation and translation; The English equivalent of "Output" is production, which emphasizes the producing process and product.

3   CTRC AND POA

"Output orientation" has two meanings. First, CTRC activities should be output-driven. CTRC members should first try to complete the output task, and then learn the necessary theoretical or practical schemes. Second, the results of learning are visible and evaluable products, such as POA teaching plans, teaching videos, research designs, draft papers, etc.

The targets of CTRC are implicit and explicit. The implicit goal is to help all CTRC members grow into teaching and research leaders who constantly seek development, improve themselves as well as do well in cooperation and reflection. The explicit goal is to guide CTRC members to become POA practitioners and researchers. Specifically, members should be able to explain POA theory, teach POA, conduct POA research, modify and improve POA theory.

Each member should enter the classroom to practice POA. In the process of implementing POA, they should find the research focus and conduct research while teaching.

The learning tasks of CTRC can be roughly divided into six categories:

1) Reading literature, such as POA theory and research method literature;

2) Design, evaluate and implement POA teaching plans;

3) Evaluate POA classroom teaching videos;

4) Design and evaluate POA research programs;

5) Write and evaluate research papers;

6) Write and submit a reflection log.

Logically, POA teaching should precede POA teaching research, but in practice, the relationship is not linear. The design of POA teaching program needs to come first, but the design of POA teaching research does not have to wait until the whole POA teaching cycle is completed.

Experienced POA teaching practitioners can carry out teaching research as well as teaching practice. Even if you are new to POA teaching, you can also try teaching and researching. Of course, the draft of the paper cannot be written until the entire teaching and research cycle *is* completed [6].

4   CONSTRUCTION OF BUSINESS ENGLISH ONLINE AND OFFLINE BLENDED TEACHING MODE

Based on the principles of CRTC and POA, this paper proposes the construction of a blended teaching model for Business English.

This model is divided into macro model construction and micro model construction. Macro model takes CRTC as the framework to construct the teaching model by four steps: online teaching discussion, teaching design, teaching practice and teaching evaluation. Macro model construction of blended teaching mode by CRTC and POA follows four steps:

Step one, discuss and improve teaching scheme by CRTC.

Step two, design teaching plans by POA.

Step three, apply online and offline blended teaching practice based on POA.

Step four, obtain teaching evaluation and feedback on using online resources after class teaching.

After the completion of the fourth step, the next round of discussion and improvement by CRTC will be conducted according to the teaching evaluation and feedback, so as to build a continuous and progressive cycle of teaching mode. See Figure 1:
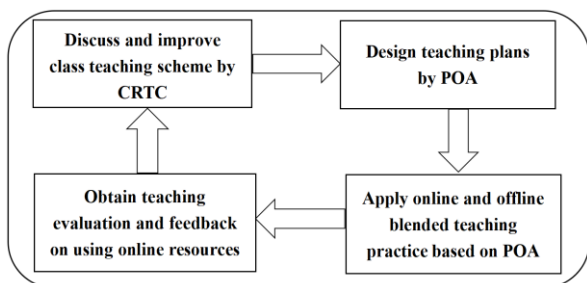

Figure 1: Macro model construction of blended teaching mode by CRTC and POA

Micro model construction is based on the concept of POA under the macro model, which is a further construction of classroom teaching implementation, evaluation and feedback, so as to clear the specific steps and principles of the teaching process. Micro model construction follows six steps:

Step one, release task before class by teachers (Pre-class).

Step two, start up with micro-lesson online platform by teachers (Guide).

Step three, basic knowledge consolidation and teacher-assisted input for students (Scaffolding).

Step four, Online and offline blended teaching by teachers (Input).

Step five, task completion and output by students as well as the feedback given by teachers (Production and Evaluation).

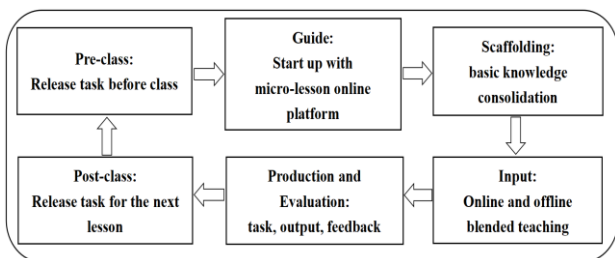Step six, release task for the next lesson (Post-class). See Figure 2:

Figure 2: Micro model construction of POA blended teaching mode for Business English

5 INTRODUCTION TO THE BUSINESS ENGLISH READING COURSE SCHEME AND STUDENTS BASED ON CHINESE CONTEXT

5.1 Introduction to the Business English Reading Course Scheme

The knowledge modules of Business English Reading Course mainly include: Corporate Culture, Leadership, Management, Consumer Behaviors and Chinese Consumers, Mobile phones and Chinese Market.

The teaching concept is based on POA. The teaching design aims to let students understand China's fine culture in business and international cooperation while learning business knowledge, respect cultural differences, cultivate cultural awareness and establish students' cultural confidence.

The characteristics of the course teaching design are that teachers implement SPOC mode (Small Private Online Course) with offline teaching, so that students can learn about cultural differences, cultural shock and the importance of cultural awareness, and at the same time guide students to think, explore and understand how China adhere to the concept of "inclusiveness" and "win-win cooperation" and make contributions and achievements to the world in recent years, which help students develop their feelings of family and country, independent thinking ability, as well as keep an open and inclusive attitude towards different cultures.

In the SPOC mode, teachers use Zhi Hui Shu (Wisdom Tree) online platform to share teaching resources related to this course synchronously, record classroom teaching videos and micro-lesson videos, evaluate POA classroom teaching videos with teaching and research team members after class, so as to further design and improve the teaching plan.

5.2 Introduction to Students

The teaching objects are the undergraduate junior students of Business English major. Juniors, after two years of English major learning, have trained and accumulated a certain English foundation. Therefore, many students' English learning needs and expectations are no longer limited to a single form of text learning and reading comprehension. Class teaching is expected to teach professional knowledge in multiple dimensions, which combines with input and output classroom activities.

Prior to this study, the research team of this paper conducted a survey on demotivation in English learning among Chinese college students [2].

The survey investigated 433 students from four undergraduate colleges in Guangdong Province. The

purpose was to study the problems and influencing factors of students' demotivation in English learning. The research aims to study several questions: one, the differences and characteristics of students' demotivation in different genders, grades and majors; Two, the correlation and influence between teachers' factors, students' personal factors, environment factors and students' demotivation in English learning; Three, the correlation and influence between College English Test (CET-4) and students' demotivation in English learning.

The questionnaire is divided into two sub-questionnaires, which are called sub-questionnaire 1 and sub-questionnaire 2. The first part of sub-questionnaire 1 is students' personal information, including gender, school, major, grade and whether they have passed CET-4. The second part is the investigation of students' lack of Motivation in English learning, with 7 questions in total.

Sub-questionnaire 2 aims to study the relationship between teachers' factors, students' personal factors and environmental factors and the degree of influence on students' demotivation in English learning. There are 40 questions in total.In the second part of sub-questionnaire 1 and sub-questionnaire 2, each item has 5 levels for choice, which are: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= uncertain, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree.

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to investigate the reliability of the questionnaire. The analysis results showed that the reliability coefficient was 0.887, indicating that the questionnaire had a good reliability. Statistical software SPSS 19.0 was used to analyze the data.

In the descriptive data of the 7 questions concerning students' demotivation in English learning, the mean values of 6 questions are all above 2.7, and 3 of them are negative skewness, indicating that students agree with their demotivation in English learning in different aspects.

Among them, the mean value of 4 questions is 2.90 or above, for example,

Question 1: I lack motivation to learn English (2.90).

Question 2. I am less interested in learning English than when I first entered college (2.91).

Question 3. I am less enthusiastic about English classes than when I first entered college (2.92).

Question 5. I have less confidence in learning English than when I first entered college (2.91).

To further analyze the demotivation in different grades, the research team conducted a correlation analysis between students' grades and their demotivation on English learning.

The results showed that the correlation between grade and lack of motivation was r=0.341, significance value is.000, that is, p<0.05, indicating that there is a significant

positive correlation between students' grade and lack of motivation. The higher the grade, the more serious the lack of motivation tends to be. This trend can be reflected in Table 1. From freshman year to junior year, the mean score of motivation deficit of male and female students shows a gradually increasing trend, from freshman year (2.37) to junior year (3.86) for male students, and from freshman year (2.48) to junior year (2.94) for female students. However, compared with the junior year, after the senior year, the scores of vivid machine deficiency of both male and female decreased, which were 2.85 for male and 2.71 for female respectively, indicating that the demand for English learning has recovered after the senior year. See Table 1:

Table 1 Test of gender difference on English learning demotivation at different grades (Mean ± Standard Deviation)

Grade	Male (M±SD)	Female (M±SD)	t	p
Freshmen	2.37±0.85	2.48±0.76	-1.110	0.268
Sophomore	3.09±1.02	3.17±0.63	-0.322	0.751
Junior	3.86±0.89	2.95±0.74	2.313	0.025
Senior	2.85±1.19	2.71±0.71	0.249	0.806

In the survey, 118 students have passed College English Test Band 4 (CET-4), accounting for 27.3%, while 315 students do not pass, accounting for 72.7%.

Table 2 shows that the demotivation in English learning has a significant difference in whether passing CET-4 or not (P<0.05). From the mean value, the score of demotivation in English learning who have passed CET-4 (2.93) was significantly higher than those do not pass (2.56), that is, the students who passed CET-4 had more obvious lack of motivation in English learning than those who do not pass.

Table 2 Test of demotivation difference on students whether passing CET-4 or not (Mean ± Standard Deviation)

Students have passed CET-4 (M±SD)	Students do not pass CET-4 (M±SD)	t	p
2.93±0.84	2.56±0.84	4.106	0.000

The survey suggests that college English classroom teaching, should not be limited to offline class. Besides, teachers are expected to let students learn to use their spare time, combined with online teaching and practical digital tools, such as "iSmart" mobile application and "Bai Ci Zhan" application (an application for learning English words through pictures), which improve the diversity and the fun of learning English after class, drive and activate the students' enthusiasm of learning English as well as teach students in accordance of their aptitude.

6   TEACHING CASES OF BLENDED TEACHING BY MICRO MODEL CONSTRUCTION

In this paper, two teaching cases of modules, "Corporate Culture" and "Leadership", are respectively taken as examples, which combined with the Wisdom Tree Platform and WJX Questionnaire Platform, to demonstrate the blended teaching mode of Business English course based on POA.

6.1 Teaching scheme on "Corporate Culture"

6.1.1 Teaching Objectives

This teaching case is designed for two periods. The knowledge objective is to understand the cultural difference and culture shock, the corporate culture of Haier, the famous Chinese enterprise, the four kinds of healthy corporate culture, and the key words and practical expressions about healthy corporate culture in the unit. Students should be able to distinguish and describe four healthy corporate cultures using key words and expressions.

The emotional and attitude goal is to understand cultural difference and culture shock, which often exists in daily life and business activities, understand healthy corporate culture, and maintain an attitude of seeking common ground while reserving differences for cultural differences.

Through group investigation and report, students will learn about China's excellent catering enterprises, clothing, business etiquette and other fine culture.

6.1.2 Teaching contents and procedure

Step 1: Release task before class (Pre-class)

Students work in groups of 4-6 persons. One of the groups is required to collect, organize and prepare a 5-8 minutes report in advance: Cantonese Cuisine and Corporate cultures.

Step 2: Start up with micro-lesson online platform by teachers (Guide)

On the Wisdom Tree Platform, teacher first shows the micro-lesson video edited of the course by teaching team, which shows the different English expressions of the same thing in Britain and America, so that students let student think about "cultural difference" and "culture shock".

After the micro-video, the teacher showed a clip from a BBC documentary about a Chinese teacher teaching a local British middle school student on how to do traditional Chinese fan dance. Teacher raises questions and leads students to discuss about "cultural awareness" and its importance in business. Questions are as follows.

Question1: What aspects do you think culture involves?

Question2: What do you miss most about Chinese culture when you go abroad?

Question3: Why is cultural awareness important for business people? Give examples.

Step 3: Basic knowledge consolidation and teacher-assisted input for students (Scaffolding)

Based on the video above, teacher extends the topic of the unit: culture not only exists in a country, but also exists in the "corporate culture" of an enterprise. Taking Haier as an example, teacher asks the students to think and discuss the corporate culture concept conveyed by its trademark "Haier Brothers". After that, teacher assists students to review and consolidate key words in the unit, paving the way for the next step of learning.

Step 4: Online and offline blended teaching by teachers (Input)

Students study "Four healthy corporate culture" by scanning and skimming. Classroom teaching is carried out through online and offline teaching, micro lesson resources of Wisdom Tree platform and Qinglu Smart Classroom technology with the integration of SPOC teaching. Students are expected to quickly and accurately summarize the main idea of a chapter or paragraph, analyze the logical structure, infer the author's attitude and viewpoint, and master the details and hidden information by skimming, speed reading and scanning.

Step 5: Task completion and comments (Production)

Students group-mates present a report on Cantonese Cuisine and corporate cultures in class. Feedback and evaluation are provided by teacher after reports, including the contents, logic, overall performance of speakers and comments from classmates.

Step 6: Task released by teacher for the next lesson (Post-class)

Students work in groups of 4 to 6. Teacher assigns each group to make a brief report with pictures and pictures, and collect and sort out one item about Chinese food, clothing and business culture, such as: Chinese food and corporate cultures, Western food and corporate cultures, Chinese costume and corporate cultures, Business Etiquette in different countries, etc. Each group will have a 5-8 minute presentation and personal opinion sharing in the next class.

Step 7: Tasks Evaluation (Evaluation)

For the after-class tasks in unit 1, teachers give feedback and put forward suggestions on the presentation and summary submitted by groups before and after class according to the progress of students' actual discussion, so as to promote the smooth progress of the output activities in the next class.

6.2 Teaching scheme on "Leadership"

6.2.1 Teaching Objectives

This teaching case is designed for two periods. The knowledge objective is to understand the characteristics of excellent leaders, China's contribution to the world as a world power and how to lead the development of friendly countries. Students should be familiar with the views of "leadership" put forward by Peter Drucker, "the father of modern management", as well as master key words and practical expressions about "leadership" in class. Students are expected to be able to use key words and expressions to describe Peter Drucker's ideas about leadership.

The emotional and attitude goal is to understand the importance of excellent leadership to the development of enterprises and the country, as well as adhere to the excellent cultural concepts of "inclusiveness" and "win-win cooperation".

6.2.2 Teaching contents and procedure

Step 1: Release task before class (Pre-class)

Students work in groups of 4-6 persons. One of the groups is required to collect, organize and prepare a 5-8 minutes report in advance: Peter Drucker and his views on Leadership.

Step 2: Start up with micro-lesson online platform by teachers (Guide)

Teacher plays two micro-lesson videos on the Wisdom Tree platform of the course, which highlight China's contribution to the world, including China's efforts to assist Africa in response to medical fields and help Ethiopia build waste incineration power plants. After the videos, teacher introduces the main topic, the importance of Leadership, guiding students to understand that China adheres to the excellent cultural concepts of "inclusiveness" and "win-win cooperation" in business, economy and other fields.

Step 3: Basic knowledge consolidation and teacher-assisted input for students (Scaffolding)

Teacher guides students to summarize the characteristics of excellent leaders, including leaders of Microsoft, Apple, Haier, Baidu, etc. Teacher assists students to review and consolidate key words in the unit, paving the way for the next step of learning.

Step 4: Online and offline blended teaching by teachers (Input)

Students study "Peter Drucker on Leadership" by careful reading through online and offline teaching, micro lesson resources of Wisdom Tree platform with the integration of SPOC teaching. In addition, students are expected to use reading strategies to obtain information

effectively in the process of reading, which include summarizing the main idea of articles and paragraphs, mastering the organization and layout of paragraphs, reasoning and judging the main idea, guessing the meaning of words, distinguishing facts and opinions.

Step 5: Task completion and comments (Production)

Students group-mates present a report on "Peter Drucker and his views on Leadership" in class. After the report, students of the other groups are invited to apply what they have learned in class to make a brief oral presentation of Peter Drucker's ideas about "leadership". After the group presentation, teacher improves or complements relevant contents for study.

Step 6: Task released by teacher for the next lesson (Post-class)

Teacher assigns tasks in advance: After learning the module, students will conduct English presentation and voting in class. The theme of the activity is: China's contribution to the world— after learning "Corporate Culture" and "Leadership". Students are required to make an English presentation in groups within 10 minutes.

Step 7: Tasks Evaluation (Evaluation)

The students in the stage scored the groups according to the performance of the groups in the stage. After all the groups showed, they discussed with their group members to select the groups with the best overall performance in the competition. Teachers issued questionnaires through e-questionnaire, with which each group scored and voted.

The evaluation dimensions and standards of task completion quality are as follows:

The total score of group presentation is 100. Teachers and peers' evaluation of each group includes: content dimension, design and presentation, and language performance.

The score includes the following four dimensions:

Dimension of students' interpretation and analysis: the most impressed and touched contents on "Corporate Culture" and "Leadership" (25 points);

Dimension of contents: China's contribution to the world in the past ten years (such as economy, science and technology, education, medical care, etc.) (25 points);

Dimension of design and demonstration: PPT slides and courseware design (25 points);

Dimension of group members' verbal presentation (25 points).

After each group's presentation, teacher makes comments and feedback in time to help students get familiar with what they have learned.

Finally, students are expected to summarize the content and questions in the group presentation, produce

the final summary report, and conduct comments, feedback and consolidation exercises in the next class.

7 CONCLUSIONS

POA and CTRC play different roles in English teaching, performing their respective roles in pre-class, in-class and after-class.

As a foreign language teaching theory and method with Chinese characteristics, POA has played an important role in college English teaching. However, it still needs more college English teachers to carry out research, practice and feedback on it, which make continuous improvement in their opinions and suggestions.

In the future teaching practice, college English teachers should constantly improve English teaching quality, methods and countermeasures, which can help to improve the comprehensive English level of students and enhance the overall competitiveness of students.

For CTRC, in terms of cognitive content in the follow-up stage, the guiding principle of CTRC is to "gain new insights through reviewing old material". "Reviewing old material" refers to the review and consolidation of formal activities. "Gain new insights" includes two aspects: One is to optimize your practice based on what you have learned from formal activities; The other is to question or raise new questions about what has been learned in formal activities. This principle conforms to the general principle of learning, which means knowledge needs review to enhance the learning effect. Besides, learners should not only use knowledge creatively, but also raise questions and search out new problems.

For the further study and research, in order to let CTRC play a better role, this paper holds that teachers are expected to conduct regular summary and communication activities among teammates, so as to evaluate POA research programs and research papers effectively, which are beneficial to gain new insights and make continuous progress for POA teaching.

Last but not least, teaching should not be constrained in single mode of teaching. The teaching and research section team can make full use of the online platform, such as Wisdom Tree Platform, Qinglu Smart Classroom Technology Platform, Tencent Meeting Application and Enterprise Wechat Application, etc., which can give full play to the advantages of blended teaching.

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