



Research on Oral Business English Teaching Mode Based on Production-oriented Approach

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Abstract. This research proposes to construct a new teaching mode for oral business English based on production-oriented approach. The author first explores the theory and principles of POA, and then construct and implement the POA teaching mode for oral business English teaching through a real example of teaching practice.

Keywords: oral business English; teaching mode; production-oriented approach

1 Introduction

With the continuous development of economic globalization and world integration, all countries in the world have strengthened their trade exchanges with other countries in politics, economy and education. Driven by the "One Belt, One Road" initiative, China's foreign trade has shown a good development trend, and has formed very close economic exchanges with countries along the Belt and the Road. Accordingly, there is a large demand for high quality business English majors who have excellent communicative ability in English. With this regard, oral business English teaching must explore a more effective way of cultivate business English majors' communicative ability in English. High-quality business English talents with solid theoretical knowledge of business English and high level of oral expression are of great significance to promoting the practical development of the "Belt and Road Initiative". The research on the teaching mode of business oral communication based on the output-oriented method provides an effective path for the cultivation of business English oral talents.

2 Production-oriented Approach

Production-oriented Approach (POA) is an English teaching method with Chinese characteristics proposed by Professor Qiufang Wen. In the past ten years, in the context of

the "post-method era" of foreign language teaching, Professor Qiufang Wen has successively put forward the output-driven hypothesis (Qiufang Wen 2007, 2008), the output-driven-input-driven hypothesis (Qiufang Wen 2014), and finally formed a "Production-oriented approach" (POA) system (Qiufang Wen 2015, 2016). The theoretical system of Output-oriented Approach includes three parts: 1) teaching concept; 2) teaching hypothesis; 3) teaching process mediated by teachers. Teaching concepts include "Learning-centered Principle", "Learning-using Integrated Principle", "Whole-person Education Principle"; teaching assumptions cover "output-driven", "input-driven" and "selective learning". Teaching process includes three stages of "motivating", "enabling" and "assessing" (Qiufang Wen, 2015).

The "Learning-centered Principle" advocates that all activities of classroom teaching should serve the occurrence of effective learning, rather than simply serving the main body of students. The previous "Student-centered" teaching philosophy regards students as the determinants of teaching goals, content and teaching progress, and the leader of classroom discourse, while weakening the teachers' instructions and responsibilities. This often results in the low achievement of learning goals and learning effects.

The "Learning-using Integrated Principle" advocates that using promotes learning, and learning also promotes using. "Learning" refers to out learning, including listening and reading; "using" refers to "output", including speaking, writing, interpretation and translation.

The "Whole-person Education Principle" means that education should serve all aspects of humans' development. Therefore, foreign language teaching should not only achieve the instrumental goal of improving students' comprehensive ability to use English, but also achieve the humanistic goals of higher education, such as improving students' critical thinking ability, autonomous learning ability and comprehensive quality (Ministry of Education Department of Higher Education, 2007).

3 The Construction of Oral Business English Teaching Mode based on POA

Based on the need of high-quality talents in oral business English, the author takes the teaching of oral business English courses for business English majors as an example to explore the construction and implementation of the POA teaching mode.

3.1 The overall frame design of POA-based teaching mode

3.1.1 Analysis of the students.

The teaching object of this course is the freshmen majored in business English in the domestic private application college. Survey results show that, though they have a certain amount of vocabulary and English reading ability, most students lack English listening and speaking curriculum and training in high school, resulting in weak listening and speaking proficiency; they have little knowledge on business cultural and business etiquette. They also lack practical experience in international business communication

and reception; students have a weak awareness of cross-cultural communication. In view of these problems, teachers should teach students according to their aptitude, design reasonable teaching objectives and teaching activities, provide high-quality learning materials, conduct timely evaluation and feedback, and ultimately promote students to achieve effective learning output.

3.1.2 Teaching objectives.

The textbook selected for this study is the second unit of the New Century Business English Major Undergraduate Series Textbook *Business English: Viewing, Listening, and Speaking* published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. Combined with the results of the learning situation analysis, the following teaching objectives are determined:

Knowledge goals: To understand the business etiquette of airport reception, including: greetings, small talk, body language and dress etiquette; to master the vocabulary and expressions of business reception, including: greetings, mutual introduction, exchange of business cards, greetings, offering help, arranging itineraries , arranging hotel check-in, etc.;

Ability goal: Be able to use the vocabulary and expressions of business reception to complete the business communication tasks of airport reception, and demonstrate good business etiquette and excellent professional quality of international business professionals.

Quality goals: In the process of business communication, follow international business etiquette and demonstrate the professional quality of international business people; introduce Chinese culture to foreign business people, such as: greetings and ways of welcoming, customs, Chinese food and local flavors, etc.

3.2 The overall design of the teaching mode based on POA

The overall design of the teaching mode follows the three stages of POA's teaching process: input-driven, output-promoting, and assessing.

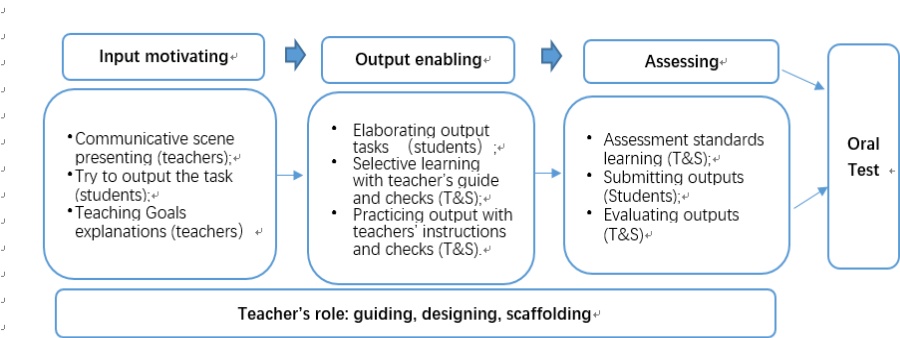


Fig. 1. The overall design of the teaching mode based on POA

4 Teaching Steps

In order to present the whole process of this teaching mode more intuitively, the author takes the business scene of the second unit of the textbook "Meeting Clients at the Airport" as an example to elaborate the steps of this teaching mode.

4.1 Input Motivating

The purpose of the input motivating state is to make students "hunger" for knowledge and abilities, and to stimulate students' curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. The teaching resources for this stage is a description of the scene and teaching goals in word file or PPT. The teaching requirements for the input-driven three steps are as follows:

Step1: The teacher present communicative scene to the students:

Situation: Meeting a client at the airport

Details: You, general manager's secretary, are receiving Mr. Wilson, a client, who has just come out of the airport. On the way to the airport parking lot, you start a conversation with him about his flight and hotel reservation. Try to ask him as many appropriate questions as possible from the box of useful expressions. Your partner playing the role of Mr. Wilson should respond accordingly. Then present your dialogue in class.

Step2: The students in pairs discuss the business scene first and then try to role-play the scene out in pair without any instructions from the teacher. Then, the teacher asks some pairs to present their role-play and then points out the shortcomings of their performance. Students are also invited to analyze and summarize the reasons why they cannot finish their conversation from the aspects of the business vocabulary, discourse structure, business culture and business etiquette.

Step3: The teacher explains the teaching goal (3.1.1) for this tasks to the students. Now, the students have a clear awareness of what kind of knowledge and abilities are acquired in order to complete the reception task. Thus, students will focus their attentions on what they need desperately from the following output enabling stage.

4.2 Output enabling

The purpose of the output enabling stage is to enable the students acquire the knowledge and abilities that they need to complete the communicative task through a variety of in-class activities designed by teacher. The teaching resources for this stage include: a word file of detailed task description, a list of vocabulary and sentence patterns on this situation, two business conversation videos of the same business situation, and a video of students' excellent work. The three steps of the output enabling stage are as follows:

Step1: The teacher elaborates the task as detailed as possible and divides the complex task to small sub-tasks which are much easier for the students to finish. The teacher shows the video of the students' excellent work and make the students know what kind out output they are going to make. The detailed task description is as follows:

Business situation: Meeting a client at the airport

Sub-tasks:

1. Self-introduction (names, job titles, company, and company business)

2. Mr. Wilson expressing thanks.
3. Exchanging name cards (business etiquette)
4. Small talk about the flight.
5. Offering to help with the luggage
6. Talking about company car & airport parking lot
7. Introducing the hotel information and typical Chinese food or local special flavor to Mr. Wilson.
8. Helping Mr. Wilson to finish the check-in at the hotel.

Step2: The teacher guides the students to make selective learning and the check the learning effect. The teacher gives the students a list of vocabulary and sentence pattern often used in the situation of the airport. After they are familiar with these sentence pattern and vocabulary, the teacher guides the students to finish the textbook listening and gap-filling exercises (in part two of the textbook) of the sub-topics in order to make students have the vocabulary and right conversation structure for each of the sub-tasks. The teacher show the students tow videos of the business scenes and help them to analyze the vocabulary, sentence patterns, discourse structure, culture elements, the business etiquette and the body language shown in these two videos.

Step3: The teacher instructs the students to design, construct and then practice their own business conversation on a sub-task basis. When the students practice the conversation in pairs, that teacher needs to have a look and provide some help that the students need. Or the teacher can check some pairs' output at random and help them make some improvements.

4.3 Conclusion

The assessing of the output can be divided into two types: immediate assessing and delayed assessing. Immediate assessing happens in the output enabling stage when the teacher checks the students output of the sub-tasks. Delayed assessing happens when the students finish and submit to the teacher their final output of the big task. The teaching recourse for this stage is an assessing standards. The specific steps of the third stage is as follows:

Step1: The teacher and students learn the assessing standards together, as both the students and the teacher are participating the assessing part.

Step2: Students in pairs complete their output video and submit the videos to the sharing platform the teacher designated. The platform enables both the teacher and students have the chance to appreciate the output of all students and make their comments based on the assessing standards.

Step3: The teacher and the students carry out assessing and grading of these output videos. In order to make the students' comments more effective, the teacher should make some assessing requirements beforehand, such as writing out at least two advantages and two disadvantages of the output. Finally, based on the scores of each pair get, 5 top work of output video is selected to be shown in the next class. The teacher can also use these selected videos for the teaching of the next round.

5 Reflections

The author has used this teaching mode to teach business English major students during the past two years. The two round teaching practice with the proposed POA-based teaching mode verifies that students' performance on business oral communicative ability has been improved significantly. The students involved in this teaching mode also claim that the process of learning is pleasant and effective. The proposed teaching mode is hoped to provide a reference for the exploration of business oral English teaching.

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