The Poetry Workshop of Pottery Songs--A Case of Output-driven Approach in Second Language Teaching

Na Hu[1, a *], Yiran Xu[2], Xinzhu Fang[1] and Xing Xu[3]

[1]School of Foreign Language, Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute, Jingdezhen 333403, China;

[2]School of Foreign Language, Hubei Business College, Wuhan 430079, China

[3]School of Information, Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute, Jingdezhen 333403, China

[a]nala_whu@aliyun.com

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Abstract. The poetry workshop of Pottery Songs builds up an educational project for students to learn the ceramic poems. Driven by the writing assignment, the workshop uses the reading and writing components to fulfill language acquisition and is a case of output-driven approach in second language teaching and learning.

Introduction

To teach poetry effectively, teachers need to teach the students not only how to read expressively like a poet, but also how to revise and write poems. In this paper, the reading and writing approach of poems is defined as the poetry workshop. The poetry workshop, which is designed on the weekly basis, is a generally brief intensive educational program for a relatively small group of students that concentrates especially on poetic devices and writing skills in the literature field. The poetry workshop of pottery songs, which aims at extending the technology, the art, the literature and the culture to students by learning the literature works, refers to the learning and writing project of pottery songs. In the workshop, motivated by the writing task of a journal, the students are encouraged to read, select, discuss and write poems, and the reading, discussing and writing components have been carefully designed according to the output-driven hypothesis [1] [2].

Poetry Workshop of Pottery Songs

Poetry, Literature and Culture. Poetry "brings sound and sense together in words and lines", in the first place poems could be the oral expression or the written word from the poets [3]. Poetry is also a form of literature that uses aesthetic features and rhythmic qualities of language--such as the sound effects and poetic elements --to evoke meanings in addition to, or in place of, the prosaic ostensible meaning, and it uses forms and conventions to suggest differential interpretation to words, or to evoke emotive responses. Literature is one of the essential embodiments of culture; therefore, poetry is the most concentrated reflection of the cultural spirit. Poetry, especially the poetry in Dang Dynasty, is regarded as one of the Chinese cultural treasures. It seems that poems have become the "meme" of the Chinese culture which passes from one generation to another. The heritage and development of ceramic culture, besides the artistic form, rely on the oral and written words of literature, and both oral and written pottery songs permeate the culture of activities of potters in the ceramic industry.

Pottery Songs. Pottery Songs, especially the Work Songs of Pottery Craftsman and History of Jingdezhen Pottery (Written by Lan Pu), are the two major ceramic poems mentioned in this paper. Work Songs of Pottery Craftsman, which was written by Gongshi in the third year of Qing Daoguang (in 1823), is one the examples of pottery songs. The translation of this poetry collection could have different versions, like Ode to Jingdezhen Ceramics [4] and Jingdezhen Ceramic Song [5], and based on the official video of Jingdezhen Imperial Kiln(1) the version of Work Songs of Pottery Craftsman is adopted in this paper. The Work Songs of Pottery Craftsman(Pottery Song for short in this paper) , is a poetry collection of 60 poems, all of which give an account of Jingdezhen ceramic industry, the main

contents of which "relate to politics, economics, arts, customs and histories"(Yang 1994), thus it is appealing to artists and researchers with its high artistic and literature value.

All of the 60 poems without exception are untitled, seven-character cut-shorts patterned, and annotated briefly within every four lines. In this poetry collection there are more than 20 poems, which take up one third of the total, illustrate the ceramic technology and press, ranging from raw materials, molding, firing, glazing to painting, for example, the third poem about raw materials says: "Ores mined-hillside, crushed and refined into clay alongside the stream, clay not shipped far away but treated on site so long as Gaolin supply good quality"(Gong 1823). For instance, the Painting Base Process is poetically described as "Even famous calligrapher Dian Xu would hesitate to take the goat-hair-brush to paint the clay base; Imagine: brush dipped into the paint and wiring brush charged with black ink so alike" (Gong 1823). On the language level, those poems are rhythmic and catchy; moreover, poetry can surpass oral language to get across the larger message of the importance of establishing conception of fine arts, understanding of involved culture and cross-cultural human connections. The pottery songs truly reproduced the hard life of the potters and craftsman, the making process of ceramics, and the folk customs, therefore, the learning of this poetry collection should not barely on the language level but move onto the literature feature and cultural information level.

Poetry Workshop. The Pottery Workshop in Jingdezhen means a workroom for people to learn and make potteries, while in language learning and teaching, the Workshop refers to a usually brief intensive educational program for a relatively small group of people that focuses especially on techniques and skills in a particular field, therefore, the poetry workshop here relates to a program for students to learn and write poems.

Workshop Schedule. The target students in this poetry workshop are those who take English as the second language, especially those who are ceramic arts professionals. The teaching plan starts with a explicit task---the writing assignment of a journal at the beginning and a "unwrite" poem in the end, and the plan is shown in the steps as Table 1.

Table 1 The steps of the teaching plan

Steps	Tasks	The Teacher	The Students
Step 1	Write a journal Favorite Poem	T shares his/her favorite poem *Pottery Song* and asks the students to write a journal about their favorite poem and .	Ss try to write the journal and notice the sound effects or the poetic elements of poems.
Step 2	Read the Poem	T reads aloud the poem and tried to stress on the literature and culture significance.	Ss respond and then read aloud to their groupmates.
Step 3	Group Discussion	T introduces poetic device, poetic elements or sound effects specifically in the poem.	Ss discuss the application of poetic device in the poem and try to find poems have the same kind.
Step 4	Unwrite the poem	T rereads the poem and asks students to help unwrite the poem.	Ss make suggestions, revise the poem and then edit the journal.

Based on the certain writing task, the schedule of the poetry workshop is designed in the cursive rather than the linear way. The workshop puts learning begin with an output task which serves as a driving force for the English language learners. The students are firstly motivated by responding to the teacher's favorite poem, and then they have to convince others that his/her own favorite poem has all the poetic elements of a good poem. The reading and discussing is the procedure for students to "expand

their knowledge and to extend their English language abilities", and this is the input-enabling process according to Wen [6].

Reading and Writing Components. The teacher sets out his/her expectations at the beginning of the poetry workshop, that is to say, the work schedule revolves around reading and writing the Pottery Song and some other poems. The first part of this poetry workshop is devoted to reading poetry and the second is to writing poetry; the students read and respond to The Pottery Songs during the reading workshop component and unwritten the poem during the writing workshop component. Since it's a project/program, the schedule can be designed both daily and weekly, as shown in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2 The reading workshop component

Date	T	Ss
Mon.	-Asks to think about their favorite poems; -Reads aloud Potter Song as an example;	-Mention the poetic elements: rhyme, alliteration,repetition, onomatopoeia.
Tue.	-Focuses on sound effects; -Reads aloud the poem again.	-Notice the poetic elements.
Wed.	-Holds a class meeting (reading poetry). -Explains the terms during the discussion.	-Come to the class meeting of reading poetry; -Share poems that relate to ceramics; -Others discuss and identify the cultural value .
Thur.	-Rereads aloud the poem; - Reads some other Pottery poems.	-Draw pictures illustrating the poem and add the lines or paraphrases of the lines to them;
Fri.		-Finish pictures; -Share with the class

Table 3 The writing workshop component

Date	T	Ss
Mon.	-shares the rough draft of C-E translation of the poem; -asks the students to help her unwrite it. -crosses out words and substitutes stronger words for long phrases;	-make suggestions; -revise the poems together; -word process the final copy the poem.
Tue.	-share students' rough-draft poems.	-suggest ways to unwrite their classmates' poems; -learn more about pottery songs
Wed.	ditto	ditto
Thur.	-reviews the rhythms; -share rough drafts.	
Fri.	-provides assistance.	-start to write rhythmed lines in group; -share with classmates.

Apparently, driven by the writing assignment at the beginning, the reading and writing components highlight the role of interaction between the teacher and the students. o implement the workshop project, the reading and writing components admit the value of input, output and interaction in language learning.

Four Patterns of Practice. In her book, Pro. Tompkins extends a question: "How does poetry fit into the four patterns of practice"[7]? And the Poetry Workshop of Pottery Songs fully incorporate into all four instructional patterns. First of all, the teacher starts with the whole workshop with a journal My Favorite Poem, in which the teacher applies the poem Jingdezhen (written by Longfellow) as an example and introduces to the ceramic arts and culture. By reading and giving feedback to Ss' response, the teacher collaborates learners into the literacy focus unit. The journal is an introduction to the Pottery Songs, especially the Work Songs of Pottery Craftsman and History of Jingdezhen Pottery (Written by Lan Pu), and eventually the teaching and learning proceed to the literacy circles. The reading and writing components, which have already been explained above, are essential for the poetry work. Since it's a learning project for second language learners on college level, the teacher will assign the students to probe into the scope of politics, economics, arts, customs and histories associated with ceramic, and this after class assignment constitutes the thematic unit of poetry workshop. Therefore, the poetry workshop of Pottery Songs fits into the classic four patterns of practice.

Output Approach

After having realized the same low speaking and writing proficiency of learners who have participated in the Canadian Immersion Course, Swain has claimed the Output Hypothesis which insisted that the understandable language input and output should both be included during the second language acquisition and learning process. In her early research, Swain simple defined the tern "output" by the product and outcome of language acquisition, while she later revised the term by spotlighting the action and learning process of language learning. The poetry workshop aims at actualizing the language acquisition and learning by the four patterns of practice in poetry learning, thus it's can be explanation of "learning with language output can lead to better learning outcomes".

Output-driven. Swain redefined "output" as the activities of "speaking, writing, collaborative dialogue, private speech, verbalizing, and languaging"(Swain 2008). As to the significance of output activities in foreign language teaching and learning, most of the teachers confined themselves to the speaking and writing activities and seldom set their foot in workshop activities. However, Professor Wen (2008) warns that "although listening and reading are basic and primary (in language acquisition), the outside world could not get to the actual contents of reading and listening without the externalized activities such as speaking, writing and translating". Hence, combined with the four patterns of practice, the poetry workshop a higher embodiment of reading and writing, and the reading and writing components make the learning project more output-driven. As it's been mentioned above, the learning process is cursive rather than linear, as shown in Fig. 1.
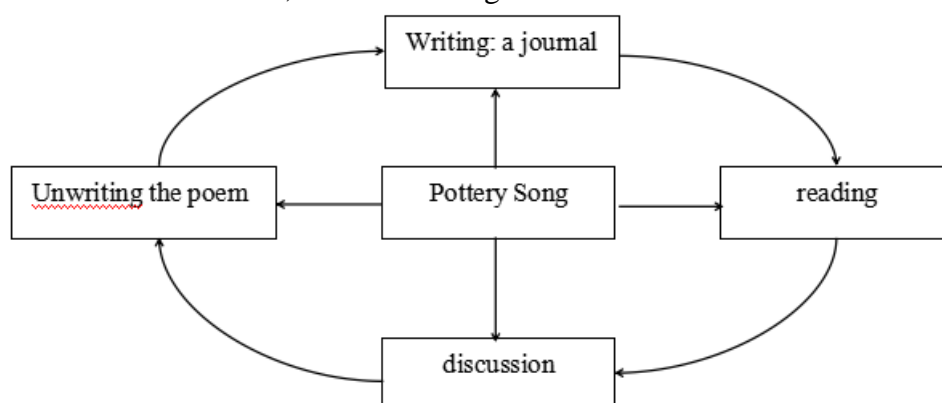

Figure 1. Finite element calculation model of arch dam and bedrock

An adequate in-class activity should be the one that advances the learners' language output after discussion; the activity could be implemented in the form of a writing assignment; and "any activities that have students talk, particularly when students reflect about their speaking or writing, are good activities" (Swain 2000). It is the same with the poetry workshop, during the reading component; the teacher holds

different whole group discussions about their responses to Pottery Song, their reflection explaining why it's a good poem, and their sharing of the poetic elements. After the discussion, the learners are enabled to find out the unnecessary words and the no rhythmic lines in the rough draft, and then are able to word process, to find alternatives and to unwritten the poem. The writing assignment, initiated by the teacher at the very beginning, makes the learners aware of what they're expected to accomplish from the first day of the workshop. By the teaching and learning track of "writing-reading-discussing-unwriting-writing", the learners are driven to learn and write poems.

Input-enabling. Swain also suggested that the understandable language input and output should both be included during the second language acquisition and learning process. In her research and observation, Professor Wen also found that teachers "in addition to students' interactions among themselves, (should) carefully to select reading or listening materials, or both, pertinent to the assigned speaking or writing activity"(Wen 2016). In the poetry workshop of Pottery Song, to extend the artistic and cultural picture of ceramic technology, the teacher carefully chose Work Songs of Pottery Craftsman for reading, and then selected to the poem Jingdezhe as a prompt for the journal writing. Motivated by the sample journal from the teacher, the learners are enabled to find the features of a good poem and then to share their own favorite poem. These materials become enablers leading learners to approach their own zones of reading and writing poems.

Conclusion

Taking the unique features of the pottery songs, the poetry teaching has never been an easy task and the language acquisition by learning poems has been consequently been time-consuming and outcome-requiring. Starting with the writing journal, the poetry work aims to enabling students to learn and write poems and designs to end with a revised poem. Driven by the writing assignment at the very beginning, the poetry workshop of Pottery Song is an excellent case of the output-driven teaching method.

Acknowledgments

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