

A Practical Exploration of the Facilitation Path for Advanced English Classroom Output Tasks under the Guidance of POA

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Abstract: The theoretical framework of Production Oriented Approach (POA) proposed by Professor Wen Qiufang has undergone a series of development and improvement, forming a "drive facilitate evaluate" teaching framework system that is guided by output tasks, supported by facilitation activities, led by teachers, and jointly constructed by teachers and students. The "facilitation" link is the core of helping learners achieve goals and achieve output tasks. Based on the ideas and requirements of this theory, the author has designed a series of "facilitation" activities to be applied in advanced English reading classrooms. This article intends to review and reflect on these teaching practice activities, in order to gain a deeper understanding of POA theory.

Keywords: POA Theory; Facilitate Event Design; Advanced English; Teaching Reflection

1. Overview of POA theory

The output oriented approach (POA) draws on the research results on the input-output hypothesis in the field of second language acquisition, and is based on the "output driven input facilitated hypothesis". After several years of development and improvement, it has formed a complete framework structure of "drive facilitated evaluation", which is increasingly used to guide foreign language classroom teaching. The three major facilitation effectiveness standards proposed by this theory, namely "progressiveness," "precision," and "effectiveness," provide effective reference for the design of "facilitation" activities.

The 'facilitation' process is a key part of the teaching process within the POA theoretical framework, which refers to classroom activities designed and conducted by teachers to help students achieve their output goals smoothly. Wen Qiufang pointed out that the "facilitation" activity here no longer distinguishes between input and output, including both the processing of input and the completion of output activities. It is crucial that the entire facilitation process reflect the concept of "integrating learning and application". Three conditions are required to complete each output task: content, language, and discourse structure. Based on these three conditions, teachers first provide corresponding input materials, and at the same time, design a series of activities for students to convert these input materials from receptive knowledge to productive knowledge.

2. Design of classroom objectives and output tasks

Advanced English is classified as a professional core course in the training plan, and is a compulsory course for the senior stage of English majors. It is a course that trains students' comprehensive English skills, especially reading comprehension, rhetoric, and writing abilities. Based on the curriculum requirements, we can set the teaching objectives of the classroom, including language, skills, and emotions. Taking the article 'Face to Face with Hurricane Camille' in the book 'Advanced English (Rearranged Third Edition)' (edited by Zhang Hanxi) as an example, this article aims to clarify the specific application process of POA theory.

This article is a narrative article that describes the process of the strongest hurricane in American history, Camille, and people's reactions to the disaster. Based on the characteristics of the article, set corresponding learning requirements:

Language requirements	Mastering vocabulary (verbs) for describing hurricanes
Language	Master the basic elements of narrative writing and be able to describe events in

requirements	chronological order
Emotional requirements	Experience the Humanitarian Spirit of Man Overcoming Nature and Watching and Helping Each Other from Fighting Natural Disasters

Learning objectives require students' abilities from three aspects: language, pragmatics, and emotions. Based on this, according to POA theory, it is necessary to design output tasks with real communicative significance around these objectives. Therefore, taking newspaper submission as the specific output task, students are required to record and report the entire process of the 2021 typhoon "fireworks". The specific task description is as follows:

You're a journalist in Newspaper. Your city was hit by Typhoon Fireworks yesterday. Write a narration on this.

According to POA theory, output task design is the first step in the "driving" process, allowing students to generate output willingness, observation and awareness of their own output ability is the guarantee of driving generation. Due to the many elements involved in writing a narrative and the fact that the topic involves extracurricular knowledge related to natural disasters, students may have some difficulty writing directly. Therefore, the "driving" section has added the "facilitating" element. Firstly, through three short videos of about 1 minute in length, students will be helped to understand the basic knowledge of hurricanes from the causes and types of hurricanes, the history of hurricanes, and the similarities and differences between hurricanes and typhoons. The corresponding dictation of the videos will help students understand the basic knowledge of hurricanes. Cloze exercises help students master basic vocabulary for describing disaster weather, such as category, gust, debris, rush, blow off, storm surge, construction, etc. Students have developed an interest in events and a desire to use the acquired vocabulary for event description.

3. "Facilitation" practice path

The 'facilitation' activity in the POA theoretical framework first requires a typical sample. According to theoretical requirements, learners need to first attempt task output based on their existing abilities, and then the teacher provides typical samples for learners to compare and identify deficiencies, thereby generating driving intention and entering the next "facilitation" stage; The comparison with typical samples also reveals the gap between the learners' current ability level and the required level of output target language tasks, in order to more accurately design "facilitation" activities. Given the characteristics of advanced English courses and textbooks, this practical activity directly selects the text as a typical sample, with the text as the reference and the successful imitation of the typical text as the final output task. The following "facilitation" activities are carried out around this goal.

3.1 Starting section

This part focuses on mastering vocabulary and learning description, corresponding to language requirements. By providing a video of the typhoon "fireworks", students observe and discuss, identify elements that can be described (sound, form, people, objects), and review typical samples (texts) to collect corresponding words and sentences. By practicing conjunctions and selecting words to fill in the blanks, one can become familiar with the usage of vocabulary. The teacher will release the first output sub task, using the learned vocabulary and sentences to describe the situation of the typhoon scene based on the typhoon video.

3.2 Development&Climax section

On the basis of the first subtask, expand the output text, and design the following activities to promote students' mastery of the insertion writing method, corresponding to the pragmatic requirements in the learning objectives, in typical samples:

By students reading, observing, and summarizing the narrative parts in typical samples, and comparing them with the previous text from three aspects: writing perspective, language style, and narrative content, it is found that the genre of the narrative content is expository. The teacher provides other typical samples (CGTN news release on Hurricane Katrina) for students to read and translate, and issues a second subtask. Following the typical samples (news release) and combining real data, write a documentary illustration of the typhoon "fireworks".

This section also includes the person writing section in the event narrative. Students observe typical texts, compare and summarize the writing strategies (voice, action, thought) in typical texts, and organize relevant vocabulary in the text. Here, the teacher introduces the third subtask and uses vocabulary to describe the characters in the typhoon.

3.3 Ending section

The narrative ends with a description of post disaster relief work and human spiritual strength. This section corresponds to the emotional goals of teaching requirements, requiring students to actively reflect on the spiritual power of humanity in facing natural disasters, reflect on the form and significance of disaster relief work, and appreciate the humanitarian spirit of watching and helping each other on the basis of acquiring language and pragmatic knowledge. Emotional goals are the focus of this section, but they also include the "facilitation" activities of language and pragmatic knowledge. The teacher provides tables to help students sort out the contents of disaster relief work, and sort out a series of words for students to practice in action, noun collocation, and sentence copying.

Emotional facilitation design starts with watching the 2020 Wuhan Anti epidemic News video, where students discuss and summarize the forms of assistance provided for anti epidemic relief from local governments to the central government, and then to the people of the whole country. Compare with the content provided by typical samples, we can find similarities and differences, understand the instinct of all humans to watch and help in the face of disasters, to explore and summarize what individuals can do in the face of disasters (from self rescue to helping others). At the end of the class, the teacher will release the fourth sub task, which will describe the disaster relief work after the typhoon based on the actual situation.

Complete all four subtasks should be completed, we should return to the driven task, integrate the content of the four subtasks, and complete the press release in chronological order.

3.4 Reflection on practical activities

This activity takes the text content as a typical sample and designs a series of teaching activities from "driving" to "facilitating" around the three major learning objectives of language, pragmatics, and emotion. The last part of the POA theoretical framework, "evaluation," is also throughout. Each subtask in the "facilitation" process has corresponding evaluation activities, from basic student self-evaluation and mutual evaluation (sorting out the basic elements and stylistic features of the output text of the subtasks) to teacher led overall evaluation (complex language structure and writing effectiveness). Each evaluation stage closely links to the requirements of the current subtask and the language elements (vocabulary, syntax, and style) provided by the subtask "facilitation" activity, so as to ensure that the entire teaching design is closely carried out around the POA theory, and achieve a closed-loop teaching under the guidance of the POA theory.

The output task gradually facilitated by multiple sub tasks has achieved good results in practice. Students have a more comprehensive understanding of vocabulary, a good grasp of conventional narrative structures, and a deeper understanding of the significance of disaster relief work. Overall, the teaching design guided by POA has achieved the expected results.

References

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