

# A Study on College English Translation Teaching Based on Production-Oriented Approach

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**Abstract:** *Accurate translation and appropriate dissemination of Chinese culture have a positive practical value and profound significance in the contemporary international community. Due to the overall low level of English proficiency among vocational college students, English translation teaching is fraught with huge difficulties among the six basic English skills of reading, listening, speaking, analyzing, writing, and translation. The Production-oriented Approach (short for POA) featured with Chinese characteristics emphasizes the effective output or production of students, adheres to the integration of production and learning, and is more suitable for English teaching in the context of Chinese national conditions. Only by reexamining the dilemma of public English translation teaching, redesigning POA-based translation teaching in vocational colleges based on POA, effectively enhancing enabling through appropriate input, clarifying the task production in college English translation teaching, can the pertinence and effectiveness of production be ensured, which provides practical and feasible methods and guidelines for vocational English translation teaching. POA-based translation teaching practice has shown that it helps improve the enthusiasm and initiative of vocational college students to participate in translation practice, improve their translation skills from Chinese to English, enhance cross-cultural communication skills, and establish the cultural confidence of talents in the new era.*

**Keywords:** *Production-oriented Approach (short for POA); Vocational college students; College students; English translation teaching*

## 1. Introduction

The college English in vocational colleges is part of the public elementary course. As one of the obligatory courses, it aims to lay a solid foundation and develop language application skills by combining theory and practice. We should ensure education performs its fundamental mission of fostering virtue, continuously improving ideological and political-combined teaching design, and prompting learners' English core competencies, in order to cultivate highly qualified technical and technical talents with Chinese dream and international vision and effective communication skills in daily life and workplace. English is a language performing functions of "humanity and instrumentality", for "humanity is the sublimation of instrumentality". The "humanity" should include not only cross-cultural education, but also cultivate students' "understanding and interpretation of Chinese culture", comparing cultural differences, learning the essence of other civilizations, elevating input and output capacity in a cross-cultural context, broadening horizon, and handling cultural differences in a proper way.

According to the English Curriculum Standards for Higher Vocational Education (2021 Edition), English skills for vocational students refer to their ability to communicate in the workplace in English, including expression skills and interactive skills, among which translation is the essential skill. Students are expected to master basic skills through learning and practical training of public English courses. Students are able to carry out daily communication, use dictionary and translate related materials, and gradually improve the ability of autonomous learning and comprehensive practical application of English, laying a good foundation for students' further education. However, the teaching of English translation in vocational colleges is severely lagging behind, with a serious problem of separation between learning and application, which is not conducive to expanding students' future employment and enhancing their confidence in career selection.

## 2. Literature Review

All the text must use the font, Times New Roman. On Macintosh, please choose font, Times. Except in special circumstances, such as program code. The Production-oriented Approach (POA), a theoretical method composed of motivating, enabling and assessing, was proposed by renowned Chinese professor Wen Qiufang. The theory has been developing for more than 15 years since 2007 when the prototype of POA was output-driven hypothesis based on Swain's output-driven hypothesis [1]. 2014 witnessed formation of POA when the "output-driven and input facilitated hypothesis" was replaced with "POA" consisting of three parts: teaching philosophy, teaching hypothesis, and teaching procedure aimed to integrate learning and application [2]. After embryonic phase and formative period, at least three revisions have been gone through, which make POA the most popular foreign language teaching theory in China [3].

Based on Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), a total of 3 articles have been found by searching with titles containing "vocational English translation" and "Production-oriented Approach" or "POA" till December 20, 2022. Guo Xun analyzed the advantages of the POA-based English teaching and designed POA-based translation teaching based on the motivating, enabling, and assessing [4]. In addition, Guo Xun proposed that teachers should change their traditional teaching concepts, optimize production, and compile related textbooks for the translation production-oriented approach to assist vocational English education. Fan Junli summarized the main existing problems in vocational English translation classrooms and generally proposed a POA-based translation teaching strategy based on three recycling components: motivating, enabling, and assessing. The motivating period sets goals and allows students to challenge translating lines of movies. Enabling phase facilitates the goal of translation productions by dividing them one by one and gradually completes the task of translating and producing lines of movies from English to Chinese [5]. And the assessing process should align with production goals by evaluating teacher-student cooperation and assessment to promote learning and teaching. Weng Jiejing carried out a case study of the animated film *Kung Fu Panda*, and conducted a 6-hour translation teaching on the theme English word suffixes and the three indispensable recycling components of motivating, enabling, and assessing [6]. Through open-ended questionnaires and reflective diaries, she proposed some improvement suggestions for POA-based translation teaching mode. POA-based translation teaching mode encourages students to try knowledge output, emphasizes productions, and improves their ability to apply comprehensive English knowledge to practice. It is beneficial for students to recognize difficulties and target them, greatly ensure the effectiveness of translation production. However, the above-mentioned 3 studies have not translating Chinese culture from Chinese to English, nor have it involved the ideological and political concepts of the national curriculum by integrating English with their majors. Therefore, the teaching of English translation in vocational colleges still has a long way to go.

## 3. College English Translation Teaching based on POA

### 3.1. Data Collection

Relying on the intelligent teaching platform, we can accurately analyze the learning situation. Through the data collected from platforms such as the questionnaire by APPs Wenjuanxing, WE Learn, and Xuexitong, teachers can sort, analyze and evaluate the learning situation of students in their classes in a timely manner through pre-class tests. The common problems in English translation for higher vocational college students are listed as follows: deficiency in English vocabulary output, frequent occurrence of grammatical errors, relatively monotonous sentence patterns, application of Chinese syntax disregarding contexts, lack of cultural background knowledge, difficulty in producing culture-loaded words, etc. As a result, the effectiveness of translation teaching is limited. The specific learning situation would be analyzed in the following three aspects.

**Knowledge and Skills Basis:** The students have acquired a certain amount of vocabulary and chunks to express gratitude, and they can carry out routine translation tasks. However, they are not familiar with Chinese proverbs, idioms, and allusions to express gratitude, and lack the ability to identify and comparatively analyze the differences between Chinese and foreign cultures of gratitude.

**Cognitive and Practical Basis:** The students have a certain ability in English listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating. They are proficient in using translation applications. The appropriateness in their language expression is not good enough, and they have weak awareness of cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural transmission.

**Learning Characteristics:** According to teaching experience and questionnaire analysis, students are proficient in using various information technology, and their intrinsic motivation for learning is relatively high, while their English foundation is slightly weaker. In the era of media convergence, early-childhood education students have a lively personality and are willing to accept cooperative learning. They like to use output forms such as thematic discussions, pre-class presentations, group PK competitions, and reading and recitation to learn and consolidate new knowledge and skills.

### **3.2. Teaching Concept**

**Ability-oriented teaching:** To cultivate students' abilities, making teaching closely related to the life of kindergarten teachers and close to early childhood education majors.

**Practice-oriented teaching:** To provide students with the opportunity of "learning by doing" in order to acquire knowledge, develop skills and cultivate abilities in the process of accomplishing tasks and activities.

**Students-oriented teaching:** To respect the differences and needs of the students by providing personalized instructing suggestions based on individual aptitudes.

**Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment:** To encourage students to learn better, formative assessment should account for a major proportion during the whole assessment. Knowledge, skills, and moral values should be assessed as the three-dimensional integration.

This course combines the corresponding knowledge and skill requirements of the teaching skills competition. The teaching effect evaluation adopts the method of combining formative assessment with result evaluation, the teacher-student cooperation evaluation runs through the teaching all the time, and through the combination of theory and practice the focus is set on evaluating students' professional ability, paying attention to individual students and exploring value-added evaluation.

### **3.3. Teaching Objectives**

After studying this unit, students are expected to achieve the following objectives:

**Knowledge Objectives:** To master the basic words and chunks to express gratitude; To understand the Chinese-English translation with culture contained in Chinese and foreign proverbs, idioms, and allusions to express gratitude.

**Competency Objectives:** Be able to express gratefulness with the vocabulary, sentence patterns, and chunks they have learned; Be able to translate commonly used proverbs, idioms, and allusions for expressing gratitude with appropriate strategies; To have the ability to identify and comparatively analyze the differences between Chinese and foreign folk cultures.

**Quality Objectives:** To learn the translation methods and techniques of proverbs and idioms expressing gratitude and cultivate students' sense of gratitude; To compare Chinese and foreign folk culture of expressing gratitude and try to translate Chinese and foreign proverbs, idioms, and allusions expressing gratitude; To inherit and disseminate the Chinese culture of expressing gratitude, promote the excellent Chinese culture of expressing gratitude, and build cultural confidence.

### **3.4. Design Ideas**

It is aimed to cultivate students' abilities by making teaching closely related to the life of kindergarten teachers and close to early childhood education majors. English teaching by integrating ideological and political education exerts a far-reaching influence on students' character throughout the educational process.

According to the job demands of professional posts in early childhood education majors, we determine the translation teaching objectives and content for productions. We take the Unit 2 "better telling China' story of expressing gratitude" as the main line, and create tasks around expressing gratitude, in order for excellent traditional culture to enter the college English classroom of higher vocational colleges. Adopting a student-oriented approach, we follow the "knowledge-sufficient and ability-oriented" design requirements to organize translation teaching and complete translation productions: introducing and recommending Chinese proverbs and idioms to express gratitude, and analyze the way to translating connotation of proverbs and idioms from Chinese to English such as "Little help brings much return", "Don't forget the well-diggers when you drink from this well", "One day as a teacher, and

be a father for life” in different contexts, effectively excavating the connotation and accurately expressing the meaning behind the scene. It is of significance to read and translate Chinese and foreign proverbs, idioms, and classic stories related to gratitude, such as *yi fan qian jin* and *cao jie xian huan* to spread excellent traditional Chinese culture.

#### 4. Teaching procedure

Combining POA with online platform, Blended Teaching is adopted, which is made up of three parts, Before-class, In-class and After-class. Online teaching mainly focuses on the two parts: before class and after class. Before class, teacher uploads tasks to learning platform Xuexitong for self-learning. Enabling part, consisting of several sub-tasks, group discussion and scaffolding, is decisive for the whole teaching process. Online teaching and learning also emphasizes after-class consolidation with some extra productions, making students used to autonomous learning in a recycling way, as shown in Fig. 1.

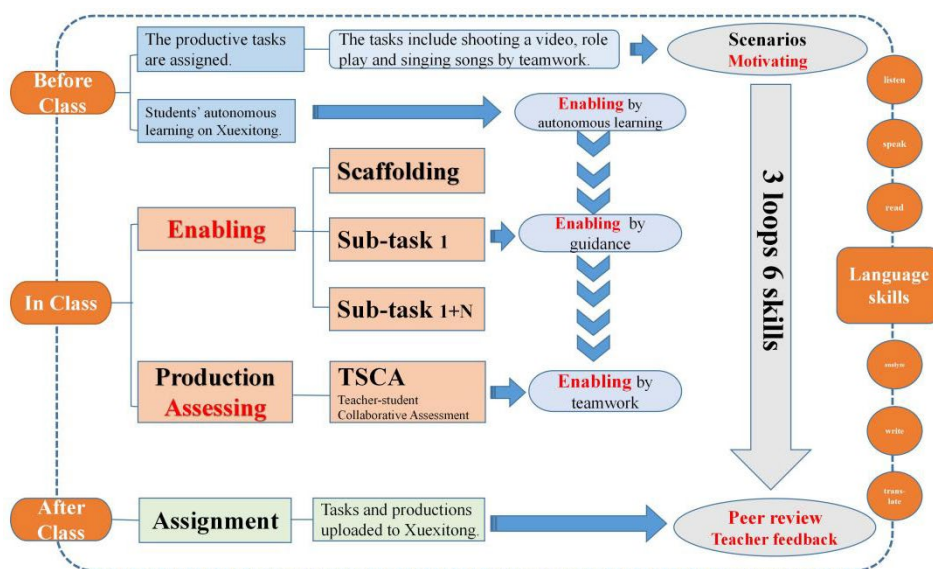


Figure 1: POA-based Teaching procedure

Taking Unit 2 Grateful Life of college English Book 2 as an example, the design of the enabling can be realized through 3 steps.

Step 1 To explain basic principles of translation briefly with some examples, namely faithfulness, expressiveness, and elegance.

Step 2 To input some language materials by watching videos or reading materials.

The teacher has uploaded videos to the teaching platform Xuexitong to make college students better understand Thanksgiving Day, the Cold Food Festival, and Qingming Festival, etc. After watching, students are invited to discuss the different cultural genes of gratitude at home and abroad to enhance cultural confidence.

Taking Thanksgiving Day for an example, it is described on page 1827 of Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary (the 6th Edition):

A day set apart for public thanksgiving for Divine goodness; spec. in the United States, an annual festival religious and social, now appointed by proclamation and celebrated (since 1941) on the fourth Thursday in November; also in Canada, celebrated on the second Monday in October.

The teacher would encourage students brainstorm and discuss with their group members about the following questions: Who should be thanked? What are the similarities and differences between Thanksgiving Day and Qingming Festival or the Cold Food Festival? And ask some group members to make presentations. They may be fully aware that the first celebration was held by the Plymouth in 1621, in thankfulness for the immigrants' first harvest in America after a year of struggle and privation since they set foot there, while China's gratitude-related festivals may bear some different meanings.

Step 3 Translating and production practice

The Chinese culturally-loaded proverbs or phrases would be posted on the teaching platform Xuexitong, the translation may include but not limited to:

- A tutor for a day is a father for a lifetime.
- He who teaches me for one day is my father for life.
- C. He who teaches me may be considered my father-figure for life.
- D. He who teaches me for one day is my father for life.
- E. Once a teacher, always a father.
- F. Once a teacher, always a teacher.
- G. The teacher is your father.
- H. If a man has been for a teacher for one day, you should treat him as my father for the rest of his life.

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The teacher asks students to discuss different versions of translation within or transgroup members, making an attempt to analyse which one is better than others in terms of culture-oriented dissemination because Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa said, "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to a man in his own language, that goes to his heart."

Benjamin K. Hammer not only learned Mandarin but also kung fu from a Chinese teacher when he was a student at American University in Washington. He got his Chinese name Meng Weilong from his kung fu teacher because he said a saying in China that "一日为师，终身为父 (the teacher is like your father)". In this part, students are encouraged to discuss the differences between "师傅" and "师父". As is described in the Great Compendium Book 27 XUNZI, "when a country is on the verge of a great florescence, it is certain to prize its teachers and give great importance to breadth of learning." Since the Qin and Han Dynasties, the polite title "师傅" referred specifically to the teachers of the emperors. After the Southern Song Dynasty, the phrase "师傅" began to be used by the common people, and has evolved to the polite title for one with accomplished skill in any trade, business or art. On the other hand, the phrase "师父" which originates from Tang Dynasty, a polite form of address to a Buddhist monk or nun or a Taoist priest or nun, serves as a teacher. In Journey to the West, the other three called Xuan Zang "师父" due to the fact "师父", who is compared to the strict father, is much more emotional than the teacher. In ancient times, the master "师父" often adopted his disciples by himself. The disciples lived in the master's house and were educated by the master with money and love. They regarded the disciples as their family members. From the traditional perspective, teacher and father are equally important. Therefore, the version the teacher is like your father by Benjamin K. Hammer is much more appropriate due to the fact that the translation should be context-dependent.

Due to the generally low English proficiency of vocational college students, the enabling part is crucial for the final production. Teachers must fully understand students' English translation abilities and difficulties, leverage their scaffolding function, provide targeted assistance or suggestions, ensure that the difficulty of translation output tasks is appropriate, and enhance students' motivation for translation learning and output.

## 5. Assessment

The purpose of evaluation is to motivate output, providing timely feedback on the learning outcomes of motivating and enabling, providing data to support for POA, and ensure the effectiveness of teaching. If only students are forced to create without providing effective and timely feedback, students' output will be frustrated [7]. Developing a matching assessment system is very important in order to completely and objectively measure the success of POA training. Based on the English Curriculum Standards for Higher Vocational Education (2021 Edition), the Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment (short for TSCA) is applied into college English teaching. The evaluation includes immediate evaluation, delayed evaluation, process evaluation, and summative evaluation. The content of evaluation not only includes traditional classroom observation, personal self-evaluation, reflection blogs, group mutual evaluation, etc., but also the data from WELearn platform so as to evaluate students' translation skills from multiple dimensions. Students can timely know their progress, quantitatively compare progress from knowledge, skills, and self-learning aspects and explore value-added evaluations. What's more, we also take enterprise mentors

and professional teachers' evaluation into consideration to better promote the integration of college English and their major, as shown in Table. 1.

*Table 1: The Content of Assessment*

Group	Language	creativity	interaction	Sense of gain	Moral feedback
1					
2					
3					

## 6. Summary

The production-oriented Approach is widely used in foreign language teaching in China as it is rooted in Chinese educational background. The theoretical system of POA has been studied and practiced over many years. In this paper, POA-based translation teaching practice has shown that it helps improve the enthusiasm and initiative of vocational college students to participate in translation practice, improve their translation skills from Chinese to English, enhance cross-cultural communication skills, and establish the cultural confidence of composite talents in the new era. But there are still some issues that require Chinese scholars and front-line teachers to make great efforts in order to better utilize POA in English teaching.

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