

Exploration and Practice of Creative Production-Oriented Approach in English Reading Teaching

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Abstract: Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives emphasizes that meaningful learning involves the transfer of knowledge. Professor Wen Qiufang's Production-Oriented Approach (POA) highlights stimulating students' learning motivation through production-oriented tasks. This study combines these two concepts in English reading teaching of vocational colleges. Through a comparative experiment between two classes, it is found that compared with non-creative POA teaching, Creative Production-Oriented Approach (CPOA) is more effective in stimulating students' learning initiative, promoting knowledge transfer, and enhancing teaching effectiveness.

Keywords: Vocational colleges; English reading; POA; Bloom

1. Introduction

The *Standards for English Curriculum of Vocational Education (2021 Edition)* issued by the Ministry of Education of China clearly states that it is vital to cultivate students' four core competencies: communication in workplace foreign affairs, multicultural communication, enhancement of linguistic thinking, and autonomous learning improvement. ^[1] Reading, as one of the five English language skills of "listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating", has a decisive impact on the enhancement of students' core competencies.

Currently, English reading teaching in vocational colleges is mainly teacher-led, with common teaching models involving teachers explaining vocabulary, sentences, and discourse, followed by student practice and supplementary teacher explanation. Some teachers also adopt a flipped classroom model: student pre-class preview, teacher in-class clarification of doubts, and student post-class practice. In these models, students exhibit weak learning autonomy and shallow knowledge internalization, which is unfavorable for motivating learning and cultivating higher-order thinking skills.

In view of this, this study integrates Bloom's theory of creativity with Wen Qiufang's POA theory, taking **creative activities** as the entry point to redesign English reading courses for vocational colleges, aiming to stimulate students' learning initiative, facilitate knowledge transfer, and achieve better teaching outcomes.

2. Construction of CPOA in English Reading Teaching in Vocational Colleges

2.1 Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

Bloom (Bloom, B. S.) proposed the Taxonomy of Educational Objectives in 1956, classifying educational objectives into six categories: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. David (David R. Krathwohl) revised it in 2002, as shown in Table 1. ^[2]

Table 1: Dimensions of the Cognitive Process

Categories & Cognitive Processes
1. Remembering/Recalling – Retrieving relevant knowledge from long-term memory
1.1 Recognizing
1.2 Recalling
2. Understanding – Constructing meaning from instructional information in the forms of oral, written, and graphic communication

2.1 Interpreting
2.2 Exemplifying
2.3 Classifying
2.4 Summarizing
2.5 Inferring
2.6 Comparing
2.7 Explaining
3. Applying – Executing or using a procedure in a given situation
3.1 Executing
3.2 Implementing
4. Analyzing – Decomposing material into its component parts, determining relational connections among the parts, and identifying the relationship of the parts to the overall structure or purpose
4.1 Differentiating
4.2 Organizing
4.3 Attributing
5. Evaluating – Making judgments based on criteria and standards
5.1 Checking
5.2 Critiquing
6. Creating – Combining elements into an internally consistent whole or functional whole; reorganizing elements into new patterns or structures
6.1 Generating
6.2 Planning
6.3 Producing

From remembering/recalling to creating, the cognitive levels progressively increase, contributing more significantly to the enhancement of students' learning outcomes. Creative activities such as writing, speaking, discussing, and debating are more likely to help students reach higher cognitive levels, whereas non-creative activities such as discourse retelling, recitation, grammatical exercises, role-playing, and dialogue enactment are not. ^[3]

2.2 POA

POA, **Production-Oriented Approach**, is a language teaching theory with Chinese characteristics, which has developed into a relatively complete theoretical system over nearly a decade. ^[4] This theory emphasizes the integration of language input and output, highlighting the driving role of output in stimulating students' initiative and creativity in English learning. ^[5] Its practical teaching applications are diverse, including discourse retelling, recitation, role-playing, dialogue enactment, writing, speaking, discussing, debating, etc.

2.3 CPOA in English Reading Teaching in Vocational Colleges

CPOA proposed in this study attempts to combine Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives with the POA theory, emphasizing student-centeredness, discourse and pragmatic knowledge as the foundation, and creativity as the orientation in vocational English reading instruction. During this process, students engage deeply in productive activities based on their interests, language and knowledge levels, and social experiences, with the support of teachers, peers, and resources. Through group discussions, online searches, and other means, they acquire necessary knowledge and information, prepare for creative output activities in terms of knowledge, language, and materials such as speeches, manuscripts, and slides, and ultimately complete the output tasks.

3. Practice of CPOA in English Reading Teaching in Vocational Colleges

3.1 Subjects of the Study

The subjects in this study were sophomores from two classes of the Primary English Education major in their second term at a vocational college, totaling 130 students. One class was designated as the experimental class with 60 students, and the other as the control class with 70 students.

Based on their college entrance examination results, previous teaching experience, and assessment scores, the two classes exhibited similar English reading proficiency. Preliminary interviews revealed

that over 90% of the subjects aspired to become primary school English teachers, facing pressures to obtain teacher qualification certificates and pass the College English Test Band 4, while nearly 70% had aspirations for further education. Therefore, they had strong learning intentions. However, most of them lacked scientific study methods, concentration, and persistence. Additionally, many students lacked learning initiative, and most were dissatisfied with their English proficiency and lacked confidence. Their strengths included high cooperativeness and lively personalities due to their major characteristics.

3.2 Teaching Content and Creative Activities of the Study

The experimental teaching content was the reading section of the *Integrated English* course. Considering student characteristics, text genres, difficulty levels, and school teaching reality, four texts were selected for a six-week experiment with 80 minutes per week. The experimental teaching content covered themes such as culture, society, life, environment, and technology, suitable for students' language and cognitive levels. Writing, speaking, discussing, and debating were adopted as CPOA activities in this experiment, aligning with text genres, stimulating students' imagination, extending learning to real life, and enhancing their problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

3.3 Implementation Process of the Study

The teaching of each text consisted of two major modules. Module 1 was teacher-led input instruction. Before class, the teacher assigned output activity tasks to both classes, with non-creative output activities for the control class and creative output activities for the experimental class. During class, the teacher instructed both classes using traditional methods, including language point explanation and practice, text reading aloud, and background and plot explanation. Module 2 was student-led output activities. Before class, students in both classes prepared for the output activities. During class, students engaged in output activities, with non-creative methods such as discourse retelling, recitation, grammatical exercises, role-playing, and dialogue enactment for the control class, and creative methods shown in Table 2 for the experimental class. To ensure objective and fair experimental results, the same teacher taught and graded tests and assignments for both classes.

Table 2: Experimental Teaching Content and Creative Output Activities

Text Title	Text Genre	Text Content	Creative Output Activity	Teaching period
<i>My First Job</i>	Narrative	A story about the author's gains from their first job, leading to successful entrepreneurship	Continuation writing after class: Stories that happened after the author started a business. (Reviewed in the next class one week after Module 1)	80 minutes
<i>The Thames Cleanup: An Incredible Achievement</i>	Narrative	The pollution cleanup process of the Thames River	Group presentation in class: Describe an example of environmental change, analyze causes, and propose environmental protection suggestions (One week after Module 1)	160 minutes
<i>Genius Characters</i>	Argumentative	Analysis of six character traits of geniuses through examples	Group discussion in class: What genius characters do you and your group members have? (Three days of preparation time, conducted in class after Module 1.)	80 minutes
<i>I'm Toast in the Battle Against "Smart" Appliances</i>	Argumentative	The design flaws of smart home appliances	Group debate in class: Are the benefits of smart appliances greater than their drawbacks? (One week after Module 1)	160 minutes

3.4 Data Analysis Methods of the Study

This study primarily collected data through written tests and interviews, supplemented by observations during teaching period. After the completion of two teaching modules for each text, the teacher administered written tests in both classes and conducted interviews with the experimental class. The written tests were based on the textbook exercises, closely related to the instructional content, with appropriate modifications according to the students' learning situation, effectively reflected students' mastery of language points and understanding of the text after the experiment teaching. Interviews were used to understand students' attitudes and suggestions towards CPOA. Classroom observations served as a supplementary method to help teachers gain a more comprehensive and objective understanding of the experimental situation.

4. Results and Discussion of the Study

4.1 Analysis of Written Test Data

Each class completed four tests, with a total score of 100 points per test, including 50 points for language application and 50 points for discourse understanding. To ensure the fairness and validity of the experimental tests, all tests were graded by the same teacher. A total of 520 test papers were distributed in this experiment, and 520 were collected. The specific data are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Results of Written Tests

Task type		Average Score of Class		
		Class A (Control)	Class B (Experimental)	Difference (B-A)
Language Application (50')	Sentence Translation (40'=10'×4)	28'	33'	+5'
	Word Fill-in-the-Blank (10'=2'×5)	9'	10'	+1'
Discourse Understanding (50')	Reading Q&A (40'=8'×5)	29'	39'	+10'
	Multiple Choice (10'=2'×5)	8'	10'	+2'
Average Score of Four Tests (100')		75'	91'	+16'

From the table above, it can be seen that the average scores of the experimental class were higher than those of the control class for all task types, with especially significant differences in subjective tasks: for sentence translation and reading Q&A, the average scores of the experimental class were 5 points and 10 points higher than those of the control class, respectively. This suggests that, in English reading classes, the teaching effectiveness of the CPOA model is superior to that of traditional models.

4.2 Analysis of Interview Data

All students in the experimental class voluntarily participated in the interviews. The interview content included: (1) Do you like CPOA? Why? (2) Do you believe that the teaching/learning effectiveness of CPOA is superior to traditional models? In what ways? (3) What difficulties did you encounter during the preparation or execution of output activities? (4) Do you have any suggestions for this model?

The interview results showed that most students approved of CPOA. Approximately 93% of the interviewed students expressed their liking for the model because it was innovative and the preparatory work drove them to review the text, search for information, and practice language skills, which improved their self-learning ability, organizational skills, and information literacy. Three students explicitly stated that they didn't like the CPOA due to discomfort with public speaking. One student expressed no clear preference for or against the model, without any clear reason. Approximately 93% of the interviewed students stated that the teaching effectiveness of this model was superior to traditional models, evidenced by deeper discourse understanding, more language practice opportunities, and more efficient group cooperation. About 11% of the interviewed students stated that they didn't encounter any difficulties during the preparation or execution of these CPOA activities, while the remaining 89% reported challenges such as lack of self-confidence and fear of public speaking;

insufficient English proficiency; inadequate knowledge; heavy coursework load, leading to insufficient preparation time; poor teamwork among group members; unclear information search channels and methods. The Students suggested that teachers should provide guidance on grammar and information search after class; offer places for after-class practice; diversify participation methods, such as allowing some students to submit videos or engage in online debates; permit individual participation; and reduce the difficulty of debates.

4.3 Analysis of Teaching Observation

The participation and concentration levels of students in the experimental class were superior to those of the students in the control class during activities, and most students demonstrated deeper thinking of discourse-related content and better application of language. The overall atmosphere in the control class was relatively dull during output activities, with less interaction.

4.4 Overall Evaluation

This teaching experiment revealed that, compared to traditional English reading teaching models, CPOA in English reading teaching not only helps students better master pragmatic knowledge but also guides them to more deeply understand the content and cultural background of discourse, thereby comprehensively enhancing students' learning outcomes.

5. Conclusion

CPOA emphasizes student-centrality, enhances students' autonomous learning ability, and stimulates their deep learning. During the preparation and execution of creative output activities, students develop their own plans, review knowledge, search for information, organize activities, and present themselves, while the teacher's role transforms into that of an observer, helper, and guide. In various creative output activities, students activate, innovate and transfer prior knowledge, and accomplish the reconstruction and creation of discourse content, promoting advanced thinking development and deep learning.

The limitations of this study lie in its narrow research scope and short research duration. Future studies will expand the research scope, extend the research duration, and conduct more rigorous design and validation of the teaching process and the scaffolding role of teachers.

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