

Brief Exploration on the Teaching Model of Academic English Vocabularybased on POA

Gu Zhenzhen^{1*}, Gao ying²

¹Associate Professor in School of Foreign Languages, North China Electric Power University, Jingxiu District, Baoding, Hebei, China

²Lecturer in School of Foreign Languages, North China Electric Power University, North District, Baoding, Hebei, China

DOI: [10.36348/sijll.2021.v04i06.003](https://doi.org/10.36348/sijll.2021.v04i06.003)

| Received: 23.04.2021 | Accepted: 31.05.2021 | Published: 09.06.2021

*Corresponding author: Gu Zhenzhen

Abstract

This study is based on POA, absorbing its beneficial elements to academic English vocabulary teaching. This research has some pedagogical implications for academic English study and teaching of college English. By using the "beneficial elements" of POA, it intends to avoid the disadvantages of traditional vocabulary teaching, then continuously improving the efficiency of teaching, thus effectively improving the quality of academic English vocabulary teaching and students' academic English vocabulary level, so as to improve its scientific research ability and academic exchange level.

Keywords: POA, Academic English, Academic Vocabulary, English Teaching, New Teaching Model, Vocabulary Teaching.

Copyright © 2021 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development of the global economy, science and technology, the global interaction, trade, culture, tourism and communication have been more prosperous than ever before. ESP, different from common English (EGP), has been paid attention to by more and more educators, so is academic English which is one type of ESP. Academic English can be categorized into General Academic English and Special Academic English (Jordan 1998). The former refers to the English language skills required in the process of learning different subjects in English academic environment while the latter refers to the English language skills acquired in the process of learning a specific subject.

Wilkins (1978) said: "little information can be conveyed without Grammar, but nothing can be conveyed without vocabulary." Coheax (2000) and Nation (2001) argued that, it is because of its high frequency academic English vocabulary in various academic fields that academic English vocabulary learning is important and particularly useful; Moreover, the absolute predominance of the number of academic words among all the words in academic literature.

Therefore, it is of great importance to explore academic English vocabulary learning and teaching.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nation (2001) categorized vocabulary into four levels: high-frequency vocabulary, academic vocabulary, specialized vocabulary and low-frequency vocabulary. Among them, academic vocabulary refers to Academic English vocabulary in this study. It is different from specialized vocabulary (the vocabulary used by a specific discipline or in a specific field). It refers to the vocabulary commonly used by each discipline, so it is also known as semi-professional or sub-professional vocabulary.

Foreign scholars have analyzed the teaching strategies of academic English (Hyland 2000), the present situation and strategies of English vocabulary learning (Carter 1998; Nation 2001), the present situation of academic English vocabulary teaching and learning (Stevens 1991; Corson 2001; Hyland & Tse 2007), current vocabulary testing methods (Schmitt 2000) and academic English vocabulary teaching based on corpus (Coxhead 2000; Huston 2002). In particular, Coxhead (2000) has developed a new "Academic Word List" (AWL) involving 570 Word families based on its own Academic English Corpus, which provides an important reference for the study of academic English vocabulary in China.

The Production-oriented Approach (POA) is an English teaching theory with Chinese characteristics

put forward by Wen Qiufang, a Chinese expert of English teaching. Its theoretical system mainly includes the teaching idea, the teaching hypothesis and the teacher-centered teaching procedure. POA has changed the conventional teaching order of "input first, output later" and made up the defects of vocabulary teaching because of its solving the problem of "separation of learning and application".

In recent years, there have been a large number of teaching practice and discussion about POA in college English class: application of POA in college English teaching (Zhang Lingli 2017; Zheng Weijia 2017); application of POA in Teaching of college English writing (Ma Rui 2018), application of POA in teaching of college English speaking and so on; moreover, there are many researches on academic English vocabulary in China (He Yuyin & Cao Qiaozhen 2008; Yin Jingshu 2010; Liu Ping & Liu Zuoxiong 2018; Liu Qin & Keqingbao 2020). Although there are studies trying to use POA for vocabulary teaching, they still focus on the traditional classroom design and mainly on theoretical research, and few on application of POA in teaching of academic English vocabulary, and only for a certain stage of POA teaching process design and effectiveness research. The "nutrient" of POA should be absorbed in the teaching of academic English vocabulary to improve academic English vocabulary teaching. It is theoretically feasible to improve teaching of academic English vocabulary from the perspective of POA, as academic English vocabulary teaching is a part of English teaching.

In view of this, it attempts to introduce POA into the academic English vocabulary teaching in this study, hoping to explore the POA's functions in academic vocabulary teaching, and based on which detailed classroom teaching are designed.

COMBINATION OF POA WITH ACADEMIC ENGLISH VOCABULARY TEACHING

1. The defect of traditional vocabulary teaching

The goal of International Talents Training guides the transformation of college English teaching from General English to academic English in China, and learners' academic English ability is growing day by day driven by the demand of different subjects (Cai Jigang 2014). And Academic English vocabulary is an important factor of academic English ability. However at present, the classroom teaching of English vocabulary (including academic English vocabulary) in our country is still traditional and teacher-centered, which emphasizes teaching of language knowledge unilaterally: "Vocabulary Teaching = definition + spelling; single-word teaching rather than overall vocabulary mastery; less vocabulary learning strategies; less teaching skills of referring to dictionary; vocabulary only given in the form of lists; fewer vocabulary tests" (Waring 2002). In other words, at

present, vocabulary teaching is excessively biased towards language input, resulting in the lack of opportunities for students to produce vocabulary, and students are usually less familiar with academic vocabulary than with ordinary vocabulary, which are the reasons why academic vocabulary are difficult for learners. Thus, (1) the teaching method of vocabulary lacks innovation, and the traditional "cramming" teaching mode greatly reduces the students' enthusiasm and participation; (2) students' lack practice and exercise to understand and digest the vocabulary they have learned will encourage students' laziness in the long run, (Yan Changhong 2018). This will lead to the phenomenon that even if students of Tsinghua University who pass CET 4 and CET 6 are still not able to read English; Therefore, it is urgent to explore new and effective ways to improve the teaching of academic English vocabulary.

2. Significance of POA to academic English vocabulary teaching

The combination of flexible and diverse teaching methods is one of the important factors for the success of vocabulary teaching. A more correct teaching idea should focus on the learning process, focus on communicative approach and contrastive analysis between English and Chinese, be inclusive and vary from person to person, teaching students according to their aptitude, which coincides with the teaching concepts of POA such as "learning center", "integration of learning and application" and "education for all".

Firstly, the integration of learning with application advocated by the POA is applied to academic English vocabulary teaching, which requires that all language teaching activities are closely connected with application, and there is no boundary between learning and application. The "application" in the teaching concept of "integration of learning and application" advocated by POA theory, both "output" in "output-driven" and "input" in "input facilitation" emphasize concrete application. It combines the teaching of academic English vocabulary with academic English writing, academic English listening, academic English speaking, and academic English translation. That is to say, the teaching of academic English vocabulary should be combined with the practical tasks of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation, such as writing academic articles, listening academic reports, explanation of terms, and translation. The students will learn the active use of academic English vocabulary in listening lectures, reading documents, writing, seminars, professional discussions, academic English vocabulary learning and use into one, so as to "use in learning, use in secondary school, learn to use the combination".

Secondly, In terms of teaching process, "driving-facilitating-evaluating" of POA teaching process is conducive to improving the efficiency of

academic English vocabulary teaching. In the whole process, the teacher, as the designer and intermediary role, leads supports and assists the students to complete the tasks in the three stages properly; the POA advocates a close combination of input-driven learning and output-driven learning. Teachers help students to complete their selective learning under the guidance of output-driven tasks and input materials. POA Designs each teaching link, pays attention to what the student can learn.

Output-driven and input-facilitated learning of English academic vocabulary. The output-driven approach advocated by the POA for academic English vocabulary teaching requires teachers to select the topics of "output" tasks carefully for classroom learning of academic vocabulary, and then to create realistic academic communication scenarios such as seminars and professional discussions, students' interest in learning academic vocabulary is driven by output, while input facilitation requires teachers not only to list vocabulary but also to provide students with carefully selected input materials. By the means of role-playing, group discussion and public speaking activities, students are inspired and induced to pay attention to and use the target vocabulary.

Thirdly, It is necessary to break through the traditional evaluation and establish the multiple dynamic evaluation system, making the teaching model of academic English vocabulary perfect.

In terms of evaluation, that is to say, when we evaluate the students' output task in Vocabulary Teaching Class, we use POA's "TSCA"(Wenqiufang 2016) for reference, combining the teacher's evaluation, self-evaluation with peer evaluation. Among them, peer assessment and individual self-assessment are mainly based on immediate assessment. For instance, students discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the output activities of vocabulary in each group in class; mutual assessment and self-assessment are adopted in some teaching process based on delayed assessment, for example, students can be asked to write out the most outstanding group or individual on the network platform. Secondly, other senior teachers can be invited to carry out classroom observation or watch classroom teaching videos to evaluate the teaching effect of academic English vocabulary. In addition, POA advocates that three forms of portfolio are established for all output tasks as well as the evaluation for the tasks, and the establishment of learning portfolio is the basis of formative evaluation. This kind of portfolio can also be used in the assessment of academic English Vocabulary Teaching: The teacher sets up the portfolio for the students to record the completion of the tasks related to the production of academic vocabulary and their assessment; the students set up their own learning portfolio, collecting data on daily academic English vocabulary learning behavior; other members in the

group set up a learning file for a student in their own group to record his or her performance in group communication and class report. Moreover, POA emphasizes that evaluation runs through the whole teaching process and is output-driven, which can effectively stimulate students' learning motivation.

CONCLUSION

Based on all the above analysis, it is theoretically feasible to construct a practical and effective teaching model for college academic English vocabulary teaching by utilizing the "beneficial elements" of POA to avoid the disadvantages of traditional vocabulary teaching, and then continuously improving the teaching effect as well as the students' academic English vocabulary level.

CONTRIBUTORS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Both authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study.

Funding: This study is financially supported by HeBei Education Department Project (Grant No. 2020YYJG077).

Action Research: Exploration and Practice of Teaching Mode of College Academic English Vocabulary based on POA;

Fundamental Research Project for Central Universities (Grant NO.2019MS158): Study on Flipped Class based on POA.

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

REFERENCE

1. Cai Jigang. (2014). From General English to academic English: a return to the college English Teaching Standard. *Foreign Language and foreign language teaching*, 274, 10-14.
2. Carter, R. (1998). *Vocabulary: Applied Linguistic Perspective* (2nd edn.) [M]. London: Routledge.
3. Corson, D. J. (1997). The learning and use of academic English words [J], *Language Learning*, 47(4), 671- 718.
4. Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list [J], *TESOL Quarterly*, (2), 213-238.
5. He Yuyin & Cao Qiaozhen. (2008). *Journal of Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics*, (social science edition), 21(3), 66-68.
6. Huston, S. (2002). *Corpora in Applied Linguistics* [M], Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7. Hyland, K. & P. Tse. (2007). Is there an "academic vocabulary" [J], *TESOL Quarterly*, (2), 235-253.
8. Liu Ping. (2018). A study on the validity of English academic vocabulary learning method based on Esp Corpus, *Foreign Language Studies*, 3, 54-60.

9. Liu Qin & Keqingbao. (2020). The application of data-driven learning in academic English vocabulary teaching. *Contemporary Foreign Language Studies*, 1, 58-67.
10. Mari. (2018). The application of POA in CET-4 writing class in independent college, *English square*, 3(2), 121-125.
11. Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language* [M], Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
12. Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in Language Teaching* [M], Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
13. Stenvens, V. (1991). Classroom concordance: Vocabulary materials derived from relevant, authentic text [J], *English for Specific Purposes*, 10(1), 35-46.
14. Sun Shuguang. (2017). Reflective practical research on classroom evaluation of teacher-student cooperation [J]. *Modern Foreign Languages*, (3), 397-398.
15. Waring, B. (2002). *Basic Principles and Practice in Vocabulary Instruction* [A/ol]. 2002-07 [2009-11-16]. [Http://www.jalt-publications.ORG/TLT/ARTICLES/2002/07](http://www.jalt-publications.ORG/TLT/ARTICLES/2002/07).
16. Wilkins, D A. (1978). *Linguistics in Language Teaching* [M], London: Edward Arnold.
17. Yan Changhong. (2018). A corpus-based study of vocabulary learning in English classroom teaching [J]. *Chinese Journal of Education* (S1), 94-96.
18. Yin Jingshu. (2010). Lexical trigger theory: College English Academic Vocabulary Teaching, a survey of non-english majors in Beihang University, *Journal of Zhejiang Ocean University (humanities edition)*, 27(3), 101-105.
19. Zhang Lingli. (2017). Research on the effectiveness of POA, *Modern foreign languages*, 40(3), 369-376.
20. Zheng Weijia. (2017). The application of POA in college English teaching, *Journal of Agricultural Engineering*, 34(1), 178-180.