

Evaluation Research on *Going Global* (Elementary)—From the Perspective of Production-Oriented Approach

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DOI: [10.36348/sjill.2022.v05i09.004](https://doi.org/10.36348/sjill.2022.v05i09.004)

| Received: 11.08.2022 | Accepted: 09.09.2022 | Published: 14.09.2022

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Abstract

Based on the theoretical framework of POA, this paper intends to evaluate an English textbook—*Going Global* (Elementary) through three criteria: "appropriateness of output objectives", "effectiveness of facilitation activities" and "achievement of output goals". By means of interviews and a questionnaire, the research results show that *Going Global* (Elementary) fit the evaluation criteria of POA in general. However, this textbook also has some limitations which needs further improvement.

Keywords: Evaluation; Production-Oriented Approach (POA); *Going Global* (Elementary).

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1. INTRODUCTION

With rapid development of the world economy, the concept of globalization has been popular. Fierce market competition and gradual specialization of international division of labor have brought about great changes and challenges to politics, economy, education and the training of relevant talents.

In order to cope with the challenges brought by globalization and optimize the talent training program, Chinese government issued the "Outline of National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan" in 2010, pointing out that it is necessary to "train a large number of international talents with international vision, who are familiar with international rules and can participate in international affairs and international competition". In order to meet the national requirements for talent training, many scholars have conducted in-depth investigation and

research on the abilities that international talents need to possess. Communication ability, thinking ability, analysis ability, problem-solving ability, cross-cultural communication ability, etc. are regarded as the core competencies.

Under the background, the series of the textbook *Going Global* were published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press in 2018. They can be divided into elementary level, intermediate level and advanced level. North China Electric Power University (NCEPU) has adopted *Going Global* (Elementary) for summer semester in 2022. Elementary level of the textbook is set in different workplace situations. Each contains four cases, which are divided into eight units. Each two units completes one workplace task. The concrete content can refer to Table 1:

Table 1

Case Briefing	Teaching Content
Case 1: Who will be the sponsor?	Unit 1 Present information about the companies
	Unit 2 Make arrangements for the field trip
Case 2: What's the audience's feedback on the program?	Unit 3 Categorize the audience's feedback
	Unit 4 Summarize the feedback
Case 3: Who will be on the show?	Unit 5 Propose a new guest
	Unit 6 Introduce the show to the new guest
Case 4: Can the new program proposal be accepted?	Unit 7 Express opinions in the meeting
	Unit 8 Give feedback on the new program proposal

Each unit contains five parts: Starting up; Taking in (Viewing/Listening; Reading); Building up (Preparing for the structure; Sharpening the skills; Developing the strategies); Carrying out (Biz practice) and Looking beyond. Facing the new English textbook, what is the learning and teaching effect? It is worth doing some research. According to CNKI, there are only two articles concerning the evaluation of *Going Global*. One is "Research on the Evaluation of English Courses for International Talents under the Theoretical Framework of POA: A Teacher's Perspective" (Jia fan, Shen Yixin, 2020), the other is "Research on the Evaluation of English Course for International Talents Based on Output-oriented Method" (Yang Weicun, 2021). Therefore, it is of great significance to do some evaluation research on this textbook.

2. Evaluation Frame: Production-Oriented Approach (POA)

Over the past 70 years, China's foreign language education theory has developed rapidly. On the basis of learning from foreign teaching theories and combining with reality, it has gradually developed into a unique foreign language education theory with Chinese characteristics. Prof. Wen Qiufang and her research team have spent more than ten years integrating theory and practice to build a theoretical system called "Production-Oriented Approach" (POA). Different from other teaching methods, POA starts from the language output and ends with the output, while the input becomes the promoter to help complete the output activities.

In China, college freshmen usually are proficient in reading and writing, but they have limited opportunities to express themselves in English. For these reasons, their English ability cannot meet the needs of social development. POA has developed into a potential solution to this situation. Through POA, college students are expected to actively participate in real communication activities and improve their English. POA also pays more attention to the selection of teaching materials in the language communication and input stage, and clearly proposes how to use the teaching materials effectively. POA believes that the evaluation from teachers and students can enhance teaching quality.

3. Evaluation Criteria

POA summarizes the evaluation criteria of teaching materials, including "appropriateness of output objectives" and "facilitation of activity effectiveness" from the teacher's perspective and "achievement of output goals" from the students' perspective. As for the appropriateness of output objectives, teachers need to set teaching objectives with moderate difficulty by using textbooks to promote students' learning aspirations. Facilitation activities refer to teaching efforts made to help students achieve appropriate output goals. The achievement of output objectives refers to

students' participation, sense of achievement and product quality. Teaching is a dynamic process in which many factors interact. The basic principle of language teaching is to determine appropriate output objectives and make input materials serve the output objectives. Therefore, the selection of language teaching materials must be based on the current level of students and the teaching practice, and the most effective teaching materials should be selected.

4. Evaluation Steps

Based on the above evaluation criteria, the research group intends to collect feedback on the textbook from teachers' interview, students' questionnaire plus interview.

4.1 Teachers' feedback through interview

The interview was conducted in July, 2022. The interviewed five teachers are the members of this research group. Their teaching span is around 15 years and their students come from different majors in NCEPU. The interview designed 5 questions concerning the evaluation criteria. Each interview lasted about half an hour.

4.1.1 Interview questions:

- 1) How do you evaluate *Going Global* (Elementary)?
- 2) Do you think the teaching materials can stimulate students' willingness and interest in teaching and learning?
- 3) Do you think the textbook design has a clear goal? Are the teaching objectives of each unit clear?
- 4) Do you think the design of the content, language and discourse structure of the textbook can achieve the goals?
- 5) Do you think the design of teaching materials can help students complete the output goals?

4.1.2 Interview Summary

- 1) *Going Global* (Elementary) aims at training students to apply English in the actual workplace in the future. Through the practice of various work scenarios, the communication ability in the actual workplace can be better strengthened, and the language skills and thinking ability to solve practical problems can be developed, which helps to deepen the understanding and interest in international work. In addition, each unit of the textbook is provided with an independent section, which presents the materials related to the unit theme. It is rich in content and clear in order, which helps to expand the field of vision and improve the humanistic quality.
- 2) The textbook is set as different workplace situations and the workplace tasks are presented in the form of videos, so that students can immerse themselves in the workplace situation, perceive the workplace situation and the skills they need to learn. Students can participate in and experience the task completion process through completing

various activities, so as to discover and master the thinking ability needed to complete the workplace tasks. In addition, the teaching materials strive to restore the real workplace tasks, so that students can feel that they are in a real language application space, gain a profound experience of language in the process of completing a real task, and deepen their understanding and application of language.

- 3) The textbook carefully designs the output tasks, reasonably sets the activity forms and sequences, and cooperates with skills and strategy explanations to help students improve their communication ability, problem-solving ability, cross-cultural communication ability and thinking ability. In addition, each unit of the textbook is provided with an independent version to present the materials related to the unit theme, with rich and diverse contents, including humanities, social sciences and other fields. Diversity helps students expand their careers and improve their humanistic quality.
- 4) The teaching method is designed to help students learn, understand their own shortcomings and stimulate their learning motivation by setting the workplace situation, clarifying the output tasks and

learning objectives. The teaching materials provide different forms of input and effective supplements for students in terms of content organization, discourse structure, language skills, communication strategies, etc. Through scientific practice design, teachers can guide students to carry out selective learning and finally realize the application of learning.

These positive feedback shows that Going Global (Elementary) fit the evaluation criteria of POA in general. However, interviewed teachers also admitted some drawbacks of the textbook, such as lack of concrete goal of language skill training; elementary level is too simple for NCEPU students; the class activities need to be more challenging and interesting.

4.2 Students' feedback

4.2.1 Questionnaire and Analysis

237 students were involved in the questionnaire which was conducted on July 20th, 2022. There are 12 questions in total. Q1- Q4 are general comments on students' learning experience; Q5- Q7 are the comments for POA mode; Q8- Q12 are the comments and function concerning ETIC.

1. My first impression on *Going Global Elementary* _____

Items	Number	Percentage
A. Very organized and related to the workplace. I can't help reading it	65	27.43%
B. Organized, which is more novel than the previous textbooks	146	61.6%
C. There is no much change compared with the previous textbooks	26	10.97%
Total	237	

2. My learning experience is _____ when I explored the textbook with the help of the teacher

Items	Number	Percentage
A. The task is real and rich with strong driving force, which enables students to participate in it.	119	50.21%
B. The tasks are rich and practical, and students have more desire to participate than before.	155	65.4%
C. Compared with the previous textbooks, this one can stimulate some desire to participate.	87	36.71%
D. Unable to stimulate enthusiasm for participation.	16	6.75%
Total	237	

3. After learning each unit, what I have achieved is _____

Items	Number	Percentage
A. The completion of the ultimate goal of each unit is facilitated by the completion of the subgoals, and the logic is very clear during the learning process. All the learning is around the output task. Therefore, there is a sense of achievement.	127	53.59%
B. Each unit clearly lists the objectives to be achieved, which is more targeted than the previous English learning.	166	70.04%
C. There are many goals in each unit, and the logical relationship between them is not clear. I was confused.	29	12.24%
D. It seems that I haven't learned many practical language skills.	6	2.53%
Total	237	

4. After learning the whole textbook, what I have achieved

Items	Number	Percentage
A. There are 4 cases and 4 tasks in the whole textbook. The division is very clear, and the completion of each task requires comprehensive coordination of various skills. Therefore, my competence has been improved.	129	54.43%
B. Compared with the previous isolated listening, speaking, writing, reading and translation abilities, the actual communication ability has been improved.	132	55.7%
C. The communication ability seems to have been improved, but I am busy coping with various tasks.	72	30.38%
D. I am not clear which skills I have improved.	17	7.17%
Total	237	

5. POA is adopted for each unit teaching. What do you think this teaching mode?

Items	Number	Percentage
A. It is helpful to clarify the objectives of unit learning and make unit learning more targeted	202	85.23%
B. Compared with traditional teaching, the mode is not new.	32	13.5%
C. It is not as good as the traditional teaching method.	3	1.27%
Total	237	

6. What do you think of the setting of unit output objectives and facilitation activities?

Items	Number	Percentage
A. The output objectives are set reasonably, and sufficient preparation can facilitate the successful completion of output tasks.	171	72.15%
B. The output target is set too high and the preparation work is insufficient. When completing the output task, I still feel that I have no way to start.	60	25.32%
C. The output target is set too low, and the output task can still be completed well without the assistance of preparatory work.	6	2.53%
Total	237	

7. What do you think about the feedback of students' tasks in class?

Items	Number	Percentage
A. It is very necessary. Through the study of the samples, we understand our advantages and disadvantages.	190	80.17%
B. No obvious effect was achieved.	45	18.99%
C. Not necessary	2	0.84%
Total	237	

8. Do you know the question type, content, requirements and scoring standards of ETIC (English Test for International Communication)?

Items	Number	Percentage
A. very clear	35	14.77%
B. clear	80	33.76%
C. unclear	122	51.47%
Total	237	

9. What do you think of the quality of ETIC?

Items	Number	Percentage
A. Very good	65	27.43%
B. Good	111	46.84%
C. Common	60	25.32%
Total	237	

10. What is your main motivation for taking ETIC??

Items	Number	Percentage
A. Increase employment advantages	127	53.59%
B. Improve English application ability	53	22.36%
C. Improve self-quality	39	16.46%
D. Learn the basic knowledge of English language	18	7.59%
Total	237	

11. How does ETIC give you motivation for English Learning?

Items	Number	Percentage
Very large	41	17.3%
Large	95	40.08%
No much influence	85	35.86%
Small influence	16	6.75%
Total	237	

12. How does ETIC affect your overall English level?

Items	Number	Percentage
A. great impact	50	21.1%
B. certain influence	161	67.93%
C. little effect	18	7.59%
D.No effect	8	3.38%
Total	237	

About 89% of the students think this textbook is organized. More than half of the students believe that the teaching tasks are rich and practical. They have the desire to participate in class activity. Since each unit clearly lists the objectives based on POA, students feel more targeted than the previous textbooks. Therefore, when they finish learning the whole textbook, students feel their comprehensive ability has been improved. 97.47% of the students think the setting of unit output objectives and facilitation activities are quite effective. 80% of the students expect to get feedback for their tasks. ETIC is a standard test set to check students' English competence after taking the course *Going Global*. From their active participation, they are positive about ETIC. They believe ETIC can facilitate their learning the course.

4.2.2 Interview and Summary

Questionnaire has limitations. In order to get more information, the research group interviewed 10 students. The interview was conducted online in August, 2022.

Interview questions:

- 1) What is your opinion on the compilation of *Going Global* (Elementary)?
- 2) What is your opinion on the application of POA in the teaching process?

Advantages:

Going Global (Elementary) focuses on oral communication with audio-visual combination. In class, teachers explained the important points, and give students opportunities to imitate and practice professional English in the work place. The assignment,

such as writing a comparison report, writing a meeting overview, etc., can cultivate students' thinking ability. Meanwhile, the assignments are not limited to textbooks. For example, when writing comparative reports, students are encouraged to choose enterprises in real life for investigation. In addition, students are arranged to form teams for regular oral practice, and their partners are required to be changed each time, which greatly promotes the communication and cooperation ability of students.

The textbook has created vivid language application atmosphere with several characters led by Chen Ming as the core, and has vividly displayed practical application of business English, which can leave a deep impression on students and stimulate their interest in reading. Moreover, the book is written with a large number of dialogues, which can improve listening. In terms of broadening students' vision, the reading part of each unit of the book is appropriately selected and also conforms to the theme.

In summary, the majority of the students favor *Going Global* (Elementary).

Disadvantages:

- 1) The contents of the textbook are too easy. Some tasks with more team consciousness and challenge in the practice part can be added so as to stimulate students' active learning.
- 2) The contents of teaching materials cannot keep pace with the times. With the development of the times, some new contents should be added to the textbook, such as "Interview under the epidemic situation".

- 3) More discussion can be added in class activities. For example, in the process of making schedules, some students can analyze the overall thinking and make comments. Through different overall thinking analysis, the effect of drawing inferences from one instance can be achieved.

In summary, due to the fact that NCEPU is a key university in China, most of the students are proficient in English. Therefore, they think *Going Global* (Elementary) should adjust the contents to a more challenging level.

5. CONCLUSION

First, POA can provide a theoretical framework for the evaluation of English textbooks. The three evaluation criteria serve as the powerful tools to evaluate teacher's teaching effect and student's learning effect. Second, there will be more or less deficiencies in any teaching materials. Teachers should play a leading role and make appropriate adjustments to the content of teaching materials according to the actual teaching situation. Third, the future research and compilation of teaching materials can collect more advice from Chinese teachers and students in order to improve its quality. To sum up, the evaluation research on textbook can offer valuable advice for practical teaching and textbook compilation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research is financially supported by Research Project of English Teaching Reform of Higher Education in Hebei Province (2021YYJG053).

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