

# A REVIEW OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING STUDIES BASED ON PRODUCTION-ORIENTED APPROACH IN CHINA

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**ABSTRACT** – A literature review on the implementation of the Production-Oriented Approach (POA) in higher vocational college English teaching is provided by this study. Since the Production-Oriented Approach was proposed, although there have been many studies on the implementation of POA in college English, there is still a lack of systematic literature and implementation research on POA in domestic higher vocational colleges English teaching. Therefore, a total of 30 academic articles published between 2017 and 2022 from China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) was reviewed by this study to fill the gap. According to the Metrological visualization analysis, five categories can be identified: (1) specific teaching areas, (2) English Curriculum ideological and Political Education, (3) application of POA in English blended teaching model, (4) Benefit of POA in English teaching, (5) Challenges to POA implementation in English teaching. The review results also reveal that the implementation of POA can enhance the English teaching's effectiveness at higher vocational college. Besides, the results of domestic POA's research will be summarized and its main problems also be noted by the paper. In the end, this study identifies several future research issues needed to be examined, which may provide useful enlightenment for teachers and researchers.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 31/08/2023

Revised: 30/09/2023

Accepted: 15/10/2023

## KEYWORDS

*Production-Oriented Approach  
Literature Research  
Higher Vocational College English Teaching*

## INTRODUCTION

With the deepening of reform and opening up and the rapid development of society and economy, higher vocational education has been strongly supported by national and government policies in recent years (Li et al., 2021; Zhang, 2019). English as a public course in higher vocational colleges, its important practical significance has been more and more recognised and concerned by people (An, 2021; Hong, 2022; Niu, 2021; Shu, 2022). Therefore, higher vocational colleges must pay more attention to English teaching and learning. However, the current situation of higher vocational English teaching is not satisfactory. Teachers still use the traditional teaching mode and put a lot of time into teaching. while its efficiency is rather low (Bao, 2021; Chen, 2020; Hong, 2022; Kong, 2021; Liu, 2021; Niu, 2021; Xiang, 2022; Zhang, 2016; Zhang, 2021). Some researchers believe that Chinese English teachers at college generally place more stress on teaching than practising and pay more attention to language knowledge than verbal communication skills (Chen, 2020; Kong, 2021; Xia, 2002; Zhang, 2021). As a result, the performances of higher vocational college students in English teaching classrooms show low participation in class, low motivation and interest in learning (Kong, 2021; Niu, 2021; Xiang, 2022). In light of this, in order to increase the effectiveness of English classroom instruction and students' English learning and practical proficiency to encourage their enthusiasm for English learning and initiative, the Production-Oriented Approach teaching method was introduced. "Production-Oriented Approach" as a theoretical framework of foreign language education with China's features was created by Professor Wen Qiufang from China (Cao & Lin, 2020). Teaching principles, teaching hypotheses, and the teaching process are the three key components of the theoretical system (Wen, 2016). Wen (2016) stated that with input serving as a facilitator to assist students in completing productive actions, POA teaching began with the learner's language output and ended with production; it was not the same as the other language-learning systems. POA is geared toward higher proficiency English learners who desire to boost their efficiency. To enhance the accuracy of English classroom instruction and students' competence in using English, a variety of student-centred learning activities are generated and lead

pupils through the three teaching connections of motivating, enabling, and assessing (Sun & Adelina, 2021).

Although, in recent years, some scholars have attached importance to POA's implementation in higher vocational college English teaching, their studies are relatively simple. For example, Zhang (2021) just focused on teaching practice of English writing courses in higher vocational colleges based on POA. Liu (2021) conducted an empirical study on POA's implementation of English reading and writing in vocational colleges, pointing out the feasibility of teaching college English reading and writing in higher vocational colleges. Based on the theory of POA, Wang (2021) did research on higher vocational English vocabulary teaching and found that POA can improve the efficiency of vocabulary teaching and get positive teaching feedback. Chen (2021) conducted a literature review of POA's influence on oral English learning of higher vocational students, pointing out the research situation of oral English teaching at home and abroad and that of higher vocational colleges, while there is no systematic discussion on how POA affects students' oral English.

Notwithstanding these studies have increased knowledge about the current situation of POAs and its research field in college English teaching, sometimes contributing to the theoretical advancement of these topics, systematic review on the implementation of POA in higher vocational college English teaching is still scarce. Therefore, this systematic review aims to fill this gap and contribute to an in-depth understanding of the POA teaching method and its process of implementation in higher vocational colleges. Additionally, by covering a wide range of representative papers, they provide evidence that the implementation of POA can enhance effects in all aspects of English teaching. Since the Production-Oriented Approach was proposed, the domestic research and the total number of published articles on this theory have been greatly increasing, especially since 2017, the number of journal articles has increased the most (Huang & Zhang, 2020; Li et al., 2020; Liu & Xing, 2020; Sun & Adelina, 2021). Therefore, this paper focuses on the articles published in the last five years, from 2017 to 2022. The literature analytical method was put into use by this paper to systematically sort out the literature interrelated to domestic POA in higher vocational colleges from 2017 to 2022 and summarise the research results, raise deficiencies and problems, then track the trends needed to be examined, so as to make further efforts to accelerating the research, development and application of POA. Consequently, the following research questions are addressed in the study:

1. What are the major emerging topics of selected studies on POA teaching in higher vocational college English teaching?
2. What questions need to be examined in future research?

The current study is a review of the recent studies of POA's implementation in higher vocational college English teaching, which is structured as follows. After the introduction, a brief overview of the Production-Oriented Approach is provided in the second part. Part three describes the methodology used in the present review. Part four presents the results of the published articles selected in this study. It is followed by the discussion section. The last part goes to the conclusion and implications of this review study.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Production-Oriented Approach**

Originated by the "Output-driven Hypothesis", Professor Wen put forward a "production-oriented approach" in 2007 aiming to promote the English Professional Skills curriculum reform (Wen, 2008). Gradually, it was expanded to college English (Wen, 2013). In the English teaching classroom, teachers always pay more attention to providing more input but ignore students' output, which leads to the separation of input and output. In order to deal with this phenomenon, POA aims to integrate knowledge and action and integrate learning and using (Liu, 2021).

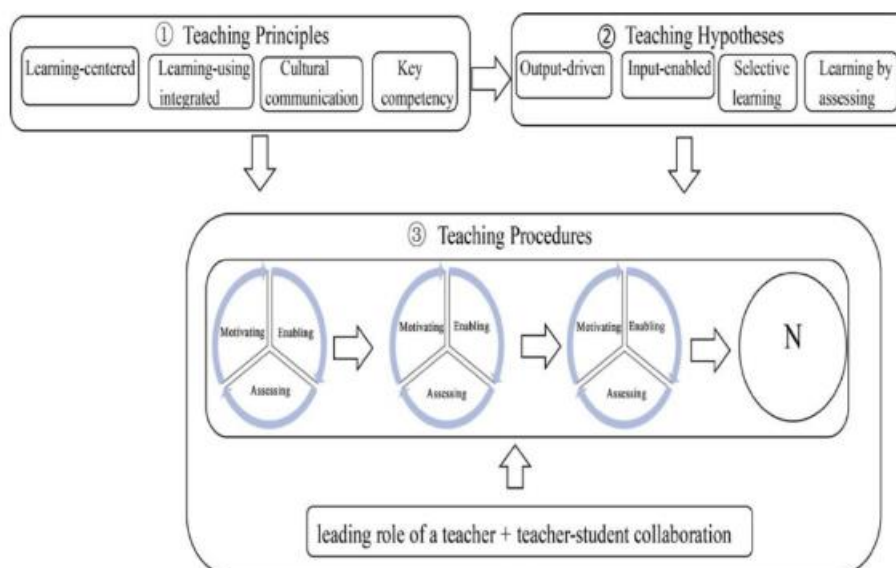
Since 2007, the theoretical system has experienced the development process of a preheating period, embryonic period, formation period, revision period, re-revision period and new version period

(Wen, 2015; Wen, 2016; Wen, 2018). As shown in Table 1, there were six stages in the development of the POA formulation. The first is the “Preheating period” from 2007 to 2013, during which the “output-driven hypothesis” was propagated. The “output-driven and input-enabled hypothesis” was put out during the 2013–2014 embryonic phase, which is the second stage. In order to test the adaptability of the output-driven hypothesis, Wen Qiufang applied it to college English teaching and found this hypothesis only stressed the significance of output without clarifying the role of input, which made it challenging for teachers to manage the link between input and output in the classroom (Sun, 2016). Hence, Wen Qiufang (2014) modified this theory as an “output-driven and input-enabled hypothesis”. The third stage is the formative period, which lasted from 2015 to 2016 when Wen initially coined the phrase “production-oriented approach”. The revision era is the fourth stage from 2016 to 2017. In 2017, Professor Wen’s team modified POA’s theoretical framework for the first time by comparing other countries’ theories and analysing the Chinese characteristics of POA. And the fifth step is the re-revision stage from 2017 to 2018 (Wen, 2018). The last stage, the newly revised theoretical system of POA, is a continuation of the fifth version, which is depicted in Figure 1.

**Table 1.** The Phases of POA development

	Phase	Development track	Time
1	Preheating Period	Output-driven	2007-2013
2	Embryonic Period	Output-driven and Input-enabled	2013-2014
3	Formation Period	POA system	2015-2016
4	Revision Period	First Revision of POA	2016-2017
5	Re-revision Period	Second Revision of POA	2017-2018
6	Newly Version Period	Newly Version of POA	2019-now

The POA consists of three parts: (1). teaching principles (Learning-centred principle, Learning-using integrated principle, Cultural communication principle, Key competency principle), (2). teaching hypotheses (Output-driven hypothesis, Input-enabled hypothesis, Selective learning hypothesis, Learning by assessing hypothesis), and (3). Teaching procedures include motivating, enabling, and assessing. Following is the newest theoretical system of POA:

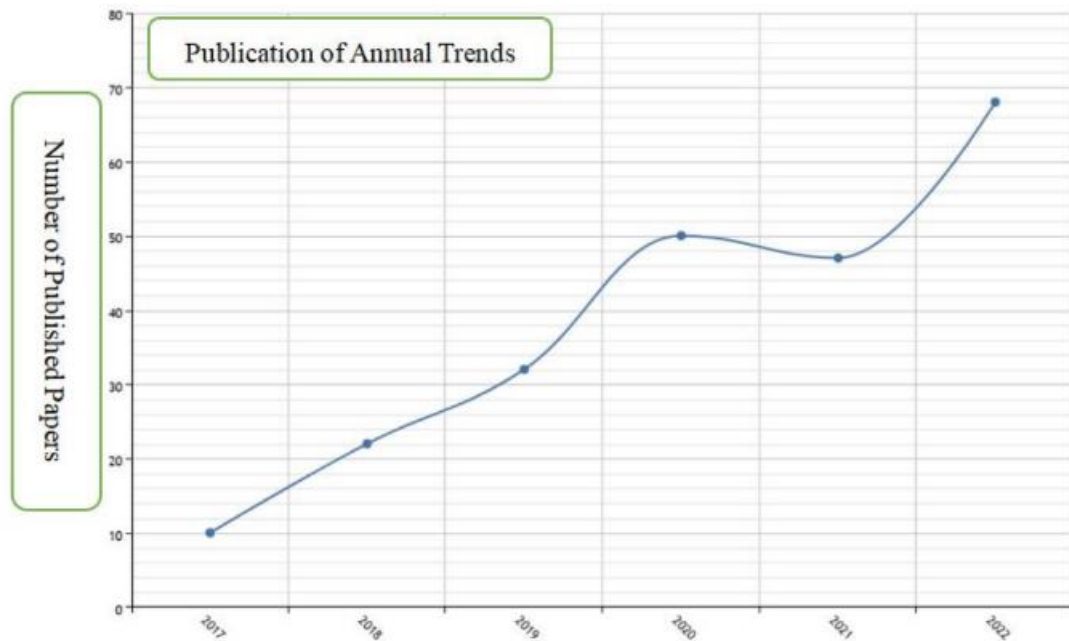


**Figure 1.** The Newest Theoretical System of POA in 2018 (Wen, 2018b)

As is shown in Figure 1, the learning-centred principle, learning-using integrated principle, cultural communication principle, and key competency are formed as POA teaching principles. Teaching hypotheses are comprised of output-driven, input-enabled, selective learning and learning by assessing. POA teaching procedures include three core links (Wen, 2017): the “motivating” link, output tasks designed by teachers to drive students to learn and stimulate learning motivation; the “enabling”

link, teachers provide input materials for output goals and design the material as an enabling activity to help students transform input materials from receptive knowledge to output knowledge; third, “assessing” link, teachers can immediately evaluate the promotion activities, or delay the output of students.

With the help of the CNKI database and using superior retrieval, the keywords “Production-oriented Approach” and “higher vocational college English” were searched. The literature query node was from 2017 to 2022, and 229 articles were retrieved. According to the Memetric visual analysis of CNKI, Figure 2 shows the overall trend, the publication of annual trends, and the annual number of published papers from 2017 to 2022. The number of publications has increased significantly since 2017, and although the number of articles in 2021 has slightly decreased, the overall trend is still on the rise.



**Figure 2** The Overall Trend

### **POA as A New Teaching Method for English Teaching**

For the sake of the effectiveness of college English teaching, teachers need to change their teaching mode, abandon the single teaching method, and keep pace with the times to apply more efficient teaching modes (Dai & Jiang, 2022). The production-oriented approach is a new English teaching theory with Chinese characteristics, and it has been carried out in college English classrooms to test its effectiveness by many English teachers and researchers (Liu & Zhang, 2019). Several studies have already been carried out on the POA’s application in English teaching, among them also some empirical studies that describe the effectiveness and feasibility of POA testing in English teaching classrooms. For instance, Zhang (2015) tries to implement POA and design a unit in the “enabling” stage for college English. She designed output tasks to drive learning and used input learning to promote output and found that the students’ enthusiasm was significantly enhanced, and the classroom teaching effect was also improved by making the combination of learning and application. A quasi-experimental design was employed on college English writing by Zhang (2017) to investigate the influence of POA. Compared with the traditional intensive reading teaching ways, in the POA classes, students have a better grasp of the unit target language items, and these language items are more used by the students in their writings (Zhang, 2017). Through analysing the present situation of English teaching in higher vocational colleges, the main concepts and tactics for higher vocational English education reform and innovation on the basis of a production-oriented approach were presented by Niu (2021).

## METHODOLOGY

The strategy utilised in this study, which was guided by the instructions given by Tranfield et al. (2003), includes three steps: (1) preparing the retrospect, (2) carrying it out, and (3) reporting and discussing the results. (Tranfield et al., 2003, as cited in Rejeb et al., 2022).

In this paper, the qualitative data analysis and literature research approach are used to assess significant studies on POA in higher vocational colleges in China from the beginning of 2017 to 2022. CNKI, as most Chinese researcher's reputable database, is used as the source of data for this paper and its superior retrieval capabilities are used to strengthen the research's dependability. The literature type is set to all the related literature from 2017 to 2022, and the keywords are Production-oriented Approach and Higher Vocational English.

This study aims to sort out the appliance of POA in higher vocational colleges' English teaching classes and, speculate the trend of POA, find out the limitation by reviewing the POA research paper published in Chinese academic journals.

## Literature Sources

According to the advanced retrieval of CNKI, the number of articles on CNKI entering "Production-Oriented Approach" and "Higher vocational college English" as the keywords has been increasing over the last five years. However, only two related papers were published in core journals. These two core papers, written by the same author named, Li Zuo, were published in Chinese Vocational and Technical Education in 2017 and 2019, respectively. Although the number of relevant papers published was rising with each passing year, the quality of POA studies is not yet so high, and rare papers were published in the core journals. The amount of Master or PhD dissertations is very limited in comparison to the number of journal publications, showing that, while the POA method has expanded the breadth of application study in higher vocational college English education, it still needs to reinforce the depth of research. When set to Master and Ph.D. thesis, there are only 5 dissertations retrieved.

**Table 2.** Journal distribution of selected articles

Journal	Number of articles
Oversea English	6
English on Campus	3
Chinese Vocational and Technical Education	2
Teachers	2
Journal of Hubei Open University	2
Comparative Study of Cultural Innovation	1
Industrial & Science Tribune	1
Journal of Higher Education	1
Education Forum	1
Modern Vocational Education	1
Ability and Wisdom	1
Other Journals	9
Total	30

The distribution of papers by publishing journal is seen in Table 2. The fact that 22 academic publications together published the 30 chosen articles shows the significance of this subject in many academic disciplines. According to the publication counts, the leading journals were Overseas English (6) and English on Campus (3), followed by the Chinese Vocational and Technical Education, Teachers, and Journal of Hubei Open University with (2) articles each. Of each of the 17 other journals, both titled and unidentified in the chart, 200 released a single manuscript.

## Study Subjects

The search protocol considers only articles published from 2017 to 2022. Through the collection of the articles, the appliance of a Production-oriented Approach to higher vocational college English

teaching with different themes was sorted out by the author. After sorting out the articles, it can be found that (1) there are 20 articles on blended teaching mode for Higher Vocational English teaching based on POA, (2) 18 articles on teaching design, (3) there are still some articles on a combination of Curriculum ideological and Political in Higher Vocational English Course in view of POA, and some articles on applying to English specific teaching areas, such as English speaking, English writing, English reading or English listening.

## RESULTS

According to the data from the CNKI database, the specific utilisation of POA in higher vocational college English teaching will be unpacked in this paper. This analysis found the most prevalent and significant keywords to be used to assess the content of the chosen publications. The 30 different keywords found in the studied articles in total are displayed in Table 3, along with their occurrence rates. In order to reflect the major study themes, these keywords were then divided into five primary themes. For example, keywords that belong to one area (e.g., spoken English teaching, English writing, reading and writing) are categorised as one theme (i.e., specific teaching areas). Content analysis of the papers revealed the themes that reflected the intersection of the production-oriented approach and English teachings in higher vocational colleges.

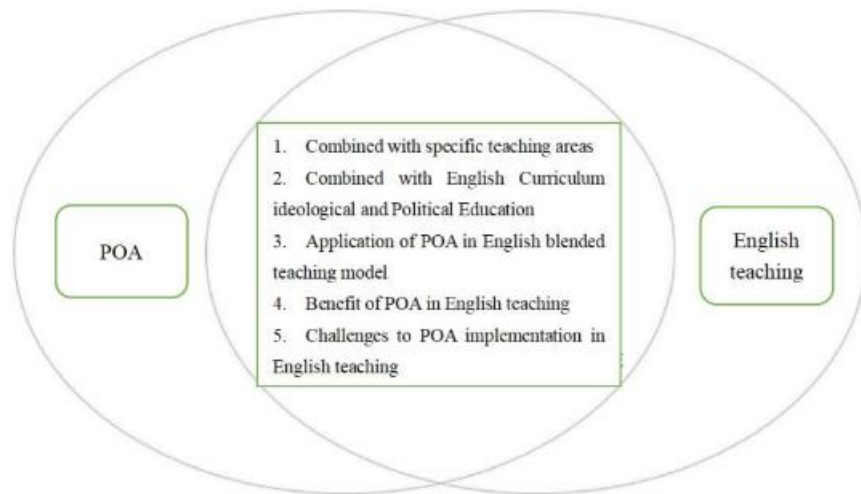
**Table 3.** Top 10 most frequent keywords

Keyword	Occurrences
Production-Oriented Approach	30
Higher Vocational English	25
Teaching practice	23
Higher vocational college English teaching	20
Teaching mode	12
Teaching effect	7
Curriculum Ideological and Political Education	3
Spoken English; English writing; reading and writing	3
Challenge	3
Blending teaching	2

As is shown in Figure. 3, the research summarised five categories as follows: (1) Combined with specific teaching areas, (2) Combined with English Curriculum ideological and Political Education, (3) Application of POA in English blended teaching model, (4) Benefit of POA in English teaching, (5) Challenges to POA implementation in English teaching. The categories were generated from the keyword categorisation methodology, which meant that each term was given to a certain category. To sum up, the themes identified by the research offer a general view of the implementation of POA in English teaching in higher vocational colleges.

Combined with specific teaching areas, include the implementation of POA in English teaching, such as spoken English, English writing, or English reading and writing. Combined with English Curriculum ideological and Political Education address the way of combining POA and Curriculum ideological and Political Education. The appliances of POA in the English blended teaching model explain the POA teaching method combined with blended teaching, forming a new pattern of teaching. The benefit of POA in English teaching mainly concerns the teaching effect of the POA's implementation in English teaching, and finally, the Challenges to POA implementation in English teaching discuss the challenges encountered when using the POA teaching style in English teaching.





**Figure.3.** Literature on the implementation of POA in English teaching.

### **Combined with Specific Teaching Areas**

Since the production-oriented approach theoretical system was proposed in 2015, the related research of POA has shown a trend of exponential growth, and it has been applied to many foreign languages teaching by English teachers since it was proposed. In order to conduct targeted research, particular teaching fields, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, were conducted in conjunction with the production-oriented approach by more research. Zhang (2021), for instance, tried to build an English writing course mode suitable for characteristics of higher vocational teaching based on POA theory and explore improving the English writing output ability of higher vocational students by conducting teaching practice and reflection and improvement. According to the Production-oriented Approach's theory and in view of the teaching situation that higher vocational students' oral English teaching has been ignored for a long time and their oral ability is slowly improved, Gao (2021) proposed the teaching mode of Basic Phase & Assessment + Advanced Phase & Assessment. She found that through this teaching mode, students' oral English skills can be enhanced effectively, and the deficiency of oral teaching in English lessons can be made up in higher vocational colleges.

The POA method is also utilised by some articles for teaching design on specific units. 257 Taking the teaching design of one unit of listening and speaking class as an example, Ding (2022) explored and adopted the driving, facilitating, and evaluating in English teaching classroom with the instruction of POA teaching ideas. She explained the leading and supporting teachers' role in the learning process and helped students enhance the application ability of foreign trade English, especially the foreign trade oral communication ability. Taking the POA theoretical system as a design basis, Kuang (2021) focused on task-driven and ability-based output and designed teaching activities for the Comprehensive English Curriculum; she believed that in the whole teaching process, students not only improved their language knowledge and skills but also mastered their learning strategies and methods in promoting the process of output tasks. The production-oriented approach was attempted to be used in nursing English courses by Zhu (2021) and was used for putting into the teaching practice. Taking the teaching design of the first unit of Nursing English as an example, she designed the teaching process and the three links of "driving-facilitating-evaluating" were conducted in the teaching practice.

### **Combined with the English Curriculum, Ideological and Political Education**

In recent years, the Ministry of Higher Education's working point has proposed "to promote the reform to the public foreign language teaching in China", "to constantly deepen the reform of public foreign language teaching", "to comprehensively promote the ideological and political construction of university courses", "to strengthen the shaping of values, and to comprehensively strengthen the ideological and political construction of university courses". Therefore, it is urgent to carry out the teaching reform of "ideological and political curriculum" in the teaching of foreign languages. In higher

vocational colleges, English is an important course, and its content is closely relevant to the culture. The integration of ideological and political education in higher vocational English courses meets the requirement of the current ideological and political reform of the curriculum. In the meanwhile, it can be beneficial to foster students' ideological and political quality well. POA is a teaching method with Chinese characteristics, and some researchers try to apply it to the ideological and political education of the English curriculum. For instance, Cheng (2022) combined a production-oriented approach to make a deep exploration. He also analysed the feasibility of the POA implementation in the ideological and political education of higher vocational college English courses. He believed that it could improve ideological and political education effectiveness through the implementation of POA and also be beneficial for the ideological and political reform of higher vocational colleges. Zhou (2022) believed that under the guidance of POA, the course of Business English Teaching is highly in conformity with ideological and political education, so she explored how to effectively integrate ideological and political elements into business English teaching in light of POA by taking the teaching of higher vocational business English process as an example. Based on the teaching concept of POA, Liang (2022) further explored the feasibility of ideological and political teaching in higher vocational English courses, and she found that the English ideological and political teaching mode based on POA can not only enable the students to have a stronger control ability of knowledge they have learned but also improve the student's critical thinking ability and cultural output ability. It is an effective way to train higher vocational students to convey Chinese stories well and share the excellent Chinese culture well.

### **Application of POA in the English Blended Teaching Model**

According to some research, the environment of language learning and language teaching methods has been greatly impacted by the blended teaching model. Based on the retrieved literature, it can be found that there are some studies on the POA teaching method combined with blended teaching, forming a new teaching mode. Kong (2021) first interpreted the value of POA theory and the practical significance of the blended teaching method, then further analysed the significance of blended teaching based on POA. She believed that teachers' taking the production-oriented approach as a theoretical basis in higher vocational English teaching, combined with blended teaching, deconstructing classroom content, and innovating teaching methods, can make students obtain a clearer and deeper cognition, thus increasing the impact of English teaching. Similarly, Taking POA theory as the theoretical basis, Wen (2021) deeply explored the higher vocational students' current English output ability in the blended teaching model. For the sake of improving the blended teaching mode effectiveness from the perspective of POA, she tried to improve the higher vocational students' English output skills from three aspects: vocabulary, reading comprehension, and oral expression. She found that in the teaching process, integrating and innovating the POA method and blended teaching can enhance the students' English output abilities, reduce the English teachers' workload, and ultimately fully reflect the effect of English classroom teaching.

### **Benefit of POA in English Teaching**

More and more studies show that POA has a significant impact on higher vocational college English teaching. English teachers tried to implement POA in English teaching to raise the effect of English teaching classrooms and test the POA teaching effectiveness.

In order to test whether the POA teaching method is effective for learners with low English proficiency in higher vocational colleges, Liu (2021) took students in a higher vocational college as research subjects and designed a unit of reading and writing teaching based on POA. After classroom observation, it was found that students were more focused and engaged in class, and the quality of the final output task was improved significantly. The improvement of students' engagement in class and output quality shows that POA is also applicable to learners with low English proficiency in higher vocational college English teaching.

Similarly, Xiang (2022) carried out two rounds of teaching experiments to try applying POA teaching theory combined with mixed teaching mode, that is, "online and offline", to English teaching practice. The teaching practice process of this teaching theory shows that POA applied in higher vocational English classrooms has achieved a good classroom teaching effect. Xiang (2022) stated that



according to the teaching process of the production-oriented approach, teachers take the output task as the main line and reorganise and adjust the listening, speaking, reading, and writing content of the unit. In the arrangement of learning content, students can learn from shallow and deep and build rich and diverse supports for students step by step to promote the final output. The teaching process of the production-oriented approach always ends with output, which enables students to learn and use in the teaching classroom and gain a great many chances for language output.

According to other studies, a production-oriented approach can significantly improve students' participation in learning, fully combine curriculum design with ideological and political education, innovate the evaluation system, and achieve the effect of promoting learning through evaluation (Liang, 2021; Liu, 2021; Zhang, 2021). In the process of implementation of POA, the student's interest in learning and their comprehensive English learning capacities can be motivated. (An, 2021; Bao, 2021; Tan, 2022).

### **Challenges to POA Implementation in English Teaching**

Although POA teaching has the practical benefits mentioned above, there are some challenges that hinder its implementation in higher vocational English teaching. Teachers in traditional English classes frequently give greater attention to the explanation of text knowledge, spend more time creating courseware and inputting language information, focus on after-class practice and testing, and overlook students' language output and cultural communication activities. English teachers need to change the traditional teaching idea and have to carefully set language output tasks during the application of production-oriented approach teaching procedures.

How to design the output tasks and teaching objectives reasonably needs to be considered thoroughly by teachers. Teachers should take into account both the overall goal of the whole course and the student's learning situation and the unit tasks. The output task and sub-task designed by POA have an internal logic connection. That is, the implementation of the production-oriented approach has a strong coherence (Ding, 2022; Xiang, 2022). Due to the limited class hours of higher vocational English teaching, students take a week to follow up on a small part of the task.

Owing to the weak English foundation of higher vocational college students, the gap between the level of the students and the completion of the task (Dai, 2022) needs to be figured out by teachers. If the gap is too large, it means that students may not be able to complete the output task. This teaching mode is less effective for language learners at lower levels and students with weak autonomous learning consciousness (Xiang, 2022). Influenced by the traditional teaching mode, students rely on the language knowledge learning input and have some difficulties and sluggishness for output first and then input (Ding, 2022).

## **DISCUSSION**

To gain a general review of existing academic documents on the implementation of POA and English teaching in higher vocational colleges is the major purpose of this research. This study selected 30 corresponding articles which are published between 2017 and 2022 from CNKI databases. According to the study, the subject has recently attracted significant attention, with the top journals including the Journal of English Campus, Overseas English, 378 and the Journal of Hubei Correspondence University. Using the keyword coding of the studies that have been reviewed, five major categories emerged: (1) Combined with specific teaching areas, (2) Combined with English Curriculum ideological and Political Education, (3) Application of POA in English blended teaching model, (4) Benefit of POA in English teaching, (5) Challenges to POA implementation in English teaching. The contribution of this study to the current document is that the research unpacks the specific implementation of POA in English teaching and identifies future research trends. That POA is an effective teaching way of higher vocational college English teaching was unveiled by the results of this literature review. Using keyword clustering to identify relevant topics and providing an up-to-date summary of aspects of the POA and English teaching is the main contribution of this study. The analysis makes further efforts to show that higher vocational colleges can apply POA teaching to boost students' interest in learning English, promote students' engagement and their final output, and finally enhance the effect of the English

teaching classroom. To fully reap the benefits of POA teaching, several issues that hamper the implementation of POA in English classes for the students of higher vocational colleges should be conquered by language teachers.

### **Limitation**

From the construction of the POA theory system to the development of teaching practice, the POA method's research on English teaching in domestic higher vocational colleges has achieved quite some results in the theoretical system, teaching practice, and other aspects, but there are still some obvious limitations.

First of all, there is more speculative research and less empirical research on the production-oriented approach theory. Although empirical studies on POA are also increasing with each passing year, the empirical research mostly focuses on the exploration of "facilitating" links' effectiveness and pays insufficient attention to the "driving" and "evaluating" links. On the basis of the literature data collected by CNKI, most of the literature first discusses the relevant teaching concepts, theory characters, and principles of POA and then focuses on the exploration of how POA theory combined with higher vocational English teaching or explanation of feasibility and necessity of implementation of POA in higher vocational college English teaching.

In addition, teacher-student collaborative assessment is called TSCA for short, which is a novel teaching assessment method based on POA. On the basis of the review of literature data, scarcely research literature can be found on TSCA in POA teaching. Most of the research focuses on the implementation of POA in speaking, writing, or ideology and politics in higher vocational English courses. Examining how well students master what they learn and their awareness of using newly learned to their output can be enhanced through assessment (Sun, 2020). Nevertheless, based on the advanced retrieved literature, there are few studies on the evaluation link of the production-oriented approach. Only one research titled *"Teaching Practice and Research on Production-oriented Evaluation in Oral English Classrooms in Higher Vocational Colleges"* conducted by Li & Pan (2020) can be found. Therefore, there is still a lot of research value in this area.

Finally, there is a lack of research on teachers' professional development. The teacher, as the subject of implementing the new teaching theory, should not ignore their own development when applying the new teaching theory. However, based on the advanced retrieval of CNKI, the keywords "production-oriented approach", "higher vocational English," and "teachers' professional development" were searched, but it did not find one study related to teachers' professional development based on POA.

### **Future Research**

Through the review and visual analysis of the literature from 2017 to 2022 and the limitations discussed above, the following issues need to be examined in future research.

Firstly, more research would focus on the application of the POA method and teaching practice. In the process of POA teaching practice, English teachers in higher vocational colleges should thoroughly understand the problems during the implementation of the production-oriented method, effectively promote the teaching practice's development and the POA theory continuous improvement.

Secondly, teacher-student collaborative assessment (TSCA) under the guidance of POA is intended to address two issues: low efficiency and poor efficacy of accomplishment assessment (Sun, 2017). Future studies should focus on the targeted research on the POA's three stages, especially in the evaluation stage. It is necessary for researchers to reinforce the research and perfection of the production-oriented method evaluation system to understand and have a good grasp of the form of teacher-student collaborative assessment.

Thirdly, focus on the significance of this theory to the teachers' professional development. Combining theory with teachers' professional development, paying attention to teachers' growth, and highlighting teachers' main role as well as the solution to teaching problems needs to be strengthened. The POA, as a new foreign language teaching theory, asks for higher requirements on teachers. Because

both new teachers and experienced old teachers are deeply influenced by the long-term traditional teaching methods, during the procedure of applying the new foreign language education theory, the contradiction of teacher development cannot be ignored, and the positive response to the main contradictions in different development stages is the only way for teacher development (Qiu, 2020). Future research should take note of balancing teachers' scaffolding roles and students' autonomy, in addition to encouraging their professionalism (Zhang, 2016). Future research should examine how to encourage teachers to change their roles and dynamic ways under the guidance of new teaching methods while also focusing on teachers' professional development and its important position in classroom practice.

## **CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

As an educational theory rooted in China and committed to solving the prominent problems in language teaching, the emergence of the production-oriented approach provides educational reform with new thoughts. By sorting out the state quo and problems of dome POA research in higher vocational college English teaching, this paper expects to offer some references for the domestic POA studies in higher vocational college English. Through sorting and document analysis, it shows that notwithstanding the POA's theoretical framework becoming more and more perfect, some problems still exist that need to be deepened and expanded by teachers and scholars to boost the better development of POA theory.

Overall, the results of this review have implications for the POA teaching method and English teaching. First, the review shows the most frequent themes of POA implementation in higher vocational colleges. In particular, English-specific teaching areas might be a pivot point for promoting the implementation of the POA teaching method. Second, it indicates the effectiveness of the POA teaching method in higher vocational college English teaching. Additionally, the results reflect challenges that hinder POA's implementation in higher vocational English teaching. Finally, it also points out the issues that need to be examined by higher vocational college English teachers or researchers in the future.

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