THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRODUCTION-ORIENTED APPROACH IN ENHANCING ENGLISH WRITING ACHIEVEMENT AND MOTIVATION AMONG YEAR 8 STUDENTS IN CHINA

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CG	Control Group
EG	Experimental Group
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
MOE	Chinese Ministry of Education
POA	Production-oriented Approach
TSCA	Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
MANCOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Covariate
Pre-L	Pre-test English Writing Language Achievement
Pre-C	Pre-test English Writing Content Achievement
Pre-S	Pre-test English Writing Structure Achievement
Post-L	Post-test English Writing Language Achievement
Post-L	Post-test English Writing Content Achievement
Post-L	Post-test English Writing Structure Achievement

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KEBERKESANAN PENDEKATAN BERORIENTASIKAN PRODUKSI DALAM PENINGKATAN PENCAPAIAN PENULISAN BAHASA INGGERIS DAN MOTIVASI DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR TAHUN 8 DI CHINA

ABSTRAK

Penulisan dalam bahasa Inggeris sangat penting bagi pelajar pada peringkat pendidikan asas. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menangani isu kekurangan motivasi dan penulisan yang lemah dalam kalangan pelajar gred lapan di China melalui pengaplikasian Pendekatan Berorientasikan Penghasilan (POA). Oleh itu, kajian ini dijalankan melalui kaedah gabungan penerangan berturutan (KUAN-KUAL). Model gabungan ini memperlihatkan dapatan kualitatif digunakan untuk menerangkan dan menyokong dapatan kuantitatif. Pensampelan kajian ini dijalankan melalui kuasi-eksperimen. Daripada 80 orang pelajar, sebanyak 40 orang pelajar daripada kumpulan eksperimental telah mengambil bahagian selama lapan minggu dalam pengajaran penulisan POA. Bagi kajian kualitatif, sebangak lima pelajar dari kumpulan eksperimental mengambil bahagian dalam temu bual separa berstruktur. Berdasarkan hasil kuantitatif daripada ujian penulisan dan analisis MANCOVA, kumpulan eksperimental menunjukkan perbezaan secara

signifikan ($p < 0.05$) berbanding dengan kumpulan kawalan dari segi bahasa, kandungan, dan struktur. Di samping itu, berdasarkan hasil analisis soal selidik dan ujian-t sampel, motivasi penulisan menunjukkan perbezaan yang signifikan ($p < 0.05$) bagi motivasi intrinsik dan ekstrinsik. Data kualitatif penyelidikan melalui analisis tematik telah mendedahkan dua tema dalam pengalaman penulisan pelajar. Yang pertama, persekitaran pembelajaran aktif (dengan subtema guru sebagai fasilitator, tahap penglibatan dalam bilik darjah, dan penilaian kolaboratif). Yang kedua, pembangunan kompetensi pembelajaran (dengan subtema kemahiran penyelesaian masalah, sikap positif, dan pembelajaran menggunakan pendekatan bersepadu). Kesimpulannya, hasil penyelidikan ini menunjukkan bahawa pengaplikasian POA dalam pengajaran penulisan bahasa Inggeris di sekolah menengah rendah adalah praktikal dan boleh dilaksanakan secara berkesan untuk meningkatkan pencapaian penulisan dan motivasi pelajar.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRODUCTION-ORIENTED APPROACH IN ENHANCING ENGLISH WRITING ACHIEVEMENT AND MOTIVATION AMONG YEAR 8 STUDENTS IN CHINA

ABSTRACT

English writing is particularly crucial for students at the basic education level. This study aims to address the current issues of poor writing achievement and low writing motivation among Chinese eighth-grade students by employing a production-oriented approach (POA). The research design followed the Explanatory Sequential (QUAN-Qual) Design of the mixed-methods approach, which the qualitative findings were used to help explain and support the quantitative results. The quantitative study employed purposive sampling to conduct a quasi-experimental study with 80 students, including 40 students in the experimental group who participated in eight weeks of POA. In the qualitative study, five students from the experimental group volunteered to participate in semi-structured interviews. The quantitative results of the writing test and MANCOVA analyzes showed that the experimental groups were significantly different (p <.05) from that of the control group in terms of language, content, and structure. Additionally, the questionnaire and independent sample t-test analyzes revealed that the writing motivation was significantly different (p <.05) for both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The qualitative research data underwent thematic analysis, revealing two themes in

students' writing experiences: the active learning environment (with subthemes of teachers as facilitators, classroom engagement, and collaborative assessment) and the learning competence development (with subthemes of problem-solving skills, positive attitude, and learning-using integrated). In conclusion, this research demonstrated that applying POA to junior high school English writing instruction is practical and feasible, effectively improving Chinese Year 8 students' writing achievement and motivation.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In the Chinese educational context, English is taught as a foreign language (Si, 2019). As the largest group of foreign language learners in the world, the study of English language education in China has attracted the attention of many researchers and experts (Han et al., 2018). English writing, one of the four fundamental skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) essential for learning English, not only reflects a student's overall language proficiency but also involves an integrated and complex process (Khosronejad et al., 2021). Chinese students begin formal and systematic English writing instruction in junior high school (Years 7-9), making this basic stage of learning particularly crucial (Jiang, 2021). Consequently, selecting an appropriate method for teaching English writing to junior high school students is imperative (Huang et al., 2019).

The process of teaching writing is closely linked to students' achievement and motivation (Yu et al., 2020). On the one hand, writing achievement directly reflects the level of mastery in English writing (Teng et al., 2020). Therefore, English teachers, as the primary organizers of English teaching activities (Qi & Jiang, 2021), should consider the various factors influencing students' English writing achievement and select a scientifically and rationally based approach to

teaching writing, aligned with the curriculum standards (Shen et al., 2020). Similarly, students are expected to actively collaborate with their teachers to adopt suitable English writing methods, aiming to enhance their English writing achievement in junior high school (Xie & Cui, 2021).

On the other hand, Serin (2018) demonstrated that writing motivation is influenced by writing achievement, with students who perform well in writing tending to have strong writing motivation. Therefore, writing motivation is considered one of the main factors influencing English writing (Lee et al., 2017). Additionally, teachers need to emphasize the flexibility of teaching English writing in the classroom by employing student-friendly writing methods. This approach ensures that the writing classroom is creative, interesting, and engaging, thereby increasing students' motivation to write in English (Li, 2021).

For a long time, the majority of mainstream foreign language teaching methods and philosophies have been adopted from foreign countries, with few systematic, localized foreign language education theories available (Wen, 2014). To adapt to the context of foreign language teaching in China, Wen (2015) and her research team developed a foreign language teaching method with Chinese characteristics, known as the Production-oriented Approach (POA).

The POA was initially established to improve the teaching of English in higher education classrooms in mainland China (Wen, 2015). In contrast to

traditional teaching methods of English language learning, the POA begins and ends with language production and the input is the catalyst that helps students to complete their production tasks (Wen, 2016). The terms “Production” and “Output” have different meanings, with “Production” emphasizing not only the process of output (Producing), but also the outcome of the output (Product) (Wen, 2015). Furthermore, POA is best suited to learners with basic grammar and adequate vocabulary (approximately 2,000 words), which means that POA is only suitable for junior high school students and above (Zhang, 2020).

The creation of POA can be seen as an exploration and attempt to build this approach, which has been developed and refined over a period of more than 10 years (Liu & Zhang, 2022). Wen (2014) has invited university foreign language teachers from eight universities to participate in a trial of POA. Three rounds of experimental practice were carried out to optimize the implementation of POA in the classroom, and the following teaching process was finalized. The teaching processes of the POA include three stages: “motivating”, “enabling”, and “assessing” (Wen, 2015). The teacher needs to play a guide role in the whole process of teaching. All three phases are guided by the teacher, who plays a variety of roles such as facilitator, designer, and scaffolder (Wen, 2018). In short, POA is the result of collective wisdom and strength and reflects the innovative process of team-building knowledge.

Due to the prominence of English writing and the fact that both achievement and motivation are important factors influencing Chinese students' English writing, it is essential to choose a method of teaching English writing that is appropriate for Chinese students. To improve Chinese students' achievement and motivation in English writing, this study will draw on indigenous Chinese teaching methods to practice POA in the classroom. The effect of the POA will be highlighted, with the goal of this study being to contribute to students' writing achievement and motivation and generate positive writing experience.

1.2 Research Background

In the era of social informatization and cultural diversity, the importance of English writing is self-evident. The Chinese Ministry of Education (MOE) (2022) has proposed an updated *English Curriculum Standard for Compulsory Education* (Curriculum Standard). The curriculum standard points out that the goal of English curriculum reform is to cultivate students' core literacy and improve their comprehensive language ability (Han, 2021). Among the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, writing as an output skill is one of the important standards for measuring students' comprehensive language ability (Khosronejad et al., 2021). Moreover, Chinese students begin taking writing exams in junior high school, with writing achievement being a significant component of the overall English exam, which also includes listening and reading sections (MOE, 2022).

Table 1.1 shows that as students continue to grow in grade, the importance of writing in English examinations becomes more prominent. For example, in the Shaanxi province, the English writing achievement account for 12.5% in the junior high school English examination. Obviously, the better students do in the English writing, the higher English scores they will get. Thus, building a good foundation in English writing at junior high school is not to be overlooked and provides a right direction for students' future writing development (Shen et al, 2020).

Table 1.1

Proportion of Essays in Chinese English Exams

	Junior high schools	**Senior high schools**	**Tertiary**
Full score in English exam	120	150	100
Full score for essay	15	40	30
Percentage	12.5%	27%	30%

Writing instruction methods are a key area of focus for both English teachers and researchers. Various pedagogical approaches address different aspects of writing, ranging from basic language skills to complex writing processes and stylistic features. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the process-genre approach has been utilized in the teaching of writing in China and continues to be employed today (Wu & Cui, 2016). The process-genre approach is a method of teaching writing that combines the process approach and genre approach (Rahimi, 2014). It emphasizes the stages of the writing process (e.g., planning, drafting, revising, etc.) and focuses

on the structure and characteristics of specific genres. The English writing test for junior high school students in China focuses on thematic writing (Han, 2021). Students are required to write on a specific theme, which can range from broad themes such as environmental protection and technological advances to more specific subjects like a historical event, a book, or a movie. Since the teaching steps of the process-genre approach can be seamlessly integrated with thematic writing, it is highly favored by English teachers.

Although these traditional teaching methods have positively impacted English writing instruction in the past, they were not designed with the writing context of Chinese students in mind (Ying & Zhang, 2017). Consequently, the Production-oriented Approach (POA) was developed and implemented specifically to address the learning needs of Chinese students and the current state of English language teaching in China (Wen, 2015). “Motivating, enabling, and assessing” are the three main components of the POA teaching process. The “motivating” phase creates a sense of “hunger” and clarifies learning objectives to motivate learning (Wen & Sun, 2020). The “enabling” phase helps students’ complete tasks by providing the right amount of production at the right time and a cycle of extended production practice (Qiu, 2019). The “assessing” phase provides feedback and suggestions to improve the production of the class. The following section will focus on the special features of the POA teaching process.

Firstly, the POA "motivating" phase is completely different from the traditional "warm-up" or "lead-in" phrase in foreign language teaching (Wen & Sun, 2020). While the purpose of a "warm-up" or "lead-in" is to stimulate students' interest in learning something new or to stimulate their existing knowledge, the purpose of a POA motivating phrase is to motivate students to learn something new and to produce something by making them aware of their own shortcomings (Shao, 2019).

Secondly, the "enabling" phase consists of three main components: 1) The teacher describes the production task; 2) The students do optional learning, which is guided and checked by the teacher; 3) The students practice the production, which is guided and checked by the teacher (Wen, 2015). The scaffolding role of the teacher is most evident in the "enabling" phase (Qiu, 2019). On the one hand, the teacher decides how much help to provide, based on a good understanding of the learning situation (Ji et al, 2020). On the other hand, the production exercise is a step-by-step process guided by the teacher. At the end of the exercise, the student is assessed immediately to see if he or she can complete the output task (Chen & Wen, 2020).

Thirdly, the "assessing" phase of production can be divided into "immediate assessment" and "delayed assessment" (Wen, 2015). "Immediate assessment" refers to the "checking" part of the "enabling" process, i.e., the teacher's assessment of students' learning as they work through the optional learning and output tasks. This "immediate assessment" helps teachers to pace and manage their teaching

(Zhang,2017). While the “delayed assessment” means that students go through the exercises post-class, as requested by the teacher, and then submit the results of the exercises to the teacher for assessment (Zhang, 2020).

The curriculum standard sets out new requirements for Junior High School English writing (MOE, 2022). The curriculum standard requires the following three main aspects, language, content, and structure. Firstly, students will be able to use correct vocabulary, sentence structure and grammar in relation to the topic. Secondly, students will be able to describe the main content and ideas accurately. Thirdly, students can use conjunctions correctly and express the main content logically. Therefore, the curriculum standards are not only an important guide to teachers’ teaching of English writing in junior secondary schools (Yu et al., 2022), but also a pre-determination and expectation of the level of development and final outcomes that students should achieve through their study of writing courses (Yang, 2022).

The curriculum standards also suggest that the writing teaching also pays attention to the observation of students’ learning motivation, which means that writing motivation is also an important factor (MOE, 2022). Based on the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), there are two types of motivation: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 1994). Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity or completing a task for its own sake (Van Blankenstein et al., 2018). For example, Students show an active and resourceful curiosity about

writing, since they are interested in writing in English rather than being forced to learn it (Karlen et al., 2019). Extrinsic motivation occurs when we are eager to perform a behavior or engage in an activity to get a reward or avoid punishment occurs when we are eager to perform a behavior or engage in an activity to get a reward or avoid punishment (Graham, 2021). Because there is little intrinsic interest in learning, especially in English writing itself, for students, teachers need to find an appropriate method of teaching writing that motivates students externally so that they can be intrinsically motivated to complete the writing task. (Camping et al., 2020).

In conclusion, regardless of the requirements of Chinese society and curriculum standards, English writing is placed in a position that cannot be ignored. Writing achievement and motivation, two important indicators of students' writing, undoubtedly require teachers to seek a teaching method that is appropriate to the learning characteristics of Chinese junior high school students. Therefore, based on the unique merits of POA, this study attempts to use the method for research and practice in the writing teaching.

1.3 Problem Statement

Chinese students are exposed to English writing from junior high school (Year 7-9), and writing is considered a complex, cyclical, and creative process compared to listening, speaking, and reading (Yun, 2019). As mentioned earlier,

POA teaching must be based on students with a certain level of English and vocabulary (Wen, 2015). Clearly, Year 7 (age 13) has difficulty meeting this requirement (Wang et al., 2020). Moreover, even though Year 9 students (15 years old) have a certain knowledge base of English, the content and teaching mode cannot be broken in the face of the Chinese Senior High School Entrance Examination (Liu & Zhang, 2019). Therefore, this study will focus on the English writing of the Year 8 (age 14) students in junior high school.

1.3.1 Problem regarding Writing Achievement

Despite the prominence of writing in teaching English as a foreign language, the writing achievement of Year 8 students is not promising (Wang et al., 2020). According to Yun (2019), a survey of 300 Year 8 students' English writing achievement in four schools in Shaanxi Province, the results showed that the average English writing score was 7.4 (out of 15). By analyzing the students' writing, the reasons for their low achievement in writing in Year 8 focused on three main areas: language, content, and structure (Ge, 2021).

Firstly, students make misspellings of words, reversing the order of letters, adding or missing letters (Yang, 2022). For example, I belive that my dreams can come ture in the future (Yun, 2019). Apparently, there is a spelling error in the words "believe" and "true" in this sentence. Additionally, some students had grammatical errors, such as third person singular and tense (Gao & Shang, 2020).

This is due to the influence of the mother tongue, which does not have such grammatical rules in Chinese language (Liu & Zhang, 2019).

Secondly, some Grade 8 students have no idea what to write about, even if they have some basic writing skills (Jiang, 2019). When faced with a writing task, students only translate the Chinese information given in the writing requirements (Ge, 2021). In other words, the writing task becomes a translation task. Other students mentioned in their interviews that they relied entirely on the sentences they usually memorised for the writing content (Yun, 2019).

Thirdly, incoherent essay structures are more common in Grade 8 students' English writing (Ge, 2021). Specifically, this is reflected in the lack of logic between paragraphs and the lack of connecting words between sentences in the essay (Zhang & Zhan, 2020). Some writing that does not make sense to the reader will receive low marks because it is simply a collection of sentences, not to mention the logical relationship of the writing (Gao & Shang, 2020). In conclusion, Year 8 students' English writing has problems in terms of writing language, writing content, and writing structure.

1.3.2 Problem regarding Writing Motivation

Another factor that influences students' writing, writing motivation, has also been studied by many researchers (Camacho et al., 2020; Liu, 2019; Yu et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2019). To understand the issues of motivation in writing for Year 8

students, Liu (2019) conducted in-depth interviews with 30 students. Firstly, students are inattentive in writing classes, gossiping with classmates, and even sleeping in class. Due to the limited time available in the classroom and the current oversized class sizes in China, teachers are unable to emphasize these issues repeatedly (Liu & Zhang, 2022). Obviously, the reason behind these problems is that Year 8 students do not have a strong intrinsic motivation to learn English writing (Bai & Wang, 2020).

Secondly, some students' writing motivation was influenced by their teachers and parents, as it was not internally driven (Ge et al., 2020). Students struggle to learn to write to gain praise from teachers or to avoid scolding from parents due to low writing achievement (Ma, 2021). In short, these problems are caused by extrinsic motivation for writing. From the above analysis, Grade 8 students' motivation problems in writing are mainly due to both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

1.3.3 Problem regarding Writing Teaching Approach

Considering that Grade 8 students suffer from the poor writing achievement and motivation, it is necessary to propose an approach to teaching writing that is appropriate to the current situation of Year 8 students (Liu & Zhang, 2019). However, the following problems exist in the teaching of English writing in Grade 8.

Firstly, there is also a common problem with Year 8 English writing in China. Due to the influence of exam-oriented education, students have less time to spend on writing (Li, 2019). Likewise, writing in Grade 8 English accounts for only 12.5% of the English exams (MOE, 2022). English writing is a long-term practice process, and students who do not pay enough attention to it will certainly not achieve good writing achievement.

Secondly, English teaching in China is mostly based on the lecture method, and students' learning in this teaching context is rather passive (Li, 2019). Over time, students may find writing lessons boring and may have problems with gossiping and inattention, thus losing motivation to learn how to write (Wang et al., 2020). Once students lose the support of positive intrinsic motivation and at the same time they are pressured by extrinsic motivation (teachers and parents) (Ma, 2021), it is difficult to improve students' motivation to write in this learning climate.

Thirdly, until now traditional methods of teaching writing have not changed the achievement and motivation of Grade 8 students in writing (Lin, 2022; Liu & Zhang, 2019; Li, 2022). The POA was created with Chinese learners and foreign language backgrounds in mind and has been enriched and refined over almost 10 years to provide new directions and ideas for teachers (Ellis, 2017; Guo, 2024; Liu, 2021; Qi, 2022; Serin, 2018; Wang, 2022; Wen, 2015; Xuan et al., 2024; Yi, 2020; Zhang, 2020).

The experiments of POA in English writing teaching mainly took place in universities (Liu et al., 2020; Yin, 2019; Zhang, 2017) and senior high schools (Liu & Zhang, 2020; Huang, 2020), and many studies have proved the positive influence of POA in teaching writing. After the POA in teaching practice, there was a significant difference in the aspect of "language achievement" between these two groups; to be specific, the experimental group made greater progress than the control group (Zhang, 2017). Huang (2020) employed POA in senior high school English writing and concluded that POA not only improved students' English writing ability but also enhanced their interest in learning. Until now, there has been no research on the application of the POA to English writing teaching in Year 8 students. In addition, some studies have focused on the relationship between POA and writing skills (Li, 2020), critical thinking (Ren & Wang, 2018), and deep learning (Qi, 2022). Therefore, there is much room for research on POA and writing achievement and motivation.

To analyze the above-mentioned writing situation of Chinese Year 8 students, there were many problems with students' writing achievement (language, content, and structure) and writing motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic). In this study, the researcher hopes that POA can help solve these problems. Therefore, this study will examine the effect of POA on enhancing Chinese Year 8 students' writing achievement and motivation.

1.4 Research Objectives

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the effectiveness of the POA in enhancing Chinese Year 8 students' English writing achievement (the linear combination of English writing language achievement, English writing content achievement, and English writing structure achievement).
2. To examine the effectiveness of the POA in enhancing Chinese Year 8 students' English writing motivation in terms of English writing intrinsic motivation and English writing extrinsic motivation.
3. To explore the Chinese Year 8 students' writing experience after using the POA.

1.5 Research Questions

This is one of the most critical sections of the study, as it enables the overall expectations and outcomes of the study to be determined. In efforts to support this, research questions are posed at the beginning of the study to contribute to guiding and focusing the research efforts on the right direction. In any case, the following research questions are addressed according to the above objectives:

RQ 1. Is there any significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' post-test English writing achievement (the linear combination of English writing language achievement, English writing content

achievement, and English writing structure achievement) between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group, while controlling for their pre-test English writing achievement?

1a. Is there any significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' post-test English writing achievement with regard to English writing language achievement between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group, while controlling for their pre-test English writing achievement?

1b. Is there any significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' post-test English writing achievement with regard to English writing content achievement between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group, while controlling for their pre-test English writing achievement?

1c. Is there any significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' post-test English writing achievement with regard to English writing structure achievement between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the

control group, while controlling for their pre-test English writing achievement?

RQ 2. Is there any significant difference in in Chinese Year 8 students' English writing motivation between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group?

2a. Is there any significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' English writing motivation with regard to English intrinsic motivation between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group?

2b. Is there any significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' English writing motivation with regard to English extrinsic motivation between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group?

RQ 3. What is the Chinese Year 8 students' writing experience after using the POA?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

To answer the research questions the following hypotheses will be statistically tested.

Ho_1. There is no significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' post-test English writing achievement (the linear combination of

English writing language achievement, English writing content achievement, and English writing structure achievement) between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group, while controlling for their pre-test English writing achievement.

Ho 1a. There is no significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' post-test English writing achievement with regard to English writing language achievement between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group, while controlling for their pre-test English writing achievement.

Ho 1b. There is no significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' post-test English writing achievement with regard to English writing content achievement between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group, while controlling for their pre-test English writing achievement.

Ho 1c. There is no significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' post-test English writing achievement with regard to English writing structure achievement between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the

control group, while controlling for their pre-test English writing achievement.

Ho_2. There is no significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' English writing motivation between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group.

Ho 2a. There is no significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' English writing motivation with regard to English intrinsic motivation between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group.

Ho 2b. There is no significant difference in Chinese Year 8 students' English writing motivation with regard to English extrinsic motivation between the POA for the experimental group and the process-genre approach for the control group.

1.7 Research Significance

The findings of this study may have some positive impact from the following five perspectives: teachers, students, teaching plans, syllabus, and POA development team.

Firstly, for students, the POA instruction drives their latent writing knowledge to complete their output effectively with the help of the teacher. The goal is to improve students' writing achievement at three levels: language, content, and

structure. Additionally, the POA differs from traditional introductions in that it fully mobilizes students' intrinsic writing motivation and draws on the cooperation of extrinsic writing motivation, thus motivating Year 8 students' English writing.

Secondly, for teachers, the POA's unique teaching process offers a new approach and path. unlike traditional writing teaching methods, the POA is based on Chinese students' learning conditions and teachers continue to optimize their own teaching process in teaching writing. Moreover, the POA enhances the teacher's scaffolding role, establishes cooperative learning between teachers and students, and gives full play to the teacher's guidance role. In short, a good writing teaching method can build a solid foundation for teachers' teaching.

Thirdly, from the point of view of lesson planning, the POA offers a new way of thinking about writing lesson planning. All the different resources and materials needed for the course have been considered by the teacher during the planning process. A clear lesson plan facilitates classroom development and considers how to teach in a way that all students can understand. In conclusion, the POA provides a new direction for writing instructional planning as a way to improve student achievement and motivation in writing.

Fourthly, for the syllabus, the results of this study serve as a possible innovation to inform and refine the course syllabus with regard to the learning context based on an analysis of the current state of student writing. Based on this

research on writing achievement, motivation, and writing methods, it will inform the improvement of the syllabus accordingly.

Finally, for the POA development team, past research on POA has only been limited to the China Knowledge Network (Chinese paper database) and there is still relatively little international research on POA. As an international student, the authors have the responsibility and obligation to carry out the promotion of POA to the world. This study will provide practical implications for POA through a mixed research approach, and also provide corresponding research value for the team.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

As the focus of this study was on Year 8 students' writing, other language learning skills, such as listening and reading, were not included. There are some limitations to this study.

Firstly, in the quantitative quasi-experimental study, the sample selection was an intact group, making it difficult to generalize to other schools. This is because different teachers' and students' psychological reactions to the experiment can influence the direction of the experiment, making it difficult to control this limitation. Secondly, this study only experimented with thematic writing. Other styles of essay writing, such as argumentative essays, expository essays, and narrative essays, will not study. This is because the curriculum standard for Grade 8 focuses on teaching thematic writing. Therefore, this experiment only explored the

context of application essays and could not be generalized to other writing styles in English.

1.9 Operational Definitions of Terms

The following key terms are defined as below.

1.9.1 The Production-oriented Approach (POA)

The production-oriented approach is a new and localized approach to teaching and learning in the foreign language classroom (Wen, 2015). The POA aims to reform university foreign language classroom instruction, and some scholars (Huang, 2020; Liu & Zhang, 2019; Sun, 2022) have demonstrated through teaching experiments that this method is also applicable to secondary school (Includes junior and senior high schools) English writing instruction (Han, 2021). The POA advocates the integration of learning and using, which can help teachers and students solve the problems in English writing (Wen, 2017). The POA focuses on the close connection between “input language learning” and “output language using” and instructs students to actively accumulate writing knowledge in the process of selective learning and processing of input language materials.

The POA teaching process is a dynamic circular chain consisting of three main stages: motivating, enabling, and assessing. The three phases of this teaching process are the basis for teachers’ teaching plan and practice. This study will be an

experimental study of Grade 8 English writing based on the three step (motivating, enabling, and assessing) teaching process of POA.

1.9.2 Writing Achievement

English as a subject has four components: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing occupies an important place as a comprehensive and all-round English skill (Zhang & Zhan, 2020). Writing achievement refers to a student's ability to express ideas or thoughts through written form. Students' achievement in English writing is usually assessed through a summative and formative approach.

This study will assess the writing achievement of Year 8 students under POA instruction. Three dimensions will be assessed according to Chinese junior high school students' writing scoring criteria: language, content, and structure.

1.9.2(a) Writing language Achievement

In the scoring rubric of essay for Year 8, the writing language focuses on spelling and grammar (MOE, 2022). The writing language requires students to spell words accurately and to use grammar in a standard way. This study will examine the effect of improving Year 8 students' writing language achievement under POA writing instruction.

1.9.2(b) Writing Content Achievement

The primary focus of writing content is the relevance of the task response. In other words, students are expected to directly answer the question or address the topic specified in the prompt. Irrelevant details or off-topic information should be minimized or avoided. The writing content achievement is judged on the basis that the writing is closely related to the topic, with a central idea and clear and unambiguous points. This study will examine the effect of improving Year 8 students' writing content achievement under POA writing instruction.

1.9.2(c) Writing Structure Achievement

Writing structure is concerned with coherence, the logical connection and clarity of ideas in a piece of writing. Students are required to use a clear and logical structure (introduction, body, conclusion). The writing structure achievement makes clear the logical relationships, not only between sentences, but also between paragraphs. This study will examine the effect of improving Year 8 students' writing structure achievement under POA writing instruction.

1.9.3 Writing Motivation

Writing motivation is a way of looking at writing that is based on a set of attitudes, beliefs, and aspirations that students develop as a result of the numerous activities and settings in which they are expected to write and use their written work (Camacho et al., 2020).