

A Study on the Practice of English Classic Reading Based on Input-Output Theory

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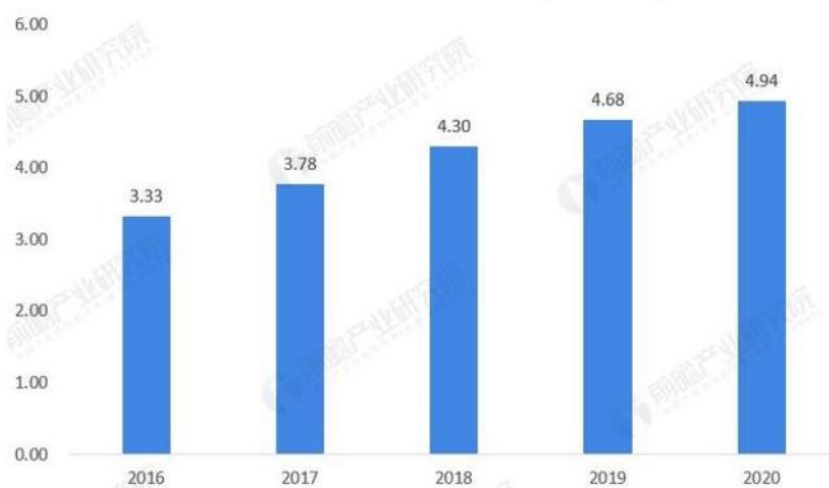
Abstract: The Input and Output Theory believed that during second language acquisition, language input is primary, that the necessary condition for second language acquisition being understandable input, and that language ability is obtained mainly through acquisition rather than learning. Nowadays, fragmented reading is a trend, which has greatly hamstrung the learners' input and eventually output. To reverse the above phenomenon, this paper has made an experimental practice on online classic reading in ximalaya.com, and found that online English classic reading practice can overall improve learners' English learning literacy.

Keywords: Input-Output Theory; Online Classic Reading; Fragmented Reading; English Learning Literacy

1. Introduction

Nowadays, with the development of the Internet and electronic equipment, a new reading method, fragmented reading, has entered the public's vision. Fragmented reading refers to incomplete and it with the help of new reading media, like the Internet. The contents of fragmented reading are short and scattered. People can read the content of personal interest anytime through leisure time. According to the data of China audio visual and Digital Publishing Association compiled by Prospective Industrial Research Institute, the number of digital reading users in China has reached 494 million from 2016 to 2020, an increase of 5.56% over 2019. With the expansion of the scale of digital reading, fragmented reading becomes popular.

Figure 1. Numerical Reading Scale(unit: 100 million) during 2016-2020



(Source: China Audio and Video Press Association, 2021)

However, fragmented reading leads to shallow reading, and it will lead to insufficient input and then limit output. If the input and output cannot be reached, the positive effect of such reading is almost zero. In other words, the shallow reading caused by fragmented reading makes the reader's gain lower than deep reading.

2. Input and Output Theory

In the 1980s, the American linguist Stephen D. Krashen put forward the input theory in the field of second language acquisition research. He believed that language input is primary, the necessary condition for second language acquisition is understandable input, and language ability is obtained mainly through acquisition rather than learning. Second language acquisition occurs naturally when learners receive sufficient input that is slightly higher than their current language level. If people's language level is i , and they are exposed to a large number of language input containing $i+1$, then their level will improve from i to $i+1$.(Krashen, 1982)

In 1985, Swain put forward the "output hypothesis" based on the problems existing in the teaching practice of French immersion course in Canada. The "output hypothesis" holds that output is also of positive significance to language acquisition. Second language acquisition requires not only understandable input, but also understandable output. Adjusted output can promote the development of the second language and urge learners to make full use of their own resources to give full play to their language ability. They must reflect on their output and adjust it to improve the comprehensibility, appropriateness and accuracy of language output.(Swain, 2008)

Since the input-output theory was put forward in the field of second language acquisition, foreign language teaching research has begun to pay attention to the joint research of input and output. A large number of studies at home and abroad have proved that input-output has a positive impact on second language acquisition. Lots of researches based on input-output theory are related to foreign language teaching, but most of them are about oral English, listening or writing, less about reading, and more about "silent research" between foreign language teaching and students or others. Therefore, based on this theory and combined with English literary works, we can make a great innovation in reading.

3. Implementation of Classic Reading

Based on input theory and output theory, an experimental online practice for reading English classical literature is conducted.

3.1 Platform Selection

There must be a certain standard for the selection of platforms. First, the platform must have a certain popularity degree. At the same time, it should have a complete range of types, rich content, and popular forms. What's more, the platform should conform to the public's aesthetics and disseminate positive content. Based on the above standards, ximalaya.com has become the final choice. Since its establishment, ximalaya.com has accumulated a large downloads and its original intention is meaningful, so chose this platform. Finally, a special account for the team was created on the platform to release works on it later.

3.2 Selection of Reading Materials

3.2.1 Language Level

When choosing reading materials, the language level of reading materials should be considered. If the language level is not enough, the significance of reading this book is insignificant. Generally speaking, the language level of the articles written by famous writers is high. Therefore, when selecting reading materials, we can give priority to select from the works of famous writers. This can not only ensure the language level as much as possible, but also greatly save the time and cost of searching books.

3.2.2 Content Level

For the content level, first, there must be a clear logical order. Only logical articles can be understood, so that people can understand the meaning and significance it wants to express. Second, its content should have certain plot ups and downs and dialogue. The ups and downs of the plot can arouse the readers' interest in reading. Third, its content should have a positive spirit of transmission. Only articles that convey positive ideas can inspire people and make readers gain something.

3.2.3 New and Old Degree

The new and old degree does not refer to the publication time of the reading materials, but the frequency of appearance on the platform. The primary selected reading materials are a lot. Finally, the members selected the book *A Captain at Fifteen*, written by Verne, a famous French novelist. His works are highly readable. Secondly, the plot of the novel is full of ups and downs. The spirit of adventure and teamwork expressed in the novel is also worth learning. Finally, no one has read the English version of this book on ximalaya.com. It is less well-known and can better reflect the "new".

3.3 Online Reading Process

A Captain at Fifteen is divided into two parts, with 32 chapters. After discussion, it was decided to record one chapter of audio a week. And the recording equipment selects mobile phones to record the audio of the whole project. Then, the team members get together to discuss the important contents of a chapter. After discussion, the audio will be recorded. The recorded audio will be sent to the leader who will integrate the recording and upload it to ximalaya.com after processing.

3.3.1 Role-based Reading

Since there are many roles in the book, it is necessary for members to read in different roles. In the role assignment, attention should be paid to the personality characteristics of each role, which should be assigned according to the personality characteristics of the role and the oral pronunciation of the members, so that the roles read by the members will be more appropriate. Each member has a preliminary understanding of the roles in the book, then recites some sentences of the roles through their own understanding, and finally determines the corresponding roles of each member according to all the aspects as a comprehensive consideration. Finally, each member has a corresponding role and is fixed to make the recording more natural and coherent.

3.3.2 Grasp of Pronunciation and Intonation

The requirements for members' pronunciation and intonation are high. Before audio recording, members should find out the words you don't know so as to ensure and improve the continuity of recording. Before reading, members should understand the general content, and figure out the inner feelings and emotions of the characters. Through such a comprehensive understanding, members can produce good results when recording and play a better role in input and output.

3.3.3 Vocabulary and Sentence Pattern Learning

The learning of vocabulary and sentence patterns runs through all the time. When preparing for the recording, members must understand the meaning of words and the structure of sentences. Therefore, members can learn relevant vocabulary and sentence patterns before preparing for the recording. Then, through repeated reading, members can better understand the meaning and usage of these words and sentence patterns. Members are constantly learning and improving their vocabulary and sentence usage through recording.

3.4 Later Data and Feedback

After each audio upload to ximalaya.com, team members will share the recording of this chapter in various ways so that more people can hear it. Since the team released the works, the cumulative playback volume has exceeded 1000 times, and the maximum playback volume of a chapter has reached 340 times. The listening objects come from different fields, so the team will receive different feedback. The team members will pay attention to the relevant feedback so that the team can continuously improve in the next recording. In this way, after drawing on the comments and feedback from the audience and their own continuous improvement, the team's recording products are becoming more and more mature and standardized.

4. Implementation Effect

In the process of practice, due to constant repetition, practice and improvement, the members' English level has been improved. It's precisely because of such input that the team has better output for the whole project. Such excellent output can better test the results of the previous input, because input is the basis and necessary preparation for output. Output is not only the best test of input effect, but also can promote better input. Both of them contribute to the improvement of students' comprehensive language ability.(Bai Nengyun, 2007)

4.1 Language Level Improved

Through practical research, the team members have greatly improved their English language level, including vocabulary, polysemy and proper nouns. For example, when members encounter a word they do not understand or are not familiar with, they will query the basic information of the word and understand its basic usage. At the same time, there are other learning gains. For example, “penetrate” appears in Chapter 4. Before that, the Chinese understanding of the word by team members was different meanings. However, in the text, “penetrate into the steward’s room” means stepping into a certain place. In this way, team members enrich their knowledge based by learning the words in the text. In the process of reading, because the contents of the readings are carried out around a theme, there is a strong relevance, which requires members to be familiar with the contents of the readings, so that they can read fluently. In general, the whole research process is also a process for the members to improve their language level, which also makes the members' English level improve and benefit a lot.

4.2 The Awareness of Cooperative Learning Strengthened

This research is carried out by students' team cooperation. In the long-term group cooperation, students' awareness of cooperative learning will be strengthened. For example, members may encounter different emotional understanding of the content, so they need to communicate with each other to discuss the emotional meaning of the content. Each member keeps pondering a certain plot and practicing a certain syllable so as to achieve the best reading effect. Finally, a consensus is reached to record, which can not only ensure the quality of the work to the greatest extent, but also use the cooperative learning consciousness from this team cooperation to life, study and work.

4.3 The Output Enhanced

The core of research is to strengthen the output. At the same time, it has a feedback effect on the members, especially in their oral English. Oral English has not only gradually improved, but also mastered many authentic English expressions. Because there are some dialogues in the book with many different feelings, the members need to read them repeatedly until they are satisfied with the results and conform to the emotional tone of the original text. Such repetition strengthens the members' output, improves the quality of output, and makes the output more meaningful. In the future study, the members will try to figure out and read a certain article repeatedly to achieve the best effect. Because this kind of output is bi-directional, it not only outputs the research qualitatively, but also feeds back the output of other aspects. In the whole process, we not only improved our English pronunciation, but also accumulated vocabulary and sentence patterns, enhanced our writing skills, and more importantly, mastered a learning method that can be used in many fields.

The effect of practice is not limited to bringing linguistic benefits to team members, but also improving their literary literacy. Because they read one of the foreign classic literature, they can learn a lot of literary knowledge or cultural customs from this book.

5. Summary

Because the reading of literary classics involves oral English, reading, listening and writing, and extends to aesthetics, perception and creation, it has high requirements for students' language ability and humanistic quality(He Jingjing, 2019), so the fragmented reading in learning the classic literature is conducive to the understanding of the article. At the same time, one-sided input cannot deeply explore the things. Only by organically combining with output can we achieve two-way

harvest, and “reading” classics is an important and correct output method. “Reading aloud is a complex process, involving all levels of language ability-pronunciation and intonation, vocabulary, syntactic processing ability, sentence and text comprehension ability.”(Gao Xia, et., 2006) If the learners only read or annotate the book at the beginning of the study, rather than actually “reading” and recording, and lack an output process, they will not appreciate the charms of the classic books, and what’s more, they can’t fully appreciate the charm and fun of learning English.

The fragmented promotion of research projects helps to understand and develop our projects in practice and improve our English learning literacy. Whether language expression or the humanistic feelings of a foreign country, it has been improved to varying degrees with the promotion of research projects. More importantly, it enriches the methods of foreign language learning through such continuous input and output.

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