

POA-Based Promotion of the “Three Inclusions” as a Solution to Chinese Cultural Aphasia: A Case Study of the Integrated English Course for English Majors

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Abstract

In order to effectively address the long-standing issue of Chinese Cultural Aphasia among English learners in China, this paper builds a “Three Inclusions” model of the Integrated English Course for undergraduate English majors under the guidance of POA theory. Taking *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* as a starting point and POA theory as a guide, the paper redesigns the Integrated English Course across the board to achieve multi-dimensional integrated teaching path that combines concepts, textbooks, strategies, and evaluation. The whole teaching design can make up for the lack of discussion on Chinese culture and social reality in English teaching, strengthening the national conditions awareness of English major students, and enhancing their ability to tell China's stories well and spread China's voice well. Finally, “Equal Opportunity, Our National Myth” written by Joseph Stiglitz is selected for case study to demonstrate the specific implementation path for POA's three phases of motivating, enabling and assessing.

Keywords: Chinese Cultural Aphasia; the “Three Inclusions” work; POA theory; the Integrated English Course.

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1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee Xi Jinping has stressed improving the country's capacity for engaging in international communication to present a true, multi-dimensional and panoramic view of China. This is related to China's participation in the reform and construction of the global governance system (Wu, 2019). Telling Chinese stories well, spreading China's voice well, and presenting a true, three-dimensional, and panoramic China are based on language, culture, and translation; therefore, cultivating outstanding international communication talents is an important mission in foreign language teaching (Jiang, 2018).

However, for a long time, higher foreign language education has not paid enough attention to mother tongue culture education, resulting in many college students' inability to skillfully and effectively use English to express the customs, systems, traditional concepts contained in Chinese culture. “Chinese Cultural Aphasia” was proposed by Professor Cong Cong of Nanjing University (2000). He pointed out that even high-level talents with good English proficiency and Chinese cultural cultivation cannot express the content

of Chinese culture in English once they enter the context of English communication. Once proposed, it has attracted widespread attention in the foreign language education field. Nevertheless, combing through relevant research literature, one can find that for a long time after Chinese Cultural Aphasia was proposed, college students' ability to express Chinese culture in English was still generally poor, and their critical understanding of Chinese and Western cultures still needs to be improved (Yuan & Zhao, 2017). Chen (2021) pointed out that foreign language courses in colleges and universities focus on language skills training and neglect the guidance of ideas, ideals and beliefs. “The long-standing characteristics of focusing on the transmission of the ‘target language’ culture and neglecting the input of China's culture have restricted college students' absorption of China's fine traditional culture and the establishment of cultural confidence,” she stressed.

Duan (2019) conducted a survey on the phenomenon of “Chinese Cultural Aphasia” among English major students and found that English major students do not have a high level of understanding of Chinese culture and are not very good at expressing Chinese culture in English. He concluded that culture

aphasia still exists widely. He then put forward three reasons for this: [1] There are too few contents related to Chinese culture in English major textbooks. [2] Professional teaching is too "focused on English and neglected on Chinese", and teachers do not have enough understanding of Chinese culture and lack awareness of the importance of teaching Chinese culture. [3] Students are not motivated to learn Chinese culture because they lack awareness of the importance of learning it.

2. Promotion of the "Three Inclusions" as a Solution to Chinese Cultural Aphasia

In 2019, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued "Opinions on Deepening the Reform and Innovation of Ideological and Political Theory Courses in Schools in the New Era", which proposed to "fully promote Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era into textbooks, classrooms, and students' minds" (hereafter referred to as the "Three Inclusions" work), and to "promote the synergy between various courses and ideological and political courses" to jointly promote the realization of the goal of building morality and cultivating people. For foreign language disciplines, the "Three Inclusions" work specifically refers to the multilingual versions of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* entering colleges and universities, textbooks, and classrooms.

Xi Jinping: The Governance of China vertically connects the history of the Party, the history of New China, the history of reform and opening up, and the history of socialist development, and covers all aspects such as politics, economy, society, culture, education, national defense, and diplomacy. It is an authoritative reading material for Chinese foreign language students to understand contemporary China. It also enables college students to distinguish between truth and falsehood, understand the real and objective national conditions of China, and thus establish confidence in the Chinese path and Chinese culture.

First, the "Three Inclusions" work is actually the main content and main focus of ideological and political education in foreign language courses. In order to implement the "moral education and character building", the "Guidelines for the Construction of Ideological and Political Courses in Higher Education Institutions" emphasizes the necessity of integrating value shaping, knowledge imparting and ability training (2020). Combining the overall requirements of the guidelines for ideological and political courses, Sun (2020) emphasized that foreign language courses can enhance students' cultural confidence and improve their moral cultivation by allowing students to understand and learn to express the core elements of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era in English, understand and learn to express fine traditional Chinese culture in English, understand and internalize the core socialist values, understand the

similarities and differences of the world's diverse cultures, and improve their awareness of mutual learning among civilizations, awareness of a community of shared future and their cross-cultural ability.

Besides, the "Three Inclusions" work facilitates foreign language majors' understanding of national conditions. In the current era of information explosion, various online rumors emerge in an endless stream, which has become a major social disease in the era of network communication, and the social environment in which young people grow up is seriously polluted. In terms of critical thinking ability, it is well established that while the overall critical thinking personality tendency of Chinese college students is positive, there are deficiencies in cognitive maturity and looking at problems from multiple perspectives. Therefore, young college students still lack the ability to distinguish the authenticity of information and are easily convinced of rumors and misled and used by forces with ulterior motives. Only when college students in the new era have a deep understanding of China's national conditions can they eliminate interference, adjust their attitudes, strengthen "the Four-sphere Confidence" and grow up healthily.

Finally, the "Three Inclusions" work is an ideal way to cultivate patriotism and convictions. For foreign language majors, a deep sense of patriotism and firm ideals and beliefs are indispensable. Precisely because of their language advantage, foreign language majors have more opportunities than others to go abroad and communicate with the world. In this case, without correct values, language may become a tool to discredit China's international image and hurt national feelings. From this perspective, it is a must to cultivate in them patriotism, values, and the awareness of language serving national security. In view of this, the new version of *The Teaching Guidelines for Foreign Languages and Literature Majors in Regular Colleges and Universities—Teaching Guidelines for English Majors* (2020) points out that the goal of cultivating talents in English majors in the new era is to integrate knowledge imparting, ability cultivation and value shaping. In the knowledge section, it especially emphasizes that students should "be familiar with Chinese language and cultural knowledge and understand China's national conditions."

The introduction of multilingual versions of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* into foreign language majors in universities will promote ideological and political education in foreign language courses, help foreign language majors reconstruct their knowledge about national conditions, enhance their international communication capabilities, and tell the Chinese story well.

3. Taking Integrated English Course for Chinese English Majors as a Case Study

Here in my institution of higher education, which is one of the prodigious universities in North China, Integrated English [1-4] is one of the most important basic courses for English majors, covering the first and second academic years, with many class hours, long cycle and wide coverage.

3.1 Problems in the Integrated English Course for English Majors

According to *Teaching Guidelines for English Majors* (2020 Edition), the teaching goal of the Integrated English course is to "cultivate students' ability to use English language knowledge and skills for language communication". However, the teaching of the Integrated English course for English majors has gradually shown its drawbacks.

Firstly, in terms of course objectives and teaching procedures, too much attention is paid to English language skills while insufficient emphasis is laid on the cultivation of students' capability of telling Chinese stories to the international community.

Secondly, from the teaching content point of view, the textbooks used in the Integrated English Course have relatively few contents related to Chinese society or Chinese cultural elements, nor do the exercises provided in each unit. The two textbooks used are *An Integrated English Course 3* and *An Integrated English Course 4* (The Twelfth Five-Year Plan National-level Planning Textbook for General Higher Education Undergraduates, published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, edited by Dai Weidong). Both of the two textbooks have a strong humanistic color, covering art, history, philosophy, law, morality, modern life, family education and other aspects. The texts mainly come from journals, newspapers and books in English-speaking countries, telling the stories of English-speaking countries, and behind it is a set of Western values and ideologies. It is undeniable that the current textbooks have irreplaceable advantages in language learning, which allow students to be exposed to and learn the original target language.

Finally, course evaluation is also mainly based on the examination of students' language skills, and not enough attention is paid to cultivating and evaluating students' ability to tell Chinese stories well and spread Chinese voices.

It can be said that the bias in the content of the textbooks and the setting of the course objective and evaluation has led to insufficient awareness and training of teachers and students in spreading Chinese culture in foreign languages, and has shown great limitations in cultivating and consolidating students' "Four-Sphere Confidences". Therefore, the existing Integrated English

Course urgently needs to be fully reconstructed across the board.

In recent years, although the course faculty has been conducting teaching reforms and practices around ideological and political education, focusing on enriching and extending teaching content from the perspective of the comparison between Chinese and Western cultures and adding Chinese elements, the English materials involving Chinese elements are often scattered and fall short of being systematic, holistic and coordinated. In addition, Chinese culture-loaded words usually have multiple translations, and teachers often find it difficult to distinguish them. Therefore, due to the lack of systematic and authoritative English readings involving Chinese culture and society, teachers have a low sense of self-efficacy in daily teaching.

By combing through the literature related to the curriculum reform of foreign language majors in the context of the "Three Inclusions" work, the course faculty has found that most of the literature explored the direction of teaching reform of foreign language majors from a macro-theoretical level (Guan, 2018), and only a few researchers explored the classroom teaching design path of the multilingual version of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* in a specific course, and these courses are mostly limited to Russian translation appreciation courses, Japanese translation appreciation courses, English speech and debate courses, etc. There is no literature exploring the teaching reform and research of the Integrated English Course for lower-grade English majors against the backdrop of the "Three Inclusions" work.

3.2 POA-based Restructuring of this Course Across the Board in the Context of the "Three Inclusion" Work

In view of the above reasons, the course faculty decide to act on the Production-Oriented Approach(POA) teaching material use, its teaching process and evaluation framework to integrate *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* into the current textbooks, and systematically reconstruct this course.

POA theory is a foreign language teaching theory constructed by Professor Wen Qiufang and her team after more than ten years of research and practice, drawing on the essence of traditional Chinese education theory and Western teaching theory. This teaching theory emphasizes both the process and the results of language production, aiming to address the separation of learning and use in English teaching in China. It consists of three parts: teaching philosophy, teaching hypothesis, and teaching process. Teaching philosophy includes "learning-centered principle", "learning-using integration principle", "cultural exchange theory" and "key ability theory"; teaching hypothesis covers "output-driven", "input-enabled", "selective learning" and "learning by evaluation"; the teaching process is led by

teachers and co-built by teachers and students, and the three phases of "driving-enabling-assessing" contribute to effective learning (Wen, 2017).

It can be seen that the POA theory can effectively change the shortcomings of English teaching, such as "focusing on input, neglecting output, neglecting evaluation", "separating learning from use", and "separating learning from evaluation".

Since its creation, POA pedagogy has received keen attention from the foreign language community. Many college teachers have actively tried to integrate this teaching theory into teaching practice, and to verify the effectiveness of the POA teaching process in improving students' vocabulary, oral, reading, writing, translation, and thinking abilities through empirical research. Studies have shown that POA can effectively improve students' writing, oral and reading abilities; it can positively affect students' thinking abilities, bring forth students' positive emotional experiences, enhance self-confidence, and strengthen learning motivation.

Guided by the POA theory, this teaching reform intends to design the following teaching objectives, teaching contents and teaching processes.

According to the viewpoint of curriculum theory, teaching objectives determine teaching content, teaching methods and evaluation methods. In setting teaching objectives for this course, output is the guide, and the overall teaching objectives related to the "Three Inclusions" and students' Chinese stories-telling competence are put in a prominent position, so as to

achieve the deep integration of "building a new liberal arts knowledge framework + cultivating language skills + guiding values" and effectively carry out ideological and political education in courses.

Wen Qiufang (2017) proposes POA Teaching Materials Use and Evaluation Theory Framework, which denotes that teachers can flexibly use the four strategies of selection, adjustment, modification and addition to select the number of teaching units in the whole book and the specific teaching content of each unit according to the level of the students, course objectives and the required teaching hours. "Selection" refers to selecting a part of the materials from the existing resources. "Adjustment" refers to rearranging the order of the existing materials, "modification" refers to modifying the existing materials, and "addition" refers to the teachers adding new materials themselves. Therefore, in terms of the teaching contents, the teacher can integrate the current Integrated English Course textbook and theme-related texts selected from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* through the four strategies of selection, adjustment, modification and addition. *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* covers all aspects such as politics, economy, society, culture, education, national defense, and diplomacy, which can be strategically and holistically integrated into the current course book with careful deliberation.

As regards the teaching procedure (See Figure 1), POA-based teaching mode is employed to maximize students' language output ability. In each phase of the teaching process, output is the guide to effectively promote learning.

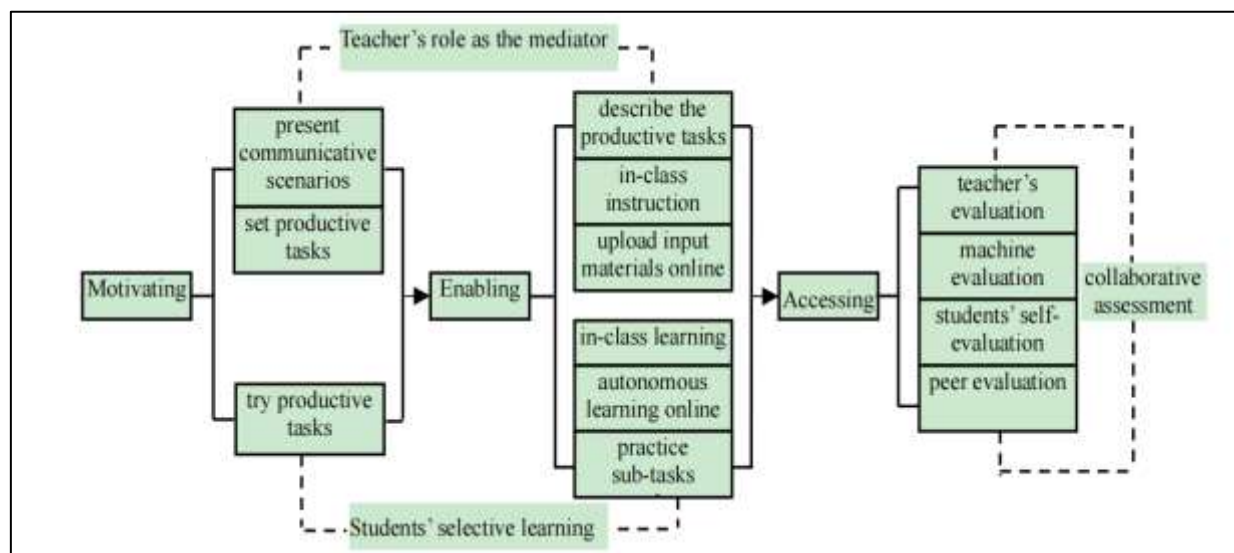


Figure 1: POA-guided Teaching Procedure

First, in the motivating phase, teachers present communicative scenarios and moderately challenging productive tasks through micro-lectures, videos or self-descriptions by teachers. In the output task part, the core concepts of socialism with Chinese characteristics can be

cleverly integrated into tasks in the form of composition, speech, or debate. This will not only test students' mastery and application of English listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation but also enable the teacher to check students' understanding and recognition

of socialism with Chinese characteristics. After students get the pre-class tasks, they can ask questions online at any time. In the process of trying to fulfill the output tasks, students realize their own deficiencies and difficulties in content, language and discourse structure, which will facilitate subsequent targeted learning.

Then in the enabling phase, the teacher describes the productive tasks in detail, which are segmented into sub-tasks, and give full play to teacher's role of scaffolding in promoting learning in flipped classroom. Meantime, the teacher provides students with learning materials in terms of content, language and discourse structure that can help them complete the output sub-tasks. In checking students' pre-class learning effects, the teacher provides immediate feedback and guidance to ensure that students correctly understand China's national conditions and that students can use appropriate English to show a real, comprehensive and three-dimensional China.

Finally, in the evaluation stage, Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment advocated by POA will be employed in which teachers and students cooperate in evaluation, students evaluate each other, and students self-evaluate, and formative evaluation and summative evaluation are combined, focusing not only on language form, but also on students' understanding and recognition of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, traditional Chinese culture and revolutionary culture.

3.3 A Specific Demo

In order to show how this proposed method works, Text 1 of Unit 7 entitled "Equal Opportunity, Our National Myth" is selected for case study.

3.3.1 Teaching Materials

Written by American Nobel Prize laureate Joseph Stiglitz, "Equal Opportunity, Our National Myth" examines the significant gap between the American Dream of equal opportunity and the harsh reality. The author argues that the United States, once a land of

opportunity, now lags behind most developed countries in terms of social mobility. The article highlights that upward mobility is becoming increasingly rare, with only a small percentage of individuals born into low-income families managing to move up the economic ladder. Stiglitz identifies key factors contributing to this situation, including racial and gender discrimination, unequal access to quality education, and economic segregation. He emphasizes that education is crucial for equal opportunity but is being undermined by current government policies. The article concludes with a call for policy reforms to restore the American Dream, asserting that equal opportunity is not only a moral imperative but also essential for economic prosperity.

In order to promote the "Three Inclusions" work and address successfully Chinese Cultural Aphasia, a speech taken from the first volume of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* with the title of "Realize Youthful Dreams" is selected as a supplementary reading text. Delivered on May 4 (China's Youth Day), 2013, this speech focuses on how Chinese youth can realize the Chinese Dream. In the speech, Xi Jinping emphasizes that young people should be firm in their ideals and convictions, improve their professional competence, dare to innovate and create, work hard, and temper their character to contribute to the realization of the Chinese Dream. He also points out that young people should integrate their personal dreams with national development and actively participate in national construction. It can be argued that this speech pairs well with Joseph Stiglitz's article.

3.3.2 Teaching Objectives

Teaching objectives comprise three constituents: language knowledge, language skills and cognitive skills. Through the two texts, students are expected to master relevant language knowledge such as vocabulary, useful expressions and new sentence structures, develop specific language skills in reading, speaking, and writing as shown in Table 1, and learn to think critically about the essential differences in the American Dream and the Chinese Dream.

Table 1: Teaching objectives: language skills

Reading skills	Speaking skills	Writing skills
1. Get the gist of the two texts through skimming respectively 2. Figure out its structure respectively 3. Interpret the underlying meaning by reading between the lines	1. Develop narrative and descriptive skills 2. Give opinions by comparing and contrasting	1. Develop generalization skills 2. Use evidence such as a story, figures or personal experiences to support the argument

3.3.3 Teaching Process from Motivating to Enabling to Assessing

According to the POA pedagogy, in the stage of motivating, the teacher first presents the scenarios for the productive tasks in order to arouse students' interests.

The scenarios should simulate authentic situations that students might encounter in their future work or studies. In trying to respond to the tasks, they realize their deficiencies. Productive tasks and sub-tasks are designed as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Productive Tasks and Sub-tasks

Scenarios	Productive tasks	Sub-tasks
Situation 1	Work in groups of 4 and generalize the differences between the American Dream and the Chinese Dream.	1. Generalize the main idea of the texts 2. Make comparisons and contrasts methodically 3. Give a group presentation
Situation 2	On a world forum, you are asked to introduce an ordinary person you know personally in your life who has changed his/her destiny through college entrance examination to illustrate the transformative power of education in China.	Tell stories with clarity and persuasiveness
Situation 3	Write an article to tell English-speaking readers some of the measures taken by the Chinese Government to promote educational equity and accessibility and what still needs to be done.	1. Search for relevant specific information 2. Structure your writing 3. Use appropriate vocabulary

In the enabling stage, the teacher describes the productive tasks, provides necessary scaffolding for students and guides them to the completion of the productive tasks step by step. Input materials provided by the teacher are selectively learned by students to bridge their language gaps before class (See Table 3 for input materials covering content enabling, structuring

enabling and vocabulary enabling). Students are also encouraged to search and explore other materials they deem necessary in the completion of the tasks. During the class, the teacher builds scaffolding from words to sentences to discourse structures. In this way, students get familiar not only with the topic but also with the necessary language items and discourse structures.

Table 3: Input materials

Category	Details
Texts	1. "Xi Story: Illuminating the future of every child" from <i>China Daily</i> 2. "Star Project to improve education in remote regions" from <i>China Daily</i> 3. "Empowering dreams (the Honghu Plan supports first-generation college students in China by providing mentorship and resources to help them overcome challenges and unlock their potential)" from <i>China Daily</i> 4. "China's experience with gender equality shared at UN" from <i>China Daily</i>
Videos	1. "How to tell a story like a native English speaker?" by Jade from <i>Bilibili</i> 2. "Trump's first 100 days: A look at the administration's impact on education" from <i>Microsoft news</i> 3. "Education: The only path to change by Ms. Renu Bali" (TED talk)
Other learning materials	1. Explore for yourself the exchanges of information between Chinese users and American TikTok refugees on the Chinese social media app <i>Xiaohongshu</i> regarding higher education tuition fees in both countries 2. Explore for yourself the four volumes of <i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> for comprehensive information on China's commitment to educational equity.

In the assessing stage, formative assessment and summative assessment in line with POA is used. The first one is applied in the enabling phase while the second one is employed when students submit productive tasks. POA advocates Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment, which comprises four steps. First, the teacher together with the students sets up the grading criteria at the beginning of the class. Second, the teacher selects some students' work as samples for discussion, during which the students are asked to give comments and score each work according to the scoring criteria. Third, the teacher makes his/her evaluation and comment on how to improve it. Finally, students are asked to peer evaluate or self-evaluate the rest of students' work after class. When assessment is conducted, special attention will be focused on students' ability to tell China's stories concerning its commitment to educational equity both in language, content, and structure.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper proposes a method for addressing the problem of "focusing on English and neglecting Chinese in the current teaching objectives, textbook content, teaching process, and course evaluation in this course. Taking *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* as a starting point and POA theory as a guide, the paper redesigns the Integrated English Course across the board to achieve multi-dimensional integrated teaching path that combines concepts, textbooks, strategies, and evaluation. The whole teaching design can make up for the lack of discussion on Chinese culture and social reality in English teaching, strengthening the national conditions awareness of English major students, and enhancing their ability to tell China's stories well and spread China's voice well. In this way, Chinese Cultural Aphasia can be effectively addressed.

The Integrated English Course is one of the most important basic courses for English majors in China's colleges and universities, with many class hours, a long cycle, and a wide coverage. Therefore, this paper has a strong promotion value.

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