



# An Exploration of the Localization of Portuguese Teaching Theories in China

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**Abstract:** In order to explore the localized teaching theory of Portuguese in Chinese colleges and universities, the author reviewed the development process of Chinese foreign language teaching theory and combined with the actual situation, and found that the communicative teaching method and the "Production-oriented Approach" are expected to play a key role in the teaching of Portuguese in our country. The article cites examples of classroom operations, aiming to "introduce bricks and stones" for the majority of Portuguese teaching researchers, with a view to the emergence of more localized Portuguese teaching theories in line with the laws of China's development in the future.

**Keywords:** Portuguese teaching theory, localization theory, foreign language communication method, Production-oriented Approach

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## 1. Introduction

Compared with other foreign language majors in China, the Portuguese teaching has not been long. As of 2020 statistics, 55 colleges and universities in China have opened Portuguese majors. With the expansion of Chinese colleges and universities, facing the ever-expanding scale of student groups, how to improve the quality of teaching, update teaching concepts and methods in a timely manner, and find a teaching theory suitable for the ecological environment of Chinese foreign language education is a question that every Portuguese teacher needs to think about.

## 2. The history of Chinese foreign language teaching theory

Since the founding of New China, after 70 years, the theory of foreign language teaching in China has been continuously developed. From the copying, introduction and transformation at the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China, to the innovative research on localized teaching theory from the end of the last century to the present, every stage has witnessed the progress and development of Chinese foreign language teaching theory research. Wen Qiufang (2019) sorted out three paths for the development of foreign language teaching theory in our country: introduction and transformation, rooting in the ground, and integration between China and foreign countries. The three paths show a trend of cross-development and complement each other, which guides the continuous advancement of foreign language teaching theories in our country.

From the founding of the People's Republic of China to the period of Reform and opening-up, foreign language education was in vain. It refers to absorbing foreign advanced theories and carrying out a lot of practice, making timely adjustments, and gradually making them in line with China's national conditions. Among them, communicative approach is one of the most representative foreign language teaching theories. In the 1980s and 1990s, "rooting in the ground" entered a golden period of development. Based on our country's educational ecological environment, many foreign language researchers actively practiced and formed localized theories dedicated to solving local problems.

Since the late 1990s, the path of "integrating China and foreign countries" has been opened up. Foreign language research scholars have absorbed the essence of Chinese and foreign theories and innovated Chinese foreign language teaching methods to solve practical problems in our country's local foreign language education. The "Production-oriented Approach" constructed by Wen Qiufang's team is one of the representative theories of this approach, and it is an important attempt and breakthrough for the effective integration of Chinese localized teaching theories with international academic circles.

## 3. Exploration of localization of Portuguese teaching in colleges

For a long time, Portuguese teaching in Chinese colleges and universities has emphasized the development of students' five basic abilities of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation, while also focusing on cultivating students' practical skills and cross-cultural communication skills. However, China's foreign language education is inseparable from

the Chinese soil. If we blindly copy foreign advanced teaching theories, while ignoring the national conditions and the actual situation of Chinese students, the ideal teaching effect will often not be achieved. This section will discuss from Communicative Approach and Production-oriented Approach (POA) from two perspectives, to explore the localization development direction of Portuguese teaching theory in Chinese universities.

### 3.1 Communicative teaching method

Since the communicative method of foreign language teaching entered China in the middle and late 1970s, its theoretical research and practice have been continuously innovated, which has had a huge impact on the traditional Chinese foreign language teaching model. Chinese foreign language teaching researchers are also re-examining the application of communicative method in China.

Traditional Portuguese teaching mostly adopts text reading teaching, text recitation teaching, grammar point memory teaching and other methods, mistakenly thinking that as long as you master the knowledge and skills of language forms, you can communicate smoothly, ignoring the cultivation of students' ability to use language function knowledge. According to Li Xiaojun (1984), the communicative teaching method emphasizes starting from four aspects and formulating a teaching plan that suits the actual situation of students.

First, create as realistic and informative communicative scenarios as possible for students. Let students know what problems they can solve in the future by learning this sentence pattern, and induce students to learn motivation (Li Xiaojun, 1984). Example 1: Student A is a staff member of the Portuguese Immigration Service (SEF, Portuguese abbreviation), student B is a Chinese student, and B goes to the SEF to apply for a short-term residence visa for foreigners. A needs to explain to B the Portuguese residence policy requirements and the documents that B needs to fill in and submit. The task is to allow B to successfully complete the application for the residence visa. Example 2: Student A and Student B play Portuguese Chinese, who are witnesses to a robbery, but did not see the real criminal; students C, D, and E are suspects, one of whom is the murderer, and student F plays the policeman; assume the dialogue takes place At the police station, witnesses and suspects make separate statements, and the task is for the witnesses to help the police find the culprit.

In addition, in actual communication, it is normal to not understand or hear some sounds or words, so it is also necessary to encourage students to contact natural and authentic language (Li Xiaojun, 1984). Only having access to Portuguese pronunciation or Brazilian Portuguese pronunciation with regular pronunciation and standard speaking speed in school will cause students to fail to understand the Portuguese speaking of those with "non-standard" pronunciation in actual conversations in the future, which is inconsistent with the purpose of language teaching. Nowadays, many Portuguese teachers are gradually introducing local materials from Portuguese-speaking countries into their classrooms, from national current affairs news to residents' living conditions. Through listening training, reading comprehension, exchange of ideas and other forms, students are no longer limited to textbook knowledge, and their internal driving force will be significantly improved.

Second, it is emphasized that the process of seeking answers in communicative activities is more important than the answers themselves. Teachers play an extremely important role in communicative activities. By asking some questions, students are prompted to think, so that they can consciously search for the answer. For example, after a student has read a critical essay on immigration policy in Portugal, the teacher asks the student: What do you think the author wants to express? There may be a so-called correct answer, but do not insist on asking students to find the correct answer, but stimulate their thinking, let them express their opinions, and gradually build a logical thinking mode in Portuguese in the process of searching for the answer.

Then, communicative activities require that language teaching should be student-centered. Today's Portuguese classroom teaching is still influenced by the background of China's examination-oriented education. It places too much emphasis on students' mastery and memory of key knowledge, and makes students memorize by rote, focusing only on the content of the examination, which is not conducive to students' overall development. The communicative teaching method advocates that "acquiring a new language is an internal change of students. As an external force, teachers can only play a role in promoting, not replacing the internal factors of students (Li Xiaojun, 1984)." For example, in the process of reading, encourage students to themselves look up new words, even if you encounter an unknown word temporarily, you can understand its meaning in context.

Finally, pay attention to the accuracy of language forms used in communicative activities, and teachers can help students gain accuracy in communication without affecting the normal progress of communicative activities. In view of this, it is suggested that the classroom activities designed by Portuguese teachers can help students achieve language accuracy consciously. For example, student A tells student B the steps of assembling a piece of furniture in Portuguese, and B listens to A's instructions to operate, and the task is to assemble the furniture. These communicative activities allow students to

actively discover their own weaknesses and correct them in time in order to achieve their tasks.

To sum up, the author believes that Chinese Portuguese teachers can properly use the communicative teaching method in the classroom. First, most of the Portuguese teachers have experience of studying abroad and have certain foreign language communication skills. Second, the increasingly rich online learning and multimedia resources have shortened the distance between students and the people of Portuguese-speaking countries, the knowledge they have learned has been more widely used, and the demand for communication activities has expanded. However, many teachers have not received professional communicative method training and cannot become successful users of communicative teaching method based on personal experience alone. Therefore, the application of the communicative method still needs to be explored, corrected and innovated in practice by the majority of Portuguese language teaching workers.

### 3.2 Production-oriented Approach

Wen Qiufang from Beijing Foreign Studies University led a team in 2015 to propose the "Production-oriented Approach" (hereinafter referred to as POA). Wen Qiufang believes that the fundamental problem of Chinese foreign language education lies in "separation between input and output", that is, focusing on input and ignoring output (Wen Qiufang, 2018). Practice has proved that "output" drives foreign language ability development more than "input". A greater motivation is more beneficial to students' future career development. The POA theoretical system consists of three parts: teaching principles, teaching hypothesis and teaching procedures. The relationship is shown in the figure below.

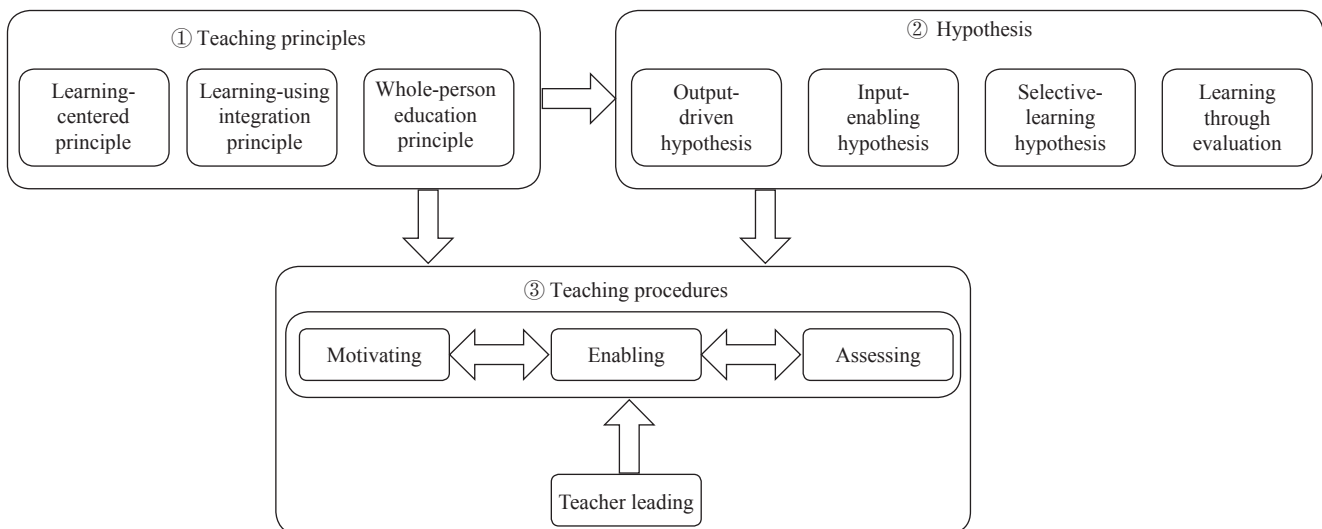


Figure 1. The theoretical system of POA (Wen Qiufang, 2017)

In classroom practice, teachers should play a leading role in helping students to improve their output ability in an all-round way from grammar and pragmatics, and effectively integrate "enabling" and "assessing". At present, in addition to English teaching, POA has been gradually applied in non-universal languages such as Korean, Malay, Romanian, Sinhalese, etc., but Portuguese teaching still leaves a research gap in this field. On the basis of referring to the above-mentioned practical experience of languages, the author tries to explore the feasibility of applying POA to the teaching of Portuguese majors in universities. Take grammar knowledge teaching as an example. Inspired by teacher from Beijing Foreign Studies University Wang Bo's article, "The Application of the 'Production-Oriented Method' in Grammar Teaching of Lower Grades in College Korean Language Majors" (2019), the following teaching plan is designed.

The author designed a classroom teaching experiment of two class hours (90 minutes). Select the theme of "Dine with Portuguese friends in Lisbon", and take "command" as the target grammar. The teaching target language target is composed of two aspects: one is the language target, covering both the oral target and the writing target, that is, to go to the restaurant with the Portuguese When having dinner together, order, dine, and check out in an appropriate way, and can skillfully use "command" writing; the second is the communication goal, that is, to develop cross-cultural communication skills, able to use Portuguese to order, check out, and improve Ability to communicate with locals. The teaching target is the first-year undergraduate students majoring in Portuguese, who have a certain Portuguese learning foundation and output ability. The teaching process follows the three steps of POA — "motivating", "enabling" and "assessing".

### **3.2.1 Teaching procedures**

#### **3.2.1.1 Motivating**

According to the POA theoretical system, the "motivating" link is divided into three teaching steps: 1. The teacher presents the communicative scene; 2. The students try to complete the communicative activities; 3. The teacher explains the teaching objectives and output tasks. Generally speaking, this part is to make students interested in new texts or new grammar points.

First, the teacher asked: You are going to a restaurant in Lisbon with Portuguese friends on a weekend night, how do you order, dine and check out properly? Then, ask two classmates to simply design a situational dialogue. At this time, students will realize their language deficiencies and stimulate their willingness to learn. Finally, the teacher informs the students of the output task of the class: skillfully use the imperative style, in a group, to conduct a restaurant scene dialogue and record it into a video, and send it to the teacher through the network.

#### **3.2.1.2 Enabling**

According to Professor Wen Qiufang (2015), this stage consists of three sub-links: 1. Teachers describe output tasks; 2. Students conduct selective learning, teachers give guidance and check; 3. Students practice output, teachers give guidance and check. To this end, the author designs three stages of dialogue exercises around the teaching theme, from easy to difficult, so that students can continuously strengthen their ability to use and express on the theme.

##### **(1) Natural learning goal grammar**

At this stage, teachers first throw out the typical cases of "imperative" used in daily life, so that students can have an intuitive understanding of its semantic function and morphological changes. For example: Por favor, fecha a porta e beba o café! (Please close the door and drink your coffee!) You can also take the form of a conversation to guide students into the conversation gradually, so that they naturally understand the use of "imperative". In this way, students can feel and understand the changing rules of grammatical forms by themselves by learning and practicing, which can improve teaching effectiveness (Wang Bo, 2019).

##### **(2) Restaurant-specific situational expression exercises**

At this time, the teacher first simulated a scenario: this evening, invite a Portuguese friend of yours to a Portuguese restaurant in Belém. How should you behave during the whole meal? The purpose of this stage is to cultivate students' ability to use "command style" to complete conversations in relevant expressions such as ordering, dining, and checkout in restaurants. Then the teacher provides a dialogue template for dining in a restaurant and some common expressions, and guides the students to follow the teacher to practice the dialogue according to the template, and mark the key content and sentence patterns in the template, and then ask the students to replace the content in the template Reframe conversations for custom content. Teachers should inspect the progress of students' activities, correct mistakes and make evaluations at any time, and finally select groups of students to show in front of the whole class according to the class time.

##### **(3) Free expression exercise**

At this stage, students can choose the topics they are interested in, and imitate the dialogues that have been practiced before. Students can freely design and arrange dialogues in the "command style", which can be to travel together, or to go to a home party together, in order to cultivate students' freedom Conversational skills, while using target grammar more proficiently. Finally, you can choose a few groups of students to show in front of the whole class, and let other students make comments.

#### **3.2.1.3 Assessing**

This class will adopt a combination of real-time evaluation and delayed evaluation, that is, to comment on the dialogues displayed in the class in time, and to evaluate the writing exercises uploaded after the class. The teacher assigns homework at the end of the course: write an essay of no less than 100 words in imperative style and submit it through the Internet. Then, through the combination of teachers' correction and students' mutual approval, students are urged to correct irregular expressions in time.

The "Production-oriented Approach" is rooted in Chinese soil and at the same time absorbs the essence of Western theories. It is a beneficial attempt to innovate the theory of foreign language teaching in China, and it is worthy of more Portuguese teachers to apply it to the practice of university Portuguese teaching.

## **4. Conclusion**

Chinese Portuguese teaching is still in the development stage. While absorbing foreign advanced theories, we should not ignore the profound cultural soil of our country, which can produce teaching methods that are more in line with the national conditions. To this end, the academic community needs to provide an excellent ecological environment and research

conditions for researchers who are exploring the localized Portuguese teaching theory. The problem provides a more efficient solution.

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