

Research on Business English Teaching in Chinese Universities

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Abstract. With the deepening of the development trend of economic globalization and cultural globalization, business English teaching has ushered in a good opportunity for development. However, the market demand for business English professionals' comprehensive ability and quality is also increasing. Based on the literature and the actual situation, this thesis summarizes the current situation of business English teaching in Chinese universities and gives some suggestions for solving the current problems. Therefore, universities should optimize the current business English teaching mode according to the market demand and job requirements, based on the actual development of the business English teaching profession, and optimize the current business English teaching mode in a targeted manner to improve the current predicament. After mastering the qualities and advantages of task teaching methods, inter-disciplinary simulation training, and online teaching platforms, we can effectively infiltrate them into all aspects of business English teaching and comprehensively strengthen the construction of a task-driven business English teaching system. In this way, not only can we cultivate more high-quality applied and compound business English talents needed by society, but we also make business English teaching break through the current educational development difficulties.

Keywords: Business English Teaching; Task-based Pedagogy; College English.

1. Introduction

English plays a vital role in the world economic market. Along with China's market economy's rapid development, trade between China and other countries is gradually increasing. However, the current situation of business English teaching is still relatively difficult to cultivate students needed by the market.

The author believes the business English teaching system should be an introductory course for cultivating practical and application-oriented business talents. In today's society and company recruitment, they focus on the theoretical knowledge students have and value whether students have strong practical hands-on ability. They expect students to be able to fulfill the job requirements once they enter the workplace, which is very important for Business English Majors.

This paper analyzed the status quo of business English teaching in college, effectively discussed various teaching means and modes, and proposed corresponding strategies to better serve the university in cultivating application-oriented talents.

2. The Current Situation of Business English Teaching in Universities

2.1. Courses Offered in the Business English Major

Shumeng Chen mentioned in her thesis that the current business English professional courses can be roughly divided into Business English courses, Business Skills courses, and literature and culture [1]. The Business English series consists of five courses: Comprehensive Business English, Business English Learning Viewing and Speaking, Business English Reading, Business English Writing, and Business English Translation. In Business Skills courses, students will learn Introduction to Economics, Introduction to Management, Cross-border E-commerce, International Business Negotiation, Introduction to International Business Law, and others. This three-dimensional



curriculum system can effectively support the achievement of professional core competence, as shown in Figure 1.

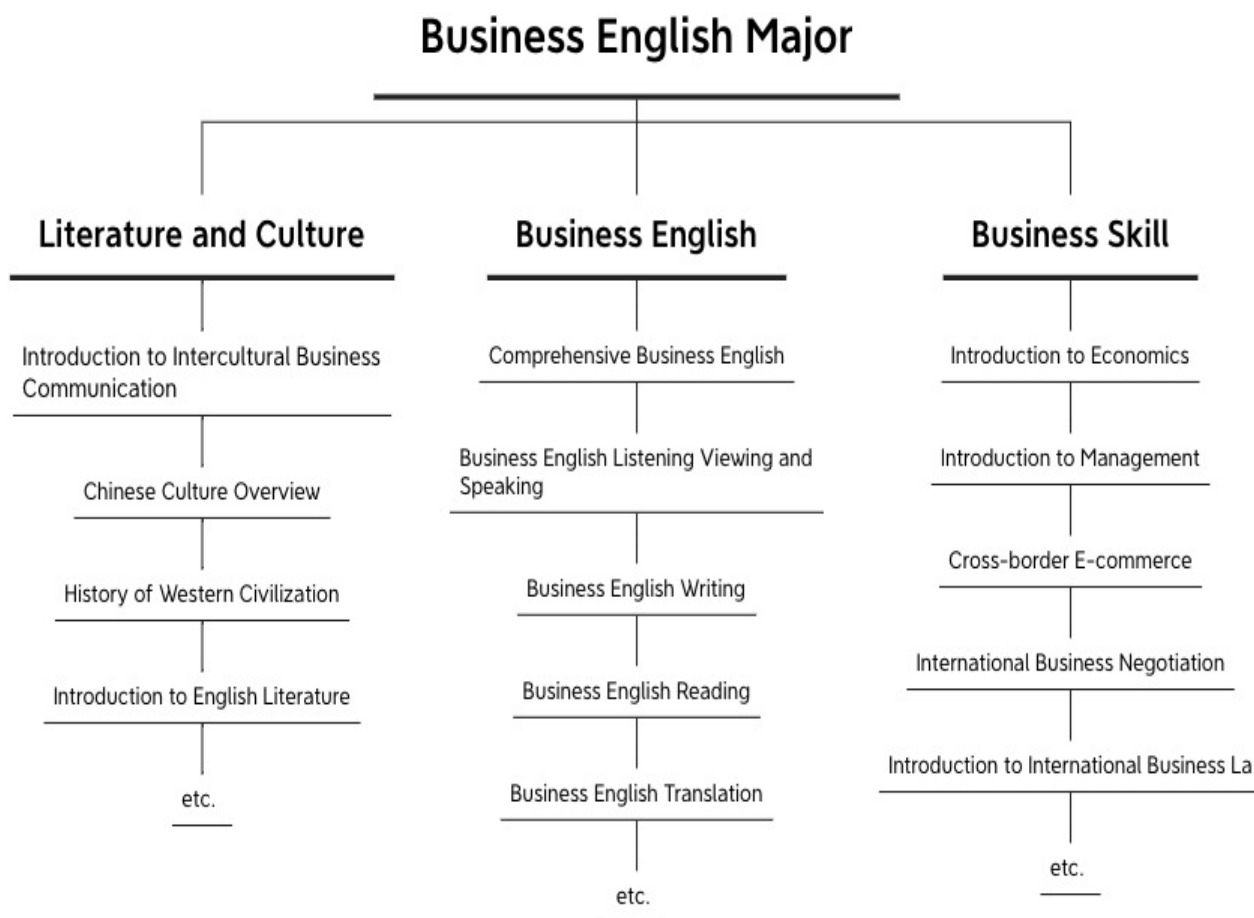


Fig. 1 Main Courses for Business English Majors [1]

2.2. Task-based Language Teaching

2.2.1. Theory of Task-based Pedagogy

Since the 1980s, based on communicative language teaching, a new model of language teaching, "Task-based Language Teaching," has been gradually developed and formed, widely accepted and used internationally. According to Nazenin Ruso, various influential experts, including Prabhu, Nunan, and Willis, gave their definitions for Tasks-based Language Teaching [2]. It is an influential language teaching model based on the research of foreign language teaching methods and second language acquisition. The model is a foreign language learning approach inspired by second language acquisition research. It puts students at the core of business English teaching and carries out student-centered teaching. It provides effective planning and innovation in the classroom by meeting actual teaching requirements and objectives. Using a task-driven approach, students are guided through relevant learning and practice to ensure they are equipped to meet the requirements and literacy of business English majors or positions.

2.2.2. The Use of Task-based Pedagogy in Practical Teaching

Unlike the general English program, the overall teaching and practical application of Business English is more difficult because it is more specialized and standardized. However, through an intensive task-based approach, students can acquire business English skills in a particular area or context and apply them effectively to achieve set goals. Many teachers, in preparing for courses involving business skills, will consciously lead students to experience relevant cases or add task-driven boards or links in their teaching to introduce business English topics or related content scientifically—for example, the most popular group cooperative learning mode. Teachers divide 4-8

students into a task-driven cooperative learning group in the classroom and introduce the task through a short video clip or question introduction to stimulate the group's desire and interest in exploring the task. Attractive slides, animations, and micro-videos create a task-driven, immersive, multifaceted, and interactive English teaching situation to break down better and explain complex and essential knowledge.

2.3. Business English Practical Training

Due to the development of society and the market demand, Business English has become a new growth point of the English discipline. The domain attributes of Business English determine that it is characterized by comprehensiveness, practicability, and applicability, and practical teaching plays a vital role in cultivating talents.

2.3.1. Kuxiao Teaching and Training Platform

In order to help students find employment in the cross-border e-commerce field, Dayang Education and Alibaba have launched the "One-stop talent training program," which uses the practical training platform "Kuxiao" to meet the needs of curriculum teaching and independent training and follows the principle of linking theory to practice. Students can access the systematic cross-border e-commerce course system through this platform, and schools can also utilize this platform for discipline construction and teacher training. In addition, the platform can also dock with enterprises to understand the current market demand for talent and provide personalized talent customization services for enterprises. As Wenwen Li mentioned in her paper, the Kuxiao platform restores the main modules and processes of Alibaba International Station so that students can gain more hands-on experience and establish a correct cross-border e-commerce business mindset [3].

2.3.2. Cross-specialty simulation training

Denying Hu mentioned that cross-specialty simulation training systems, with the help of computer equipment, software system data model, and virtual reality technology, create a virtual teaching scene in line with the physical teaching environment in the process of operation based on the data parameters of the system operating environment, to achieve the virtual teaching and course activities of the fine docking to enhance the practical ability of students [4]. Nowadays, many schools have designated Cross-specialty simulation training as a mandatory course. Ruiya Fan mentioned that the course takes manufacturing enterprises, raw material supply enterprises, and leasing company enterprises as the core and sets up relevant virtual organizations, which typically embody the general rules of enterprise operation and management [5]. At the same time, to meet the needs of the core enterprise for human, financial, and other essential elements, virtual commercial banks, logistics companies, and other economic organizations. In order to manage and coordinate the various complex interests of these different subjects of economic organizations, it also sets up tax bureaus, industrial and commercial bureaus, accounting firms, and other institutions to ensure that the simulation environment is accurate, orderly and specific, and highly simulates the natural business environment.

2.4. Blended Teaching Model

In recent years, the UMOOC and Superstar platforms have emerged as versatile and efficient experimental teaching and learning platforms. Based on the CBI teaching concept, Yuanna designed a blended teaching model suitable for the quality of business English teaching by adopting intelligent teaching aids such as Learning Link for classroom teaching [6]. The design of the blended teaching model based on Superstar and UMOOC is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Design of the Blended Teaching Model based on the UMOOC / Superstar Platform

Pre-course (UMOOC/ Superstar)	Learning Situation Analysis
	Sending Video Clips
	Online Discussion
	Feedback
	Instructional Design
In-class (lectures on Superstar)	Sending Course Powerpoint
	Presentation of the Topic Guide/ Student's Discussion
	Presentation Evaluation (Voting and Scoring)
	Feedback
	Group Tasks/ Cooperative learning
After-class (UMOOC/ Superstar)	Sending Review Materials
	After-class Practice/ Platform Homework
	After-class Q&A
	Discussion on the Platform
	Summary and Reflection

Jinghui Ren mentioned that quite a few scholars have attached great importance to the SPOC-based blended teaching modes and combined new teaching concepts, such as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) with SPOC teaching practices [7]. In addition, Xiao Jing proposed a new model, "SPOC + " (miniature private online course + offline courses), that is, by opening up the barriers between the teaching resources of the online public platform and the offline classroom, creating a cooperative model of sharing the online course resources with the university courses, by increasing the number of online courses, and by increasing the number of online courses, and by increasing the number of online courses. By breaking through the barriers between online public platform teaching resources and offline classrooms, we create a cooperative mode of sharing online course resources and university courses and allow different teaching units to access teaching resources by adding teaching modules [8]. Junfei Xin took MOOC+SPOC mode online-offline hybrid BERW "Golden Classroom" as a case study and attempted a new teaching reform [9]. More and more teachers choose to make use of the advantages of the existing resources under the traditional teaching mode by establishing online education courses specifically for their classes and making use of the mobility of the teacher team to develop and optimize the teaching resources in the digital teaching aid platform to realize the personalized teaching mode and in-depth teaching.

3. Analyses

3.1. Advantage

3.1.1. Cross-specialty simulation training

This is not only an excellent opportunity to help students consolidate their professional knowledge, such as theoretical knowledge and practical skills related to international trade, but also enables them to obtain a series of comprehensive skills and quality enhancement to prepare for their future careers. Students need to apply theoretical knowledge by simulating business operations, such as trade terms and payment methods, filling in foreign trade documents, and writing business letters. Carrying out the whole set of business transactions, developing and maintaining customers, negotiating transaction prices, and making contracts greatly hone their independent problem-solving skills and improve their decision-making ability. Students are required to work with their team members to solve problems and communicate with each other about their business, and they can ask their teachers for advice when they encounter difficulties. This improves their teamwork and communication skills. As most

of the knowledge and skills related to international trade require English for communication and application, students' English professional ability is also enhanced through simulation training. Through the practical application, students' interest in learning professional knowledge is obviously enhanced, and their conscientiousness and enthusiasm in participating in practice are also stimulated to understand better the application of professional knowledge in the actual working environment and improve their professionalism.

3.1.2. Online education platforms such as Kuxiao and SuperStar

First, these platforms provide abundant learning resources and tools, which can help students study more conveniently. For example, SuperStar platforms have many learning resources and convenient learning tools, allowing students to collect and access materials quickly, conduct course learning and thesis checking, and other operations. At the same time, it can also facilitate teachers' teaching work, such as classroom teaching, using tools such as Teacher's Schedule and Model Teaching Kit.

Secondly, these platforms can provide flexible learning modes and autonomous learning progress. Students can study according to time and organize their plans and progress. SuperStar platform can also conduct various forms of interactive teaching such as screencasting, roll call, check-in, and live broadcasting, allowing students to communicate and interact with teachers and classmates in a timely and effective manner, creating a better learning atmosphere.

In addition, these platforms can help students better master knowledge and skills. For example, SuperStar can provide practical functions such as thesis checking to help students better complete their coursework and thesis, etc. The Kuxiao platform cooperates with Alibaba as the official designated teaching and training platform, which can help students learn and practically train their e-commerce skills.

3.2. Disadvantage

3.2.1. Cross-specialty simulation training

Although the simulation of real training can provide an experience close to the actual situation, after all, it is not real practice. Students may feel that the simulation scenarios need to be more real, not as much as the accumulation of experience gained from directly entering the company's internship.

There may be technical problems during the training, such as system crashes, network delays, unsmooth operations, etc., affecting the students' experience and satisfaction. Usually, simulation training will provide students with specific guidance and assistance, but if the guidance is insufficient or inappropriate, it may make students feel confused and dissatisfied. Even some simulations may be too idealized, not match students' actual needs and interests, and lacking practicality. If the content of the simulation exercises is too straightforward, students may not find it challenging; if the content is too complex, students may find it difficult to understand and master; if the schedule is too long or too short, or if it clashes with students' other courses or activities, it may lead to student dissatisfaction.

3.2.2. The teaching team faces the challenge of transformation and upgrading

Xuelian Li and Shixian Qin mentioned in their paper that according to the New Business English National Standards, Business English majors are characterized by the composite nature of the discipline [10]. Therefore, Business English teachers should have a high level of foreign language ability, solid business knowledge, and strong business practice ability. However, at present, many business English teachers in the literature-based teaching team specialize in English-related subjects at the undergraduate and master's level, with a relative lack of business knowledge, and basically have not been engaged in international business activities, with a relatively weak practical ability. Some schools even need to borrow teachers from the School of Economics to give business English students specialized courses in economics, management, marketing, and other related business knowledge. Therefore, it is even more difficult for students to digest and absorb the high-intensity specialized courses.

4. Recommendations

4.1. Select Teaching Method for the Students According to Actual Situation

Business English courses and teaching methods should be set up differently according to individual students, and the best choice should be made according to the actual situation of the students. The effectiveness and quality of business English teaching can be improved through diversified teaching, simulation of real business scenarios, cultivation of cross-cultural awareness, application of modern technological means, and combination of practical training. Before formulating teaching strategies, it is first necessary to understand the needs and background of students, including their English level, learning goals, etc. This helps to tailor the teaching methods that are most suitable for different students.

According to the students' actual situation, various teaching methods, such as case studies, role-playing, group discussion, interactive games, etc., are used to stimulate the students' interest and motivation in learning. Meanwhile, in classroom teaching, real business scenarios should be simulated as much as possible so that students can immerse themselves in business English. This can be realized through simulated business negotiations, simulated meetings, role-playing, and other ways to help students better understand and master business English knowledge.

Besides, cultivating cross-cultural awareness is equally important in business English teaching. It can be realized by introducing the business cultural customs and manners of different countries to help students understand the rules and habits of business interactions under different cultural backgrounds so as to avoid cultural conflicts in future business activities.

With the continuous development of science and technology, more and more modern technical means can be applied to business English teaching. For example, online learning platforms such as Superstar and Kuxiao can be utilized to enrich the teaching content and improve the teaching effect. At the same time, artificial intelligence, big data, and other technical means embedded in the platform can also be used to accurately analyze students' learning situations and provide personalized learning suggestions for each student.

In addition to classroom teaching, simulation training can be carried out through cooperation with relevant enterprises so that students can learn and use business English in a natural business environment. This approach allows students to understand business English's practical use better and improve their practical ability.

4.2. Continuous Enhancement of Teachers' Teaching Capacity and Capability and Better Provision of Quality Teaching Services to Students

Teachers need to improve their ability, actively participate in professional training courses, cooperate with enterprises, form teaching teams, and make full use of modern means and other aspects of improvement in order to effectively improve the quality of talent cultivation for newly recruited business English majors. Teachers should continuously improve their English proficiency and business knowledge and constantly learn and master new teaching methods and means to meet students' learning needs better. Professional training courses can help teachers enhance their professional skills, update their knowledge structure, and improve their teaching strategies. These training courses can include business English interpretation, cross-border e-commerce, international trade, and other courses to improve teachers' professionalism and teaching ability.

In addition, schools can establish cooperative relationships with enterprises to understand the standards of talents needed by enterprises and refine them into student training standards. This kind of cooperation can align the teaching content with the practical application and improve students' practical ability and competitiveness in employment.

Teachers of Business English can form teaching teams with enterprise instructors to discuss teaching methods and contents, share teaching resources, and improve the teaching effect and quality of talent

training. This cooperation mode can provide students with more prosperous learning opportunities and closer practical experience and also help improve teachers' practical teaching ability.

5. Conclusion

The importance of business English in trade communication is becoming increasingly prominent. In order to cultivate more practical and applied business English talents, colleges and universities should strengthen the construction of the business English teaching system and the development of practical training. By adopting the task-based teaching method and building a practical training platform and other measures, students' motivation and learning effect can be effectively improved, and more high-quality business English talents can be cultivated to contribute to China's economic development. Business English practical training is crucial for improving students' business English application ability. Through practical training, students can apply the theoretical knowledge learned in the classroom to practical situations and deepen their understanding and mastery of Business English. Incorporating various online learning platforms and interdisciplinary practical training platforms in teaching has become a trend. Practical training platforms can provide students with an immersive learning experience and help them better understand and apply business English knowledge.

At the same time, teachers can also supervise and guide students through the combination of online teaching platforms and offline classrooms to better understand students' learning situations and needs so as to organize teaching better and improve teaching quality. Besides, cultivating talents in business English majors also needs to improve teachers' abilities continuously. Attending professional training courses and cooperating with enterprises to improve the quality of teaching in order to meet students' learning needs and improve their practical ability and competitiveness in employment is a good choice. Finally, it is hoped that in future research, someone can further discuss the development of business English teaching and adapt to the market demand for talents in future business trade.

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