Current Business English Teaching Mode in China: Limitations and Methodologies

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Abstract. To meet increasing demand of job market, society and globalization, more and more Chinese universities and colleges have set up business English program, or at least business English course in the curriculum. The two wodely-applied business English teaching frameworks easily fall into stagnation due to practical limitations. This article picks out several feasible methodologies in business English teaching.

Two Widely-Applied Frameworks in Business English Teaching

Business English is English especially related to international trade. In fact, there is no generally accepted definition of Business English, but it normally falls into two main categories: vocabulary and functional language. The former may itself be further specialised by industries like banking, investment, import-export and oil industry etc. As part of the university or college curriculum, business English mainly deals with functional language education and training. The normally applied business English teaching modes fall roughly into two types: the first mode is English + business knowledge. This mode blends the traditional English classroom with a small number of pieces of business knowledge, such as foreign trade correspondence, international trade theories and integrated business English. However, the inadequate business knowledge involved in the first mode can only meet the needs of specific business operations. Business knowledge is fragmented and lacks systematicness and coherence. Therefore, students are not capable of directly engaging in business work in future positions. The second mode is business English as a program. Within this framework, the coursebooks applied focus on professional business knowledge with a higer difficulty degree. Most of the classroom teaching remains teacher-oriented, and the teaching content tends to focus on the language points and stay on vocabulary and grammar analysis. Although this teaching mode conforms to Chinese college students' learning habits, the teaching effect is not satisfactory: students do not have a systematic grasp of business knowledge, and their oral English expression is difficult to improve. In the future business contacts they may feel at a loss.

With the deepening progress of Belt and Road Initiative strategy, talents proficient in relevant foreign languages, familiar with international rules and equipped with international vision, technical ability, management ability, communication ability and behavioral ability are in urgent need. The requirements are the same as the talent cultivation goal of business English program. Higher education institutions aim to develop the business English professionals with solid English basic skills, the broad international vision, reasonable international business knowledge and skills, as well as mastering relevant disciplines, such as economy, management and law, the basic knowledge and theory, forming higher cultural quality and cross-cultural communication compentence, using English properly in business, trade, management, finance, foreign affairs.The question is that these two traditional teaching modes can not meet the needs of the fundamental purpose of business English teaching. As we all know, the application of teaching methods mainly depends on the teaching content and teaching objectives. Business English teaching includes professional English and practical business knowledge teaching. The objectives of business English teaching are cultivating students' language ability and professional skills respectively. Therefore, business English courses must combine English language skills with business expertise.

Limitations in Current Business English Teaching

Although business English has undergone rapid development and has formed a relatively mature teaching outline, the limitations hindering it from further development are obvious. Above all, the teaching content and actual social demand disconnect. Take translation theory teaching and practice for example, some universities or colleges use lengthy paragraphs in illustrating translation criteria techniques and practical requirements, some texts even lack business relevance and pertinence. The inappropriate emphasis on theories leads to the lack of practicability. The students remain far from the expectations of functional business language.

The monotonous teaching mode is another embodiment. Traditional result-comparison mode is often adopted in business English translation courses, that is, teachers teach theoretical knowledge, students do exercises, and teachers compare and comment with standard translations. In this process, the lecturer still occupies the central position. In the era of paperless office, translation no longer relies solely on pen, paper and dictionary. Computer-aided translation tools, translation memory technology, terminology database and bilingual parallel corpus have been widely used in practical translation, greatly improving the efficiency and quality of translation work. It will be a breakthrough if lectuers make good use the technology, demonstrate how to apply it into translation practice.

Besides, lack of practice platform is a terrible barrier in enhancing students' hands-on skills. The business English translation activity is an output process, which must be based on a large number of translation practices. Therefore, building practice platform is the key to carry out business translation practice teaching and cultivate business translation talents. However, due to various conditions, many colleges and universities are unable to establish sufficient and high-level practice platforms, and students' business translation skills are not well trained. Domestic market demand displays an uneven distribution, most of the students are not good at breaking space and time limit via network. They only take limited internships or practice in the surrounding enterprises; at the same time, the opportunities some companies provide tend to be mere formality.

Methodologies in Business English Teaching

Intelligence is an important factor that determines whether a student's academic performance is good or bad, but sometimes what affects the learning effect is often non-intelligence factors, such as interest, emotion management, attention and so on. If teachers adopt scenario simulation teaching, they can attract and drive students' attention through advanced multimedia means, stimulate students' interest, and mobilize students' emotions in situational simulation activities. The basic law of human understanding of the development of things is always from intuitive image to abstract and general picture. Teaching is the most natural process of understanding. Scenario teaching makes use of this principle of immediateness, arouses students' interest in learning through intuitive objects, intuitive scenes and vivid language, and makes students more enthusiastic about learning. In the end, this teaching method is conducive to students' understanding and mastering of the knowledge they have learned. Scenario simulation teaching has changed the traditional teacher-led teaching and the single irrigation teaching mode based on textbook content from the bottom. The new teaching mode fully embodies the principle that students are the main body of learning and it centers on students rather than teachers. Students' group activities become the core of the class. They begin to consciously explore knowledge in simulated business activities, and change from passive learning to active acquisition of knowledge and active transformation of knowledge into a new state.

In oral business English teaching activities, scenario simulation can be the most recommended approach. In the specific simulation of a certain situation, teachers can design a number of scenarios and different identity roles around a certain business theme for students to play, and reproduce the development process of the business workflow through simulation. In this way, students can naturally understand the teaching content. The teaching method gives students an opportunity to work in and see the real scene, and produces strong sense of identity, which in turn enhances student's learning motivation and effect. In addition, complex business scenarios can also help

cultivate students' comprehensive analysis and thinking ability. The learners' organizational ability, strain capacity and operational ability can also be significantly enhanced. Scenario simulation is often accompanied by group teaching. Competition among groups and cooperation among group members undoubtedly cultivate better teamwork spirit and sense of competition. By creating virtual situations and role-playing, teachers build a bridge between theoretical learning and social practice, enabling students to have a deeper understanding of the society.

When it comes to business English translation teaching, it is procedual and must have students' hands-on practice as its core. Traditional business English translation courses evaluate learning effect through homework grade + closed-book examination. To solve the disadvantages of this one-sided evaluation method, it is better to adopt multiple evaluation, including the completion of students' classroom translation task, participation degree in discussions and the completion of translation tasks on outsourcing platform. Formative evaluation focuses on the learning process. From the perspective of students' learning, it can reduce their anxiety about the final examination to a certain extent, and can form a state of self-reflection and self-evaluation to avoid fluke. From the perspective of teachers' evaluation, we should avoid the arbitrariness of judging students' language learning effect by one test, and make the evaluation result more open and fair.

The development of the Internet has brought great room for reform in English teaching. The network has the characteristics of integration and interactivity, which is beneficial to cultivate students' ability to adapt to the information society, to form the ability of information collection, selection, processing and publication, and to cultivate students' ability to find problems, think and solve problems. Business English translation teachers should make full use of Internet resources in every link of teaching, collect, select, classify and sort out information and resources that serve teaching courses and teaching objectives, and guide students to actively participate in online reading, online discussion and online practice. The role of the Internet in business English translation teaching goes beyond that. Due to the introduction and application of constructivism, interactive translation teaching has aroused more attention from teaching researchers, including classroom interaction research, extracurricular interaction research, traditional interaction model and network interaction model. The network interactive mode includes two basic programs: the first is the student independent translation practice and the network discussion; The second is the concentrated presentation and discussion in class under the guidance of teachers. In the first program, students are divided into groups. The group members independently translate the text and upload the translation and existing problems to the corresponding network section. Then the group members carry out network discussion, and finally the group summarizes the translation and upload it to the network. In program 2, the teacher organizes class discussion based on the features, highlights and common problems in group translation. In this process, teachers can guide students to further discussion and analysis, in the collision of ideas in the exchange of views to solve the problem.

If the teaching content changes to oral interpretation, the teacher can firstly clarify the problems to be solved in the process, and the goal of group activity is to give the main structure and key words, and verbally in the end. The team members have a clear division of labor. There are several students in each group, some supervise the activity going, some record, some discuss the structure, some collect key words, and finally form a complete report and interpretation. Then it skips to group discussion period. The teacher interacts with each group to avoid students forming wrong ideas. In the process, the students will find the words they are not familiar with or not sure. Students may find sentence structure diversity and tone difference in the process of interpretation. After the practice, the teacher asks the group members to interpret according to discussion and teamwork result. The teacher will be responsible for giving feedbacks after the group presentation. Through independent thinking and teamwork, students can have concrete achievements. Through teachers' comments, students can deepen their impression on knowledge points and correct their mistakes. The teaching effect can be guaranteed if each group member participates in carefullly.

Another thing worth mentioning is cultivating students' intercultural business communicative competence makes another important aspect of business English teaching. However, at present, most of China's intercultural business communication education is based on the western traditional

intercultural communication theory, and it has not deviated from the education idea of national cultural contrast. Simply being satisfied with the understanding of local customs, social culture and subject values of other countries is not enough to ensure effective cross-border business communication. We must also have an understanding of the corporate culture, professional culture, and individual differences of the other side of the communication, as well as the general economic situation of other cultures, specific business practices and business environment, customary communication strategies, and the dynamic impact of these comprehensive factors on the communication model in the workplace.

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