

Research on the Innovation of Standardized Training Mode for Business English Talents in the Context of Cross-border E-commerce

Jiixin Lin*

School of Foreign Languages, Taizhou University, Taizhou 317099, Zhejiang, China

**Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

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Abstract: With the rapid development of the digital economy, cross-border e-commerce has become an important engine for the growth of China's foreign trade. The demand for compound talents with both business English competence and practical cross-border e-commerce skills is increasingly urgent. However, the current training mode for business English talents still has problems such as insufficient standardization and disconnection from industry needs, making it difficult to meet the development requirements of the cross-border e-commerce industry. By analyzing the existing problems in the training of business English talents against the background of cross-border e-commerce, this paper explores the innovative paths of the standardized training mode. The paper aims to provide a reference for the reform of business English majors in colleges and universities, help cultivate high-quality talents that meet industry standards, and promote the sustainable and healthy development of the cross-border e-commerce industry.

Keywords: Cross-border e-commerce; Business English talents; Standardized training mode

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1. Introduction

Against the background of the deep integration of globalization and digitalization, the transaction volume of China's cross-border e-commerce has been continuously rising. In 2024, the import and export scale of cross-border e-commerce exceeded 2 trillion US dollars, becoming a key force in stabilizing foreign trade. Cross-border e-commerce business covers links such as international market research, cross-border platform operation, multilingual customer service, and international logistics coordination. It puts forward higher requirements for talents' practical ability in business English application, cross-border e-commerce operation, and cross-cultural communication competence. As a core major for cultivating compound foreign trade talents, the traditional training mode of business English mainly focuses on the teaching of language skills and basic business knowledge. It has not formed a standardized training system adapted to the cross-border e-commerce industry,

resulting in an obvious gap between talent supply and enterprise demand ^[1]. Therefore, in-depth analysis of the existing problems in the current training of business English talents and the construction of a standardized and systematic training mode have become important issues for promoting the development of the cross-border e-commerce industry and the professional construction of colleges and universities.

2. Existing problems in the training of business English talents in the context of cross-border e-commerce

2.1. Vague orientation of training objectives and disconnection from the actual needs of enterprises

At present, the training objectives of business English majors in most colleges and universities still remain a broad statement of “cultivating compound talents with strong English proficiency and business knowledge”, without precise positioning combined with the job characteristics of the cross-border e-commerce industry. From the perspective of enterprise needs, cross-border e-commerce positions can be subdivided into cross-border platform operation specialists, international marketing promotion specialists, multilingual customer service specialists, cross-border logistics coordinators, etc. ^[2]. Different positions have significant differences in skill priorities. For example, platform operation positions require mastering the rule operation and data analysis capabilities of platforms such as Amazon and AliExpress, while multilingual customer service positions require efficient English communication skills and customer problem-solving capabilities. However, the existing training objectives do not clearly define the specific skills required for these positions, resulting in a lack of pertinence in curriculum design. After graduation, students often need enterprises to conduct long-term pre-job training to be competent for the work. According to the survey, about 68% of cross-border e-commerce enterprises reflect that fresh business English graduates have obvious deficiencies in practical skills such as cross-border e-commerce platform operation and cross-border payment processes, and it is difficult for them to quickly adapt to job requirements ^[3]. The root cause of this phenomenon lies in the disconnection between training objectives and the actual needs of enterprises, failing to form a standardized training orientation oriented by job competence.

2.2. Lagging curriculum system and insufficient connection between theory and practice

The curriculum system of business English majors still has the problems of “valuing theory over practice” and “valuing tradition over innovation”, which makes it difficult to adapt to the rapid development of the cross-border e-commerce industry. Traditional courses mainly focus on theoretical courses such as “Business English Correspondence”, “International Trade Practice”, and “Business English Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.” Although they cover basic business knowledge, they lack practical courses closely related to cross-border e-commerce. The offering rate of courses such as “Cross-border E-commerce Platform Operation Practice”, “Cross-border E-commerce Data Analysis”, “Cross-border E-commerce Training”, and “International Logistics and Supply Chain Management” is less than 40% ^[4]. Even if some colleges and universities offer relevant practical courses, there is a problem of lagging update of course content. For example, knowledge related to emerging cross-border e-commerce models, such as TikTok e-commerce and independent station operation, has not been incorporated in a timely manner, resulting in a disconnection between what students learn and the actual development of the industry. In addition, the connection between theoretical courses and practical courses lacks systematicness. Most practical courses only serve as supplements to theoretical courses,

failing to form a complete chain of “theoretical learning—simulated practice—practical application.” Students find it difficult to effectively combine business English knowledge with cross-border e-commerce practical skills. When facing real cross-border e-commerce business scenarios, they often encounter situations where “they can speak but not act” and “they understand theory but not practice”^[5].

2.3. Lack of practical teaching resources and insufficient actual combat training scenarios

Practical teaching is a key link in cultivating the practical ability of business English talents in the background of cross-border e-commerce. However, the practical teaching resources of business English majors in current colleges and universities are generally insufficient, which it difficult to meet the needs of actual combat training. On the one hand, the construction of on-campus training bases is lagging behind. Most colleges and universities only equip basic language laboratories or simple cross-border e-commerce simulation software. This software often has single functions and outdated data, and cannot simulate real cross-border e-commerce platform operation scenarios. For example, they cannot realize the connection with real payment systems or simulate the real-time tracking process of international logistics, resulting in a significant reduction in students’ training effects^[6]. On the other hand, the depth of school-enterprise cooperation is insufficient. Although some colleges and universities have established cooperative relationships with cross-border e-commerce enterprises, most of them stay at the shallow level of cooperation, such as “enterprise visits” and “expert lectures”, and fail to form in-depth cooperation models such as “order-based training” and “school-enterprise joint training.” Students have difficulty entering enterprises to participate in real cross-border e-commerce business operations. According to statistics, only 23% of business English students have the opportunity to participate in real cross-border e-commerce projects of enterprises during their school years. The practical ability of other students can only be improved through classroom simulation training, which can be difficult to meet the industry’s requirements for talents’ actual combat ability^[7].

2.4. Single structure of the teaching staff and lack of cross-border e-commerce practical experience

The professional quality of the teaching staff directly affects the quality of business English talent training. At present, the teaching staff of business English majors in colleges and universities has the problems of a single structure and a lack of cross-border e-commerce practical experience. Most teachers have backgrounds in English or international trade, with solid language teaching ability and theoretical knowledge reserves, but they lack practical work experience in the cross-border e-commerce industry and have not participated in actual businesses such as cross-border e-commerce platform operation and cross-border digital marketing, making it difficult to provide students with professional practical guidance in the teaching process^[8]. For example, when explaining the course “Cross-border E-commerce Platform Operation”, some teachers can only introduce platform rules based on textbook content, and cannot share common problems and solutions in store operation combined with their own practical experience, resulting in a lack of practicality and pertinence in course teaching. In addition, the training of teachers in colleges and universities mainly focuses on the update of teaching methods and theoretical knowledge, and few organize teachers to participate in practical training or on-the-job training in cross-border e-commerce enterprises, leading to the difficulty of teachers’ knowledge systems keeping up with the rapid development of the cross-border e-commerce industry. At the same time, colleges

and universities have insufficient efforts in introducing part-time teachers from enterprises, making it difficult to integrate the practical experience of industry experts into classroom teaching, which further aggravates the disconnection between the teaching staff and industry needs.

3. Innovative paths of the standardized training mode for business English talents in the context of cross-border e-commerce

3.1. Precisely position training objectives and build a job competence-oriented standardized system

The standardization of training objectives should focus on the needs of cross-border e-commerce positions. It is necessary to conduct job competence research in conjunction with industry associations and leading enterprises to clarify the core competence indicators of different positions. For segmented positions such as cross-border e-commerce platform operation, multilingual customer service, and international logistics coordination, formulate quantifiable competence standards. For example, include “Amazon store setup and optimization”, “English customer complaint response time limit ≤ 2 hours”, and “cross-border logistics exception handling accuracy rate $\geq 95\%$ ” into the training objectives^[9]. At the same time, establish a hierarchical training system. The basic level focuses on business English communication and basic cross-border e-commerce operations, while the advanced level emphasizes special skills such as data analysis and digital marketing. This ensures that the training objectives not only meet the general industry standards but also meet the personalized needs of enterprises. By releasing the “White Paper on the Competence of Business English Talents in Cross-border E-commerce”, convert the job competence standards into specific indicators in the training plan, realize the precise connection between training objectives and enterprise needs, and solve the previous problems of vague objectives and disconnection between supply and demand^[10].

3.2. Optimize the curriculum system structure and achieve in-depth integration of theory and practice

The innovation of the curriculum system needs to break the traditional simple superposition mode of “theory + practice” and build a standardized curriculum system of “scenario-based modules + dynamic updates.” Add cutting-edge courses such as “Operation of Emerging Cross-border E-commerce Platforms” and “Cross-border Digital Content Creation (English)”, and incorporate emerging models such as TikTok e-commerce and independent station operation into the teaching content. Reconstruct core curriculum modules. For example, integrate real email cases from cross-border e-commerce platforms into “Business English Correspondence”, and add practical simulation links of cross-border payment, customs declaration, and inspection into “International Trade Practice” to realize the synchronous improvement of language ability and professional skills^[11]. Establish a dynamic update mechanism for curriculum content. Every semester, cooperate with enterprise experts to sort out the latest industry policies and technical trends, and update no less than 20% of the curriculum cases and training projects to ensure that the curriculum content keeps pace with industry development. In addition, set up a three-stage curriculum process of “theoretical learning—on-campus simulation—enterprise actual combat.” For example, students first learn the theory of platform rules, then simulate store operation through on-campus training software, and finally enter enterprises to participate in real order processing, forming a closed-loop training of theory and practice^[12].

3.3. Integrate practical teaching resources and build a multi-level actual combat training platform

The standardized construction of practical resources needs to make joint efforts from three dimensions: on-campus, off-campus, and online. On campus, build a “cross-border e-commerce simulation training base”, introduce a simulation system consistent with the functions of real platforms, covering the entire business processes such as store operation, logistics tracking, and payment settlement. Equip professional training tutors to guide students in solving problems in simulated operations, such as handling cross-border return disputes and optimizing English product listings. Off campus, deepen school-enterprise cooperation, co-build “enterprise practice bases” with cross-border e-commerce enterprises, and implement “order-based training.” Enterprises participate in the formulation of training plans throughout the process and provide real business projects for students to practice. For example, let students participate in the enterprise’s overseas market research and English product promotion. Students’ practical results are included in the course assessment ^[13]. Build an “online cross-border e-commerce training cloud platform” to integrate resources such as industry case libraries, practical video courses, and online simulation question banks. Students can carry out independent training anytime and anywhere. The platform automatically records training data and generates competency evaluation reports to provide a basis for personalized training. Through the construction of a multi-level platform, ensure that each student participates in no less than 3 real cross-border e-commerce projects during their school years, with the actual combat training time not less than 600 class hours, so as to improve the standardization level of practical ability ^[14].

3.4. Optimize the structure of the teaching staff and strengthen teachers’ practical ability in cross-border e-commerce

The standardized construction of the teaching staff needs to build a system from three aspects: “introduction + training + assessment.” On the one hand, increase the intensity of introducing part-time teachers from enterprises, hire operation directors and senior customer managers of cross-border e-commerce enterprises as part-time teachers, and undertake no less than 32 class hours of practical courses every semester, such as explaining practical content, such as store traffic optimization skills and overseas social media marketing strategies. On the other hand, strengthen the training of on-campus teachers’ practical ability, formulate the “Plan for Improving Teachers’ Practical Ability in Cross-border E-commerce”, require teachers to take on-the-job training in enterprises for no less than 3 months every two years, participate in real business projects of enterprises, and organize teachers to participate in cross-border e-commerce industry certification training, such as Amazon Global Selling official training and cross-border e-commerce operator qualification certification, to ensure that teachers have solid practical ability ^[15]. Establish a standardized teacher assessment mechanism, and include cross-border e-commerce practical experience and enterprise project guidance results in the teachers’ annual assessment indicators. For example, require teachers to guide students to complete at least 1 enterprise cooperation project every year, or publish 1 paper related to cross-border e-commerce teaching practice. Force teachers to improve their practical teaching ability through assessment, and solve the previous problems of a single teacher structure and insufficient practical experience.

4. Conclusion

This paper addresses the problems existing in the training of business English talents in the background of

cross-border e-commerce, such as vague objectives, lagging courses, insufficient practice, and weak teachers. It constructs the innovative path of the standardized training mode from four dimensions: the quantification of training objectives oriented by job competence, the optimization of the curriculum system integrating theory and practice, the construction of a multi-level actual combat platform, and the construction of a double-qualified teaching staff. By converting industry needs into implementable training standards, this path effectively bridges the gap between talent supply and enterprise demand, and provides a systematic plan for the reform of business English majors in colleges and universities. In the future, it is necessary to keep up with the pace of policy adjustments and technological innovations in the cross-border e-commerce industry, continuously and dynamically update training standards and teaching content, further deepen the school-enterprise collaborative education mechanism, promote the formation of positive interaction between the training of business English talents and the development of the cross-border e-commerce industry, and ultimately achieve a win-win situation for the improvement of the quality of talent training in colleges and universities, the development benefits of enterprises and the enhancement of industry competitiveness.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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