

The Application of Digital Multimodal Resources in Business English Classroom Teaching

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Abstract: With the continuous development of the global economy, companies are increasingly demanding business English professionals. These professionals are not only required to possess fluent English communication skills but also to be familiar with import and export trade processes, international business rules, and cross-cultural contexts. However, current business English teaching in universities primarily relies on the transfer of language knowledge, lacking integration with real-world business scenarios, resulting in graduates' limited employability. The introduction of digital multimodal resources offers a new breakthrough in business English teaching. By leveraging diverse information media such as video, audio, animation, virtual simulations, and interactive platforms, teachers can break through the constraints of classroom time and space and create a more immersive and interactive learning environment. This approach makes abstract business knowledge more intuitive and contextualizes complex communication skills, thereby alleviating the pain points of fragmented knowledge, weak skills, and insufficient learning motivation. This paper aims to explore the application of digital multimodal resources in university business English classrooms, analyze their impact on improving students' language skills, cross-cultural communication abilities, and practical engagement, and provide a feasible reference for optimizing the development of business English talent in universities.

Keywords: Business English; Digital multimodal resources; Classroom teaching; Multimodal teaching method; Professional ability training

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1. Introduction

As the global economy continues to deepen, companies have put forward higher-level requirements for the comprehensive capabilities of business English talents. In particular, small and medium-sized enterprises generally expect graduates to have the comprehensive quality of "ready to work and competent", not only to be able to communicate fluently in English, but also to be familiar with import and export trade processes, international business rules, and multicultural backgrounds. However, at present, business English classes in colleges and universities are mainly based on language knowledge inculcation, which is not practical enough

and out of touch with real business scenarios. This has led to insufficient employment competitiveness of graduates, some companies “cannot recruit suitable talents”, and the mismatch between supply and demand of college graduates, “cannot find matching positions”, has become more and more prominent.

In this context, the introduction of digital multimodal resources provides a new breakthrough for business English teaching in colleges and universities. With the help of various information carriers such as video, audio, animation, virtual simulation, and interactive platforms, teachers can break through the time and space limitations of the classroom and build a more immersive and interactive learning environment, making abstract business knowledge visual and complex communication skills contextualized, thereby alleviating the core teaching pain points of “fragmented knowledge, weakened skills, and insufficient learning motivation.”

This paper aims to explore the application model of digital multimodal resources in business English classes in colleges and universities, analyze its role in improving students’ language skills, cross-cultural communication ability, and sense of practical participation, and provide a feasible reference for colleges and universities to optimize the training path of business English talents.

2. Research background and current issues

With the continuous advancement of the global economic integration process, Business English has gradually evolved from a single language learning to a composite application course that integrates language skills, professional knowledge, and cross-cultural communication skills. With the increasing frequency of international trade activities and the deepening of corporate foreign exchanges and cooperation, the demand for business English talents by enterprises not only stays on the basic listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation skills, but also pays more attention to their understanding of trade processes, mastery of business rules and practical application of cross-cultural business communication. Especially under the impetus of my country’s “going out” strategy and the “Belt and Road” initiative, the market has put forward higher requirements for composite business English talents with practical skills and cross-cultural adaptability.

However, from the perspective of the current business English teaching model in colleges and universities, there is still a significant disconnect between teaching results and social needs. On the one hand, most college classroom teaching is still based on “textbooks as the outline, teachers as the leader, and knowledge instillation”, ignoring students’ comprehensive application training in real business scenarios, resulting in students having certain language knowledge but being unable to perform actual business work. On the other hand, limited by classroom time and space and traditional teaching methods, teachers often lack sufficient means to build a language practice environment for students that is close to workplace needs, making classroom teaching remain at the level of “knowledge input” and lacking an effective path for “skill output.”

3. Literature review

Existing studies have generally pointed out that business English courses in colleges and universities are out of touch with the actual needs of the industry to varying degrees. Włosowicz’s research shows that even if students have strong learning motivation, the content taught in class is still difficult to fully cover the professional terms, economic concepts, and business writing skills they need in the actual business environment ^[1]. The mastery of business terms by students of different grades varies greatly, and even in the senior grades, there is still a problem of being unskilled in the use of core terms. This shows that a single classroom teaching model

is difficult to effectively meet students' deep needs for professional and practical knowledge, and it is easy to cause students to still face difficulties in adapting to the workplace after completing their studies.

Roshid and Kankaanranta's survey of the international garment industry further verified this problem. They found that although college English courses cover basic communication skills, there is a large gap in meeting the industry's requirements for core skills such as practical business communication skills, application of professional terminology, and clear expression ^[2]. In particular, in high-frequency job skills such as foreign trade negotiations, contract formulation, and business document writing, graduates often lack the ability to directly take up jobs, making it difficult for talents trained by colleges and universities to quickly adapt to corporate employment standards.

Combined with the current research background, it can be seen that if business English classroom teaching continues to remain at the stage of single knowledge transfer, it will not be able to effectively solve the practical problem of students' "disconnection between learning and application."

In recent years, the research on business English courses in colleges and universities has shown significant diversification and innovation, gradually breaking the traditional language classroom model of "teacher-centered and knowledge-oriented" and transforming towards ability-oriented, task-driven, and scenario-simulated directions. From the latest literature, Project-Based Learning (PBL), flipped classroom, Discourse Driven Learning (DDL), and hybrid teaching models have gradually become the focus of research, reflecting that college business English teaching attaches great importance to the cultivation of professional, practical, and communicative abilities.

Hao et al. verified through quasi-experimental research that project-based learning and project-based flipped classrooms significantly promote students' higher-order thinking ability, especially in the cultivation of critical thinking and creativity ^[3]. This study shows that the traditional knowledge-based course model is difficult to stimulate students' deep thinking, and practical-oriented project tasks can better promote the expansion of students' thinking ability. Khamouja further pointed out that PBL can also effectively improve students' communication skills in real contexts in business English classes, helping students overcome the passive learning mode of "learning from paper" and form a positive learning attitude of active participation and language output ^[4].

At the same time, Larbi and Ahmed found through empirical research on Discourse Driven Learning (DDL) that this model not only strengthens the application ability of business English vocabulary but also helps students build stronger language confidence in cross-cultural scenarios ^[5]. Chi's research further confirmed the positive impact of PBL on students' multi-dimensional abilities. It not only improves language ability but also significantly enhances students' teamwork and social skills, helping students to develop more practice-oriented comprehensive language abilities ^[6].

In the field of writing ability training, Sun and Asmawi's research introduced the Presentation-Assimilation-Discussion (PAD) classroom model and confirmed its all-around improvement effect on the quality of business English writing ^[7]. In addition, Hu and Song focused on the role of open digital resources, such as Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), in business English teaching, and proposed that the combination of digital platforms and flipped classrooms can promote the reshaping of teacher and student roles and the improvement of classroom interaction vitality ^[8].

From the perspective of multimodal applications, some studies have reflected the diverse values and challenges of digital multimodal resources in language teaching.

First, the study by Kholis and Azmi emphasized the importance of integrating multimodal materials (such as text, audio, video, and interactive tasks) in the development of e-books, especially in cultivating students' 21st-century skills (communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity) ^[9]. This shows that multimodal resources not only enrich the input form but also enhance students' digital literacy and comprehensive ability cultivation.

Mohamed's research further pointed out that by combining multimodal elements in Project-Based Learning (PJBL), teachers can better adapt to students' language proficiency and learning needs, thereby improving language learning outcomes and critical thinking ^[10]. This reflects the potential of multimodal resources in flexible adjustment of teaching methods and personalized support.

Laksana's empirical research has shown that multimodal e-books significantly improve students' language ability and behavioral performance in business English courses, and students' acceptance and willingness to use multimodal digital resources are also very high ^[11]. This emphasizes the challenge and supplementary role of multimodal resources to traditional ESP teaching models.

The Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) multimodal teaching method proposed by Shu et al. shows that a good classroom atmosphere and teacher-student interaction depend on the effective application of multimodal teaching methods, which promotes the improvement of student participation and classroom efficiency ^[12]. This reflects the important role of multimodal resources in optimizing the teaching environment and promoting teacher-student interaction.

Maktiar Singh and Yoke focused on the combination of visual and verbal modes, especially their application in academic oral expression, showing that multimodal elements (such as PPT slides) are not only auxiliary tools, but also an important part of expression and communication. However, the study also found that despite the popularity of multimodal resources, students still face the challenge of insufficient expression ability, suggesting that multimodal teaching needs to pay more attention to skill training and expression guidance ^[13].

4. Practical application of digital multimodal resources in business English classroom teaching

4.1. Application ideas and practical goals

Based on the analysis of the current teaching dilemma, the introduction of digital multimodal resources is not only an update of technical means, but also a teaching transformation path that responds to the actual needs of the talent market. The goal of business English teaching not only includes the mastery of basic English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, but also focuses on cultivating students' ability to use English to complete practical business tasks, covering business negotiations, product introductions, cross-cultural communication, workplace interviews, and other practical links. Therefore, the core application idea of multimodal resources is to break the closed nature of traditional classrooms and build a dynamic, scenario-based, and interactive teaching space, so that students can understand knowledge and acquire skills through multi-sensory participation.

Specifically, the practical application of digital multimodal resources in business English classrooms mainly revolves around three core goals: First, to improve students' language skills, especially their ability to express themselves in real business situations. Second, educators will strengthen students' professional ability training by exposing them to the operational procedures and communication skills in actual business

activities through simulation scenarios and case training. Third, it significantly enhances students' classroom participation, stimulates their interest in learning through multiple means such as audio, video, and virtual reality, and improves the one-way indoctrination of students in traditional classrooms where they passively accept knowledge.

The establishment of these three goals is a response to the current employment market's requirements for the diverse abilities of compound business English talents. It is also an effective return to the "practicality" and "career-oriented" characteristics of business English teaching in colleges and universities.

4.2. Types and functions of digital multimodal resources

In the current business English classroom teaching reform, the application of digital multimodal resources presents rich forms and diverse functions. The core advantage of multimodal resources is that they break through the limitations of single-text and oral teaching. Through multi-sensory participation and multi-channel input, students can gradually master business English skills in a real and dynamic language environment, and comprehensively improve their language literacy and professional application ability. As the most popular multimodal teaching method, audio and video resources play a significant role in supplementing teaching. The application of visual PPT and chart resources effectively improves the visibility of classroom content and the depth of understanding of professional knowledge. The introduction of interactive platform tools has greatly increased the frequency of classroom interaction and students' enthusiasm for participation. The application of virtual simulation and augmented reality (AR) technology has broadened the classroom boundaries for business English teaching and created a more immersive and practice-oriented learning experience.

4.3. Multimodal integration practice in typical business English teaching links

Multimodal teaching not only optimizes the overall classroom process but also accurately corresponds to the needs of professional scenarios in specific business English modules. Designing multimodal resources and activities for different modules helps to break through the limitations of traditional teaching and improve students' practical language skills and comprehensive business literacy.

4.3.1. Business negotiation module

Teachers help students understand language expression and strategy application by introducing audio and video of business negotiations, combined with flowcharts and term lists. In group simulation negotiations, students interact in different roles, use the platform to record and provide feedback, and complete the learning cycle of "input-practice-feedback."

4.3.2. Product promotion module

With the help of corporate press conference videos, PPT, and chart presentations, students learn product description language and industry terminology. Group exercises are combined with recording and commentary to train expression, logic, and product presentation skills, and improve practical application capabilities in the workplace.

4.3.3. Job interview module

Through recruitment videos, interview records, and virtual simulation technology, students practice interview

language in real situations. Combined with PPT presentation strategies and individual feedback, students complete simulated interview training to improve their expression standards and adaptability.

5. Conclusion

The introduction of digital multimodal resources provides innovative solutions for business English classroom teaching, especially in improving students' language skills, cross-cultural communication skills, and sense of practical participation. Through multi-sensory participation and multi-channel information input, students can not only better master the basic knowledge of business English, but also improve their application ability in simulated actual business scenarios. Multimodal teaching methods break the limitations of traditional teaching models, enhance students' classroom participation and practical operation ability, and help them better adapt to various complex language and communication needs in the workplace.

In the future, with the further development of digital technology, the application of multimodal teaching resources will be further deepened, bringing more innovative possibilities to business English teaching. Colleges and universities should strengthen the integration and application of multimodal resources, explore teaching models that are more in line with industry needs, and thus provide strong support for the cultivation of compound business English talents with cross-cultural adaptability and practical operation ability.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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