

# Research on the Integrated Teaching Reform of “Language-Culture-Skill” in Exhibition Business Communication Course From the Perspective of Humanistic English

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**Abstract:** Against the backdrop of the rapid development of the globalized exhibition industry, higher vocational education should advance the reform of the exhibition talent training system to keep pace with the times, so as to meet the industry’s demand for compound talents equipped with language proficiency, cross-cultural literacy, and professional communication skills. On this basis, this paper briefly analyzes the necessity and current teaching situation of the teaching reform of the Exhibition Business Communication course from the perspective of humanistic English, and puts forward optimization strategies. It aims to resolve the core pain points of the course, promote the simultaneous improvement of students’ linguistic competence, cross-cultural literacy and practical exhibition skills, and provide references for teaching innovation of the Exhibition Business Communication course.

**Keywords:** Humanistic English; Exhibition business communication course; Integrated teaching

**Online publication:** September 10, 2026

## 1. Introduction

With the internationalization and specialization of China’s exhibition economy, various international exhibitions and transnational exhibition cooperation projects are growing rapidly. The market demand for exhibition business talents has shifted from single interpreters and basic service staff to compound talents capable of accurate language application, cross-cultural adaptation and comprehensive practical literacy. Exhibition Business Communication is a core course for cultivating students’ business communication competence in exhibition majors. Integrating humanistic English concepts into curriculum teaching reform and innovating integrated teaching practice of “language-culture-skill” can not only improve the educational quality of the course, but also better boost the coordinated development of students’ professional ability and

humanistic literacy.

## **2. Necessity of teaching reform of exhibition business communication course from the perspective of humanistic English**

### **2.1. Meet the demand for compound talents in the international exhibition industry**

Work links including investment promotion docking, booth negotiation, business talks, customer maintenance and exhibition summary in international exhibitions all rely on high-quality cross-cultural business communication. Compared with general business English communication, exhibition business communication features specific scenarios, diversified communication and specialized demands, putting forward higher requirements for practitioners' linguistic competence, cross-cultural literacy and vocational skills <sup>[1]</sup>. With the vigorous development of cross-border trade and cross-border e-commerce, the teaching of Exhibition Business Communication should actively align with industry post standards, break barriers in language, culture and skill teaching under traditional modes, strengthen coordinated cultivation of students' knowledge, literacy and abilities, enable graduates to match posts in international exhibition enterprises better and adapt to the transition from campus to workplace faster, and deliver qualified reserve talents for high-quality development of international exhibition industry.

### **2.2. Realize systematic teaching of exhibition business communication**

At present, the teaching of Exhibition Business Communication generally emphasizes linguistic theories while ignoring scenario application. Teachers attach excessive importance to students' mastery of vocabulary and grammar, yet neglect the construction and practice of exhibition-specific communication scenarios. Meanwhile, many teachers only introduce cultural knowledge as extended reading materials in class, without integrating cross-cultural literacy training into communication skill drills. As a result, students fail to form a complete system of exhibition business communication competence. Promoting teaching reform from the perspective of humanistic English aims to integrate language application, cultural cognition and skill training organically, design teaching contents around real work procedures of exhibition business communication, embed cultural literacy into language drills and base skill development on language application, so as to build a systematic teaching system with coherent logic and progressive levels. It helps students form a complete cognitive logic: convey information via language, understand differences through culture, and complete communication with professional skills <sup>[2]</sup>.

## **3. Current teaching situation of exhibition business communication course**

### **3.1. Exam-oriented language teaching**

In the current teaching of the Exhibition Business Communication course, classroom teaching mainly relies on textbooks, focusing on basic content such as memorizing exhibition English vocabulary, grammar analysis and short passage translation. There is a lack of language application training for real international exhibition scenarios, unexpected situations and complex business scenarios, which disconnects language teaching content from actual work in exhibition-related positions <sup>[3]</sup>. In the long run, monotonous and rigid teaching content will lead to students' insufficient practical language competence. Though students have a solid grasp of basic theoretical knowledge, they struggle to flexibly adjust their language expressions to suit diverse cross-cultural

exhibition contexts. Their oral English sounds stiff with repetitive sentence patterns and non-standard business expressions. Meanwhile, their written communication often suffers from non-standard formats, inaccurate professional terminology and incoherent logical structure, failing to meet the requirements of professionalism and precision in international exhibition business communication.

### **3.2. Formalized practical training**

Within the current teaching system of Exhibition Business Communication courses, practical training is mostly confined to in-class role-playing and scripted dialogue drills. All practical training scenarios are idealized and preset by teachers based on textbook content, featuring fixed procedures and standard answers. There is a lack of in-depth reproduction of complex real-world scenarios at international exhibitions, including authentic business negotiations, handling unexpected objections, and cross-cultural conflicts. Moreover, regular cooperation with exhibition enterprises and offline exhibition projects is absent, leading to a clear disconnect between practical teaching and the actual job demands of the industry.

Over time, students only practice their communication skills in closed, prearranged settings, making it difficult for them to develop business communication thinking and emergency response capabilities suited to real workplace environments. Although students can smoothly carry out standardized scenario dialogues, they cannot flexibly address random demands and objections raised by merchants and clients on exhibition sites. They also fail to fully grasp the full-process communication strategies covering pre-exhibition client development, on-site business talks, and post-exhibition relationship maintenance. Their awareness of cross-cultural communication etiquette and negotiation strategies is particularly weak, leaving them unable to independently conduct efficient and professional business communication in real exhibition positions.

### **3.3. Superficial cultural infiltration**

At present, the cultural teaching in exhibition business communication courses mostly remains at a superficial level where teachers simply intersperse general knowledge about Western business etiquette, customs and taboos in class. There is no systematic instruction on in-depth content such as intercultural communication theories, differences between Chinese and Western business mindsets, and solutions to intercultural conflicts, resulting in fragmented and unsystematic cultural knowledge delivery. Furthermore, some teachers treat cultural content as an add-on to regular lessons, failing to integrate intercultural thinking into the full spectrum of practical training, including language expression, business negotiation, and exhibition services. Consequently, students only memorize cultural trivia mechanically without developing genuine intercultural thinking. When engaging in real-world international exhibition communication, students lack adequate understanding of disparities between Chinese and Western decision-making styles and communication logic. This not only undermines communication efficiency but also frequently triggers business conflicts stemming from cultural misunderstandings, making it difficult to move cooperation forward smoothly.

### **3.4. Fragmented skill training**

The primary teaching mode of the Exhibition Business Communication course features language teachers focusing on language training and exhibition major teachers concentrating on skill instruction. Language application training and exhibition communication skill cultivation fall under separate teaching modules without coordinated integration. Language courses only emphasize the accuracy of students' verbal expression and fail to polish specialized skills such as exhibition investment invitation, on-site reception, demand

coordination, and contract follow-up. Meanwhile, exhibition professional skill training merely lets students practice basic capabilities including booth introduction and client reception, lacking training on advanced, sophisticated and core skills such as cross-border business negotiation, exhibition crisis management, multinational client maintenance and project cooperation coordination <sup>[4]</sup>. Furthermore, teachers rarely incorporate linguistic and cultural dimensions into skill training sessions. As a result, students cannot develop an integrated mindset to apply language, culture and skills in tandem, and struggle to combine and deploy these three competencies when confronting practical problems.

## **4. Integrated teaching reform strategies of “language-culture-skill” from the perspective of humanistic English**

### **4.1. Optimize integrated curriculum system to boost in-depth integration of three dimensions**

Teachers should integrate the educational philosophy of humanistic English with the job requirements of the exhibition industry, divide curriculum content into three modules: basic knowledge, core skills and extended application, and promote the in-depth integration and synchronous teaching of language, culture and skill teaching elements. In the basic knowledge module, the primary goal is to cultivate students’ linguistic competence. Teachers focus on exhibition-specific English, eliminate outdated and redundant grammatical theories from teaching materials, guide students to concentrate on specialized vocabulary, business sentence patterns and scenario-based expressions covering the entire workflow of international exhibitions, and foster students’ standardized, appropriate and professional language expression habits combined with the foundational literacy of humanistic English <sup>[5]</sup>. In the core skills module, teachers may add cross-cultural business communication teaching content, sort out business cultures, communication logics, etiquette standards and cultural taboos of major global exhibition cooperation regions, lead students to conduct in-depth analysis of classic cross-cultural conflict cases in the exhibition industry, embed cross-cultural thinking into language expression and skill training, so that students can adapt to diverse cultural environments and master corresponding communication skills<sup>[6]</sup>. The teaching of the extended application module focuses on the improvement of vocational skills. Based on linguistic and cultural foundations, teachers design hierarchical and categorized practical skill training content for students, such as basic reception skills, business negotiation skills, crisis handling skills and cross-border cooperation coordination skills. They organically integrate standardized language expressions, cross-cultural etiquette requirements and on-the-job practical operation procedures, guide students to consolidate linguistic knowledge and practice cultural literacy during skill training, and achieve simultaneous advancement in language application, cultural literacy and vocational skills.

### **4.2. Innovate integrated teaching modes to strengthen scenario-based practical education**

Real international exhibition projects and workflows serve as vital supports for the course. Teachers shall abandon one-way lecture-based teaching and shift knowledge delivery to competence cultivation guided by scenario-oriented humanistic English teaching.

First, adopt situational teaching and immersive learning based on real foreign-related exhibition scenarios. For instance, create a teaching scenario of overseas exhibition promotion for intangible cultural heritage handicrafts, assign students roles of exhibitors, overseas purchasers and exhibition organizers, and integrate cultural norms of different regions into scenario drills. Students are required to use professional English to

complete full-process communication including booth reception, product introduction and demand negotiation, polishing linguistic competence and raising cross-cultural awareness through practice <sup>[7,8]</sup>.

Second, deepen school-enterprise integration via close long-term cooperation with local exhibition enterprises and international exhibition organizing committees to build on-campus and off-campus training bases. Students are offered chances to volunteer, assist with reception, and conduct business docking at real exhibitions, linking classroom learning to workplace practice seamlessly <sup>[9,10]</sup>. For example, organize students to participate in pre-preparation and on-site services of local import expos and cross-border cultural tourism exhibitions. Students communicate with merchants of diverse cultural backgrounds in real foreign-related contexts, perceive the integrated application of language, culture and skills, and accumulate practical experience to make up ability deficiencies.

### **4.3. Improve diversified evaluation mechanisms to guarantee integrated educational outcomes**

The evaluation system for the Convention and Exhibition Business Communication course usually centers on summative written examinations, which mainly test students' memorization and mastery of vocabulary and grammar. Formative assessments mostly take the form of written homework exercises, failing to fully reflect students' comprehensive capabilities including language application, cultural literacy and practical skills. From the perspective of humanistic English education, teachers base their work on the three-dimensional educational objectives of "language, culture and skills" and adopt a diversified evaluation system consisting of "60% formative assessment + 30% summative assessment + 10% professional literacy assessment" to evaluate students' comprehensive abilities in an all-round, fair and impartial manner <sup>[11]</sup>. Formative assessment focuses on students' daily classroom performance, examining their proficiency in language application, flexibility in cultural thinking and standardization of practical skills through multiple dimensions such as in-class Q&A performance, role-play outcomes, project completion status, cross-cultural case analysis reports, training attendance and hands-on practice demonstrations. Summative assessment can combine written tests and practical evaluations. The written test mainly examines students' professional knowledge of convention and exhibition English as well as cross-cultural theoretical knowledge, while the practical evaluation sets random convention and exhibition scenarios to assess students' comprehensive capabilities, including impromptu communication, negotiation coordination, and problem-solving skills. Professional literacy assessment is scored by school and enterprise training instructors based on students' standardization of professional etiquette, communication attitudes, adaptability and professional ethics, comprehensively reflecting their integrated communication competence in real workplace environments. Meanwhile, teachers need to establish individual student growth portfolios. By analyzing universal and personalized problems existing in current teaching based on evaluation results, they can provide customized, targeted tutoring for students to ensure the educational effectiveness of integrated teaching.

### **4.4. Build double-qualified teaching staff to secure long-term implementation of reform**

The implementation of integrated teaching reform sets higher standards for teachers' comprehensive capabilities. Teachers are required to possess solid expertise in humanistic English and cross-cultural teaching, as well as familiarity with job requirements, workflows and the latest development trends of the international exhibition industry. In response, higher vocational colleges should make efforts in two dimensions: teacher training and talent recruitment, to build a dual-qualified teaching team suitable for the integrated "language-

culture-skill” teaching model.

In terms of teacher training, higher vocational colleges shall regularly organize special training programs for internal teachers covering humanistic English teaching philosophies, cross-cultural business communication, practical operational skills of the exhibition industry and other topics. English teachers and instructors of exhibition business communication courses shall be assigned to take temporary posts in exhibition enterprises to accumulate practical industrial experience. Teachers should be encouraged to engage in bilingual teaching and further specialized studies in business English to upgrade their language teaching proficiency continuously <sup>[12,13]</sup>.

In terms of talent recruitment, higher vocational colleges shall vigorously recruit industry backbones and outstanding talents with practical experience in international exhibitions, proficient bilingual communication skills and sound cross-cultural literacy to enrich the teaching faculty. Meanwhile, a school-enterprise joint teacher training platform shall be established. Senior executives of exhibition enterprises and seasoned practitioners of international expos shall be invited as enterprise mentors to carry out teaching and research activities including special lectures, practical skill training and project guidance. This brings the latest communication techniques, cultural adaptation requirements and job standards of the exhibition industry into classrooms, makes up for the industrial limitations of on-campus teaching, and achieves full coverage of linguistic competence, cross-cultural literacy and industrial practical skills among the teaching team.

## 5. Conclusion

In summary, the integrated teaching reform of “Language-Culture-Skill” in the Exhibition Business Communication course from the perspective of humanistic English is a long-term systematic project. Teachers shall base on the core connotation of humanistic English, carry out innovative practice on optimizing integrated curriculum systems, innovating integrated teaching modes, perfecting diversified evaluation mechanisms and building double-qualified teaching teams, continuously deepen integrated teaching reform, comprehensively improve the educational quality of Exhibition Business Communication course, and support the cultivation of internationalized compound exhibition talents <sup>[14,15]</sup>.

## Funding

Heze University Teaching Reform Research Project (Project No.: JG202413)

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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