



Tripartite Mentorship Culture-Oriented Research on the Teaching Reform of Business English Communication

Yuru Cao

School of English Studies, Xi'an International Studies University, Business English Teaching and its interdisciplinary application, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China

caoyuru@xisu.edu.cn

Abstract. The theory of tripartite mentorship culture covers post-figurative, configurative and pre-figurative cultural inheritance modes, offering solid theoretical support for educational reform. Current Business English Communication (BEC) teaching faces drawbacks like outdated concepts, disjointed content and rigid modes, failing to satisfy cross-border business talent demands. This paper elaborates the theoretical foundation, analyzes existing flaws of instructional method in BEC, clarifies the necessity of tripartite-mentorship-culture-oriented reform, proposes the path of “post-figurative foundation-laying, configurative quality-improving, pre-figurative innovation and three-culture integration”, and discusses its theoretical and practical significance, providing reference for high-quality BEC teaching and cultivating talents with business cross-cultural communication competence.

Keywords: Tripartite Mentorship Culture; Business English Communication; Educational Reform; Business Intercultural Communicative Competence

1 Introduction

In the context of in-depth advancement of economic globalization and the increasing integration of cross-border business markets, the demand for high-quality inter-disciplinary talents has become increasingly urgent. Such talents are required to not only master systematic business professional knowledge and skills but also possess excellent cross-border communication competence and cross-cultural adaptation ability. Business English Communication (BEC) courses, as the core compulsory courses for business English majors and related interdisciplinary majors, are the key carrier to connect linguistic application and business practice, and bear the important mission of cultivating cross-border business talents that meet the development needs of the new era.

However, the current BEC teaching in domestic colleges and universities still faces many intractable drawbacks that cannot be ignored. Restricted by outdated teaching concepts, most teaching practices adopt rigid and single teaching modes, and the teaching content is often disjointed from the actual needs of cross-border business activities, lacking timeliness, pertinence and practicality. This backward teaching

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status quo not only hinders the improvement of students' comprehensive application ability of business English but also makes it difficult to adapt to the dynamic changes of cross-border business scenarios, thus failing to meet the practical talent recruitment demands of various enterprises in the new economic pattern.

Against this realistic background, the theory of tripartite mentorship culture has emerged as a valuable theoretical support for BEC teaching reform. This theory includes three distinct cultural inheritance modes: post-figurative, configurative and pre-figurative, which breaks through the limitations of traditional single cultural inheritance and teaching modes. This paper takes this theory as the core theoretical basis, elaborates on its connotation, analyzes the existing flaws of current BEC instructional methods, clarifies the necessity of tripartite-mentorship-culture-oriented reform, puts forward a targeted reform path, and discusses its theoretical and practical significance, aiming to provide valuable reference for realizing high-quality BEC teaching and cultivating outstanding cross-border business talents with strong cross-cultural communication competence.

2 Tripartite Mentorship Culture

The theory of tripartite mentorship culture is a core theory at the intersection of pedagogy and cultural anthropology, first proposed by the renowned American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead. It breaks through the single perspective of traditional cultural research, reconstructs the cultural transmission mode of human society from the dimension of intergenerational cultural inheritance, and divides it into three types: post-figurative culture, configurative culture and pre-figurative culture, thus providing brand-new theoretical support and practical logic for educational reform in various fields [3].

Post-figurative culture centers on elders for cultural inheritance, embodying a vertical cultural transmission from the older generation to the younger one [1]. Its core lies in younger generations learning the thinking modes of their elders, evolving into an educational model rooted in shared values and lifestyles. Focused on experience transfer, it emphasizes learners' acceptance and imitation of predecessors' knowledge and experience, aligns with traditional society's demand for order stability and experience continuity, and stresses learners' obedience and compliance.

Co-figurative culture is closely bound to era's changes. Against the backdrop of rapid socioeconomic development and technological upgrading, the authority of elders' experience has gradually weakened, and peer groups have become the core carriers of cultural dissemination [1]. Through horizontal interaction, communication and mutual learning, individuals accumulate experience and enhance capabilities. The derived educational model inherently features peer motivation and synergy, enabling learners to efficiently acquire new knowledge and master new skills in a peer-specific context.

Pre-figurative culture forms reverse inheritance logic opposite to post-figurative culture. With the new generation as the main cultural disseminators, it realizes the reverse cultural feedback from the younger to the older, breaking traditional intergenerational barriers [1]. Its derivative educational model focuses on encouraging inde-

pendent thinking, fostering critical thinking and stimulating innovation awareness. It not only conforms to the high-quality development trend of education in the new era but also meets society's core demand for innovative talents. Together with co-figurative culture, it has become the mainstream development direction in the current education field [4].

3 Existing Problems in Business English Communication Teaching

Business English Communication (BEC) Teaching serves as a foundational course for cultivating versatile professionals in cross-border commerce, bearing the critical responsibility of consolidating students' linguistic proficiency in English, polishing their business communication expertise, and cultivating their cross-cultural communicative competence. Nevertheless, there exists a striking mismatch between its current pedagogical landscape and both the imperative of cross-border business advancement amid global integration and enterprises' demands for interdisciplinary talents [5]. The deficiencies across the full teaching cycle call for targeted solutions, thereby presenting an optimal and precise entry point for the incorporation of the tripartite mentorship culture theory.

The backwardness of teaching philosophy constitutes the root restricting teaching quality. Currently, there prevails a common misconception in teaching that prioritizes linguistic techniques over business cultural communication: the focus is unduly placed on the mechanical instruction of Business English vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures, with excessive emphasis on language skill training, yet the systematic cultivation of business communication competence is neglected, especially the effective integration of cross-cultural communication literacy. As a result, students, despite having basic English proficiency, are hardly capable of handling business communication scenarios in diverse cultural contexts, and their inadequate cross-cultural communication competence has become a core bottleneck hindering their workplace adaptability. In addition, the poor adaptability of textbook content further exacerbates the disconnect between teaching and practice. Textbooks update far too slowly to keep pace with the development of new business formats such as cross-border e-commerce and cross-border live streaming; their content mostly centers on traditional scenarios like business negotiation and correspondence, failing to cover scenario-based communication strategies for new cross-border business rules. Moreover, the failure to align with the changes in business norms means textbooks cannot address the real pain points in practical business communication, making it difficult to support students in coping with diverse business scenarios.

Moreover, rigid teaching models severely compromise instructional outcomes. Some courses skip building foundational business communication skills and blindly pursue advanced scenario-based expression training, leaving students with shaky basics and unable to apply knowledge flexibly [7]. Meanwhile, teaching methods remain monotonous and lack interactivity. Blended online-offline teaching only stays at superficial integration; it fails to leverage information technology to create interac-

tive, personalized scenario-based lessons, thus depriving students of practical operational skills and hindering the development of their autonomous learning and teamwork capabilities. Weak, uneven-quality teaching resources also undermine teaching standards [4]. Most existing materials are just repackaged generic business English content, with a scarcity of targeted resources tailored to business communication. There is a shortage of high-quality business cases and cross-cultural communication materials, and some resources suffer from mismatched quality and value, which cannot support high-standard teaching.

Additionally, the one-dimensional assessment system fails to comprehensively evaluate students' competencies. Current evaluations mainly rely on written exams and assignments, focusing merely on language knowledge acquisition instead of effectively assessing practical business communication skills and cross-cultural literacy [4]. Besides, the inadequate feedback mechanism fails to provide timely, targeted guidance for students' capability improvement, impeding the iterative upgrade of teaching quality.

4 Tripartite Mentorship Culture-Based Solutions to BEC Teaching Problems

The three logics of inheritance, interaction and reciprocal feedback in the tripartite mentorship culture theory offer targeted solutions to the pain points of Business English Communication teaching and clarify the path for teaching reform. Such culture-guided reform is both an inherent need to tackle teaching dilemmas and an external requirement to adapt to the era and market, bearing irreplaceable practical necessity.

As an inherent imperative to redress the imbalance of the teaching system, the three-dimensional inheritance logic effectively offsets outdated teaching concepts and rigid models [6]. The three-dimensional synergy--pre-figurative culture for foundational grounding, configurative culture for quality enhancement, and post-figurative culture for innovation--rebuilds the teaching system, fundamentally bridging the gaps between basic knowledge and its application.

This reform also caters to the core demand of fostering intercultural business communication competence, the very essence of BEC. Highlighting cultural inheritance and interactive integration, Tripartite Mentorship Culture shifts teaching from language-focused instruction to a dual-core paradigm of culture and communication, precisely cultivating students' intercultural business communication competence in line with the course's core training goals.

Moreover, the reform responds to the external imperative of adapting to economic globalization and new business formats. Amid the rapid development of cross-border commerce, enterprises are imposing increasingly higher requirements on professionals' comprehensive competencies [5]. The logic of reverse inheritance and peer interaction embedded in theory of tripartite mentorship culture enables teaching to keep pace with the times, timely absorb the achievements of new business formats, and ensure that talent cultivation aligns with market demands. Furthermore, the reform is an inevitable necessity for advancing the high-quality development of BEC teaching. The tripartite mentorship culture theory offers a novel theoretical perspective for teaching

reform, breaks the rigid constraints of the single-mode thinking in traditional teaching, facilitates the all-round upgrading of teaching philosophies, contents and modes, and propels BEC teaching toward high-quality and distinctive development.

Based on the core connotation of the tripartite mentorship culture and the training objectives of BEC teaching, we can construct a multi-dimensional reform path of Tripartite Mentorship Integration. This path promotes the effective implementation of teaching reforms, comprehensively addresses teaching shortcomings, and enhances talent training quality.

Pre-figurative culture underpins solid teaching foundations, resolving outdated ideologies and poor basic proficiency. In line with post-figurative culture's inheritance logic of elder-to-youth knowledge transmission, teachers shall take full guiding and inheriting responsibilities, prioritizing basic teaching and core competency impartation. First, build a basic teaching system centered on business etiquette, cross-border business norms, basic communication scripts and business correspondence standards, to consolidate students' Business English skills and business knowledge foundations and prevent foundational gaps. Then, embed intercultural communication competence in the entire teaching process: elaborate on cross-national business cultural differences, communication taboos and etiquette, and use classic cases to enable students to master intercultural communication's underlying logic, develop intercultural thinking and empathy, and boost their intercultural business communication skills. Additionally, teachers need to upgrade professional competence and deepen insights into Business English and Intercultural Communication, guaranteeing professional and accurate knowledge transmission.

Drawing on the configurative culture, this study innovates teaching models to address the dual predicaments of rigid teaching paradigms and insufficient practical engagement. By capitalizing on the core advantage of horizontal peer interaction inherent in the configurative culture, students' subjective consciousness is activated, and the interactivity and practicality of teaching are effectively enhanced [2]. To break the constraints of the traditional one-way lecturing mode, diversified peer interactive teaching scenarios are constructed; through group cooperation, business case deliberations, simulated cross-border negotiations and business scenario role-playing, students are encouraged to exchange learning experiences, refine business communication skills and cultivate team collaboration capabilities in peer interactions. Furthermore, the in-depth integration of online-offline blended teaching is advanced. Relying on information technology, a simulated business scenario platform is established to reconstruct emerging business scenarios including cross-border live streaming, cross-border e-commerce negotiations and international business conferences, which enables students to improve their scenario-based response capabilities in simulated practical contexts. In conjunction with a peer mutual-aid learning mechanism, students are motivated to form learning groups to conduct collaborative learning focusing on business communication difficulties and cross-cultural communication puzzles, which not only fosters their autonomous learning abilities but also promotes the transformation of teaching from one-way knowledge indoctrination to two-way interactive communication.

Pre-figurative culture enables reverse feedback, solving outdated content and resource shortages. Following its logic of younger generations empowering elders to adapt to new business trends, teachers upgrade teaching content/resources by leveraging students' strengths. As digital natives familiar with new cross-border business scenarios, students share practical experience, industry dynamics and skills to help teachers keep up with the industry. Teachers and students co-develop quality resources (business scenario manuals, cross-cultural case banks, practical question banks) to offset resource gaps. Teachers should discard old authoritative views, absorb students' innovations, optimize teaching methods, shift from teacher-centered to mutual growth, and build tailored flexible models for diverse student needs.

Through the integration of the tripartite mentorship culture theory, supporting systems are optimized to resolve the issues of single-dimensional evaluation and misalignment between teaching supply and practical demand [6]. The three cultural inheritance models are not isolated but are required to achieve integration. Supporting facilities are improved simultaneously to establish a comprehensive teaching guarantee system and a diversified holistic evaluation system, with the single written-exam evaluation mode broken. Core evaluation dimensions include basic competencies, practical performance, cross-cultural literacy and teamwork capabilities; scientificity and comprehensiveness are enhanced via evaluation methods that combine written tests, practical assessments, scenario simulations, peer reviews and corporate mentor evaluations. The teaching feedback mechanism is refined to timely collect input from students and mentors, and targeted optimization of teaching content and methods is conducted to facilitate the continuous iterative upgrading of teaching quality. University-enterprise cooperation is deepened to align with cross-border business needs; corporate mentors are invited to participate in teaching, and real business projects are introduced as teaching materials, thereby making teaching more workplace-relevant and enabling the accurate alignment between talent training and market demands.

5 Conclusion

Promoting the reform of Business English Communication teaching under the guidance of the tripartite mentorship culture theory boasts profound theoretical significance and important practical value, which injects new impetus into the development of Business English teaching and provides robust support for the cultivation of cross-border business talents.

In terms of theoretical significance, the reform achieves the in-depth integration of the tripartite mentorship culture theory with BEC teaching, enriches the theoretical research perspectives of BEC teaching, expands the practical scenarios of the tripartite mentorship culture theory in applied education, offers valuable references for the educational reform of foreign language teaching and related disciplines, and promotes the further deepening of relevant theoretical research.

In terms of practical significance, first, the reform effectively addresses the five core problems existing in current BEC teaching, reconstructs a scientific and sound teaching system, drives the all-round upgrading of teaching concepts, contents and modes, and

significantly improves teaching quality. Besides, it precisely cultivates students' abilities in business cross-cultural communication and practical business operation, consolidates their core workplace competitiveness, enables students to quickly adapt to the demands of the cross-border business workplace, and thus facilitates the smooth transition from campus to workplace.

In conclusion, the tripartite mentorship culture theory provides scientific guidance and robust support for the reform of BEC teaching. Guided by this theory, advancing teaching reform is not only an inevitable choice to resolve teaching predicaments, but also an inherent requirement to meet the needs of the times and the market. Through the integration and practical implementation of the three cultural inheritance model--pre-configurative, configurative education and post-configurative education--we can comprehensively address teaching shortcomings, cultivate students' core competencies and practical capabilities, realize the high-quality development of BEC teaching, and continuously empower the cultivation of cross-border business talents and the high-quality development of the industry.

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