

# Network Simulation for the Multimode Business English

Zuo Yan

School of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Beijing Wuzi University, Beijing 101149, China  
zuoyan@bwu.edu.cn

**Abstract** - This paper mainly introduces the multimode-assisted practice in Business English training guided by the theory of multimodality. It emphasizes on the idea that lectures on Business English integrating pictures, screenshots, video frequencies, sound etc. may help to make business works impressive. With the help of the virtual simulation technology, the learners can take part in the designed business activities. The implications of the practical business works can be strengthened; at the same time, the learning effect will be improved and learners' puzzles in comprehension of Business English are reduced.

**Index Terms** - Computer Network, Multimodality, Business English

## I. Introduction

In the information age, with its quick and convenient service, the computer network provides people with various information. People no longer rely on a single media for the access to information and knowledge. They are getting used to the new ways to acquire knowledge, to update knowledge and accumulate knowledge through computer networks. The friendly interface and intuitive image interactive learning environment that the computer network can provide, as well as the rich source of information is conducive to a lot of access to knowledge, and help to stimulate interest in collaborative learning[1].

For this reason, the computer network is guided to the Business English activities, which brings the Business English teaching and training the inexperienced multimode style. In the process of training, the modern information technology is used; the multimedia resources are used rationally and positively developed; the rich resources on the internet are made full use of; the resources which are close to society and close to the times are provided [2]. In this way, the learning and using channels of Business English are expanded. Through the use of a variety of audio and video resources and network resources, the practical effect will be improved. The computer network changed the previous book-resourced learning and made the multimode learning possible.

## II. Multimodality Theory

Multimodality refers to the semiotic mode mixture of different symbols in one conducted communication or the communicative activities [3]. Also it can represent that different symbolic resources are mobilized to construct various ways of meanings [4]. The theory is from the social semiotics perspective, based on Halliday's functional grammar theoretical foundation. In this theory, the vice language of images, colours, sounds, and action symbols have been no longer in the auxiliary position in the modern social

exchanges. They are becoming broader symbolic resources to participate in the construction of meaning with text symbols.

The multimodality advocates the use of multi-channels from network, pictures and role-playing for the stimulation of the multi-work of collaborative operation of multiple senses. In the activities, the senses should be used as much as possible to experience the various business procedures. Being permitted, the full use of the network, multimedia and other resources, as well as visual, auditory, tactile and other means should be used to stimulate the learners' interest and enthusiasm. The multi - modal learning is combined with a multi- modal characteristics of the textbooks, the Internet and the business scenes, involving images, colours, sounds, texts, and other combinations of modes.

In the multi - modal framework, an important reference for modal choice is whether we can enhance learning efficiency. Any mode which can provide for teaching and facilitating conditions and which can provide teaching auxiliary conditions can be used as a learning mode. The development of network technology provided the appropriate scenarios and convenient conditions. The joint participation for a variety of media is a good way for the absorption course information.

Multimodality theory has already been introduced and practiced in the field of English teaching and learning. Language learning requires the co-related work of all senses from the learners. It will stimulate the students' interest by the function of all organs.

## III. The Characteristics of Business English and the Feasibility of Multi-modal Practice

### A. The Characteristics

#### 1) Situational

Business English courses include Business English language, Business English style, Business English writing and Business English negotiation. Both the writing style and the negotiation are trying to show specific business scenarios for learners. Being familiar with the business model in the problem-solving process through specific tasks and practice unfolds Business English proficiency requirements. Learning and training process are situational Business English adaptation. The learners call for the real business situation for the learning interest and the learning effect. For example, the learning of different types of Business English writing should be accompanied by different writing tasks from real companies.

## 2) Operational

Business English learning and training are intended to complete business tasks. A lot of hands-on activities are involved in the learning process. Learning is by doing—Business English negotiation skills are gradually mastered in negotiations analog and Business English writing is also obtained in the ability to cope with the writing task activities. The learning of business English should always be corresponded with the requirement from the companies and the development of the companies.

### B. The Feasibility of Multi-modal Teaching Based on Computer Network Technology

Both the business scene and a specific business task are given a special significance and effect in the process of learning and training. Therefore, each business activity can be integrated a variety of different scenes modes, such as voice, text and images. The auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic and other senses should be fully mobilized to make the program to achieve the organic integration of the various means and symbols of language, images, sounds, text and other resources [5].

## IV. Construction of the Multi-modal Teaching for Business English

Business English Learning is a network technology-based course for its own characteristics, based on multi-modal teaching theory, with the help of computer network platform (see Fig.1).

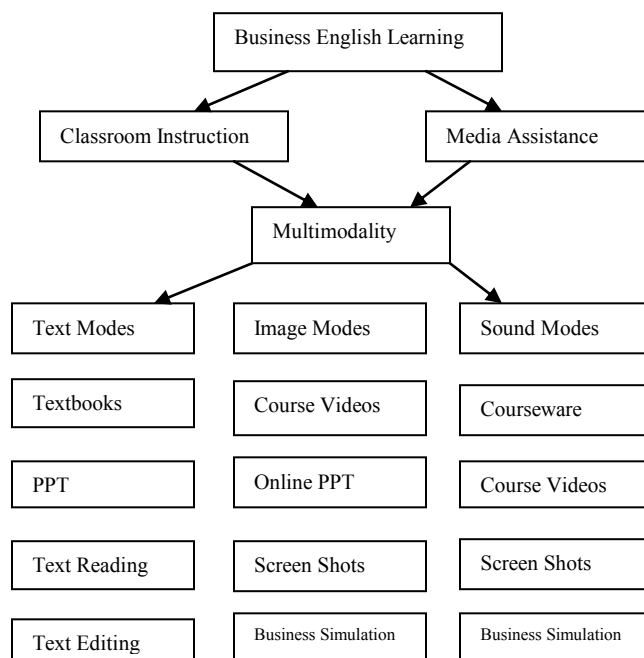


Fig.1 Network Simulation for the Multimode Business English Instruction.

In the age of Internet, it is necessary to provide business English website URL for students keen on Internet culture and

the Business English training personnel, to guide them browse for the completion of certain business English practice. The single instruction mode will be converted into the mode of instruction, network and practice. Learning activities are presented in three main modes: text modes, image modes and sound modes

### A. Text Modes

In the process of Business English learning, Text modes are always in the leading position. Text modes include teaching text, the PPT material in text and text writing (the practical styles that the Business English learners need to complete).

### B. Image Modes

Image modes include various types of images displayed for Business English learning, the uploaded videos on the local area network, the network PPT (courseware images, graphics and screenshots) and business activity records. This mode forms the image of the text modes.

### C. Sound Modes

Sound mode has PPT courseware, video, record movies, and students' practical business scene simulation performance recording as a carrier, which make the text modes and image modes more vivid.

In the above three modes, the text mode is responsible for providing key information, the images and sounds mode which are auxiliary and are responsible for providing background information. Although they each emphasize different aspects, they are used to achieve the purpose of communication with a macro intensive Business English learning content.

## V. Network Simulation of Multi-modal Business English

In the premise of multi-modal learning, although the text mode is always in a dominant position, the mutual penetration of the three modes and the complementing constructed the significance of the Business English texts. In one condition, the image and the sound mode highlighted the text mode; in another condition, the text mode also enabled the image modes and the characteristics of the sound modes more projecting.

The following is an example case from Business English Negotiation, presenting the whole process of the three modal learning.

### A. Text Modes

In the teaching of some basic principles in the course of Business English negotiation, the modes of teaching are text-based, supplemented by PPT courseware. The text mode in the courseware is always in the leading role. For example, the explanation for some polite principles like equality and mutual benefit and other important policies are explained in the text modes. Only text modes can clearly articulate these concepts and principles. The textual representation will also be supplemented by pictures, screenshots and videos. The image

mode, serving as the background, emphasizes the literal meaning of the expression for its strong visual impact.

The supplementary reading after class is also text mode based. By the direction from the guiders in class, the learners can download the relevant articles from Internet to expand the Business English learning. The learners will also adapt some of the essays and business affairs from Internet and write their own Business English articles. As a practice for Business English Writing, the activity is text modes based. The teachers will help to analyse the articles that the students wrote and train the way of practical learning by teaching and reading.

### B. Image Modes

Image mode is the assisting mode in the classroom instruction. However, in the part of the image-centered web pages, or in the online videos and screenshots, image mode will be the main one correspondingly and the text and sound be the auxiliary mode. For instance, in the video for Business English negotiation, the image is the main mode and text mode only appears in the form of subtitles at the bottom of the screen (see Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 Business Negotiation

The sound mode is the auxiliary mode synchronized with the language of the screen character. In this case, the interpretation of the text mode makes the image mode more prominent. The sound modes with the synchronization also strengthened the effect.

The main modal role of the image is also reflected in the network learning of the students. Through curriculum network platform, students can watch the network video, browse the courseware to consolidate the content of learning. The other manifestation of the image mode is the students' business simulation. In the process, the students will act as the requirement of practical situation and decorate the surroundings. The activity is based on the text mode and the presentation is image mode (lively images). The text mode provides acting context for the image mode, and the sound mode—the recorded materials give the clues for the activity (see Fig.3). The three modes work together for the lively participation of the learners. The image modes also serve the function of aesthetic pursuit.



Fig. 3 Simulation for the Business English Negotiation)

### C. Sound Modes

The sound mode always takes the role of providing background information. In the PPT courseware, every entering and quitting of the words and pictures needs the hint from the sound, serving as the input of the entry for one piece of new information. In the course videos, sound is the guarantee for the aliveness of the characters in the pictures. Moreover, in the activity of business stimulation, the sound mode, coordinating with the bodily activities from the students, is the main mode.

Take the example of Business English Negotiation, sound modes are applied perfectly in the process of learning. The students will download the business situation and choose the one that is operational. Then in groups, they need to adapt the text and distribute the roles for the recording. The practical record will be played to check the effect. In the process the sound mode becomes the main mode. The word document and the environment (image mode) are the auxiliary ones.

For some special business occasions, sound modes play the dominating role. In the process of business bargaining, the learners are taught and experienced the real situation by listening to some business audio clips. Text or image is not permitted to use, the learners' discriminating ability is tested.

## VI. Technological Support for the Network Simulation

Internet instruction is becoming a very popular way for many teachers and instructors. In the process of practice, the learners will meet some problems by their own surfing and learning, the problems limited the development of network simulation learning. Therefore, a kind of technology from the direction of teachers is called for, that is, the virtual simulation technology.

### A. Virtual Simulation Technology

Virtual simulation technology is a kind of computer technology which can construct and experience virtual world. Compared with the traditional simulation technology, the virtual simulation one has the characteristics of immersion, construction and interaction. The virtual world is created from the computer simulation. It may be the reproduction of the real world, and it may also be the false world. The users can

interact with it naturally by the visual, audio and tactile senses. It creates a virtual world for the users which can reflect the changes and growth of the real world. It provides an interactive platform for the users to communicate with the virtual world. The users can take part in the activities and explore the function and development of the virtual objects, a kind immersion effect is produced. The kind of virtual simulation instruction may not take the place of real practical learning, whereas, with the advantages of low cost, safety, repetition, reliability and perfect virtual environment, it is a good try for the present practical learning. The use of virtual simulation technology in Business English learning helps to stimulate the students' interest and practical effect. The learning is a kind of autonomous learning for the students. They have to work in groups to meet the challenges from the business tasks. They have to form the innovative thinking for the practical problems. In that way, the quality cultivation and innovation education are obtained.

#### *B. Designing of the Virtual Simulation*

The designing is based on the requirement of the course of Business English. In the practical tasks, the classical tasks relating to business work are selected. Business negotiation, Business diplomacy, Business corresponding, Business execution are the representing units. The users can make use of the virtual environment to realize the business work. They can interact with other users and the business companies. They may run their own companies on line and operate it. It virtualizes the real business scenes naturally.

In the designing stage, the software 3DSMAX 9.0 and Flash CS3 will be combined to get the virtual effect. The former one devotes to create a highly real business environment and the latter one works for the interaction in the virtual world. The management for the teachers and students information is also designed and operated. The data between the front and the back will be exchanged. The user can control the scene and task by the control of mouse, to realize the initiation and termination of business tasks.

In order to realize the integration of teaching, learning, practicing and evaluating, every task may contain three stages, including demonstration, practice and examination. The demonstration aims to help the instruction. The practice stage permits the repetitive practice from the students, the unfinished tasks can be stored for further practice and examination. The examination stage will have various business scenes. Different degrees may be marked. The starting equipment is controlled by the teacher for the fairness of examination.

The user may use the platform to reach the aim of being accustomed to the real business environment and fulfilling the business English tasks. He enters into the main part for the general review of the business English application. He can choose the different scenes with different tasks and different levels. The teacher will monitor the whole process of learning and self-testing from behind. Whenever possible, he may provide his suggestions for learning.

#### **VII. Conclusion**

Computer network - based multi-modal auxiliary teaching model enables the interdependence and inter-promotion of various modes in the use of computer network resources. Computer network technology provided text, pictures, video and other multi-modal resources to mobilize the student's auditory, visual and tactile senses, and thus make a lively, vibrant, effective learning and training [6].

In the multi-modal style, text modes go throughout all aspects, always bearing the interpretation function which is irreplaceable. The text modes interpenetrated with sound modes and image modes at the same time, complementing each other to make the text more vital. The interdependence of the three modes brings about the visual and auditory impact, filling the blank senses of learners, and fully mobilizing the auditory, visual and other senses. To a large extent, this way of learning digested the learners' plain text comprehension difficulties.

Business English covers every aspect of business practice. The authentic learning has to be done through getting into the real business world. The network simulation for the multimode business English provides the efficient, effective and interesting learning. It is not only a trend in learning, but an enjoyment.

#### **References**

- [1] R.Sui, "Translation Instruction based on the Computer Net Technology," Foreign Language and Literature Study, 2002.
- [2] J.L. Chen, "Integration of Computer Network and Foreign Language Courses," Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2010.
- [3] T. Leeuwen, "Introducing social Semiotics," London: Routledge, 2005.
- [4] A. Baldry, & P. Thibault, P. "Multimodal Transcription and Text Analysis," London: Equinox Publishing Limited, 2006.
- [5] V. Lim. "Developing an integrative multi-semiotic model," Multimodal Discourse Analysis: Systemic-Functional Perspectives, 2004.
- [6] S. Norris, "Analyzing Multimodal Interaction: A Methodological Framework," 2004.