

Exploration and Practice of Project-based Learning in Arabic “Business Communication” Course in Higher Vocational Education in the Context of “Golden Course” Construction

Ziyun Tang

Shenzhen Polytechnic University, Shenzhen 518055

Abstract: The Ministry of Education has proposed the construction of “golden courses” as one of the core tasks for promoting the “quality revolution” in higher education institutions nationwide and driving the connotative development of higher education in China. In the context of “golden course” construction, the exploration and practice of project-based learning in the Arabic Business Communication course will help to cultivate compound talents who can meet market demands.

Keywords: Project-based learning; Arabic business communication course; Higher Vocational Education; Golden Courses Construction

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1. Introduction

For a long time, in Arabic language teaching, there has been a tendency to focus on developing and enhancing language skills, with relatively less emphasis on language teaching and practice in business scenarios.

With the development of the digital economy, the Internet, and cross-border e-commerce, market demands have also changed. We should promptly adapt to changes in the market demand for talents. Under the background of golden course construction, we should adjust teaching content and methods, reconstruct the course, and build course resources, aiming to achieve adaptability, advancement, effectiveness, and attainment of the course.

2. Problems

2.1 The Outdated and sparse course resources

Despite the extensive research on project-based curriculum reform, the academic research on relevant curriculum construction is notably limited, particularly in light of the rapid development of the digital economy and the urgent mismatch between current market demands for compound Arabic-speaking talents in business areas. Existing research is confined to Arabic language and cultural teaching studies.

In vocational universities, the Arabic course “Business Communication” still employs relatively outdated teaching methods, with teaching content diverging from actual workplace requirements, and there remains a gap in research on related project-based curriculum construction. Due to the high dependence of vocational Arabic majors on undergraduate Arabic majors, course design has not been fully integrated with actual market demands. Therefore, teachers are required to abandon the traditional training model of “emphasis on grammar, neglect of skills” and organically combine vocational content with curriculum design to create high-quality “golden courses” that align with the employment environment in the digital economy. This aims to cultivate applied talents proficient

in both foreign language and business skills.

2.2 Outdated teaching methods

Currently, there is also a shortage of teaching resources and outdated teaching methods in Arabic business education. In the past, the curriculum mainly relied on lecturing, with the teacher-centered approach resulting in low student engagement and inadequate development of their language application skills. Due to the relatively late development of Arabic language majors and the vastness of Arabic-speaking countries with numerous dialects, online resources for the standard Arabic language are scarce. Therefore, in the context of the digital economy, “Internet Plus,” and 5G technology development, teachers should incorporate modern teaching methods, enrich course resources, and engage overseas and industry experts in teaching to enhance teaching effectiveness.

3. The methods of project-based learning

3.1 Reconstructing Teaching Content

Traditional foreign-language communication-related courses mainly focus on traditional cross-cultural knowledge learning, primarily introducing common cultural phenomena such as traditional festivals, specialty food, and dining etiquette. These knowledge areas reflect surface-level cultural phenomena and fail to help students understand the deeper connotations behind these surface cultural phenomena or relate them to workplace applications. According to the survey of the companies’ demand for Arabic talents, knowledge of business etiquette and foreign trade is of high importance.

In this study, through collaboration with industry experts and establishing a platform for university-enterprise cooperation, the teaching objectives of Arabic business communication courses are analyzed. The corresponding curriculum system is reconstructed according to market demands, integrating real workplace environments and exploring suitable and effective teaching methods. Experiences are summarized, and validated through practice, and the course is developed into a “golden course” that meets the “three order and one degree” objectives. This achieves adaptability, advancement, effectiveness, and achievement of the course, as well as the scientific and standardized cultivation of compound talents in business Arabic cross-cultural communication, improving talent cultivation efficiency.

The key point of the reconstruction of project-based learning is the project. Therefore, we are supposed to set the project names in the form of subject-verb-object structure, to visually demonstrate what we are going to “do” or “learn to do,” clarifying learning motivations and embedding teaching in learning. The following table includes the project names for the Arabic Business Communication course.

Module	Project
1. Develop the market	1. Research the target market
	2. Analyze customer characteristics
	3. Develop target customers
2. Negotiate with customers	4. Receive foreign guests
	5. Promote company products
	6. Negotiate cooperation terms
	7. Conclude a contract
3. Operate customer relationships	8. Pre-sales: respond to inquiries
	9. During sales: follow up on progress
	10. After sales: solve problems

a) Optimizing digital teaching methods

In the context of rapid development in 5G technology and artificial intelligence, teachers should actively explore how to utilize information technology teaching software, global digital teaching resources, and new media intelligent classrooms. They should employ innovative technologies to simulate teaching, optimize teaching methods, cater to the individual characteristics and needs of different students, achieve personalized teaching, and promote student autonomy in learning. Technologies such as 5G, VR, AR, and MR should be integrated into actual teaching, establishing a virtual educational environment to enhance student learning enjoyment. By keeping pace with the times, this approach advances the development of digital teaching.

b) Enriching teaching resources and enhancing faculty capabilities.

Currently, there is a lack of business-oriented Arabic language textbooks and teaching resources. Existing textbooks are outdated, and there are only a few resources available for cross-cultural business communication. It is essential to utilize the internet to expand teaching resources and explore ways to enrich teaching resources for business communication through the development of micro-courses and MOOCs.

Due to the close relationship between project-based teaching and the job market, project-based teaching not only requires teachers to have a solid theoretical foundation but also to have extensive practical experience to handle problems that may arise during the project-based teaching process. This research will also further explore how to enhance teacher capabilities.

4. Steps of Construction of project-based Teaching

The construction of project-based teaching can't be finished easily, but it relies on the unremitting efforts of both teachers and students. Based on different business themes, teachers assign different tasks, students complete them as required, and then both teachers and students discuss and evaluate the project tasks together, aiming to achieve mutual learning and thereby realize project-based learning.

Currently, the micro-lectures in the golden course construction, scenario simulations, and tasks review serve as the three main support methods for the practice of project-based learning in Arabic business communication courses. They also represent effective forms of integrating artificial intelligence into language teaching, fully embodying the characteristics of project-driven design and practical integration.

In the teaching practice of this course, it is important to simulate real-life situations, setting up business scenarios with a student-centered approach. For instance, in the foreign trade industry, Arabic language students need to engage in business negotiations over contract details before the contract conclusion. In teaching practice, group work can be employed, with each group consisting of 5-6 students. For each task, roles or responsibilities should be assigned to ensure active participation from every student. Within each group, two companies, one for import and one for export, should be established. These companies should be named, and corresponding group members should assume roles as heads of each company and translators. The group representing the export company needs to introduce their products, while both sides negotiate details such as product names, quality, quantity, packaging, pricing, and insurance terms.

This negotiation scenario, based on simulations of real-life situations, combines international trade with Arabic language knowledge, making knowledge more systematic and integrating theory with practice. It can stimulate students' interest and, in the process, enhance their communication, cooperation, and innovation skills. It can contribute to students' independent learning and information retrieval, allowing them to better grasp and consolidate their knowledge from practice, laying the groundwork for future social work positions.

Teachers create specific and actionable learning and practice scenarios for students, but they must adhere to student-centeredness. The role of the teacher should be that of an initiator and guide, while students take on the role of practitioners. Through hands-on practice, students discover and explore, applying new knowledge to complete the final project.

After the scenario performance, there will be a four-side evaluation involving intra-group members, other groups, teachers, and industry mentors. Other groups will summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the performing group, while intra-group members will engage in self-evaluation. Teachers will evaluate and score the performance based on students' language accuracy, completeness of content, and logical expression. Industry experts will score the students' professional proficiency.

Furthermore, the weightings for the four-side evaluation should be established, and different students within the group should be graded based on the difficulty of their respective roles. If a group or individual members perform exceptionally well, they may receive additional points.

5. Conclusion

The exploration and practice of project-based learning in the Arabic business communication course in the common efforts of both teacher and students helps to achieve remarkable results. From the data of the graduate students in Arabic major, most of the students chose to work in the business area. It can be seen that we should further explore to achieve adaptability, advancement, effectiveness, and attainment of the course, thus it will help cultivate the compound talents who can meet the market demands.

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About the author:

Ziyun Tang, female, 1991.12, Han, Suining, Master degree, Lecturer, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, Vocational Education, Arabic research