# BLENDED LEARNING MODE OF BUSINESS ENGLISH WRITING UNDER THE OBE CONCEPT IN APPLICATION-ORIENTED COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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**ABSTRAK**

Dengan perkembangan berterusan ekonomi global, komunikasi perniagaan telah menjadi semakin antarabangsa, menjadikan kemahiran menulis bahasa Inggeris perniagaan yang berkesan amat penting. Kertas kerja ini bertujuan untuk meneroka cara membina bilik darjah pengajaran gabungan berorientasikan aplikasi dan cekap untuk "Penulisan Bahasa Inggeris Perniagaan" di bawah bimbingan falsafah "Pendidikan Berasaskan Hasil (OBE)". Kajian ini mengintegrasikan teknologi pendidikan moden dengan strategi pengajaran yang berkesan, dengan matlamat teras untuk meningkatkan kebolehan menulis praktikal pelajar. Pertama, kertas kerja ini memperkenalkan prinsip teras falsafah OBE, menekankan pendekatan berpusatkan pelajar dan memberi tumpuan kepada hasil pembelajaran dan pembangunan kemahiran pelajar. Selepas itu, kertas kerja itu menjelaskan kepentingan penulisan bahasa

Inggeris perniagaan, menonjolkan batasan kaedah pengajaran tradisional dan kelebihan pengajaran gabungan dari segi kreativiti, interaktiviti dan fleksibiliti. Mengenai model pengajaran bercantum, kertas kerja ini mencadangkan rangka kerja yang menggabungkan pengajaran dalam talian dan luar talian. Dalam fasa dalam talian, guru boleh menggunakan sumber multimedia, papan perbincangan dalam talian, dan bengkel penulisan maya untuk membimbing pelajar dalam pembelajaran bebas dan pemikiran kritis. Dalam fasa luar talian, guru boleh mengatur tugasan penulisan praktikal, perbincangan kumpulan dan sesi maklum balas untuk menggalakkan kerjasama pelajar dan kemahiran aplikasi praktikal. Tambahan pula, kertas kerja membincangkan strategi penilaian, menekankan kaedah penilaian berasaskan kecekapan. Melalui kerja projek, simulasi senario dunia sebenar dan ulasan rakan sebaya, guru boleh memahami kebolehan menulis pelajar secara menyeluruh dan memberikan bimbingan dan cadangan yang disasarkan. Akhir sekali, kertas kerja itu meringkaskan kelebihan "Bilik Pengajaran Berorientasikan Aplikasi dan Campuran Cekap untuk Penulisan Bahasa Inggeris Perniagaan" di bawah falsafah OBE: memupuk kebolehan pembelajaran kendiri pelajar, pemikiran kreatif dan semangat kerja berpasukan; meningkatkan kemahiran menulis praktikal pelajar untuk menyesuaikan diri dengan lebih baik dengan tuntutan persekitaran perniagaan. Walau bagaimanapun, perhatian juga harus diberikan kepada peruntukan sumber pengajaran yang munasabah, peningkatan profesionalisme guru, dan pemupukan kesedaran pelajar terhadap pembelajaran dalam talian.

**Kata kunci:** Falsafah OBE, penulisan Bahasa Inggeris perniagaan, pengajaran campuran, kebolehan praktikal, strategi penilaian

*ABSTRACT*

*With the continuous development of the global economy, business communication has become increasingly internationalized, making effective business English writing skills critically important. This paper aims to explore how to construct an application-oriented and efficient blended teaching classroom for "Business English Writing" under the guidance of the "Outcome-Based Education (OBE)" philosophy. The study integrates modern educational*

*technology with effective teaching strategies, with the core goal of enhancing students' practical writing abilities. Firstly, the paper introduces the core principles of the OBE philosophy, emphasizing a student-centered approach and focusing on students' learning outcomes and skill development. Subsequently, the paper elucidates the significance of business English writing, highlighting the limitations of traditional teaching methods and the advantages of blended teaching in terms of creativity, interactivity, and flexibility. Regarding the blended teaching model, this paper proposes a framework that combines online and offline teaching. In the online phase, teachers can use multimedia resources, online discussion boards, and virtual writing workshops to guide students in independent learning and critical thinking. In the offline phase, teachers can organize practical writing tasks, group discussions, and feedback sessions to promote student collaboration and practical application skills. Furthermore, the paper discusses assessment strategies, emphasizing competency-based evaluation methods. Through project works, real-world scenario simulations, and peer reviews, teachers can comprehensively understand students' writing abilities and provide targeted guidance and suggestions. Finally, the paper summarizes the advantages of the "Application-Oriented and Efficient Blended Teaching Classroom for Business English Writing" under the OBE philosophy: cultivating students' self-directed learning abilities, creative thinking, and teamwork spirit; enhancing students' practical writing skills to better adapt to the demands of the business environment. However, attention should also be given to the reasonable allocation of teaching resources, the enhancement of teacher professionalism, and the cultivation of students' awareness of online learning.*

***Keywords:*** *OBE philosophy, business English writing, blended teaching, practical abilities, assessment strategies*

## Introduction

As globalization advances, communication and cooperation in the business field are increasingly highlighting their international characteristics, making effective business English writing skills crucial. In the modern business environment, clear and accurate

communication, as well as the ability to effectively convey professional information, are key factors for success for businesses and professionals. However, business English writing is not merely about the application of grammar and vocabulary; it also involves how to express information with commercial value in a precise and adaptable manner within a cross-cultural, cross-border context. In order to cultivate students' competitiveness in this highly competitive business environment, the field of education is constantly exploring innovative teaching methods. Among these, the concept of "Outcome-Based Education (OBE)" emerges as a novel educational approach, emphasizing placing students at the core of learning and focusing on developing students' learning outcomes and abilities. (Biggs, J. & Tang C., 2011.) In this context, the integration of the OBE concept with the teaching of business English writing, and the creation of an applied and efficient hybrid teaching classroom, has become an urgent issue in the field of education.

The objective of this paper is to explore the construction of an applied and efficient hybrid teaching classroom for "Business English Writing" under the guidance of the "OBE concept." We aim to integrate modern educational technology with effective teaching strategies, with the goal of enhancing students' actual writing skills so that they can fully leverage their potential in the business domain. This paper will discuss the following aspects: firstly, it will introduce the core principles of the OBE concept, emphasizing a student-centered approach and focusing on students' learning outcomes and skill development. Next, we will delve into the significance of business English writing and highlight the shortcomings of traditional teaching methods in cultivating practical writing skills. In the section on hybrid teaching models, we will propose a framework that combines online and offline teaching to better promote students' independent thinking and practical application abilities. Furthermore, we will explore competency-based assessment strategies to comprehensively understand students' writing skills. Finally, we will summarize the advantages of the "Applied and Efficient 'Business English Writing' Hybrid Teaching Classroom" under the OBE concept, and highlight key considerations during the construction of this teaching model. Through the research presented in this paper, we hope to provide practical recommendations for the field of education in constructing applied and efficient hybrid teaching classrooms for business English writing under the guidance of the OBE concept. The goal is to better meet the writing skill needs of students in the business domain and provide robust support for their success in international business communication.

## OBE Concept and Its Application

Outcome-Based Education (OBE), also referred to as outcome-driven education, is an approach that organizes actions based on achieving specific results (Spady, W. G., 1994). Its core principle emphasizes placing the focus of education on students' learning outcomes and capabilities, rather than solely on imparting knowledge. One of its key principles, Assessment Diversity, underscores the use of varied assessment methods to comprehensively evaluate students' knowledge, skills, and abilities. Assessment methods can include projects, demonstrations, portfolios, exams, and more, aiming to better capture

students' learning achievements. OBE revolves around organizing and reverse-designing the educational process and content around the effectiveness of students' learning outcomes. These outcomes encompass not only achieving high grades but also focusing on the knowledge, skills, and qualities that students can attain upon completing their studies (Spady, W. G., 1994). The goal is to cultivate students who can fulfill societal demands by imparting knowledge and skills. A significant aspect of this teaching philosophy is that the prominent achievement of students is quantifiable, verifiable, and improvable. OBE principles have garnered widespread recognition globally and are extensively applied across diverse disciplines and educational stages. This educational concept challenges educators to innovate and step beyond their comfort zones, aiding students in moving away from rote memorization and repetitive testing, facilitating the cultivation of innovative thinking. (SPADY.W.G,1988)

Application-oriented undergraduate institutions aim to cultivate versatile talents with applied knowledge. These institutions, relatively speaking, emphasize the practical application of learned knowledge, laying emphasis on cultivating practical and innovative skills to meet the demands of the local community and the nation's industrial development. For application-oriented institutions, engaging in innovative thinking and transitioning from the traditional teaching approach that solely concentrates on input to exploring the amalgamation of teaching philosophies represented by OBE is an inevitable requirement for nurturing professionals with vocational adaptability and societal competitiveness.

**Challenges and Considerations In Classroom Construction Under Blended Learning Environment**

**3.1 Strengthening alignment between curriculum design and educational objectives**

The alignment between curriculum design and learning objectives is an essential factor in ensuring the effectiveness of education. In the context of "Business English Writing" courses, there is room for improvement in matching curriculum design with the intended learning outcomes. Business English writing skills and corresponding communication techniques are pivotal for students in this field. As a core component of the Business English specialization, the course content should be highly practical and applicable, adequately preparing students for real-world scenarios. However, a gap between theory and practice has been observed, with theoretical aspects often outweighing practical application. Feedback from students highlights the difficulty of the course content, the emphasis on theoretical knowledge surpassing practical implementation, and limited improvements in their skill set. Students find their industry knowledge reservoir and abilities insufficient to meet future employment demands. To address this, educators should focus on aligning curriculum design with the actual needs and practical capabilities of students. Course objectives and design should consider the real-world application and outcomes after course completion. This way, students can develop competencies that match the requirements of the industry and society. Specifically, educators in applied institutions offering "Business English Writing" courses should strive to integrate students' practical needs and abilities into the teaching design. This involves emphasizing alignment with students' career development paths, ultimately nurturing graduates who

possess skills that align with societal demands and industry requirements (Wiggins G. & McTighe J., 2005).

The essential skills for students in the field of Business English include writing proficiency and corresponding communication skills. As a core course within the Business English specialization, "Business English Writing" holds strong practical and applied significance, preparing students for professional practice. However, a persistent gap between theory and practice exists within the course, with theoretical teaching overshadowing practical application. Surveys and interviews with students have revealed that the course content is challenging, with a disproportionate emphasis on theoretical knowledge, resulting in limited improvements. Students express concerns regarding their insufficient industry-specific knowledge and competencies, hindering their ability to meet future employment demands. To address this, instructors of "Business English Writing" in applied institutions should tailor their teaching design to match students' practical needs and abilities, emphasizing alignment with students' career paths. When setting course goals and designing content, practical application and outcomes after course completion should be taken into account, cultivating applied talents that meet societal needs.

## 3.2 Ensuring Currency of Course Content and Teaching Models

In the era of the New Liberal Arts, higher foreign language education underscores the elimination of subpar courses and the cultivation of high-quality courses, promoting educational reform, and enhancing interdisciplinary integration. However, courses like "Business English Writing" often suffer from outdated content and rote teaching methods, failing to adapt promptly to new disciplinary demands, changing contexts, societal needs, and student requirements. Concurrently, students passively absorb knowledge in class, spending considerable time reviewing theories and practicing independently after class, leading to ineffective teaching outcomes, student disengagement, and insufficient improvement in practical abilities. In this "Internet Plus" age, a fusion of online, offline, and mobile learning modes offers students a comprehensive self-directed learning environment. Moreover, under the backdrop of course-based ideological and political education, professional courses play a crucial role in enhancing students' cross-cultural competence and building cultural confidence. Instructors should contemplate how to integrate cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, and inter-course knowledge, selecting genuine business writing cases and introducing cross-cultural business knowledge. This amalgamation helps students achieve requisite academic literacy and output levels, augment cultural confidence, while also enhancing innovative thinking, independent reflection, and problem-solving abilities.

## 3.3 Room for Improvement in Faculty Structure and Exerts

Certain higher education institutions in our country confront inadequate staffing in the field of Business English, requiring enhancement in the professional expertise and knowledge reservoirs of instructors. Challenges in cultivating and preparing composite-type instructors further exacerbate this situation. Due to disparities between foreign language subject instructors and foreign language (language) instructors, achieving teaching quality and

standards necessitates collaborative efforts from colleges, departments, and instructors. An established faculty echelon for professional instructors, a conducive research department atmosphere, instructors' professional competence and skill levels reaching required standards, and an evaluation and supervision framework are currently lacking. These factors lead to unclear teaching objectives, suboptimal teaching quality, and unsatisfactory teaching outcomes in Business English specialization. Therefore, the challenge facing Business English instruction in such institutions is how to prepare professional talent in Business English, enhance teaching quality and outcomes.

### 3.4 Need for Reform in Teaching Evaluation Methods

Effective business English writing skills comprise language proficiency, writing ability, logical thinking, along with a grasp of business knowledge, cross-cultural competency, and business communication skills. Therefore, the learning outcomes attained through the course cannot be reduced solely to examination grades, and teaching should not rely on a passive, single evaluation method. Comprehensive ability enhancement and meeting learning needs should be prioritized. For "Business English Writing" courses with high practicality and applicability, solely relying on end-of-term scores as the primary measure of student learning is not sufficiently scientific or rational. This approach fails to motivate students adequately. Only through reforming traditional teaching evaluation methods and teaching models can issues of low student participation and learning inefficiency be tackled, yielding effective outputs and genuinely nurturing students with corresponding abilities to meet industry demands.

### 4. Building Methods and Strategies for Blended Learning Classroom Under the Concept of OBE

### 4.1 Formulation of Course Objectives

Teachers must understand the standards set by the country for the cultivation of undergraduate talents in Business English, including the "New Liberal Arts, Major Foreign Languages" initiative, the "National Standards for the Quality of Undergraduate Teaching in Business English Majors," the "Teaching Guidelines for Foreign Language and Literature Majors in General Higher Education Institutions (Part I): English Major Teaching Guidelines," as well as the demand for high-quality international compound foreign language talents in the new era. Based on the expected outcomes students hope to achieve through learning, reverse-engineer course objectives. Develop specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic expected outcomes by integrating the requirements of the "National Standards for Business English" and the "Guidelines" for the knowledge, qualities, and abilities of undergraduate talents in Business English, as well as the specific objectives of the "Business English Writing" course. Combine regional characteristics, the school's situation, talent cultivation positioning, and student backgrounds to refine the teaching objectives and establish phased goals. During this process, use methods such as surveys,

interviews, and diagnostic assessments to understand students' learning progress and needs. Quantify the course's expected outcomes clearly, and reverse-engineer specific indicators to structure the course system.

## 4.2 Backward Course Design

Teachers need to shift from the traditional course design approach and design course teaching based on dynamic societal, industry, and student needs. After analyzing and clarifying the expected outcomes and specific teaching objectives of the course based on the aforementioned content, flexibly select teaching content and modes. Reverse-engineer the course design and implement it positively according to the course's content and goals. During course design, consider multiple dimensions in line with the expected learning outcomes. Firstly, plan the teaching scope and class schedule rationally. Since there are various types of written communication in business, the course should cover cross-cultural business communication, business writing strategies and skills, analysis of business communication genres, and information technology application. Balance the depth and breadth of the course content according to industry needs and student knowledge and skill requirements. Secondly, design unit and subunit teaching. Plan teaching for each unit from easy to difficult, from the whole to the parts, focusing on students' needs, ensuring that students clearly understand the knowledge and abilities they should master in each unit and at the end of the course. Design teaching with a results-oriented, clear focus. The recurrence and continuity of content in the course design are essential for enhancing the durability of content and skills. Additionally, the breadth and depth of "Business English Writing" teaching should gradually increase, maintaining a connection in terms of difficulty with previous courses like "Business English" and "English Writing," as well as continuity with deeper learning content in subsequent courses. Balance teaching content and time to effectively help students comprehensively improve their knowledge, qualities, and abilities.

## 4.3 Student-Centered Teaching Implementation

By implementing a student-centered teaching process in "Business English Writing" courses, educators can foster a positive and engaging learning environment where students take an active role in their education. This approach not only enhances their writing skills but also nurtures their critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and overall growth as effective communicators in the business world. (Wiggins G. & McTighe J., 2005)

In teaching, teachers should transition from the traditional role of "controller" to that of "facilitator." Guided by the OBE teaching philosophy, the implementation of the teaching process should always revolve around the expected outcome objectives. Based on the main content and goals of the course, combine practical needs, and design specific teaching activities centered around students. Innovate teaching models and reshape teaching processes to enhance teaching effectiveness. By employing blended learning, shift from the traditional classroom as the sole teaching medium and integrate students' pre-class, in-class,

and post-class learning, achieving continuity and sustainability in learning. Before class, teachers can use blended learning platforms to release micro-lessons, course materials, and more, helping students prepare for fundamental knowledge and fostering their self-directed learning abilities. Simultaneously, design online exercises and tests to gauge students' understanding in advance, allowing them to reflect based on test results. In class, teachers can employ heuristic teaching based on the expected learning and skill outcomes of the course and units. Taking into account students' understanding before class, emphasize key points in explanations and reinforcement to ensure knowledge retention. (Fink L. D., 2013). Integrate real-world business communication cases and relevant exam content into class content, establishing connections with students. Additionally, design various student-led classroom inquiries and group discussion activities to enhance interaction and participation experience between teachers and students. Appropriately integrate the use of the blended learning platform during teaching and combine it with classroom activities to enrich the class format, increase student engagement, and improve efficiency. This also helps teachers monitor students' learning progress in real time. Moreover, teaching content should connect with subsequent chapters and units, constructing a hierarchical, spiral learning path. (Fink L. D., 2013) For a course like "Business English Writing," practical exercises are crucial. Teachers can release some exercises through online platforms. Students complete these exercises within a designated time frame. After teacher evaluations or student discussions, the teacher summarizes issues and examples for explanations in class. Leveraging extracurricular activities not only enhances teaching efficiency but also facilitates tracking students' completion status. Furthermore, through pushing key points for class review, conducting follow-up tests and evaluations, students' learning outcomes are effectively increased. Implementing student-centered teaching based on actual needs and experiences enhances multidimensional and multilevel intera**ctions. This** effectively improves students' business English writing and language abilities.

## 4.4 Multiple Assessment and Continuous Improvement of the Course

Teachers should strengthen formative assessment based on students' progressive improvement and growth in "Business English Writing." Design quantifiable periodic tests, combining immediate and delayed assessments. This provides continuous supervision, inspection, improvement, and feedback on the entire teaching process and teaching plans from multiple dimensions regarding students' learning conditions. Based on students' performance at different stages, help them achieve continuous skill improvement, establishing a dynamic examination of students' comprehensive abilities and inspiring their enthusiasm for learning. Implement diverse assessment subjects and content through methods like systematic evaluation, student self-assessment, peer assessment, and group assessment. This makes assessment more comprehensive, objective, scientific, and authentic. Active student participation in assessment helps them better understand their learning abilities' enhancement. Through dynamic, comprehensive, and diverse assessment methods, teachers can obtain feedback on students' learning progress from multiple channels, thereby promoting continuous teaching improvement, effectively enhancing teaching effectiveness, and optimizing teaching quality. After the course ends, teachers should also understand students'

self-improvement and output evaluations through methods like questionnaires and interviews. Continuously track and collect data to form records. Based on teaching evaluations and feedback from different semesters, continue to understand, record, and analyze course situations, achieving ongoing course improvement.

## 4.5 Teaching Team Building and Capacity Enhancement

As instructors of the "Business English Writing" course, teachers should possess and continuously improve comprehensive teaching abilities such as language skills, communication skills, innovation skills, educational technology skills, etc. They should also enhance their professional knowledge and strive to be versatile educators. Teachers should not only focus on textbook content and enhancing students' language abilities but also design teaching based on societal and industry demands, combining students' actual situations. This requires teachers to stay up-to-date and continuously improve their understanding of subject matter and industry developments through various channels. They should also interact with relevant companies and practitioners in the economic and trade industries to understand the latest industry developments and demands, which is essential for reverse-engineering course outlines and content. The college and departments should focus on teacher team construction and long-term planning, fostering a collaborative research atmosphere, and building a high-quality, high-level professional teaching team. (Ramsden, P. ,2003). Furthermore, teachers can enhance their teaching through participation in various levels of teaching competitions. Engaging in such competitions promotes teaching excellence and facilitates learning about cutting-edge teaching philosophies, thereby elevating the quality of instruction. Teachers can also acquire relevant certifications to master content and skills and integrate them into the curriculum, encouraging students to pursue related qualifications and enhance their industry competitiveness. (Coffey, M., & Gibbs, G., 2001).

## Conclusion

Under the ongoing evolution of teaching principles, philosophies, and methods, challenges persist in the teaching of the "Business English Writing" course. Outcome-Based Education (OBE), as a student-centered approach guided by abilities, objectives, and needs, effectively directs innovative course design methods and the cultivation of applied talents with innovative practical skills. Guided by the OBE philosophy, course objectives that align with real-world situations and needs, along with reverse-designed course content, foster multidimensional teaching innovations within blended learning environments. Continuous enhancement of instructors' composite abilities, reform of classroom evaluation methods, and continual curriculum improvement are achieved. This, in turn, more effectively nurtures students' business writing abilities and comprehensive skills needed by industries, laying a foundation for their professional development.

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