

---

## 2025 International Conference on Economics, Management and Education Technology (ICEMET 2025)

Article

# Research on Teaching Strategies for Practical Business Chinese Expression Based on Needs Analysis

Siyu Hong <sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University International College, Macau University of Science and Technology, Macau, China

\* Correspondence: Siyu Hong, University International College, Macau University of Science and Technology, Macau, China

**Abstract:** In the context of globalization, practical Business Chinese expression competence plays a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of international communication and cooperation. Learners engaged in business-related Chinese often face specific communicative tasks, such as negotiations, presentations, and written correspondence, which require accurate, appropriate, and context-sensitive language use. A needs analysis-based approach enables teachers and curriculum designers to systematically identify learners' communicative purposes, linguistic gaps, and pragmatic difficulties in real business settings. On this basis, teaching content can be more closely aligned with authentic business scenarios, emphasizing situational simulations, case analysis, and task-based activities that foster practical application ability. This study conducts detailed needs research on a target learner group to clarify common problems and expression barriers in business communication, including limited vocabulary range, insufficient awareness of register, and challenges in intercultural pragmatics. The findings indicate that teaching strategies grounded in needs analysis can effectively enhance students' language application ability, increase their confidence in professional interactions, and strengthen their competitiveness in business environments. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of flexible adjustment of teaching content and methods according to evolving learner needs, thereby supporting personalized instruction and promoting autonomous learning. By integrating practice and theory, the research explores core elements of Business Chinese expression and contributes to the construction of a more comprehensive and systematic Business Chinese education framework.

**Keywords:** business chinese; language teaching; needs analysis; teaching strategies; learner needs; business communication

Received: 07 February 2026

Revised: 26 March 2026

Accepted: 06 April 2026

Published: 11 April 2026



**Copyright:** © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

---

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

With the gradual acceleration of global economic integration, business exchanges between countries have become increasingly frequent, leading to a significant rise in the demand for learning Business Chinese. In recent years, within specific international business environments, mastering effective Business Chinese expression has proven to enhance communication efficiency and provide broader opportunities for individual career development. As China's economic strength continues to grow, an increasing number of foreign enterprises are entering the Chinese market, while many Chinese enterprises are actively expanding their international business operations. Consequently, the practicality of Business Chinese has become increasingly prominent. Currently, Business Chinese teaching faces numerous challenges. Traditional teaching models often emphasize grammar and vocabulary instruction while overlooking learners' urgent need for language application skills in real business contexts. Employing needs analysis to

identify learners' actual expression requirements in business communication and developing corresponding teaching strategies is of great importance. By utilizing needs analysis methods to assess target learners' backgrounds, language proficiency, and specific needs in business activities, teaching content can be precisely tailored [1]. Teaching strategies based on empirical research not only enhance learners' practical application abilities but also foster confident expression in business environments, establishing a solid foundation for effective communication and achieving both individual and societal value.

### *1.2. Research Significance*

This study holds significant theoretical and practical value. Theoretically, it introduces a fresh perspective to Business Chinese teaching by employing needs analysis as a methodology. This approach enables the scientific identification of learners' specific needs in real communication scenarios, enriching the research framework of language teaching and offering valuable references for needs analysis in other language education fields. Practically, understanding learners' actual needs facilitates the development of highly targeted and effective teaching strategies, thereby enhancing teaching outcomes. By addressing the real communication challenges faced by learners in business contexts, educators can design course content and activities with precision, leading to substantial improvements in learners' language application skills and boosting their workplace competitiveness. This research drives reform and innovation in Business Chinese education, fostering the development of intercultural communication competence [1, 2]. It equips learners not only with language proficiency but also with the ability to use language effectively for cultural exchange and business negotiations. In the era of rapid globalization and digital transformation, cultivating high-quality talent capable of adapting to evolving environments is of critical importance for strengthening national cultural influence and economic competitiveness.

## **2. Current Status of Practical Business Chinese Expression Teaching**

### *2.1. Theoretical Foundations and Practical Demands*

In conducting research on teaching strategies for practical Business Chinese expression, it can be observed that there is a close relationship between theoretical foundations and practical demands, which provides strong support for teaching innovation. To construct an effective theoretical framework for Business Chinese teaching, it is necessary to rely on relevant theories from modern linguistics and pedagogy, including Task-Based Language Teaching and Constructivist Learning Theory. Task-Based Language Teaching emphasizes that learners enhance language ability by completing specific tasks in authentic contexts, aligning closely with the frequent use of practical expressions in business activities. Constructivism advocates learners' active exploration and social interaction to build their own knowledge systems, emphasizing learner agency and participation. This provides essential theoretical support for designing teaching activities that meet real needs. From the perspective of practical demands, with the continuous development of economic globalization, enterprises show a growing demand for talent with strong business language competence. Learners need not only to master basic business terminology but also to possess efficient communication skills and intercultural understanding [3]. Through needs analysis, learners' challenges and demands in real business activities can be clearly identified, effectively helping teachers adjust teaching strategies so that teaching content and methods align more closely with market needs.

## 2.2. Problems in the Current Teaching Situation

### 2.2.1. Misalignment Between General Instruction and Position-Specific Language

In current Business Chinese teaching, a significant misalignment exists between general instructional content and position-specific language, making it challenging for learners to apply their knowledge in actual work scenarios. General instruction typically emphasizes standardized grammar and common vocabulary to build basic language competence, but it often overlooks the specialized terminology and expression patterns required by specific industries or roles. This creates a substantial gap between classroom learning and the business communication skills needed in real-world workplaces, leading to issues such as unclear expression and communication barriers when learners transition to professional environments. Much of the Business Chinese taught in class consists of general expressions, whereas actual work environments demand language tailored to specific positions and industries, including specialized terminology, industry conventions, and distinct discourse systems. This misalignment leaves learners unfamiliar with the position-specific language required in real business contexts, resulting in reduced confidence and difficulty in fully demonstrating their language abilities. Furthermore, insufficient instruction in industry-related background knowledge exacerbates challenges in intercultural communication, further impacting learners' adaptability in workplace settings.

### 2.2.2. Disconnection Between Textbook Scenarios and Real Situations

In the process of Business Chinese teaching, a disconnection between scenarios set in textbooks and real-world situations is common and significantly impacts learners' ability to apply acquired knowledge in practice [2, 4]. Many textbooks design scenarios in an overly idealized manner and lack cases and concrete situations closely related to real business activities. This disconnection prevents the real challenges and confusion encountered in business communication from being adequately reflected when learners attempt to use their knowledge. A gap exists between learners' accumulation of theoretical knowledge and actual application, leaving them unprepared for complex and dynamic business environments and limiting their expressive abilities. Dialogues and examples in numerous textbooks are typically set in general situations and fail to include real cases targeting specific industries or concrete business contexts. They often overlook industry-specific characteristics and the influence of cultural differences on business communication. As a result, learners lack opportunities to practice in authentic contexts and cannot experience or resolve real-world problems in the classroom, which diminishes their ability and confidence in independent problem solving. Additionally, learners have insufficient awareness of nonverbal communication and etiquette culture in business environments, yet these are essential elements of effective communication in real situations.

### 2.2.3. Imbalance Between Language Input and Actual Needs

In the field of Business Chinese education, the imbalance between language input and actual needs has become increasingly evident and directly affects learners' ability to use language. Existing teaching systems often focus on basic knowledge such as pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, while training in language use contexts and practical communication strategies is insufficient. This makes it difficult for learners to express themselves effectively in real business settings. The imbalance manifests in many aspects [5, 6]. Language content learned in class is mostly static knowledge and lacks analysis of dynamic contexts and practical application. Learners fail to establish effective connections between input and real usage scenarios, resulting in difficulty transforming knowledge into practice. The types and quantity of language input often cannot meet learners' diverse needs in specific business activities. Some learners work in areas such as sales, marketing, or customer service, where different positions require different language competencies. Existing teaching content does not effectively cover the needs of specific

fields, causing learners to feel unprepared when facing specialized terminology, industry conventions, and intercultural communication, which affects their performance in actual work.

### **3. Needs Analysis of Practical Business Chinese Expression**

#### *3.1. Research Design*

##### **3.1.1. Research Participants and Sampling Methods**

This study primarily examines the language needs of Business Chinese learners in real workplace settings. To achieve this, a combination of stratified random sampling and purposive sampling was employed. The research participants were divided into three main groups. The first group included senior undergraduate and graduate students majoring in Business Chinese at universities. While they possess a foundational understanding of the language, they lack practical workplace experience. The second group consisted of foreign employees working in multinational enterprises in China. These individuals operate in genuine business environments and have the most pressing language requirements. The third group comprised social learners enrolled in various Business Chinese training programs. To ensure the sample's representativeness, participants were carefully selected from diverse industry sectors, including finance, trade, manufacturing, and IT services. A total of 320 valid samples were collected, with males accounting for 54 percent and females 46 percent. The participants had an average of 2.5 years of Chinese language study.

##### **3.1.2. Research Instruments and Data Collection**

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative questionnaire surveys with qualitative in-depth interviews. A Practical Business Chinese Expression Needs Survey Questionnaire was designed. The scale covered three dimensions: workplace scenario importance, frequency of expression use, and self-assessed mastery level. A five-point Likert scale was used for scoring, ranging from completely unnecessary or never used to very necessary or frequently used. From the sample, 30 representative learners were selected for in-depth interviews, focusing on communication barriers in specific business situations, language coping strategies, and dissatisfaction with existing teaching materials. Portions of learner language data from simulated business negotiations or authentic email exchanges were collected to support the analysis of language error points. Data collection lasted three months. In total, 315 valid questionnaires were returned, and 30 interview records were completed.

#### *3.2. Empirical Results Analysis*

##### **3.2.1. Statistics on the Frequency of Learners' Workplace Scenario Needs**

Following a statistical analysis of the questionnaire data, business activities were categorized into six core scenarios. The demand index, representing the mean demand value, was calculated for each scenario and ranked accordingly. The findings indicate that learners exhibit the highest demand for "interpersonal relationship maintenance" and "business negotiation," while the need for traditional "product introduction"-related activities is comparatively lower (As shown in Table 1).

**Table 1.** Statistics of learners' workplace business scenario needs frequency (N = 315).

Rank	Business Scenario Category	Examples of Included Tasks	Mean Demand (1–5)	Standard Deviation (SD)
1	Business Socializing and Banquets	Reception, banquet toasts, small talk topics, gift-giving etiquette	4.72	0.45
2	Business Negotiation and Consultation	Price negotiation, contract term discussion, objection handling	4.56	0.52
3	Workplace Communication and Reporting	Meeting statements, work reports, cross-department coordination	4.35	0.61
4	Customer Service and Response	Complaint handling, inquiry responses, after-sales follow-up	4.12	0.68
5	Business Document Writing	Email correspondence, memoranda, meeting minutes	3.88	0.74
6	Product Presentation and Promotion	Product demonstrations, company introductions, promotional speeches	3.45	0.89

### 3.2.2. Identification of Practical Expression Difficulties and Gaps

In interviews and open-ended questionnaire surveys, most learners reported that commonly available business textbooks fail to address higher-level communication needs effectively. A difference calculation was conducted between learners' self-rated importance and their self-assessed mastery levels to identify the most significant competence gaps (As shown in Table 2).

**Table 2.** Analysis of practical Business Chinese expression difficulties and competence gaps.

Difficulty Category	Specific Expression	Mean Importance Score	Mean Mastery Score	Competence Gap Value (Difference)
Pragmatic appropriateness	Refusal and deflection with euphemistic language	4.85	2.3	2.55
Pragmatic appropriateness	Forms of address and honorific usage	4.65	2.85	1.8
Intercultural communication	Face culture and social small talk	4.5	3.1	1.4

Professional terminology	Abbreviations and industry jargon	4.2	3	1.2
Strategic competence	Coping with unexpected situations	4.4	3.25	1.15

### 3.2.3. Examination of the Match Between Current Conditions and Needs

To assess whether mainstream Business Chinese teaching resources effectively address these needs, this study selected five widely used domestic Business Chinese textbook series and compared the key points covered in their teaching content with the statistical results of the identified needs [7] (As shown in Table 3).

**Table 3.** Examination of the match between current textbook content and actual needs.

Matching Dimension	Actual Needs Characteristics	Characteristics of Current Textbook Content
Scenario coverage	High-frequency scenarios include social interaction, negotiation, and complaints (strong authenticity)	Focus on company introduction, factory visits, and flight booking (strong procedural orientation)
Register style	Requires spoken, implicit, and sometimes dialect-influenced expressions	Focus on written language and formal register with a single and rigid style
Functional expression	Focus on pragmatic functions such as refusal, persuasion, and hedging	Focus on information transmission functions (such as price inquiry and time confirmation)
Cultural relevance	Influence of deep cultural psychology on language choice such as (face and relationships)	Mainly reflects surface cultural customs (such as gift-giving taboos and festival introductions)

The analysis results reveal a significant mismatch between the supply and demand in Business Chinese teaching. Learners most urgently require the ability to use language appropriately and flexibly in high-pressure, complex social, and negotiation scenarios. However, most existing textbooks focus primarily on simple information exchange and business process simulations. The register style is overly formal, and there is a notable lack of training in pragmatic appropriateness and intercultural communication strategies. This directly contributes to the challenge where learners memorize extensive vocabulary but struggle to communicate effectively in critical situations.

## 4. Analysis of the Causes of Teaching Dilemmas

### 4.1. Internal Structural Contradictions

The root causes of teaching dilemmas primarily stem from structural contradictions within the teaching system itself. A key issue is the tension between standardized general teaching models and the diverse demands of specific occupational contexts. Current Business Chinese teaching systems are largely designed based on general business logic, emphasizing the systematic and comprehensive presentation of language knowledge, such as trade procedures and standard etiquette. However, real workplace environments

are highly segmented and exhibit distinct industry characteristics. For instance, foreign learners employed in airport ground services or duty-free shops often require highly structured and time-sensitive directive expressions to handle situations like emergency security checks or baggage loss complaints. Similarly, foreign employees working in Hong Kong and Macao encounter unique challenges, including traditional Chinese writing, the integration of Cantonese vocabulary such as "to piggyback on existing arrangements" and "to operate independently," and specific administrative document registers. General textbooks struggle to address both vertical professional specialization and regional variation effectively. Consequently, the teaching content remains broad, while the learning outcomes lack contextual specificity and practical applicability. This results in a disconnect between language input and occupational needs.

#### *4.2. External Environmental Constraints*

Rapid changes in the external environment and the relative lag in teaching resources constitute major external constraints. Language reflects social life, and workplace expressions in specific fields evolve rapidly. Industry- and region-specific jargon often exists outside standardized textbooks [8, 9]. Textbook development cycles are lengthy and cannot capture new dynamics in real workplaces promptly. For instance, with the increasing integration in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, new expressions combining English, Cantonese, and Mandarin have emerged in Hong Kong and Macao workplaces, yet traditional textbooks rarely include content addressing these developments. Real business environments are inherently unpredictable. Scenarios such as group communication during flight delays at airports or the nuanced drinking table culture in Hong Kong and Macao business banquets involve high-context and high-pressure communication situations that are challenging to replicate in relatively static and closed classroom settings. Without immersion in authentic language environments, learners relying solely on standard textbooks often struggle when faced with complex and real-world work situations, such as managing sudden passenger disagreements or responding to local clients with highly specific dialect habits. The complexity of the external environment significantly increases the difficulty of transferring classroom learning to practical applications.

#### *4.3. Integrated Interaction Effects of the Causes*

Internal contradictions and external constraints do not exist independently [10, 11]. They are intertwined and produce negative integrated interaction effects that exacerbate teaching dilemmas. Internal structural bias diverts teaching content away from real-world conditions, leaving learners without essential coping abilities when facing complex external environments. Simultaneously, the specificity and variability of the external environment underscore the rigidity of generalized teaching models, further intensifying learner frustration. For instance, foreign management staff working at airports in Hong Kong and Macao may encounter challenges if internal teaching content focuses solely on standard Mandarin expressions such as "Please show your identification," while the external environment demands understanding commands delivered with strong Cantonese accents and the ability to use localized spoken expressions for effective communication. A serious mismatch between internal supply and external demand can result in significant cognitive dissonance, leading learners to perceive their efforts as futile. If instructors lack research into specific contexts, such as particular industries or the cultural nuances of the Hong Kong and Macao regions, they cannot adapt teaching strategies effectively. Consequently, the disconnect between learning and practical application becomes increasingly severe, perpetuating a vicious cycle driven by internal structural deficiencies and external environmental barriers.

## 5. Paths for Teaching Optimization

### 5.1. *Reconstructing Consensus on Teaching Objectives*

To resolve current dilemmas, the primary path is to reconstruct teaching objectives by shifting from a language knowledge orientation to an occupational communicative effectiveness orientation. Instructional designers and teachers need to reach a consensus that the ultimate goal of Business Chinese teaching is not to have learners memorize grammar rules but to achieve effective communication in specific workplace contexts. This means breaking away from the one textbook fits all approach and setting precise teaching objectives for specific industries or regions. For airport ground service personnel, objectives should be defined as accurately issuing and executing instructions in high-pressure environments. For business professionals working in Hong Kong and Macao, greater emphasis should be placed on traditional Chinese character recognition, Cantonese vocabulary differentiation, and cross-cultural register shifting. Teaching syllabi should be linked with professional qualification certificates such as the International Chinese Language Teacher Certificate and specific industry certifications to ensure alignment with industry standards. Only by making teaching objectives concrete and context-based can the misalignment between general instruction and position requirements be addressed and learners' workplace competence genuinely improved [12, 13].

### 5.2. *Optimizing the Combination of Teaching Strategy Tools*

At the level of teaching strategies, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and situational simulation methods should be used in combination, with the introduction of authentic corpora to enhance immersion. Teachers should utilize multimedia technology to collect authentic audio and video materials from specific work environments [14]. In airport language instruction, real airport broadcast recordings and counter service recordings should be played directly so that students can adapt to real speech rates and background noise. In business contexts specific to Hong Kong and Macao, authentic internal company emails, meeting minutes, and case texts containing Cantonese borrowings should be introduced. Highly realistic role-playing activities should be designed to simulate high-pressure scenarios, such as calming passengers during flight delays and managing strategic interactions in business negotiations. These practices train students to respond linguistically in unexpected situations and help build a language ecology close to reality. This approach bridges the gap between textbook scenarios and real-life situations, enables learning through action, and further enhances pragmatic appropriateness.

### 5.3. *Improving School Enterprise Cooperation Mechanisms*

To address the imbalance between supply and demand, it is essential to establish deep cooperation between schools and enterprises. This collaboration enables the dynamic updating of teaching resources and ensures effective alignment with industry needs. Educational institutions should work closely with employers, such as airlines, cross-border trade companies, and enterprises operating in Hong Kong and Macao, to jointly develop internship and training bases and implement order-based talent cultivation programs. Frontline enterprise experts should be involved in course design to directly incorporate the latest workplace language norms and address communication challenges into teaching materials. Partner enterprises can contribute authentic customer complaint recordings for classroom analysis or assign senior staff as part-time mentors to explain workplace-specific cultural nuances, such as dining etiquette and unwritten professional rules in Hong Kong and Macao. A closed-loop mechanism should be established to gather enterprise feedback and adjust teaching practices accordingly. This mechanism would regularly track graduates' workplace performance and identify language barriers encountered in real-world scenarios. Such feedback can guide the revision of textbooks and the improvement of teaching methods [15]. An open education

model can effectively eliminate campus boundaries, transforming traditional classrooms into bridges that connect directly to the workplace, thereby ensuring that teaching content remains aligned with the latest industry developments.

## 6. Conclusion

This study examines the current state of practical Business Chinese expression teaching, identifies its challenges, and proposes specific optimization strategies based on a needs analysis. Three core issues are highlighted: the misalignment between general instruction and position-specific language, the disconnect between textbook scenarios and real-world situations, and the imbalance between language input and actual learner needs. Empirical investigations in contexts such as airport services and business environments in Hong Kong and Macao reveal learners' urgent requirements for high pragmatic competence, awareness of regional variations, and expressions for handling emergencies. The lag in existing textbooks and teaching models is identified as the fundamental cause of the gap between supply and demand. Furthermore, the contradiction between the uniformity of internal teaching structures and the complexity and diversity of external workplace environments is recognized as the underlying mechanism behind these challenges. To address these issues, this study proposes optimization strategies, including redefining teaching objectives to focus on occupational communicative effectiveness, enhancing task-based teaching strategies grounded in authentic corpora, and establishing dynamic feedback-oriented school-enterprise cooperation mechanisms. These approaches aim to bridge the gap between learning and practical application, thereby improving the relevance and practicality of teaching content. Business Chinese teaching should transcend traditional language skill instruction by integrating specific occupational contexts to create a precise, needs-driven teaching system. Future research should delve deeper into workplace language variations across industries and regions to provide further empirical evidence and theoretical insights for the professionalization and refinement of Business Chinese education. By continuously adapting to evolving needs and innovating teaching models, Business Chinese education can effectively support learners' career development.

## References

1. R. L. Oxford, "Task-based language teaching and learning: An overview," *Asian EFL Journal*, vol. 8, no. 3, 2006.
2. A. Gilmore, "Materials and authenticity in language teaching," in *The Routledge Handbook of English Language Teacher Education*, Routledge, 2019, pp. 299–318.
3. X. Li, "The Construction of Long-term Mechanism of School-Enterprise Cooperation under the Background of Local Undergraduate Colleges' Transformation," 2018.
4. J. Li, *New Directions of Local Higher Education Policy: Insights from China*, Springer Nature, 2021.
5. Y. Mu and B. Yu, "Developing intercultural competence in college business English students: A study of innovative teaching in China," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 92, p. 101747, 2023.
6. P. W. Cardon and J. C. Scott, "Chinese business face: Communication behaviors and teaching approaches," *Business Communication Quarterly*, vol. 66, no. 4, pp. 9–22, 2003.
7. E. R. Martyn, "Integrating Content and Language in Business English Teaching in China: First Year Students' Perceptions and Learning Experience," *English Language Teaching*, vol. 11, no. 8, pp. 86–102, 2018.
8. Z. Zhang, "Towards an integrated approach to teaching Business English: A Chinese experience," *English for Specific Purposes*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 399–410, 2007.
9. H. Wang, "Toward deepening cultural and language understanding: The design and practice of a hybrid business Chinese course," *Journal of Teaching in International Business*, vol. 25, no. 3, pp. 250–262, 2014.
10. H. Wang, "Chinese for business professionals: The workplace needs and business Chinese textbooks," *Global Business Languages*, vol. 16, no. 1, p. 5, 2011.
11. D. Guan and Z. Shi, "Business Chinese Curriculum Development: An Analysis of Course Types and Pedagogical Approaches," in *New Developments in Chinese for Specific and Professional Purposes*, pp. 63–78, 2026.
12. Z. Shi, Q. Yuan, and M. Kong, "Developments in business Chinese teaching and research: An overview and perspectives," in *\*Chinese for Specific and Professional Purposes: Theory, Pedagogical Applications, and Practices\**, pp. 133–155, 2019.
13. S. Li, S. Wang, and J. Wang, "A preliminary investigation of business Chinese teaching among US institutions of higher education," *Journal of The Chinese Language Teachers' Association*, vol. 48, no. 2, pp. 69–89, 2013.

14. H. Zhang, "Teaching business Chinese online," *Calico Journal*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 525–532, 2002.
15. B. Ai, L. Wang, and J. Zhang, "Using English as economic capital in a Chinese–Australian workplace: Implications for teaching business English in China," *Journal of Teaching in International Business*, vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 272–288, 2018.

**Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:** The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of Publisher and/or the editor(s). Publisher and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.