

Applying the BOPPPS Model to Exhibition Business Communication: Teaching Design, Practice, and Reflection

Zixuan Feng

School of Tourism Management, Wuhan Business University, Wuhan, Hubei, China

Abstract: With the rapid development of the exhibition industry, application-oriented undergraduate education places higher demands on students' business communication skills. The course Exhibition Business Communication plays a central role in the talent cultivation system of exhibition economy and management, yet traditional teaching often suffers from overly theoretical content, insufficient classroom interaction, and limited effectiveness in skill development. This study redesigns and implements the course based on the BOPPPS model (Bridge-in, Objectives, Pre-assessment, Participatory learning, Post-assessment, and Summary). By adopting case-based introductions, hierarchical learning objectives, diagnostic questioning, group discussion and role play, structured evaluation of assignments and presentations, and reflective summaries, a comprehensive teaching pathway was constructed. The practice shows that the BOPPPS model significantly improves students' engagement and motivation, while enhancing their abilities in structured expression, intercultural communication, and teamwork. However, challenges such as limited class time, uneven student participation, and increased preparation workload for instructors were also observed. Accordingly, localized improvement strategies are proposed, including optimizing the weight of each stage, integrating online resources, and designing differentiated tasks. The findings provide valuable insights for the reform of the Exhibition Business Communication course and offer empirical reference for the wider application of the BOPPPS model in application-oriented undergraduate education.

Keywords: BOPPPS Model; Exhibition Business Communication; Teaching Design; Application-Oriented Undergraduate Education; Course Practice

1. Introduction

In the context of global economic integration and increasingly frequent cultural exchanges, the exhibition industry has emerged as a vital platform for fostering cooperation, promoting industrial linkages, and facilitating regional development. In recent years, China's exhibition industry has witnessed rapid expansion, with a steady increase in the number, scale, and influence of fairs and meetings. This growth has intensified the demand for application-oriented professionals who not only possess theoretical knowledge of exhibition management but also demonstrate strong business communication, intercultural sensitivity, and teamwork competencies [1]. Within this framework, the Exhibition Business Communication course plays a central role in undergraduate programs in exhibition economy and management, as it directly affects students' employability and professional performance. Nevertheless, challenges persist in the current delivery of this course. First, instruction is often overly theoretical, leaving students with limited opportunities to apply concepts in authentic scenarios, thereby creating a gap between classroom learning and industry practice [2]. Second, classroom participation is typically low due to the prevalence of lecture-based methods, resulting in limited student engagement and motivation [3]. Third, assessment methods remain narrow, heavily reliant on written examinations while neglecting the evaluation of essential competencies such as oral communication, teamwork, and intercultural competence. These issues collectively hinder the fulfillment of application-oriented undergraduate education goals, which emphasize competency-based outcomes [4].

The BOPPPS model (Bridge-in, Objectives, Pre-assessment, Participatory Learning, Post-assessment, and Summary) has attracted attention in higher education reform for its systematic structure, emphasis on active engagement, and student-centered philosophy [5]. By integrating situational case introductions, explicit learning

objectives, diagnostic assessments, interactive activities, and reflective summaries, the model creates a complete pedagogical loop. Empirical studies have confirmed its ability to enhance student engagement, foster critical thinking, and improve learning outcomes in diverse disciplinary contexts [6,7]. In China, BOPPPS has been successfully applied in English language teaching, medical education, and laboratory-based courses, yielding positive effects on student motivation and performance [8,9].

Meanwhile, reform in application-oriented undergraduate education has continued to deepen, driven by the integration of innovative approaches such as outcome-based education (OBE), blended learning, project-based teaching, and industry-education integration. OBE emphasizes backward design and continuous improvement, aligning curriculum objectives with competency development [4,10]. Blended learning approaches integrate online and offline resources to expand student access and engagement [11]. Project-based and industry-integrated pedagogies further enhance students' problem-solving ability, practical competence, and career readiness [12]. These trends converge with the core philosophy of BOPPPS, suggesting strong potential for its adoption in application-oriented programs.

However, research gaps remain evident. Most studies on BOPPPS have concentrated on language education, laboratory teaching, or engineering courses [13,14]. Systematic exploration of BOPPPS in exhibition-related courses is scarce, especially for Exhibition Business Communication, a course that combines professional knowledge, intercultural competence, and practical communication skills. Furthermore, existing research on exhibition education reform has largely focused on macro-level issues such as curriculum design, talent training models, and school-enterprise collaboration [1,15,16], with insufficient attention to micro-level classroom practice.

In light of these challenges, this study applies the BOPPPS model to redesign and implement the Exhibition Business Communication course in an application-oriented undergraduate context. The objectives are threefold: (1) to construct a pedagogical framework tailored to the course based on BOPPPS; (2) to evaluate the effects of this implementation on student engagement, motivation, and competence development; and (3) to identify challenges and propose localized improvement strategies. By addressing both

theoretical and practical aspects, this study contributes to filling a research gap in exhibition education while providing actionable insights for teaching innovation in application-oriented undergraduate institutions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Research on the BOPPPS Model

The BOPPPS model originated in Canada and is valued for its systematic and interactive structure [5]. International scholarship demonstrates that the model enhances teaching effectiveness by structuring lessons into six interconnected stages and placing students at the center of the learning process [16]. Bonwell and Eison (1991) and Walton (2016) highlight the importance of active learning strategies, which are inherently embedded in the BOPPPS framework [7,17], while Black and Wiliam (2009) emphasize its capacity to improve formative assessment and self-regulated learning [18].

In China, research on BOPPPS has grown steadily in recent years. Cong (2025) extended the model into a blended English listening and speaking framework (BP-BOPP-PS), which improved students' participation and communication skills [6]. Qiu et al. (2025) integrated BOPPPS into morphology laboratory teaching, demonstrating improvements in student engagement and learning outcomes [8]. Similarly, Zhao (2024) applied the "Internet + BOPPPS" approach in physical education, enhancing interactivity and practicality [9]. Jin et al. (2022) and Li et al. (2022) incorporated BOPPPS into engineering and biology courses [13,14], respectively, verifying its effectiveness in boosting both academic performance and competence development. Despite these successes, few studies have applied BOPPPS systematically in exhibition-related courses, leaving a critical research gap.

2.2 Reform of Application-Oriented Undergraduate Education

Application-oriented undergraduate institutions emphasize practice-oriented training to align with industry demands. The OBE philosophy, focusing on outcome-driven learning, has become a cornerstone of reform. Wang (2025) argues that OBE enables backward curriculum design and continuous quality improvement, fostering practical competencies in undergraduate accounting education [4]. Gao (2025) expands on this perspective by analyzing how OBE informs

institutional teaching management strategies [10]. In addition, blended learning models have emerged as effective strategies for bridging the gap between theory and practice. Wang (2025) highlights the potential of blended teaching to enrich learning resources and improve classroom dynamics [19]. Zhu et al. (2025) explore how industry-education integration can empower virtual reality course reform, illustrating how cross-disciplinary collaboration can enhance application-oriented learning [12]. Collectively, these studies show that application-oriented education reform is converging toward student-centered, competency-driven, and cross-disciplinary models.

2.3 Reform of Exhibition Education

Exhibition education in China is relatively young but developing rapidly. Li and Zhou (2018) reveal significant mismatches between industry demand and graduate competence, underscoring the urgency of curriculum reform [2]. Hu and Xiao (2017) argue that current talent cultivation models lag behind industry development, and propose innovative frameworks to bridge the gap [16]. Zhou and Wang (2017) emphasize that industry-oriented curriculum reform is essential to ensuring employability and relevance [1].

At the course level, Wang (2023) integrates scenario theory into exhibition display design courses, demonstrating the potential of blended and project-based strategies in enhancing student creativity and professional competence [15]. Jiang and Ren (2017) explore exploratory experimental teaching in liberal arts, using Exhibition Project Management as a case study, and highlight three major reform paths: system building, interactive pedagogy, and assessment innovation [20]. These findings suggest that while exhibition education reform has made progress at the macro level, more micro-level studies on teaching innovation in core courses such as Exhibition Business Communication are needed.

2.4 Research Gap and Contribution

Overall, research shows that the BOPPPS model is widely recognized as a powerful framework for active learning and formative assessment, and application-oriented undergraduate education reform is increasingly aligned with competency-based approaches. However, there is still a notable absence of systematic studies on applying BOPPPS to exhibition-related courses. In particular, Exhibition Business Communication-a

core course combining professional knowledge, intercultural competence, and communication skills-remains underexplored in terms of structured teaching innovation. This study addresses this gap by implementing and evaluating a BOPPPS-based teaching design, aiming to provide empirical evidence and practical insights for both exhibition education and broader application-oriented higher education reform.

3. Research Design

3.1 Course Background

The Exhibition Business Communication course is a core component of the Exhibition Economy and Management program, primarily offered to third-year undergraduates and top-up students. The course consists of 32 contact hours and covers a wide range of topics, including fundamentals of business communication, intercultural communication, negotiation and conflict management, and teamwork coordination. Its overarching goal is to equip students with both theoretical knowledge and the ability to apply communication skills effectively in simulated or authentic exhibition scenarios, thereby enhancing their professional competence.

However, several problems have long constrained the effectiveness of this course. First, the teaching design is overly lecture-based, with insufficient case analysis and practical activities. Second, classroom interaction is limited, leading to low levels of student engagement and motivation. Third, assessment methods are overly dependent on written examinations, which fail to comprehensively reflect students' competencies. These issues underscore the necessity of adopting a new teaching model to improve both teaching quality and student outcomes.

3.2 Research Subjects and Methods

The study involved 78 students from two classes who enrolled in the Exhibition Business Communication course in the first semester of the 2024-2025 academic year. The students' baseline competencies varied widely: some demonstrated strong English proficiency, while others struggled with communication and expression.

A teaching practice research approach was adopted, focusing on in-depth observation and reflective analysis rather than experimental control groups. The following data sources were used:

Classroom observation: Documenting students' participation, interaction, and learning performance during class sessions.

Assignments and presentations: Collecting evidence from group reports, role-played negotiations, and individual presentations, which were evaluated in terms of communication logic, language expression, and collaboration.

Teaching logs: Recording challenges and reflections throughout the teaching process to generate first-hand practice-based insights.

Unlike traditional experimental designs, this approach emphasized rich descriptions of authentic teaching contexts and triangulation of multiple data sources to provide nuanced insights.

3.3 Choice of Teaching Model

The BOPPPS model was selected as the pedagogical framework for the following reasons. First, its six sequential components—Bridge-in, Objectives, Pre-assessment, Participatory Learning, Post-assessment, and Summary—offer a clear and systematic structure that helps instructors organize lessons effectively and ensures pedagogical coherence [5]. Second, participatory learning and formative assessment, the core features of BOPPPS, directly address the problems of limited interaction and narrow evaluation in the current course. For instance, role play and group discussion can significantly increase student engagement [18]. Third, the model aligns well with the competency-oriented philosophy of application-oriented undergraduate education, which emphasizes student-centeredness and outcome-based learning [21].

Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of BOPPPS across multiple domains, such as language teaching, medical education, and laboratory-based courses [6-9]. Yet, its systematic application to exhibition-related courses remains underexplored. This study thus introduces the BOPPPS model into the Exhibition Business Communication course, constructing a pedagogical pathway characterized by “case-based introduction, layered objectives, diagnostic questioning, interactive learning, process-oriented evaluation, and reflective summary.” The design emphasizes not only knowledge acquisition but also the development of communication competence, intercultural sensitivity, and teamwork skills. By analyzing both achievements and challenges in practice, the study aims to provide empirical evidence and practical guidance for teaching reform in exhibition-related courses.

4. Teaching Practice

The teaching practice of the *Exhibition Business Communication* course was redesigned according to the six stages of the BOPPPS model. Each stage was closely adapted to the characteristics of the exhibition industry and emphasized practical engagement.

4.1 Bridge-in

At the beginning of each unit, the class started with a vivid situation. For example, in the first lesson, students watched a short video showing a failed negotiation between an organizer and an exhibitor at an international trade fair. This direct exposure to a real-world problem quickly drew attention and triggered discussions. Students were asked to reflect on the mistakes in the video and share possible improvements, which naturally led to the topic of communication strategies. Such openings proved effective in raising curiosity and setting a professional context.

4.2 Objectives

Clear objectives were provided at the start of each unit, focusing on three levels:

Knowledge: grasp the basics of communication models, negotiation strategies, and cultural frameworks.

Skills: demonstrate logical, persuasive communication in discussions, role plays, and presentations.

Attitudes: develop professionalism, teamwork, and intercultural awareness.

For example, in the Cross-cultural Communication unit, the objectives included understanding cultural differences, analyzing cases of cultural conflict, and practicing appropriate responses through role play. Students reported that having clear objectives helped them focus on key points and measure their progress.

4.3 Pre-Assessment

Before each topic, a short warm-up or quiz was conducted to check students' prior knowledge. For instance, before the Negotiation unit, students brainstormed their existing negotiation strategies. Some equated negotiation with competition or confrontation, which revealed misconceptions that were later addressed. Pre-assessment also allowed the teacher to adjust activities based on students' readiness and interest.

4.4 Participatory Learning

The heart of the course was active participation. Several methods were applied:

Role Play: Students practiced exhibition scenarios, such as welcoming international clients, managing booth disputes, or negotiating sponsorships. Each role play was followed by peer and teacher feedback, focusing on clarity, tone, and professionalism.

Case Study: Groups analyzed real or adapted cases, such as communication failures during press conferences. They identified problems, designed solutions, and presented their findings.

Team Project: Each group designed a communication plan for a hypothetical international conference, covering tasks such as media handling, conflict resolution, and client communication. This required teamwork, division of roles, and application of theories.

These activities shifted students from passive listening to active problem-solving. Many students commented that the role plays gave them a “real exhibition feeling” and boosted their confidence in public speaking.

4.5 Post-Assessment

At the end of each unit, students completed performance-based tasks. Examples included delivering a persuasive pitch, conducting a mock negotiation, or submitting a group plan. Evaluation was based on rubrics covering content, delivery, teamwork, and creativity. Feedback was provided immediately in class, which encouraged reflection and improvement. Instead of relying only on final exams, this continuous assessment captured both learning process and outcomes more comprehensively.

4.6 Summary

Every class ended with a short summary. Sometimes the teacher gave a structured recap, and sometimes students were asked to write a “one-minute paper” on the most important point they learned. At the end of the semester, a collective reflection session was held. Students shared how their communication skills had changed, with many highlighting increased confidence in teamwork and public speaking.

5. Outcomes

The application of the BOPPPS model led to several outcomes:

1. Higher participation: Students were much more active in discussions and role plays.

2. Better competence: Assignments and

presentations showed clearer structure and stronger teamwork.

3. Increased motivation: Students expressed greater interest in communication due to the use of real exhibition cases.

At the same time, challenges appeared. Some students were shy and reluctant to speak, and time management was sometimes difficult as role plays and discussions took longer than expected. In addition, teachers needed to spend extra time preparing cases and rubrics.

Despite these challenges, the overall results were positive. The course achieved its goals of enhancing students’ communication ability and giving them authentic professional practice.

6. Results and Reflection

6.1 Positive Results

6.1.1 Improved classroom engagement

Compared with previous semesters, students in this course showed significantly higher participation. Attendance rates were stable, and more than 80% of students were willing to speak or take roles during simulations. Group discussions were lively, with many students voluntarily staying after class to continue rehearsing role plays. This indicates that the structured, interactive elements of the BOPPPS model succeeded in breaking the passivity of traditional lecture-based teaching.

6.1.2 Enhanced communication competence

Students’ progress was evident in their final presentations and negotiation exercises. At the beginning of the course, many presentations lacked logical flow and persuasive power. By the end, most students demonstrated clearer structures, better use of professional vocabulary, and stronger audience awareness. Peer evaluations also confirmed that teamwork and cooperation improved, as groups became more coordinated and confident in delivering joint projects.

6.1.3 Increased professional awareness

The integration of authentic exhibition cases raised students’ awareness of workplace communication standards. For example, in the “sponsorship negotiation” role play, students learned to balance politeness with firmness, avoiding overly casual or overly rigid expressions. Several students mentioned in their reflective notes that they could imagine applying these skills in real internships or jobs.

6.2 Challenges Encountered

6.2.1 Uneven student participation

Not all students were equally active. A small number of students were reluctant to speak due to language anxiety or lack of confidence. In group projects, stronger students often dominated, while weaker students contributed less. Although the teacher tried to assign rotating roles, the imbalance was not fully resolved.

6.2.2 Time management difficulties

The participatory nature of the course meant that activities often extended beyond the planned schedule. Role plays and case discussions, though effective, consumed large amounts of class time. As a result, some theoretical explanations had to be condensed or moved to online learning modules, which created additional workload for both teacher and students.

6.2.3 Increased teacher preparation load

Designing case-based activities, developing rubrics, and providing timely feedback required significant preparation. Compared with traditional teaching, lesson planning was more demanding, and ensuring fairness in evaluation posed additional challenges. Teachers need institutional support and training to sustain this approach.

6.3 Reflection and Suggestions

6.3.1 Encouraging broader participation

One recurring challenge in the application of the BOPPPS model is uneven student involvement. While most students welcomed the participatory design, a small proportion remained passive. To address this, scaffolding strategies could be systematically embedded into future teaching. For example, teachers may assign pre-class preparation tasks, such as drafting a negotiation script or outlining communication strategies, to lower the threshold of participation. In-class, small-group rehearsals can be used as a buffer stage before public role plays, allowing less confident students to gain confidence in a lower-pressure setting. Furthermore, the integration of anonymous online platforms (e.g., discussion boards or real-time polling apps) enables all students to share their opinions without fear of judgment. Over time, such scaffolding can help weaker or introverted students build incremental confidence and cultivate a habit of active engagement.

6.3.2 Balancing depth and breadth

The BOPPPS model emphasizes student-centered and interactive learning, but its time-intensive nature creates tension between covering the curriculum comprehensively and exploring certain

topics in depth. A more refined strategy is to adopt a tiered teaching approach: identifying a few core competencies that are indispensable to exhibition business communication—such as negotiation skills, intercultural communication, and crisis management—and allocating more classroom time to these areas with intensive participatory activities. Meanwhile, supplementary topics (e.g., email etiquette, meeting notes) can be delivered through flipped classroom methods or short online modules. This balance ensures that students not only grasp key communication skills at a professional level but also maintain adequate exposure to the broader curriculum.

6.3.3 Enhancing institutional support

Although individual teachers can implement BOPPPS-based reforms, sustainable practice requires systematic institutional backing. Universities can establish a shared case and resource library for exhibition communication scenarios, which would ease the preparation burden on individual teachers and promote consistency across courses. Regular training workshops can also help teachers develop stronger facilitation and evaluation skills, especially in managing interactive classrooms. Beyond material support, institutional recognition is equally crucial: teaching innovation awards, inclusion in performance evaluations, or additional workload credits would incentivize teachers to invest time and creativity in reform efforts. With such support, the BOPPPS model could gradually transition from isolated innovation to a widespread practice.

6.3.4 Integrating technology for sustainability

Another important reflection is the potential role of educational technology in sustaining the reform. Online learning platforms can host pre-class quizzes (serving as the “Pre-assessment”), discussion forums (supporting “Participatory Learning”), and post-class reflection journals (aligning with “Summary”). Technology not only extends learning beyond the classroom but also generates data for continuous improvement. For example, participation metrics and reflective entries can be analyzed to identify which activities engage students most effectively, thereby guiding evidence-based refinement of course design.

6.3.5 Fostering long-term professional competence

Ultimately, the goal of the Exhibition Business Communication course is not only to enhance classroom engagement but also to nurture students’ professional readiness. Reflection suggests that linking course assignments more

explicitly to real-world exhibition contexts-such as drafting sponsorship proposals, conducting mock press conferences, or simulating client briefings-would better prepare students for industry expectations. In this sense, the BOPPPS model should not be treated as a rigid template but as a flexible framework adaptable to evolving industry demands. By aligning classroom activities with authentic professional tasks, the course can bridge the gap between academic training and workplace competence.

7. Conclusion

The application of the BOPPPS model in the Exhibition Business Communication course highlights its value as a structured, participatory, and outcome-oriented teaching framework. The model not only enhanced students' engagement and communication competence but also fostered greater professional awareness through authentic, practice-oriented activities. Despite challenges such as uneven participation, time constraints, and increased preparation demands, the advantages of this approach clearly outweigh its limitations. This study further suggests that when adapted to local teaching contexts, the BOPPPS model can serve as an effective pedagogical pathway for application-oriented universities. By aligning classroom learning with industry-relevant skills, it contributes to bridging the gap between academic training and professional practice. Future efforts should focus on refining participation strategies, optimizing activity design, and strengthening institutional support, thereby ensuring the sustainable integration of the BOPPPS model into professional communication education.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by the Teaching Reform Research Project of Wuhan Business University, Innovative and Exploratory Classroom Practice of the "Exhibition Business Communication" Course Based on the BOPPPS Model (Project No. 2024N003).

References

- [1] Zhou J., Wang D. Research on exhibition talent training reform under industry competence orientation. *Commercial Economic Research*, 2017, 7: 200-201.
- [2] Li Y., Zhou Y. The construction and practice of higher vocational exhibition programs based on Beijing's talent demand. *Vocational and Technical Education*, 2018, 39(26): 30-34.
- [3] Prince M. Does active learning work? A review of the research. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 2004, 93(3): 223-231.
- [4] Wang Y. Exploring accounting curriculum reform in application-oriented universities under OBE. *Laozihao Brand Marketing*, 2025, 18: 198-200.
- [5] Stanley G., Porter R. Engaging students with structured teaching: The BOPPPS model. *Journal of College Teaching*, 2002, 50(2): 75-79.
- [6] Cong L. From BOPPPS to BP-BOPP-PS: A blended teaching model for high school English listening and speaking. *English Teaching and Research in Primary and Secondary Schools*, 2025, 1: 47-51.
- [7] Bonwell C. C., Eison J. A. *Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom*. Washington D.C.: George Washington University, 1991.
- [8] Qiu Y., Fan J., Xia Q., Chen S. Exploration and practice of blended morphological laboratory teaching integrating BOPPPS. *Research and Exploration in Laboratory*, 2025, 44(1): 136-140.
- [9] Zhao Y. Research on physical education teaching under "Internet + BOPPPS". *Theory and Practice of Education*, 2024, 44(36): 53-56.
- [10] Gao X. Research on teaching management strategies of application-oriented universities based on OBE. *Journal of Jilin Institute of Education*, 2025, 41(9): 94-98.
- [11] Wang X. Research on blended teaching reform of basic accounting courses in application-oriented universities. *Jiangsu Business Review*, 2025, 10: 129-132.
- [12] Zhu H., Huang P., Li Q., Xu B. Empowering application-oriented undergraduate VR course reform through industry-education integration. *Research in Higher Engineering Education*, 2025, 5: 173-178.
- [13] Jin X., Li L., Du J., Yue Y. Instructional innovation design based on the BOPPPS model: A case of mechanical design. *Research in Higher Engineering Education*, 2022, 6: 19-24.
- [14] Li Y., Zhou Y., Chen X. Teaching reform of general biology in application-oriented universities. *Chinese Journal of Biotechnology*, 2022, 38(4): 1662-1670.
- [15] Wang S. Constructing blended teaching strategies for exhibition display courses based on scenario theory. *Packaging Engineering*,

- 2023, 44(S1): 636-644.
- [16]Hu L., Xiao S. Reform of innovative talent training models: The case of exhibition planning and management. Vocational Education Forum, 2017, 11: 63-66.
- [17]Walton J. M., Matthews M. B., O'Shaughnessy A. BOPPPS in medical education: Enhancing learning outcomes. Medical Teacher, 2016, 38(10): 994-1001.
- [18]Black P., Wiliam D. Developing the theory of formative assessment. Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability, 2009, 21(1): 5-31.
- [19]Wang X. Research on blended teaching reform of basic accounting courses in application-oriented universities. Jiangsu Business Review, 2025, 10: 129-132.
- [20]Jiang, J., & Ren, X. (2017). Three reform paths of exploratory experimental teaching in liberal arts: A case of exhibition project management. Research and Exploration in Laboratory, 36(10), 274-282.
- [21]Biggs J., Tang C. Teaching for Quality Learning at University (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2011.