



On the Training Ways of Interdisciplinary Business English Talents in the Context of New Liberal Arts

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Abstract. The new liberal arts focus on interdisciplinary integration, promoting innovation in liberal arts education on the basis of upholding traditions, with specialty optimization, curriculum improvement, and model innovation as three key points. Guided by the construction of new liberal arts and combined with the *Teaching Guide for University Undergraduate Business English Program*, this paper tries to discuss the problems of training interdisciplinary business English talents in applied undergraduate colleges, and suggests the ways to train interdisciplinary business English talents from aspects such as optimizing teaching resources and content, innovating teaching methods, integrating digital and intelligent technologies, and establishing industry-academia-research-practice cooperation platforms.

Keywords: new liberal arts; interdisciplinary business English talents; training ways

1 Introduction

In October 2018, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Science and Technology, and other departments jointly launched the "Six Excellence and One Top-notch" Personnel Plan 2.0 and the "Double Ten Thousand Plan," comprehensively advancing the construction of new liberal arts. In November 2020, the New Liberal Arts Construction Work Conference, was held at Shandong University, releasing the "New Liberal Arts Construction Manifesto", proposing that "the new era and new mission require liberal arts education to accelerate innovation and development." At the same time, higher education of liberal arts has reached a consensus that "comprehensive ability improvement, firm cultural confidence, and the cultivation of talents in the new era require new liberal arts"[1]. Since then the construction of new liberal arts has become a hot topic in the reform of foreign language education. Based on the original liberal arts, the new liberal arts restructure various majors to form an interdisciplinary integration, while advocating the integration of modern information technology into course teaching, providing students with interdisciplinary learning, and guiding the integration and innovative development of disciplines in the direction of national strategy, social development, regional economic development, and market demand. The construction of new

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V. A. Balakrishnan et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the 2024 4th International Conference on Modern Educational and Social Sciences (ICMETSS 2024)*, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 878,

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-311-5_39

liberal arts takes specialty optimization, curriculum improvement, and model innovation as the three major focuses. At the same time, the construction of new liberal arts shows four significant characteristics and trends of innovation, integration, Chinese-ness, and globalization [2], which undoubtedly points out a new direction for training interdisciplinary business English talents in applied undergraduate colleges.

2 Researches of New Liberal Arts in Foreign Language Teaching

In the nearly four years since the proposition of New Liberal Arts, various universities have made attempts in both the theory and practice of New Liberal Arts. Hu Kaibao (2020) carried out discussions and research on new liberal arts in foreign languages from the perspectives of scientific research, professional construction, and talent cultivation [3]. Wang Lifei (2021) conducted studies on business English talents under the background of new liberal arts in terms of training specifications, training models, training goals, curriculum systems, teaching contents and teaching methods [4]. Chen Xiuchun (2021) undertook multimodal research on the teaching of practical translation courses for English majors based on "Internet +" and information technology [5]. Liu Heping (2022) suggested the training mode of interdisciplinary language service talent under the background of New Liberal Arts Reform [6]. Wang Huashu (2023), from the perspective of digital humanities, explicitly expounded the connotation of digital literacy of translators in the new era and analyzed the main problems and solutions in the current development of digital literacy of translators [7]. Wen Qiufang and Liang Maocheng (2024) actively advocated for enhancing the cultivation of human-computer interactive negotiation ability in English teaching to narrow the gap in learning outcomes and enhance the fairness of education [8]. Wen Qiufang (2024) also elaborated on how to form a new four-element curriculum model after integrating the element of artificial intelligence into the three elements of teachers, students, and teaching materials [9]. Thus, it can be perceived that the application of the educational concept of new liberal arts in foreign language teaching is an inevitable trend.

Most of the above scholars have conducted research from the macro perspective of foreign language disciplines under the guidance of new liberal arts construction. However, there are relatively few studies on the training ways for interdisciplinary business English talents based on school-based characteristics of application-oriented undergraduate universities. Therefore, guided by the concept of new liberal arts construction and the Teaching Guide for University Undergraduate Business English Program, combined with the author's teaching experience in ESP courses such as Business English and International Trade Practice in recent years, the practice of establishing provincial and university-level first-class blended courses, and the research foundation of establishing a business practice innovation class with enterprises, this paper conducts a research from aspects such as optimizing teaching resources and contents, innovating teaching methods, integrating digital and intelligent technologies, and establishing co-operation platforms for industry-university-research-application, in order to solve the

problems in business English teaching and strive to train interdisciplinary business English talents needed for the social and economic development in the new era.

3 Problems in Training Interdisciplinary Business English Talents

As a typical new liberal arts major, Business English was established to meet the demand for interdisciplinary foreign language talents in the opening-up and economic and social development. The specialty positioning fully follows the "interdisciplinary" concept of new liberal arts, achieving the intersection and integration of English and business disciplines. The "Teaching Guide for University Undergraduate Business English Program" (hereinafter referred to as the "Business English Guidelines") defines interdisciplinary Business English talents as talents with solid basic English skills, relevant business knowledge, good humanistic literacy, Chinese sentiment and international vision, strong intercultural ability, business communicative competence, and innovation and entrepreneurship ability. At present, influenced by traditional teaching concepts, most application-orientated undergraduate universities tend to cultivate business English talents in a homogenized way, and there are the following problems in teaching content, teaching mode, practical training, and industry-education integration of business English teaching:

(1) Teaching resources are singular, and the teaching content does not meet the employment needs of industries and enterprises, resulting in insufficient business practice ability of students;

(2) Classroom teaching mode is mainly teacher-centered one-way input, with insufficient integration of digital and intelligent technology into business English teaching, insufficient teacher-student interaction, and low student participation in class;

(3) The industry-education integration mechanism is not perfect, and the output effect of government-industry-education-research cooperation is not obvious, and schools have not effectively served local governments and enterprises;

(4) The first classroom has limited time and space, and the practice is insufficient. How to combine the second classroom to enhance students' practical ability while conducting the ideological and political education to serve the society is very important.

4 Training Ways in the Context of New Liberal Arts Construction

Based on these problems, this paper proposes the training ways of interdisciplinary business English talents in accordance with the "Business English Guidelines".

4.1 Optimizing Course Resources and Teaching Modes

The design of business English curriculum system should follow the composite concept as required by the "Business English Guidelines". The types of courses are divided into

language and literature courses, business courses, intercultural courses, and general education courses, forming a complete composite curriculum system. Among these four types of courses, language, literature, and cultural courses are the core courses of the major, adhering to the principle of "solid foundation" to strengthen the basics; business courses are interdisciplinary knowledge and skill courses, implementing the new liberal arts concept of disciplinary intersection; general education courses are public basic courses, implementing the idea of broad-caliber education.

The teaching content of business English major consists of three parts: skill teaching, knowledge teaching, and practical teaching. Skill teaching refers to the training of business English listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation skills, which is the core content and focus of basic professional teaching. Knowledge teaching mainly includes the basic theories and knowledge of economics and management, which is the difficulty of business English major teaching. Practical teaching refers to professional practice, innovation and entrepreneurship practice, social practice activities, and international exchange activities, which can be implemented in conjunction with professional qualification certification or vocational skill requirements. According to the Content-Based Instruction (CBI) concept, based on industry needs, the course content mainly selects authentic materials from foreign trade business and business management for detailed explanation, introducing real cases from enterprises for SWOT analysis to cultivate students' comprehensive ability to solve complex problems and advanced critical thinking. At the same time, business English comprehensive practical courses allow students to learn by doing to enhance their business practice ability.

Based on MOOCs at all levels and centered on students, a blended teaching model of "interesting guidance before class + interactive teaching during class + practical training after class" has been recommended. This model combines case teaching with inquiry learning, integrates value shaping with skill training, and organically unifies ideological and political elements with professional knowledge. Through various methods such as student presentations and evaluations, discussion debates, project exploration, and role-playing, online learning and offline discussions are seamlessly connected, which will enhance the attraction, challenge, practicality of the course, as well as students' sense of gain. In addition, the full teacher-student interaction before class, in class and after class will help to achieve the course objective by precise teaching.

4.2 Empowering the Digitalization, Informatization, and Intelligence

The "Business English Guidelines" first proposed the abilities of quantitative thinking and digital information literacy, which requires us to closely follow the requirements of new liberal arts construction and cultivate students' business big data analysis capabilities. This enables them to capture and crunch business and language big data, and use technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine translation, and machine learning to explore the interrelationships between information, predict market trends and user satisfaction, and obtain commercially valuable information. The new liberal arts advocate the integration of modern information technology into course teaching to make classroom teaching intelligent.

AI technology not only has the potential to accelerate the reform of talent cultivation models and improve the education quality but also to innovate teaching methods significantly. For instance, emerging teaching models such as blended learning and AI-supported human-computer collaborative teaching (introducing intelligent tutors, "digital humans," virtual mentors, etc.) demonstrate strong vitality. They provide students with one-on-one tutoring, targeted learning suggestions, and analysis of difficult points. By intelligently recommending corresponding teaching resources based on students' learning progress and interests, these models can promote autonomous learning and the ability to solve complex problems.

Utilizing AI technology and big data, a multi-dimensional knowledge graph can be constructed by integrating rich media teaching resources, including micro-videos, online open courses, and literature materials, which will aid in students' personalized learning with a learning portrait of knowledge points and learning paths. Furthermore, using big data and large models in real-time monitoring and analyzing students' learning behaviors and performances will provide timely feedback on learning conditions. All this will help teachers achieve intelligent classroom management, and conduct AI-assisted formative assessments by better understanding student needs and adjusting teaching strategies. By innovating teaching concepts and optimizing teaching designs, a teaching model characterized by "autonomy, inquiry, cooperation, and innovation," integrating learning, teaching, practice, and application, can be established [10].

4.3 Strengthening Cooperation with Enterprises to Serve the Society

Firstly, by collaborating with practice bases to get project approval of the Ministry of Education, and jointly running business practice innovation classes with enterprises, industry lecturers are invited to give lectures together, bringing real business cases and projects, as well as post standards, into class to make talent cultivation more adaptable to the needs of industry and society. The innovation class adopts a "dual mentor system" training model, taking full advantage of school-enterprise resources to provide students with opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship practice. On the one hand, teachers go to enterprises and industries for internships, updating teaching concepts, collecting authentic materials, accumulating industry experience, and striving to become "double-qualified" teachers. On the other hand, enterprise mentors participate in teaching, lectures, Q&A, and assessments. Through a series of measures, a school-enterprise collaborative innovation mechanism and a new model of industry-education integration can be established, as well as a "gold course" system for professional practice characterized by inter-discipline, application, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Secondly, universities should initiatively contact the practical bases to carry out summer online internships and winter training camps for English majors of nationwide college students, guiding students to use fragmented time during winter and summer vacations for self-study and actively practice on the internship platform. By trying out online practical training or internships combined with qualification certificate exams on the cloud platform, the mechanism of integrating diplomas and vocational skills certificates is effectively explored.

Guided by the development of enterprises and regional economy, a platform for industry-education-research cooperation could be set up to serve the government, industry, academia, and research institutes. Students can apply professional knowledge to a variety of second classroom activities, such as English salons, international cultural festivals and other activities to promote their language competence. In addition, students are encouraged to take an active part in social practice and volunteer activities such as trade fairs, standardization of public signs to enhance their sense of responsibility by beautifying the local city image and serving the society.

5 Conclusion

Under the background of new liberal arts construction, the traditional business English course teaching needs transformation and upgrading. First of all, we must adhere to ideological and political education, highlight the interdisciplinary nature, promote the organic integration of business knowledge and language knowledge. Secondly, we should optimize course resources, introduce authentic cases and industry standards into class to develop students' critical thinking to solve complex problems, and carry out online and offline blended teaching based on MOOCs. Then practicality is strengthened by jointly running practice innovation classes with enterprises, as well as creating a platform for industry-education-research cooperation to serve the government, industry, academic and research institutes. Last but not least, we should integrate teaching with artificial intelligence technology education, empower business English teaching to be digital and intelligent. A teaching model characterized by "autonomy, inquiry, cooperation, and innovation" should be set up to integrate learning, teaching, practice, and application, in order to cultivate interdisciplinary business English talents who are "proficient in one and skilled in many" and "specialized in one and capable in many".

Acknowledgments

This paper is funded by the Annual Project in 2022 of "14th Five-Year Plan" for Education Science in Fujian Province (FJJKBK22-021) and the First-class Blended Courses of Fujian Province in 2023.

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