

# *Strategies for Enhancing Students' General Literacy in University English Major Teaching under the New Liberal Arts Context*

Sai Ma

*North China University of Science and Technology, Tangshan, 063000, China*

**Keywords:** New liberal arts context; university English major teaching; students' general literacy

**Abstract:** This article addresses the cultivation of students' general literacy in university English major teaching under the backdrop of the new liberal arts context. Starting from the importance, current status, and future prospects, the article presents a series of strategies. In the context of the development of the new liberal arts, students' general literacy plays a pivotal role in fostering comprehensive qualities. It demands that students not only master specialized knowledge but also acquire fundamental knowledge from various disciplines and possess the ability to apply knowledge to problem-solving. However, there are still deficiencies in students' general literacy in current university English major teaching. In response to these issues, this article proposes corresponding strategies. Additionally, future trends, including the assistance of artificial intelligence, are expected to have a positive impact on enhancing students' general literacy.

## 1. Introduction

With the advancement of the new liberal arts, university English major teaching is facing new challenges and opportunities. Students' general literacy, as one of the core competencies, plays a crucial role in fostering students' comprehensive qualities. The cultivation of general literacy is becoming increasingly important, and it plays a vital role in cultivating students' comprehensive qualities. General literacy encompasses not only the proficient use of specialized knowledge but also the understanding of basic knowledge from different disciplines, the grasp of social phenomena and global issues, as well as the ability to apply knowledge to problem-solving. Emphasis should be placed on improving the quality of education and teaching and enhancing teachers' self-development capabilities to promote students' comprehensive development. In the future, students will not only possess solid language skills but also have extensive knowledge backgrounds and the ability to engage in interdisciplinary learning.

## 2. The Importance of Student General Literacy in University English Major Teaching Under the Background of New Liberal Arts

The development of new liberal arts emphasizes innovation, cross-disciplinary approaches, and integration, aiming to equip students with fundamental global knowledge, enhance their critical

thinking and innovation abilities, and cultivate a human-centered global consciousness. In this context, students are required to possess a broader knowledge perspective and interdisciplinary learning skills to meet the new demands of societal development. General literacy, as one of the core competencies, not only necessitates grasping fundamental subject knowledge but also entails understanding societal phenomena and global issues and the ability to apply knowledge to problem-solving. It plays a crucial role in fostering students' comprehensive qualities. In university English major teaching, cultivating students' general literacy is equally crucial. This aids in improving their language proficiency. General education exposes students to a wider range of knowledge domains, enriching their language expression, enhancing their language comprehension, and boosting their language application skills. It also enhances their cross-cultural communication skills. General education provides a diverse cultural perspective, allowing students to understand the characteristics and differences of various cultures through reading, discussions, and writing, thereby improving their communication skills in diverse cultural environments. Lastly, it helps them better adapt to the future development of society and embark on broader life paths.[1]

### **3. The Current Status of Student General Literacy in University English Major Teaching Under the Background of New Liberal Arts**

#### **3.1. The Comprehensive English Assessment System in the New Liberal Arts**

Traditional English teaching evaluation methods mainly focus on students' mastery of knowledge, while future assessments should pay more attention to students' comprehensive abilities and interdisciplinary learning outcomes. With the rise of the new liberal arts, university English major teaching is moving towards more comprehensive assessment methods. Traditional knowledge-based assessments are gradually evolving to emphasize students' comprehensive abilities.[2] This transformation encourages educators to explore more interdisciplinary assessment methods and urges students to apply English to solve problems in different fields. Comprehensive projects, teamwork, and assessments based on real-world applications will be more closely aligned with real-world demands, nurturing students' innovation and comprehensive thinking abilities, allowing them to demonstrate interdisciplinary competence when addressing practical issues. Therefore, there is a need to explore interdisciplinary assessment methods that integrate knowledge from different disciplines and encourage students to adopt a multidisciplinary approach to problem-solving.

#### **3.2. Teacher Teaching Concepts and Student General Literacy Cultivation**

In practical teaching, an increasing number of teachers are becoming aware of the importance of students' general literacy and are adopting proactive strategies in teaching to promote students' comprehensive abilities and innovation spirit. More and more teachers are recognizing the importance of student-centered teaching methods. They focus on stimulating students' interest in learning, encouraging active participation in classroom discussions, and fostering deep thinking. Through heuristic questions and case studies, teachers guide students to explore and discover knowledge actively, making students active knowledge constructors.[3] Teachers incorporate interdisciplinary learning and general literacy into English major teaching by designing curricula that are more aligned with societal needs and student interests, offering comprehensive courses and practical projects that allow students to apply their knowledge in real-life scenarios, and enhancing their comprehensive qualities. As educational concepts continue to develop, and teachers' professional competence improves, the cultivation of students' general literacy will gradually receive more attention and strengthening.[4]

### **3.3. Curriculum Design and General Literacy Cultivation in the Context of New Liberal Arts**

The curriculum design of university English majors is gradually integrating with the objectives of general literacy cultivation. In the context of the new liberal arts, curricula place a balanced emphasis on breadth and depth, highlighting interdisciplinary integration. Diverse course content covers knowledge from various fields, helping students develop a more comprehensive disciplinary perspective. Simultaneously, curriculum designs align more with societal needs, introducing real-world cases and projects that allow students to enhance their general literacy through practical applications. Curriculum designs become more aligned with real-life situations, encouraging students to apply multidisciplinary thinking when problem-solving. Teaching methods such as real-case analysis, teamwork, and practical projects are widely adopted, enabling students to better grasp knowledge and develop problem-solving abilities while also fostering innovative thinking. This new teaching model can cultivate students' more comprehensive literacy, enabling them to effortlessly apply their acquired knowledge in interdisciplinary fields. Through practical experience and problem-solving, students not only gain a deeper understanding of learned concepts but also cultivate innovation thinking and practical problem-solving skills.

## **4. Strategies for Enhancing Student General Literacy in University English Major Teaching under the Background of New Liberal Arts**

### **4.1. Building a Comprehensive Assessment System to Holistically Evaluate Students' General Literacy**

When establishing an assessment system for students' general literacy in university English major teaching under the background of new liberal arts, it is essential to consider diversity and comprehensiveness to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of students' interdisciplinary learning and innovation capabilities. Oral expression assessments can evaluate students' oral communication skills, critical thinking abilities, and their grasp of interdisciplinary topics. Assessment formats may include classroom presentations, group discussions, role-playing, etc., allowing students to demonstrate their comprehensive qualities and innovation capabilities in real-life situations.[5] In addition to traditional assessment methods, project-based learning is also a crucial component of assessing students' general literacy. By participating in interdisciplinary projects, students can integrate their specialized knowledge with knowledge from other disciplines to solve real-world problems, fostering practical skills and a spirit of teamwork. Furthermore, the assessment of students' general literacy in the context of new liberal arts can incorporate innovative methods, such as students autonomously building electronic learning portfolios to document their learning achievements and growth journey, thereby comprehensively assessing their learning attitudes, habits, and self-directed learning abilities. Establishing a diverse and comprehensive assessment system requires collaborative efforts from both teachers and educational institutions. Teachers should design differentiated assessment methods and provide personalized guidance and feedback based on students' learning situations and characteristics. Educational institutions need to offer professional training and support to teachers, facilitating the effective implementation and continuous improvement of the assessment system.

### **4.2. Strengthening Teacher Training to Enhance Teachers' Comprehensive Qualities and Teaching Abilities**

Under the backdrop of new liberal arts, enhancing the comprehensive qualities of university English major teachers is a significant measure for improving students' general literacy. Teachers' roles in teaching are no longer limited to knowledge dissemination but have evolved into guides and

motivators of student learning. To better adapt to the developmental demands of the new liberal arts, teachers must continuously improve their own qualities and teaching abilities. Teachers need to possess extensive subject knowledge and interdisciplinary learning skills. The new liberal arts emphasize the fusion and intersection of disciplines, and to enhance interdisciplinary learning skills, teachers can actively engage in academic research and disciplinary exchange activities to enhance their understanding of other disciplinary fields. Teachers should continually update their teaching philosophies, guiding students to adopt more guiding and inquiry-based learning methods. Traditional teaching models emphasize one-way knowledge transmission from teachers, while in the context of the new liberal arts, students need to cultivate active learning capabilities. Therefore, teachers should use heuristic questions, case studies, and other methods to guide students in actively exploring and discovering knowledge, cultivating their interest in learning and self-directed learning abilities. Teachers can also effectively integrate modern educational technologies by incorporating information technology, internet resources, and other elements into teaching. Through educational technology, teachers can better present instructional content, provide rich learning resources, increase the appeal and interactivity of teaching, and stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm for learning.

### **4.3. Establishing Diverse Learning Curricula**

Introducing more elements of the new liberal arts and incorporating interdisciplinary learning into university English major teaching through the creation of relevant comprehensive courses will provide students with a broader knowledge perspective, fostering comprehensive qualities and innovation capabilities. This practice is proactive and helps students better adapt to future societal challenges and changes. As society continues to progress, the development of emerging disciplines places increasingly higher demands on students' comprehensive qualities. Introducing elements of the new liberal arts allows students to not only learn English but also gain insights into societal backgrounds and cultural connotations, thereby broadening their knowledge perspective and cognitive breadth. In traditional subject-based teaching, students may face issues of inadequate learning motivation due to the monotonous nature of the content or its lack of practical significance. Interdisciplinary learning, on the other hand, allows students to combine knowledge from different disciplines, helping them discover connections and applications of various disciplines during the learning process, thereby stimulating their interest in learning and their ability to think across disciplines. Learning integrated into practical teaching is an effective means. These courses can cover various fields, including literature, culture, social sciences, technology, and more, allowing students to expand their understanding and knowledge in addition to learning English. By broadening students' knowledge perspective, educational institutions can cultivate more well-rounded English major professionals.

### **4.4. Enhancing General Literacy through University-Industry Collaboration in Practice**

Collaborative practical projects between university English major students and companies or institutions have a positive impact on their practical skills and comprehensive qualities. Such collaborations not only enrich students' learning experiences but also provide more opportunities for them to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios, better preparing them for future careers and societal demands. Firstly, collaborating with companies or institutions in practical projects exposes students to real work environments and business challenges. In these practical projects, students need to address real-world problems and use their English language skills for communication and problem-solving. By engaging with real-world scenarios, students can gain a better understanding of the practical applications of their specialized knowledge, fostering problem-solving abilities and teamwork skills. Secondly, collaborative practical projects also cultivate students' spirit of teamwork

and leadership. When collaborating with companies or institutions, students often need to work with peers from different backgrounds and disciplines to complete project tasks collectively. This collaborative process hones students' awareness of teamwork and organizational coordination, and some students may even assume leadership roles during projects, developing their leadership skills. Additionally, collaborative practical projects improve students' practical skills and problem-solving abilities. In practice, students must adapt flexibly to real-world situations and address various challenges and difficulties encountered during projects. This practical experience helps students accumulate rich experiences and enhance their general literacy.

## **5. Prospects for Enhancing Student General Literacy in University English Major Teaching under the Background of New Liberal Arts**

### **5.1. Steady Improvement of Student General Literacy with Artificial Intelligence Assistance**

By introducing artificial intelligence (AI) in teaching, students can experience a more personalized and intelligent learning process, better adapting to the requirements of university English major teaching under the background of the new liberal arts. AI can provide personalized learning plans based on students' learning characteristics and needs. Each student has a unique learning style and interests, and traditional teaching often cannot meet all students' needs. AI technology, through data analysis and intelligent algorithms, can deeply understand students' learning habits, knowledge levels, and learning progress, tailoring learning plans for each student, making the learning process more efficient and personalized. AI can offer real-time feedback and guidance to students. In traditional teaching, students often have to wait until exams or assignments are graded to understand their learning performance and issues. AI technology can monitor students' learning performance in real time, identifying learning problems promptly and providing immediate feedback and guidance. This real-time feedback helps students adjust their learning strategies, correct errors, and enhance learning outcomes. AI can provide intelligent learning resources for students. In the context of the new liberal arts, enhancing student general literacy requires interdisciplinary learning and a broad knowledge base. AI technology can recommend high-quality and relevant learning resources for students through data mining and knowledge graph construction, helping students expand their knowledge and increase the breadth of their learning.

### **5.2. Assisting Students in Independently Improving General Literacy with Online Resources**

In today's digital age, students have increasingly convenient access to learning materials and information through online resources. This offers valuable opportunities for them to independently explore different learning domains and enhance their general literacy. Online resources are accessible anytime, anywhere, without constraints of time and location. Students can access the necessary materials according to their schedules, study from anywhere, and flexibly manage their study time, improving learning efficiency. Online resources cover a wide range of academic fields and knowledge content, allowing students to select learning materials that align with their personal interests and needs. This personalized learning approach helps ignite students' motivation and enthusiasm for learning. Through online resources, students can autonomously choose the content and depth of their learning, cultivating their self-directed learning abilities. They can learn at their own pace, revisit topics for better understanding, and ultimately improve their learning effectiveness. Selecting valuable content from a vast sea of information requires students to develop skills in discerning information authenticity and validity. Learning through online resources helps students enhance their information retrieval and processing abilities, as well as critical thinking. Online resources also provide students with opportunities to engage with learners worldwide. They can collaborate and discuss with peers



from different countries and cultural backgrounds, fostering cross-cultural communication skills and a global perspective. Online resources often include practical cases, projects, and exercises, enabling students to apply their knowledge to real-world problem-solving, enhancing their comprehensive abilities.

### **5.3. Assisting Students in Multi-Dimensional Enhancement of General Literacy with a Global Perspective**

Introducing a global perspective in university English major teaching and engaging in international academic exchange activities aim to enhance students' cross-cultural communication skills and global awareness. As globalization accelerates, cross-cultural communication skills have become a critical factor for success. By introducing a global perspective and international academic exchange activities, students can gain a broader academic outlook and a platform for communication, promoting their comprehensive qualities and competitiveness. Incorporating a global perspective means integrating global viewpoints into the curriculum content and teaching philosophies. Traditional English teaching often focuses on the culture of a single country, but in the context of the new liberal arts, students need to understand language usage in different cultural contexts. Moreover, introducing a global perspective can increase students' awareness of international affairs, fostering their global consciousness and social responsibility. Conducting international academic exchange activities is a vital teaching method. Students can engage in in-depth exchanges with scholars and peers from different countries by participating in international academic conferences, exchange programs, collaborative research, and other activities. This not only helps improve students' English communication skills but, more importantly, cultivates their cross-cultural communication abilities. During interactions with others, students must learn to respect and understand cultural differences, overcome language and cultural barriers, and build positive international cooperation relationships.

### **5.4. Encouraging Interdisciplinary Innovation to Assist Students in Applying Comprehensive Abilities for General Literacy Enhancement**

Encouraging students to collaborate across disciplines and participate in innovative projects can stimulate their interest and motivation for learning. In traditional subject frameworks, students may find the learning content monotonous. However, through interdisciplinary collaboration, students can access a broader knowledge spectrum, discover connections between disciplines, and increase their interest in learning. Additionally, involvement in innovative projects exposes students to real-world problems and challenges, igniting their desire to actively explore and solve problems through practical learning methods. During projects, students often need to collaborate with peers from different academic backgrounds, working together to solve problems. This collaborative process helps students learn to listen to others' opinions, respect different viewpoints, develop teamwork awareness, and improve communication skills—skills that are crucial for future work and social interactions. In the new liberal arts context, students need to possess interdisciplinary learning and thinking abilities, combining knowledge and skills from different fields to solve complex problems. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, students can draw from various disciplines, forming a comprehensive knowledge structure and enhancing their comprehensive abilities and literacy. To implement this strategy, educational institutions can establish interdisciplinary learning projects and encourage students to actively participate. Inviting experts from different academic fields to provide guidance and support to students can be valuable. Additionally, institutions can establish innovation labs or bases, providing resources and platforms for students to engage in innovative projects more frequently.

## 6. Conclusion

In the current social environment, schools should address issues with a global perspective and cultivate interdisciplinary talents with innovative thinking. General literacy, as an essential learning quality and spiritual core, serves as both the goal of university education and an important pathway for students' self-improvement. Therefore, the cultivation of general literacy in university English major teaching not only enhances students' English proficiency but also builds the foundation for their overall development, enabling them to confidently face challenges and realize their self-worth in a globalized society. In the future, artificial intelligence technology and online resources will become important means of assisting students in improving their general literacy. Introducing a global perspective and engaging in international academic exchange activities can nurture students' cross-cultural communication skills and global awareness. Collaboration between schools and enterprises will also contribute to students' enhancement of general literacy through practical experience. By comprehensively applying these strategies, students can better adapt to the challenges of the future society and realize their self-worth.

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