

# *Research on the Reform Path of Foreign Language Curriculum Based on Digital Technologies under the Background of New Liberal Arts*

Shuang Cui, Ye Wang

*College of Art & Information Engineering, Dalian Polytechnic University, Dalian, 116400, China*

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**Abstract:** Based on the relationship between the new liberal arts construction and the collaborative development of foreign languages, this study explores the challenges and opportunities that the new liberal arts construction brings to foreign language major courses, and clarifies the new mission and new goals of foreign language major course construction and talent training in colleges and universities position. Through in-depth thinking on the curriculum reform and discipline connotation construction of foreign language majors, a construction path from four aspects including curriculum setting, teaching model, teaching system, and evaluation mechanism is proposed to promote the connotative development of foreign language major construction in colleges and universities.

## **1. Policy Background of New Liberal Arts**

In today's world, profound changes are taking place in politics, economy, science and education. In 2019, China officially launched the "new liberal arts" construction. According to the requirements of the Ministry of Education, the construction of new liberal arts should "meet the new requirements for the development of philosophy and social sciences in the new era, build an advanced culture with new era Chinese characteristics, Chinese style and Chinese temperament, cultivate social scientists in the new era, promote the intersection and integration of philosophy and social sciences with a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, and form Chinese schools of philosophy and social sciences." [1]

The construction of new liberal arts brings challenges and opportunities to the curriculum development and teaching models of foreign language disciplines. How to reform the professional curriculum of foreign language disciplines through the construction of new liberal arts, explore the connotative construction and practice of talent cultivation models according to local development needs will be issues that foreign language disciplines in various universities should think deeply about and solve in the future. This research attempts to explore the above issues in order to provide ideas for the curriculum reform and application-oriented and skills-oriented talent cultivation model construction of foreign language disciplines in colleges and universities under the background of new liberal arts construction.

## 2.Foreign Language Discipline Construction and Development under New Liberal Arts

Under the background of new liberal arts construction, foreign language discipline construction has embraced new opportunities. New liberal arts clearly points out the new direction for foreign language teaching curriculum reform and development. The construction and teaching of foreign language disciplines also shoulder the important task of supporting the development of new liberal arts. New liberal arts and greater significance of foreign languages, each performing its own functions and supporting each other for common development, will greatly promote the internal connotation construction of foreign language disciplines by encouraging interdisciplinary crossover and collaborative innovation among liberal arts disciplines, as well as integration of various disciplines with foreign language disciplines. [2]

Under the "new mission and grand vision" of new liberal arts construction, renowned foreign language universities in China have successively carried out innovations in scientific research and teaching, such as:

(1) Beijing Foreign Studies University made full use of its own advantages in language and culture resources to build the Luxun Academy (2018), the Institute of Foreign Language Digital Publishing (2020) and other entities, and set up professional directions such as language and communication, language and cultural communication. It uses digital technologies to create online open courses and corpora.

(2) Shanghai International Studies University established the School of Cultural Communication and the Institute of Global Communication Studies (2020), and began offering digital humanities in 2021. Relying on corpora and teaching resource libraries, it builds online courses and digital teaching environments.

(3) Nanjing University established the School of Cultural Communication in 2019. In 2020, it set up the major in Language Communication and Cultural Innovation, and carried out talent cultivation in the field of cultural communication. It built digital resource platforms such as the Global Shakhhar Literary Network.

(4) The University of International Business and Economics established the Research Center for Digital Trade Culture Communication (2020). Since 2021, it has set up master's programs in digital content industry, and conducted research on language and cultural communication in digital environments.

While carrying out innovations in the settings and reforms of foreign language disciplines, the requirements of new liberal arts construction clearly point out: strongly support the systematic connotation construction of foreign language disciplines in aspects such as curriculum design, teaching content, evaluation methods and curriculum resources, thereby enhancing the teaching quality of foreign language curriculum, and ultimately improving the quality of talent cultivation. The above policy guidance of new liberal arts construction provides ample momentum for foreign language disciplines to get out of the previous predicaments in teaching. [4]

This research focuses on the relationship between the collaborative development of new liberal arts and greater significance of foreign languages, discusses the challenges and opportunities brought by new liberal arts construction to foreign language curriculum, and clarifies the new mission and new positioning of curriculum construction and talent cultivation goals of foreign language disciplines in colleges and universities. Through in-depth thinking on the reform and connotation construction of foreign language curriculum, it puts forward the development paths from four aspects - curriculum design, teaching models, teaching systems, and evaluation mechanisms, so as to promote the connotative development of foreign language discipline construction in colleges and universities.

### **3. Ideas on Curriculum Reform and Connotation Construction of Foreign Languages under New Liberal Arts**

#### **3.1. Three-dimensional Curriculum Settings**

The aim of this reform is to enhance the three-dimensional curriculum structure of the "Four Dimensions in One" model and align the configuration of foreign language courses with the requirements outlined in the "New National Standards" issued by the Ministry of Education and the curriculum development specifications of the institute for talent cultivation. [5] This includes language foundation courses, language major courses, language and culture courses, and internship courses. Among them, language foundation courses and language major courses strengthen comprehensive language application abilities; language and culture courses expand cross-cultural communication skills; internship courses focus on improving students' practical application abilities of languages, and ultimately achieving improvement in students' autonomous learning abilities and sustainable development abilities of languages.

#### **3.2. Blended Teaching Model Reform**

Implement the "online + offline" blended teaching model. In the reform process, relying on high-quality courses on teaching platforms such as the Liaoning Provincial Cross-School Credit Teaching Management Platform, Chaoxing Learning, Wisdom Tree, and Rain Classroom, we will vigorously build school-based series of online courses; continue to explore online and offline blended teaching practices of "student-centered autonomous learning under teacher guidance", driven by learning tasks, and carry out purposeful and personalized autonomous learning; teachers, based on but not limited by textbooks, make flexible use of textbooks, and highlight personalized guidance and feedback in teaching design, teaching content and teaching process. [3]

#### **3.3. Improving the Interactive Teaching System of "Theory + Practice"**

Building upon the theoretical courses within the existing core curriculum of the discipline, there is a proposed expansion to establish complementary practical courses. This expansion aims to facilitate diversified and tiered extracurricular practical experiences, thereby offering students a spectrum of cognitive and learning avenues. The objective is to ensure that students with varying levels of knowledge and distinct skill advantages can identify and engage with learning channels tailored to their individual needs, ultimately fostering the exploration of their latent potentials.

This will not only achieve the purpose of language learning, but also promote the continuous development of diversified intelligence, achieving the goals of quality education and lifelong education. [5]

#### **3.4. Establishing a "1+x" Diversified Assessment Mechanism**

For foreign language students, students taking level tests and obtaining corresponding level certificates is an important means to test the quality of foreign language teaching and student learning outcomes. Our department's foreign language teaching adheres to the principles of respecting language learning laws and attaching importance to language learning processes. We have established a teaching evaluation mechanism that combines "foreign language level certificates + professional qualification certificates". Judging from the current trial effects, the attempt of combining foreign language level test certificates acquisition with credit recognition has promoted and improved students' learning enthusiasm and initiative.

## 4.Implementing Blended Teaching Models by Making Good Use of Digital Technologies

Since 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has become a booster for the rapid development of blended teaching. The advancement of digital technologies and 5G networks, coupled with the promotion of online teaching during the pandemic, have enabled blended teaching to spread rapidly.

Based on the overall goals and reform ideas of the talent cultivation target reforms of our university, this research has carried out the following practices in blended course construction.

### 4.1.Online Learning Platform Construction

(1) Leveraging the advantages of a renowned publishing house, we have digitally curated instructional materials and educational resources to establish an intelligent foreign language learning platform. This platform incorporates various functional modules such as micro-videos, electronic courseware, and a knowledge repository. With mobile accessibility support, it facilitates a rich learning experience and interaction, significantly enhancing the efficacy of foreign language instruction and learning. This exemplifies one of the effective pathways for the application of digital educational resources in the realm of foreign language acquisition. This is one of the effective ways for digital teaching resources to be applied in foreign language learning.

These digital teaching resource modules can be organically integrated and assembled into an intelligent foreign language learning platform that supports PC and mobile access. Students can log in to the platform to online select e-courseware, watch micro-videos, do voice interactive exercises, query the knowledge base, etc., to achieve self-directed and personalized foreign language learning. [6]

(2) On the basis of existing digital course platforms such as Chaoxing Learning, further enrich video teaching resources and build a professional video course library. The video course library can produce various micro-courses and flipped classroom videos covering language knowledge and language skills training.

For example: The teacher develops a 5-10 minute micro-lecture video that dynamically elucidates key points of knowledge, encompassing grammar, vocabulary, phonetics, etc., through vibrant explanations and illustrative examples. Alternatively, the teacher can also create a 20-30 minute flipped classroom video to instruct students on relevant concepts and principles of language knowledge for pre-class learning.

In terms of language skills training, situational dialogue micro-videos can be produced by recording real rehearsal processes of the teaching acting out dialogues in different scenarios, for learning and imitating dialogue methods. Micro-lessons can also be used to explain various writing skills and how to give English speeches.

The micro-lessons and flipped classroom videos used in the courses will be systematically organized by teachers on the teaching platforms and compiled into themed video courses for students to learn on-demand according to their own learning needs. Attention shall be paid to making the content vivid and interesting when producing to enhance learning appeal. The abundant video course content can greatly improve the learning effects of foreign languages. [7]

(3) Leverage digital platforms and interactive learning components will be integrated with textbooks, including voice dialogue systems, vocabulary memory assistance tools, and voice evaluation systems, to facilitate effective communication between teachers and students, as well as foster interaction among students.

(4) The instructor will utilize quantitative analysis tools to gather data on students' learning trajectories for statistical assessment and offer practical learning recommendations.

## 4.2. Classroom Teaching Design

(1) Highlight the development of language communication skills in the teaching process and organize activities such as discussions, role playing, speeches, dialogues.

Specifically, in the implementation process, it can be carried out as follows. For example, in listening, speaking and visual courses, students can be organized to discuss foreign language texts/videos. Teachers raise questions for students to communicate their thinking in English or Japanese and summarize their views. Role playing of English business negotiations can also be set for students to simulate dialogues in different identities. In English public speaking and Japanese public speaking and debate courses, English and Japanese speech contests can be held for students to conduct oral expressions following speech procedures. These activities can greatly enhance students' foreign language oral communication and comprehensive language application abilities. [6]

(2) Adopt innovative teaching thinking such as project-driven methods and case teaching methods to strengthen the integration of language knowledge and skills.

For example, in foreign language film and television projects, students collect information to make videos and explain them in English. The project requires comprehensive application of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as well as background knowledge. Case teaching can make use of foreign language cases describing work scenarios for students to analyze case content and discuss solutions in a foreign language, which strengthens knowledge application and communication skills.

Through such design, effective integration of foreign language knowledge learning and communication skills training can be promoted, enabling students to gradually master and authentically apply language knowledge in communication, and rapidly improve their language application abilities.

(3) Design language environment simulation scenarios to simulate business meetings, hotel receptions, etc., and cultivate language application abilities.

In offline courses, business English and business Japanese environmental simulation classrooms can be set up in classrooms to simulate business scenarios such as conference rooms and office desks. Students can be grouped to conduct negotiation dialogues, business report speeches and other activities, play different business roles, simulate real business environments for communication in English. Hotel front desk environments can also be set up for students to play front desk staff or guests and simulate various situational dialogues such as room reservations and check-ins. Such immersive scenario designs can greatly improve students' practical English communication abilities. [8]

(4) Pay attention to personalized teaching and design language group exercises or personalized tutoring according to different needs.

Teachers can respectively conduct English learning style tests at the beginning of the semester to assess students' language learning advantages and characteristics. Then, targeted group exercises can be designed according to learning preferences and language foundations, such as more reading and writing tasks. Diagnostic tests can also be used to analyze students' language ability defects and provide personalized tutoring in speaking, conversation, writing and other aspects to help students strengthen their weak links. Personalized teaching can greatly improve the effects of students' foreign language learning.

## 4.3. Teaching Resources Development and Utilization

(1) Actively apply for quality courses and resource sharing courses inside and outside the school to expand high-quality resources.

Excellent provincial and ministerial resource sharing courses can be applied for to increase influence. High-quality online course resources such as Harvard University's business

communication courses can also be explored and integrated to further develop school-based online course resources. These measures can enrich curriculum resource reserves and provide more diversified English learning materials.

(2) Encourage teachers to develop featured online video courses, e-teaching plans and other resources.

Specific activities that can be carried out are as follows: The school and departments can hold micro-course competitions for teachers, commend exquisitely designed short video teaching projects, and encourage teachers to record video resources such as English knowledge explanation. Teaching resource libraries can be established for uploading resource files designed by teachers such as e-teaching plans, courseware, tests, etc. for easy search and use. These measures can stimulate teachers' creativity and enrich online teaching resources.

(3) Through teachers' professional skills and the convenience of Internet technologies, encourage teachers to continuously enrich course data pools.

Taking first-class course construction as an opportunity, teachers are encouraged to continuously enrich materials that can improve students' foreign language professional skills training, such as conversational corpus, writing templates, translation corpus, etc., and leverage resources from existing Bilibili, Youtube, foreign language websites to enrich students' learning resources and increase their learning interest.

(4) Rely on language intelligence platforms such as corpora and machine translation to enrich teaching resources such as translation, proofreading, intelligent writing and polishing.

## **5. Teachers' Role Transformation**

### **5.1. Transform from a knowledge imparter to a designer and supporter of the learning process**

Teachers are no longer the dominant imparters of classroom knowledge, but take on the role of designing students' learning processes, carefully planning pre-class, in-class and after-class learning activities to stimulate students' active learning. They provide guidance on learning methods in class and analyze learning outcomes after class to provide continuous support.

### **5.2. Focus on cultivating teachers' information technology application abilities and proficiently master various teaching tools**

The school can provide teacher information technology training for mastering teaching software, online platforms, intelligent devices and other information technologies, and be able to integrate their application into teaching design to create a digital language learning environment.

### **5.3. Attach importance to teachers' heuristic learning concepts and be good at arousing students' active learning interest**

Teachers need to deeply understand the heuristic learning concepts, focus on heuristic methods in each teaching design link, such as raising open questions, setting exploratory tasks, etc., strengthen teacher-student interactions, and take initiative to stimulate students' learning interest.

### **5.4. Make full use of teachers' professional strengths to provide students with guidance on language knowledge and learning methods**

Teachers should utilize their own expertise in linguistics to profoundly yet succinctly analyze grammar rules, vocabulary usage, etc., to help students construct knowledge frameworks. They

should also guide students on reasonable language learning methods to develop autonomous learning abilities.

## **6. Research Conclusions, Limitations, Prospects, and Social Significance**

### **6.1. Research Conclusions**

(1) Blended teaching can achieve effective combination of online autonomous learning and offline interactive learning to meet students' individualized needs.

(2) The richness and diversity of teaching resources are crucial for implementing blended teaching.

(3) Teachers need to transform their roles and serve as designers and supporters of the learning process.

(4) Blended teaching is conducive to stimulating students' learning interest and cultivating their autonomous learning abilities.

(5) Blended teaching is an important way to reform and innovate foreign language discipline teaching.

### **6.2. Innovations**

(1) A blended course design framework oriented to foreign language disciplines was built.

(2) Specific implementation paths for online and offline resource construction, teaching design, teacher development, etc. were explored.

(3) Scenario simulation, project-driven and other methods were applied to achieve effective integration of knowledge and skills.

### **6.3. Research Limitations**

(1) The research sample size and time period were limited, resulting in certain limitations of the conclusions.

(2) Related empirical studies are still not systematic and adequate enough.

(3) Long-term effects need to be supplemented with further qualitative studies to obtain more accurate learning feedback information.

### **6.4. Directions for Further Improvements**

(1) Expand sample sizes for more systematic empirical studies.

(2) Establish comprehensive quality evaluation systems for blended teaching.

(3) Explore learning characteristics of different types of students to optimize teaching designs.

(4) If possible, continue tracking with students' entire college years (4 years) as the research period to observe long-term training effects.

(5) Social Significance and Value of the Research

## **7. Summary**

This research focuses on the relationship between the collaborative development of "new liberal arts" and "greater significance of foreign languages". In the digital technology environment, the teacher discusses the challenges and opportunities brought by the new liberal arts construction to the foreign language curriculum. Also, this study hopes to clarify the new missions, positioning of curriculum construction, and talent cultivation goals for foreign languages in colleges and universities. Through in-depth thinking on the reform and connotation construction of foreign

language curriculum, it puts forward development paths from four aspects - curriculum design, teaching models, teaching systems, and evaluation mechanisms, and carried out curriculum reform practices based on the school where the project practitioners are located. The reform practices have achieved certain results in short-term evaluation effects. It is hoped that the ideas and paths for curriculum reform and connotation construction of foreign language disciplines under the background of new liberal arts construction can provide some reference for the construction and development of foreign language disciplines in similar colleges and universities, so as to promote the connotative development of foreign language discipline construction in application-oriented universities. This will jointly facilitate the collaborative development of new liberal arts and greater significance of foreign languages in China, further promote communication and learning between China and countries around the world, and enable foreign language education to help spread China's profound traditional culture, revolutionary red culture and advanced socialist culture abroad.

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