



Under the Background of the New Liberal Arts Era: Research and Practice of Blended Teaching in Comprehensive Business English

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Abstract: In the context of the new era of education, facing the new goals of constructing new liberal arts and the new requirements of ideological and political education, it is imperative for universities to carry out reforms in foreign language education. With the fundamental task of cultivating talents with high moral integrity, solid English language skills, an international perspective, and humanistic business literacy, this paper aims to address the deficiencies in the teaching of comprehensive business English courses. Through innovative reforms in teaching content, modes, environments, and evaluation methods, a new paradigm for core courses has been developed, integrating the concepts of constructing new liberal arts and educating students in ideology and politics into the entire teaching process. This ensures the achievement of three objectives: knowledge teaching, competence development, and ideological and political education, as well as continuous improvement in student learning outcomes, high-level thinking, and comprehensive literacy.

Keywords: Comprehensive business English; new liberal arts; blended teaching.

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In the new era, it is extremely important to "tell China's story well, spread China's voice, and present a trustworthy, lovable, and respectable image of China." In promoting the dissemination of China's stories and voice, it is necessary to achieve global expression. Faced with new trends, new requirements, and new challenges, it is imperative to cultivate interdisciplinary, high-quality, composite business English talents. Business English has the professional characteristics of "business knowledge + English language knowledge and skills + business operation knowledge and skills" and is a typical new liberal arts major. Currently, the promotion of the "Belt and Road" initiative imposes higher requirements on business talents. Students majoring in business English should have solid language skills, profound humanistic literacy, and a broad international perspective.

I. Overview of Comprehensive Business English Curriculum Teaching

The comprehensive business English curriculum emphasizes not only the training of language knowledge and skills but also the organic integration of language, culture, and business. It undertakes the task of comprehensive training. Students have a certain language foundation and business knowledge. As "digital natives," students also possess certain information literacy and enthusiasm for learning. However, there are significant individual differences, a weakening of the motivation for value-oriented learning, a lack of interdisciplinary consciousness, and deficiencies in critical and innovative thinking. There is also insufficient initiative and depth in understanding contemporary China. In the teaching process, based on the characteristics of student learning, professional training objectives, and graduation



requirements, the comprehensive business English curriculum mainly faces three "pain points."

Firstly, teaching is one-dimensional, and students lack interdisciplinary thinking and humanistic literacy. Traditional teaching dimensions overly focus on achieving knowledge objectives, emphasize language skill training, and lack the cultivation of business practical abilities and cultural critical thinking abilities, leading to students' insufficient knowledge, consciousness, and skills in comprehensive business English. Moreover, due to traditional learning modes, some students have poor English learning transferability, and there are obvious deficiencies in critical thinking and humanistic literacy reflected in writing and oral expression.

Secondly, teaching content is rigid, and students lack the ability to interpret China's path and wisdom. The existing course content is relatively outdated, structurally simple, and lacking in cases, with most of the materials coming from foreign original publications, unintentionally spreading Western culture, knowledge perspectives, and values, while neglecting current affairs education and national conditions education. At the same time, the presentation of teaching content is stereotyped, with the problem of "two-facedness" in knowledge and skill learning and emotional attitudes and values development. Additionally, students are in the period of knowledge system, thinking mode, and value formation, and have not yet established a deep understanding of Chinese culture, and their attention to domestic and international current affairs is insufficient. Therefore, they lack the literacy to understand contemporary China and cross-cultural communication skills, and the ability to "tell China's story" urgently needs to be improved.

Thirdly, teaching forms are rigid, and students lack the internal drive for continuous and deep learning. Due to the single traditional teaching format, lack of inquiry-based, cooperative learning activities that allow students to participate actively, and simulation of real knowledge application scenarios, the utilization rate of internet resources is low, students' personalized needs are not effectively met, and the evaluation forms mostly focus on results, resulting in a lack of internal drive for students' continuous and deep learning.

The comprehensive business English course should adhere to the requirements of the

construction of the new liberal arts, be driven by the needs of the new liberal arts, and transition from emphasizing humanities education to emphasizing comprehensive quality education. It should focus on students, abilities, and outcomes, and implement the reform concept of "moral education, cross-disciplinary integration, and technological empowerment."

Therefore, based on the principle of "being based in Guangxi, radiating to ASEAN, facing grassroots, and serving society," the comprehensive business English course at Guangxi University of Finance and Economics requires students to achieve goals in three dimensions: knowledge, abilities, and qualities. This is to cultivate business English talents for the new era who have a correct worldview, can tell China's story well, and possess an international perspective.

II. Reform of Blended Teaching in Comprehensive Business English under the Background of the New Liberal Arts

In response to the long-standing pain points in teaching, the comprehensive business English course, guided by the spirit of the new liberal arts, has promoted and implemented innovative reforms in teaching content, methods, environments, and evaluation.

1. Integration of Curriculum Content

The course content achieves "three integrations" through ideological and political education, interdisciplinary integration, and case integration. The reconstructed curriculum content breaks away from textbooks, expands the depth and breadth of course content, enhances the alignment between teaching content and objectives, and forms eight theme modules of "three integrations" of ideological and political education, interdisciplinary integration, and case study. These modules are flexibly integrated before, during, and after class to achieve organic integration of knowledge inheritance, ideal belief shaping, comprehensive ability improvement, and professional literacy development.

- Ideological and Political Integration: With an international perspective as the keynote, focusing on China and values, the curriculum highlights understanding contemporary China. It aims to cultivate the new era youth on the modernization path with Chinese characteristics. By deeply



integrating the ideological and political elements hidden and implied in the unit themes, it promotes students' identification with the country, politics, economy, and culture. It encourages students to tell China's story well, spread China's voice, enhance the dissemination and influence of Chinese civilization, and increase confidence and strength in civilizational exchange and mutual learning.

- **Interdisciplinary Integration:** Eight related interdisciplinary themes are modularly designed according to unit themes, emphasizing alignment with social talent needs and direct relevance to students' future work scenarios. It focuses on integrating business consciousness and thinking into English reasoning skills training and combines cutting-edge knowledge and hot issues. Dynamic knowledge is introduced in real-time to supplement the shortcomings of textbook content, enhance the timeliness and openness of the curriculum. Thirdly, there is integration of cases. From the perspective of constructing new liberal arts, Chinese enterprise cases are selected, and the latest cases related to unit themes and interdisciplinary knowledge points are introduced into the classroom. This emphasizes the responsibility and commitment of Chinese enterprises, deepens students' systematic understanding of business themes, and cultivates students' ability to apply business English knowledge.

II. Innovation in Teaching Modes

The teaching team, based on constructivism theory, has created the APCP (Activate, Participate, Cooperate, Produce) advanced teaching mode. The APCP advanced teaching mode highlights two progressions: firstly, it enables students to progress from a view of language knowledge to a tool view of communicative use, and then to the realization of a chain effect of humanistic moral views; secondly, it shifts from the traditional "lecture-dominated" approach to a progressive "four-step" model. This model emphasizes principles of activating students' initiative, enthusiasm, and creativity, engaging in cooperative activities such as topic discussions, scenario simulations, case studies, and communication tasks related to business activities. It allows students to construct meaningful knowledge through active participation, and to achieve constructive and fulfilling participation through their own inquiry abilities and cooperative sharing within the team. Emphasis is placed on laying a solid foundation in language skills, with

equal emphasis on business professional qualities and humanistic literacy.

Based on the APCP advanced teaching mode, two key teaching activities are designed, mainly using collaborative reading of passages and unit project tasks to reflect the teaching philosophy of "cross-disciplinary integration, moral education, and talent cultivation."

Firstly, there is collaborative reading of English passages. Textbook passages are read collaboratively through flipped classroom sessions. Students are divided into groups of four, each playing different roles such as vocabulary guides, syntax masters, content analysts, and passage constructors. Before class, students discuss and summarize vocabulary phrases, syntactic structures, paragraph summaries, and central themes according to their respective roles. In class, roles are reversed between teachers and students: the "vocabulary guides" explain key vocabulary and expand vocabulary, the "syntax masters" analyze the syntax of complex sentences, the "content analysts" summarize paragraph meanings, and the "passage constructors" analyze passage structures and author viewpoints. Teachers then provide feedback, supplement instruction based on student explanations, and lead discussions and analyses.

Secondly, there is the design and implementation of unit project tasks. Based on the unit theme, organic integration of language learning, business concept learning, and the cultivation of advanced abilities and qualities is achieved. For each unit, a creative output task is designed, mainly using case analysis and research report methods. This aims to actively engage students in scenarios, deepen their understanding and analysis of problems, and find solutions or approaches to problem-solving. It effectively enhances students' language skills and business practice abilities, critical thinking skills, independent exploration abilities, and comprehensive problem analysis and solving abilities.

During this process, it is especially important to adhere to Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" theory. This means that project design should be challenging yet achievable for the target audience. At the same time, teachers should timely scaffold students' learning, guiding and inspiring them step by step.



Case analysis involves introducing specific enterprise cases to authentically present specific international business scenarios. It provides basic background information, specific problems, and additional information, presented through oral and written tasks. The implementation of research reports mainly involves students conducting literature reading, searching and organizing multimodal resources in Chinese and English, and conducting questionnaire interviews before class. In class, collaborative exploration and participatory activities are used to achieve the creative output of unit projects.

III. Creation of Teaching Environment

Operating on the core mechanism of learning communities, and supported by hardware such as smart classrooms and cloud platforms, a smart learning community of teachers and students is constructed. This assists in cultivating students' abilities for autonomous and inquiry-based learning and achieving synchronous improvement in the quality and effectiveness of course-based ideological and political education. Additionally, a "three-class integration" classroom model is constructed, with teachers as leaders, students as the main body, and teaching platforms and resources mutually supporting each other. Through the smart learning community and the new "three-class integration" classroom model, an interactive multi-space-linked ubiquitous learning environment is created, fostering a teaching ecology that is open, dynamic, interactive, and shared.

The smart learning community involves teachers and students jointly building online resource libraries and English journal training camps to facilitate mutual learning and evaluation among teachers and students. By sharing learning resources and completing learning tasks together, a creative learning atmosphere is created. Strict completion nodes are set, and the cycle of "planning, execution, evaluation, and reflection" is implemented, achieving mutual growth in teaching and learning.

In the collaborative resource library, teachers upload multimodal resources of different difficulty levels, and students can independently choose appropriate teaching resource content based on their learning foundation and abilities. Students mainly participate in resource library construction through three forms: one-to-one-three mind map

drawing, thematic micro-lecture production, and in-class test cooperation. One-to-one-three mind mapping involves searching for the latest English business magazines and newspapers based on the unit theme and completing the drawing.

In the English journal training camp, teachers regularly record audio readings of foreign journals and organize key questions, difficult sentences, cultural backgrounds, and key phrases from articles into documents for students to write learning experiences and share. The training camp effectively consolidates students' language foundations, enables them to widely understand cutting-edge viewpoints, discourse modes, idiomatic expressions, and cultural thinking related to business and social topics.

2. "Three-Class Integration": Building an integration of online classes, face-to-face classes, and practical classes, creating an intelligent teaching environment that combines in-class and out-of-class learning, online and offline activities, and virtual and real experiences. Online classes, based on the Learning Pass cloud platform, are used to complete teaching tasks related to language fundamentals, discourse comprehension, humanities knowledge, and professional knowledge. Face-to-face classes, combined with smart classrooms and cloud platforms, utilize digital teaching tools to assist students in understanding and absorbing knowledge, with a focus on developing students' language skills, humanities and business literacy, and critical thinking abilities. Practical classes, based on the integration of research and learning, expand the curriculum's scope. Students apply the business English knowledge and skills they have learned in social surveys, innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, and subject competitions to enhance their language and business practice abilities, seamlessly connecting with the needs of business talents.

IV. Reform of Teaching Evaluation

Based on the combination of individual and team, qualitative and quantitative, process, and outcome, a combination of formative and summative evaluations is adopted to establish a personalized evaluation system that is challenging, process-oriented, and scientific. Process evaluations mainly include learning behaviors and achievements recorded on the platform, students' participation in various subject competitions and extracurricular practical activities, as well as



evaluation scales based on co-constructed scoring standards by teachers and students, students' self-feedback, and learning reflection logs.

The reformed evaluation methods respect students' intelligence, experience, and communication abilities, focusing on assessing students' actual language application, business literacy, and problem-solving abilities, comprehensively testing the achievement of knowledge, abilities, and quality goals throughout the entire process and in all aspects.

In summary, the comprehensive business English course should adhere to the requirements of the new liberal arts education, integrating business awareness and business thinking into the cultivation of foreign language critical thinking skills, emphasizing the cultivation of students' interdisciplinary awareness, interdisciplinary thinking, and problem-oriented awareness. The course content should reflect the timeliness of business English courses, highlight the understanding of Chinese culture, and strengthen cultural international comparisons. Teaching methods should reflect advancement and interactivity, such as utilizing information technology to allow students to design and simulate the implementation of business projects. At the same time, the course should have a certain level of difficulty, requiring students to conduct extensive data collection and preparation before class, and engage in relevant practices and research after class, transitioning from traditional classrooms to dialogic classrooms, open classrooms, smart classrooms, and capability classrooms. In future teaching processes, educators should make full use of modern information technology and guide students with low enthusiasm and weak participation by utilizing interdisciplinary integration, collaborative learning resources integration platforms, and promoting students' comprehensive development with the concept of "enlightenment, foundation strengthening, and diligent practice."

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