

Research and Practice of "Four Dimensions" Teaching Reform for Applied Foreign Language Talents Cultivation Based on the Cross-School Credit System in the Context of New Liberal Arts

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Abstract

The construction of new liberal arts has put forward the mission and challenge of "teaching mode" innovation for the cultivation of foreign language talents. The cross-school credit mode effectively shares high-quality resources, providing new ideas for the innovation of foreign language teaching system and the cultivation of applied foreign language talents who meet the needs of future social and economic development. Based on the training objectives of applied foreign language talents and the student-centered whole-person education philosophy under the background of new liberal arts, this study constructs a teaching mode that integrates four dimensions of "general courses", "ideological and political education", "aesthetic education", and "practice expansion" based on the cross-school credit mode. This effectively improves students' autonomous learning, cross-cultural, and practical application abilities, providing innovative solutions for the cultivation of applied foreign language talents and the reform of foreign language teaching.

Keywords

Cross-school credit study, applied foreign language talents cultivation, "Four Dimensions" teaching reform research and practice, new liberal arts.

1. Introduction

The Outline of the National Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) clearly states the need to promote the common use of teaching resources from outstanding universities nationwide and to advance the deep integration of university informationization construction and course teaching. The "China Education Modernization 2035" plan aims to further activate the driving force of teaching development and achieve the goal of teaching modernization. Under this background, the development and construction of high-quality open courses in universities in China have gradually begun.

In September 2014, the Education Department of Liaoning Province launched a pilot project for cross-school academic exchange and teaching among ordinary universities, officially kicking off the reform of cross-school academic exchange and teaching in ordinary universities in Liaoning Province. [1]

In 2018, the Ministry of Education issued the "Notice on Vigorously Implementing the Spirit of the National Conference on Undergraduate Education in the New Era", proposing that one of the long-term mechanisms and institutional safeguard measures to revitalize undergraduate education is to "improve the credit recognition system for online open courses, promote credit recognition, and promote the joint construction and sharing of quality resources".

In November 2020, with the release of the "Declaration on the Construction of New Liberal Arts", the construction of new liberal arts was fully launched. Wu Yan, Director of the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education, previously pointed out that "in the construction of new liberal arts, higher foreign language education cannot be absent. We

must grasp the general trend of higher education development, anticipate changes, accelerate the promotion of new liberal arts construction, actively respond to changes, and cultivate high-quality foreign language talents who take the initiative to seek changes." [2]"New liberal arts pursue the integration of disciplines and have interdisciplinary, comprehensive, and integrated characteristics. Foreign language education in the new era should be based on a global perspective, serve national strategic development, and cultivate high-quality foreign language talents." [3]

Against this backdrop, the establishment of a teaching model that integrates the four dimensions of "general education courses," "ideological and political education," "aesthetic education," and "practice expansion" can fully implement the student-centered whole-person education philosophy, fully utilize the cross-school academic exchange model to share quality resources, and is an important measure to meet the needs of new liberal arts construction and achieve the goal of cultivating applied foreign language talents.

The "four-dimension" teaching reform practice relies on the cross-school academic exchange platform, integrates different online teaching modes, and adopts a combination of online and offline teaching, online teaching, and offline lecturing, combined with credit recognition for cross-school academic exchange, to carry out teaching from the four dimensions of "general education courses," "ideological and political education," "aesthetic education," and "practice expansion". This creates a new model of teaching reform and provides a certain practical space for cultivating high-quality, knowledgeable, capable, moral, and harmoniously developed applied foreign language talents. At the same time, relying on this research, it will promote the construction of professional core courses and general education courses, laying the foundation for both offering basic skill courses and professional knowledge courses, as well as emphasizing the introduction of learning methods, research methods courses, and achieving an organic integration of the instrumental and humanistic aspects of foreign language education.

However, at the present stage of our country, there are relatively few example studies that can integrate "general courses", "ideological and political education", "aesthetic education", "practice expansion" and other aspects into the process of cultivating practical foreign language talents through the cross-school resource sharing platform. This study aims to fully utilize the technical support of intelligent language laboratories and smart classrooms, and rely on the "Cool Study Liaoning" platform to build a new "four-dimensional" teaching model that can achieve coordinated progress in foreign language education, ideological and political courses, aesthetic education activities, and practical activities.

2. Research Design

2.1. Research Subjects

This study mainly focuses on and samples first-year undergraduate students from 2022 grade at Liaoning University of Science and Technology, with a total of 132 participants. The students' English scores on the college entrance examination range from 85 to 126 points, with their language proficiency ranging from levels three to four on the China Standards of English Language Ability (CSE). The students' previous English learning has been focused on input and declarative knowledge retention, with relatively weak output skills and language application abilities.

2.2. Research Questions

(1) How to grasp the overall trend of social development and progress, understand the new demands for discipline construction and talent cultivation, and utilize the cross-school elective platform to achieve whole-person education by combining ideological and political education,

aesthetic education, and internship expansion, in order to cultivate applied foreign language talents with extensive knowledge, harmonious mental development, and sound personalities.

(2) The general education curriculum for foreign languages is overly concentrated in the field of linguistics, limiting students' perspectives. How can this project broaden students' horizons, improve their knowledge systems, and enhance their multi-cognitive abilities through cross-school study?

(3) How to effectively implement a cross-school credit system for study abroad and share quality resources.

(4) How to adjust and improve based on actual circumstances to ensure that it truly improves students' various abilities and constructs and improves multi-dimensional teaching modes.

(5) How to design scientific and reasonable evaluation indicators and methods to empirically evaluate the constructed teaching mode, in order to promote the expected outcomes of the teaching mode.

2.3. Research Objectives

(1). Exploring a New Mode of Cultivating Applied Foreign Language Talents Under the Background of New Liberal Arts

The research aims to explore and construct a mode of cultivating applied foreign language talents that meets the future social and economic development needs under the framework of new liberal arts. This includes introducing a cross-school credit system into foreign language talent training to more effectively share high-quality educational resources.

(2). Constructing a Multi-Dimensional Teaching Model

The research proposes a teaching model that integrates four dimensions: "general education courses", "ideological and political education", "aesthetic education", and "practice and expansion". This model aims to comprehensively improve students' independent learning ability, intercultural communication ability, and practical application ability, thus meeting the requirements of whole-person education in the new era.

(3). Providing Innovative Solutions for Foreign Language Teaching Reform

Through empirical research, the effectiveness of the constructed teaching model will be evaluated, providing practical and innovative solutions for foreign language teaching reform.

2.4. Research Implementation

The cultivation and reserve of foreign language talents are crucial, especially in terms of high-quality and innovative foreign language talents who possess an international perspective, solid language skills, cross-cultural communication abilities, and humanistic qualities, enabling them to use foreign languages as their working languages in economic and trade exchanges and other activities. This is an important and urgent task. [4] This study is based on the goal of cultivating applied foreign language talents in the context of new liberal arts and the student-centered whole-person education philosophy. By relying on the credit transfer model across universities, a comprehensive reform plan for teaching models integrating "general education courses," "ideological and political education," "aesthetic education," and "internship expansion" has been developed. Details are as follows:

2.4.1. Foreign Language General Education Course Module

This research aims to offer high-level exemplary foreign language general education courses for freshman and sophomore undergraduate students and establish a general education course module. It improves students' foreign language ability in various aspects:

(1). Broaden students' knowledge horizons: By providing diversified foreign language courses such as "Culture and Translation" and "English Listening, Speaking and Viewing" on campus, students can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the culture and language

characteristics of different countries, thereby enhancing their cross-cultural communication skills. In addition, through the "Cool Learning Liaoning" platform, cross-school elective courses such as "Social and Cultural Aspects of English-speaking Countries" taught by Professor Wang Yan from Shenyang University and "News English Listening, Speaking and Viewing" taught by Professor Guan Wei from Bohai University can expose students to a wider range of knowledge areas, further broadening their knowledge horizons.

(2). Enhance students' language skills: High-level foreign language general education courses such as "Introduction to English Lexicology" taught by Professor Li Tianxin from Shenyang University of Technology and "English Speech and Debate" on campus can help students improve their language skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and more. Through a large amount of language practice and interaction, students can better master foreign language knowledge and improve the accuracy and fluency of their language use.

(3). Enhance students' academic literacy: The courses in the project not only focus on the cultivation of language skills but also on the improvement of academic literacy. By studying courses such as "General Academic English" and "Advanced English", students can better master the expression and norms of academic English and improve their ability in academic research and paper writing.

2.4.2. Ideological and Political Education Module

By building the ideological and political education module and introducing the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* as a unique teaching content, we have offered an elective course called "Appreciation of the English Translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*", combined with Understanding Modern China series textbooks. This module plays an important role in talent cultivation as follows:

(1). Enhancing Students' Understanding of China's Development Path: Students can learn about China's contemporary development concepts, development path, and internal and external policies through studying *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*.

(2). Improving Students' Global Perspective and Cross-Cultural Communication Skills: By studying the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, students can not only understand Chinese policies but also improve their English language abilities, including reading comprehension, translation, and spoken expression. This helps them better communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds in the context of globalization.

(3). Enhancing Students' National Pride and Sense of Responsibility: By studying *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* and Understanding Modern China series textbooks, students can gain a deeper understanding of their responsibilities and missions in national development, thereby enhancing their national pride and national self-confidence.

(4). Promoting Comprehensive Penetration of Ideological and Political Education in Courses: By integrating these contents with ideological and political education, students can receive education in socialist core values while learning professional knowledge, thus forming a correct worldview, outlook on life, and values.

2.4.3. Aesthetic Education Module

Promote the cross-school credit mode step by step, base on the whole person education idea, select excellent aesthetic education courses on the cross-school elective platform, such as the "appreciation of world classic literature" taught by Liang Na from Dalian Maritime University, the "history of British literature" taught by Yao Li from Shenyang University of Technology, and so on. At the same time, combine with the excellent aesthetic education courses such as "appreciation of university music" and the blended teaching golden course "piano" opened by the project team members, select and integrate the high-quality aesthetic education courses of each school to achieve the following goals: 1. Enrich students' aesthetic knowledge system, improve their aesthetic ability and humanistic quality. 2. Shape students' character and values,

cultivate good moral quality, innovative spirit and collaborative ability, and promote students' comprehensive development. Finally, it is hoped to cultivate talents with knowledge, ability, morality and comprehensive harmonious development in the new era.

2.4.4. Practice Expansion Module

The study has signed school-enterprise cooperation agreements with Xiamen Yixue Software Co., Ltd., Shanghai YGYM Translation Services Co, Ltd and other enterprises to establish a translation practice base for industry-academia-research cooperation. The school and enterprise jointly build English speaking courses aimed at improving the efficiency of international communication, providing students with a platform for the application of English, developing online internship content related to translation, business, cross-border e-commerce, and speaking during winter and summer vacations, and establishing an internship expansion module to enhance the comprehensive quality of students:

- (1). Improvement of practical skills: Students can practice and apply their foreign language skills such as translation, business, cross-border e-commerce, and speaking in real work environments, improving their practical abilities and comprehensive quality.
- (2). Combination of theory and practice: Through the industry-academia-research translation practice base, students can combine the theoretical knowledge learned in the classroom with practical operations, deepening their understanding and application of foreign language disciplines.
- (3). Increased employment competitiveness: Through the internship expansion module, students can accumulate practical work experience, enhance their employment competitiveness, and lay a solid foundation for career development.
- (4). Improvement of international communication efficiency: The English speaking courses jointly built by schools and enterprises improve students' international communication abilities, making them more confident and appropriate in cross-cultural communication.
- (5). Enhanced school-enterprise cooperation: By establishing school-enterprise cooperation relationships, schools and enterprises can jointly promote industry-academia-research cooperation, promote resource sharing and complementary advantages between the two parties.

2.5. Research Achievements

The study provides new ideas and methods for foreign language talent training and teaching reform, while also promoting the sharing of quality resources and cooperation and communication among universities.

- (1). Innovated foreign language talent training mode: In the context of the new liberal arts, the study has successfully constructed a teaching model that integrates "general education courses", "ideological and political education", "aesthetic education", and "internship expansion" through cross-school credit-earning models. This is an innovation to the traditional foreign language talent training mode, which meets the needs of future social and economic development.
- (2). Improved students' comprehensive abilities: This teaching model effectively improves students' self-learning ability, cross-cultural communication ability, practical application ability, etc., which are the core abilities essential for future foreign language talents. Through this teaching model, students can better adapt to future social and economic development.
- (3). Provided innovative solutions for foreign language teaching reform: This study not only provides new ideas for the training of applied foreign language talents but also offers innovative solutions for foreign language teaching reform. The promotion and application of this teaching model are expected to promote the reform and innovation of foreign language teaching, improving the quality and effectiveness of foreign language teaching.

(4). Promoted the sharing of quality resources: The cross-school credit-earning model effectively shares quality resources, which not only helps to improve teaching quality but also promotes cooperation and communication among universities, driving the optimal allocation of educational resources.

3. Experience and Reflection

Based on previous research on the cultivation of applied foreign language talents, the surging trend of new liberal arts construction has brought opportunities and challenges. It has greatly promoted interdisciplinary and deep integration of multiple disciplines through inheritance and innovation, intersection and fusion, and collaboration and sharing. Against this background, foreign language disciplines need to explore intra-campus cross-training, off-campus collaborative training, and international joint training, strengthen exchanges and cooperation among departments, schools, and internationally, and achieve coordinated progress with ideological and political education, aesthetic education activities, and productive labor. [5] Based on the inter-university credit system, this study has constructed a teaching model that integrates four dimensions: "general education courses," "ideological and political education," "aesthetic education," and "internship expansion" to cultivate applied foreign language talents who meet the needs of future social and economic development. Through practice, we have achieved certain results and gained some experience and reflections.

3.1. Summary of Experience

(1). Advantages of the Inter-University Credit System: The inter-university credit system helps to effectively share high-quality resources and broaden students' knowledge horizons and learning spaces. This model is not only conducive to cultivating students' autonomous learning ability and intercultural communication skills but also helps to improve their comprehensive quality and competitiveness.

(2). Establishment of a Multi-Dimensional Evaluation System: A multi-dimensional evaluation system was established in this study to comprehensively and objectively evaluate students' learning outcomes. This includes evaluations of students' knowledge mastery, ability development, emotional attitude, and other aspects. Through the multi-dimensional evaluation system, it is possible to better understand students' learning needs and problems and provide them with more targeted guidance and assistance.

Under the four-dimensional teaching reform model adopted in this study, the following evaluation system was mainly adopted: exploration was carried out in various aspects such as evaluation forms, evaluation content, scoring proportions, and scoring criteria. Students' foreign language performance was set as 50% of the overall score, with a total of 50 points. While reforming the evaluation method, the school regulations were coordinated to set a 20-point mock exam score, covering the examination of general education course-related knowledge. Another 30 points were divided into 10 points for classroom performance (ideological and political activities, aesthetic education activities), 5 points for in-class quizzes (listening, reading, speaking, writing, etc.), and 15 points for regular homework (10 points for online cross-campus credit courses + 5 points for internship-related tasks). See figure 1.

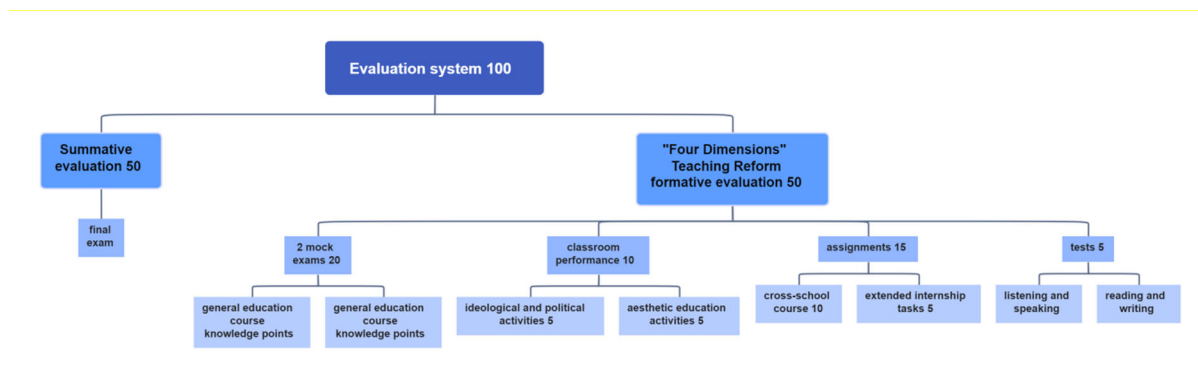


Figure 1. Evaluation system of "Four Dimensions" teaching reform research and practice

3.2. Reflection

(1). The mechanism of curriculum docking and credit mutual recognition needs to be further improved. Due to differences in curriculum design, teaching quality, and evaluation systems among different universities, there are certain difficulties in docking and mutual recognition of cross-university credits. To solve this problem, we can establish a more unified and transparent mechanism for mutual recognition of credits, while encouraging universities to strengthen exchanges and cooperation, and jointly formulate curriculum standards and evaluation systems.

(2). Strengthening practical aspects: During the operation of the "internship expansion" dimension, the effectiveness of the internship component still needs to be improved. In the future, we need to further strengthen cooperation with enterprises and society, providing students with more and higher-quality practical opportunities.

Under the background of the construction of new liberal arts, we need to continue to explore and innovate the training model of applied foreign language talents. Through reflection and practice, we can continuously optimize and improve the current teaching mode and evaluation system of practice and research, and make contributions to the cultivation of more outstanding foreign language talents.

4. Conclusion

In the context of the construction of new liberal arts, this study conducted an in-depth exploration of the application of the cross-school credit mode in the cultivation of applied foreign language talents. By constructing a "four-dimensional" teaching mode integrating general courses, ideological and political education, aesthetic education, and internship expansion, it effectively promoted students' ability of independent learning, cross-cultural communication, and practical application. This innovative teaching reform practice not only provides new ideas for the cultivation of applied foreign language talents, but also provides strong support for foreign language teaching reform.

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