

# Research on Multi-modal Teaching Model of Emergency English under the Background of New Liberal Arts Construction

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**Abstract:** Under the background of the deepening trend of globalization and the frequent occurrence of diseases, natural disasters and other emergencies, the ability of supplying emergency English service is turning increasingly important. It is of great significance to integrate emergency English into the English major courses in colleges and universities which present relevant departments or majors with emergency management. Under the guidance of the new liberal arts concept, this paper tends to conduct research of the new strategies of emergency English teaching. This paper first analyzes the inspiration and guiding significance of the new liberal arts concept to emergency English teaching, and then discusses the feasible strategies of multi-modal emergency English teaching mode. This paper further probes into the advantages and challenges of this teaching mode, suggesting several appropriate countermeasures, and finally looks forward to the future development of emergency English teaching.

**Keywords:** New Liberal Arts concept, emergency English, multi-modal teaching model

## 1. Introduction

With the increasing speed of social development, the occurrence of emergencies is also rising. Besides, the frequency of disasters such as natural disasters and the spread of viruses has also increased significantly. In this context, the importance of emergency defense system construction has received unprecedented attention. For language disciplines, integrating emergency language service into traditional teaching and curriculum is not only conducive to the cultivation of comprehensive talents, but also can better serve the needs of society and the country. However, the traditional emergency English teaching mode is often limited to classroom teaching, and it is difficult to meet the diversified and personalized learning needs of students. Therefore, this research proposes to construct an "online + offline" multi-modal emergency English teaching mode under the New Liberal Arts concept, so as to improve the teaching effect of emergency English and students' emergency language service ability.

## 2. Theoretical connotation of "New Liberal Arts" concept

The new liberal arts concept is a new idea and practical exploration to innovate and expand the traditional liberal arts education under the background of the new era of in-depth integration of science and technology development in the field of education. The concept was first proposed by Hiram College in 2017 to integrate new technologies with traditional liberal arts teaching. At present, in the field of higher education in China, the teaching of humanities also shows an obvious trend of change and development, and the Ministry of Education and major universities have actively invested in the construction of "new liberal arts". In 2021, *Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China has issued the Announcement of the First Batch of New Liberal Arts Research and Reform Practice Projects*, so that the construction of "new liberal arts" will be fully implemented in a larger scope and with greater efforts.

Many colleges, universities and authoritative scholars of English majors have conducted relative studies in the construction of "new liberal arts", and have presented positive thinking and exploration. Professor Qu Weiguo of Fudan University and Associate Professor Chen Liufang of East China Normal University systematically elaborated on the profound connotation of "new liberal arts", pointing out that "new liberal arts is an all-round systematic reform of liberal arts teaching under the conditions of the new era". They also advocate "adding an interlingual and intercultural dimension to professional integration".<sup>[1]</sup> Shanghai Jiao Tong University has upgraded the talent training of English majors in an

all-round way in the aspects of "discipline-specialty linkage", "strengthening practical teaching" and "strengthening teaching support".<sup>[2]</sup> Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (SUFU) has established a foreign language teaching and talent training model of "One in one, three in one, and one in one" with the path of "Classics, commerce and numeracy".<sup>[3]</sup>

As the above studies and lots of other researches jointly point out, the concept emphasizes technological innovation, content renewal and method innovation in teaching of liberal arts.<sup>[4]</sup> In terms of technology, the new liberal arts concept encourages the application of modern information technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data and smart platforms to improve learning efficiency and scientific research quality, and open up new horizons and fields for the development of liberal arts. In terms of teaching content, the new liberal arts concept emphasizes the cross-integration of disciplines and the improvement of humanistic literacy, skillfully integrating the knowledge background of different disciplines into a certain course, and creating a high-quality "big" liberal arts; In terms of teaching methods, the new liberal arts concept advocates giving full play to students' subjectivity and paying attention to the close combination of discipline knowledge and practice. The concept of the new liberal arts is highly consistent with the ideas and needs of emergency English teaching. Emergency English is not only a learning of language skills, but also a reflection of comprehensive quality and language service ability.<sup>[5]</sup> It requires students to be able to describe disasters and emergencies quickly and accurately in emergency situations, communicate emergency response and corresponding measures in a timely manner, and assist in various exchanges and contacts. This involves not only the language itself, but also many abilities such as cultural understanding, psychological adjustment and quick decision making. It is an outbreak manifestation of comprehensive ability.

There is no denial that the new liberal arts concept has provided a brand-new perspective for emergency English teaching. It encourages educators to break down disciplinary barriers and combine language learning with knowledge of other disciplines, such as disaster relief, emergency management, sociology and psychology, so as to cultivate students' abilities in cross-cultural communication, rapid response and problem solving. This teaching model not only helps improve students' language skills, but also enhances their resilience and comprehensive quality in complex situations.

### **3. The implementation of multi-modal emergency English teaching**

The new liberal arts concept advocates the integration of science and technology into teaching, makes comprehensive use of a variety of intelligent platforms, enriches the forms and carriers of teaching content, and creates teaching modes rich in diversity. At the same time, in emergency English teaching, we should pay attention to the application of innovative teaching methods and means.<sup>[6]</sup>

#### **3.1 Online + offline multi-modal teaching strategy**

With the development of online-teaching technology, the combination of both online and offline teaching is no longer a new scene in Chinese higher education. For example, new teaching models such as online teaching and blended teaching are used to integrate various forms of teaching content such as text, audio, video, micro-class works and students' independent contributions, so as to break the time and space restrictions of traditional classes and achieve more flexible and personalized teaching. Modern educational technology means such as artificial intelligence and big data can also be used to accurately analyze and evaluate students' learning situation, and provide them with more personalized learning paths and resource recommendations. These innovative teaching methods and means can stimulate students' interest and motivation in learning, and improve teaching efficiency and effect.<sup>[7]</sup>

In Institute of Disaster Prevention (IDP) where the author works has established relative departments of emergency management majors and the institute bears specific advantages for the talent cultivation in this sphere. Our English major is no exception which has set three training directions, including emergency English service direction. Our department has offered a series of interpretation courses for many years, including "Visual Translation", "Basic Interpretation" and "Consecutive Interpretation". The effective connection between the courses has brought about the formation of joint force and the realization of systematic training. Besides, the teaching is facilitated by several professional multi-functional language laboratories including a simultaneous interpretation training room, a translation training room, a business English training room, a virtual scene teaching training room and other modern professional laboratories. These high-performing equipment have allowed sufficient teaching resources and helpful research environment for the development of projects and courses.

In the course "Consecutive Interpretation" offered to English major students, the teaching team actively adopts multi-modal teaching methods, expands high-quality teaching resources, and forms a teaching model of online and offline interaction and multi-modal resource integration *Table 1*:

*Table 1: Interaction of multi-modal teaching materials on various platforms*

<b>Online Platforms &amp; Teaching Activities</b>	<b>Emergency English Themes &amp; Topics</b>	<b>Offline Platforms &amp; Teaching Activities</b>
<b>Rain-Class Platform:</b> Text Preview Audio Listening Pictures & Vocabulary +	Natural Disasters:	<b>In-classroom Study</b>
	Tsunami	Text Analysis
	Hurricane	Teacher Explanation
	Earthquake ...	Multi-media Demonstration
	Social Events	+
<b>SPOC Platform:</b>	Anti-terrorism	<b>After-class Self-learning</b>
Audio Shadowing Video Preview Mock Interpretation	Environmental Protection	Multi-modal Presentation
	Pandemic	Mock Interpretation
	Accident	Mutual Comment

### 3.2 Multi-disciplinary integrated teaching strategy

Emergency English is not only a language skill, but also involves the knowledge of disaster science, psychology, sociology and other disciplines. [8] Therefore, in teaching, attention should be paid to interdisciplinary integration, introducing knowledge and methods of related disciplines. For example, it is possible to analyze group psychology and behavior characteristics in emergency situations from the perspective of sociology, explore how to effectively communicate in crisis from the perspective of psychology, and understand emergency communication strategies in different cultural backgrounds from the perspective of international relations. Such interdisciplinary integration can help students have a more comprehensive understanding of the connotation and application of emergency English and improve their comprehensive literacy.

### 3.3 Strategies for improving ideological, political and humanistic qualities

Along with deepening trend of globalization and more occasions of international communication, the improvement of humanistic literacy is very important for emergency English learners. Therefore, attention should also be paid to the study of cultural comparison and cross-cultural communication in teaching. By comparing the language habits and communication methods in different cultural backgrounds, students can have a deeper understanding of the differences and commonalities between different cultures, and enhance their cultural understanding and respect ability. At the same time, by organizing cultural exchange activities and inviting foreign teachers to teach, we can also provide students with a richer cross-cultural communication experience, help students better understand the taboos and characteristics of different cultures, and lay a good foundation for overcoming cultural barriers in emergency services.

## 4. The challenge and countermeasure of strategy implementation

In the midst of emergency English teaching under the new liberal arts concept, although the above strategies are forward-looking and practical, they still face a series of challenges. These challenges may come from the level of teachers, teaching resources, interdisciplinary cooperation and so on.

### 4.1 Lack of qualified teachers

Emergency English teaching under the new liberal arts concept requires teachers not only to have a solid English language ability, but also to have interdisciplinary knowledge and accomplishment. However, many teachers may lack the training and experience in this area at present. In order to solve this problem, teacher training needs to be strengthened. Teachers can be trained in knowledge and skills across disciplines by organizing regular seminars, workshops or online courses. In addition, teachers can be encouraged to participate in emergency English-related practical projects to accumulate practical experience and improve their teaching abilities.

#### **4.2 Lack of teaching resources**

The implementation of emergency English teaching under the new liberal arts concept requires abundant teaching resources, including textbooks, cases, multimedia, audio and video materials, etc. However, at present, these resources may be relatively scarce or limited, which limits the effective implementation of teaching strategies. In order to solve this problem, online teaching resources can be actively developed and utilized. For example, an emergency English online course platform can be established to integrate high-quality teaching resources at home and abroad to provide students with rich and diverse learning materials. At the same time, encouraging teachers to create their own teaching resources, such as writing textbooks and making teaching videos, is also an effective way to solve the problem of resource shortage.

#### **4.3 Lack of interdisciplinary cooperation**

The new liberal arts philosophy emphasizes interdisciplinary integration, but in practice, cross-disciplinary cooperation between different disciplines may face some difficulties and obstacles. In order to promote cross-disciplinary cooperation, exchanges and cooperation between disciplines can be strengthened. For example, interdisciplinary seminars can be organized regularly and experts from different disciplines can be invited to participate together and share experience and knowledge. In addition, interdisciplinary teaching teams can be established to jointly design and implement emergency English teaching programs to share resources and complement each other's strengths.

### **5. Prospects and suggestions for emergency English teaching**

With the rapid development of science and technology, emergency English teaching in the future should actively embrace technological innovation and explore and apply cutting-edge technologies to improve teaching effect. For example, artificial intelligence (AI) can assist teachers in personalized teaching, providing customized learning paths and resources according to students' learning progress and ability differences. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies, on the other hand, can simulate real emergency scenarios, allowing students to learn and master knowledge in practical operations and improve their emergency response ability. In addition, technologies such as big data and cloud computing can also be used to analyze students' learning data to provide teachers with scientific teaching feedback and suggestions for improvement.

The content and methods of emergency English teaching should be closely combined with actual needs, and constantly improved and innovated. The teaching content should cover all kinds of common emergency scenes and situations, and pay attention to practicability and operability. At the same time, teaching methods should also be diversified, and various forms such as case analysis, role playing and group discussion can be adopted to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning. In addition, attention should be paid to the integration of interdisciplinary knowledge, combining emergency English with knowledge from other related fields to improve students' comprehensive quality and ability to cope with complex situations.

In order to evaluate students' emergency English ability comprehensively and objectively, a diversified evaluation system should be established. This system should include the traditional written test, oral test and other evaluation methods, and should also introduce the evaluation of practical ability, team cooperation, problem solving ability and other evaluation methods. Through these evaluation methods, students' learning situation and emergency response ability can be more comprehensively understood, and strong support can be provided for teaching improvement and student development. At the same time, this evaluation system should also pay attention to the combination of process evaluation and outcome evaluation, paying attention to both students' learning process and students' learning outcomes.

### **6. Conclusion**

The new liberal arts concept provides a fresh new perspective for emergency English teaching. Students' emergency English ability and comprehensive quality can be effectively improved by implementing teaching strategies such as interdisciplinary integration, practical ability cultivation, humanistic quality improvement and innovative teaching methods and means. At the same time, they should fully recognize the challenges and problems they may face in the process of implementing these

strategies, and take corresponding countermeasures and suggestions to solve them. In the future, emergency English teaching under the new liberal arts concept will continue to develop and improve along with continuous exploration, so as to cultivate more emergency language service talents to the society and play a greater role in the course of emergency management and disaster prevention and reduction.

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