

Exploration and Practice of the Educational Mechanism in College English Courses under the Background of "Great Ideological and Political Thought"

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Abstract. Under the background of "Thought and Politics in Higher Education," foreign language teaching is no longer just subject teaching, but a comprehensive and all-round education throughout the entire development process. As a compulsory course in universities, College English is a fundamental course in applied undergraduate institutions, characterized by a large number of class hours, a wide audience, and significant influence. It also has the characteristics of being humanistic, instrumental, and speculative, playing a crucial role in promoting the development of students' comprehensive abilities. This paper takes College English, a public course in universities, as an example to explore how to integrate ideological and political elements into English teaching, cultivate good values while improving students' knowledge abilities, and achieve the dual integration of English course knowledge and ideological and political education.

Keywords: College English; Curriculum-based Political and Virtuous Awareness; Exploration; Practice.

1. Introduction

"Guidelines for the Construction of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Curriculum" points out that to comprehensively promote the construction of ideological and political education in the curriculum, we must focus on the "main battlefield" of curriculum construction and the "main channel" of classroom teaching, so that all teachers and all courses can fulfill their educational responsibilities, aligning all types of courses with ideological and political courses, and constructing a comprehensive and all-round educational framework for all individuals. Relying solely on ideological and political courses for ideological and political education of college students is far from enough. Education is a process of teaching and educating. Teachers should not only impart knowledge but also pay attention to cultivating students' moral qualities. It is the teacher's responsibility to integrate ideological and political education into classroom teaching. College English, as a public foundational course in universities, covers all students and has a long teaching cycle, making it an important platform for carrying out ideological and political education. At the same time, teachers should use appropriate methods to help students understand the connotation of ideological and political education and the related knowledge of the curriculum, fully exert the moral education function of classroom teaching, and introduce social values and knowledge in the field of thought into English classroom teaching. By using various channels to promote Chinese culture, students can not only learn language knowledge but also understand the differences in cultural systems between China and the West, have a deeper understanding of the requirements for building a socialist society with Chinese characteristics, and establish cultural confidence. Therefore, integrating ideological and political education into college English teaching is of great significance.

2. The Concept and Research Status of Ideological and Political Education in College English Courses

As an educational concept, curriculum ideological and political education is different from ideological and political courses. It integrates ideological and value guidance into non-ideological and political courses and conducts ideological and political education. By establishing a mechanism in which all courses go in the same direction, the educational function of each course is exerted to achieve the goal of cultivating moral character and nurturing talents. The "Guidelines for College

English Teaching" also mentions that college English teaching should reflect the basic requirements of the Party and the country for education and should embody the accumulation of human cultural knowledge and innovative achievements. Therefore, to integrate ideological and political elements into college English courses, reforms should be carried out in various aspects such as the ideological and political teaching system of foreign language courses, the characteristics of foreign language disciplines, classroom teaching, the ideological and political construction ability of foreign language teachers, and evaluation mechanisms.

In the field of foreign language education in China, there have been some discussions and research on understanding curriculum ideological and political education and how to implement it. For example, analyzing how to carry out curriculum ideological and political education from the perspective of textbook compilation and discussing it from the perspective of system construction and curriculum reform. However, overall, the research on curriculum ideological and political education in college English courses is still relatively lacking, and there is still a lot of research space in terms of depth, breadth, and specific implementation plans.

3. Challenges in the Ideological and Political Reform of "College English" Course

"College English" is a language course, and foreign language teachers across the country have encountered some common problems in exploring the ideological and political construction of the "College English" course.

3.1 Problems with the Textbooks

Foreign language courses are generally implemented as compulsory basic language courses in most universities, usually relying on existing domestically compiled textbooks, which mostly consist of foreign language texts. Some general elective courses also have reference textbooks available, but the content and selection of materials vary. There are certain limitations in expanding ideological and political materials within the existing textbooks, and the arrangement of teaching content is prone to sporadic and arbitrary issues. Therefore, it is necessary to supplement a large amount of ideological and political resources based on relevant themes, in addition to the reference textbooks. If teachers do not prepare, accumulate, and arrange carefully, it is difficult to gain students' high degree of recognition for ideological and political education content, thus weakening the actual effectiveness of ideological and political teaching in foreign language courses.

3.2 The Professional Background of Foreign Language Teachers

Most foreign language teachers, whether they are language course teachers or general elective course teachers, have been focusing on the teaching of language and cultural knowledge of target language countries for many years, lacking attention to and systematic accumulation of Chinese culture and values in their knowledge reserves. Therefore, in the ideological and political construction of the "College English" course, there is a common characteristic of professional knowledge and professional "outwardness". It is easy for ideological and political courses in foreign languages to exhibit arbitrariness and fragmentation when integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture and core values. Obviously, temporary knowledge patchwork is difficult to seamlessly integrate, and it is also difficult to continuously attract students.

3.3 Issues with Classroom Teaching Construction

The ideological and political teaching reform of the "College English" course, as a new teaching practice, also faces many new problems in searching for and integrating ideological and political materials into classroom teaching content. Foreign language courses may already have limitations in teaching methods and means, and a single form. Because the teaching of college English courses mainly focuses on the imparting of English language knowledge and the cultivation of skills, the

introduction of ideological and political content has traditionally been neglected. Therefore, most English course teachers may lack ideological and conceptual preparation in this reform process. If systematic design is not carried out in curriculum content construction and teaching method improvement, it may be difficult to achieve the expected effect of ideological and political education. Moreover, the construction of the "College English" course is not achieved overnight; it requires the accumulation and exploration of a certain number of course cycles in order to achieve ideal results and sustainability. In the current environment where universities generally prioritize research over teaching, it can be said that this is a task that requires joint efforts and great efforts.

4. The Necessity of Integrating Applied College English and Curriculum Ideological and Political Education

Different from key universities that focus on cultivating research-oriented and theoretical talents, applied colleges mainly aim to cultivate applied professionals for frontline positions in production, construction, management, and services. As a public course in applied colleges, college English covers a wide range of students, has a large amount of curriculum, and covers multiple majors. It also serves as a bridge for the dissemination of knowledge about Chinese and Western cultures. Therefore, how to make good use of college English classrooms, play the humanistic and instrumental roles of college English courses, and integrate English language teaching with ideological and political education in the classroom is an important exploration for English teachers in applied colleges. Based on the humanistic characteristics of college English courses, curriculum ideological and political education is not just a supplement to teaching content but should be integrated into all teaching aspects, and the ideological and political resources of each aspect need to be reconsidered. Any element related to the ideological and political goal model can be applied, and the implicit characteristics of humanities courses can be utilized to achieve ideological and political goals in a subtle and influential way.

At present, the teaching staff of applied colleges is generally young and lacks teaching experience. Their understanding of English language teaching and classroom ideological and political education is not deep enough, and their teaching abilities need to be improved. At the same time, some students have a serious imbalance in their English proficiency when they enter college, and their English foundations vary. This increases the difficulty of achieving dual teaching effects of English language knowledge and ideological and political education. Contemporary college students are intellectually active and have independence, variability, and diversity. The domestic and international social and cultural environments are diverse, and students lack the ability to discern. Their political thoughts are immature and they are easily influenced and impacted by ideological infiltration. Therefore, it is necessary to closely integrate ideological and political education with professional knowledge teaching, and subtly conduct ideological and political education for students in classroom teaching, helping them shape a positive, optimistic, and healthy outlook on life, worldviews, and values while mastering professional knowledge. The integration of ideological and political education into the entire process of college English teaching must be implemented.

5. Practices of Curriculum Ideological and Political Education in Applied Undergraduate College English Courses

5.1 Clarify Teaching Objectives and Improve Teaching Design with Ideological and Political Content

Teaching objectives, as the first step in classroom preparation, directly determine the specific teaching content, teaching tools and strategies needed in teaching, and the teaching methods used to achieve teaching objectives. As a humanities subject, college English plays an important role in shaping students' ideology. Therefore, teachers should set language objectives and educational

objectives at the beginning of setting teaching objectives, integrate ideological and political education content with the explanation of professional knowledge, effectively integrate socialist core values with textbook content, and improve students' ideological and moral qualities and establish correct values. While teaching English knowledge, teachers should also actively guide students to explore our excellent culture. Through a comparison of Chinese and Western cultures, students are encouraged to improve their sense of identity and pride in Chinese culture. When comparing Chinese and Western cultures, students should also be guided to think dialectically and learn to objectively view issues.

In specific unit teaching, the overall objectives should be refined into sub-objectives: language knowledge objectives, language proficiency objectives, and educational objectives. Language knowledge objectives include: mastering basic English language knowledge; familiarizing oneself with basic knowledge of English-speaking countries' society, culture, and military; understanding the differences in language and culture between the East and the West and cross-cultural communication knowledge. Language proficiency objectives include: developing basic language skills; improving self-learning ability, critical thinking ability, and cross-cultural communication ability. Educational objectives include: stimulating students' interest in learning English, broadening their cultural and international perspectives, cultivating students' sense of national cultural identity and pride through the study of Chinese and Western cultural comparisons, and establishing correct values and outlooks on life.

5.2 Explore Ideological and Political Elements in Extracurricular Activities to Enhance Humanistic Literacy

The implementation of extracurricular activities after class should also be of concern to teachers. Each college English class is usually about 40-45 minutes long, and due to time constraints, the content taught may be somewhat affected, thereby affecting the overall teaching effectiveness. To make up for this shortcoming, the form of extracurricular activities can be effectively utilized to truly integrate ideological and political education into all education. For example, through English debate competitions, English speech competitions, and other events with ideological and political education as the theme, students' English proficiency can be improved while also enhancing their ideological and political awareness. Activities such as "Chinese and Foreign Cultural Exchange Festival" and "Chinese and Foreign Interviews" can be organized to increase students' understanding of Chinese and Western cultures. This allows students to dialectically view Chinese and Western cultures, enhance their sense of identity with their own national culture, and thereby enhance college students' humanistic literacy.

As the American educator John Dewey said, the ultimate goal of all education is to shape one's character. In the subtle teaching process, college English teaching should integrate knowledge objectives, proficiency objectives, and educational objectives, allowing students to naturally accept ideological and political elements as part of the curriculum, triggering emotional resonance among students, effectively motivating them to generate internal drive, and promoting their understanding, expansion, and deepening of course knowledge. Faced with new challenges, we should take "national needs and talent cultivation" as the foundation, embrace diversity, adapt to the situation, seriously contemplate and implement the country's major policies, and clarify the role of ideological and political education in the future development of higher education.

5.3 Focus on the Educational Effect and Conduct Multidimensional Evaluation

"Objective and reasonable evaluation criteria for teaching processes and outcomes are important guarantees for achieving the goals of both 'teaching' and 'educating.' " As one of the sub-goals of the curriculum, the educational effect should also be examined and evaluated. In curriculum evaluation, qualities and moral values can be included as evaluation indicators to assess multidimensional educational effects such as knowledge, abilities, qualities, and moral values, and integrate language

proficiency with educational effects throughout the entire process and multiple dimensions of curriculum evaluation.

In the ongoing formative assessment, the quantity and quality of students' completion of language learning tasks should be assessed, while also paying attention to students' learning attitudes, interests, motivations, and habits. Through the evaluation of students' daily learning attitudes and behaviors, students are encouraged and guided to develop correct learning attitudes, cultivate strong learning interests and positive learning motivations, and develop good learning habits, integrating how to be a person, how to do things, and how to learn. In the summative assessment at the end of the semester, not only language knowledge mastery and language proficiency of students are evaluated, but also emphasis is placed on assessing students' humanistic literacy and value orientation. For example, in the translation task at the end of the semester, short texts related to Chinese culture, Chinese society, and development themes are selected to assess not only students' mastery of vocabulary, phrases, and sentence structures, but also their understanding of relevant topics and their comprehension of Chinese culture. This enhances students' sense of national cultural identity and pride, and enables them to tell Chinese stories in English and convey Chinese civilization to the world.

6. Conclusion

Currently, social development and technological changes have raised higher requirements for talents, and society needs comprehensive talents with high education, high skills, and high-level ideological qualities. College English has the characteristics of being instrumental, general, humanistic, and vocational. The rich ideological and political resources in the curriculum content are an effective approach to implement curriculum ideological and political education, which is crucial for achieving the goals of teaching and educating and cultivating students' moral character. Teachers should be brave in exploration, actively introduce curriculum ideological and political education in English teaching, and incorporate the requirements of socialist core values into ideological and political teaching, helping students establish correct values.

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