

Research on the Pathways for Enhancing Ideological and Political Teaching Abilities of University English Teachers in Vocational University

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Abstract: With the deepening integration of the “ideological and political courses” concept in higher education in China, incorporating ideological and political elements into the teaching of university English in vocational universities has become an important means of enhancing educational quality. This study aims to explore the current status, existing problems, and enhancement pathways of ideological and political teaching abilities of university English teachers in these institutions. The research shows that a systematic enhancement pathway significantly boosts teachers’ abilities in ideological and political education, providing theoretical support and practical guidance for the effective implementation of such education in vocational universities.

Keywords: Vocational university; University English teachers; Ideological and political courses; Teaching ability; Enhancement pathways

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1. Introduction

In recent years, “ideological and political courses” as a new educational concept that organically integrates ideological and political education with professional course teaching has received widespread attention and in-depth study. The university English course is not only a crucial pathway for students to improve their language skills but also serves as an important vehicle for implementing ideological and political education. However, English teachers in vocational universities face certain challenges in ideological and political education, such as unclear teaching philosophies, insufficient integration of ideological elements, and the need for improved teaching capabilities. Therefore, researching the enhancement pathways for the ideological and political teaching abilities of English teachers in vocational universities helps clarify the specific requirements and development directions for teachers in ideological and political education, also providing a scientific basis and reference for the professional development and performance evaluation of university teachers.

2. Current status of ideological and political teaching abilities of university English teachers in vocational universities

2.1. Definition and connotation of ideological and political teaching ability

Ideological and political teaching ability refers to a teacher's comprehensive capability to organically integrate ideological and political education content into professional course teaching. This ability can be defined and understood from several aspects.

Firstly, teachers' ideological awareness, requires not only a high level of political consciousness and awareness of ideological and political education but also the proactive incorporation of ideological elements into classroom teaching.

Secondly, teaching design ability, where teachers need to skillfully integrate ideological elements into their teaching plans and materials, and ensures that ideological and political education complements professional knowledge without undermining the course's professionalism.

Thirdly, teaching implementation ability, which involves effectively conveying ideological content in the classroom, guiding student discussion and thought, and facilitating deep understanding and agreement with the ideological content through interaction and communication.

Fourthly, the ability to evaluate and provide feedback on teaching outcomes, where a scientifically comprehensive evaluation framework is essential for assessing the effects of ideological and political teaching. Various evaluation methods are used to gauge students' understanding and acceptance of ideological content, with continuous adjustments to teaching methods based on feedback.

2.2. Current status of ideological and political teaching among university English teachers in vocational universities

While some progress has been made, numerous challenges remain.

Firstly, some teachers lack a deep understanding of ideological and political courses, with insufficient awareness and political consciousness, making it difficult to naturally and effectively integrate ideological content.

Secondly, many teachers lack specific methods and strategies for organically integrating ideological content into courses, often limiting their teaching to traditional knowledge transmission and not fully utilizing the guidance potential of ideological and political education.

Thirdly, imperfections in the teaching evaluation system also limit the effectiveness of ideological and political education. Teachers' evaluations still focus on assessing knowledge points, neglecting the evaluation of students' ideological and political literacy and values, which affects students' regard for ideological and political education.

Fourthly, professional development and capability enhancement challenges for teachers also exist. English teachers in vocational universities often lack systematic training and guidance in ideological and political education, making it difficult for them to comfortably use ideological elements in teaching practices.

Therefore, systematically enhancing teachers' ideological and political teaching abilities is an urgent issue for vocational universities to address.

3. Major challenges in enhancing the ideological and political teaching capabilities of university English teachers

3.1. Difficulties in implementing ideological and political education in courses

3.1.1. Challenges in integrating ideological education with university English teaching

The primary challenge in implementing ideological and political education is effectively integrating it with the

content of university English teaching. In practice, English teachers in vocational institutions need to cleverly incorporate elements of ideological education into their courses without compromising the quality of teaching. This requires teachers to not only possess solid knowledge of university English but also a deep understanding of the core values and objectives of ideological education. However, given the abstract nature of ideological content and the practicality and skill training focus of university English teaching, achieving a seamless integration while ensuring the depth and breadth of teaching remains a significant challenge for these educators.

3.1.2. Innovating ideological education content

Another major challenge for university English teachers is to innovate the content of ideological education to meet the ideological traits and learning needs of contemporary university students. In today's diverse information environment and complex social context, traditional ideological content and methods often fail to fully meet students' needs. Teachers are required to continually innovate both the content and form of ideological education. This demands a high level of creativity and the ability to design teaching content that not only engages students but also effectively communicates the core values of socialism.

3.2. Limitations in teaching methods for ideological and political education

3.2.1. Monotony in teaching methods

Currently, English teachers in vocational universities tend to rely on traditional teaching methods like lecturing and discussion, which lack diversity and innovation. This not only limits the effective delivery of ideological content but also reduces students' interest and participation. Ideological and political education should utilize a variety of teaching methods and techniques, such as case study analysis, role-playing, and multimedia teaching methods, to enhance the appeal and interactivity of the lessons. However, teachers' insufficient mastery of these methods often impedes the educational impact, affecting students' value formation and the cultivation of their humanistic qualities.

3.2.2. Insufficient use of educational technology and tools

In the modern educational environment, educational technology and tools play a crucial role in enhancing teaching effectiveness. Yet, in the context of ideological and political education, there is a notable limitation in the use of educational technology and tools by university English teachers. This is evident in the insufficient teaching resources, such as multimedia materials specifically designed for ideological education, interactive platforms, and simulation software, as well as teachers' limited capability to apply existing educational technologies. Although some teachers attempt to enrich their teaching content and methods using information technology, the lack of systematic training and practical guidance often prevents these efforts from achieving desired outcomes, limiting the innovation and development of ideological and political education.

3.3. Limited personal capacity and development of teachers

3.3.1. Need for updated teaching knowledge

In a rapidly evolving educational environment, English teachers in vocational universities must update their teaching knowledge. With the acceleration of globalization and increased international interactions, changes in the English language and culture pose new demands on teachers. Additionally, the content and form of ideological and political education are also evolving, requiring teachers to not only master traditional language teaching knowledge but also stay informed about the latest political, economic, and cultural dynamics, as well as changes in educational policies. However, some teachers struggle to keep pace with these developments, particularly in the depth and breadth of ideological education, which not only affects the quality and depth of

their teaching but also limits students' broadening perspectives and cognitive skills enhancement ^[1].

3.3.2. Need for enhanced ability to guide ideological education

In the current educational landscape, strengthening teachers' ability to guide ideological education is especially important. This not only enhances students' motivation and satisfaction with the course but also promotes their overall quality development. However, in vocational universities, teachers often exhibit deficiencies in this capability, typically manifesting as a failure to fully engage students' initiative and interactive potential, thereby limiting the depth and breadth of ideological and political education implementation. This shortfall mainly stems from an educational practice that overlooks students' proactiveness and interaction potential, thereby hindering the full realization of the educational goals ^[2].

3.4. Incomplete evaluation system for teaching effectiveness

3.4.1. Lack of a comprehensive evaluation system

A complete and comprehensive evaluation system is essential for assessing teaching effectiveness and the improvement of teachers' teaching capabilities, especially in the field of ideological and political education. An ideal evaluation system should comprehensively reflect the teaching content, methods, student engagement, and the achievement of ideological education objectives. However, university English teachers often face significant shortcomings in this area, with overly simplified evaluation systems that prioritize knowledge acquisition while neglecting the effectiveness of ideological and political education, the cultivation of students' critical thinking skills, and the enhancement of their sense of social responsibility. The absence of assessments for these soft indicators makes it difficult to fully evaluate teaching outcomes, thereby affecting teachers' ability to improve and innovate in ideological and political education ^[3].

3.4.2. Uniformity in evaluation methods

In current teaching practices, the uniformity of evaluation methods is also a significant issue. Traditional evaluation methods, such as closed-book exams and written tests, although capable of assessing students' knowledge acquisition to some extent, are inadequate for evaluating students' ideological awareness, the internalization of values, and their application capabilities. The lack of diverse evaluation methods, such as project assessments, peer reviews, and self-reflection reports, restricts a comprehensive assessment of students' overall abilities and the effectiveness of ideological education, consequently impacting the optimization of teaching methods and content.

4. Pathways to enhance the ideological and political teaching capabilities of university English teachers in vocational universities

4.1. Transformation and enhancement of teaching philosophy

Teachers should organically integrate the goals of ideological and political education with professional education objectives. By deeply exploring and expanding the teaching content, they can incorporate elements such as socialist core values, patriotism, and responsibility into English teaching, thereby cultivating students' comprehensive qualities. Teachers need to update their educational perspectives, focusing on fostering students' autonomous learning abilities and innovative thinking. In ideological and political teaching, teachers should abandon traditional rote teaching methods in favor of student-centered inquiry-based and discussion-based teaching models. By guiding students to think independently and engage in active discussions, their interest in learning and initiative can be stimulated, better achieving the dual goals of ideological education and

professional education. Teachers should continuously learn and draw upon advanced educational philosophies and methods to enhance their teaching skills and educational literacy ^[4].

Additionally, teachers should possess a global perspective and an open mindset, emphasizing cross-cultural education and ideological and political education in a globalized context. In English teaching, teachers can use international content and case studies to guide students in thinking about global issues and cultural differences, developing students' international outlook and cross-cultural communication skills. Teachers should also focus on cultivating students' cultural confidence and national pride by comparing and analyzing Eastern and Western cultures to help students establish correct values and cultural identities.

4.2. Enhancement of instructional design skills

Instructional design is a crucial component of ideological and political teaching capabilities. Teachers first need to clearly define the ideological education goals within their course designs, integrating them into the syllabus and teaching plans. For example, when formulating teaching plans, teachers can design ideological education goals and activities aligned with each teaching unit's content, using discussions and case analyses to immerse students in professional knowledge and ideological education simultaneously. The selection of teaching content should also be timely, keeping pace with developments and societal trends to ensure the relevance and targeted nature of ideological education.

Teachers should focus on innovating and integrating teaching methods and resources. In course design, teachers can employ various teaching methods, such as situational simulations, role-playing, and project-based learning, to enhance the interactivity and practicality of teaching. Furthermore, they can utilize modern educational technologies, such as multimedia presentations, online learning platforms, and virtual reality technologies, to enrich teaching resources and methods, improving students' learning experiences and engagement. By continuously optimizing instructional design, teachers can better achieve the educational goals of ideological and political courses, enhancing students' political literacy and comprehensive abilities. Additionally, teachers should be capable of flexibly adjusting their teaching designs based on classroom feedback and student needs, continuously refining and improving teaching plans to achieve optimal teaching and educational outcomes.

4.3. Enhancement of teaching implementation skills

Teaching implementation is a vital manifestation of ideological and political teaching capabilities. Teachers must have strong classroom management skills to create a positive and interactive classroom atmosphere. During teaching, they should focus on teacher-student and student-student interactions, stimulating students' thoughts and discussions through questioning, discussions, and group collaborations, making classroom teaching more engaging and livelier. Teachers should also pay attention to classroom feedback, promptly understand students' learning situations and thought processes, and adjust teaching strategies and methods based on students' feedback to ensure teaching effectiveness ^[5].

Teachers should also be adept at flexibly utilizing teaching content. Given the rich variety of content in university English courses, teachers should naturally integrate ideological elements into the teaching content. For instance, when teaching language knowledge, teachers can select texts with ideological educational significance, guiding students to discuss related social issues and values. Additionally, teachers should have the adaptability to adjust teaching pace and methods according to classroom situations and student needs, ensuring the maximal effectiveness of ideological and political education. Furthermore, in teaching implementation, teachers should focus on diversifying and innovating teaching methods. Through case teaching, project-based

teaching, and task-based teaching, they can enhance the practicality and enjoyment of teaching. Through project and task-based teaching, students' teamwork and practical skills can be fostered, enhancing their social responsibility and innovative spirit.

4.4. Enhancement of teaching evaluation skills

Teaching evaluation skills are crucial for ensuring the effectiveness of ideological and political education in courses. Teachers first need to design and implement diversified evaluation methods such as project assessments, peer evaluations, self-reflection reports, and student feedback. These methods comprehensively assess students' ideological awareness, the internalization of values, and their comprehensive application abilities. Teachers should also focus on the analysis and feedback of evaluation results. By quantitatively analyzing students' learning situations, teachers can identify issues and shortcomings in teaching, providing a basis for improving teaching methods. Additionally, through evaluation feedback, teachers should communicate with students to understand their learning experiences and sense of ideological identification, and continually optimize teaching plans based on feedback. Effective evaluation feedback not only aids in the professional development of teachers but also enhances students' learning outcomes and the effectiveness of ideological education.

Furthermore, teachers should focus on self-evaluation and reflection capabilities in teaching evaluations. Teachers should be capable of objectively and fairly assessing their teaching processes and outcomes. Based on this, they should also focus on reflective teaching, summarizing teaching experiences, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and proposing improvement measures and plans. Through self-evaluation and reflection, teachers can continually enhance their teaching abilities and the level of ideological and political education, promoting their professional development and the comprehensive growth of students.

4.5. Enhancement of professional development skills

Professional development skills are the foundation and guarantee for improving ideological and political teaching capabilities. Teachers need the ability to engage in continuous learning, constantly updating and expanding their professional knowledge and teaching skills. University English teachers in vocational universities should stay abreast of the latest educational theories and teaching methods through professional training, academic seminars, and advanced courses, thereby enhancing their teaching level and capabilities in ideological and political education. Teachers should also focus on learning interdisciplinary knowledge, broadening their knowledge base to better serve the teaching goals of ideological and political education ^[6].

Teachers should actively participate in teaching research and educational science research, continually exploring and innovating teaching methods and models. By engaging in research projects, writing academic papers, and participating in teaching experiments, teachers can integrate theoretical research with teaching practice, verifying and refining their teaching philosophies and methods. Schools and educational institutions should also provide a conducive environment and support for professional development, such as establishing teacher development centers, offering professional development resources and opportunities, and encouraging teachers to engage in educational research. Through these measures, teachers can continuously improve their capabilities in ideological and political education, adapting to the demands of modern education.

5. Conclusion

This study analyzes the current status of ideological and political teaching capabilities among English teachers in vocational universities, explores the integration of ideological education with English teaching, and proposes

diverse methods and techniques for ideological and political teaching. It also suggests specific measures for enhancing teachers' professional qualities and ideological guidance abilities. Future research should further verify and refine the effectiveness of these capability enhancement pathways, explore their feasibility across different educational backgrounds and disciplines, and investigate how effective teacher training and professional development planning can comprehensively enhance the ideological and political teaching capabilities of vocational university English teachers.

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