

Research and Practice of Course Reform in English Majors of Colleges and Universities from the Ideological and Political Perspective

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Abstract: There is an urgent need for high-quality talents with ideological and moral character for the development of higher education and the cultivation of English majors who meet the requirements of the times. The course reform in English majors from the ideological and political perspective is an important way to improve the comprehensive quality and moral values of students, which helps to cultivate English talents with social responsibility and innovative abilities. This paper analyzes the problems in the current courses through literature review and field research, such as the lack of ideological and political perspective and low interest of students in ideological and political content. Based on these issues, taking the course “Comprehensive English” as an example, various teaching stages were practiced from the aspects of learning objectives, learning content, learning situation, implementation ideas, implementation effects, and teaching evaluation. Additionally, some suggestions are proposed, such as integrating ideological and political content into the entire process of teaching. The teaching staff needs to possess high-level English teaching ability and ideological and political perspective, standardize the evaluation system, and integrate epistemology into the evaluation process of ideological and political education, in order to promote in-depth research and exploration of ideological and political education of English majors.

Keywords: English courses; Colleges and universities; Ideological and political perspective; Teaching reform; Research; Practice

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1. Introduction

With the rapid development of China's social economy and the promotion of globalization, the scale and quality of higher education have been greatly improved. This poses higher requirements for the cultivation of English majors. Courses from an ideological and political perspective refers to the educational method and practice of integrating the content, concepts, and requirements of ideological and political perspective into curriculum design, teaching activities, and evaluation systems in the process of education and teaching, in order to cultivate students' ideological and political qualities and core values. It emphasizes the integration of ideological and

political content in education, guiding students to form correct worldviews, life views, and values through curriculum design and teaching activities.

Through ideological and political perspective education, English majors can develop a sense of social responsibility and patriotism, and enhance their sense of responsibility for social and national development. The research and practice of course reform in English majors from the ideological and political perspective can promote the integration of English knowledge and ideological and political theory, enabling students to gain a deeper understanding and application of English knowledge and skills.

2. Literature review

Policy documents related to ideological and political education were successively issued, such as the 2017 Implementation Outline of the Quality Improvement Project for Ideological and Political Work in Higher Education Institutions, the 2018 Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of High-Level Undergraduate Education and Improving Talent Training Ability, and the 2020 Guiding Outline for Curriculum Ideological and Political Construction in Higher Education Institutions, all emphasizing the role of ideological and political education in all courses and achieving value guidance in knowledge transmission.

In recent years, research on the reform of ideological and political education in English majors has gradually received attention. Scholars have explored from different perspectives how to organically integrate ideological and political education with English courses to improve students' ideological and political literacy and core values.

The research trends in the ideological and political education of English majors are mainly reflected in the following aspects. On the one hand, scholars have begun to explore how to organically integrate ideological and political education with English professional courses from the theoretical and conceptual levels, emphasizing the integration of ideological and political content and innovation in expression methods^[1,2]. On the other hand, starting from specific course design and teaching practice, they explore how to improve the effectiveness of ideological and political education through multimedia technology, interactive teaching, and other means. These studies focus on the improvement of students' ideological and political literacy and the cultivation of core values, providing theoretical guidance and practical experience for the ideological and political education of English majors^[3,4]. In addition, there are some results on teacher training and student evaluation, as well as the exploration of ideological and political education models in English courses based on new technologies such as artificial intelligence^[5-8].

Foreign universities have not put forward the proposition and concept of "courses from ideological and political perspective," nor have they specialized in moral education such as ideological and political theory courses. However, in reality, countries such as the United States, Germany, and Japan have cultivated citizens' moral awareness through various subject courses in long-term educational practice. The United States does not have a dedicated ideological and political curriculum, but it has a set of moral goals and systems that are adapted to its society. Educators study ideological and political education from a multidisciplinary perspective, and the teaching results are concentrated on the development of general education. In Germany, ideological education is based on various disciplines, integrated with professional education, emphasizing multi-channel infiltration. While incorporating moral content into various courses, it also pays more attention to social cohesion, thus forming a good moral education atmosphere with school education as the main focus and social education as the auxiliary. "Strategic education" in Japan not only emphasizes science and technology but also places great emphasis on strengthening and enriching morale, which places greater emphasis on sustainability.

The teaching goal is to enhance students' political literacy, improve their abilities and academic attitudes, and cultivate highly educated and knowledgeable talents on the basis of mastering basic political theory.

It can be seen from the above that foreign universities usually incorporate moral education content into their professional course teaching, and use various measures to influence students' personality shaping and moral cultivation. These models and experiences have important reference significance to explore the path of ideological and political education.

In summary, a series of studies have been conducted on the reform of ideological and political education in English majors both domestically and internationally, and some achievements have been made. However, there are still certain issues and challenges that need to be further addressed and explored. Future research should focus on the feasibility and effectiveness evaluation of practical teaching applications, continuously innovate research methods and theoretical frameworks, and promote the development and progress of ideological and political education.

3. Existing problems in the teaching of English majors

There are some problems in the current English courses in colleges and universities. Firstly, too much emphasis is placed on the cultivation of professional knowledge and skills, while the integration of ideological and political education is neglected. This leads to students being unable to fully understand and apply ideological and political theories, and lacking in-depth thinking on social, cultural, and global affairs.

Secondly, some English teachers lack theoretical literacy and practical experience in ideological and political education and are unable to organically integrate ideological and political education with English teaching and carry out corresponding teaching activities. They may lack the ability to guide students to think about values and make moral judgments, which affects the effectiveness of their ideological and political education.

Thirdly, in some English courses, the teaching methods used focus too much on imparting knowledge and lack interactive, practical, and experiential elements. It is difficult to stimulate students' learning interest and thinking ability, which limits the effective implementation of ideological and political education.

Fourthly, traditional evaluation systems may place more emphasis on students' academic performance and language skills, while neglecting the evaluation of their ideological and political literacy. The lack of comprehensive, scientific, and diverse evaluation methods makes it difficult to accurately measure the achievements of students in ideological and political education.

4. Research and practice of the course reform from ideological and political perspective

According to the 2018 National Standards for the Quality of Foreign Language and Literature Teaching developed by the Higher Education Teaching Guidance Committee of the Ministry of Education, students majoring in foreign languages should have a correct worldview, a positive outlook on life and values, good moral qualities, Chinese sentiment and international perspective, a sense of social responsibility, humanistic and scientific literacy, cooperation and innovation spirit, and basic subject literacy. Ideological and political education can help students establish a correct sense of international communication and responsibility, strengthen their independent learning and innovation abilities, and adapt to an international learning and working environment. This paper takes the "Comprehensive English" course as an example to study the research and practice of ideological and political education.

4.1. Teaching contents

“Comprehensive English” is a compulsory basic skill course for English majors, usually offered in the first to the third semesters. The main goal is to cultivate and improve students’ comprehensive ability to use English. Students are required to expand their knowledge and deepen their understanding of society and life by reading and analyzing a wide range of materials, including works of famous figures in politics, economy, society, language, literature, education, philosophy, etc., consciously cultivating their critical thinking ability, improving their global perspective, and establishing correct values and outlook on life. Starting from the first semester, students majoring in English have taken this course, which is a new starting point for them.

In the teaching design of “Comprehensive English,” the teaching content mainly includes the following:

- (1) Language skills training: Through the teaching design, students will learn and improve English language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The course will arrange tasks such as oral practice, listening comprehension training, reading comprehension, and writing to help students comprehensively improve their different language skills.
- (2) Cultural and background knowledge: Teaching design will also involve an introduction to the cultural and background knowledge of English-speaking countries. By studying relevant cultural and historical backgrounds, students will be able to better understand and appreciate the English language, literature, and social culture.
- (3) Introduction of ideological and political elements: The teaching design will incorporate the ideological and political elements involved, and through various forms of learning activities, enhance students’ social skills, international expression skills, and understanding abilities.

4.2. Analysis of the learning situation

The “Comprehensive English” course is a core series of professional courses offered by English majors in their first and second years. The English proficiency of students is generally equivalent to the college entrance examination. The focus of teaching is not limited to grammar and vocabulary but also includes comprehensively enhancing students’ language application abilities through various teaching and learning tasks and activities. Students require a period of adaptation to the teaching mode and learning methods, which should be considered when designing teaching tasks and activities.

4.3. Learning objectives

In the teaching design of “Comprehensive English,” the learning objectives should match the course content and student needs to ensure the effectiveness and pertinence of teaching. The main learning objectives of this course include:

- (1) Language skills: Learners can improve their language skills in various aspects such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, including increasing vocabulary, improving grammar application skills, strengthening listening comprehension and oral expression skills, etc. Learners can master the basic norms and skills of academic writing, including literature reading, information gathering, paper writing, and academic citation, in order to improve their academic research and writing skills.
- (2) Cultural awareness: Learners can gain a deep understanding of the cultural, social, and historical backgrounds of English-speaking countries, enhance their understanding and inclusiveness towards different cultures, and adapt and communicate in cross-cultural communication.
- (3) Comprehensive literacy: Learners can cultivate critical thinking and problem-solving skills, develop innovative thinking, and cope with complex language and cultural environments. Learners can communicate effectively through English, and possess a positive spirit and teamwork in group

cooperation and team projects.

These learning objectives can help teachers determine course content, teaching methods, and evaluation methods, thereby better guiding students' learning and improving their overall English proficiency and literacy. At the same time, learning objectives need to be quantifiable and valuable, making it convenient for teachers and students to conduct effective teaching and learning evaluations based on the objectives.

4.4. Implementation ideas

In the teaching design of “Comprehensive English,” the implementation ideas are as follows:

- (1) Pre-class preparation: Teachers should fully prepare the textbooks and teaching content before teaching. This includes familiarizing oneself with the content of the text, developing teaching plans and activities, preparing the teaching aids, multimedia resources, etc. required for teaching.
- (2) Teaching introduction: Teachers usually introduce the theme and objectives of this lesson with an engaging story, picture, or question, to stimulate students' interest and curiosity in learning.
- (3) Teaching methods: According to the teaching design, teachers teach using various methods, such as explanation, demonstration, discussion, activities, etc. Teachers can use multimedia resources, textbooks, and exercise books for language input and demonstration, while encouraging students to actively participate in classroom interaction and practice.
- (4) Practice and consolidation: Teachers design exercises and tasks to help students consolidate their knowledge and skills. This can include oral practice, listening comprehension tasks, reading training, and writing exercises. Teachers can provide individual guidance and correction in the classroom, and encourage students to cooperate and learn together.
- (5) Expansion and application: Teachers can guide students to apply their learned knowledge and skills for deeper learning and application. This can include group discussions, project research, practical application tasks, etc., to cultivate students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation abilities.
- (6) Teaching reflection: Before the end of the class, teachers summarize the key content and learning outcomes of this lesson, and raise questions or assign tasks to stimulate students to further think and learn.
- (7) Homework and evaluation: Teachers can assign homework specific to the content they have learned, such as practices in exercise books, writing tasks, etc. At the same time, teachers can use different evaluation methods, such as tests, oral expressions, and project assignments, to evaluate and provide feedback on students' learning outcomes.

4.5. Implementation effect

The implementation effect of “Comprehensive English” includes:

- (1) Learning motivation and participation: If students have a positive attitude towards learning, actively participate in teaching activities, and strive to complete tasks, the implementation effect may be better. Therefore, teachers can stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning by creating interesting and challenging learning environments, providing positive feedback and individual guidance.
- (2) Teaching methods and activity design: It is crucial to adopt appropriate teaching methods and design suitable teaching activities for effective implementation. Teachers can adopt diverse teaching methods, such as explanation, demonstration, discussion, collaborative learning, etc., to meet the learning needs of different students. In addition, teachers can design challenging and interactive teaching activities to

stimulate students' thinking and practical skills.

- (3) Teaching ability and experience: Teachers need to possess professional knowledge and skills, and be able to adjust and adapt in a timely manner based on student feedback and situations. Teacher's enthusiasm and encouragement, individual tutoring and correction can also improve students' learning motivation and effectiveness.
- (4) Teaching resources and environment: Teachers should ensure timely provision and effective utilization of teaching resources, including textbooks, multimedia equipment, and auxiliary teaching tools. At the same time, the atmosphere and organization of the teaching environment also have a significant impact on students' learning.

4.6. Teaching evaluation

In the teaching design of "Comprehensive English," teaching evaluation is carried out through the following methods:

- (1) Learning achievement: Through tests, exams, or other forms of evaluation, students' learning achievements and comprehensive abilities are tested.
- (2) Learning process: Through classroom observation, post-class reflection, and student work evaluation, the participation, performance, and learning habits of students in the learning process can be assessed.
- (3) Peer evaluation: Through mutual evaluation among students, their comprehensive abilities such as cooperation, expression, and critical thinking can be evaluated.
- (4) Teaching reflection: Teachers regularly reflect and evaluate their teaching methods and effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and enhance teaching design and implementation.

5. Conclusion

The research and practice of the reform of English majors from ideological and political perspective aims to promote the integration of professional education and ideological and political education, cultivate English professionals who meet social needs, and promote the comprehensive development of higher education.

Therefore, ideological and political education should be integrated into all aspects of English teaching in English courses, and diversified teaching methods should be used to improve students' ideological and political literacy and cultivate core values. Research has shown that in the teaching process, ideological and political education should be integrated with subject education to form an organic combination, in order to avoid overemphasizing ideological and political education while neglecting subject education.

Secondly, the teaching staff of English majors need to possess a high level of English teaching ability and ideological and political education quality. Teachers should improve their ideological and political literacy, strengthen their "four confidences," and deeply understand and reflect on the essential requirements of educational work and the characteristics of educational objects. They should pay attention to the subject status of students, and stimulate their interest and enthusiasm in learning.

Thirdly, the evaluation system should be standardized and integrate epistemology into the evaluation process of ideological and political education. Teachers should explore an evaluation system that is suitable for the close combination of ideological and political education and English education, which can reflect the effectiveness of subject education and evaluate the achievements of ideological and political education, making the evaluation system more scientific and objective, and the evaluation results more informative.

In short, the reform of English major courses from ideological and political perspective in universities needs to draw on advanced experiences at home and abroad, innovate ideas, adhere to diversified teaching

methods, and coordinate the promotion of professional education and ideological and political education.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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