

Exploration and Practice of the Path of Ideological and Political Education in College English Curriculum

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Abstract: Cultivating morality and nurturing talents is an important task of educational work, and the proposal of curriculum ideology and politics has laid a solid foundation for universities to implement the education of cultivating morality and nurturing talents. Ideological and political education in the curriculum, as an important tool for cultivating moral character, utilizes the main channel of classroom teaching to disseminate content related to ideological and political education and promote the development of correct core socialist values and good character in students. Integrating ideological and political elements into English courses requires students to consider multiple factors, explore ideological and political elements, and choose appropriate teaching methods. At present, the integration of ideological and political elements into college English courses is still in the exploratory stage. This article conducts a comprehensive analysis and research on the connotation of ideological and political elements in courses, and the difficulties, causes, and significance of integrating them into English courses. Lastly, practical and feasible teaching strategies are proposed, hoping to provide guidance for frontline teachers and promote students' comprehensive development.

Keywords: College English; Ideological and political education; Teaching status; Implementation path

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1. Introduction

At the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Higher Education Institutions, it was explicitly mentioned that teachers need to prioritize moral education and integrate ideological and political work into all aspects of education. This means that relying solely on ideological and political courses is not feasible, and it is necessary to integrate ideological and political courses with professional courses to exert a synergistic educational effect^[1]. College English courses are compulsory general education courses in universities, which have a significant impact on cultural dissemination and value cultivation. Therefore, English courses should actively assume the function of ideological and political education and promote traditional Chinese culture. In this context, integrating ideological and political education into college English teaching has become a crucial aspect.

2. The connotation of ideological and political education in the curriculum

Many scholars have conducted profound research on curriculum ideology and politics, forming five typical understandings of curriculum ideology and politics. The first type is the theory of course type, which means understanding ideological and political education as a type of course, which is a supplement to the ideological and political curriculum system. The second type is the educational philosophy theory, which believes that ideological and political education in the curriculum is a concept that involves using different types of courses as carriers to infuse ideological and political concepts into these courses^[2]. The third approach is the theory of ideological and political education, which regards curriculum ideological and political education as a teaching method and uses flexible teaching methods to improve students' values and personal qualities^[3]. The fourth type is the theory of practical activities, which regards ideological and political education in courses as a practical activity and closely integrates ideological and political education theory with professional courses through practical means. The fifth type is the theory of multiple attributes. This understanding holds that curriculum ideology and politics possess multiple attributes, which can be teaching concepts, teaching methods, or teaching modes. In summary, the above viewpoints interpret curriculum ideology and politics from different dimensions and provide a detailed interpretation of the attributes of ideological and political education in courses. As a frontline teacher, it is necessary to explain and explore the specific implementation path of curriculum ideological and political education based on the concept of curriculum ideological and political education^[4]. By integrating multiple elements such as curriculum objectives, curriculum content, students' learning situation, and educational technology, we can explore curriculum ideological and political education and organize a relatively flexible educational method.

3. The starting point of ideological and political elements in college English courses

3.1. The ideological and moral elements in college English

Cultivating morality and nurturing talents is the fundamental task of educational work, and China has always attached great importance to moral education, placing it in a key position in education^[5]. Teachers should sort out the laws of moral education and explore the elements of moral education in English teaching content, textbooks, and methods, allowing moral education to permeate the entire process of English teaching. While transmitting English knowledge, teachers should guide students to develop correct ideological values, consciously practice core socialist values, and become disseminators of Chinese culture and stories^[6]. For example, teachers incorporate a sense of social responsibility and dedication into English courses to cultivate students' sense of responsibility, and so on.

3.2. Traditional cultural elements in college English

Language is the external manifestation of culture. For college English courses, while transmitting English knowledge and introducing English culture, teachers should also pay attention to the dissemination of traditional culture. During the teaching process, they should use the main methods of classroom teaching to tell Chinese stories well and spread excellent traditional Chinese culture to students. Currently, cross-cultural communication skills are one of the important training goals of the English curriculum^[7]. English curriculum teachers should guide students to develop correct cultural concepts based on language, cultivate an open and inclusive cultural attitude and a firm sense of cultural confidence, recognize cultural differences between China and the United Kingdom, and then help them view Western culture with an objective attitude, keeping in mind the significance of cultural dissemination^[8].

3.3. Ethnic emotional elements in college English curriculum

In the process of teaching English in universities, there is often a collision of ideas and cultures between China and the West. Therefore, teachers should not only focus on language knowledge, but also broaden students' international perspectives, guide them to think critically about different problems and situations, connect with international hotspots, and cultivate high-quality talents with an open international perspective and firm national sentiment who meet the needs of contemporary international society ^[9]. When exploring the ideological and political elements of college English textbooks, teachers should also focus on unit themes. The unit theme is often a summary and in-depth analysis of the unit, guiding students to pay attention to the unit theme, which can help them dialectically view a certain problem from different perspectives.

4. Specific strategies for integrating ideological and political education into college English teaching

4.1. Adjusting the goals of college English courses to reflect ideological and political education in the curriculum

To integrate ideological and political education into various aspects of teaching, the first step is to adjust the English curriculum objectives, reflect ideological and political elements in the curriculum objectives, and provide direction for the entire English teaching work. In the conventional English teaching syllabus, the teaching objectives mainly revolve around knowledge and skills and rarely integrate emotional cognition, cultural literacy, and other content ^[10]. To integrate the English subject with moral education, teachers need to integrate emotional cognition and cultural literacy throughout the entire teaching process, allowing students to transition from traditional vocabulary, grammar, and other knowledge points to ideal beliefs, values, cultural literacy, moral qualities, and other aspects. Teachers need to maintain a firm political stance, establish clear teaching thinking, and use core socialist values to guide students in learning English vocabulary and grammar. At the same time, teachers should cultivate students' cultural character. When facing the cultural differences between China and foreign countries, they should guide students to deal with the differences with a correct attitude and courage, learn from others' strengths, take the essence of traditional culture to remove its dregs, consciously resist the ideological wave of negative culture, correct cultural attitude, and develop a high political sensitivity ^[11]. Teachers also need to play a leading role as role models, strengthen the construction of their own moral qualities, and leverage their good professional ethics as teachers, such as eliminating erroneous ideas that worship foreign cultures and completely negate Chinese or Western culture.

4.2. Exploring ideological and political elements and integrating ideological and political education into curriculum content

In the process of teaching, English teachers need to actively utilize the diversity of topics and rich themes in college English courses, combined with the university's own positioning and educational characteristics, to extract the sensitive ideological and political elements contained in the textbooks, and to permeate the content of ideological and moral qualities in the process of imparting language knowledge. At the same time, English teachers also need to be guided by real-life problems, apply ideological and political education to analyze language materials and texts, and diverge students' thinking through analysis, discussion, and debate competitions.

For example, when discussing the theme of "International Communication of Chinese Culture," teachers can guide students to organize Chinese idioms, classic Chinese studies, etc., explore how to spread traditional culture in groups, and sort out cultures that foreigners are interested in, in order to promote the excellent traditional culture of China and cultivate students' awareness of spreading Chinese culture ^[12].

Compared to traditional ideological and political elements, teachers can also make full use of popular online teaching platforms and new media platforms to broaden students' horizons, actively organize online reading, online book-sharing meetings, and other content to enrich students' extracurricular reading volume, build a second classroom for English language learning, and expand the channels of online ideological and political education. Online reading integrates current affairs and hot topics from mainstream media, guiding students to pay attention to international and domestic information while strengthening their patriotism and sense of social responsibility.

4.3. Expanding extracurricular materials and selecting ideological and political materials

4.3.1. Infiltrating national policies, social hotspots, and online sentences

Based on the unit theme, teachers should organize relevant current affairs news, important conference documents, and key messages. They should guide students to understand and reflect on this content. For example, in the theme of green living, teachers can organize the requirements and development strategies for energy conservation and environmental protection in China, and guide students to engage in dialogue and exchange, understand the inherent meaning of green living, and understand China's development strategy. Based on these materials, students have broadened their horizons and gained a deeper understanding of English communication skills under the theme of green living. At the same time, the expanded materials of the course have also enabled students to understand the English expression methods of Chinese characteristic discourse, such as "green mountains and clear waters are like mountains of gold and silver" and "returning farmland to forests and grasslands," laying the foundation for students to spread Chinese culture and tell Chinese stories. For example, when discussing career-related topics, teachers can also demonstrate the efforts of Chinese police and medical staff and the sacrifice of their families for everyone, guide students to feel their spirit of dedication and challenge, and enhance their determination to overcome difficulties^[13]. In the process of rebuilding the curriculum for teachers and students, teachers should conduct an in-depth analysis of the course content, comprehensively and deeply explore the ideological and political elements in English courses, cultivate students' ideological values and emotional guidance and cultural confidence through national policies and social hotspots, and develop their cultural dissemination ability.

4.3.2. Translating ancient poetry

English teachers should establish awareness of cultural dissemination, actively respond to calls, join in the inheritance and promotion of traditional culture, infiltrate classic literature teaching in English classrooms, do a good job in cultural output during English teaching, and enhance China's cultural soft power. Based on the characteristics of the English language course, Chinese language and culture, such as poetry and classical Chinese culture, are disseminated, allowing students to try to translate these ancient poems. This not only cultivates students' translation skills but also deepens their understanding of Chinese culture, while unknowingly infiltrating and transmitting the ideas of Chinese culture. In discussions on friendship topics, teachers can show students sentences that reflect the ancient view of making friends, such as "Those who share the same aspirations should not be far away from mountains and seas," "A gentleman's friendship is as light as water, and a petty person's friendship is as sweet as wine," and "Three beneficial friends, three harmful friends. Friends who are honest, friends who are kind and gentle, and friends who provide knowledge and wisdom are beneficial. Friends who are overly flattering, friends who are deceitful and manipulative, and friends who are insincere and hypocritical are harmful"^[14]. Firstly, teachers and students jointly explore the significance of ancient literary works and attempt to translate them into English. Then, they are asked to summarize the ancient people's views on friendship and reflect on the differences in friendship concepts between Confucius and Aristotle in China.

4.4. Integrating ideological and political education into teaching evaluation

In classroom teaching, teachers should combine “process evaluation” with “outcome evaluation.” For example, regular grades and final grades are allocated in a certain proportion. In daily performance, in addition to tests and assignments, evaluations of dynamic processes such as students’ learning attitudes and participation in classroom activities should also be included. By using an online teaching platform, students’ learning status can be recorded in real-time in the app, providing data support for process evaluation^[15]. The evaluation is not only an evaluation of the effectiveness of classroom teaching but also an extension of extracurricular practical activities for students. After each practical activity, teachers also need to evaluate the language skills and cross-cultural communication competence of students, so as to not only master their practical activities but also make corresponding adjustments and improvements to future teaching methods. In the implementation process of ideological and political education in the curriculum, teachers should observe and record the performance of each student in terms of life beliefs, patriotism, moral qualities, humanistic care, etc., and track the above changes of each student in this semester, incorporating this comprehensive evaluation into the English academic achievement evaluation system.

5. Conclusion

It is of great significance to incorporate ideological and political elements into college English teaching. This process is not achieved overnight but requires a lengthy practical process. When integrating ideological and political education into college English teaching, teachers need to find the starting point between ideological and political education and English teaching content, deeply explore ideological and political elements, and integrate social hotspots, traditional culture, international situations, and other content into it. However, this is a significant challenge for English teachers. Universities need to actively carry out teacher training and regional teacher discussions, gradually increasing English teachers’ ideological and political education levels.

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