Design and Implementation Strategies for English Reading Teaching in Secondary Vocational Schools from the Perspective of Curriculum Ideology and Politics: Taking an English Reading Class as an Example

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Abstract: Within the perspective of curriculum-based ideological and political education, this paper takes a secondary vocational English reading class themed "Invention and Innovation" as an example to delve into the process from instructional content design to implementation. In terms of instructional design, the paper highlights key elements. Profoundly, it discusses the strategies for teaching implementation, including the setting of teaching objectives, the selection of reading instructional materials, and the design and advancement of teaching activities. The aim is to effectively integrate ideological and political elements into secondary vocational English reading instruction, with the hope of providing useful references and insights for the teaching of English reading in secondary vocational education.

Keywords: Curriculum ideology and politics; English teaching in secondary vocational schools; Reading instructional design; Implementation strategies

1. Teaching background

With the continuous updating and deepening of educational concepts, curriculum ideology and politics, as a set of beliefs about the aims of education, has increasingly attracted widespread attention and emphasis from educators. To implement the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education and achieve the educational goal of subject-based character cultivation, it is necessary for teachers of secondary vocational schools to uncover ideological and political elements with educational value in the design of teaching, and to deepen the content of ideological and political education during the implementation of teaching, thereby enhancing students' comprehensive literacy [1]. Secondary vocational English teaching should cultivate students' core competencies

and values of workplace language communication, awareness of thinking differences, cross-cultural understanding, and autonomous learning [2]. In combination with the teaching material content of Unit 7 Invention and Innovation from the *Basic English Module 2* published by Higher Education Press, it is found that the reading materials of this unit provide rich ideological and political educational values for second-year students majoring in mechanical and electrical engineering. The students in this class have a certain foundation in English language and relatively good reading habits, and they are able to comprehend the reading passages in the textbook with the help of the vocabulary list. However, they have had limited exposure to argumentative essays and lack certain reading strategies. Therefore, after completing a reading comprehension class, a reading-for-thinking class was designed to explore the ideological and political elements behind the text.

2. Key elements of instructional content design

This section mainly discusses the instructional design from the perspective of curriculum ideological and political education. In the entire instructional design, the following key elements need to be considered.

2.1. Studying the teaching materials repeatedly

The teaching materials need to be studied repeatedly by teachers to ensure a deep understanding of the content, from the overall structure and the author's main purpose and intention to the supporting detailed information. This is considered the cornerstone for determining teaching activities [3]. In this sample lesson, the reading material themed "Technology and Innovation" was taught, which is divided into four paragraphs. The main purposes and intentions are presented in the first and fourth paragraphs. It is illustrated in the first sentences of the first and fourth paragraphs that technology has changed people's lives. The second and third paragraphs provide detailed discussions, using methods such as contrast between past and present, examples, and providing data to support the arguments. The contrast method is primarily used in the first and third paragraphs, with time markers such as "in the past, now" and "in the beginning, but now" being employed. The second paragraph uses the example of Internet of Things to argue that technology is all around us. The last sentence of the first paragraph, "more than 90% of them prefer online shopping," is used to provide data demonstrating the significant impact of technology on people's lives. In the fourth paragraph, the change in tenses in the sentences is noticed to reflect the ideological element that the impact of technology on people's lives is ongoing.

2.2. Designing reading activities

The alignment of the learning activities and questions in the textbook with the ideological and political elements of this lesson was carefully considered by the author, with the main idea selection question retained and content modifications made to the mind map following the reading material. The textbook required students to fill in the main details based on the thinking framework. To help students understand the basic argumentative methods of argumentative essays, a new mind map was designed, which required students to list the argumentative methods instead. Given that students were encountering the argumentative essay for the first time, the difficulty of the activity was lowered. The parts demonstrating a certain argumentative method were marked in different colors to make it easier for students to grasp the targeted argumentative method, and specific markers such as "in the past," "now," etc., were highlighted in the corresponding argumentative methods on the mind map. The ideological and political elements and important information reflected in each paragraph were processed by the author, leaving blanks and marking the paragraph sources of the information to be filled in. For example, in Para. 1, "You can order food online and _____ to your doorsteps." In the fourth paragraph, an activity was designed for students to observe and

underline the tenses "have truly changed, are benefiting, has not stopped, will surely welcome," to guide students to actively experience the ongoing impact of technology on people's lives.

2.3. "Weaving the thread"

Once all reading activities have been designed, the main thread connecting these activities will be carefully conceived. The emotional experience of ideological and political education serves as an invisible guiding line, leading students through the text and learning activities to appreciate the positive impact of technology on people's lives. Initially, the relevant reading content is introduced through a thematic video, allowing students to embark on a journey exploring how technology transforms life, thereby initiating their reading process. The emotional tone of ideological and political education is established by clarifying the article's main purpose—demonstrating that technology enhances life. Mind map-based learning tasks are employed to help students recognize and understand the argumentation methods used in argumentative essays. Evidence supporting the transformative effects of technology on life is identified, with key details supplemented for each paragraph, such as "Every person is surrounded by technology such as _____," reinforcing the power of technology. Through the analysis of verb tenses in the fourth paragraph, students ultimately perceive the ongoing influence of technology, with the future of technological development awaiting their exploration. Consequently, the ideological and political education component reaches its climax.

3. Teaching implementation strategies

This section elaborates on the implementation of a secondary vocational English reading lesson with ideological and political education as its foundation. The discussion encompasses teaching objectives, selection of reading materials, design of learning activities, expert reviews, and reflections.

3.1. Clarifying learning objectives and integrating ideological and political elements

Teaching objectives represent the core requirements that must be clearly defined before a series of teaching activities can be effectively implemented [4]. During the initial phase of instructional design, ideological and political educational goals, centered on fostering virtue through education, are integrated into reading instruction. In this reading lesson, based on the latest English curriculum standards, the teaching materials are thoroughly analyzed, and interconnected learning tasks are carefully designed according to the learning characteristics of students majoring in mechanical and electrical engineering. These tasks guide students in conducting and completing corresponding learning activities, enabling them to comprehend the structural framework of the text and recognize the argumentative methods employed in the essay. On this basis, students gain a deeper understanding of the continuous impact of technology on people's lives, fostering their appreciation for technological innovation. Furthermore, their enthusiasm and aspirations for technological advancement are inspired, nurturing a spirit of innovation and a sense of responsibility.

3.2. Selecting reading materials with educational value reflecting the ideological and political theme

The selection of reading materials with an ideological and political theme is crucial. When determining teaching content, its relevance to the ideological and political theme should be prioritized [5]. In this case, the teaching content is centered on the theme of "Invention and Innovation," an argumentative essay discussing how technology

transforms people's lives. The essay highlights the impact of technology from the past to the present and even the future, closely aligning with the ideological and political theme of "innovation, technology, and the future." Such materials not only correspond to the professional background of secondary vocational students but also encourage them to reflect on the social value of technological innovation. Consequently, students' understanding of ideological and political themes is deepened while acquiring language knowledge, thereby fulfilling the educational objective of the English subject in shaping well-rounded individuals.

3.3. Implementing rich and effective teaching activities to strengthen ideological and political education

As teaching activities are conducted, ideological and political education should be seamlessly integrated into the entire class rather than treated as a separate component from foreign language teaching, avoiding a "two separate skins" approach [6]. In the lesson, video teaching materials were used twice. To stimulate students' interest in reading, the unit theme "Invention and Innovation" was introduced through a video about a smart home, allowing students to grasp the transformative power of technological innovation. During the post-reading session, another video illustrating how technology illuminates the future was used to reinforce the ideological and political elements of the course.

Ideological and political reading was primarily explored through activities such as identifying the writing intention, constructing mind maps, extracting key information, and analyzing tenses. During implementation, verbs in the four answer choices for the writing intention question in the textbook were bolded and highlighted to draw students' attention to different verb forms. The construction of mind maps aimed to help students organize key information reflecting ideological and political elements (see **Figure 1**). In practice, students were able to easily identify the main idea but struggled to provide supporting evidence. To address this, the corresponding evidence was presented in different colored fonts, reducing the difficulty of the activity. Students performed well in completing the key information cloze task and in analyzing sentence tenses in the fourth paragraph. In the post-reading activity, students were encouraged to engage with the theme through the message: "The past is history, today is a gift, but the future is a mystery. The future of technology is in your hands. Please create your life through technological innovation." This encouraged students to actively participate in technological advancements and contribute to realizing the Chinese Dream. Finally, through a self-evaluation task, students internalized the knowledge gained, transforming it into personal values and action guidelines while assessing their comprehension and acceptance of ideological and political elements.
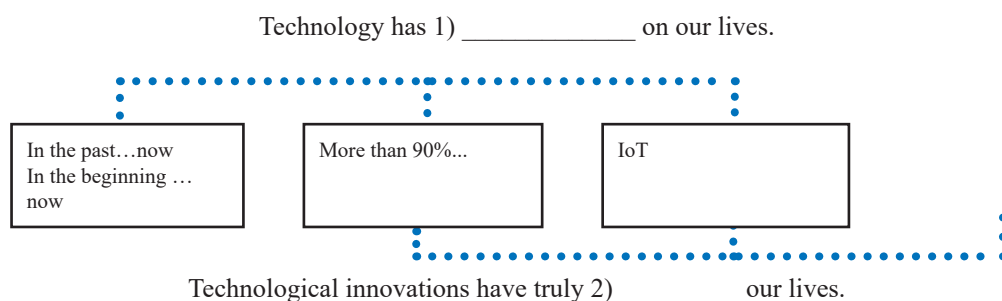
Technology has 1) _____ on our lives.

| In the past…now In the beginning … now | More than 90%... | IoT |

Technological innovations have truly 2) _____ our lives.

Figure 1. Mind maps help organize key information reflecting ideological and political elements

4. Conclusion

To foster virtue through education and subject-based learning, an English reading lesson was designed and implemented for second-year students majoring in mechanical and electrical engineering at a secondary vocational school, adopting a curriculum-based ideological and political education perspective. In the teaching design, key elements were emphasized. More importantly, teaching implementation strategies were proposed and analyzed from various aspects, including the formulation of teaching objectives, the selection of reading instructional materials, and the design and progression of teaching activities. The goal is to enhance the quality of English teaching in secondary vocational education through iterative teaching design and continuous practice, thereby achieving the educational objectives of curriculum-based ideological and political education, helping students develop a positive outlook on life and values, and cultivating their comprehensive literacy and innovative abilities.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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