

Optimizing Classroom Questioning to Improve the Quality of Ideological and Political Courses in High Schools

Tianxing Chen*

Marxist College, Henan Polytechnic University, Jiaozuo 454003, Henan Province, China

*Corresponding author: Tianxing Chen, chentx199707@163.com

Copyright: © 2022 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

Abstract: Under the concept of quality education, how to optimize classroom questioning to promote ideological and political courses in high schools in such a way to fit students' reality and promote students' all-round development has become a hot topic. The ideological and political curriculum standards for high schools (2017 edition) implored grasping the subject's core literacy, improving the art of classroom questioning, directing classroom questioning toward "breadth," "depth," and "temperature," promoting the development of in-depth studies, designing based on real-life circumstances, and learning to teach for students' lifelong development. Therefore, it is very important to enhance the motivation of students' development.

Keywords: Ideological and political teachers; High school; Classroom questioning; Comprehensive development

Online publication: April 28, 2022

1. Introduction

In a symposium for teachers of ideological and political courses held in 2019, it was mentioned that ideological and political courses are the key courses to implement the fundamental task of moral education. The key to running ideological and political courses well lies in teachers. This also lies in the fact that teachers give full play to their enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity in the teaching process, as well as cleverly implement classroom questioning for the development of ideological and political courses in high schools, highlighting the role of students' subjectivity and promoting students' thinking. The gradual and spiraling questioning will guide students to identify with the teaching content of ideological and political courses and become qualified builders as well as reliable successors of socialism. Classroom questioning runs through teaching and is considered a means of interaction between teachers and students^[1]. Classroom questioning is an indispensable part of classroom teaching and one of the most important forms of bilateral activities between teachers and students. If there is no questions asked in the classroom, it is inevitable that the teacher will end up singing a "one-man show," which will affect the vitality of classroom teaching. Applying classroom questioning to the whole teaching process is a very important teaching method, in which a healthy communication relationship can be established between teachers and students^[2].

2. Connotation of asking questions in ideological and political class in high schools

Human vision and perspectives are like searchlights, in which the areas that are illuminated are likely to be considered. Perspective determines what we can see. The scene observed, the problem being addressed, the analysis made, and the dominating approach are all distinct. Conscious or not, one's perception of the

outside world is limited by vision ^[3]. Classroom questioning refers to questions used to inspire students to think independently, challenge them, and develop the courage to answer a teaching link. It is used by teachers in daily teaching activities in order to achieve curriculum standard and teaching target. It can be either raised by teachers or by students in the face of doubt, thus forming interactions between them. Classroom questioning is a crucial part of the teaching process and an important channel of interaction between teachers and students. Through appropriate questions, students can take an active part in class activities, strengthen their interest in ideological and political lessons, expand their extracurricular knowledge, and learn to be willing and brave to participate in every class activity, giving full play to their initiative. With reasonable, appropriate, and interesting questions, teachers can complete the teaching objectives and improve the teaching quality of ideological and political courses. In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of students, teachers should pay attention to their response as well as their answering process ^[4]. As a very professional teaching method, classroom questioning should not only be designed and implemented from the height of the curriculum, but also be considered to promote the overall development of students' thinking, skills, emotional attitude, and values ^[5]. Interest is the best teacher; that is to say, once a person has a strong interest in something, he or she will take the initiative to learn, explore, and practice. In the pursuit of knowledge, exploration, and practice, emotions and experience are formed. Therefore, only by stimulating students' interest in learning can students shift from "hard learning" to "love learning" and "joy learning." This paper discusses some aspects that teachers should pay attention to in setting up problems before class and generating problems in class. Classroom questioning is an interactive teaching method, which is an activity of information transfer and emotional exchange between teachers and students. A good teacher-student relationship and a relaxed classroom environment ensue a more efficient teaching process ^[6].

3. Brief analysis of the present situation and importance of optimizing classroom questioning in ideological and political courses

3.1. Analyzing the current situation and causes of classroom questioning in ideological and political courses in high schools

Classroom questioning is an important part of classroom teaching. Teachers can communicate with students through classroom questioning to help students understand and master certain knowledge ^[7]. However, there are a number of issues with it in high school ideological and political teaching. Many questions are ineffective, inefficient, or even negative, as seen by the following examples: first, there are too many questions or too few; second, the problems are either too shallow or too difficult; third, the questions are asked at will, without regard for the students' response; fourth, direct and astringent questions that dull students' interest are asked; fifth, teachers tend to neglect students' questions ^[8]. There are several reasons for these situations. First, the setting of problems in high schools lacks breadth. At present, most of the questions are superficial questions, and their concern is about where they want to ask in this class, rather than giving full play to the role and function of questioning. Second, the theoretical expertise of some ideological and political teachers lacks depth; teachers need to understand that questions should have a sense of purpose, not only to liven up the classroom environment, but to really serve in classroom teaching ^[9]. The education of materialism is therefore an urgent task ^[10]. Ideological and political course is a minor subject in junior and senior high schools. The course has not received enough attention for a long time. Quite a number of ideological and political teachers are not from other courses, and the teachers themselves do not know much about Marxism neither do they have a solid and thorough grasp of the theory, which makes it more difficult for students to learn. The kinds of questions that are asked in class are based on certain premises, implying the relationship between a certain knowledge point and other knowledge points relating to it ^[11]. Third, the content of political courses lacks "temperature." It is not easy to stimulate

students' interest in learning; thus, teachers need to put in a lot of effort to prepare a lesson, combine textbook contents with living examples, set ingenious "issues," make the class more interesting and realistic, promote classroom life, as well as allow students to be the main body of learning. In teaching practice, teachers should integrate international education with patriotic education, cross-cultural education with cultural confidence education, as well as mission education with aesthetic education ^[12].

3.2. Importance of optimizing the teaching of ideology and politics in high schools

Education is the foundation of a century-long project. Class questions are questions that take place between at least two people, from a teacher to a student, a student to a teacher, or a student to another student ^[13]. Teachers are responsible for the healthy development of every child and the satisfactory education of the people. Teachers are engineers and inheritors. They carry the important task of imparting knowledge, ideas, and truth as well as shaping the soul and life of people. Ideological and political course teachers in high schools can use many teaching methods to attract students' interest in learning, especially when setting class questions. Teachers should think about how to make their class questions to have more "breadth," "depth," and "temperature." The setting of class problems should be addressed not only in light of students' circumstances, but also the rules of ideological and political education as well as students' development rule. Selecting the problems that students are most perplexed and concerned about would be helpful in encouraging them to learn, improving their political identification quality consciousness and dialectical thinking, as well as promoting their all-round development.

4. Using questions to optimize the learning of ideological and political courses in high schools

4.1. Rely on students' questions: Creating a "temperature" ideological and political class

Listening to the "death theory," there is no "temperature," touch, or quality. Hence, students tend to be unwilling to listen to such a class ^[14]. When preparing lessons, teachers should not only prepare teaching materials and methods, but also consider students' thinking and behavior development, so as to create ideological and political courses with "temperature" based on students' own questions. Research has shown that slowing down the pace of classes and providing more time to answer a question can improve learning. ^[15] First of all, teachers should fully comprehend the ideological reality of students prior to class in order to identify the corresponding problems, so that students' "current" ideological level and the thought of "should be" that produces cognitive conflicts between levels will eventually solve the contradiction in their existing thoughts, thus allowing them to truly internalize knowledge into their own ideas. Second, when setting questions, teachers should consider the current realistic development level of students and understand that there are differences in their knowledge level and in their acquisition of various knowledge. In setting up classroom problems, in consideration of these differences, students may encounter difficulties and doubts if teachers teach at their own speed, and over a long period of time, students will naturally lose interest in the subject. Finally, in setting questions, teachers should begin from the concerns of students. What are the concerns of students, and how do teachers come to learn of their concerns? Therefore, teachers need to delve deeply into the reality of students, carry out heart-to-heart talks with them and their parents, as well as understand their daily concerns. These problems are in fact exciting to students, and they are also the materials that teachers can use in ideological and political teaching. Cultivating students' questioning skills is a gradual process, which requires long-term training ^[16]. In a word, teachers should pay more attention to students' thoughts, knowledge level, and their issues of concern. In consideration of their familiarity with certain materials, it is important to come up with questions that can resonate with students' emotional aspect and promote their thinking, thus enhancing the life of high school education courses and making them interesting.

4.2. Divergent questions and answers: Improving the breadth of ideological and political class questions

Breadth is the range of things. Ideological and political course teachers in high schools should pay attention to the divergence and inspiration of classroom questions, expand the scope of knowledge, stimulate students' thinking, adhere to the idea of students as the main body, and do not set fixed answers except for those related to textbook knowledge and principles, but instead, provide sufficient space for imagination. As the saying goes, to give students a glass of water, the teacher must have a bucket of water. In the era of information explosion, media is a part of everyday life, and students themselves are engaged with videos, television, and so on to acquire information from the media, sometimes even more than that of teachers. Therefore, having just a bucket of water may not be sufficient to meet the needs of the world development of today; in order to give students a glass of water, teachers need a pool of water. Ideological and political teachers should hold onto the concept of lifelong learning, and have the determination and will to live and learn. The ideological and political course in high schools is considered an interdisciplinary subject, involving multiple subjects. This enables teachers to set relevant questions according to the actual needs of the classroom, so as to encourage students to think and solve problems from multiple perspectives. Questions are not only the starting point of thinking, but also the power of thinking. Therefore, teachers should not only impart book knowledge, but also attach importance to discussion in the process of teaching, so as to mobilize students' thinking activities and encourage them to explore actively, think diligently, and bravely innovate. For students who are unable to provide an answer or answer inaccurately, it is necessary to guide and inspire them to think and provide the correct answer. Creating a scenario that connects political knowledge with students' social life may be beneficial in helping them achieve the goal of acquiring knowledge, cultivating skills, and improving quality through personal experience and perception ^[17]. Teachers should pay more attention to students and focus on issues of concern prior to setting up classroom questioning. The problem should be appropriately spread out, so as to make dull theories fresh, the classroom environment more active, and the whole class more colorful, encouraging students to be more active in classroom.

4.3. Grasp the gradient: Expanding the depth of ideological and political class questions

Asking questions in class encourages interaction and learning in teaching. Asking a good question can reflect a teacher's creative interpretation of the course content and ability to control the class ^[18]. The understanding and mastery of knowledge is a process from simple to complex and from shallow to deep. In classroom teaching, teachers should follow the law of education and teaching as well as the law of students' cognitive development, grasp the integration of old and new knowledge, and set up questions that correspond to the knowledge level of students. Vygotsky, a famous Soviet psychologist, classified people's cognitive level into three levels: "known area," "recent development area," and "unknown area." The zone of proximal development refers to the gap between a student's current level and a higher level that can be achieved with the help of others. Based on people's cognitive level of spiral state, it is not suitable to remain in the known area and or the unknown area, as the known area of a problem is too simple, which is not suitable to arouse students' enthusiasm, while the unknown area of a problem will be too challenging, thus discouraging students to think. These situations will stifle students' interest in learning. Hence, it is important to try to maintain students' learning motivation. By setting a problem based on the zone of proximal development may drive students to think about it over and over again. These types of problems can fully mobilize students' learning motivation, as they are somewhat challenging for students. Thereafter, gradient problems should be carefully designed. This not only helps students to "know" but more importantly, to "know why," thus stimulating their thought process. Students will begin asking questions actively from shallow to deep. By bringing life to the original boring theory and making it closely related

to students' lives can help students truly understand the meaning and significance of the theory through multiple layers of answering and thinking. When teachers set questions, they should not only encourage students to "jump to pick peaches," but also allow them to "reach" so as to all-round development.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

Marx said, "Theory can hold the masses as long as it persuades people, and theory can persuade people as long as it is thorough ^[19]." This requires ideological and political teachers in high schools to first have solid knowledge, understand the Marxist theory, and to establish questions step by step in teaching. The problem setting of ideological and political courses in high schools should not only have "breadth," but also "temperature" and "depth." In order to create "breadth," "depth," and "temperature," as well as to improve ideological and political courses in high schools, it is necessary to grasp the veins and arouse the ripples of students' thinking, as well as highlight the epochal and extensive nature of ideological and political courses. As an important means of classroom teaching, classroom questioning not only reflects teachers' professional quality and wisdom, but also guides and stimulates students' thinking, which can promote a balanced and all-round development of personality ^[20]. In a word, "classroom questioning," from the perspective of education, is a value pursuit that realizes teaching value and educational significance based on the value orientation of knowledge imparting, thinking, and emotional experience. The pursuit of "transforming knowledge into wisdom" and of emotional experience needs to be integrated with teachers' wisdom and knowledge as well as the growth of students. Only in this way can the dual effect of teaching and education be achieved.

Acknowledgments

A heartfelt gratitude to all the authors of the books and papers that provided reference for the completion of this paper.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Qiu K, Chen YL, Liu M, 2020, A Case Study of Middle School Mathematics Teachers' Classroom Questioning Teaching Behavior. *Journal of Hubei Normal University*, 40(01): 114-118.
- [2] Bo Y, 2020, Teaching Strategies for Asking Questions in Geography Class. *Journal of Mudanjiang College of Education*, 2020(08):108-109.
- [3] Xia Q, 2020, How to Broaden the Ideological and Political Theory Course: "Classroom Revolution" and Perspective Change. *Research on Ideological Education*, 2020(01): 100-104.
- [4] Xu BX, 2020, Integrate "curriculum Thinking and Politics" Into College English Class by Asking Questions. *English Square*, 2020(35): 119-121.
- [5] Jiang GH, Lin W, 2013, "Classroom Questioning" and Meaning Seeking in the Perspective of Education – Taking Ideological and Political Lessons as an Example. *Ideology and Politics Teaching*, 2013(02): 4-6.
- [6] Li CY, 2018, Effective Questioning Strategies in Geography Classroom Teaching from the Perspective of Learning. *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method*, 38(08): 99-105.

- [7] Ni QM, 2018, On the Optimization of Questioning Teaching in Physics Class of Junior Middle School. *Learning Weekly*, 2018(05): 117-118.
- [8] Fan HJ, 2012, Adhere to the “Five” Optimization of Questions. *Research in Teaching*, 2012(10): 39-41.
- [9] Wu XL, 2018, Questions in Ideological and Political Class Should Be Carefully Designed. *Journal of Chinese Education*, 2018(36): 106.
- [10] China Cai Yuanpei Research Society, 1997, *Collected Works of Cai Yuanpei*, Zhejiang Education Press, 44.
- [11] Liu CY, 2021, Structuring Classroom Questioning: Connotation, Value and Strategy. *Educational Theory and Practice*, 41(11): 54-57.
- [12] Wang Q, Deng ZY, 2021, On the Current Ideological and Political Construction Strategy of College Curriculum. *Higher Education of Jiangsu*, 2021(05): 94-98.
- [13] Wang R, 2019, A Preliminary Study on the Practice of Quality-Oriented Classroom Questioning Teaching. *English Square*, 2019(11): 148-150.
- [14] Jiao YX, 2018, Ideological and Political Class Enlightens Young People’s Belief – A Review of the Special Work of ideological and Political Course Teaching Quality Year in Colleges and Universities. *China Education Daily*, February 27, 2018.
- [15] Luo SQ, Huang J, Ma XL, 2015, *Facilitating Learning: Formative Assessment in Second Language Teaching*, Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, Beijing, 94-98.
- [16] Wang XT, 2018, High School Physics Classroom Teaching Strategy Based on Questioning Ability Cultivation. *Basic Education Review*, 2018(08): 52-54.
- [17] Peng XB, 2015, *Research on the Problems and Optimization of High School Ideological and Political Class Questions*, Central China Normal University, 55.
- [18] Han Y, Zhang YF, 2018, Elementary School Chinese Classroom Question Teaching. *Comparative Study of Cultural Innovation*, 2(08): 187, 198.
- [19] 2012, *Selections from Marx and Engels (Volume 1)*, People’s Publishing House, 9-10.
- [20] Pan N, 2016, Inquiry into the Teaching Method of Chinese Classroom Questioning – Taking Yu Yingchao’s Classroom Questioning Teaching as an Example. *Bulletin of Chinese Language Teaching*, 2016(08): 26-27.

Publisher’s note

Bio-Byword Scientific Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.