

Teaching Design of Implementing Ideological-Political Instruction in Chinese Culture Course for English Majors

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ABSTRACT

Chinese Traditional Culture course in English has rich ideological and political elements, which is of great significance to strengthen moral education for English majors. This paper first reviews requirements of ideological-political instruction in Curriculum. Then, it highlights the importance of inheriting and transmitting good Chinese traditional culture by teaching Chinese traditional culture course in English. Last, it takes unit one “The Wisdom of Confucius” from *Introducing Chinese Culture in English* as an example to explore how to implement ideological-political instruction through online and offline blended teaching mode. By teaching Confucius’s idea on Ren, in particular filial piety, benevolence, propriety, and their rich cultural connotations, students are guided to love their parents, respect their brothers, care for others, abide by discipline and law, all of which helps to enhance students’ cultural recognition, cultivate their love toward our country, improve their cross-cultural communication ability to tell Chinese stories well in English, and achieve ideological-political instruction in Chinese culture course.

Keywords: *Introducing Chinese Culture in English, Ideological-political instruction in curriculum, Teaching design.*

1. INTRODUCTION: REQUIREMENTS OF IDEOLOGICAL-POLITICAL INSTRUCTION

In 2016, General Secretary Xi Jinping clearly proposed at the National Conference on Ideological-Political Work in Colleges and Universities that all other courses should take responsibility of implementing ideological-political instruction, so that all kinds of courses and ideological-political theory courses go in the same direction to form a synergistic effect, and “ideological-political work should run through the whole process of education, realize educating people in all-round way, and strive to create a new situation in the development of China’s higher education”, which has put forward clear requirements for integrating ideological-political instruction into each course. [1]

In 2019, General Secretary Xi Jinping presided over a symposium for teachers of ideological - political theory courses in Beijing and delivered an important speech: “We must adhere to the unity of explicit education and implicit education, tap the ideological-political education resources contained in other courses and teaching methods, and realize all-round whole-process education for all people.” [2]

The “Guideline for Ideological-Political Construction in the Curriculum of Colleges and Universities” issued by Ministry of Education in 2020 more clearly pointed out: “It is necessary to comprehensively promote the ideological-political construction of college courses, guide values in knowledge transmission and ability training, and help students shape a correct outlook on world, on life, and on values, which is the true meaning and necessary content of talent training”. In addition, this Guideline requires that professional courses in literature and philosophy should be combined with professional knowledge education to guide students

to deeply understand core values of socialism, and consciously carry forward excellent traditional Chinese culture, revolutionary culture, and advanced socialist culture [3]. This has put forward specific requirements for ideological-political education for college courses, and explains the position and decisive role of implementing ideological-political instruction in Curriculum in the entire education system.

2. SIGNIFICANCE OF INHERITING AND TRANSMITTING CHINESE TRADITIONAL CULTURE

In 2017, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued “Opinions on implementation of the project of inheriting and developing China’s excellent traditional culture”, which has pushed Chinese traditional culture education to a new level, and promoted colleges and universities to open excellent Chinese traditional culture courses. [4]

On October 18 of 2017, General Secretary Xi Jinping once again emphasized the importance of culture in the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, stating: “Without a high degree of cultural self-confidence and cultural prosperity, there will be no great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, people-to-people and culture-to-culture exchanges between China and foreign countries should be strengthened, international communication capacity should be promoted, Chinese stories should be told well, and a true, all-dimensional and comprehensive China should be shown.”[5]

With in-depth implementation of the “Belt and Road” initiative, the strategy of “Chinese culture going global” has attracted the attention of all walks of life, General Secretary Xi Jinping has stressed in many meetings that we Chinese people must enhance cultural consciousness and strengthen cultural self-confidence, hoping that “everyone will continue to carry forward Chinese culture, tell Chinese stories and spread Chinese voices” and “create a good environment for realizing the Chinese dream”. [6]

However, there are two major problems in the current curriculum of English majors in colleges and universities: one is that it focuses on training of students’ language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation, and neglects cultivation of students’ cross-cultural ability and the other is that it stresses language learning and

western culture learning, lacking the education and edification of local culture, resulting in students’ “mother-tongue-culture aphasia”[7].

College students are in the key stage of establishing a correct view on life, on world and on values, China’s excellent traditional culture is the foundation of the Chinese nation, but also an important resource for building advanced socialist culture, containing rich ideological-political education elements, which not only help to cultivate the cultural basis of contemporary college students, enhance their cultural self-confidence, but also play a very important role in improving their ideological and moral quality, is thus an effective way to implement ideological-political education for English majors[8].

3. FOUNDATION FOR IMPLEMENTING IDEOLOGICAL-POLITICAL INSTRUCTION IN INTRODUCING CHINESE CULTURE IN ENGLISH

In this part, the foundation for implementing ideological-political instruction in *Introducing Chinese Culture in English* from course description, analysis of students and online-offline blended teaching mode is introduced as follows:

3.1 Course Description

The textbook *Introducing Chinese Culture in English* was edited by Wang Zhiru and Lu Xiaoli from Hubei University and published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press in 2017.

It selects 14 representative characteristic content and highlights of Chinese culture, ranging from the lives and philosophical principles of Confucius and Laozi, the ideograms as well as several methods of Chinese writing, the Chinese calendar, main traditional festivals, Chinese culinary culture, traditional Chinese wedding, “Cheongsam” or “Qipao”, the women’s traditional dress, the arts and crafts of paper, the Chinese architecture through the Forbidden City and the symbolism associated with construction such as the art of Feng Shui, Yin and Yang, the eight trigrams, Peking Opera, the four main roles in the Chinese classic operas, the meaning of facial make-up and the four artistic skills that are speaking, singing, dancing, and wrestling on stage, the theory of a balance between Yin and Yang, and a harmonious relationship between man and nature, traditional Chinese

medicine, traditional Chinese painting and Chinese kung-fu, its philosophy and schools. [9]

This course uses English as the teaching language and Chinese traditional culture as the teaching content, aiming to improve students' English language ability and enhance their awareness and sense of identity with Chinese traditional culture, so that they can spread Chinese culture in English in international exchanges and let the world understand China. At the same time, the course also hopes to undertake the social responsibility and historical mission of promoting Chinese traditional culture to the world. [9]

3.2 Analysis of Students

This course is open for juniors in the fifth semester. For the third-year English majors, they have completed basic language literacy and skills training courses, and have mastered certain basic knowledge of English pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, discourse and other knowledge, but their comprehensive language use ability needs to be improved, especially the ability to comprehensively explain Chinese culture in English, and they also need to vigorously improve the cross-cultural communication ability of telling Chinese stories in English. At the same time, students' understanding of Chinese traditional culture is not enough in depth and breadth.

3.3 Online-offline Blended Teaching Mode

This course makes full use of the excellent teaching resources "Introducing Chinese Culture in English" on Chinese university MOOCs to establish a SPOC, combine Tencent classroom, Wechat group and other methods for online and offline teaching and discussion.

Online-offline blended teaching mode can promote students' independent learning ability, critical thinking ability and group cooperation ability, help strengthen the communication between teachers and students, and implement the task of moral education [10]. When teaching this course, the author sends many input materials, including related articles, videos, MOOCs, etc. to students through the Internet before class, and assigns tasks that need to be output at the same time, such as English introduction of certain information, group discussion topics, etc., so that students can effectively prepare for them. In the process of classroom teaching, the author uses a variety of teaching methods such as lecture, example, and

discussion to help students further understand and think about the topic, improve their critical thinking ability in analysis and discussion, and improve their comprehensive language use ability and cross-cultural communication ability in English presentation.

4. TEACHING DESIGN OF IMPLEMENTING IDEOLOGICAL-POLITICAL INSTRUCTION IN CHINESE CULTURE COURSE

In this section, the teaching design including teaching objectives, teaching process and teaching reflections are presented below:

4.1 Teaching Objectives

- Knowledge objective

On one hand, students will be familiar with key words, phrases, and sentence patterns regarding the topic of Confucian thought on Ren.

On the other hand, students will learn the ways of translating Confucius' teachings into Chinese.

- Ability goal

First, through online MOOCs, students' input ability of English listening and reading comprehension will be cultivated.

Second, through offline report and discussion, students' English speaking, writing, and translation skills will be enhanced.

Third, through online and offline blended learning and communication, students' ability to cooperate, to think critically and to innovate will be strengthened.

Last, students will be enabled to communicate with foreign tourists in English clearly and fluently on Confucian idea of Ren.

- Ideological-political education objectives

First, students' understanding of theme value of Confucius philosophy such as filial piety, benevolence, and propriety in terms of breadth and depth will be strengthened.

Second, students' cultural identity and cultural self-confidence will be enhanced.

Last, students' awareness of disseminating excellent traditional Chinese culture will be improve.

4.2 Teaching Process

This lesson studies “Wisdom of Confucius” by focusing on his core idea of Ren, hoping to enable students to understand the cultural connotation of Ren and its influence on Chinese culture. The teaching process before, during and after class is closely related to the knowledge content and ability objectives, integrates with, and implements ideological-political instruction.

4.2.1 Pre-class: Assigning Tasks

First, students finish watching and learning “Confucius Conception of Ren” in the online MOOCS, learn related words and expressions and try to understand its cultural connotation, offline students will be grouped to communicate with each other, and representatives will be chosen to present their understanding of Ren.

Second, students finish watching and learning “From Behavior Cultivation to Social Order” in the online MOOCS, offline students will communicate and discuss how to achieve social harmony and political stability from family reverence.

Third, students finish watching and learning “Confucian Thought on Li” in the online MOOCS, offline students will share their ideas about Li and the relationship between Ren and Li.

4.2.2 During-class: Ideological-Political Instruction in Curriculum

In offline class, the teacher checked students’ understanding about Confucius by judging related statements true or false, reviewed historical background of his time in which Confucius lived in by listening to the recording about the Spring and Autumn Period and filling in the blanks to complete the passage, the purpose is for students to understand the reason why Confucius wanted to restore the great tradition abandoned by people and established harmonious social relationships among people. Then students were chosen by random to introduce Confucius in English from different aspects.

This one-class period design focuses on Confucius Conception of Ren, and enables students to strengthen their cultural self-confidence and cultivate and practice socialist core values in a multi-dimensional way.

First, the teacher guides students to review key words by translating Confucius key conceptions from Chinese into English as below:

孝悌: family reverence, filial piety

仁: humaneness, benevolence, humane love

礼: ritual propriety, rites propriety

修行: behavior cultivation, self-cultivation

Second, students are divided into groups to communicate their understanding of Ren such as “What is Ren? What’s the significance of Ren? How to realize Ren? How to practice it in our daily life?” respectively and then choose representatives to report their sharing orally in English.

After students’ report, the teacher gives feedback and suggestions and summarizes key points one by one:

Q1: What is Ren? What’s the essence?

Ren, or humaneness or benevolence, broadly speaking, refers to universal love or human love, in a narrow sense, refers to love to parents and respect to brothers, originally, is the intimate feeling from a mother toward her baby. The core of Ren is family reverence, or love, especially love for parents, which is taken as the root of human feelings by Confucius. A human being can only fulfill himself by beginning with family reverence, the starting point of all relationships. This innate feeling must be aware of so that it can be nourished and cultivated, and extended to other social relationships.

Q2: “What’s the significance of Ren?”

For this question, the teacher will guide students to understand that Ren is love, starting from primary familiar relationship between family members. When this innate feeling to intimate people is nourished and cultivated, it will be spread over all humanity, that is humane love. Then, harmonious social relationships with other people will be developed. In this way, ritual propriety is restored and preserved. Put it simply, at home filial piety toward our parents should be cultivated, and out of home love to everybody should be given. If everyone does it in this way, social and political order in a country can be kept.

Q3: How to realize Ren?

Ren is the essence while Li is the form.

Ren is realized by Li, Li puts ren into practice

To realize Ren, Confucius proposed self-cultivation with the starting point from feelings to parents. The feelings are nourished and cultivated into family reverence. The love for parents extends to other people as one begins to Love holistically. This is the way of self-cultivation which begins with intimate feelings to and close relationship with family members, and then extends to others with universal love.

The process of self-cultivation is the development into humaneness (ren) which is the central concept of Confucianism. Along with humaneness is another theme value- ritual propriety or Li. Important as it is, Confucius regards it as secondary because he considers sincere humane love is more significant than ritual propriety because in human communication, the most important factor is one's feelings toward others, while the form of this sentiment comes second.

Q4: How to practice Ren in our daily life?

On one hand, people should love their parents, respect our brothers, and care about other people.

On the other hand, disciplining ourselves is necessary and ritual propriety should be observed, what goes against ritual propriety should not be looked at, not be listened to, not be spoken, and not be done.

So, personal behavior should be cultivated toward family and society.

Third, to further understand that filial piety is essence of Ren, the teacher will play a Chinese song "Chinese filial piety" (中华孝道), students listen to it by looking at the lyrics, then share their understanding of filial piety again "Why it is so important for Chinese people? And how to practice it in our daily life?"

Last, students discuss in groups and translate Confucius' Quotations on filial piety from English to Chinese

1. The Master said, "In serving your father and mother you ought to dissuade them from doing wrong in the gentlest way. If you see your advice being ignored, you should not become disobedient but should remain reverent. You should not complain even if you are distressed." (Book 4: 18)

2. The Master said, "While your parents are alive, you should not travel too far afield. If you do travel, your whereabouts should always be known." (Book 4: 19)

3. The Master said, "When your parents are alive, comply with the rites in serving them; when they die, comply with the rites in burying them and in offering sacrifices to them."

4. The Master said, "A young man should be a good son at home and an obedient young man abroad, sparing of speech but trustworthy in what he says, and should love the multitude at large but cultivate the friendship of his fellow men. If, after all these activities, he has any energy to spare, let him use it to making [make] himself cultivated."

4.2.3 After Class: Assignments

First, students should finish the Quiz of unit 1 online to strengthen understanding of Confucius and his Rennism.

Second, students should finish a Translation task about theme value of Confucius philosophy from Chinese to English as follows to review key words and to practice translation ability:

《论语》是儒家学派的经典著作 (classics) 之一, 该书记录了(records)孔子及其弟子的言行, 传授儒家的主要思想(central theme): 仁、义 (righteousness)、礼、智, 其中, 仁是儒家的核心价值观(kernel value). 仁是指爱父母和敬长兄, 如果这种对家庭成员的情感伸延 (extend to) 到社会的其他人身上, 人与人之间和睦关系也就建立起来了。

Third, students listen to the Chinese song "中华孝道" again after class, learn to sing it and next time students will volunteer to sing it out loud in class.

Last, students rethink on the implications of humaneness to China today and on how to live out Ren in our life.

4.3 Reflections

First, it's important to guide students to reflect on Confucius' ideas of Ren and how to apply it in our daily life and in modern society.

Second, the song "Chinese filial piety" (中华孝道) is so rich and profound in cultural connotation, so beautiful in lyrics and melody, really touching the heart, after enjoying listening to it, it is advisable to guide students to think about how to relate it to and practice it in our daily life.

To cultivate students' cross cultural awareness, it is also important to guide students to think whether there is the concept of filial piety in western countries, how it is shown in their life and

whether it is similar to or different from Chinese filial piety.

5. CONCLUSION

The traditional Chinese culture course in English is an important carrier for implementing ideological-political instruction in Curriculum and carrying out the fundamental task of cultivating morality in students. In this paper, one of the most representative themes of Chinese culture, Confucius and his Rennism is taken as an example. By learning and understanding his filial piety, benevolence and ritual, self-cultivation, it helps to enable students to feel the rich cultural connotation of Confucianism and its far-reaching influence on Chinese culture and its value leadership in today's society. The Chinese culture course teaches and spreads the excellent traditional Chinese culture in English, cultivates students' team spirit through group discussion and cooperation, enhances students' ability of thinking and innovation through classroom learning and communication, and improves students' cross-cultural communication ability to tell Chinese stories in English, which is conducive to helping students to strengthen their cultural self-confidence, enhance their ideological awareness and strengthen their sense of cultural identity, and better communicate Chinese ideological and cultural values to the world.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper is independently completed by Panpan Cao.

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