Exploring the Teaching Design of Ideological and Political Education in Intercultural Communication Courses for English Majors in Universities Based on the Production-Oriented Approach

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to explore the instructional design of ideological and political education (IPE) in intercultural communication courses for English majors in higher education, based on the Production-Oriented Approach (POA). It delves into how IPE elements can be effectively integrated into the teaching practice of intercultural communication courses. Grounded in the theoretical framework of POA, the study discusses the design of instructional activities centered on the unit "Intercultural Awareness" to embed ideological and political elements. The teaching design aims to guide students in gaining a deeper understanding of the importance of intercultural awareness, enhancing their intercultural communication competence while fostering their ideological and political literacy.

Keywords: Production-Oriented Approach (POA), Intercultural communication, Ideological and political instructional design, Intercultural awareness; English teaching in higher education.

1. INTRODUCTION

In May 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the Guidelines for the Construction of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Curricula, which highlight two key points. First, professional education courses should leverage the characteristics and strengths of different disciplines to deeply explore the educational objectives of various programs. Educators are encouraged to extract and refine the ideological values and spiritual essence embedded in the professional knowledge system. The breadth, depth, and emotional resonance of professional courses should be scientifically expanded from perspectives such as profession, industry, nation, international context, culture, and history. This approach aims to enhance the knowledge, humanity, guidance, timeliness, and openness of the courses. Second, the guidelines emphasize advancing ideological and political education (IPE) in curricula according to the characteristics of each discipline. It is evident that the focus of IPE in higher education is the integration of ideological and political education with course instruction, achieving an organic unity of value guidance and knowledge transfer. Specifically, instructors are expected to address three key aspects during teaching: The first is to incorporate ideological and political content: Teachers should skillfully integrate IPE into classroom teaching, using vivid cases and real-world issues to inspire students' independent thinking. The second is to cultivate values and social responsibility: Through activities like class discussions and debates, teachers should nurture students' values and sense of responsibility toward society. The third is to highlight social significance and application: While imparting professional knowledge, teachers should emphasize its social significance and practical value, enabling students to not only master theoretical knowledge but also understand its underlying ideological essence and societal impact.

As a required course for advanced English majors, intercultural communication takes culture as its starting point, delving into both the

differences and commonalities between Chinese and Western cultures. Through comparing these two cultures, students develop intercultural awareness and perspective, gaining an understanding of values, customs, and social norms from different cultural contexts. Building on theoretical knowledge, students improve their intercultural communication skills through rich case analyses and practical situational simulations. Through systematic learning, students not only master language skills but also gain a deep understanding of cultural connotations, enabling them to analyze cultural content in detail, thus enhancing their intercultural awareness in communication activities. In the classroom, teachers guide students to actively participate in discussions, share personal experiences and thoughts, and engage in role-playing activities to strengthen their practical abilities, making them more confident and composed in future international exchanges. During the learning process, the integration of ideological and political education (IPE) content can spark students' interest and cultivate their critical thinking skills. By combining the course content with IPE in a layered, phased manner, this approach lays the foundation for cultivating talents with both noble character and a solid knowledge structure. This paper mainly follows the theoretical guidance of the Production-Oriented Approach (POA) proposed by Professor Wen Qiufang to explore the first unit, "Four Dimensions of Intercultural Awareness," in intercultural communication. Specifically, these four dimensions include the cognition of cultural differences, handling cultural conflicts, cultural adaptation abilities, and the practice of cultural integration. Using the first text as an example, this paper will analyze how IPE elements can be cleverly integrated into English major courses through specific instructional designs. This enables students to not only master language skills but also deeply understand and internalize the core socialist values. The goal of this course design is to reflect on the necessity of IPE in English major curricula, explore effective methods and approaches, and comprehensively enhance students' overall quality.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE PRODUCTION-ORIENTED APPROACH (POA)

The Production-Oriented Approach (POA), proposed by Professor Wen Qiufang in 2017, is a teaching theory developed to address the challenges in the reform of English major education.

"Production-Oriented" means that in the teaching process, the setting of teaching goals effectively enhances learning efficacy, ensuring that students not only absorb knowledge in the classroom but also consolidate what they have learned through practical operations and applications. The entire teaching process is closely linked to the outcomes of student learning. Teachers design various practical activities based on the course content, to ensure that students can apply the knowledge they have acquired in real-life situations. To maximize teaching effectiveness, it is essential for teachers to continuously adjust their teaching strategies and methods, pay attention to student feedback, and provide timely guidance and support. In the teaching process, it is important to ensure the organic connection of teaching steps, guaranteeing that each stage is interconnected, from introducing new knowledge, consolidating practice, to summarizing and improving. This creates a comprehensive teaching chain that enhances the overall teaching effectiveness. Through this approach, the goal is to foster an active and dynamic learning environment where students' language skills and critical thinking abilities are strengthened in practical, context-based tasks.

The Production-Oriented Approach (POA) focuses on comprehensively cultivating students' overall competencies through three key stages: Motivating, Enabling, and Assessing. For English major students, this approach requires solid English language skills, sustained learning ability, diverse adaptability, and flexible critical thinking within the classroom design that integrates POA theory with the lesson content. This lesson plan aims to comprehensively enhance these core competencies. In the motivating stage, the focus is on guiding students to develop a strong interest in achieving the output goals, promoting independent learning, and laying a solid foundation before the lesson. This stage also involves practical activities designed to help students engage actively, shifting from passive learning to proactive involvement, alongside the teacher's instructional tasks. In the enabling stage, the lesson combines text explanation with independent learning. It delves into questions like "What is it?", "Why is it?", and "How is it?", helping students grasp knowledge while improving their analytical and problem-solving abilities. Teachers will guide students in analyzing the structure and content of the texts, and through interactive discussions and group activities, help students master analytical skills. Not only will students recognize specific knowledge points

they've learned, but they will also appreciate the importance and value of applying this knowledge in real-world contexts. Finally, in the assessment stage, various evaluation methods can be used, The aim is to assess how well students have internalized the knowledge and whether the set learning objectives—knowledge, skills, personal development, and ideological education (IPE) goals—have been achieved. Throughout the process, the motivating, enabling, and assessment stages align with the core concept of POA — "learning and application are integrated" — by combining acquired knowledge with practical application. These stages also correspond with the educational philosophy of "comprehensive development of students," aimed at enhancing students' overall quality in knowledge, skills, and moral character. This approach ensures that students receive a holistic education, fully integrating ideological and political elements with academic learning.

3. TEACHING MODEL OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION (IPE) IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COURSES

The aim of the intercultural communication course is to cultivate students' intercultural communication skills based on their language proficiency, enabling them to understand and respect concepts and behaviors in different cultural contexts. Therefore, the integration of ideological and political education (IPE) elements into the entire course is essential. The IPE teaching model for intercultural communication courses can be viewed from four perspectives:
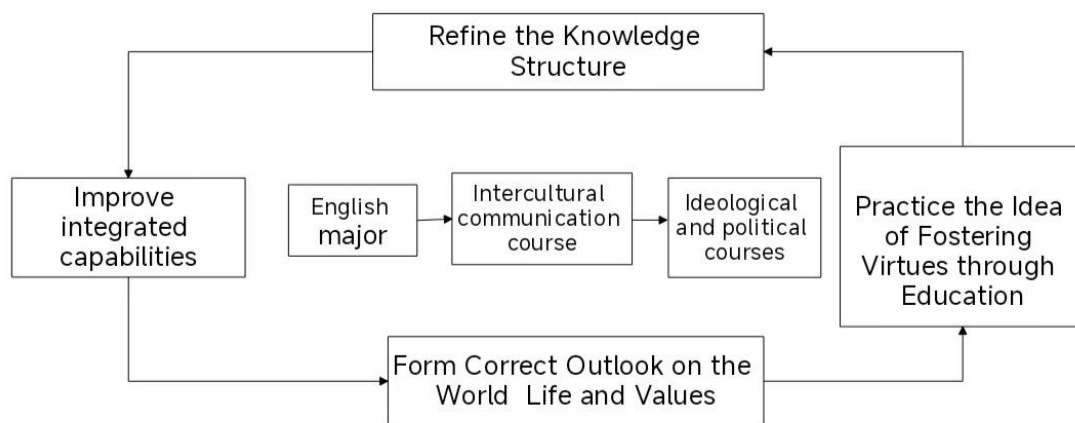

Figure 1 Schematic diagram of ideological and political teaching mode of intercultural communication Course.

3.1 Improvement of Knowledge Structure

In terms of knowledge acquisition, students must grasp the content and theoretical techniques of intercultural communication. By improving the knowledge structure, students can effectively engage with cultural conflicts in a multicultural environment and communicate more effectively. The course content includes, but is not limited to, the analysis of cultural differences, cross-cultural communication strategies, and the development of cultural sensitivity and adaptability. Through case studies, role-playing, and simulated dialogues, students will deepen their understanding of communication styles and behavioral norms in different cultural contexts, thus enhancing their intercultural communication skills.

3.2 Enhancement of Comprehensive Competencies

Through systematic learning and practice, students will gain a deeper understanding of themselves, identify and correct their biases, and enhance their adaptability in intercultural contexts. They will not only distinguish between the broad and narrow concepts of intercultural communication but also apply this knowledge flexibly in real-life interactions. Furthermore, students will learn to adopt an objective and open attitude towards potential challenges, enabling them to navigate communication and collaboration in diverse cultural environments with confidence.

3.3 Formation of Correct Worldviews (Three Views)

After completing the course, students will gain an understanding of the characteristics of different cultures. Students will explore the reasons and manifestations of differing values, thinking, and behavior patterns in various cultural contexts. Through training in intercultural communication techniques and cultural sensitivity, students will be better able to adapt to multicultural environments, promoting international cooperation and communication.

3.4 Practical Concept of Moral Education (Foster virtue through education)

A key objective of course teaching is the internalization of knowledge, enabling students to achieve unity of knowledge and action. In the process of learning, students will not only experience the enhancement of their ideological quality but will also recognize how the power of knowledge can be applied in real life. The knowledge learned helps individuals not only master language skills but also focus on personal development, such as cultivating etiquette, morality, and values. Students will deepen their understanding of the transformation from individual identity to social responsibility, fostering a sense of responsibility and developing positive qualities such as honesty, courage, and empathy.

4. THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION (IPE) IN THE POA-DRIVEN TEACHING MODEL

4.1 Integration of Ideological and Political Education (IPE) Elements

The teaching focus of this lesson is to understand what intercultural awareness is, and the ability to communicate and cooperate effectively in a multicultural environment. What are the four aspects of intercultural awareness? These four aspects are: self-cultural awareness, awareness of other cultures, intercultural adaptability, and intercultural communication skills. What are the characteristics of these four aspects? Self-cultural awareness is characterized by a deep understanding of one's own cultural background, values, and behavior patterns; awareness of other cultures is reflected in an open attitude and respect for other cultural backgrounds, customs, and beliefs; intercultural adaptability refers to the ability to adjust one's behavior and attitude flexibly in different cultural environments; intercultural communication skills are the ability to communicate effectively through language and non-verbal symbols in a multicultural context. How to guide intercultural communication activities? Teachers can help students enhance their intercultural awareness by designing diverse cultural experience activities. At the same time, students are encouraged to reflect on their own cultural biases, cultivate an open and inclusive mindset, and analyze real-life cases to strengthen their ability to apply intercultural skills in real situations. Before teaching, instructors should identify the ideological and political elements that relate to the entry points of the text and incorporate them into the teaching process, specifically before, during, and after class. The ideological and political elements should align with the teaching activities in each step to achieve the set goals. Therefore, before the lesson, students will explore the intrinsic meaning of "Human nature is similar, but habits differ" from the "Three Character Classic" by analyzing specific historical stories and examples to understand the profound philosophy behind this statement. At the same time, teachers will guide students to reflect on the close connection between this saying and traditional Chinese culture, such as how Confucian thought reflects the idea that human nature is inherently good but differs due to environmental influences. This can be further analyzed by incorporating real-life examples from modern society, helping students better grasp the key concept.

4.2 Integration of Ideological and Political Education Elements into the Design of Intercultural Communication Courses under POA

Based on the theory of the Production-Oriented Approach, the author organically integrates ideological and political elements into all aspects of instructional design, ensuring their consistent presence throughout the entire teaching process, thereby maximizing the embodiment of ideological education's coherence and integrity. The teaching design is as follows.

Table 1. Course content design table

Teaching process					
Teaching content	Teaching link			The Ideological and Political Elements	Setting goals
Before class	Teacher:Excavating the Ideological and Political Elements and Organizing the Teaching Process			The Importance of Learning Excellent Traditional Culture	Cultural acquisition
	Student: 1.Watch the video of By nature, men are nearly alike 2.The group discusses its connotation and completes the interpretation, and submits the learning report on the micro-teaching assistant platform				
In class	Teacher: Student-centered design of teaching process, introduction of links, watching Chinese and Western clothing and summarizing cultural characteristics			Rational Speculation on the Cultural Elements of Chinese Costumes from Multiple Angles	Rational Speculation on the Cultural Elements of Chinese Costumes from Multiple Angles
	student: Analyzing the cultural characteristics of clothing according to the clothing of different countries.				
	Text analysis	Productive activities	Teacher: Text interpretation analysis on what why, and how		
			Students: read independently and complete the mind map		
		Motivating	Students	Read the text→Identify the dimensions of cross-cultural awareness→Summarize the defining characteristics of each level and give examples in combination with life. A Mind Map for the Formation of Discourse Structure	
After class	Higher order learning activities	Productive target	Students are divided into five groups, according to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, organize classic cases according to cross-cultural awareness and arrange them for activity display.	Humanistic accomplishment	Critical Thinking Ability and Scientific Spirit

4.3 Teaching Reflection on the Integration of Ideological and Political Education Elements into the Design of Intercultural Communication Courses under POA

When setting teaching goals, the author clearly integrates the cultivation of intercultural awareness with the incorporation of ideological and political education elements. Through the explanation of the text, I not only require students to grasp the basic knowledge and skills of intercultural communication but also emphasize confidence in Chinese culture and respect and inclusivity towards foreign cultures. In terms of text selection, I focus on choosing articles that have both a background of intercultural communication and ideological and political education significance. During the explanation, by guiding students to analyze the intercultural phenomena and ideological and political connotations in the articles, I help them deepen their understanding of the importance of intercultural awareness and stimulate their critical thinking.

In terms of teaching methods, student participation and practical experience are the focus.

In class, when students engage in group discussions, they often have intense debates around issues from the real world, with each group member actively contributing unique insights and solutions. The role-playing segment allows students to step into the shoes of individuals from different cultural backgrounds, giving them first-hand experience of various cultural customs and etiquette, thus deepening their understanding of foreign cultures. For the case analysis, I selected several representative cases to analyze the cultural factors and communication strategies behind them, helping students acquire practical intercultural communication techniques. The integration of ideological and political elements, such as simulating intercultural communication scenarios, allows students to experience the differences and commonalities between cultures in real-life situations, fostering cultural inclusivity and an international perspective.

In terms of teaching assessment, I have established a comprehensive assessment system that not only focuses on students' intercultural communication skills but also emphasizes their performance in ideological and political education. Through various methods such as classroom observation, group discussion reports, and assignment feedback, students are able to enhance their academic abilities while also cultivating critical thinking and a sense of social responsibility.

5. CONCLUSION

Under the theoretical guidance of the Production-Oriented Approach (POA), both teachers and students collaborate in the teaching activities centered around ideological and political education content. The teacher plays the role of organizer, deeply exploring entry points for ideological education and systematically integrating these elements into the teaching process in layers and steps. Meanwhile, students actively participate as both participants and executors of the teaching activities. By engaging in the teaching process, they are better able to experience, absorb, and internalize the knowledge structure being taught. This interactive approach not only enhances the focus of the learning but also significantly boosts students' autonomous learning abilities. Through this method, students gain a profound understanding and mastery of the core content of ideological and political education through practice, which substantially improves learning outcomes. Overall, the POA not only optimizes the teaching process

but also stimulates students' interest and initiative, making ideological and political education more vivid and effective. Regardless of the teaching methods and strategies used, the core objective is to ignite students' intrinsic motivation, promote self-directed learning, and facilitate the transition from mere knowledge acquisition to practical application. This approach encourages active involvement from both teachers and students, ensuring that the teaching process is more organically integrated. By using English as a tool, it helps students understand cultural features and backgrounds, thereby enhancing cultural confidence, critical thinking skills, and the spirit of scientific exploration, guiding them to avoid cultural conflicts and achieve effective communication in future intercultural exchanges.

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