

# A Study on the Integration of Ideological and Political Education in College English Course

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## ABSTRACT

College English plays an important role in the quality and effectiveness of talent cultivation in colleges and universities. At present, there are some problems in the ideological and political education in college English teaching, such as teachers' weak ideological and political consciousness, and no clear integration strategy of ideological and political education. Based on the present situation, this paper analyzes the necessity and feasibility of constructing ideological and political education mode in college English curriculum, then puts forward strategies for integration of ideological and political teaching mode in college English course, such as improving teachers' ideological and political ability, clarifying the ideological and political objectives of the curriculum, selecting appropriate teaching strategies, excavating the cultural connotation of the text and integrating the ideological and political elements into classroom teaching. This paper also suggests that teachers should keep pace with the times, supplement fresh materials, promote the speculative teaching of Chinese and Western culture, and enhance the confidence of Chinese culture. Only through the organic unity of cultivation of students' personality with language learning, can institutions of higher learning cultivate high-quality talents with all-round development.

**Keywords:** College English, Ideological and political education, Teaching mode.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

College English is a general compulsory course set up by colleges and universities in China. Its main purpose is to enable students to learn English language, and use English to spread and carry forward Chinese culture against the background of global economic development, so as to improve China's cultural soft power. Based on this, the academic community has put ideological and political elements into the reform practice of college English education and teaching in China, in order to improve the educational responsibility of college English education in the new era and realize the "dual value" of higher education. In recent years, despite the corresponding changes and innovations in the forms and methods of college English education, the content of education has always been dominated by cultivating students' language application ability. In 2017, the National Education Department implemented corresponding policies, proposed to carry out educational reform with the goal of integrating ideological and political

education into college English, and deeply explored the ideological and political elements contained in college English course. In order to give full play to the role of ideological and political education in college English curriculum, teachers should really grasp the connotation and significance of ideological and political education. For a long time, ideological and political education in universities has always been a key part of the school education system. Ideological and political courses and Marxist courses in colleges and universities occupy the key positions for students' moral education, and play a decisive role in the cultivation of college students' ideology and moral sentiment. With the development of society, it can be seen that students' ideological and political education not only depends on the original ideological and political courses, but also should be integrated into other courses in the school. Classroom is not only an important place for students to learn theoretical and cultural knowledge and cultivate professional skills, but also the main channel for them to establish correct views. Therefore, the integration of

ideological and political education into curriculum design, classroom teaching and textbook compilation plays an important role in cultivating high-quality socialist builders and successors with comprehensive ability.

## **2. THE NECESSITY AND FEASIBILITY OF INTEGRATING IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION INTO COLLEGE ENGLISH COURSE**

Currently, as the main subject of study and research, college English helps improve students' ability of international communication and scientific and cultural exchange. In the process of education, it is necessary and feasible for the teachers to integrate ideological and political education into English course.

### ***2.1 The Necessity of Integrating Ideological and Political Education into College English Course***

It is clearly pointed out in *College English Teaching Guide* issued by the Education Bureau that college English education is one of the important components of China's higher education, which is of great significance to promote the comprehensive accomplishment of college students' English language knowledge and ability. English is the main teaching subject in college language teaching. College English education plays an irreplaceable role in cultivating talents. In *Requirements for College English Classroom Teaching* issued by the Education Bureau, it is clearly stated that college English course is not only a basic language course, but also a teaching course to understand world culture, expand students' knowledge and literacy, etc.[1]<sup>2</sup> College English course bears the function of humanistic education in colleges and universities, which has two characteristics: instrumental and humanistic. Instrumental means that students master the language of English subjects, communicate in English and learn to understand world cultures. Humanism refers to the comprehensive quality and overall development of students.[2] College English courses help students understand foreign cultures. While cultivating students' English vocabulary skills, teachers should put emphasis on cultivating students' political and ideological quality and ability, helping students form correct

outlook on life, world outlook and ideological values.

### ***2.2 The Feasibility of Integrating Ideological and Political Education into College English Course***

As one of the main subjects in colleges and universities, the contents of college English textbooks cover life philosophy, hot social issues, biography, history and culture, etc. When learning English, students not only experience the cultural differences between the two countries, but also cultivate patriotism, establishing good moral character and socialist core values. Similarly, ideological education courses are conducive to promoting students to establish a good concept of life value and helping students to achieve knowledge level. From this point of view, college English courses and ideological and political courses coincide. College English teachers thus can use teaching equipment, strictly sort important material of Chinese culture, and design different teaching plan, so as to help students understand Chinese culture, guiding students to use English to tell Chinese stories.

## **3. PROBLEMS IN IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION OF COLLEGE ENGLISH COURSE**

College English plays an important role in the quality and effectiveness of talent cultivation in colleges and universities. At present, there are some problems in the ideological and political education in college English teaching.

### ***3.1 Emphasizing Examination and Neglecting Education***

In recent years, college English teaching in China has placed too much emphasis on the instrumental value of language, and training students' language skills has become the main goal of college English teaching.[3] The aim is to help students master a universal communication tool and improve their English listening, speaking, reading and writing ability. College English teaching has been weakened into language knowledge examination and test-oriented ability training, and the goal of college students' English learning has been simplified to pass the semester course examination, college English CET-4 and CET-6, and professional English CET-4 and CET-8. The teaching content is more focused on language

knowledge analysis. The teaching method of teachers is mechanically simple, repeatedly analyzing language points, exercises and examination questions. Students listen to lectures, take notes, brush questions after class to consolidate the relevant knowledge content to improve test scores. Obviously, this kind of utilitarian education restricts the full development of students' comprehensive abilities such as analysis and synthesis, reasoning and thinking, research and creation, etc., so it is difficult to really improve students' comprehensive language ability.

### ***3.2 Emphasizing the West over the Local***

One of the main reasons for the weakening of ideological and political functions in college English courses is the absence of local culture and the insufficient presentation of ideological and political elements in the textbooks. At present, in order to create "authentic" foreign language and culture learning context, college English textbooks mainly use original English textbooks, newspapers and magazines, covering politics, economy, culture, science and technology, society, education, ethics, religion. It is authentic language, real scene. Objectively speaking, it provides rich resources for contemporary college students to comprehensively understand the people, and things of Western countries such as Britain and the United States, understand the culture of English-speaking countries and improve their cross-cultural communication skills. But, on the other hand, such textbooks also become obstacles to the organization of ideological and political activities in college English courses in China, which lack English expression of Chinese elements and narration of Chinese stories. The textbooks fail in carrying forward the Chinese excellent traditional culture, and the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, the socialist core values, contemporary Chinese people's great practice are rarely reflected, and China's appeal to building a community of human destiny is rarely mentioned. Such textbooks cannot ensure the English input of knowledge about Chinese culture, resulting in Chinese college students' superficial and vague understanding of national conditions and culture, as well as low cultural output ability, resulting in low efficiency and failure in cross-cultural communication, and gradually leading to cultural "aphasia". This is not conducive to the cultivation of students' cultural identity and cultural confidence, and their establishment of national consciousness,

national feelings, and social responsibility consciousness.

### ***3.3 Emphasizing Publicizing but Neglecting Practice***

Ideological and political course mainly focuses on publicizing. Mr. Zhang Dainian pointed out that Chinese philosophy has the characteristics of emphasizing life rather than knowledge, understanding rather than argumentation.[4] As far as the ideological and political teaching of college English course is concerned, some teachers lack systematic learning and research spirit, and it is difficult to integrate the subject knowledge teaching with ideological and political education. Some teachers can not fully carry out rigorous logical reasoning. Ideological and political education mainly becomes empty theoretical preaching and slogan propaganda. Theoretical explanation is insufficient, and it is difficult to stimulate students' moral feelings, ideals and beliefs. Obviously, such ideological and political education is difficult to achieve the desired results.

## **4. STRATEGIES FOR IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL TEACHING IN COLLEGE ENGLISH COURSE**

Based on the analysis of the problems in the ideological and political education in college English teaching, this paper puts forward strategies for integration of ideological and political teaching mode in college English course.

### ***4.1 Optimizing Curriculum Training Objectives and Highlighting Students' Ideological and Political Orientation***

From the perspective of curriculum education, while improving the students' English communication skills, comprehensive application ability and cognitive ability, college English education should focus on cultivating college students' ideology, political identity and moral norms. Teachers should combine language knowledge with ideological and political education, leading to the ideological construction of college English course.

College English teaching should constantly reform students' world outlook, outlook on life and values, and help students establish a scientific ideological system, adhere to using the basic standpoint, viewpoint and method of Marxism to

analyze the problems and difficulties in the process of social development of the country. Students should learn to use Marxism to guide Chinese spirit, consciously resist the influence of the Western concept. While actively pursuing individual growth, students will consider the relevance of their destiny to future of the nation, strengthen the sense of social responsibility and historical mission, overcome refined egoism, take "truth, kindness and beauty" as the spiritual pursuit of individuals, firmly establish the lofty life values of "serving the people", strive to consciously practice the spirit of labor and dedication, and realize self-value in the process of creating social value.

#### ***4.2 Promoting Students' Spirit of Patriotism, Collectivism and Socialism, and Establishing a Distinct Political Identity***

College English education should put cultivating the students' political quality in the outstanding position, help students understand the basic theory of the party and the state, political system, policy principles, being confident in our path, theory, system, and culture. On the basis of rational cognition, students thus form a healthy political psychology and political identity, support the leadership of the Party and the socialist system, and strengthen love and pride for the motherland; After establishing a correct sense of family and country, young generations consciously integrate the country, society and individuals, and actively participate in the cause of national construction.

Also, ideological and political education of college English should strengthen the construction of students' social morality and personal morality helping students adhere to the guidance of socialist core values, establishing students' moral concept system characterized by positive health, upward goodness and people's stance. When using English in international communication, students should pay attention to their behavior, show good spirit and moral cultivation, and create a good international image.

#### ***4.3 Improving Teachers' Political Literacy and Exploring Ideological and Political Elements***

Language is the carrier of thought and culture. Although the texts in college English course inevitably contain Western bourgeois standpoint and viewpoint, they also contain rich cultural value

resources. Under the guidance of ideological and political ideas in the curriculum, teachers should constantly improve their political literacy and consciously integrate ideological and political elements such as the essence of traditional culture, realistic spirit, positive outlook on life and values into the classroom teaching so that students can acquire language knowledge and ideological and political contents unconsciously.

Besides, college English teachers should deeply analyze the text, excavate the ideological and political elements about the outlook on life and values in the text. Taking New Progressive College English Integrated Course 3, Unit 2 Conspicuous Consumption as an example, the teaching content is designed to enable students to improve their political literacy, and understand American values and consumer culture on the premise of mastering English language skills. In the teaching practice, the teaching team has conducted long-term in-depth research on textbooks, and integrated the ideological and political elements to strengthen the ideological education. Before class, teachers collected some films about American consumer culture and values, such as *The Great Gatsby* and *The Million Dollar Baby*. The students are arranged to watch the film while previewing the text and think the questions such as "which is more important, money and happiness?", "Is money successful?", "If you can choose, do you prefer a rich family or a loving family? And Why?" These pre-reading questions enable students to have a preliminary reflection on the relationship and significance of money, happiness and success. Among them, the idea of money is an important problem faced by contemporary college students. In the process of text learning, students' thinking on moral education materials will be further stimulated, and their outlook on life and values will be further optimized. In the process of pre-class analysis and integration, teachers actively integrate ideological and political content to jointly realize the improvement of English knowledge and ideological and moral quality.

#### ***4.4 Keeping Pace with the Times and Supplementing Fresh Materials***

To implement the ideological and political education in college English course, teachers should pay attention to the timeliness of teaching content, social hot spots and focus issues, timely make classroom teaching truly "live", and constantly enhance the sense of the times. The

sudden outbreak of Covid 19 in 2020 once again raised the alarm for the relationship between man and nature. Man's destruction of nature will eventually hurt human beings. [5] In fact, as early as two centuries ago, Engels profoundly pointed out in *Dialectics of Nature*: "We should not be too intoxicated with our human victory over nature. For every such victory, nature retaliates against us." [6]<sup>519</sup> The documentary *Nature is Speaking* is an English public welfare film that well describes the relationship between man and nature. It is divided into mother nature, ocean, land, rainforest, mahogany, water, flowers, coral reefs, sky, mountains, ice, home, etc. This is a letter written by nature to human beings. It is described in the first person and contains the simplest and most profound education of the view of nature. By introducing this teaching material, teachers can arouse students' potential consciousness of respecting and protecting nature, firmly establish the ecological concept of "man needs nature", and deeply realize that human beings are a part of nature. Human beings should not be above nature, but follow the laws of nature and live in harmony with nature. The documentary is full of strong flavor of the times and profound ecological thought, and provides classic ideological and political materials for college English to carry out the theme education of the relationship between man and nature. At the same time, college English teachers should actively pay attention to social and current affairs at home and abroad, provide practical materials that keep pace with the times, encourage students to actively participate in discussions, guide students to shape a correct world outlook and value to analyze the world, grasp history and lead the times while improving students' interest in learning college English.

#### ***4.5 Reforming the Teaching Methods and Enhancing the Ideological and Political Emotional Experience of the Course***

Teachers should abandon the teaching method of indoctrination, strengthen the training of students' critical thinking ability, and enhance the attraction of ideological and political theory knowledge in the course. In recent years, with the popularization of the concept of critical English teaching, more and more college English teachers have realized the importance of the cultivation of critical English ability. In addition to the basic facts, principles, concepts, methods, characters, symbols and information about ideological and political content, the theoretical knowledge of ideological

and political theory of the course also contains a series of rules, ideas, generation logic, thinking mode and so on. Teachers should consciously develop students' thinking ability, deepen the study of ideological content and knowledge connotation. In the process of teaching, the integrated use of analysis, induction, deduction, judgment, reasoning, thinking method should be applied. Teachers should restore the original charm and aesthetic value of knowledge, changing theory into method and virtue. Teachers should help students grasp the complete knowledge system of ideological and political science with scientific thinking, expand students' thinking space and spiritual world, and let students experience the sense of achievement, value and efficacy of theoretical knowledge learning, exploration and creation.

Teachers should open up channels of practical activities, help students realize life is education, and enhance ideological and political affinity of courses. Combining theory with practice is the basic viewpoint and style of study advocated by Marxism. The teaching of curriculum theoretical knowledge must be connected with the objective practice. So teachers should try to hold English salon activities, campus drama festival, culture and art festival, debate competition and other campus cultural activities, encourage students' positive attention to current affairs and hot topics, actively participate in social practice activities such as "volunteer service", continuously develop Marxist position, forming the ability to use English to describe problems, expressing rational position point of view, becoming a qualified communicator of Chinese culture, propagandist of Chinese policy and defender of Chinese spirit.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

To sum up, language is the main carrier of culture, and the main purpose of learning English is to promote the further development of mother tongue culture and improve the overall strength and competitiveness of Chinese culture in the world. When carrying out ideological and political education in college English teaching, teachers should fully explore the hidden educational resources of ideological and political elements and clarify that the ideological and political education mechanism of English curriculum is the main measure to promote the comprehensive development of college students, which is of great value and significance to improve the effectiveness and quality of college English teaching. Carrying

out ideological and political education in college English teaching can effectively cultivate college students' cultural identity and professional quality, give full play to the effect of building morality and cultivating people, and lay a solid foundation for college students' better development in the future.. Also, students can learn to distinguish right from wrong, resolutely resist the invasion of the wrong ideas in the West, and become high-quality talents with both political integrity and professional ability.

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