



Research and Practice on Teaching Reform of Academic English under the Guidance of Curriculum Ideological and Political Education

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Abstract. Curriculum ideological and political education has become a new educational concept and trend in the new era. This research takes the course of Academic English One as an example, which has just been successfully approved as a demonstration course of ideological and political education of the authors' college, therefore having unique advantages in this field. The integration of ideological and political education and course knowledge can not only cultivate students' academic English language skills, critical thinking ability and cross-cultural communication ability, but also strengthen students' ideological belief and confidence in the excellent traditional Chinese culture, develop students' academic literacy, strengthen the education on students' professional ideals, ethics and norms, and cultivate their sense of vocational responsibility so as to guide them to grow into talents needed for the socialist construction. This paper mainly discusses the exploration and practice of ideological and political education in Academic English One from the aspects of determining the course objectives, teaching contents, teaching mode, teaching case and evaluation system, in the hope of providing a reference for the reform of academic English teaching.

Keywords: Academic English One, Curriculum Ideological and Political Education, Product-Oriented Approach, Blended Learning.

1 Background

On September 17, 2018, the Ministry of Education issued *the Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Accelerating the Construction of High-level Undergraduate Education and Comprehensively Improving the Ability of Talents Cultivation* [1], making specific arrangements for improving the quality of talents training, and particularly emphasizing the construction of new engineering, new medical science, new liberal arts and new agriculture. Talents cultivation is related to the development of the whole society. How to cultivate compound talents with high qualities needed by the society and the country and how to conduct ideological and political education well are the fundamental missions of today's universities. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that ideological and political work should be carried out throughout the whole teaching process in order to create a new situation for the development of higher education in our country [2].

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The report of the 19th CPC National Congress pointed out that building a powerful country in education is a basic project for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. We must speed up the modernization of education, making it a strategic priority for the country, and ensure that our education can meet the needs of the people. Xi also said that ideological and political education is the lifeline of all work in schools [3]. Universities should comprehensively promote the construction of ideological and political courses, embed it into the whole talents training system, give full play to the educating role of various disciplines, and ensure the quality of talents training in colleges and universities.

2 Current Researches and Problems

Under this background, the research on ideological and political education in English courses is continuously developing. At present, the *Guide for Ideological and Political Education in College English Courses* compiled by East China Normal University puts forward the principles and gives a specific operation plan for ideological and political education in College English courses, showing the idea of guiding the reform of college English teaching system with ideological and political education. The School of Humanities and Foreign Languages of Qingdao University of Technology has actively explored the path of ideological and political education in academic English courses from the aspects of team building, resource construction and teaching mode. China University of Petroleum (East China) has defined the importance of combining academic English knowledge teaching and ability training with the education of ideals, beliefs and moral concepts. South China University of Technology has made an active and exemplary attempt in the field of ideological and political education in academic English courses.

It can be seen from the above that the research on ideological and political education in academic English courses shows a developing trend. But some problems still remain as follows. First, there are differences in the understanding of ideological and political education among teachers, and there is a lack of unified implementation standard. Second, the depth and breadth of the exploration of ideological and political contents need to be extended. Third, the process of integrating ideological and political elements into knowledge teaching and skill training is unnatural. Next, students' perception of ideological and political contents is insufficient; so their participation is not high. In addition, the effectiveness and practicability of the evaluation of ideological and political education effect in academic English courses need to be improved. Besides, teachers training and team building also need to be strengthened. Moreover, although some relevant documents or guidelines provide certain references, it is difficult to customize the implementation plan according to the characteristic of each institution.

3 Necessity and Significance of This Study

Our college is mainly based on medical disciplines. Academic English One is a compulsory public basic course for most undergraduate majors in the sophomore year. It

has both instrumental and humanistic attributes and involves scientific exploration. Therefore, the research and reform of it is in line with the requirements of the construction of new medical science and new liberal arts in the new era. This course has just been successfully approved as a school-level demonstration course of ideological and political education. Since it has large influence and wide coverage, integrating ideological and political education into the course teaching is of great necessity and significance because it is not only an important way to strengthen and improve the ideological and political work among students, but also a positive response to the national requirement of "ideological and political education in all courses", which has rich and profound practical significance for realizing the goal of talents training in China and showing the educational characteristics of our college.

4 Teaching Reform Plan of Ideological and Political Education in Academic English One

4.1 Overall Conception

Guidelines for Curriculum Ideological and Political Construction in Colleges and Universities (Hereinafter referred to as the *Guidelines*) [4] require teachers to organically integrate ideological and political contents into course teaching by combing the teaching contents and analyzing the course characteristics. The core of Academic English One is to exercise students' language skills, cultivate their academic literacy and shape their ideological values. It upholds the educational concept of "student-centered" and attaches equal importance to knowledge and skill teaching as well as value shaping.

In view of the current problems in ideological and political education in academic English courses, this study has taken some reform measures and made some achievements in the following aspects. First, we clarified the teaching objectives, providing teachers with principles and operational norms when implementing ideological and political education. Second, after analyzing the educational orientation and characteristics of our college, we excavated unique resources and optimized the teaching contents. At the same time, we improved the teaching method, evaluation mechanism and other related aspects. In doing so, we have promoted the construction of the ideological and political education in Academic English One to a certain degree.

4.2 Teaching Design and Implementation Path

Teaching Objectives. After summarizing and analyzing the previous teaching, this study adjusted and optimized the teaching objectives. Now, the course objectives include three aspects: knowledge objectives, ability objectives and value objectives. In the teaching process, we aim to guide students' attention to knowledge and skills needed for professional study and research, improve students' academic English language application and communication ability, and cultivate their academic literacy and critical thinking ability. In the mean time, we aim to help students deeply understand the advanced nature of the socialist system, the excellent traditional Chinese culture,

the community with a shared future for mankind and other advanced systems and concepts. In this way, we hope to strengthen students' confidence, cultivate their professional responsibility, and strengthen their vocational ideals, professional ethics and other related aspects.

Teaching Contents. Based on the text book and course objectives and according to the overall requirements of the *Guidelines* and the curriculum construction, our team focused on teaching contents, highlighted value guidance, optimized contents supply, and consolidated ideological and political effects. These ideological and political themes are highly emphasized: socialist core values, cultural literacy, scientific spirit, environmental awareness, thinking quality, professional ethics and norms, doctor benevolence and so on. Our team has already established the ideological and political education syllabus and teaching plan, comprehensively sorted out important knowledge points, deeply explored their combination points with the curriculum ideological and political education, carefully reconstructed the teaching contents, developed multi-modal learning materials, and constructed a resource base. The resource base mainly includes the following categories: text-based materials, basic knowledge materials, language skills materials, practice and test materials, materials with professional characteristics, materials related to the integration of language learning and curriculum ideological and political education, materials related to literacy development as well as students' theme-related works.

Teaching Mode. A Blended Learning (BL) mode is adopted. Based on the text book, combined with its SPOC course, this course has formed an online and offline integration mode when implementing ideological and political education. This mode utilizes network platform, mobile phone and other media to effectively extend the teaching time and space. It not only meets the personalized and differentiated learning needs, but also enhances students' sense of expectation, participation and achievement, and improves their independent learning ability. At the same time, in order to consolidate the effect of this mode and ensure that the ideological and political education effect of this course takes root, this study adopts Production-Oriented Approach (POA). POA takes the unit learning content as the basis and the output task as the starting point. It follows a "motivating-enabling-evaluating" process and builds a "teacher-student community" so as to help students achieve promotion in language, skills, critical thinking, cross-cultural awareness and ability, academic accomplishments, professional ethics and so on.

Teaching Case. The sample text is Can Pets Make You Happy. The ideological and political education is embedded throughout the whole process. Within the framework of POA, before the class students are informed of the main production task, which is to introduce why pets can help relieve stress. They are required to use some professional terms and record their work into audio or video and then submit it to the online learning platform. To help the students successfully complete the main task, they are divided into groups and given different sub-tasks. By searching materials, having discussions, watching videos and so on, they may learn something about the reasons why people

keep pets and the physical, psychological and social impacts of pets on human beings. They also need to dialectically analyze the safety risks and legal and ethical issues that raising pets, feeding stray animals or disposing animals may bring to themselves and others. During the class, students are guided to complete the sub-tasks one by one. They are guided to learn about the key expressions, text structure, and academic feature. Ideological and political education is integrated in appropriately to achieve the organic integration of knowledge teaching, skill training and value shaping. The ideological and political education elements mainly include braveness when facing stress, humanistic care, vocational responsibility, dialectical thinking etc. Diverse materials and various enabling activities are adopted to provide students with scaffolds from different aspects, including language, information, structure and values. After that, students need to complete the draft of the main task, try oral presentation and then conduct a teacher-student cooperation evaluation. After class, students internalize what they have learned, improve the draft and then submit their final production work. Finally, the teacher gives comments and feedback on their works so that the theme can be further extended and important values can be strengthened.

Evaluation System. This course adopts a combination of formative evaluation and summative evaluation. Students' language knowledge, academic ability and comprehensive literacy are evaluated, with the emphasis on the latter two aspects. The course mainly takes formative evaluation and focuses on the whole teaching and learning process. The formative evaluation mainly covers the following aspects: attendance, class participation, online and offline assignments completion, and practical training. Assignments mainly include exercises on the topics like food safety, technology and life, self identify, health management, psychology in life, and zoology. Practical training mainly focuses on the basic knowledge and skills about medical English, covering the topics like human body, skeletal system and nervous system. Summative evaluation generally refers to the final examination. The two forms of evaluation work together to comprehensively evaluate students' knowledge learning, ability developing and value shaping.

5 Possible Problems and Countermeasures

The integration of ideological and political education in academic English teaching is a relatively new field. Many problems need to be overcome in the practical teaching. First, it is necessary for teachers to constantly strengthen their awareness and ability in ideological and political education. Second, there are not so many materials and research models available for reference, so it requires teachers to develop a practical outline and an effective teaching plan. At the same time, the teachers need to keep up with the times so as to provide students with the frontier developments and the latest scientific cases. In addition, since Academic English One upholds POA approach, to make the effect of ideological and political education take root, it requires long-term persistence and effective guidance from teachers to build multidimensional scaffolds for students and stimulate their long-term interest in learning and discovering. Moreover, due

to the limited class hours, the ratio of online to offline learning and how to conduct BL learning effectively need to be discussed and flexibly applied.

6 Conclusion

In the process of promoting the development of the country and finally realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, the curriculum ideological and political education in colleges and universities plays an important role. Some universities have conducted ideological and political education reform in English courses, and have made some achievements, but there are still some problems. This study introduces the ideological and political education reform of Academic English One in the authors' college, including the overall concept, teaching objectives, teaching contents, teaching mode, teaching case and evaluation system. Despite the limitations, it has school-based characteristics and is quite feasible. It is hoped that it can provide some reference for reforms and researches in this field.

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