

Research on Curriculum Ideology and Politics of English Majors' Reading Courses under the Vision of "Understanding Contemporary China"

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Abstract

Under the background of curriculum ideology and politics in the foreign language teaching in colleges and universities, A Reading and Writing Course in the series of textbooks "Understanding Contemporary China" is a textbook for the cultivation of English reading and writing ability and curriculum ideology and politics launched by FLTRP. This paper discusses the rich ideological and political elements in the textbook and the application and practice of the textbook in the reading courses for English majors. Through this study, the author hopes to combine reading courses for English majors with ideological and political education in order to cultivate compound talents with ideological and political accomplishment and international vision.

Keywords

"Understanding Contemporary China"; A English Reading and Writing Course; Reading Courses for English Majors; Curriculum Ideology and Politics.

1. Preface

Guidelines for Curriculum Ideological and Political Construction in Colleges and Universities puts forward that the ideological and political construction of curriculum in colleges and universities should be carried out in an all-round way to give full play to the educational role of each course. Teachers should dig deeply and refine the ideological value and spiritual connotation contained in the professional knowledge system, scientifically and reasonably broaden the breadth, depth and temperature of the professional courses, increase the knowledge and humanity of the courses, and enhance the leading character, the era and the openness. In this context, English major teachers should integrate the concepts of "new liberal arts" and "ideology and politics" into their teaching, change the way of education, integrate ideological and political elements into teaching, improve their teaching and research ability, so as to adapt to the new requirements under the background of the new era, and cultivate high-quality interdisciplinary talents with international vision and feelings of home and country. As a basic course for English majors, reading courses for English majors play an important role in English majors. Therefore, it is of great significance to deeply understand the importance of ideological and political education in English major reading courses and explore how to effectively integrate ideological and political education into English major courses to cultivate students' ideological and political accomplishment and international vision.

With the acceleration of globalization, cross-cultural communication and cooperation have become an important trend in today's world. As an international language, English plays an important role in international communication. Therefore, the teaching quality of English majors is of great significance for cultivating talents with international vision and intercultural

communication ability. However, the traditional teaching of English majors often pays too much attention to the imparting of language knowledge and skills, but neglects the cultivation of students' ideological consciousness, cultural accomplishment and cross-cultural communication ability. As a result, many students lack understanding and respect for different cultures in cross-cultural communication, making it difficult for them to communicate and cooperate effectively.

2. Interpretation of Ideological and Political Elements in A Reading and Writing Course of “Understanding Contemporary China”

In 2022, the “Understanding Contemporary China” series of teaching materials for universities and colleges has been officially published, which is widely used by undergraduates and postgraduates majoring in foreign languages and literature and international students majoring in foreign languages. Among them, “Understanding Contemporary China” series of English textbooks include A English Reading and Writing Course, A Public Speaking Course and Chinese-English Translation suitable for undergraduate English majors in colleges and universities, and Advanced Chinese-English Translation and Advanced Chinese-English Interpretation suitable for graduate students in translation majors in colleges and universities. A Reading and Writing Course of “Understanding Contemporary China” is the author's English reading course used in the second year of English major.

A Reading and Writing Course of “Understanding Contemporary China”, as a combination of language learning and ideological and political education materials, aims to improve students' language ability through English reading and writing training, while deepening the understanding of contemporary China's society, culture, politics, economy and other aspects. In this textbook, ideological and political elements are cleverly integrated into each unit, so that students can receive positive value guidance and ideological education while learning English. This book guides students to learn to analyze China's contemporary development and achievements using Chinese theoretical frameworks, and explain the Chinese path and Chinese wisdom from a cross-cultural perspective. In the process of content learning, we should further consolidate the basic skills of English words and sentences, understand the discourse characteristics of Chinese current political discourse, and improve the ability of current political literature reading, academic discussion and academic writing.

2.1. The Main Content of Ideological and Political Elements in A Reading and Writing Course of “Understanding Contemporary China”

This textbook integrates value shaping, knowledge imparting and ability cultivation. The ideological and political elements in the textbook mainly have the following four aspects:

(1) Core values: The textbook selects articles related to core values, such as honesty, friendliness, patriotism, etc. For example, the fourth chapter “Whole-Process People's Democracy” focuses on strengthening confidence in the political system; The fifth chapter is “A Fair and Just Society”, focusing on “the rule of law”; The sixth chapter, “Carrying Reform Through to the End”, focuses on the thought and basic strategy for a new era; Chapter 10, “Learning from History to Create a Bright Future”, makes clear the main content of the people-centered development thought, so that students can deeply understand and practice the core values while learning English.

(2) Excellent traditional Chinese culture: Through the introduction of Chinese traditional festivals, historical stories, cultural heritage, etc., the first chapter “The Mission of Chinese Youth” focuses on carrying forward the spirit of May Fourth and living up to the great era; The seventh chapter, “Towards National Rejuvenation”, focuses on carrying forward the spirit of

the great Long March, walking the road of today's Long March, stimulating students' interest in and love for the excellent traditional Chinese culture, and enhancing cultural self-confidence.

(3) National Development Strategies and Policies: The textbook covers China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative, innovation-driven development strategy, etc. Chapter 9, "Whither Civilizations?", focuses on the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, adheres to the independent foreign policy of peace, helps students understand national development strategies and policies, and enhances the sense of national identity and mission.

(4) Contemporary Chinese social hot issues: In view of the current hot issues of social concern, such as environmental protection, education reform, medical and health care, the second chapter "Beautiful China" focuses on the principles that must be adhered to to strengthen the construction of ecological civilization; The third chapter, "High-Quality Development", focuses on in-depth understanding of new development concepts; Chapter 8, "Harmony Without Uniformity", focuses on the importance of cultural diversity and promoting exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, and guides students to pay attention to social reality and enhance their sense of social responsibility in learning.

By integrating these elements, students can gain a deeper understanding of the core values. This way of education is not only to simply impart knowledge, but also to guide students to establish a correct outlook on life, values and world outlook in the learning process. Through reading the original works, students can directly touch the original ideas, draw wisdom from them, comprehend the truth, and then internalize it in the mind and externalize it in the speech.

2.2. The Way of Integrating Ideological and Political Elements in A Reading and Writing Course of "Understanding Contemporary China"

(1) Theme setting: The theme of each unit revolves around an ideological and political element. The textbook includes 10 units of the following themes, which are: "The Mission of Chinese Youth", "Beautiful China", "High-Quality Development", "Whole-Process People's Democracy", "A Fair and Just Society", "Carrying Reform Through to the End", "Towards National Rejuvenation", "Harmony Without Uniformity", "Whither Civilizations?", "Learning from History to Create a Bright Future". These themes enable students to learn English while deeply thinking and understanding the relevant ideological and political content.

(2) After-class discussion and writing: Through organizing after-class discussion and writing exercises, students are guided to think and express deeply on related ideological and political topics, and further consolidate and internalize the ideological and political content.

(3) Vocabulary and expression: In the teaching of English vocabulary and expression, pay attention to the combination of ideological and political content, so that students can understand and use relevant ideological and political vocabulary and expression while mastering language skills.

3. Application and Practice of Ideological and Political Elements in Curriculum in A Reading and Writing Course of "Understanding Contemporary China"

A English Reading and Writing Course guides students to systematically study and learn to analyze the development and achievements of contemporary China with Chinese theories, and explain the Chinese road and Chinese wisdom from a cross-cultural perspective; In the process of content learning, we should further consolidate the basic skills of English words and sentences, understand the discourse characteristics of Chinese current political discourse, and improve the ability of current political literature reading, academic discussion and academic writing.

One of the major features of A English Reading and Writing Course is the special setting of "Global Perspective" and "Telling China's Story to the World", which guide students to pay attention to the international community's understanding and misunderstanding of Chinese theory and practice, cultivate students' cross-cultural thinking awareness, and improve their ability to tell Chinese stories well in English. In the process of practice and teaching, this course is a good complement of knowledge and broadness of vision for both teachers and students. Students can integrate ideological and political content into reading while learning the course, improve their English reading ability, and enhance their ability to tell Chinese stories well to the international community and voice China.

Each unit of the textbook is neatly laid out, setting up nine modules: Lead-in, Read and Respond, Text, Analytical Reading, Global Perspectives, Telling China's Story to the World, Language in Focus, Ancient Chinese Wisdom and Further Reading.

Take the seventh chapter as an example. The teaching theme of the unit is "Towards National Rejuvenation". In this unit, the teaching objectives mainly include the following aspects: understand the tenets of the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation; interpret the spirit of the Long March; justify the necessity of upholding the spirit of the Long March under the current circumstances; take a global perspective on China's new long march towards the realization of the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation; write an essay about how the living standards of Chinese people have improved over the past decades; use key words and expressions about the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

In the course implementation, teachers adopt the "Comprehension-Practice-Critical Thinking-Inquiry" - "Four-in-One" curriculum implementation method, relying on A English Reading and Writing Course of the "Understanding Contemporary China", integrating the skills of "listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating" with the curriculum ideology and politics, leading students to give full play to creative thinking, expand thinking ability and practice Chinese theory from various aspects. Form high-quality language shaping. With the focus on cultivating students' reading ability, in the process of carrying out language activities related to reading, we should constantly deepen ideological construction and understanding, maximize learning efficiency, and pay attention to cultivating students' language application ability, critical thinking ability, innovation ability, cross-cultural ability, cooperation ability and independent learning ability (see Figure 1).

While completing the basic skills of English reading, it can help students shape the core values, improve the comprehensive quality of students, help students establish correct values and strengthen cultural self-confidence, and actively spread the voice of China and tell Chinese stories.

Step 1: Students complete the two sections of "Lead-in" and "Read and Respond" through independent learning and classroom questioning; In addition to telling the students to write an essay as instructed, the teacher divided the students into small groups and had the group representative present the results of their discussion to the class. Teachers can also use visual or interactive tools to motivate learning.

Step 2: In the "Analytical Reading" section, the learning is divided into two parts: "Understanding the Text" and "Critical Thinking". The teacher focuses on training students' understanding and critical thinking ability through classroom questions, group discussions and teacher comments. In the "Understanding the Text" of "Analytical Reading", the teacher first helps students understand the main structure of the article and get familiar with the central idea of the article by filling in the blanks in the outline. Then the teacher asks the students to work in pairs to discuss some questions about the text and share the results in class. The purpose of this group task is to push students to understand the main points of the text through discussion and exploration. As a reading course, the "Analytical Reading" module is the focus of

learning, while the “Understanding the Text” section lays the foundation for the following learning steps. In this unit, the teacher combines the reading theme “The Spirit of the Long March” to assign discussion questions to students: What is the goal of our generation’s new Long March? The discussion topics not only let students understand the historical significance of the spirit of Long March, but also make students clear as a new Long March goal for contemporary young people. After reviewing and discussing the contents of the text, students come to the conclusion that “To attain the Two Centenary Goals and realize the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation”.

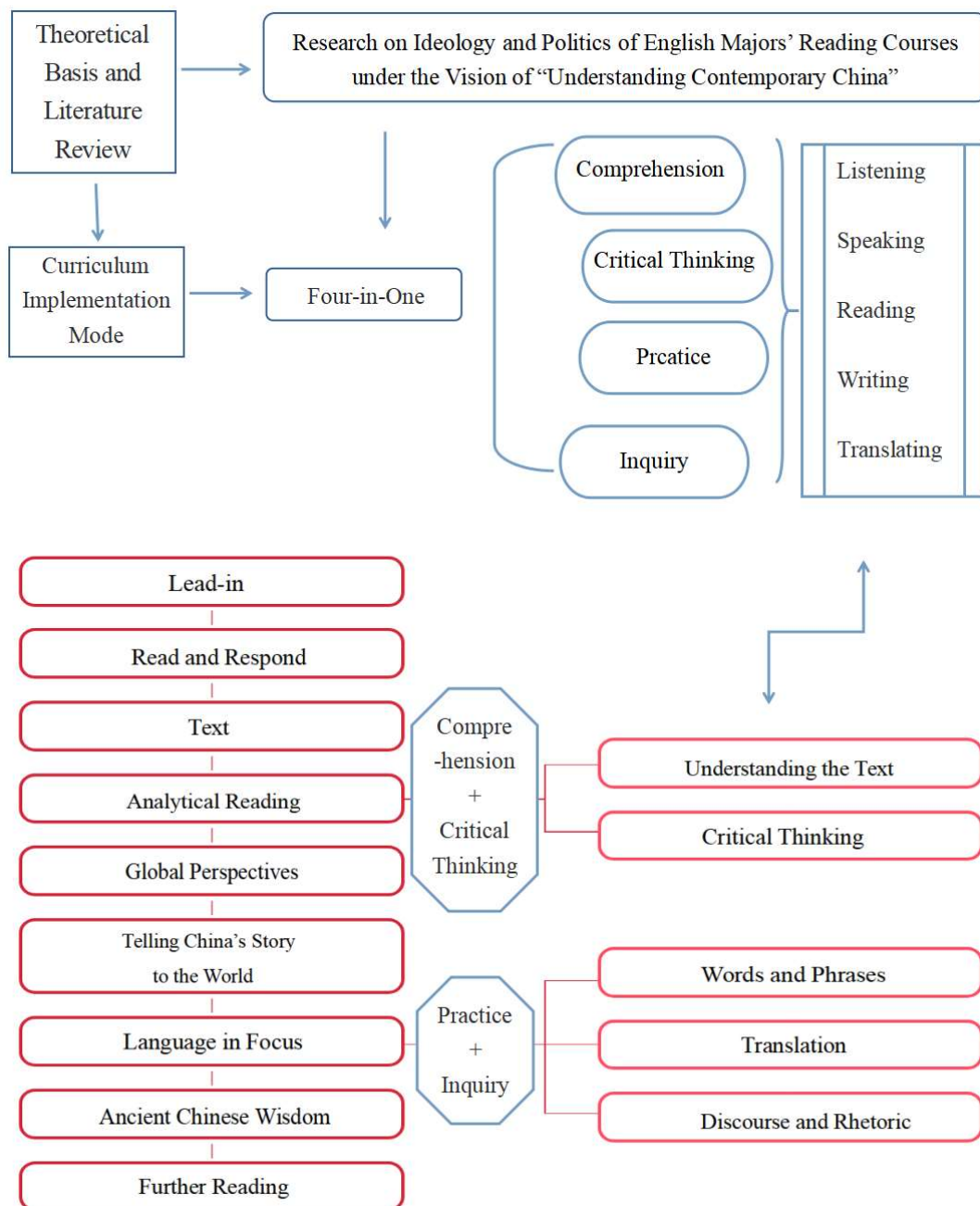


Figure 1. Outline of Curriculum Implementation

In the section of “Critical Thinking” of “Analytical Reading”, the teacher assigns the critical questions in advance. Before the discussion, the class is divided into groups of four, and then the questions are assigned to the groups, because the critical reading and discussion are very

challenging parts. In a discussion class, students begin with a group discussion before class to share their own independent research results. Students are encouraged to adopt different perspectives and apply critical thinking skills in their joint explorations. At the end of the group discussion, each group chooses a representative to report the results of the discussion to the class. The teacher makes comments at the end of the discussion.

Cases of Critical Thinking: More than eight decades have passed since the victory of the Long March. The Chinese nation has achieved a tremendous transformation from standing up and growing prosperous to becoming strong. Why is it still necessary for us to uphold the spirit of the Long March under the current circumstances?

The teacher summarizes the students' answers and emphasized the following points: Being prepared for danger in times of peace is the key to survival and development. The "four tests" and "four risks" that we faces are long-term, complex and grave.

Step 3: In the two sections of "Global Perspective" and "Telling China's Story to the World", while cultivating students' understanding ability and critical thinking ability, strengthen the formative guidance of practical ability and inquiry ability.

In these two sections, based on the theme of this chapter, "The Spirit of the Long March", the teacher emphasizes that students should tell the story of China to the world from a global perspective. For example, the spirit of the Long March has been carried forward and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation has been realized. The greatness of the Chinese dream lies in the pursuit of common prosperity for all people, which is different from the American Dream, which focuses on individual freedom and economic success. The Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is a grand vision. This has not only provided the impetus for China's rapid development, but also contributed to the prosperity of the world.

Step 4: In the sections of "Language Practice", "Chinese Wisdom" and "Further Reading", through the practice of vocabulary and phrases, translation, discourse and rhetoric, students can further improve their reading ability and achieve deep cultivation of practical ability and inquiry ability.

Translation cases of key words are as follows: promote the spirit of the Long March; the Two Centenary Goals; the Four Consciousnesses; the Four-Sphere Confidence; battling corruption.

In these sections, after students are familiar with the basic vocabulary usage, the teacher emphasizes the English expressions of Chinese national policy, history and culture-related words, and achieves the purpose of skillful memorization through relevant translation exercises.

4. Conclusion

Curriculum ideological and political elements should not simply be put into textbooks and classes, but organically integrate them into textbooks and classroom practice, integrating value shaping, knowledge imparts and ability training. The core idea of ideological and political education is to integrate ideological and political education into the English curriculum, and guide students to establish a correct world outlook, outlook on life and values through the reform of teaching content and teaching methods. This kind of education is not only about instilling knowledge, but also about cultivating students' comprehensive quality and social responsibility. Curriculum ideology and politics require teachers to constantly innovate teaching methods, pay attention to students' participation and interaction, guide students to think and discuss, and stimulate their learning interest and potential. Through the course of thinking and politics, students can cultivate their critical thinking ability, innovation ability and teamwork ability while learning knowledge, so as to better adapt to the development needs of the future society. The "Understanding Contemporary China" series of textbooks came into

being in response to such needs. A English Reading and Writing Course in the series "Understanding Contemporary China" is a characteristic reading textbook with Chinese characteristics, in line with the ideological and political reform needs of Chinese college English teaching courses and students' learning needs, which can help students show a positive image of China and tell a good story of China on the future international stage.

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