An Exploration of Teaching Reform in the English Course of Chinese Culture in the Context of Ideological and Political Education

Ying LIU
Xi'an Fanyi University, Shaanxi, China
95105464@qq.com

Keywords: Ideological and political education; Teaching reform; Value orientation; Chinese culture.

Abstract. This paper illustrates the connotation and importance of ideological and political education applied in the English course of Chinese culture. In such an Information era, it is high time for teachers to integrate ideological and political education in their routine teaching and it is also essential to carry out teaching reform in terms of teaching ideology, teaching contents, holding up activities and applying teaching assessment. Finally, it is concluded that talents cultivation means that one’s morality cultivation should be placed as the priority task, which involves setting up lofty ideals to serve the country and people, fostering an awareness of patriotism and national culture confidence, forming a correct value orientation and realizing one’s all-round development.

Introduction

With the development of globalization and cultural pluralism, college students are undergoing an important era of shaping their ideology. Being exposed to an ocean of information on the Internet each day, students tend to be easily misled due to the lack of correct guidance. It is the duty of every teacher in college to give instructions for students to shape correct value orientation. According to Chinese President Xi’s remarks in the 19th National Congress of Communist Party of China, constructing a powerful nation in educational field is the basis of China’s national rejuvenation. Talent cultivation should be focused on students’ overall development, which involves setting up lofty ideals, enhancing comprehensive skills and cultivating their attentiveness, innovativeness and dedicating spirit. Teachers are supposed to integrate the ideological and political elements in the whole teaching process, realizing students’ all-round development.

Connotation of Ideological and Political Education

In traditional Chinese Culture, Confucius, the Sage and great philosopher, once stated that a man who wanted to make greater contribution to the country and the world, he must first focus on developing oneself into a virtuous man with noble qualities. According to Chinese President Xi’s remarks, cultivating students’ morality should be the priority concern in higher education. To some extent, cultivating one’s morality is the essential element of ideological and political education. Besides, imparting knowledge, enhancing competence, setting up lofty ideals, fostering national culture confidence, forming correct value orientation, contributing oneself to society and country are also the important elements in the ideological and political education. In college, teachers must shoulder the responsibility of not only teaching knowledge, but also shaping students’ ideology and patriotic awareness, guiding students from the perspective of vocational spirit, professional spirit and value orientation, as well as trying their utmost efforts to integrate the ideological and political elements in each course teaching.

Importance of Ideological and Political Education

Nowadays, a great many scholars and professors found out a serious problem that some college students with higher scores in academic study and higher competence in professional skills have no patriotic awareness or incorrect value orientation. According to recent news, a college student
coming from Beijing University murdered his beloved mother, which shocked the whole world. In current society, a series of issues have shown that we are undergoing a serious moral crisis. It is an urgent task to revive the socialist core value and promote people’s morality. As Chinese President Xi points out that a country without virtues would never prosper, while a man without virtues is not an upright one. It is high time for college teachers to integrate ideological and political education to promote college students’ moral standard. Since the first and foremost issue of education is to cultivate one’s morality, it is also the essence of China’s higher education. The primary factor of the ideological and political education requires teachers to focus on the moral element involved in each course, cultivating students’ qualities and morality through both their routine teaching and everyday life.

Another important factor of ideological and political education is to develop students’ humanistic spirit, guiding students to show concern to social developments, national achievements and value realization. In the process of the academic study, students should not only be able to master knowledge of certain fields, but also learn to explore deeper meaning of certain subjects which will be better applied in daily life. In the teaching process, teachers should guide students to form correct and positive value orientation, based on which, students will be more diligent and more devoted, cherishing ambitions to make greater contribution to society in the near future.

Teaching Reform in the Course Design

In the past, schools emphasized solely on the teaching of political theories and opened related courses to enhance students’ moral awareness. Nowadays, situation has completely changed that all the teaching subjects and school activities should involve the ideological and political elements, which have raised higher requirements for college teachers to carry out teaching reform as soon as possible. Teachers are supposed to think about how to better design each lesson integrated with ideological and political elements and explore cultural values to guide students in their daily life.

The Innovation of Teaching Ideology

To fully apply the political ideology in teaching, teachers should first change their traditional teaching concept, radically transforming the exam-oriented assessment system into the daily performance-oriented assessment system. Students’ moral standard should be put into evaluation as an important factor that must be included in the final score. The specific items include the patriotic awareness, national cultural confidence and correct value orientation involved in students’ in-class PPT presentation. In terms of teaching syllabus, fostering national culture confidence should be highly advocated. Taking the English course of Chinese Culture as an example, the course consists of 16 chapters in terms of different subjects including Chinese history, ethnic minorities, religion, philosophy, architecture, gardens, Chinese Cuisine, tea culture and so on. When it comes to the course design, teachers should find out some highlights of Chinese culture or glorious achievements made by Chinese people so that students can express their awe and admiration towards Chinese people’s wisdom, and simultaneously raise their awareness of respecting Chinese culture and further promoting and spreading Chinese culture to the outside world.

The Optimization of Teaching Contents

As for the teaching contents of the English course of Chinese culture, most of the facts and cultural element should be memorized. If students only master these so-called key points and get higher scores in the final examination, the ultimate goal of learning this course would never be achieved. During each class, teachers should select some highlights and link these important issues with current affairs or tell some vivid stories or legends lying behind those facts, so that students can not only master the key points but also learn and retell more stories related to these issues.

When it comes to the lecture concerning gardens, most of us would naturally associate with private gardens in Suzhou and the Summer Palace in Beijing. Basic facts such as the garden design, the layout and the construction style are all required to be learnt. However, students could not find any interest in learning these facts and soon forget them, let alone link these facts with interesting
stories by themselves, so teachers should try their utmost to guide them. When the Lion Grove Garden is learnt, stories of Bei Yuming, a famous architect, should be highly recommended. As a well-known prolific Chinese architect, his architectural achievements and great influence should be widely known by students. Besides, the stories of ancient emperors such as Huizong of Southern Song Dynasty and Qianlong of Qing Dynasty should also be told and retold among teachers and students. The artistic value, aesthetic value and higher life quality pursued by ancient Chinese emperors could be highly appreciated and reassessed. Maybe those stories which could never be shown in the final examination are always ignored by both teachers and students before. Nowadays, these unknown stories should be learnt and greatly emphasized. By learning such stories, students can largely and flexibly integrate these basic facts in their everyday life. Learning in this way, students’ learning interest is not only cultivated, their national pride, awareness of appreciating Chinese gardens and humanistic spirit are simultaneously and unwittingly promoted.

The Combination of in-class and after-class Activities

As for the English course learning of Chinese culture, the in-class activities such as group discussion, PPT presentation and debate are effective enough to develop students’ interest in learning such an English course. However, because of limited time in each lesson, those in-class activities are far from enough to have a greater impact on cultivating students’ morality. Therefore, other forms of after-class activities should also be encouraged to be held. In order to highly motivate students’ interest and develop their self-learning abilities, an English micro-video contest concerning Chinese culture was once held. To better prepare for such an activity, students working in groups cooperated with each other to do research on certain subjects, to film a micro-video, to write down a script and prepare a role-play and to visit some related tourist attractions to do deeper research. During the preparation process, students could largely digest those historical stories and play in different roles, so that they could better understand the historical stories against certain historical background. With enough interest and self-study abilities, students’ Chinese cultural awareness will be gradually developed, which will exert a far-reaching influence in their future study.

The Application of Teaching Assessment System

The integration of ideological and political education in the English teaching of Chinese culture does not mean that students’ basic English skills should no longer be emphasized. Instead, students’ comprehensive abilities can be largely reflected through language output both in oral form and in written form. During the language output process, the contents involved in Chinese culture are required to be conveyed. Meanwhile, the ideological and political elements should also be put into consideration.

Taking the subject of philosophy as an example, Confucianism and Taoism are important ideologies of Chinese culture. Students are required not only to master the core values of each philosophical ideology, but also know how to apply these important ideologies in society and in everyday life. As the concept of “benevolence” “rites” and “trustworthiness” are highly advocated in Confucianism, these valuable concepts can also be applied in modern society. Students should be required to express their own understanding of each ideology and point out the specific ways on how people shall behave in order to construct a harmonious society. Issues concerning filial piety, fraternal duty, dedication and friendship will be involved in heated discussion in class and in group work. Besides, students are also required to hand in the written work to express their own ideas. The assessment system involves peer assessment and teacher’s evaluation. Ideological and political elements, students’ own opinions, oral expression as well as written expression are the necessary aspects to be taken into final assessment system.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the English course of Chinese culture has a much closer relationship with the integration of ideological and political education. The philosophical ideologies represented by
Confucianism and Taoism are the most valuable treasures of Chinese culture which can highly promote students’ moral standard and enable them to possess noble qualities; typical teaching contents, such as Chinese history, Chinese gardens, tea culture, Chinese cuisine and so on, all have something to do with the ideological and political elements to foster students’ patriotic awareness and develop a sense of national culture confidence. Based on the teaching reform from the above-mentioned four aspects, every college teacher should try their utmost efforts to think about how to better integrate ideological and political education in one’s own course, with an aim of cultivating talents of all-round development.

Acknowledgments

This research was financially supported by the Xi’an Fanyi Univerisity with the number of XFU17KYTDC09.

References


