

Teaching Ability Improvement Strategies of English Teachers in Higher Vocational Colleges under the Background of Curriculum Ideological-political Education

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Abstract: Under the background of curriculum ideological-political education, teaching abilities of English teachers in higher vocational colleges are very important. This paper first analyses components of teaching abilities of English teachers in higher vocational colleges under the background of curriculum ideological-political education, including political orientation, ability to dig moral education resources, teaching design ability and ability to use information technology. Then it explores teaching abilities improvement strategies of English teachers in higher vocational colleges under the background of curriculum ideological-political education from perspectives of English teachers, colleges' management and policy.

1. Introduction

Moral education is the fundamental task of higher vocational education and the mission of the times. General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed the following points at the National Conference on Ideological-Political Work: moral education should be taken as the central link and ideological-political work should go through the whole process of education and teaching in universities and colleges. Carriers of curriculum ideological-political education include all courses with teachers as implementer to make all curriculum ideological-political education and ideological-political theory classes go in the same direction. Teachers' political belief, ideological literacy, academic level, personality charm and professional ethics all have great influence upon growth of college students^[1]. Higher vocational English teachers are an important force in ideological-political work of higher vocational colleges, shouldering important responsibilities of combining English language knowledge with ideological-political elements and moral education resources, and carrying out ideological-political education for students in a hidden manner, which puts forward higher demands on teaching abilities of higher vocational English teachers.

2. Components of teaching ability of English teachers in higher vocational colleges under the background of curriculum ideological-political education

2.1 Political orientation

Value leading is the inherent attribute of public basic courses in socialist colleges and universities with Chinese characteristics, as is the English course of higher vocational colleges. The new Standards for Vocational English Courses in Higher Vocational Education, promulgated in March 2021, states that vocational English courses for higher vocational education fully implement the Party's educational policy and the fundamental tasks of moral education. Therefore, political orientation is an essential ability of English teachers, which includes political literacy, that is, English teachers should be highly consistent with the Party Central Committee in political principles, positions, direction, discipline, guidance. Higher vocational colleges are the gathering places of young people, where various ideological views will collide with one another. They are also the forefront of ideological struggle, especially in the current "Internet plus" era, in which all kinds of information constantly impact or even change mindset of college students and re-establish students' standards on outlooks on the world, life and value^[2]. Whether they are radical or conservative, extreme or speculative, tolerant or mean, teachers should stand firm and fight against all kinds of wrong ideas. If teachers' own political position is not firm, negligence or dilution of ideological-political educational resources in the course of teaching will weaken the guiding position of Marxism, which will greatly affect or even shake political beliefs of college students, and have a great negative impact on them. English teaching will inevitably contain original teaching materials, teachers should know how to use correct political orientation ability to analyze and guide students to treat Western culture from the perspective of critical thinking and help students gradually realize the charm of Chinese culture and establish Chinese cultural self-confidence through comparative analysis of Chinese and Western culture.

2.2 Ability to dig moral education resources

English is both instrumental and humanistic. English teachers should not only impart language knowledge and skills in the classroom teaching, but also pay attention to humanistic information contained in the language. English teachers should have abilities to dig and organize moral education resources from English learning materials as well as integrate ideological-political elements into language learning. English textbooks contain rich dialectical materialism world view and methodology, and hidden educational resources to cultivate college students' ideal belief, value orientation, moral quality and social responsibility. Under the background of curriculum ideological-political education reform, English teachers are required to dig deep into value elements and functions of education in curriculum materials, organize and integrate moral education resources, and strive to realize organic integration of moral education and intellectual education^[3]. This approach is student-centered, focusing on student's internal moral education needs. Specifically, moral education resource integration reflects teacher's ability to analyze ideological situation, value judgment and moral needs behind students' interest, excitement, confusion and enthusiasm in the classroom so as to combine curriculum moral education resources, screen appropriate moral education elements, adopt flexible teaching methods, create appropriate moral education opportunities, and realize educational goal in the end.

2.3 Teaching design ability

Teaching design ability refers to abilities to organize and refine content of curriculum to achieve

teaching objectives, including design of teaching objectives, content, method and support system, which is an embodiment of teachers' comprehensive abilities. High quality of classroom teaching is closely related to teacher's teaching design level. "We should seriously study the integration of the Party's theoretical innovations with theoretical knowledge of various disciplines," Said Chen Baosheng, former Minister of Education, in 2018. English teachers should learn how to integrate ideological-political element into their teaching design and try not to lecture students directly on ideological-political theories, which may make students feel bored and the teaching effect may not be satisfactory^[4]. Instead, English teacher should "melt" ideological-political element into teaching design and reach the ultimate goal without students' realizing it. For example, when English teachers teach the topic of "travel" to students, they should emphasize professionalism by presenting that tour guides should act professionally when introducing a certain scenic spot to tourists. Tour guides should be very familiar with their introductions and smile when making the introduction.

2.4 Ability to use information technology

With the rapid development of Internet technology, deep integration of information technology and teaching has become an inevitable trend of higher vocational English teaching reform, which requires that English teachers should be able to use information technology to assist their teaching. Some studies show that most teachers already have basic ability of using information technology in teaching, but the proportion of teachers with higher application level is low. When it comes to use information technology for innovation teaching mode, there still exists a lot of room for improvement. On the whole, there is still a gap between college English teachers' ability of using information technology and the goal of "deep integration of information technology and curriculum teaching" put forward by the state. Abilities of using information technology mainly includes two aspects, one is the ability to process information, that is, the ability to use modern information technology to screen, retrieve, process and integrate all kinds of information, and the other is the ability to use information technology, that is, the ability to design, develop, implement and innovate modern information teaching resources. Actually, this ability is closed related to teachers' teaching design ability. If teachers' ability to use information technology is good, it may be easier for them to design a lesson that integrates ideological-political content in their teaching. Otherwise, information technology may be a big obstacle for them.

3. Teaching ability improvement strategies of English teachers in higher vocational colleges under the background of curriculum ideological-political education

3.1 From the perspective of English teachers

In order to improve curriculum ideological-political teaching ability of English teachers in higher vocational colleges to enhance ideological-political education function of English classrooms, curriculum ideological-political education awareness of English teachers need to be strengthened. There are many ways for English teachers to enhance their awareness of curriculum ideological-political education abilities, such as reading classic books written by Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and Xi Jinping, browsing websites online, using Xuexiqiangguo, etc. They should take the initiative to strengthen the study of ideological-political education methodology, and consciously carry forward the core values of socialism in the classroom. In the classroom teaching, students need to be inspired to love China and embrace national pride so that ideological-political education truly finds a place in college English teachers' ideological consciousness^[5]. They should maintain political determination at all times in the process of education, speak clearly about politics,

publicize the Party's theories, lines, principles and policies, and consciously resist hostile western culture. Never will they make public anything in the classroom that harms the interests of the Party and the state or make statements that damage the image of the Party and the state. Never will they distort or vilify the history and culture of the Party and the state, glorify the western ideological and political system and social and cultural customs, worship the outside world, make a fool of themselves, change the teaching content at will in the name of teaching reform, and publicize western ideas.

3.2 From the perspective of colleges' management

First of all, higher vocational colleges should combine overall development strategy of the school and characteristics of English teachers to develop English teachers' cultivation plan to improve English teacher's abilities in curriculum ideological-political education. Specifically, they should pay attention to cultivation of Marxist ideals and beliefs of English teachers, encourage teachers to use their professional expertise to read classic works of Marxism, learn relevant knowledge of Marxist theory through concentrated discussions, lecture reports and other forms, establish Marxist position, consciously strengthen the value of socialist ideology and scientific research under the guidance of Marxism, adhere to the unity of academic standards and political standards. They should effectively strengthen study of English teachers' political theory, put teachers' ideal and belief education first, guide them to firmly support the leadership of the Communist Party of China, strengthen self-confidence, theoretical self-confidence, institutional self-confidence and cultural self-confidence in the socialist road with Chinese characteristics, strengthen training and education of young teachers, and visiting scholars back from overseas, and continuously deepen teachers' sense of identity and responsibility for curriculum ideological-political education. Besides, they should strengthen the propaganda and leading role of the Party branch at the grass-roots level, take construction of teachers' moral style and teacher's professional ethics as the main line, and give full play to the role of the battle fortress of the Party branch.

Secondly, higher vocational colleges should "take scientific research to promote teaching" as the key starting point, build a school-level curriculum ideological-political education research platform, encourage teachers to explore teaching reform ideas, teaching methods improvement, moral education elements mining and integration of ideas and ways from an academic point of view. At the same time, they should do a good job of "docking" between English teachers and ideological-political theory teachers and professional teachers, break down professional barriers, and open up horizontal "docking" channels of curriculum. Senior teachers can not only share experience accumulated in the process of practical teaching, but also point out young teachers' shortcomings in the teaching process, and then provide problem-solving strategies, which has a significant role in promoting improvement of moral education teaching ability.

3.3 From the perspective of policy

The educational administrative department and the school party committee play a very important role in advocating and carrying out construction of curriculum ideological-political education. The administrative department of education should increase its investment, set up special funds, guarantee sufficient human and material resources, carry out construction of curriculum ideological-political education, and at the same time give preferential treatment for teachers who have done a good job in construction of curriculum ideological-political education in terms of on-the-job title promotion, year-end assessment, evaluation, and encourage teachers to participate in construction of curriculum ideological-political education.

Higher vocational colleges should establish effective incentive mechanism. First, they should

establish a reasonable evaluation mechanism. Among them, the exploration and establishment of curriculum ideological-political education index and quantitative system is the key to success or failure of the evaluation mechanism, because only through data and other objective information can they provide timely feedback on the effectiveness of the course to achieve targeted and effective integration. Second, establishment of an effective incentive mechanism to promote teachers gradually improve ability of education and teaching in curriculum ideological-political education. For example, through "teaching plan design competition" and other ways to allow teachers to show teacher style, share curriculum construction experience, the school can get lots of teaching results, such as papers, handouts, curriculum PPT, student works, case anthology, and curriculum ideological-political education construction will be conducive to establishment of teachers' evaluation mechanism.

4. Conclusion

In a word, English teachers are an important force in carrying out the policy of curriculum ideological-political education. Just like a Chinese saying puts: better tools make good work. To better promote curriculum ideological-political education in the English classroom, English teachers' teaching abilities should be give proper attention and improved step by step. English teachers themselves should work hard to equip them with sufficient knowledge and firm political ideal. Higher vocational colleges should provide resources and preferential treatment to stimulate English teachers'. Curriculum ideological-political education is a systematic project and it may take quite a long time to realize this goal.

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