

An Exploration on the Ideological Instruction in the Second English Classroom Activities-Take the Model United Nations as an Example

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Abstract: In the English classrooms, a new-type of “dumb English” phenomenon represented by the lack of in-depth thinking, self-innovation, and effective evaluation is gradually emerging. The second classroom activities, as the extension of the main classrooms, serves to integrating ideological consciousness into English learning. Taking the Model United Nations as an example, this paper explores and creates the “i-3D” ideological instruction mode in our college’s second English classroom activities, that is, within the framework of ideological instruction, deep learning before the conference, deep consultation during the conference, and deep reflection after the conference. By applying quantitative and qualitative research methods, this paper analyzes and discusses the positive impacts of Model United Nations on delegates' knowledge, ability and quality, aiming to put forward a feasible scheme for the implementation of ideological instruction mode in second classroom activities.

1. Introduction

1.1 Ideological Instruction Requirements of College English Courses

In May 2020, the document *Ideological and Political Theories teaching in All Courses in Colleges and Universities* issued by the Ministry of Education clearly pointed out that “Value shaping, knowledge transferring and capacity training are inseparable and must be integrated”^[1]. In July 2020, the newly revised trial *Regulations on Education in Military Academies* proposed that “attention should be paid to ideological instruction in various courses”^[2]. In November 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the “Manifesto of the New Liberal Arts” at the work conference on the construction of new liberal arts held by Shandong University, proposing that liberal arts education should grasp the three important kernel of “professional optimization, curriculum improvement, model innovation”, so that liberal arts talents could meet the new requirements of the new era^[3]. In December 2020, the *College English Teaching Guide* incorporated the college English curriculum into the ideological and political teaching system of the school curriculum^[4].

English teaching, as one of the important liberal arts courses in military academies, not only shoulders the responsibility of improving delegates' English language knowledge, ability and quality, but also undertakes the mission of broadening delegates' ideological and political abilities, such as international vision, critical thinking and cross-cultural communicating capabilities. However, after years of teaching, the author finds that there is a new type of “dumb English” problem represented by the lack of in-depth thinking, self-innovation and effective evaluation in main English teaching. Students are strong in understanding, describing, imitating and discussing, but is weak in reasoning, analyzing, generalizing and evaluating. Therefore, it is high time to carry out ideological instruction based on student-centered “in-depth learning” to enhance students high-level cognitive knowledge, ability and quality, ultimately to resolve the “new dumb English problem”.

1.2 Nature of Model United Nations

The Model United Nations originated from the inter-school “Model International Union Conference” in the United States in 1923, and later evolved into the Model United Nations. Following and simulating the operation mode, rules and procedure of the United Nations, it is a meeting held by delegates representing different United Nations’ institutions discussing international hot issues. The delegates attending the meeting act as “diplomats” from different countries to safeguard the interests of the “representative country”, striving to provide practical or feasible solutions for the settlement of international hot issues or regional contradictions through

such procedures as position statement, motion debate, and consultation, or tit-for-tat, draft voting, and resolution writing.

In July 2021 and June 2022, students in our academy participated in Model United Nations activities held by different academies three times with aims to enhance and evaluate their English language knowledge, ability and quality. It is also expected to address the “new dumb” problem emerging in main English classrooms, exploring a new mode of English ideological instruction, and then radiate more second classroom activities into the implementation of ideological instruction.

2. The Ideological Instruction Design of Model United Nations

This Model United Nations uses English as the official language and selects international hot issues as discussing topics. In order to actively explore the mode of ideological instruction in the the Model United Nations and resolve the “new dumb” problem, our college has originally created “i3D” mode of ideological instruction, which is mainly reflected in the deep learning during preparation prior to the conference, mid-session deep consultation, and deep reflection through post-meeting review.

2.1 Deep Learning Before the Conference: Knowledge Transfer

Before the meeting, the students seek for the interests of the “representative country”, collect, consult online and offline on the position of the representative country, analyze the interests concerned and prepare motions for various sessions, as is shown in Table 1. In other words, students English knowledge transfer is not limited to low-level of knowing or recognizing, but focuses on understanding, analyzing and evaluating.

Table 1 Cognitive Behaviors And Cognitive Level

Cognitive behaviors	Cognitive level
1. Collect, consult and sort out materials related to “representative country” from official websites such as United Nations and MOOC.	Understanding
2. Analyze the background information of the countries concerned, interpret their economic and political demands, and judge conflicts and common interests.	Analysis
3. Clarify friendly, neutral or hostile relations and form “interest blocs” in online survey of “representative countries”	Evaluation

2.2 Deep Consultation during the Conference: Skills Cultivation

During the meeting, delegates’ online and offline discussions on topics are based on the actual progressing of the venue and in line with the immediate tactics of warfare. According to the actual venue progressing and position of their “representative country”, delegates apply accurate and appropriate English to expound their positions, debate motions, lobby for consultations, and preparing resolutions. For example, in formal consultations, in order to avoid “empty” speeches, delegates are required to provide objective and scientific data, official documents and other empirical materials for arguments; in informal consultations, in order to consolidate interests groups and elaborate draft resolutions, delegates need to lobby in fluent English after investigating and assessing the positions and interests of other nations, so as to refine their views, integrate materials, and strive for the optimal motion and draft to guarantee interests for the largest number of “representative countries”.

2.3 Deep Reflection after the Conference: Consciousness Reshaping

After the conference, the representatives of the participants wrote a total of 15 reflection notes, and the author extracted the ideological clues from their logs:

Student 1: “Countries must be strong in order to have a say, for..small countries are without diplomacy, “ (GA1 venue, Panamanian representative)

As is stated, “Usually, a small country does not have the equal right to make negotiations in diplomacy, a country must be strong before it can have a say.” In fact, it is students’ further analysis and cognition of the international situation of maritime security after a comprehensive evaluation,

and it reflects a high-level cognition and effective evaluation. It is an ideological self-refinement that integrates national consciousness and global governance ability.

Student 2: “New MUNers strive to speak and think that the number of speeches determines the level of performance in Model United Nations; but they mistake it; do not be inopportune, just speak or keep the right silence.” (GA1 venue, representative of the United States)

Avoiding “empty speaking opportunity” or “keeping the wrong silence”, it is after-conference evaluation of the participation skills of the Model United Nations, representing a high-level cognition and reflection of in-depth self-evaluation. It is achieved through obscure ideological integration, like melting salt in waters.

3. Effectiveness of Ideological Instruction in Model United Nations

In order to investigate on the effectiveness of “i3D” mode of ideological instruction of the Model United Nations based on deep learning, deep consultation, and deep reflection, the author designed a questionnaire to investigate delegates participating in this Model United Nations. A total of 52 questionnaires were sent out and 49 valid questionnaires were collected. The data are as follows:

“What cognitive abilities do participants of the Model United Nations activities need to have?”

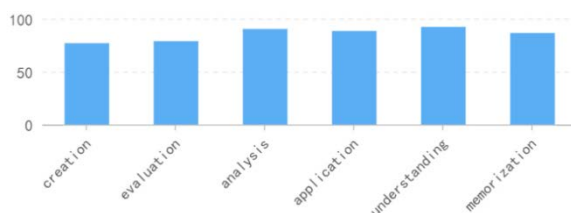


Fig.1 Cognitive Abilities That Participants Applied in Model United Nations

Figure 1 shows that 92.31% participants think they exercise individual understanding ability in the Model United Nations activities, followed by 90.38% analytical ability, followed by 88.46% application ability, 86.54% memorization and 78.85% comprehensive analysis. Finally, 76.92% of the participants still believe that participating in the Model United Nations can train their evaluation skills. This survey show that participants agree that participation in Model United Nations activities is not limited to the low-level level of “knowing and understanding”, but also further challenges its high-level cognitive abilities such as “analysis and application”, indicating that the Model United Nations optimizes ideological consciousness have solved the “new dumb English problem” to some extent. At the same time, students cultivate their cross-cultural communication, global vision and national conspicuousness, etc, thus enhancing imperceptibly the students ideological quality and consciousness.

4. Analysis of Ideological Instruction in Model United Nations

4.1 Knowledge Transfer in Preparation for Model United Nations

High-level cognitive abilities are exercised based on the knowledge transfer. Firstly, delegates need to carefully and fully understand the issued English *Background Guide*, clarify the logical relations of the topic and committee, and analyze the current situation of the issue to be discussed. Then, delegates should be capable to verify and illustrate the representative country’s position, formulate maps of its representative country in political, economic, social, cultural, scientific and technological fields, and judge the international situation. Besides that, delegates uses English to consult with other delegates to establish international interests’ blocs, seek for cooperation, and deal with conflicts with the purpose of scheming a cooperative international environment.

In this process, the cognitive level of delegates' English understanding is not limited to the low-level level of “knowing and understanding”, but elevated to the higher cognitive level of of “application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation”, which can not only supplement student’s academic

knowledge and enhance the understanding of complex international relations, but also effectively promote the delegates' dialectical thinking and international vision.

In the delegates' in-depth study before the competition, the ideological and political elements are integrated into English cognition, which not only solves the delegates' "new dumb English problem", but also imperceptibly permeates the ideological and political consciousness and realizes "salt in water".

4.2 Capacity Building in Model United Nations

First of all, as a "spokesman for national diplomacy", delegates is to use English appropriately, accurately and fluently to safeguard the interests of their representative country at the tense, complicated, and pressured stance. Secondly, in the venue, the delegates collide and reconcile with each other, express their views and work out problems, fight and cooperate for the maximization of the interests to ultimately reach a consensus. Thirdly, each delegate shoulders national responsibility. In other words, every move, every word and deed is an invisible contest among countries. Official voice, rigorous wording and national temperament of the delegates is necessary and essential.

In this process, delegates' sense of community with a shared future is cultivated when delegates strive to maintain the international development by seeking common ground while reserving differences through mutual or joint cooperation among various parties.

4.3 Value Building after the Model United Nations

The Model United Nations, highlighted with the characteristics of "actual combat", places the cadets in diplomatic occasions, tests their etiquette cultivation and diplomatic ability, and makes up the problem of "spoon-feeding" teaching in the offline classroom.

In this process, due to the complicated and changeable international situation, and with the new mission in the new era, global governance capabilities and high-level cognition are cultivated.

5. Conclusion

Taking the second classroom model United Nations as an example, this study finds that the second classroom activities can effectively solve the problem of "new dumb English" and cultivate all-round talents with international vision, critical thinking and deep thinking ability, in particular, new type of high-quality and professional military talents adapting to the ever-changing information battlefield. In the second classroom activities in the future, the author will further explore and radiate other second classroom activities with the "i3D" education mode. In addition, by participating in the second classroom activities like Model United Nations, the author believes that the teachers' capability in instructing Model United Nations are worth investigating: first, teachers should improve their professional quality, such as knowledge in international law, international relations and other related knowledge; second, teachers should think about how to improve the delegates' ability to cope with emergencies on the spot, such as presupposing before the competition, "When the big countries with hostile relations suddenly cooperate with each other, as a small country, how to deal with it? or "How to deal with the sudden defection of the national interest group led by your country?" and so on.

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