The Pathways of Ideological and Political Education Integrated Throughout Business English Curriculum from the Perspective of Fostering Virtue

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Abstract: *Fostering Virtue is the Fundamental Task of Education. Based on this fundamental task, universities should improve the teaching design of every course in various disciplines, integrating ideological and political education into them. This article explores the basic pathways for implementing ideological and political education in Business English courses from the perspective of fostering virtue. These pathways include establishing and dividing course groups for ideological and political education, exploring ideological and political elements to find corresponding material for integration, and innovating teaching methods to strengthen the effect of moral education. This article provides new ideas for integrating ideological and political education into Business English courses in universities.*

Keywords: Fostering virtue, Ideological and political Education, Business English Curriculum.

1. Introduction

The report from the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out that "fostering virtue should be taken as the fundamental task of education, aiming to nurture socialist builders and successors with all-around development in morality, intelligence, physique, and aesthetics." For the first time, "fostering virtue" was officially established as the fundamental mission of education. Since then, the national education sector has consistently regarded education as a major plan for both the country and the Party, fully implementing the Party's educational policies. Major decisions have been made to deeply implement the strategy of invigorating the country through science and education, accelerate the modernization of education, and establish the goal of building a strong education system by 2035. Steady progress has been made in this endeavor. On September 10, 2024, at the National Education Conference, Xi Jinping emphasized the need to focus closely on the fundamental task of moral education and talent cultivation, and to move steadily towards the strategic goal of building a strong education system. General Secretary Xi Jinping also stressed, "We must improve the mechanism for adjusting university disciplines and talent cultivation models, strengthen the construction of fundamental, emerging, and interdisciplinary subjects, and nurture top-tier talent. We should enhance research collaboration between universities and enterprises, accelerating the transformation of more scientific and technological achievements into real productive forces, and vigorously cultivate master craftsmen, skilled artisans, and highly skilled professionals."

The concept of cultivating interdisciplinary talents in Business English closely aligns with the goals of fostering virtue. The National Standards for Undergraduate Teaching Quality in Higher Education Institutions clearly outlines that the aim of the Business English major is to cultivate talents with a solid foundation in the English language and relevant business knowledge, who possess good humanistic qualities, a deep affection for China, and an international perspective. These talents should be familiar with related theoretical knowledge in literature, economics, management, and law, and master the basic theories and practices of international business. They should have strong cross-cultural abilities, business communication skills, and innovative and entrepreneurship capacities, to meet the needs of national and local economic and social development, external exchanges and cooperation. They should be able to proficiently use English to engage in foreign-related work, such as international business, international trade, international accounting, international finance, and cross-border e-commerce, thus becoming international and interdisciplinary talents [1]. Integrating ideological and political education into the Business English curriculum helps foster students' sense of social responsibility and professional ethics and cultivate future talents for international communication and cooperation. Through ideological and political education, students can develop an international perspective and global awareness, enhance their intercultural communication skills, and become well-rounded professionals who possess both specialized skills and strong moral character. Therefore, exploring the pathways of ideological and political education integrated throughout Business English curriculum from the perspective of fostering virtue is instrumental in leveraging the complementary strengths of Business English teaching and curriculum-based ideological and political education, and in fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue.

2. Main Problems of Ideological and Political Education Integrated Throughout Business English Curriculum in Practice

2.1 Little In-depth and Targeted Research Conducted for Business English Curriculum

Research on the integration of ideological and political education within the Business English curriculum remains insufficient and often lacks a focused approach. Most studies do not specifically address how ideological concepts can be contextualized within the unique dynamics of business environments. This gap results in a deficiency of empirical frameworks and models that educators can utilize to effectively merge language instruction with ideological

principles. The absence of targeted research limits the development of best practices tailored to enhance both linguistic proficiency and moral reasoning among Business English majors.

2.2 Lack of Exploration into Ideological and Political Elements and Corresponding Material

The Business English curriculum frequently neglects to explore relevant ideological and political elements, leading to an insufficient incorporation of critical content such as corporate governance, ethical business practices, and social responsibility. Existing materials often fail to link these elements with practical business scenarios, thus restricting students' ability to understand the broader societal implications of their field. This oversight not only limits students' critical engagement with pressing global issues but also inhibits their capacity to navigate the complexities of international business environments, where ethical considerations are paramount.

2.3 Singular and Rigid Teaching Methods

The predominant teaching methodologies in Business English programs tend to be singular and rigid, primarily relying on traditional lecture formats that prioritize rote memorization over active engagement. This pedagogical approach does not accommodate diverse learning styles or promote critical discourse around ideological and political issues. Consequently, students may struggle to apply theoretical concepts to real-world business situations, diminishing their ability to develop nuanced perspectives on ethical dilemmas. To address this, there is a pressing need for the adoption of innovative teaching strategies—such as problem-based learning, case studies, and simulations—that actively engage students in exploring the intersections of language, ethics, and business practices, thereby fostering a more holistic learning experience.

3. The Path of Ideological and Political Education for Business English Majors

3.1 Establishing and Dividing Course Groups of Ideological and Political Education

Based on Business English curriculum, teachers for Business English majors can be divided into the following ideological and political education (hereafter IPE) course groups based on the characteristics of the courses: comprehensive business English course group, language skills course group, and language and culture course group. Integrate the features of the course group with ideological and political education elements to make ideological and political education more targeted from a micro perspective. From a macro perspective, it helps form a full-fledged system of ideological and political education [2]. Here's a guideline for how can these course groups combine language teaching and moral education:

For comprehensive business English group, the courses involved may include Comprehensive Business English, Introduction to Economics, Introduction to Management, Introduction to International Business Law, International Business Negotiation, etc. For these courses, Moral education

can be more closely integrated with the practical application scenarios of Business English. Through case analysis and simulated business scenarios, ideological and political education can be incorporated into the teaching practice of Business English, allowing students to master Business English knowledge while also deeply understanding and practicing the core socialist values and professional ethics.

For language skills course group, the courses involved are Business English Listening and Speaking, Business English Reading, Business English Writing, Business English Translation, English Public Speaking, etc. These courses aim to improve language skills of students, IPE can focus on cultivating students' language communication abilities and intercultural communication skills. By guiding students to learn how to express Chinese culture and values accurately and appropriately in English, it enhances students' cultural confidence and national pride, enhancing their abilities to tell China's stories well.

As for language and culture course group, teachers for courses like Society and Culture of English-Speaking Countries, Selected Readings in English Literature, Introduction to Western Culture can delve deeper into the cultural connotations and values behind the language. By comparing cultural differences between China and other countries, it guides students to view different cultures correctly, cultivating an international perspective and intercultural communication skills while also strengthening students' cultural confidence.

By incorporating IPE in specific course groups based on the Business English curriculum, an organic combination and further refinement of knowledge transmission and value guidance can be achieved. While mastering professional knowledge, students can also receive proper value guidance, forming a well-rounded personality. Establishing an IPE education curriculum group can promote communication and collaboration among teachers from different course groups. They can jointly discuss how to better integrate IPE into professional courses, share teaching experiences and insights, and collaboratively promote the integration of IPE into the Business English curriculum.

In summary, the practice of subdividing the Business English curriculum into course groups based on course characteristics and establishing separate IPE course groups has far-reaching significance for implementing moral education in the Business English major. It not only enhances the relevance and effectiveness of moral education but also promotes the organic integration of curriculum moral education, while also improving teachers' ideological and political education literacy and teaching ability.

3.2 Exploring Ideological and Political Elements to Find Corresponding Material for Integration

There is a huge discrepancy between existing ideological and political education material and learning contents for Business English majors. To solve this problem, teachers should deeply explore the elements of ideological and political education (hereafter IPE) based on course characteristics and seek appropriate material to achieve the organic integration of IPE

into the curriculum.

In the practice of integrating IPE into the teaching process, teachers need to first identify IPE goals to explore IPE elements contained within the course. This process is not only a reassessment of the course content but also a profound refinement of educational philosophy. Then, to align with established IPE goals, teachers need to systematically explore those elements that can cultivate students' patriotism, social responsibility, professional ethics, and nurture their positive values. This requires teachers to possess sharp insight and innovative abilities to discover implicit IPE elements in professional knowledge.

After this, the corresponding material for embodying IPE elements should be determined and carefully designed. The material can be diverse, including but not limited to classroom lectures, case analyses, group discussions, practical projects and multimedia presentations. Establishing an IPE resource database to collect and organize these meticulously designed IPE materials and cases would surely provide solid support for the continuous deepening of IPE in the curriculum.

Finally, implementation of IPE in the classroom is essential to ensure that IPE integration is reflected not only in the teaching plan but also in every detail of each lesson. This requires teachers to clearly define the duration and depth of IPE integration and design teaching activities, ensuring that the delivery of professional knowledge is not affected while ensuring effective penetration of IPE education. Through regular teaching reflection and assessment, timely adjustments can be made to optimize the resource and material of IPE integration, ensuring that the goals of IPE are achieved, and truly cultivate talents in the new era who possess solid professional knowledge as well as noble character and morals.

3.3 Innovating Teaching Methods to Strengthen the Effect of Ideological and Political Education

To enhance the effect of moral education within the Business English curriculum, it is essential to adopt innovative teaching methods that foster active engagement and critical thinking [3]. Traditional, lecture-based approaches often fail to resonate with students and do not encourage the application of ethical principles in real-world contexts. The integration methods should emphasize natural and smooth integration, avoiding rigid preaching, striving to allow students to subtly receive positive guidance in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. For example, by introducing the struggles of industry pioneers, showcasing their patriotism and professional spirit; or utilizing current social hot topics to guide students in analyzing and discussing, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills, while reinforcing their sense of social responsibility and civic awareness. Several teaching methods could be utilized to integrate moral education into classes smoothly.

1) Problem-Based Learning (PBL): Implementing PBL can immerse students in real-life business scenarios where they must identify ethical dilemmas, analyze various perspectives, and propose solutions. This method encourages collaborative learning, critical analysis, and the application of both language skills and moral reasoning.

2) Case Studies: Utilizing case studies of companies that have faced ethical challenges allows students to explore the consequences of business decisions in a contextualized manner. By analyzing these cases, students can engage in discussions about corporate responsibility, ethical leadership, and the implications of globalization on business ethics.

3) Role-Playing and Simulations: Role-playing exercises enable students to step into various stakeholder roles, such as corporate leaders, consumers, and regulators. This experiential learning method helps students appreciate the complexity of moral decision-making in business and enhances their empathy and intercultural communication skills.

4) Integrative Projects: Collaborative projects that combine language skills with community service or social entrepreneurship can strengthen moral education by allowing students to apply their learning in meaningful ways. For instance, students could design a marketing campaign for a non-profit organization, integrating business acumen with social impact.

5) Digital Tools and Multimedia: Leveraging technology, such as interactive simulations and online discussion platforms, can create dynamic learning environments that enhance engagement. Multimedia resources—like documentaries, podcasts, and virtual reality experiences—can provide diverse perspectives on ethical issues, fostering deeper understanding and discussion.

By diversifying instructional approaches and incorporating these innovative methods, teachers can create a more engaging learning environment that not only strengthens language proficiency but also reinforces moral education. This holistic approach will better prepare students to navigate the ethical complexities of the business world, ultimately cultivating professionals who are not only skilled in language but also committed to ethical practices and social responsibility.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of ideological and political education within the Business English curriculum is vital for fostering virtue among students, aligning with fundamental mission of fostering virtue that emphasize moral development alongside academic proficiency. The pathways outlined in this study—establishing and dividing course groups, exploring ideological and political elements to find suitable materials, and innovating teaching methods—provide a structured approach for effectively embedding moral education into language instruction.

By addressing the existing gaps in research and educational practice, institutions can better equip students to navigate the complexities of a globalized business landscape while upholding ethical standards. This integration not only enhances students' language skills and cultural awareness but also cultivates their sense of social responsibility and professional ethics. Ultimately, by fostering well-rounded

graduates who possess both specialized skills and strong moral character, universities can contribute significantly to the development of competent, responsible professionals who are prepared to build bridges between China and the international community, which is a great step forward in realizing the fundamental mission of fostering virtue.

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