

A Case Study on Integrating "Course Ideology and Politics" into the Teaching of College English Writing from the Perspective of POA Theory

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Abstract: *Under the context of "course ideology and politics", university teachers should explore how to integrate it into the teaching of English from the perspective of production-oriented approach. This paper analyzes the combination of "course ideology and politics", college English writing, and the POA Theory. The writing task of Unit 5 Love is in Air in New Future College English Integrated Textbook I is taken as an example to study this issue. The author of this paper will design a teaching plan for the writing task, which attempts to integrate "course ideology and politics" into the teaching of college English writing.*

Keywords: "Course ideology and politics", English Writing, College English, production-oriented approach.

1. Introduction

Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, proposed to integrate ideological and political education into the teaching of all courses in universities, which is called "course ideology and politics". As a compulsory course for non-English major students in various universities, college English has both instrumental and humanistic properties. However, many universities have not fully utilized the dual nature of college English, resulting in some problems. College English is not only a training of language skills, but also an important way to form values and cultural perspectives. Lack of integration of ideological and political education into the English writing teaching may lead to students overlooking socialist core values. The integration of "course ideology and politics" into the teaching of English writing in higher education is the key to alleviating these problems.

2. The Connotation of "Course Ideology and Politics"

The concept of "course ideology and politics" was first formed in the 2014 comprehensive education reform in Shanghai. According to the "Shanghai Education Comprehensive Reform Plan (2014-2020)" issued by the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee, "course ideology and politics", also called "curriculum ideological and political education" refers to a comprehensive educational concept that "regards the morality education as the fundamental task of education. It deeply explores the ideological and political theories of various courses, making ideological and political theory courses go hand in hand with other courses, and forming a synergistic effect" (Du & Sun, 2019:122). In this way, a comprehensive education pattern concerning all staff, stages, and curriculum can be constructed. Thus, it can be seen that "course ideology and politics" does not refer to a certain type of course, but rather a teaching philosophy. This educational philosophy emphasizes moral education. In other words, specialized knowledge should be combined with ideological and political education. Therefore, teachers not only need to teach students knowledge in the classroom, but also need to cultivate their spiritual world and develop their morals, so that they can objectively view things and solve

problems rationally (Qiu, 2017).

From General Secretary Xi Jinping's speech, he hopes that Chinese higher education can integrate ideological and political education into every course in universities, rather than just teaching in the political course. This speech reflects the core ideology of ideological and political education in the university curriculum, and points out the direction for the reform of higher education in the future.

3. Necessity of Integrating "Course Ideology and Politics" in College English Writing

As is said before, College English course is a compulsory course for non-English major students in universities, with both instrumental and humanistic features. Instrumentality refers to learning of advanced scientific knowledge and exchange of technological or professional information (Xia, 2020). It also means that College English can help understand foreign society and culture. To be more precise, it refers to enhancing understanding of different cultures and improving awareness of similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign cultures, and thus cultivating cross-cultural communication skills. Humanism emphasizes "putting people first, and promoting people-oriented values" (Xia, 2020:154). It focuses on the cultivation of virtues and comprehensive development of individuals. This means that the teaching of college English writing not only require teachers to explain English knowledge and cultivate English skills, but also to enhance students' understanding of cultural differences between China and the West, shape their international perspective and patriotic spirit, and help students establish correct outlooks on life, values, and the world.

After entering the 21st century, college English courses have been continuously reformed, and significant achievements have been made. However, the teaching English writing in colleges still face many challenges. From an instrumental perspective, English writing courses in Chinese universities place too much emphasis on teaching English knowledge and writing skills, neglecting the cultivation of cultural literacy and the inheritance of excellent traditional Chinese culture. On the one hand, this is due to the lack of writing materials on

Chinese culture in textbooks. In 2018, Professor An Xiumei conducted a study on the articles included in the textbook of College English. The results show that content related to Chinese culture only accounts for about 2% of all textbook content, not to mention English writing (An, 2018). On the other hand, teachers do not delve deeply into the cultural content of textbooks during the process of teaching English writing to university students. Teachers may overly focus on explaining the culture of Western English-speaking countries, ignoring the learners' own culture.

In terms of humanism, English courses in universities have not fully reflected their educational value (Mo, 2010). Therefore, there is a lack of ideological and political education in the teaching of college English writing. There are three main reasons for this phenomenon. Firstly, some college English teachers believe that ideological and political education is only the responsibility of political teachers and is only taught in political classes. Secondly, some university teachers may adopt inappropriate teaching models. More specifically, some teachers still adopt the teacher-centered teaching mode, cramming English writing knowledge and neglecting the exploration of ideological and political elements in writing material. Finally, some university teachers lack knowledge of ideological and political theories, and their ideological consciousness is low. Especially many English teachers may be unconsciously influenced by Western culture, leading to a crisis of their own cultural identity. It can be seen that in order to solve these problems and fully leverage the dual nature of college English, the integration of "course ideology and politics" into college English writing is essential.

4. POA in the Teaching of College English Writing

POA stands for production-oriented approach. It is a theory for foreign language teaching created by Professor Wen Qiufang. The theory was put forward to address the issue that several language learners have difficulties in applying English in real life. The POA theory includes three parts: teaching philosophy, teaching assumptions, and teaching processes. As for teaching philosophy, it emphasizes the integration of learning and application, holistic education, and learner-oriented teaching. There are four teaching assumptions. The first is output-driven hypothesis. By asking students to output language first, their needs for language learning can be stimulated, thereby improving learning efficiency. The second is called input-enabled hypothesis that teachers provide targeted language input to help students complete language tasks. The third is selective learning hypothesis: teachers should select the language teaching materials based on output goals. The last one is evaluation-based learning hypothesis. Assessment is not only a test of learning outcomes but also a part of the learning process. Through assessment, students can understand the degree of their learning and adjust their learning strategies accordingly (Wen, 2015).

The process of teaching English writing consists of "motivating, enabling, and assessing" (Wen, 2015: 548). Motivating is the first stage, which stimulates students' writing interests by designing some tasks or exercises. These

tasks or exercises allow students to use language in simulated or real communicative situations, thereby recognizing their knowledge gaps and motivating them to learn. In conclusion, the motivating phase consists of creating communicative situations, designing tasks, and identifying the deficiencies of students. In the teaching of English writing, for example, teachers can play topic-relevant videos or ask students to discuss topics, laying the foundation for writing. In the enabling stage, teachers feed students necessary language knowledge through several activities. This stage follows the motivating stage, aiming to achieve the language output goal. Teachers help students fill in the language gap identified in the motivating phase by designing learning activities and providing necessary learning materials. For instance, the teachers can teach students vocabulary, text organization, and grammatical structures, which may be used in the writing tasks. This can facilitate the learning of students. The assessing phase evaluates students' learning outcomes. It is usually at the end of the teaching process. It is not only a test to evaluate learning outcomes but also a process to promote students' language learning. In this phase, peer review, teacher review or teacher-student collaborative assessment can be carried out. Teachers and students usually participate in this stage together. Students are asked to reflect on their learning process and thus improve the effectiveness of learning. To conclude, the ultimate purpose of evaluation is to promote learning, helping students recognize their shortcomings and strengths. In some cases, teachers provide personalized guidance for students' writing, which help enhance their writing skill

5. The Integration of "Course Ideology and Politics" into College English Writing from the Perspective of POA Theory

Many scholars have explored how to integrate "course ideology and politics" into specialized courses and proposed a framework. For example, Professor Tian Hongfen and Professor Fu Hong pointed out that "course ideology and politics" should be implemented collaboratively from three aspects: top-level design, traditional Chinese elements in the classroom, and teachers' ideological and political awareness and skills (Tian & Fu, 2018). On this basis, some scholars propose to improve the evaluation feedback mechanism of "course ideology and politics" and implement diversified evaluation (Wan, 2019). For example, Cheng Guiying and Wang Jiping (2019) suggest that teachers should be evaluated from six dimensions - setting goals for "course ideology and politics", exploring elements of "course ideology and politics", the degree of integration of "course ideology and politics", the effectiveness of "course ideology and politics", critical thinking of "course ideology and politics", and the achievement of "course ideology and politics".

Under this circumstance, the integration of "course ideology and politics" into English writing teaching can be carried out from several aspects. For example, great attention should be paid to the content of teaching material. This can highlight "Chinese elements at the source and reflect ideological and political guidance"(Du & Sun, 2019). When discussing writing topics such as western festivals in college English textbooks, Chinese cultural materials can be added to compare cultural differences between the East and the West.

This can also cultivate students' cultural confidence through critical thinking.

In this essay, the approaches of integrating "course ideology and politics" into English writing teaching will be analyzed from the perspective of POA theory. From the perspective of teaching philosophy, the production-oriented approach is in line with "course ideology and politics" (Xu, 2024). On the one hand, they all stress student-centered teaching. On the other hand, "course ideology and politics" can cultivate students' spiritual world and develop their morals, which is part of holistic education and the integration of learning and application emphasized in the POA theory. In the teaching process, the integration of the POA and "course ideology and politics" can be reflected in the following aspects. In the motivating phase of POA, in order to stimulate students' interest and motivation, teachers can design pre-writing tasks with practical communicative significance that integrate elements of ideological and political education. For example, students might be asked to write an essay on festivals, which can lead to discussions on traditional customs in groups. This discussion can boost cultural confidence of students. In terms of the enabling phase, necessary knowledge can be taught to help students complete writing. This includes vocabulary, grammatical structures, cultural background knowledge, critical thinking skills and writing tips. Cultural background knowledge should be aligned with the ideological and political themes of the writing task. In the assessing phase, teachers and students work together to evaluate students' learning outcomes, and to assess whether they meet ideological and political education goals or not. Through assessment, students can also be aware of their level of writing ability. Evaluate students' writing is not only for linguistic accuracy but also for the depth of their understanding of ideological and political themes. Improvements can thus be made by students according to the feedback and comments.

6. A Case Study of Integrating "Course Ideology and Politics" into College English Writing from the Perspective of POA Theory

The research takes Unit 5 Love is in Air in *New Future College English Integrated Textbook 1* as an example to demonstrate how to integrate ideological and political elements into the teaching of English writing based on POA. Students are asked to write a short essay reflecting on how you would like to express love. It is suggested to take three aspects into consideration. For whom would you like to express your love? How would you like to express love? How are you affected by culturally-approved ways to express love? After deeply exploring the teaching themes of each unit, the author of the paper attempts to integrate ideological and political elements with English writing teaching procedures from the perspective of POA theory. The teaching design below focuses on the first two questions of the writing task-for whom you would like to express your love and how you would like to express love.

6.1 Teaching Objectives

The teaching objectives of this writing task are divided into three aspects. In terms of language knowledge objectives, students can list the types of love and master language expressions related to "show love" at the end of class. As to ability objectives, students should be able to objectively state viewpoints, which can facilitate the critical thinking ability of students. Students can also enhance their writing, cooperation, and communication skills after the class. Educational objectives contain the establishment of correct values and enhance national pride of students by thinking about the way Chinese people show love. Ideological and political elements are reflected in the teaching Objectives. More specifically, students will be aware of traditional ways of demonstrating love and appreciate Chinese love's philosophy, boosting culture confidence. In addition, students can develop critical thinking ability through the writing lesson. Critical thinking ability will help students distinguish right from wrong and establish the correct "three- perspectives"- the outlook on the world, life and values.

6.2 Teaching Process

The teaching process are made of motivating, enabling, and assessing. It involves two enabling phases-enabling ① and enabling ②. Accordingly, there are two assessing phases – assessing ① and assessing ②. The homework after the class is presented in the 2.2.6. section.

6.2.1 Motivating

The teacher assigns the writing task on the Pigai platform and students should complete it in advance according to the task requirements. The task asks students to write a short essay on how they would like to express love and the essay should be around 130 words. Students are also told to pay attention to Chinese traditional ways to show affection, which spreads traditional Chinese culture and meets the requirements of "course ideology and politics" (for educational objectives). The teacher should review the students' essays in advance, focusing on the diversity of language expression (for language goal) and whether the students can objectively present viewpoints (for ability goal). Typical cases are then selected from these essays.

During the class, a matching activity is designed to let students understand how people express love in different cultures. Then, the teacher will ask students to discuss in groups how Chinese people show love by answering the following two questions. For whom would you like to express your love? How would you like to express love? A poll can be done to collect students' answer. Next comes case analysis. The teacher will comment on the pre-class writing task completed before the class. The teacher then presents typical cases of students' essays, and guides students to evaluate the samples according to the criteria in groups. The criteria focus on the variety of language expression and objectivity in students' arguments. Issues in the writing samples are summarized.

6.2.2 Enabling①

To solve the issues summarized in the motivating phase, students will firstly be taught on how to express affections in a

variety of ways. Next, students are asked to review the "question-answer" structure of text A in the Unit 5 under the guidance of the teacher. students are also required to discuss in groups on whether the arguments in text A are objectively presented. In order to evaluate arguments in an objective way, students should think of arguments in terms of relevance, accuracy, and sound logic. To be more precise, four questions in the textbook can be presented to students: (1) Does the author stay on topic or introduce irrelevant material? (2) Are the ideas in the text consistent, or do they contradict each other? (3) Does the author give reliable evidence to support the claims? (4) Does the author take into account opposing viewpoints?

After the teacher's explanation, students are divided into groups to rewrite the sample cases displayed in the beginning of the class according to what they have learned. After the discussion, the group leader should upload their work to the learning platform.

6.2.3 Assessing①

This stage consists of peer evaluation and teacher-student cooperative evaluation. Peer evaluation requires students to evaluate each other and give feedbacks on the learning platform. The evaluation focuses on the diversity of English expression of love and whether the viewpoints are objective or not. Teacher-student cooperative evaluation follows peer evaluation. The teacher summarizes the peer evaluation after the evaluation is finished. One or two essays with high scores from peer evaluation are chosen for teacher review.

6.2.4 Enabling②

How to express love in different ways and how to present arguments objectively are repeated and summarized through a combination of teacher's instruction and classroom Q&A. The teacher asks students to rewrite their own piece of writing by using the newly-learned phrases, sentences and skills to reinforce and consolidate knowledge. After rewriting, students reupload their essays on Pigai website.

6.2.5 Assessing②

The teacher randomly selects some essays, checks the students' mastery of expressions related to love, and judges the objectivity of their viewpoints. Feedbacks should be offered to students for further improvement.

6.2.6 Homework

Based on this class, students are asked to complete a continuous writing task on Pigai website, addressing the question-How are you affected by culturally-approved ways to express love? A speech video of Ouyang is provided for students for reference.

6.3 Ideological and Political Elements in the Teaching Process

The teaching process can reflect ideological and political elements in two perspectives. On the one hand, activities in the motivating and enabling phases can help students

understand traditional Chinese love and learn how to express in English, which will boost culture confidence. On the other hand, students can improve critical thinking skills through objectively evaluate viewpoints. As is said before, Critical thinking ability will help students establish the correct world outlook, study philosophy of life, and hold right values.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Guided by the POA theory, this paper attempts to explore ways for ideological and political education in college English writing courses. The research takes as an example the writing task of Unit 5 Love is in Air in *New Future College English Integrated Textbook 1*.

Further research should focus on empirical study. Questionnaire or interview can be conducted to collect feedbacks from university students on the effectiveness of the integration of ideological and political education in English writing courses from the perspective of the POA theory. The surveys should be designed to assess students' achievement of learning goals. Through the analysis of these data, students' overall evaluation of the teaching design stated in this paper can be obtained.

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