Ideological and Political Teaching Strategy and Case Study of the English Courses of Military Characteristics

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Abstract

This paper mainly explores the ideological and political teaching practice of integrating the cultivation of foreign language skills and the improvement of ideological and moral quality in military English courses with special characteristics. The practice includes two interrelated aspects: (1) the ideological and political connotation of the military English curriculum, and (2) designing principles and strategies for ideological and political teaching of military English courses. Based on the exploration of teaching practice in the early stage, this paper provides specific practical cases to provide references for front-line foreign language teachers to carry out curriculum ideological and political practice.

Keywords

English with military characteristics
Curriculum ideological and political teaching
Teaching case

1. Research background

Since the current President of the People's Republic of China put forward the military education policy of the new era of "cultivating people by virtue and educating people for war" in 2019, Curriculum ideological and political teaching has become a new practical subject for foreign language teaching in military schools.

However, the existing English courses with military characteristics make it difficult to meet the needs of ideological and political education. Taking the course "Military English" offered by all military colleges and universities as an example, there are mainly the following problems: First, the teaching content seldom reflects the historical development and information construction of our army. Second, the ideological and political elements of teaching design

are insufficient. Third, there is the lack of a systematic curriculum ideological and political classroom teaching implementation system. Fourth, the teaching mode emphasizes knowledge imparting, moral education is insufficient. Fifth, the disconnection of curriculum ideological and political teaching design is serious.

2. Literature review

The domestic research on ideology and politics in foreign language curricula can be roughly summarized into six aspects, such as the connotation of ideology and politics in foreign language curricula, the compilation of ideological and political textbooks, the mining of ideological and political elements, the implementation path, the evaluation of ideological and political thinking and politics in military English curriculum.

Zhang and Wang [1] as well as Wen [2] expounded the connotation of ideology and politics from different perspectives. Wang [3] as well as Xiao and Huang [4] put forward the principles and strategies for compiling foreign language ideological and political textbooks. Several scholars such as Liu [5], Yang [6], Yang [7], and Huang [8] summarized the methods of mining ideological and political elements from existing teaching materials. Scholars such as Zhang and Wang [1], Wen [2], and Yang [6] designed the implementation path of ideology and politics in foreign language curricula. In addition, Wen [2] and Liu [6] also designed the evaluation system of ideological and political teaching effects. There are only two articles on how to implement curriculum ideology and politics in military English teaching.

Domestic research provides abundant materials and methods for reference, but there are several issues:

(1) The specific meaning of "virtue" in the army is not clear.

(2) Sources of ideological and political elements, mining methods, implementation paths, evaluation studies, etc., are mostly speculative discussions, and lack of practical studies.

3. The ideological and political connotation of foreign language courses with military characteristics

According to the military education policy in the new era, the primary goal of military English courses is to guide students to firm their ideals and beliefs, namely: faith in Marxism, faith in socialism and communism, and loyalty to the Party and the people; The core is to guide students to cast a strong sense of the military spirit, the Party's absolute leadership of the army is the foundation of the people's army, the soul of the army; The fundamental is to guide the students determined to win the strong army, which is to temper the fighting spirit of "not afraid of hardship, not afraid of death" and to temper the indomitable will to fight.

4. The design principles and strategies of ideological and political teaching of military English courses

4.1. The design of teaching objectives highlights precision

Teaching objectives are the compass and direction mark used by teaching materials, so we must ensure the accuracy of teaching objectives: The ideological and political teaching objectives of military English courses should be based on the military education policy in the new era, organically connected with the language teaching objectives, and should be based on and higher than the text.

4.2. Curriculum ideological and political content design should grasp the "three degrees"

Curriculum design for ideological and political content should grasp the "three degrees": height, depth, and trend. First, it should have height, meaning it should elevate students' understanding and perspectives. Second, it should have depth, aiming to train students

to develop firm ideals and beliefs, instill a strong sense of military consciousness, and adhere to the principle of winning for the army as the central theme of the course's ideological and political content. Third, it should have a trend. The design of the ideological and political content in military English courses must focus on the development of military cadets, be based on the characteristics of military colleges, and be guided by the subject attributes of military English.

4.3. The course teaching process is prominent and progressive

Vygotsky believed that the design of learning activity steps should follow the principle of the zone of proximal development [9]. Therefore, the difficulty of classroom teaching activities needs to be improved step by step. Since the teaching goal always requires students to jump before they can achieve it, teachers need to provide students with the necessary language and ideological and political support, such as vocabulary, phrases, functional sentences, ideas, opinions, and so on.

4.4. Curriculum evaluation feedback highlights integration

The evaluation of curriculum ideological and political teaching should be integrated into the evaluation of language knowledge and skills. Among them, the evaluation of language knowledge and skills is dominant, while the evaluation of ideological and political goals is recessive.

5. The teaching case of the English courses of military characteristics (topic 8: aircraft carrier)

5.1. Ideological and political teaching goal

(1) To reshape the teaching content and edify the spirit of exploration: By adding, modifying, deleting, and supplementing the content of the teaching material, the history of the research and development of China's aircraft carrier and the history of the struggle of the first aircraft carrier's crew are supplemented, and the vision of students is expanded and the ideological and political elements are enriched. It teaches by example and guides students to explore and innovate.

(2) To enhance national confidence and cultivate national feelings: The history of Varyag being reborn and transformed into Liaoning is described, and then to Shandong, a domestic aircraft carrier that is completely independently designed, built, and supported, and then to Fujian, a catapult-type aircraft carrier that is completely independently designed and built, showing the development course of China in the field of aircraft carriers from "zero" to "having" and then to "leading", enhancing the students' national confidence and feelings of home and country.

(3) To inspire patriotic feelings and commit to the cause of national defense: By getting familiar with the sacrifice spirit of carrier-based aircraft pilots "carrying their heads to the cause" and the "meticulous" dedication spirit of flight deck staff, students will be guided to understand the mission and responsibility of the first generation of aircraft carrier crew members loyal to the country for the cause of aircraft carriers.

5.2. Important and difficult points in teaching

(1) Important point: Master the terminology and expressions that introduce the definition, history, and layout of an aircraft carrier.

(2) Difficult point: Be able to skillfully introduce the history and layout of China's two aircraft carriers.

5.3. Teaching content, process, and method

5.3.1. Teaching content

Teaching content is selected from "Military English Listening and Speaking Course" topic 8 "aircraft carrier", for listening and speaking class type. Master the relevant terms and expressions that introduce the definition, history, and layout of an aircraft carrier.

5.3.2. Unit ideological and political teaching design

5.3.2.1. Before class

(1) Teachers' preparation before class: Teachers prepare lessons in the form of lesson plans. Before case teaching, teachers prepare enlightening pre-class thinking questions, assign pre-class tasks, understand students' grasp of English expressions related to aircraft carrier knowledge, and clarify the relevant teaching methods adopted in class.

(2) Students' preparation before class: Students preview before class, the first is to pay attention to the rain class preview courseware, to understand the output tasks of this class. The second is to collect information about the Liaoning. The third is to summarize the pre-class learning, which is carried out in groups of 1–5 people. The form can be but is not limited to mind mapping, PowerPoint presentations, audio-visual production, and sharing, and the corresponding report will be made in class.

5.3.2.2. In class

The classroom teaching design is guided by the output-oriented method, and the teaching process is composed of several "driving-facilitating-evaluating" cycle chains.

Through task traction, the learning content is completed in the way of "elaborate and practice more" + "pair activity" + "class presentation". Specifically, by understanding the relevant important historical nodes of Shandong since its commissioning, master the vocabulary to introduce the history of the aircraft carrier, and master the relevant vocabulary to describe the layout of the aircraft carrier through matching and listening exercises. Additionally, the students were grouped into groups and combined with the content of this class to complete the introduction of important nodes in the history of Liaoning, as well as the oral practice of aircraft carrier layout vocabulary, and to test the results of the group discussion through rain class practice and class demonstration.

5.3.2.3. After class

(1) After class exercise: Teachers assigned after-class exercise, and students drew a curriculum mind map;

(2) Thinking after class: Students compared Chinese and American aircraft carriers, found the gap, and clarified the direction of development;

(3) After-class reflection: Students summarized and reflected on their own knowledge mastery and the change of their corresponding professional emotional attitude after the completion of the course, and understood and practiced the connotation of loving the motherland and devoting themselves to national defense.

5.3.3. Reflection on teaching design

First, students' grasp of basic knowledge. The implementation of the output-oriented method makes teachers and students clear the task of each class and have a target; The combination of teachers' teaching and students' practice can realize the purpose of applying what they have learned. Second, with the cultivation of learning ability and methods, the students' independent exploration ability has been significantly improved, and the learning transfer ability has been strengthened. The third is the cultivation of students' professional values, embedding relevant ideological and political teaching in different teaching links, cultivating the spirit of exploration, cultivating the feelings of home and country, and committing to the ambition of national defense.

6. Conclusion

This paper puts forward the principles of ideological and political teaching in curriculum, shows the idea of leading the reform of the military English teaching system with curriculum ideological and political elements, and the path and method of integrating ideological and political elements into the teaching content and process. In addition, taking "Military English" as an example, the teaching guide of ideological and political development of the curriculum is provided, and specific operational reference cases from theory to practice are provided for front-line teachers.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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