

The Exploration of Collaborative Education Pathway for Counselors and College English Teachers under the Perspective of Curriculum Ideology and Politics — A Teaching Case Study Based on the "A Taste of Culture"

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Abstract: In the context of the comprehensive integration of curriculum ideology and politics into university teaching, college English class, as an important field of cross-cultural communication and value guidance, urgently need to establish an education mode of "teacher-led and counselor-assisted". This paper uses the teaching design of "A Taste of Culture" from Unit 5 of New Generation College English 1 (the Advanced edition), designed by English Teacher A from a university in Guilin, as a case study. It systematically analyzes the ideological and political elements embedded in the course's introduction, reading, discussion, and output parts. By integrating teaching practice, the paper extracts feasible pathways for counselor-assisted education from three dimensions—pre-class, in-class, and post-class—to provide practical references for the deep integration of curriculum ideology and politics in university courses and student affairs work.

Keywords: College English Class; Curriculum Ideology and Politics; Counsellor; Collaborative Education

1. Introduction

Comprehensively promoting the construction of curriculum ideological and political is a strategic measure to implement the fundamental task of cultivating people with integrity and talent. To build a high-level talent cultivation system, it is necessary to integrate the ideological and political work system throughout it and to strengthen the construction curriculum ideology and politics, addressing the issue of the disconnect between professional education and ideological and political education^[1]. College English courses combine language tools with cultural communication. They not only undertake the task of improving students' cross-cultural communication skills, but also shoulder the mission of guiding students to establish cultural self-confidence and practice the civilization concept of "harmony but difference" in the comparison of Chinese and Western cultures. As the core force in guiding students' thinking, counselors work in tandem with English teachers to achieve the unity of "knowledge transmission" and "value guidance." By assisting college English teachers in implementing ideological and politics education within courses, counselors can enhance English teachers' efficiency in preparing teaching resources while compensating for their own professional knowledge gaps^[2].

This paper takes the teaching design of "A Taste of Culture" from Unit 5 of New Generation College English 1 (the Advanced edition), designed by English Teacher A from a university in Guilin, as the research object. Taking food culture as the entry point, this course analyzes the Chinese philosophy of "Yin-Yang balance" in diet and the differences between Chinese and Western food cultures. It designs a complete teaching chain from language learning to cultural cognition and value shaping, including introduction, fast reading, intensive reading, discussion, writing and other links. Based on English Teacher A's teaching design, this paper explores how counselors can embed themselves into the whole teaching process and build a path of collaborative education.

2. The Teaching Design and the Analysis of ideological and political elements of the Case Study

The teaching design of "A Taste of Culture" takes "food carrying culture" as the core and constructs a progressive teaching closed loop, which contains rich ideological and political elements in each link:

2.1 Teaching objectives

After class, students will be able to master objectives from three dimensions. They are respectively knowledge and skills objectives, process and method objectives, and emotional attitudes and values. For the knowledge and skills objectives, students should not only master key words and expressions related to food culture: diversity, cuisine, philosophy, harmony, balance, Yin-Yang theory, etc, but also know how to use the sentence structure in the text to describe the characteristics of food in different cultural backgrounds. Process and method objectives are finding out the differences between Chinese and Western cultures by combining the teacher's lecture with their own daily life. Besides, students are able to deeply understand the philosophical connotation of "Yin-Yang balance" in Chinese food culture through group discussion and learn to use comparative analysis to write about cross-cultural food topics. Emotional attitudes and values seem more inner, they are strengthening cultural confidence to accurately express the essence of Chinese culinary culture in English; fostering a sense of a community with a shared future for mankind, understanding the importance of cultural diversity in civilization exchanges; cultivating critical thinking to dialectically view differences between Chinese and Western culinary cultures; enhancing cross-cultural communication awareness to comprehend the cultural philosophy of "harmony in diversity" .

2.2 Teaching key point and difficult point

The teaching key point is understanding the discussion on the diversity of food culture in the text and mastering the embodiment of the "Yin-Yang" philosophy in Chinese food culture. The teaching difficult points are how to guide students to understand the differences of food culture from the philosophical perspective and how to enhance students' cultural confidence and cross-cultural communication ability through language learning. What's more, to naturally integrate the concept of "a community with a shared future for mankind" into classroom teaching is also a teaching difficult point.

2.3 Teaching method

The teaching methods used in this teaching design include task-based method, problem-oriented method, group cooperative method and multimedia assisted teaching method

2.4 Teaching procedures

The teacher designed 4 steps in this part, lead-in, fast and intensive reading, group discussion and homework are included.

2.4.1 Lead-in (5mins)

The teacher played the documentary clips of "Chinese Food" on BBC and guided students to think about "Why is food more than just eating?" and connect food with national history and cultural values, laying an emotional foundation for the education of "cultural confidence".

2.4.2 Fast and intensive reading (23mins)

The teacher raised a guided question "How does Chinese food culture reflect the 'Yin-Yang' philosophy?" to help students understand through text analysis that "Yin-Yang balance" is not only a dietary principle but also the core of Chinese culture which emphasizes "harmonious coexistence," while also connecting it to the concept of a "community with a shared future for mankind." The teacher introduced the concept of "five grains as nourishment" from the Huangdi Neijing and the medical theory of the four natures which are cold, hot, warm, and cool to the students. After the introduction, the teacher asked the students to have a brain storming on "Yin-Yang foods" to reinforce their understanding of Chinese dietary philosophy.

2.4.3 Group discussion (10mins)

The teachers organized group discussions on topics such as "differences in Chinese and Western dietary habits", "preserving local culinary traditions in a globalized world" and "promoting Chinese

food culture internationally" to cultivate students' critical thinking and cultural awareness. After the discussion, each group takes turns to present their findings to enhance teamwork spirits, logical reasoning skills, and communication abilities.

2.4.4 Homework (2mins)

The teacher gave a selective assignment: introducing Chinese food culture to foreign friends or exchanging views on "A Bite of China" with your classmates to realize the transformation from cultural cognition to practical ability.

This design forms a chain of ideological and political education "language learning--cultural understanding--value practice", which provides a clear intervention node for counselors to cooperate in education.

3. Counselor Collaborative Education Pathway

Compared with the course teacher, counselors are able to get close to students' studies, life and other aspects, and they have more access, such as daily talk, dormitory inspection, evening meeting, themed class meeting, etc, to understand students, which enables counselors to start from the details of students' life and guide them to establish a correct and active attitude towards life and behavior habits, and cultivate their sense of self-discipline and responsibility[3]. Course teachers possess solid academic expertise and exceptional professional competence, which effectively enhances students' academic development. By integrating high-quality educational resources, counselors and course teachers establish a collaborative communication mechanism. This ensures both parties fulfill their respective roles while leveraging their strengths and complementing each other's advantages, thereby helping students address various challenges encountered during their growth and talent development process[4]. Based on the teaching design of "A Taste of Culture", counselors can build a collaborative education path from the following three dimensions:

3.1 Pre-class: Supplementing background knowledge and strengthening ideological and political preparation

Teachers often encounter various challenges during instruction, with students' lack of necessary background knowledge being particularly prominent. This gap in foundational understanding frequently disrupts classroom activities, forcing teachers to spend considerable time supplementing relevant contextual information. If counselors can help students acquire this background knowledge before class, it would significantly enhance teaching effectiveness for instructors. In addition, it is particularly important for counselors to strengthen ideological and political preparation for students before class. To achieve the above two purposes, counselors can start from the following two aspects:

3.1.1 Aligning with teaching objectives and conducting accurate research on students' learning situations

In alignment with the learning objectives of "Understanding philosophy of Yin-Yang balance and strengthening cultural confidence," counselors can conduct class surveys and group interviews to identify students' knowledge gaps regarding Chinese dietary culture, such as understanding the traditional concept of "food-medicine equivalence" and their acceptance of "Yin-Yang theory". To address potential cognitive barriers in lead-in part—particularly concerns about the scientific validity of "Yin-Yang theory"—counselors can collect materials in advance, such as modern interpretations of the Huangdi Neijing and examples of traditional Chinese medicine dietary health care cases and some other materials. These resources can be provided to English teachers as supplementary materials. Additionally, class meetings incorporate interactive sessions sharing "Food Wisdom from Daily Life," laying a cognitive foundation for classroom learning.

3.1.2 Setting up preview tasks and activating cultural identity

Focus on the lead-in part of the teaching design, counselors assist in designing a "local culinary culture" preparatory task. Students are asked to take photos of their family dining tables and record festival special food like Dragon Boat Festival zongzi and Mid-Autumn Festival mooncakes, and annotate their cultural significance. Before class, those outstanding works are compiled into a PowerPoint presentation, which will be showcased by teachers during lessons. This approach not only aligned with the instructional theme of "Food as Cultural Carrier" but also strengthened students' cultural identity through personal involvement.

3.2 In-class: Deep embedding teaching and strengthening value guidance

In the teaching process, counselors can go into the classroom and carry out teaching activities with students, giving them positive guidance and education in the process.

3.2.1 Participating in group discussions to deepen cultural interpretation

During the group discussion on yin and yang foods, the counselor can join the group as an observer. He can draw on examples mentioned by the students such as lamb is yang and watermelon is yin to expand on the interpretation: This is the wisdom of "following the seasons and balancing one's diet", which has been documented in the Huangdi Neijing for a long time and it remains a dietary principle in Chinese households till now. This is precisely where the vitality of Chinese culture lies, in its ability to pass down its traditions from generation to generation." Through concrete explanations, the "Yin-Yang theory" in the teaching design is elevated from a biological level to a cultural heritage level.

3.2.2 Focusing on cognitive conflict and guiding dialectical thinking

During the "group discussion" session, in response to extreme viewpoints that students might express, such as "Western individual-serving meals are absolutely superior to Chinese communal meals," the counselor should promptly guide the discussion based on the "harmony in diversity" philosophy incorporated into the teaching design: "Communal meals embody the values of 'sharing' and 'reunion,' which are everyday expressions of China's 'harmony is precious' philosophy, while the hygiene principles of individual-serving meals are worth learning." The text mentions that 'different cultures should coexist in harmony', which precisely tells us that cultures have no superiority or inferiority; respecting differences is true wisdom.

3.2.3 Collaborating on after-school guidance and calibrating communication positions

In homework part, counselors can assist English teachers in guiding students to avoid two tendencies: one is to avoid cultural inferiority, such as overemphasizing international integration and weakening the "yin-yang balance" characteristic. The second is to avoid cultural arrogance, such as denying Western food culture. For example, students are guided to add the Chinese concept of "yin and yang balance" coincides with the dietary balance of modern nutrition, showing the common pursuit of human health by mankind", which is not only in line with the goal of cultural communication in teaching design, but also conveys the cross-cultural concept of equal communication.

3.3 Post-class: Extending the practical scene and solidifying the effect of education

In order to consolidate the classroom teaching effect, counselors can take the following measures to extend the practical scene and solidify the educational effect:

3.3.1 Designing follow-up assignments and organizing themed practical activities

For the selective assignment in the teaching design, counselors can organize an "English Sharing Session on Culinary Culture" during themed class meetings. Students must not only describe dishes in English, for example, dumplings symbolize reunion, and hot pot embodies inclusivity, but also explain their cultural significance using the "Yin-Yang theory" from the text, for example, eating mung beans in summer to cool off is the wisdom of balancing summer heat with "Yin foods", thereby achieving a closed-loop process of "language expression - cultural interpretation - confident communication".

3.3.2 Building a cross-cultural platform and practicing the concept of symbiosis

In line with the concept of a "community with a shared future for mankind" in the teaching design, the counselor collaborates with the International Exchange College to organize a "Dialogue on Chinese and Western Food Culture" event. Students are organized to explain "chopstick culture" and "seasonal cuisine" to international students in English, while international students are invited to share Western dining etiquette. Through interaction, they put into practice the lesson's message that "different cuisines coexist in harmony," transforming classroom knowledge into cross-cultural practical skills.

3.3.3 Establishing feedback mechanism and optimizing the coordination mode

After class, counselors collect students' feedback through questionnaires. The questions can be "Whether you are more willing to actively understand traditional Chinese culture" and "Can you rationally view the differences between Chinese and Western cultures". At the same time, counselors can also adjust subsequent collaborative strategies with English teachers based on the achievement of teaching design goals, such as increasing activities like "food culture debate" and "bilingual food

festival", so as to form a long-term mechanism of "teaching-practice-feedback-optimization".

4. Conclusion

The collaborative practice of "A Taste of Culture" course demonstrates that the role of counselors in English curriculum ideology and politics is not additional; instead, it involves embedding themselves in the entire teaching process and transforming the ideological and political elements in teaching design into specific experiences that students can perceive, participate in, and practice. Its core strategy can be summarized as follows: laying a foundation for collaboration through "learning situation research and cultural preheating" before class, deepening value transmission by relying on "discussion guidance and cognitive calibration" during class, and realizing the integration of knowledge and action by means of "practice extension and feedback optimization" after class.

To enhance the effectiveness of collaborative education, counselors must thoroughly understand the ideological and political logic underlying course design and avoid interfering with professional instruction. They should establish a regular communication mechanism with English teachers to ensure alignment between collaborative objectives and teaching goals. Besides, counselors should also ground their approach in students' cognitive patterns and integrate ideological and political education into daily contexts like dining and festivals, steering clear of didactic instruction. In the future, with the deepening of curriculum ideological and political education, the collaboration between counselors and professional teachers will be close, which will provide strong support for cultivating international talents "with both language ability and cultural confidence".

Acknowledgements

This work is financially supported by the Seventh Batch of Curriculum Ideological and Political Demonstration Course Construction Project of Guangxi Normal University (2024kcsz31) and Key Project of School Education and Teaching Reform in 2024 (2024JGB29). The authors are thankful for the support.

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