A Practical Research on the Integration of University English Course Ideological Education Enabled by Generative AI under the OBE Concept

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Abstract

In terms of goal orientation, content design, implementation path, and evaluation standards, the OBE concept and curriculum ideological education have inherent consistency. Based on the OBE concept, by leveraging generative artificial intelligence to innovate the design of teaching objectives and contents, teaching methods and evaluation systems, it is possible to effectively solve the current problems in teaching such as mechanical superimposition of goals, superficial integration of content, disconnection of method innovation, and defects in the evaluation system.

Keywords

OBE Concept; University English; Curriculum Ideological Education; Teaching Design; Artificial Intelligence.

1. Introduction

In June 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the Guidelines for the Construction of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Courses, clearly stating that all universities and all disciplines and majors in China should comprehensively promote the construction of ideological and political education in courses [1]. In January 2025, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the Outline for the Construction of an Education Power (2024-2035), incorporating the construction of ideological and political education in courses into the framework of the education power strategy, and once again emphasizing that cultivating virtue and fostering talents is the fundamental task of higher education in our country.

2. OBE Concept and University English Curriculum Ideological Education

2.1. OBE Concept and Core Points

In 1981, American scholar William G. Spady first proposed the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) concept, which focuses on learning outcomes. By designing courses and teaching in a reverse manner, the expected educational goals shift from what students have learned to what they can do. The OBE concept has been widely applied in higher education in English-speaking countries and has gradually spread worldwide. It has also promoted the transformation of the traditional educational paradigm in China from “centered on teaching” to “centered on learning”, and from “knowledge system-centered” to “goal-oriented at achieving abilities”. The core points of the OBE concept are to be student-centered, first establishing clear and measurable learning goals, then designing the curriculum system and teaching activities in reverse, forming an effective closed loop of “evaluation-feedback-improvement”, so that students can ultimately achieve the expected learning outcomes.

2.2. Core Connotations and Expected Goals of Ideological and Political Education in University English Courses

University English courses incorporate ideological and political education through the medium of English language courses. They deeply explore the ideological and political elements such as humanistic spirit, moral concepts, patriotism, and international perspective that are embedded in the courses, integrating ideological and political education into English teaching to achieve the organic unity of value guidance, knowledge education, and ability cultivation [2]. The fundamental goal of university English courses with ideological and political education is for students to be able to better convey China's voice on the international stage, tell China's stories, and serve the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It closely aligns with the talent cultivation plans of China's higher education and strives to cultivate high-quality talents with an international perspective, good moral qualities, and solid language skills.

2.3. Synergy between the OBE Concept and the Ideological and Political Education in College English Courses

2.3.1. Consistency in Goal Orientation

The high alignment of the OBE concept and ideological and political education at the conceptual level can lead to a synergistic effect. Bloom established a hierarchical goal system by integrating the cognitive, affective, and motor skills domains, providing a theoretical basis for achieving the unity of knowledge transmission and value guidance in course design. The OBE concept emphasizes the realization of students' expected learning goals. The ideological and political education in English courses sets the goals of mastering language skills such as vocabulary and grammar application, and also incorporates the cultivation of students' cross-cultural communication abilities and social responsibility and other emotional and value enhancements into the course objectives. This is conducive to integrating the value guidance goals of ideological and political education into specific course teaching [3]. 1.3.2 Compatibility of Content Design Concept

The modular curriculum system architecture based on OBE provides a structured carrier for the integration of ideological and political elements. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes that cognitive development stems from the internalization of cultural tools. Language teaching content must carry cultural value codes. In language classroom teaching, teachers introduce knowledge about festivals, history, art, etc. in English-speaking countries to enable students to understand the cultural background of these countries, and guide students to think about the values behind these cultures [4].

2.3.2. Compatibility of Implementation Path Scheme

The OBE concept and the subject construction in curriculum ideological education both emphasize "student-centers" at the methodological level. Bandura established a three-way interactive model based on individuals, behaviors, and environments, pointing out that the coupling effect of these three elements jointly determines the occurrence and development of human behavior. Through the three-way interactive model, the intrinsic connection between the two is revealed. The teaching practice meticulously designed according to the learning conditions theory of Gagne, from the initial awakening of value cognition, to the effective cultivation of critical thinking, and ultimately extending to value judgment in cross-cultural communication scenarios, ingeniously embeds the ideological elements into each stage of the language task chain [5].

2.3.3. Intrinsic Consistency of Evaluation Criteria

The continuous improvement mechanism of the OBE theory and the qualitative evaluation of curriculum ideological education both aim to enhance educational quality and promote the

all-round development of students. Scrivener advocates that when evaluating the goals, it is not only necessary to focus on the achievement of the preset goals, but also to pay attention to the implicit gains during the teaching process. Atkin also believes that evaluation should not be regarded as a simple judgment of results, but should be regarded as an organic part of the teaching and learning process.

3. Real Issues in the University English Curriculum Ideological Education

3.1. Mechanical Superposition of Teaching Objectives and Ideological Objectives

The teaching objectives of university English focus on the mastery and application of students' language abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The ideological objectives emphasize the cultivation of new era English talents with a global perspective and cultural confidence. However, in practice, some colleges often simplify the ideological objectives to the addition of knowledge points, ignoring the process of value internalization and the coordinated laws of language cognition development. The mechanical superposition of ideological objectives and language ability objectives blurs the target system and leads to a "two-layered" phenomenon in teaching implementation, violating the integration requirements of the cognitive and emotional domains in Bloom's educational goal classification, and weakening the educational effectiveness of ideological education in the course [6].

3.2. The Integration of Teaching Content is Superficial

Vygotsky's social-cultural theory emphasizes that knowledge is dynamically constructed through social interaction and cultural tool mediation in interpersonal collaboration rather than being acquired in isolation by individuals. In the integration of university English teaching content, teachers often overlook the ideological transmission function carried by the language symbol system itself, simplifying ideological and political elements into static labels, neglecting the deep cultural load of language symbols, failing to achieve the dynamic integration of ideological and political content with students' cognitive structures through social activities such as teacher-student interaction and text interpretation, and failing to establish a deep integration mechanism between cultural value codes and language symbol systems. The superficial integration of English vocabulary, grammar structure learning and ideological and political elements leads to the fragmentation of value education.

3.3. Disconnection between Teaching Method Innovation and Educational Effectiveness

The disconnection between teaching method innovation and educational effectiveness essentially represents the overstepping of instrumental rationality over value rationality, highlighting the deep-seated contradiction in higher education reform between "methodological priority" and "lack of ontological focus". Some teachers' own value cognitive systems are not yet complete, making it difficult for them to achieve the implicit transmission of ideology in language training, and making the demonstration effect emphasized by Bandura's social learning theory difficult to be realized in cross-cultural contexts. The online-offline hybrid and AI-enabled teaching reforms have even exposed the insufficient digital literacy of teachers, and the cognitive mediation process.

3.4. Structural Flaws in the Teaching Evaluation System

The current situation of the evaluation mechanism for college English courses is that it neglects the qualitative assessment of value cognition that quantitative data cannot reach and focuses more on the quantitative assessment of language skills. The SOLO classification theory

requires that by analyzing the structural complexity of students' responses to questions, their cognitive levels be divided into five levels from low to high and from concrete to abstract, in order to assess the progressive development from simple memory to complex abstract thinking. Cognitive-level evaluation, however, has been simplified into standardized tests in operation, completely disregarding the dynamics and differences in the process of internalizing values.

4. Re-design of the Teaching Objectives and Content of Curriculum Ideological Education

4.1. Setting of Teaching Objectives for Curriculum Ideological Education

4.1.1. The Knowledge Objective

Under the framework of the OBE concept, the ideological education in the university English course achieves the organic unity of the instrumental nature of language and the guiding role of ideology through the two-way interaction of "explicit knowledge transmission-implicit value infiltration". Under the guidance of the teacher, students systematically master the core vocabulary, phrases, and sentence structures of the course, and form the precise semantic understanding and flexible application ability of "form-meaning-usage" in a tripartite manner.

4.1.2. The Competence Objective.

The university English course ideological and political teaching is based on the OBE (Outcome-Based Education) concept's competence objective system. Through the three-dimensional interaction of "language-thinking-strategy'', it achieves a leapfrog improvement from language skills to thinking quality, focusing on cultivating students' cross-cultural communication skills, critical thinking and autonomous learning abilities, ultimately achieving the practical orientation of " being able to do things in English'', providing a core driving force for lifelong learning and global competence development. Under the systematic guidance of teachers, students, through in-depth analysis of language phenomena and cultural issues, gradually form independent thinking ability, questioning and reflective spirit, and logical argumentation literacy, effectively improving their critical thinking level.

4.1.3. The Educational Goals.

Under the guidance of the OBE concept, the ideological and political education in university English courses should set the goal of achieving value guidance and personality formation through language teaching. Teachers need to establish a teaching model that integrates "language-culture-and values'', and through teaching activities such as text interpretation and situational simulation, guide students to transform their ideological and political cognition into behavioral consciousness, help students construct the contemporary connotations of correct outlooks on life, values, and worldviews, cultivate their healthy attitudes towards life, strengthen their sense of social responsibility, and enable them to consciously integrate their personal development into the construction of the nation and the human community.

4.2. Integration of AI-enabled Curriculum Ideological Education Content

4.2.1. Exploring the Content of the Textbooks and Extracting Ideological Elements.

In the university English course, ideological education in accordance with the OBE (Outcome-Based Education) concept is carried out in the teaching practice. Using the Bloom's educational goal classification method, through a systematic and structured analysis framework of the textbooks, following the three-dimensional path of "deconstruction-identification-mapping'', the content of the textbooks is explored, and a correlation model of "language ability-cognitive dimension-value goal'' is constructed to achieve a step-by-step transformation from vocabulary acquisition to cultural identification, ensuring that

ideological elements are organically integrated into the language symbol system. Teachers decompose the text based on the language form and the core of the thought, revealing the language features such as the selection of narrative perspectives and the use of modal verbs in the text, which convey the value orientation and the ideological encoding behind them.

4.2.2. Introducing Expanded Resources and Enriching Ideological and Political Teaching Materials.

Through the establishment of a "core-satellite-radiation'' three-dimensional framework, a multi-modal ideological and political resource library is constructed: the extended materials of textbooks are the core layer, and through corpus technology, they collect, store, label, and analyze the frequent ideological and political semantic fields; the satellite layer integrates cross-disciplinary resources such as policy documents, academic papers, and video materials, and uses the LDA topic model to automatically discover the theme structure and infer the implicit connection between the documents and ideology and politics; through crawling technology, it connects with social hot spots to capture real-time English reports from mainstream media to form the radiation layer, and builds a dynamic updated ideological and political case library. Then, based on the pretest data of students, the intelligent push of differentiated ideological and political materials is carried out using the artificial intelligence teaching assistance system.

4.2.3. The Organization and Presentation of Teaching Content.

The organization of teaching content should follow the principle of systematicness, with the logical chain of "reverse design-multi-dimensional coupling-hierarchical manifestation''. Based on the OBE concept, it emphasizes the goal of expected learning outcomes, designs the teaching process in reverse, and uses the GRASPS framework to create real and challenging tasks with ideological and political dimensions, such as "writing cross-cultural conflict solutions'', to promote the improvement of students' language communication skills and harmonious values. In the presentation of teaching content, it can be achieved through task chain design to realize progressive training of language skills for explicit display, or by leveraging the cognitive mechanism of "trigger-infiltration-reflection'', such as through topic-based discussions, allowing students to naturally touch on cultural stance choices in pragmatic practice to permeate ideological and political elements.

5. Conclusion

From the perspective of OBE, generative AI serves as a powerful tool to advance the integrated teaching of college English and curriculum ideological and political education. It helps overcome typical challenges including rigid goal combination, shallow content integration, ineffective teaching methods, and incomplete assessment systems. By redesigning clear learning objectives, intelligently blending ideological elements into language content, and establishing a sustainable evaluation loop, this approach unifies knowledge teaching, skill development and value guidance. It enhances students' cultural confidence and cross-cultural communication skills, thus supporting the talent cultivation goals of higher education.

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