



Curriculum Ideology and Politics Research on *Selected Readings of British and American Literature* in the Context of Blended Teaching

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Abstract

With the development of information technology, the blended teaching mode has been widely applied in college teaching. Taking the course *Selected Readings of British and American Literature* as an example, this paper explores how to integrate ideological and political elements into the course under the background of blended teaching and to achieve the unity of knowledge imparting and value guidance. With the aim of providing references for the ideological and political construction of foreign language courses in colleges, specific teaching strategies will be proposed by analyzing the characteristics of blended teaching and the demands of ideological and political education.

Subject Areas

English Education, Teaching Evaluation

Keywords

Blended Teaching, *Selected Readings of British and American Literature*, Curriculum Ideology and Politics, Teaching Strategies

1. Introduction

Since 2014, in order to implement the goal of running universities with Chinese characteristics and integrate the cultivation and practice of socialist core values into the entire process of teaching and education, the education authorities in Shanghai have vigorously promoted the reform of ideological and political education. The ideological and political theory community has also continuously conducted theoretical exploration and gradually refined the new teaching concept of Curriculum Ideology and Politics. Since 2017, when the Ministry of Education

issued the “Implementation Outline for the Quality Enhancement Project of Ideological and Political Work in Higher Education Institutions”, the concept of Curriculum Ideology and Politics was clearly proposed [1]. Subsequently, the “Guiding Outline for the Construction of Ideological and Political Education in College Courses” (2020) clearly states that comprehensively promoting the construction of ideological and political education in courses is a strategic measure for implementing the fundamental task of fostering virtue. It also proposes that the construction of ideological and political education in courses is an important task for comprehensively improving the quality of talent cultivation. The document specifies the goals, requirements and key contents of the construction of ideological and political education in courses. Moreover, this document suggests that course ideological and political education construction should be carried out in a classified manner based on the characteristics of different disciplines. For liberal arts-related courses, they should combine professional knowledge education to guide students to deeply understand the core socialist values and consciously promote Chinese excellent traditional culture, revolutionary culture, and advanced socialist culture [2]. Therefore, in the current curriculum reform of higher education institutions, the construction of curriculum ideological and political has become an important means to fulfill the fundamental task of fostering virtue. *Selected Readings in British and American Literature* is a literature literacy course for foreign language majors. It not only aims to cultivate students’ language skills and literary literacy, but also needs to guide students to establish correct values in cross-cultural communication. Therefore, integrating the elements of curriculum ideological education into the literature teaching has become an important teaching goal for literature educators. To achieve this goal, educators have been constantly reforming and innovating teaching models and methods. The blended teaching model, which combines online and offline teaching advantages, can effectively make up for the problem that offline teaching cannot provide a large amount of necessary background and other materials in a short time. At the same time, it can help students understand the deeper meanings behind the text by using more concrete materials, thereby exploring the practical significance and enlightenment of the text.

Selected Readings in British and American Literature is characterized by rich content, broad knowledge coverage, and strong humanistic nature. These features are closely related to the requirements of ideological and political education in university courses. Therefore, as a literature educator, it is particularly important to explore the ideological and political elements within the texts.

2. Fully Explore the Ideological and Political Elements within the Text

The *Selected Readings of British and American Literature* course is a course that not only enhances students’ English language skills but also cultivates their literary literacy. The classic texts selected in this course not only convey cultural information but also serve the function of helping students establish correct values.

Therefore, as an educator in British and American literature, when preparing lessons, in addition to paying attention to the language phenomena present in the texts, one should also deeply explore the ideological and political elements in the teaching materials. By studying classic texts, the teaching content can align with the six dimensions of ideological and political education (family and national sentiment, humanistic literacy, scientific spirit, deep learning, personality development, and practical innovation), and implement nine key points of education, namely international understanding, national identity, social responsibility, humanistic sentiment, aesthetic taste, the courage to explore, love for learning and good learning habits, a healthy personality, and a sense of labor consciousness. Take the American literary classic selection poem *The Road Not Taken* in teaching material *Selected Readings of British and American Literature* ([3]: p. 248) as an example. This poem describes that the author recalls that he once came to a fork in the forest. Without any external help, he had to make a choice and was forced to choose one while giving up the other. He regretted not being able to take both paths at the same time, and also imagined that one day in the future he might want to change his current choice, but this was impossible. The description of what seems to be a very common event is actually using symbolic techniques to write about the paths in nature to express the poet's thoughts on the path of life. It tells us that there are countless paths in life, but a person in their lifetime often can only choose one, so one must be cautious; on the path of life, do not follow the crowd blindly, but think for oneself and make an independent and autonomous choice. In order to enable students to better appreciate the theme of "the path of life" in this poem, teachers need to understand the writing background of the poem during their preparation. Based on this background, they should also understand the author's creative motivation. At this point, the author is at a crucial decision-making moment in life, and thus wrote this poem to express his psychological activities during the decision-making process. Through the preparation process, the humanistic sentiments and healthy personality elements contained in this poem can be explored, and these elements can be integrated into the explanation of the poem.

3. Improve the Design of the Blended Teaching Model and Better Integrate Ideological and Political Elements

The blended teaching model is a form that integrates online and offline teaching. In the "Notice on Issuing the Action Plan for Deepening the Reform of Basic Education Curriculum and Teaching" issued by the Ministry of Education in 2023, the important tasks of the reform of basic education curriculum and teaching were clearly defined. It mentioned promoting the use of digital technology to enhance teaching quality, emphasizing the rational utilization of online teaching resources and enriching the teaching content [4]. Since the content covered by literature is quite extensive, it is indeed difficult for offline teaching to cover all aspects. Therefore, it is particularly important to improve the design of the blended teaching

model and better utilize online resources to combine with offline teaching.

3.1. Clarify Teaching Tasks and Integrate Ideological and Political Elements

The blended teaching mode has the characteristics of flexible time, rich materials, and strong interactivity. For an in-depth exploration of a literary work, it is often necessary to first understand the author's background, writing style, writing characteristics, as well as the creation background, style, and features of the work. However, this part of the content is often complex and extensive. If this content is explained in the offline classroom, it will not only occupy a lot of classroom time, but also be difficult for students to quickly digest and understand. On the other hand, if using online resources, a combination of videos, pictures, and text can enable students to quickly understand the relevant information. At the same time, as senior college students, they should have certain abilities to collect materials and organize literature. Therefore, while allowing students to collect suitable learning materials for themselves, they should also learn to organize literature. This requires teachers to set clear learning tasks for students during online learning and integrate ideological and political elements into these tasks to trigger students' related thoughts. For example, when studying Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in *Selected Readings of British and American Literature* ([3]: p. 19), students must first understand the relevant background knowledge of Shakespeare and the work itself. As a master of British literature and this work being a well-known piece in China, students can easily find a large amount of relevant materials online. At this point, a clear learning task becomes particularly important. Since this is a drama work, it allows students to focus on learning about Shakespeare's drama creation and his achievements when understanding him. Additionally, as one of Shakespeare's well-known plays, its creative theme and style are also things that students need to understand. Among the many themes of this work, there is a popular love theme for college students. Therefore, students can analyze the love concept of this work based on their understanding of the previous materials, thereby reflecting on their own love views and conducting discussions in class. Thus, a clear learning task enables students to learn to select the materials they need from numerous sources and also enables them to learn to organize the materials when answering questions.

3.2. Answer Questions and Clarify Doubts, Explain Key Points of Ideological and Political

Through a series of online studies, students have been able to solve some problems independently. However, there are still some theoretical and highly complex problems that students cannot solve through online learning. This is where offline learning comes in to provide clarification and guidance. Although offline learning cannot offer as rich classroom resources as online learning, it has an advantage that online classes cannot achieve, which is the face-to-face communication and discussion among teachers and students, as well as among students themselves. It

is difficult to distinguish absolute right from wrong through online literature understanding. More often, different ideas lead to different interpretations of the same work or the same author, and this kind of exchange and collision is what makes literature classes so fascinating. For example, in the learning of *Romeo and Juliet*, students have already gained a considerable amount of basic information, but they still need offline classroom learning for the theories involved in text analysis. For instance, one of the significant features of Shakespeare's dramatic creation is that the scriptwriting adopts the form of "blank verse". What blank verse is requires further detailed explanation from the teacher. Also, as was mentioned earlier, we asked students to think about their views on love. After learning the material, they gained a deeper understanding of it. At this point, we can compare the views on love presented in Chinese and Western literary works.

For example, a comparative analysis of *Romeo and Juliet* and the Han Yuefu poem *The Peacock Flies Southeast* [5] can help us understand the different impacts of different historical backgrounds and cultural differences between China and the West on the concept of love. This analysis can also enable students to reflect on their own views on love again. By combining this with some negative views on love that have emerged in today's society, it can guide students to think positively and constructively. They can learn to distinguish negative influences and thus form a correct view on love.

3.3. Expanding Learning, Inspiring Ideological and Political Exploration

Literature classes often prompt readers to have in-depth reflections after understanding literary works. Therefore, this course does not end with the offline Q&A session. Instead, it should build on the students' deeper understanding of the texts in the offline class, further inspiring them to expand their knowledge and conduct more in-depth ideological and political exploration. Just like the comparative analysis conducted in the offline classroom, it can help students understand the work *Romeo and Juliet* from another perspective and in a more comprehensive way. However, the perspective used in this comparison is still limited. Therefore, students can be encouraged to search for more comparable classic Chinese literary works outside of class, such as *The Story of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai* [6], *The Tale of the Western Chamber* [7], etc. Through this expansion, it enables students to have a better understanding of Chinese classic literary works. Many of these classic works were introduced to students in primary and secondary schools, but at that time their concepts of life, values, and worldviews were not yet fully developed, let alone their views on love. Therefore, in the past, their learning of these works was mainly focused on the language and structure levels. Now, by comparing a Western work with these Chinese classic works, students can gain different understandings and uncover more profound connotations.

4. Conclusion

As the currently popular blended teaching model, its advantages are obvious. Es-

pecially when combined with the *Selected Readings of British and American Literature* course, it can better leverage the characteristics of blended teaching, enrich the content of the text, visualize some obscure theories, help students understand the text and literary theories, and at the same time cultivate students' ability to search and organize literature. Integrating the elements of Curriculum Ideology and Politics in the context of blended teaching can achieve the unity of knowledge transmission and value guidance.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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