

Multivariant Innovation Research on Curriculum Ideology and Politics for Foreign Language Majors

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[**Abstract**] As the reform of curriculum ideology and politics in universities continues to deepen, it is essential to address the coordination issues between professional courses and ideological and political courses. This can be achieved by leveraging the political and value guidance provided by ideological and political courses and drawing insights from successful experiences in designing such courses. Foreign language major courses have traditionally been limited to their own professional disciplines. It is crucial to incorporate and draw insights from ideological and political courses when developing teaching staff, objectives, curriculum, and methods. Diversified innovations should be implemented to enhance the political, ethical, and educational aspects of these courses. This will fully utilize the implicit moral education and nurture the function of courses.

[**Key words**] ideological and political courses; courses for foreign language majors; curriculum ideology and politics; innovation

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As a dominant ideological and political education, ideological and political courses at the university serve as the primary channel for universities to implement the central government's fundamental task of cultivating morality and fostering individuals. These courses are directly linked to establishing a correct value system for university students. After experiencing several reforms in this century, they have established an educational paradigm that integrates values, imparts knowledge, and cultivates abilities. With unprecedented changes around the world in this century and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, it is becoming increasingly apparent that relying solely on explicit ideological and political courses to conduct ideological and political education for young college students is monotonous in content and weak in impact. For a long time, there has been a lack of coordination or even friction between professional courses in universities and ideological and political courses in terms of teachers, objectives, curricula, and methods. Therefore, it is urgent to organize professional courses and ideological and political courses, and construct curriculum ideology and politics. Since the Ministry of Education issued "Guiding Outline for the Construction of Curriculum Ideology and Politics in Colleges and Universities" in 2020, outlining the development of a curriculum ideology and politics framework that nurtures individuals across all staff, processes, and aspects, curriculum ideology and politics of professional courses in universities have generally shown insufficient ideological and political effectiveness. This is evident in ineffective mechanisms, low awareness, and insufficient integration. In the central government's planning for ideological and political work in universities, there

is an emphasis on “adhering to the political and value-guiding role of ideological and political courses in the curriculum system and addressing the coordination between various courses and ideological and political courses”. This highlights the importance of aligning curriculum ideology and politics of professional courses with the political and value guidance provided by ideological and political courses. However, the current exploration of curriculum ideology and politics in professional courses primarily emphasizes developing an educational model of curriculum ideology and politics for all courses. This involves collaborative education with courses on ideological and political theory, extensive courses on ideological and political theory, and the integration of courses on ideological and political theory. There is less emphasis on how ideological and political courses can influence the development of curriculum ideology and politics in professional courses. Taking curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors as an example, it is short in duration, has numerous issues, and lacks depth in integration. In practice, it mainly revolves around courses, teaching materials, and teachers, and rarely incorporates the experiential learning from ideological and political courses. In order to investigate how foreign language major courses can benefit from the political and value-guiding effectiveness of ideological and political courses, the author conducted a survey in nine foreign language schools/departments and Marxist schools/departments at various levels in Province H, which is located in central China. The author compared the differences and similarities between foreign language major courses and courses on ideological and political theory in terms of teaching objectives, curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and teacher training. The study also explored how curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors can be influenced by courses on ideological and political theory to enhance their ideological and political efficacy and educational characteristics in a more diverse manner.

1 Development of faculty

By comparing the academic backgrounds and educational experiences of educational subjects, it can be found that the disciplinary backgrounds of teachers in ideological and political theory can exhibit a diversified trend in response to changes in the global situation and national conditions. Nowadays, they cover Marxist theory, philosophy, law, history, politics, literature, etc., which is typical of diversified and well-rounded teacher resources. Therefore, ideological and political teachers are not only proficient in political theory but also are well-versed in new liberal arts knowledge. We need to learn from those who integrate political firmness, activate knowledge, appeal to emotions, integrate across domains, and make value judgments. In addition, due to professional limitations, most teachers of ideological and political theory have domestic educational experience and are less influenced by Western ideology. They have a strong political stance and are aware of anti-infiltration measures. The disciplinary backgrounds of foreign language teachers are relatively narrow, primarily in foreign language and literature disciplines, while backgrounds in political science, history, and philosophy are rare. Therefore, their literacy and knowledge diversification on political theory are weaker than ideological and political teachers. At the same time, the blind pursuit of teachers' overseas educational experience is particularly evident among foreign language teachers. Although this has improved the international standing of foreign language majors, it has also increased the risk that foreign language teachers are influenced by Western ideology. These two issues have resulted in a lack of political awareness and a diminished interest in ideological and political teaching among foreign language teachers during actual teaching. This is evident in the low representation of curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors, often presented in a perfunctory manner, and the limited ideological and political impact of these courses.

In order to give play to the leading effect of ideological and political courses on foreign language courses, it is

essential to address the issue of foreign language teachers. Therefore, it is necessary to prioritize adherence to the leadership of the Party and consider political qualification as the primary criterion for selecting, hiring, and evaluating foreign language teachers. Through comprehensive training in political theory, it is essential to enhance the political awareness of foreign language teachers and develop a teaching approach that nurtures talents for the nation and the Party. Secondly, it is necessary to learn from each other in teaching. With regard to the diverse strengths of ideological and political teachers delivering courses and the mix of full-time and part-time instructors, it is essential to establish curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors involving various stakeholders such as society, colleges and universities, teachers, and students. We should facilitate an exchange mechanism for ideological and political teachers and foreign language teachers to visit each other's classrooms, attend lectures, deliver speeches, and enhance teaching methods. Thirdly, evaluation should be used to promote reform. A linkage mechanism should be established for evaluating the effectiveness of curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors. This evaluation should involve the participation of the Party, students, teachers, and society to enrich and enhance the ideological and political content of classroom teaching.

2 Establishment of teaching objectives

By examining the educational requirements of the Party and the country for ideological and political courses and foreign language courses, it can be found that there are obvious differences in the overall teaching objectives of the two. Ideological and political courses aim to cultivate individuals with socialist ideology with Chinese characteristics in the new era. This guides students to enhance their confidence in the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, their confidence in theory, system, and culture. Additionally, we aim to cultivate a sense of patriotism. Therefore, the teaching objectives of ideological and political courses are most closely aligned with the policies and guidelines of the Party and the country. These courses have the strongest political attributes and hold the highest position. Foreign language courses aim to cultivate international talents with a global vision, and proficiency in international rules, foreign languages, as well as negotiation and communication between China and foreign countries. Therefore, foreign language courses place more emphasis on professional knowledge training. Their teaching content mostly involves Western ideology, which can lead to a weak political stance and susceptibility to the infiltration of Western ideology. Since the Ministry of Education issued "Guiding Outline for the Construction of Curriculum Ideology and Politics in Colleges and Universities" in 2020, every major course in universities has started to broaden its ideological and political functions and seek ways to nurture individuals. The teaching objectives of foreign language courses have also been expanded accordingly. According to the guidelines of the Ministry of Education, foreign language majors are classified under liberal arts disciplines. Their curriculum should aim to help students grasp the Marxist worldview and methodology. It should also integrate professional knowledge to cultivate students' understanding of core socialist values, promote China's rich traditional culture, revolutionary culture, and socialist advanced culture. Therefore, by incorporating ideological and political teaching objectives from political education and moral education, foreign language courses are inclined to align with ideological and political courses.

Generally speaking, the objectives between talent cultivation and people cultivation of foreign language courses are evidently unbalanced, and the scope, depth, and intensity of the courses need to be expanded. Guided by courses in ideological and political theory, foreign language courses should, on the one hand, refine and incorporate teaching concepts and objectives of ideological and political courses to deepen and strengthen the goals of cultivating individuals, aiming to integrate value guidance into knowledge imparting. On the other hand, foreign

language courses should strategically integrate and allocate ideological training, knowledge imparting, and skill development in their teaching objectives in a scientific and rational manner, rather than solely focusing on ideological and political theory at the expense of professional knowledge. Therefore, when it comes to specific practices, curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors should be grounded in the curriculum's characteristics, thinking mode, and value concept. Subsequently, it should consider the logical development of teaching objectives for courses on ideological and political theory. From the perspectives of history and culture of the countries involved in foreign language courses, it is essential to critically and comparatively cultivate the ideological and political elements in the courses. These elements should be organically integrated into the teaching objectives to enhance the humanistic and ideological nature of the courses.

3 Plan for curriculum setting

In terms of curriculum planning, the curriculum of ideological and political theory significantly differs from that of foreign language. Ideological and political courses in universities belong to the first-level discipline of Marxist theory, CPC history and party building. The curriculum setting has always adhered to the guidance of Marxism and the thought of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It has so far formed five core courses: "Introduction to the Basic Principles of Marxism", "Introduction to Mao Zedong Thought and the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics", "An Outline of Modern and Contemporary Chinese History", "Ideological and Moral Cultivation and Legal Foundation", and "Current Affairs and Policies". These courses are comprehensive and practical, and guiding and contemporary, providing the most direct, mature, and effective ideological and political curriculum system for modern college students. In contrast, foreign language courses fall under the first-level discipline of foreign languages and literature. The main languages involved are European and Asian languages, such as English, German, French, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese, and Korean. So far, the discipline has initially formed five relatively complete research fields: "Foreign Language Studies", "Foreign Literature Studies", "Translation Studies", "Country and Regional Studies", and "Comparative Literature and Cross - Cultural Studies", along with corresponding courses. The discipline's connotative development has begun to take shape. However, due to long-term constraints of the discipline's characteristics, foreign language courses face challenges in effectively incorporating Marxist theory and the principles of socialism with Chinese characteristics into teaching materials, courses, and students' comprehension. These challenges include delayed implementation, limited experience, numerous issues, and unsatisfactory outcomes. The integration of ideological and political theory faces both challenges and opportunities.

In terms of curriculum setting, the primary purpose of ideological and political courses is to nurture individuals, whereas foreign language courses concentrate more on developing skills. According to the Ministry of Education's guidelines, cultivating talents should not be the sole purpose of curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors. Instead, unifying the cultivation of talents and the development of individuals should be the complete function. The main challenge in ideological and political courses for foreign language majors is to align with talent development and character cultivation. Therefore, when setting up supporting courses for curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors, we should first learn from, absorb, and integrate the curriculum outline, framework, and system of ideological and political courses, which provide explicit ideological and political education. At the same time, considering the characteristics of the courses, we should either explore the ideological and political elements within the courses or introduce the connotation and structure of the curriculum setting for ideological and political courses. In quality-oriented courses such as translation, reading, speech, national

conditions, and writing courses, it is essential to incorporate spiritual content such as the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, significant accomplishments, party history and development, diplomacy, and national defense. This content should be seamlessly integrated, embedded, and infused into the objectives, content, and teaching methodologies of the courses to address the issue of ideological deficiency and political connotation in the curriculum setting of foreign language courses.

4 Application of teaching methods

In terms of teaching methods, the instructional approaches in ideological and political courses and foreign language courses tend to be diverse yet convergent. Under the concept of modern education, student autonomy, teacher-student participation, and digital classrooms require teachers to possess a wealth of professional knowledge and adept practical skills to uphold the optimal integration of teaching components. In terms of teaching presentation, the teaching process of both courses involves the collaborative participation of teachers and students. Teachers assist and guide students in transitioning from sensory cognition to rational cognition of teaching content. This helps supplement, revise, and deepen students' understanding of knowledge and problem-solving. The traditional teaching method has a singular function and weak impact. In contrast, Chinese and foreign teaching methods that can enhance students' autonomy and practical skills, such as practical teaching, project-based teaching, task-based teaching, cooperative teaching, problem-based teaching, heuristic teaching, and discussion-based teaching, are commonly utilized by educators worldwide. Among them, ideological and political courses emphasize the establishment of students' political consciousness, the edification of value concepts, the cultivation of familial and national sentiments, and the development of legal concepts. Therefore, they are more accustomed to creating scenarios that closely resemble the real context of the content students learn. This approach aims to encourage students to effectively overcome obstacles in thinking and enhance their problem-solving skills. Therefore, empathetic teaching, such as case teaching and situational teaching, is more favored by teachers of ideological and political theory. Foreign language teaching focuses more on students' proficient mastery of the target language. It usually adopts behavior-oriented or cognitively-oriented language teaching methods such as translation method, direct method, listening and speaking method, audio-visual method, and action method. These methods aim to inspire students to use the target language divergently and innovatively through extensive, repetitive, and mechanical training. With the advancement of teaching informatization, new teaching methods such as immersive teaching, blended teaching, flipped classrooms, MOOCs, and virtual classrooms have been implemented in ideological and political courses as well as foreign language courses. Therefore, the two complement each other and draw on each other's strengths in teaching methods, thus achieving continuous improvement.

In the new era of diverse ideological and cultural exchanges, fierce confrontation of values and information explosion on the Internet, curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors is encountering the increasingly prominent individuality of young college students. Therefore, to integrate explicit and implicit curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors, teachers should choose diverse teaching methods based on students' gender, age, and mindset. This can help to spark their interest and enthusiasm, as well as evoke their synesthesia and empathy, in order to fulfill the educational goals of fostering noble sentiments, lofty aspirations, patriotism, and dedication. Therefore, by integrating teaching method characteristics of ideological and political theory courses, curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors should adopt the following teaching methods: First, highlight the main body, and transform the classroom from single-directional instruction to diverse participation, such as interactive, participatory, inquiry-based, and on-site teaching methods, to promote

students' enhancement of their values and appreciation for ideological and political theory. Second, it is important to emphasize practice and transform the teaching organization from solely theory-based instruction to a combination of theory and practice. Enhance a wide range of ideological and political activities to foster students' moral values and emotions. Third, apply new technologies to expand the use of various modern teaching methods such as micro-classes, MOOCs, and flipped classrooms. Combine offline and online blended teaching, and explore intelligent teaching supported by big data and integrated media to achieve comprehensive education in the dynamic space between virtual and reality.

5 Conclusion

The implementation of curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors should be guided and demonstrated by courses on ideological and political theory. First, ideological and political courses are fundamental requirements for colleges and universities to establish morality and cultivate individuals, as mandated by the Party and the country. Their teaching objectives hold the highest political significance. Secondly, the curriculum design of ideological and political courses is characterized by a strong political nature, comprehensive education, and high integration. The ideological and political impact of these courses far surpasses that of other professional courses. Thirdly, ideological and political courses have accumulated rich and valuable experience in reforming and developing teaching staff, teaching methods, and other aspects. If foreign language courses are to achieve the goal of cultivating individuals in the same direction as ideological and political courses, they must first extract the valuable experience of ideological and political courses in terms of teaching purpose, teacher advantages, curriculum setting, and teaching methods. Subsequently, these experiences should be introduced, integrated, and applied into the practice of curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors. Therefore, to comprehensively promote the convergence and learning of curriculum ideology and politics for foreign language majors and ideological and political courses, it is necessary to: First, enhance the construction of the teaching staff by adhering to the Party's management and training of teachers, taking ideological and political teachers as role models, improving the Marxist theoretical foundation of foreign language teachers, and strengthening the foundation of efforts to cultivate students; second, enhance the political orientation of courses by incorporating elements from the curriculum of ideological and political theory, and reinforcing the political consciousness and orientation of foreign language courses; third, allocate courses and ideological and political theory in a rational manner based on the characteristics of the major and students, integrating ideological and political teaching into the teaching objectives, aligning teaching objectives with the purpose of cultivating students and achieving the intended outcomes. To enhance ideological and political education, it is essential to unify explicit and implicit approaches; fourthly, diversifying teaching methods is crucial. Balancing curriculum ideology and politics with students' professional requirements is important to avoid ineffective value indoctrination. This approach can improve the relevance and appeal of curriculum ideology and politics teaching, ultimately achieving a subtle influence of ideological and political theory. Ultimately, by leveraging, assimilating, and incorporating the political and value-oriented impacts of the ideological and political course, the disparity in political education effectiveness between foreign language courses and ideological and political courses can be rectified, thereby enhancing the overall quality of university education in the new era.

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