Teaching Design of College English Curriculum Based on OBE Theory

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Abstract: This study focuses on the teaching design of college English curriculum informed by OBE (Outcome-Based Education) theory. In the current educational context, college English courses must not only develop language skills but also incorporate ideological and political education to enhance students' overall competence. The research employs literature review and comparative analysis to examine the application of OBE theory in education domestically and internationally, and to analyze the challenges in integrating traditional college English teaching with ideological and political education. The design process is guided by the three elements of OBE theory: student-centeredness, outcome orientation, and continuous improvement, addressing three aspects: setting teaching objectives, planning teaching processes, and constructing assessment methods. The teaching objectives focus on students' knowledge, skills, and competencies, aligning with societal needs to define actionable and assessable outcomes. The teaching process incorporates diverse instructional materials to develop multiple competencies, utilizing interactive, cooperative, and inquiry-based learning methods alongside modern technological tools. The assessment is structured based on teaching objectives, employing a diversified and tiered evaluation approach. The findings indicate that the OBE-based design of college English curriculum effectively promotes the integration of English knowledge and ideological education, enhances students' language application and ideological literacy, and strengthens their cross-cultural communication and critical thinking skills. This study provides a solid foundation for future development and offers new pathways and methodological references for the reform of ideological education in college English courses.

Keywords: OBE Theory; College English; Ideological Education; Teaching Design; Outcome-Oriented

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Significance

In the context of accelerating globalization, the frequency of international communication has increased, underscoring the significance of English as a global lingua franca. The aim of university English education is to equip students with a solid foundation in the English language and strong application skills to meet societal demands for versatile talent. Concurrently, with the deepening of educational reforms, the concept of ideological and political education (IPE) has gained traction in higher education. IPE advocates for the integration of ideological education elements into various courses, facilitating a synergistic relationship between knowledge transmission and value guidance.

As one of the most widely adopted foundational courses in universities, the university English curriculum is rich in IPE resources. It plays a crucial role in fostering students' cross-cultural communication skills while guiding them to develop a correct worldview, outlook on life, and values. However, traditional university English teaching often emphasizes language knowledge and skills training, neglecting the importance of IPE, resulting in a disconnect between IPE and English instruction. This not only limits the enhancement of students' comprehensive qualities but also fails to meet the new demands for talent cultivation in the contemporary era.

The Outcome-Based Education (OBE) theory focuses on student learning outcomes,

designing, implementing, and evaluating educational activities based on the competencies and qualities students should achieve upon graduation. Integrating OBE theory into the design of IPE in university English courses can clarify teaching objectives, optimize content and methods, and improve the scientific and effective assessment of education, thus enhancing the educational role of university English courses. This study aims to provide new ideas and methods for reforming IPE in university English instruction, promoting students' comprehensive development in language abilities, cross-cultural communication, and ideological literacy.

1.2 Review of Domestic and International Research Status

Internationally, the concept of outcome-based education has been widely implemented in developed countries such as those in Europe and America since its inception. In language education, numerous studies focus on designing curricula and teaching activities based on outcomes to enhance students' comprehensive language application abilities. For instance, research comparing different language teaching models has shown that outcome-oriented instruction significantly improves students' communication skills in real-life contexts. However, there is relatively little research abroad on integrating IPE into language teaching, primarily due to variations in educational systems and cultural backgrounds across countries.

Domestically, interest in IPE has surged in recent years. In the context of university English courses, many scholars have actively explored the integration of IPE elements, methods, and teaching practices. Studies indicate that incorporating elements such as excellent traditional Chinese culture and core socialist values into English teaching can enhance students' cultural confidence and national pride. Other scholars have investigated effective implementation strategies for IPE in university English courses from the perspectives of teaching methods and assessment systems. However, systematic research on the design of IPE in university English courses based on OBE theory remains insufficient, particularly regarding precise goal setting, effective alignment of content and

methods, and comprehensive assessment.

1.3 Research Objectives and Methodology

This study aims to construct a framework for the design of IPE in university English courses based on OBE theory, exploring practical teaching pathways to enhance the quality and effectiveness of IPE instruction. Specific objectives include: clarifying IPE teaching goals based on OBE theory; designing scientifically sound teaching content and methods; and developing a comprehensive evaluation system.

Methodologically, this study employs a mixed-methods approach. Firstly, a literature review is conducted to systematically analyze domestic and international research on OBE theory, university English education, and IPE, providing theoretical support and practical experience for this study. Secondly, survey research methods such as questionnaires and interviews are utilized to gather insights from teachers and students regarding their needs and expectations for IPE in university English teaching, offering a realistic foundation for instructional design. Additionally, case analysis is employed to examine successful instances of IPE in university English courses at select institutions, summarizing lessons learned to optimize teaching design strategies.

2. Overview of OBE Theory and Its Relation to Ideological and Political Education in College English Courses

2.1 Connotation and Core Elements of OBE Theory

Outcome-Based Education (OBE) theory, introduced by American educator Spady in 1981, has evolved into a widely recognized educational philosophy. It emphasizes that education should focus on the outcomes achieved by students rather than solely on the teaching process and inputs. Its core elements include three aspects:

Firstly, OBE necessitates that educational activities cater to students' needs, interests, and abilities, respecting their primary role and encouraging active participation. Teachers should develop personalized teaching plans and provide diverse support based on individual student circumstances.

Secondly, OBE highlights the competencies and qualities that students should attain by the

end of their studies, ensuring these outcomes are specific, measurable, achievable, and aligned with societal needs and career development. In instructional design, teachers must clarify the knowledge, skills, and attributes students should possess upon graduation and use these as a basis for designing content, methods, and evaluations.

Lastly, OBE posits that education is an ongoing process, requiring continual assessment and feedback of teaching practices and outcomes. This ensures timely adjustments to strategies, enhancing educational quality and talent cultivation through effective quality assurance mechanisms.

2.2 Goals and Values of Ideological and Political Education in College English Courses

The goal of integrating ideological and political education into college English courses is to organically blend political education elements with language instruction, guiding students to establish correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values. This approach aims to foster patriotism, an international perspective, and a sense of social responsibility, thereby enhancing students' political literacy and comprehensive humanistic qualities.

From a value perspective, this integration is significant in strengthening students' cultural confidence. By incorporating elements of excellent traditional Chinese culture, revolutionary culture, and advanced socialist culture, students can better understand and inherit China's cultural heritage. This fosters cultural confidence and helps convey China's voice in cross-cultural exchanges. Moreover, it cultivates students' international perspectives and intercultural communication skills, encouraging respect for other cultures while actively promoting their own, ultimately enhancing China's cultural soft power. Additionally, it facilitates students' holistic development by integrating knowledge transfer, skill cultivation, and value formation, producing high-quality talents that meet societal needs.

2.3 Applicability Analysis of OBE Theory to Ideological and Political Education in College English Courses

OBE theory aligns closely with the principles and objectives of ideological and political education in college English courses, ensuring its strong applicability.

The student-centered philosophy of OBE corresponds with the emphasis on students' holistic development in ideological and political education. In teaching, this means integrating political education elements into the content based on students' cognitive levels and learning needs, employing suitable methods to stimulate interest and engagement, thus promoting comprehensive enhancement of knowledge, skills, and qualities.

The outcome-oriented principle of OBE resonates with the teaching goals of ideological and political education, which aim to cultivate students' competencies in language, intercultural communication, and political literacy. Guided by OBE principles, teachers can specify these outcomes and design activities around them, selecting appropriate materials and assessment methods to ensure that teaching effectively facilitates the desired learning outcomes.

Moreover, OBE's continuous improvement mechanism supports the enhancement of teaching quality in ideological and political education. Sustained evaluation of teaching processes and outcomes allows for the identification of challenges, such as the insufficient integration of political elements or ineffective methodologies, facilitating targeted adjustments to teaching strategies for ongoing optimization and improved educational quality.

3. Designing Teaching Objectives for Ideological and Political Education in College English Courses Based on OBE Theory

3.1 Knowledge and Skills Objectives

In terms of knowledge objectives, students should possess a solid foundation in English language fundamentals, including a robust vocabulary, systematic grammar knowledge, accurate pronunciation and intonation, as well as familiarity with various English genres and expression styles. Research indicates that students should master 4,500 to 6,000 common words and a certain number of specialized terms. They should understand basic sentence structures and grammatical frameworks for accurate expression and have a clear grasp of the structure and logic of different English texts.

Regarding skills objectives, students need to develop strong abilities in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation. For listening, students should comprehend everyday English conversations, broadcasts, and lectures with an accuracy rate of over 70%. In speaking, they should communicate fluently and accurately in daily interactions, effectively engaging in classroom discussions. For reading, students should quickly read various English texts, including academic articles, news reports, and literary works, achieving a reading speed of 120 to 150 words per minute. Writing skills require students to produce various common application documents and academic abstracts with accurate and fluent expression and logical structure. In translation, students should be capable of accurately translating texts between English and Chinese, especially in common business, technology, and cultural contexts, ensuring fidelity and fluency.

3.2 Political Literacy Objectives

The objectives for political literacy aim to cultivate various aspects of students' ideological and political awareness through college English education. This includes nurturing patriotism by introducing English materials related to China's history, culture, and achievements, thereby fostering national pride and enthusiasm for patriotism.

Enhancing students' cultural confidence is another aim, encouraging them to delve into traditional Chinese culture and integrate cultural elements into their English studies. This may include using cultural references and idioms in writing and speaking to strengthen their confidence in their own cultural heritage amidst global exchanges.

Furthermore, fostering an international perspective and global awareness is essential. By exploring the cultures, histories, and societies of English-speaking countries, students can appreciate cultural diversity and develop intercultural communication skills, enabling them to think globally and actively engage in international collaboration and competition.

Finally, reinforcing social responsibility is crucial. By discussing contemporary social issues—such as environmental protection and social equity—in English, students can develop awareness of societal concerns and contribute their insights and efforts to resolve these issues.

3.3 Principles and Basis for Outcome-Based Objective Setting

The principles for outcome-based objective setting include:

Clarity: Objectives should be clear, specific, and actionable, delineating the explicit outcomes students should achieve post-learning to avoid ambiguity.

Measurability: Goals must be quantifiable or qualitatively assessable through defined evaluations, allowing accurate determination of whether students meet the expected outcomes.

Relevance: Teaching objectives should closely align with students' professional needs, future career paths, and societal demands for talent, ensuring the applicability of learned knowledge and skills.

Challenge: Objectives should be sufficiently challenging to motivate students while remaining achievable within their capacity with effort.

The basis for these objectives includes:

National Education Policies and Curriculum Standards: Objectives should align with national guidelines for higher education and the fundamental requirements of college English curriculum outlines, integrating ideological education goals.

Societal Needs and Career Development: As society evolves, the demand for talents with strong English skills and political literacy grows, necessitating objectives that reflect these realities and prepare students for the workplace.

Students' Actual Situations: Individual differences in students' English proficiency, learning abilities, interests, and ideological characteristics must be considered to formulate targeted and tiered objectives that promote overall student development.

4. Design of Ideological and Political Education Content in College English Curriculum Based on OBE Theory

4.1 Extraction and Integration of Ideological Elements in English Textbooks

Current college English textbooks cover a wide range of themes, including daily life, cultural exchange, academic exploration, and technological development. To achieve the

goals of ideological and political education (IPE), it is essential to deeply extract and cleverly integrate these elements. For example, a unit on environmental protection in a general English textbook may discuss global environmental issues and responses. When extracting ideological elements, students can be guided to appreciate China's achievements in environmental protection, such as significant increases in forest coverage through large-scale afforestation and leading positions in renewable energy development. This enhances their national pride and confidence in the country's development path. In cultural comparison units, ideological elements reflecting cultural confidence can be explored, prompting students to reflect on the unique charm and profound roots of excellent Chinese traditional culture, such as the rich humanistic spirit and values embedded in traditional festivals, thus fostering cultural awareness in cross-cultural exchanges. Additionally, vocabulary instruction can incorporate ideological elements by discussing words like "responsibility" and "integrity" in context, highlighting the importance of these moral qualities and seamlessly integrating ideological education into language learning.

4.2 Selection and Utilization of Extracurricular Resources

To enrich the IPE content in college English courses, the selection and use of extracurricular resources are crucial. Students can be encouraged to follow the English channel of China Global Television Network (CGTN), which features domestic and international news, cultural topics, and in-depth reports. This not only improves their English listening and speaking skills but also keeps them informed about China's contributions to global affairs, enhancing their international perspective and patriotism. High-quality open courses on online English learning platforms from renowned foreign universities, covering humanities and social sciences or international relations, can expose students to diverse academic viewpoints and promote critical thinking through comparative analysis of cultural values. Reading English translations of works like "Ordinary World" allows students to experience the changes in Chinese society and the spirit of perseverance while improving their English reading skills.

Organizing English corner activities around IPE-related themes, such as "Responsibilities and Responsibilities of Youth in the New Era," encourages students to discuss these topics in English, effectively connecting language practice with ideological reflection and expanding the breadth and depth of the course content.

4.3 Strategies for the Organic Integration of Teaching Content and IPE

To achieve the organic integration of teaching content and IPE, effective strategies must be employed. In the course introduction, relevant social hot topics or phenomena can be presented, such as introducing the robust growth of China's economy amidst global economic fluctuations when discussing economic-related English content. This engages students' interests and naturally leads to IPE discussions about institutional advantages and macroeconomic wisdom. During knowledge explanation, IPE elements can be integrated into language points and grammar instruction. For example, while explaining complex structures like adjective clauses, sentences describing China's technological innovations can be used to analyze language structures while emphasizing the importance of an innovation-driven development strategy. Designing open-ended questions for classroom discussions, such as "How can Chinese values be disseminated in cross-cultural communication?" encourages students to express their views using their English knowledge, deepening their understanding of IPE through collaborative thought. Assignments can require students to write English reports on local traditional culture's inheritance and development, allowing them to reinforce language skills while contemplating ideological issues, thereby integrating IPE throughout the teaching process.

5. Teaching Methods and Techniques Design Based on OBE Theory

5.1 Utilization of Diverse Teaching Methods

To enhance the effectiveness of IPE in college English courses, a variety of teaching methods should be employed. Project-based learning can be effectively implemented, such as assigning a project to "Promote Chinese

Traditional Handicrafts in English." Students can work in groups to choose specific crafts like paper-cutting or embroidery, conducting research and creating English promotional materials. This not only improves their comprehensive language abilities but also deepens their understanding of traditional handicraft culture and enhances cultural awareness. Collaborative learning methods can be widely used, organizing group discussions on "Challenges and Opportunities for Chinese Culture Transmission in the Context of Globalization," where students cooperate to collect data, analyze problems, and present their viewpoints in English, fostering teamwork and communication skills while enabling in-depth discussions on ideological issues. Contextual teaching can create authentic language situations, such as simulating international business negotiations that involve cultural differences, business etiquette, and cooperation, allowing students to communicate in English and experience the collision of different cultural values. Various teaching methods can be combined to meet diverse learning needs and teaching objectives.

5.2 Support from Information Technology in Teaching

In the context of rapid technological advancement, information technology provides significant support for IPE in college English education. Multimedia teaching software can be utilized to integrate text, images, audio, and video resources, enriching the presentation of teaching content. For example, when discussing historical and cultural themes, relevant documentary clips can be shown, such as an English documentary on the history of the Silk Road, allowing students to perceive the allure of history and enhance their interest and understanding. Online learning platforms like Chaoxing and Rain Classroom can be used to distribute teaching materials, conduct online tests, and organize classroom interactions, enabling teachers to monitor student progress in real-time and adjust teaching strategies accordingly. AI-assisted teaching tools, such as intelligent English writing correction software, can evaluate students' essays for grammar, vocabulary, and logic, providing suggestions. Teachers can also add ideological comments within the software, such as evaluating the correctness of the values reflected in the essays,

thus improving teaching efficiency and quality while expanding the dimensions of teaching time and space.

5.3 Organization of Student-Centered Teaching Activities

Based on OBE theory, organizing student-centered teaching activities is crucial. In classroom teaching, students should be encouraged to lead certain segments, such as conducting English news broadcasts with ideological commentary, which enhances their language expression and self-learning abilities while fostering habit of social concern and critical thinking. Students can also autonomously design English teaching projects, such as planning an English cultural festival, managing everything from the theme and schedule to promotion, with teacher guidance that maximizes student initiative and enhances their comprehensive abilities. Organizing students to participate in English competitions, such as the "Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press Cup" English speech contest with IPE-related themes, stimulates their competitive spirit and innovative thinking. During the preparation and participation process, students can engage deeply with ideological topics and improve their English proficiency and ideological qualities, placing students at the core of the teaching activities to promote their overall development.

6. Evaluation Design for IPE in College English Curriculum Based on OBE Theory

6.1 Construction of Evaluation Indicator System

Establishing a scientific and reasonable evaluation indicator system is key to the evaluation of IPE in college English courses based on OBE theory. In the knowledge and skills dimension, students' mastery of English language knowledge, such as vocabulary and grammatical accuracy, should be assessed through vocabulary tests and specialized grammar exercises. In terms of language skills, listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation capabilities can be evaluated through listening tests, oral presentations, reading comprehension exercises, writing tasks, and translation assignments, with specific scoring criteria established for aspects such as content completeness, language accuracy, and

logical coherence in writing. In the ideological quality dimension, assessments can be made based on the depth of students' viewpoints on ideological issues during classroom discussions, the reflection of ideological awareness and values in project work, and participation in social practice activities, such as demonstrating social responsibility and teamwork in social welfare English projects. In the learning process dimension, factors such as classroom participation, assignment quality, and learning attitudes should be evaluated through attendance records, group activity participation, and the timeliness and quality of assignment submissions, providing a comprehensive evaluation of students' learning outcomes and development.

6.2 Combination of Formative and Summative Evaluation

Formative evaluation should run throughout the entire teaching process to track students' learning progress in real time. Classroom performance evaluation should focus on the quality of student contributions, discussion engagement, and group collaboration. Teachers should provide timely feedback and guidance. Assignment evaluations should prioritize not only the correctness of answers but also the demonstration of thinking and innovation during the completion process, with detailed corrections and comments on students' assignments. Periodic tests, such as unit quizzes and midterms, assess students' knowledge mastery and skills enhancement at specific stages, with analysis of test results providing a basis for subsequent teaching adjustments. Summative evaluations, conducted at the end of the semester, primarily assess students' overall knowledge and skill mastery, as well as improvements in ideological qualities. The examination content should encompass language knowledge, language application, and writing or speaking on ideological themes, with a reasonable ratio of formative and summative evaluations contributing to the final grades, resulting in a comprehensive and objective reflection of students' learning outcomes.

6.3 Continuous Improvement Mechanism Based on Evaluation Results

Establishing a continuous improvement mechanism based on evaluation results is crucial for enhancing teaching quality. Teachers should regularly analyze evaluation data, identifying weak points in students' knowledge and skills tests and common issues in their ideological quality evaluations. For instance, if students frequently make grammatical errors in English writing, subsequent teaching arrangements can be adjusted to include more grammar practice and writing guidance courses. If students lack awareness of ideological issues in cross-cultural communication, related case analyses and discussion activities can be added to the teaching content. Additionally, based on evaluation feedback, teaching methods and techniques can be optimized. For example, if students actively participate in project-based learning but effectiveness needs improvement, project designs and guidance methods can be refined. At the institutional level, professional development support can be provided based on teachers' evaluation results, such as organizing training on IPE in course teaching or teaching seminars, fostering teacher development and creating a virtuous cycle of mutual teaching improvement, continuously optimizing IPE in college English courses.

7. Conclusion and Outlook

7.1 Summary of Research Findings

This study constructs a framework for IPE design in college English courses based on OBE theory, emphasizing student-centeredness, outcome orientation, and continuous improvement. It establishes comprehensive teaching objectives covering knowledge, skills, and ideological qualities. In content design, it achieves deep extraction and integration of ideological elements in textbooks while leveraging extracurricular resources and employing effective integration strategies. In terms of teaching methods and techniques, it utilizes diverse teaching methods, integrates information technology, and organizes student-centered activities. The evaluation design constructs a scientific evaluation indicator system, combining formative and summative evaluations while establishing a continuous improvement mechanism based on evaluation results. Practical exploration has shown that this teaching design effectively enhances students' comprehensive English abilities and ideological qualities, promotes their overall

development, and provides new ideas and methods for reform in IPE within college English education.

7.2 Innovations and Limitations of the Study

The innovation lies in the systematic application of OBE theory to IPE in college English courses, creating a complete system from goal setting to implementation and evaluation, highlighting outcome orientation and continuous improvement. It focuses on extracting ideological elements from teaching content and employs diverse and innovative teaching methods to enhance effectiveness. However, the study has limitations, with a relatively restricted sample primarily focusing on select universities and classes, necessitating further validation of the applicability of its findings. The subjective nature of the ideological quality assessment in the evaluation indicator system requires refinement to enhance objectivity. Additionally, there is insufficient long-term tracking of teaching effectiveness, failing to fully assess the continued development of students' knowledge and qualities post-graduation.

7.3 Future Research Directions

Future research should widen the sample range to include different regions and levels of universities, validating the effectiveness and applicability of IPE design based on OBE theory. In-depth exploration of evaluation methods for ideological qualities should be conducted, incorporating big data and artificial intelligence technologies to develop more objective and precise evaluation tools, refining the evaluation indicator system. Strengthening long-term tracking of teaching effectiveness and establishing alumni feedback mechanisms will help assess the application and development of students' English competence and ideological qualities in their professional and social lives, providing stronger evidence for ongoing improvements in teaching. Furthermore, the integration of OBE theory with other educational philosophies should be further explored to innovate IPE teaching models in college English courses, continuously enhancing teaching quality and cultivating high-quality talents that meet contemporary demands.

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