

# To Explore the Dilemma of Improving the Moral Ability of Foreign Language Teachers in Our University from the Perspective of Courses for Ideological and Political Education

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**Keywords:** Courses for ideological and political education; The current situation of cultivating morality; Teachers in universities and colleges; Dilemma of improving the moral ability

**Abstract:** Strengthening moral education and cultivating people being the fundamental task of the current education, the key to education lies in whether teachers have good ability to cultivate morality. This paper is investigating the exercising process of courses for ideological and political education of 41 foreign language teachers of our university in the process of teaching by the questionnaire approach, observational method and interviewing method, which aims to explore the dilemma of improving the moral ability in the exercising process of courses for ideological and political education. And this paper can help the teachers realize these dilemmas: diffidence in the ability of cultivating morality in the practice process of courses for ideological and political education, lack of the consciousness of cultivating morality and its perceptivity, which can provide some help to improve the ability and provide certain reference for more teachers in other universities and colleges.

## 1. Research Background

In 2020, the Ministry of Education issued *The Guiding Outline for Construction of Courses for Ideological and Political Education at Colleges and Universities*, requiring them to carry out the ideological and political education through the personnel training system, comprehensively promote its construction at colleges and universities and give full play to the educational role of each course [1]. Being a new educational concept, the course for ideological and political education takes specific courses as the carrier, takes strengthening moral education and cultivating people as the goal, and combines knowledge instruction, ability cultivation and value shaping together. Meanwhile, it requires that the whole teaching process should not only focus on the explanation of knowledge, but also shape students' outlook on the value, life and world imperceptibly. As a basic subject with a wide range of audience, university foreign language has the dual nature of tool and humanity. The nature of humanity requires the teachers to cultivate students' cross-cultural communication ability, deepen their understanding of Chinese culture and improve their ability of telling Chinese stories well, and serve for the transmission of Chinese culture to the world, which shows the necessity that the ideological and political education should be integrated into the foreign language courses. In this process, foreign language teachers play a role of a bridge. Therefore, in order to educate students in ideology and politics better and improve the quality of students comprehensively, the teachers should improve their ability to cultivate morality firstly. However, there are some dilemmas for them to improve the ability to cultivate morality.

The so-called "cultivating morality" is a social activity in which the educational bodies lead some specific groups to have right views on the ideology and politics and morality by the method of moral education based on the according to the development requirements of the current society [2]. "Teachers' ability to cultivate morality" refers to that in the exercising process of courses for ideological and political education, teachers can guide students to have correct ideological value, taking strengthening moral education and cultivating people as the goal, mainly including the

consciousness of moral education, perceptivity of it and their own teaching ability [3]. In order to give full play to the humanistic role of university foreign language and effectively educate students in ideology and politics during the teaching course, the primary problem is to find the dilemmas of improving the ability of moral education of foreign language teachers.

## 2. Research Process

### 2.1 Research design

The author did research by questionnaire survey, attending a lecture and interview, taking 41 foreign language teachers of the university as the research objects, so as to effectively understand the status quo of the ability to cultivate morality in the the exercising process of courses for ideological and political education.

Questionnaire was designed with three types of questions, like single choice question, multiple choice question and short answer question, mainly involving the following three main contents: teachers' basic information (including age, gender, professional title, teaching age) shown in table 1, the understanding of the theory of courses for ideological and political education, the practice in its exercising process and the problems encountered in improving the ability of improving the moral ability.

Table 1 Teachers' Basic Information

Professional titles	Proportion	Teaching age	Proportion
Teaching assistant	61%	1-5 Years	72%
Lecturer	24%	6-10 Years	4%
Associate Professor	2%	11-15 Years	8%
professor	12%	15 years or more	16%

The author selected randomly 20 from 41 foreign language teachers in the university to attend their lectures. Attending lectures is an activity that can observe the class carefully, which has an extremely important role in knowing and understanding the class [4]. Therefore, to attend the lecture is helpful for us to know the teaching situation in class and the ability of moral education in the exercising process of ideological and political education. Before attending the class, the author first determined its purpose: to observe the ability of moral education of the teacher in the teaching process; secondly, the author adopted the questionnaire method to track the students' acceptance of the integration of the ideological and political education and teaching content in class, which can know effect of cultivating morality of the teachers, and the author made corresponding records.

The interview were focused on open-ended questions, which can fully know the real situation of the foreign language teachers' ability of cultivating morality in the exercising process of course for ideological and political education. The main questions include: What is your understanding of the course for ideological and political education? And your understanding of ability of cultivating morality? Do you think it is necessary to read books related to the psychology of teenagers? In the teaching of foreign languages, should you focus on western culture, or should you take into account Chinese culture? Will you guide students' values consciously while teaching? How to guide? What textbook do you use currently? Is this textbook suitable for ideological and political education? What are the difficulties do you face in the exercising process of ideological and political education? How do you deal with such phenomena in the textbooks such as the traditional Chinese culture and social ethics? In what ways do you think your ability to cultivate morality should be improved? What efforts have you made to better integrate the ideological and political education and improve your moral education ability in foreign language teaching? Do you have any good suggestion? The above questions centered on obtaining the subjective views of the teachers.

The above data were classified and analyzed, and finally the results were classified and summarized.

### 2.2 Research findings

By analyzing the questionnaire, the results are shown in the table 2:

Table 2 The current situation of course for ideological and political education and cultivating morality

	Concrete content	Proportion
The exercising situation of courses for ideological and political education (the process of the teachers integrating the ideological and political education into college foreign language teaching consciously)	Always	36%
	Often	52%
	Once in a while	12%
	Never	0%
dilemma of the integration of the ideological and political education and the teaching content	Being difficult to find a starting point in the teaching process	68%
	Lack of relevant teaching experience and skills	52%
	Low positivity of students to participate	52%
	Lack of scientific and effective evaluation methods	48%
	Being difficult to dig into the ideological and political elements for the courses	36%
	Having large proportion of professional knowledge and small proportion of students' cultivation of moral character and quality	60%
	Lack of ways to learn the theoretical knowledge of moral education	34%%
Problems encountered in improving the ability of moral education	The effect of moral education is difficult to evaluate	68%
	Limited energy of teachers	28%
	Others	4%

At present, 12 percent of the teachers could integrate the concept of course for ideological and political education into the teaching process of university foreign language occasionally and consciously. The teachers gradually focused on the basic knowledge of foreign language in the process of teaching; 52 percent of teachers could often integrate the concept of course for ideological and political education into the teaching process of university foreign language consciously, but they still couldn't carry out through the whole teaching process, which showed that such teachers lacked a certain degree of overall awareness and ignored the impact of after-class exercises on students; 68 percent of teachers reflected that the difficulty of the courses for ideological and political education lied in finding an entry point in the teaching process; 52 percent of teachers thought the difficulty was the low enthusiasm of students to participate; 60 percent of the teachers had the idea that the proportion of professional knowledge transmission was large, and the proportion of students' cultivation of moral character and quality was small, which was difficult to achieve the natural integration of foreign language knowledge's learning and ideological and political education. The integration problems of the courses for ideological and political education reflected the lack of teachers' ability of cultivating students' morality to some extent. According to the questionnaire, 34 percent of teachers believed that they lacked the ability of cultivating students' morality and the way of learning the knowledge of cultivating morality; 68 percent thought that it was difficult to evaluate the effect of moral education in the process of cultivating morality, which would reduce teachers' enthusiasm for improving their ability of cultivating students' morality in the long run; 28 percent thought their energy was limited and needed more helps.

By classifying and sorting out the records of attending lectures of the 20 foreign language teachers, the finding is shown in the table 3.

Table 3 Distribution of teachers educating the students in ideology and politics in different links

Links	Number of teachers	Proportion
Before class	20	100%
In class	12	60%
After class	9	45%

Before class, 20 teachers could use different teaching methods to carry out ideological and political education consciously. For example, when students study Unit One- *Man and Nature*, teachers can introduce the theme and the course's ideological and political points by watching the videos and observing the pictures in the lead-in link; In class, 12 teachers could consciously guide students to establish correct values by the methods of extending the words' meaning, making sentences, combing through the article structure and discussing in groups while explaining the new words and text. For example, when explaining the word "harmony", the teachers ask some students to try to make sentences with the word like "Man and nature should coexist in harmony", which can guide students to develop a correct ecological view naturally. However, some teachers still pay more attention to the analysis and explanation of knowledge points in the teaching process, ignoring the role of guiding students' correct values in class. After class only 9 teachers consolidated the fruits and extended the knowledge of the ideological and political education in the lesson through assigning tasks, which reflected that some teachers were short of the consciousness of cultivating morality. According to the tracking investigation of students in the class, teachers integrated the ideological and political education into the whole teaching process, which could make students better improve their awareness of value.

By analyzing and summarizing the interview results of 41 foreign language teachers, the author found that 47 percent of teachers did not understand the concept of "courses for ideological and political education" comprehensively, and few teachers even felt confused about the concepts of "courses for ideological and political education" and "courses of ideological and political education"; 80 percent of the teachers believed that both Chinese and Western cultures should be combined in the teaching process to emphasize the ability of intercultural communication of college foreign language courses; In the process of integrating the ideological and political education into the course, 90 percent of the teachers would educated the students in ideology and politics bases on these topics existed in the text like Chinese traditional culture and social ethics. However, a few teachers thought that there was no need to force the teacher to integrate the ideological and political concept into the course if some units were without clear and significant ideological and political characteristics. Most teachers thought that they need time and systematic help in improving their ability of cultivating morality.

### 3. The Dilemmas of Improving the Ability of Cultivating Morality of Foreign Language Teachers in the University

Through analyzing the questionnaire survey, studying the records of attending lectures and sorting out the results of teachers' interview, the author found that the dilemmas of improving the ability of cultivating morality of foreign language teachers in the university mainly consist of the following three aspects.

First of all, teachers reflected that the enthusiasm of students to participate was not high in the process of cultivating their moralities and the effect of moral education was difficult to evaluate, which resulted in the lack of confidence in their ability to cultivate their moralities. Teachers' confidence is the driving force to give full play to the role of cultivating morality of the ideological and political education [5], and the feedback of students in the teaching process is the biggest driving force for teachers to educate them. So how do we arouse positive feedback from students? This needs to cooperate with different parties like their counselors to discuss and understand students' characters, professional characteristics, which can be helpful to activate the whole class by combining the actual situation of students.

Secondly, most teachers were lack of the consciousness of cultivating morality and its

perceptivity. They have high ideological consciousness, but most teachers only pay attention to the ideological and political education before class, ignoring the searching and integration of ideological and political elements in the whole teaching process, which makes them fail to fully play to their ability to cultivate morality. And they are being in prison without knowing it. This finding shows that some teachers are lack of the consciousness of cultivating morality and its perceptivity in the whole process. In the interview, these teachers believed that they had played their moral ability to cultivate students, but had not thought about the effect, which sustained the situation for a long time that the teachers only teaching and cultivating without asking students' input or absorption. One who is in the game is blind, while a bystander sees through everything. The teachers are short of certain practical guidance and the consciousness of cultivating morality and its perceptivity in the whole process.

Finally, some teachers thought that their energy was limited and they needed help in improving their ability to cultivate morality. Teachers should not only dig deep into the ideological and political elements of textbooks, but also understand the characteristics of students, and improve their perceptivity of cultivating morality, which requires the teachers to feel the students' changes in value and psychology, selectively integrate ideological and political education according to the actual situation, and put forward high requirements for teachers' teaching ability and moral education ability. It has a strong randomness to give full play to the ability to cultivate morality and to integrate ideological and political integration in class. This kind integration of ideological and political education at random requires teachers to accumulate more experience in the practice of cultivating morality continuously [6]. Therefore, multi-party cooperation and systematic training are essential to improve teachers' ability of cultivating students' morality.

#### **4. Conclusion**

By interviewing 41 foreign language teachers in our university and observing the teaching process, this paper finds the importance and dilemmas of improving teachers' ability of cultivating morality in the process of courses for ideological and political education. With a wider range of audience, foreign language courses have great influence on the students in their views and thoughts. Even if there is no explicit entry points of ideological and political education in the university foreign language textbooks, we should discuss it deeply and explore the ideological and political elements. The discovery of these problems is helpful for the teacher in our university to improve their ability to cultivate students' morality and it is hoped that the paper can provide a reference for subsequent studies.

#### **Acknowledgements**

First of all, the author sincerely thanks the 41 teachers in our university for taking the time out of their busy schedules to fill out the questionnaires and accept the interview.

Secondly, the author would like to thank our team members for their support and help in the research process. Great things may be done by mass effort. It is hoped that this paper will be helpful for teachers to improve the ability to cultivate the morality.

Project: The periodic result of the general project called "Research on the Methods of Improvement of Moral Education Ability of Foreign Language Teachers in Application-oriented Universities and Colleges under the View of Courses for Ideological and Political Education" of Education and Teaching Reform of Shandong Huayu University of Technology in 2021. Project No.: 2021JG53.

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