Construction and practice of a competency-driven ideological and political teaching model: a case study of the "Portuguese Translation" course

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Abstract. This study, guided by a competency-driven approach, explores the integration and practical application of Ideological and Political Education (IPE) into the "Portuguese Translation" course, and constructs a teaching model characterized by "one list, one database, three stages, and three dimensions." Focusing on the Portuguese Translation curriculum, the paper identifies key pain points, including insufficient ideological and political integration, low student engagement, and a lack of accurate evaluation. In response, it builds and implements the competency-driven "one list, one database, three stages, and three dimensions" teaching model. By developing a course knowledge checklist, establishing a repository of ideological and political cases, promoting a three-stage teaching methodology, and implementing a three-dimensional full-process evaluation strategy, the study achieves a deep integration and mutual promotion of ideological education and professional Portuguese translation teaching, ultimately fulfilling the fundamental goal of competency development.

Keywords: Portuguese language, ideological and political education, teaching reform, talent cultivation

1. Introduction

With the continuous advancement of the "Belt and Road" Initiative, China's relations with Portuguese-speaking countries such as Brazil and Portugal have experienced rapid growth. However, there is an increasing scarcity of high-level Portuguese language professionals who are "ideologically sound, highly skilled, and full of potential." This urgent supply-demand imbalance presents both new challenges and opportunities for Chinese universities to reform ideological and political education and innovate talent cultivation systems [1, 2]. Therefore, exploring a competency-driven ideological and political teaching model is of significant theoretical and practical value.

Against the backdrop of higher education reform in the new era, the development of ideological and political education across the curriculum (commonly referred to as "Curriculum-Based Ideological and Political Education") has become a crucial measure to fulfill the fundamental mission of moral education. In the context of Portuguese language instruction, integrating ideological and political education can help students develop a correct understanding of China's relations with Portuguese-speaking countries and cultivate their awareness of serving national strategies. Additionally, given the substantial Western cultural content involved in Portuguese language teaching, ideological and political integration can guide students to view Sino-Western cultural differences dialectically, thereby enhancing cultural confidence [3, 4]. Overall, a competency-driven ideological and political teaching approach not only improves students' language proficiency but also develops their intercultural communication skills and global vision, while strengthening their cultural self-confidence and sense of national identity [5].

2. Problems in the current teaching model

For students majoring in Portuguese, the "Portuguese Translation" course primarily focuses on developing their translation competence and serves as a critical foundation for building professional skills. However, the current teaching model largely remains traditional, with some integration of Ideological and Political Education (IPE) reforms, yet it still lingers in a state of "ideological education for its own sake." Specifically:

2.1. Insufficient organic integration of ideological elements with course content

Ideological and political education is a systematic endeavor designed to serve the course itself, rather than adding ideological elements superficially for the sake of compliance. It must be effective, relevant, and vivid, rather than a mechanical "1+1" combination. As an advanced foundational course for the Portuguese major, "Portuguese Translation" plays a critical role in shaping students' professional competencies. Although course designers have consciously attempted to integrate ideological elements—such as the "Three Advances" and "Double Innovation" initiatives—into the curriculum based on the textual content, the linkage between these elements and course materials often remains rigid. This results in a disjointed learning experience where students' thought processes are prone to disruption. Transitions from the course content to ideological case studies are sometimes abrupt, making the ideological elements feel forced and diminishing the intended educational impact. Some students even develop resistance, perceiving the case studies as disconnected from the main course objectives. Moreover, when students are re-engaged with the main curriculum after the ideological case discussions, many remain mentally immersed in the cases, hindering the smooth resumption of regular instruction and thereby affecting overall teaching effectiveness. In general, the current implementation of ideological and political education in the "Portuguese Translation" course remains superficial. It lacks a targeted design aligned with the distinctive nature of translation training and often involves directly transplanting ideological content from unrelated professional courses. Furthermore, instructors, as the primary drivers of classroom activities, tend to prioritize knowledge transmission and skill acquisition over deeper goals such as fostering professional identity and developing students' potential, resulting in suboptimal educational outcomes.

2.2. Low student engagement

Effective ideological and political education is not a one-man show by the teacher; it requires active student participation guided by the instructor. However, in practice, students are often willing to listen to stories and discuss case studies, yet show limited engagement with the deeper educational objectives behind them. As a result, although the classroom atmosphere may appear lively, the educational impact outside the classroom remains weak.

2.3. Fragmented and one-dimensional evaluation system

The success of ideological and political education cannot be accurately assessed merely through questionnaires or self-appraisal by instructors; it demands a systematic and comprehensive evaluation process. Currently, most course assessments primarily involve two dimensions: student grades (based on coursework and final exams) and teacher evaluations (based on student feedback). These assessments overwhelmingly focus on knowledge acquisition and skill development, while lacking dedicated evaluation mechanisms for ideological and political education outcomes. Consequently, it remains unclear how effective the talent cultivation and ideological education efforts truly are. A more scientific and multi-dimensional evaluation system is needed to enable accurate reflection, to better support teaching reforms, and to enhance the overall quality of education.

3. Ideological and political teaching model for the course

Taking the "Portuguese Translation" course as the foundation, this model leverages case-driven learning, task-based instruction, full-process evaluation, and diverse activities as key breakthroughs to integrate Ideological and Political Education (IPE) elements - such as the "Three Advances" and "Double Innovation" initiatives - into the curriculum. It strengthens students' foundational knowledge of translation principles and skills development while using ideological engagement to evoke emotional resonance, stimulate professional potential, and effectively enhance the quality of talent cultivation.

3.1. Strengthening top-level design through "menu-based" teaching

Relying on the "Portuguese Translation" course, the traditional lecture-based system is dismantled and replaced with a modular teaching framework. The course is subdivided into modules, including translation principles and techniques, translation and practice of applied writing, argumentative writing, news writing, artistic writing, business writing, and integrated translation practice. Prior to the course, a survey is conducted to understand students' interests, allowing for the rational allocation of instructional time across modules and the establishment of a sound top-level design.

3.2. Advancing "case repository" construction for effective case-driven learning

Based on the specifics of each module, ideological and political elements are deeply integrated, leading to the creation of a "Portuguese Major Case Repository." For instance, when teaching translation principles, examples from the lives of outstanding translators from earlier generations in China are introduced to trigger emotional resonance. When discussing translation techniques, experiences of distinguished alumni are shared to enhance students' professional identity. For the argumentative writing module,

selected readings such as Xi Jinping: The Governance of China and Plain Talk are incorporated, along with related cases from the Belt and Road Initiative, to deepen students' understanding of national needs and stimulate their intrinsic motivation. Building upon the case repository, task-driven teaching is implemented, using cases to anchor student participation and promote in-depth classroom engagement.

3.3. Fostering a sense of ownership through three-stage teaching

A three-stage teaching method is adopted to clearly establish students' central role in the learning process and to cultivate a sense of ownership: 1. Pre-class: Students engage in autonomous learning to acquire foundational knowledge. They receive case materials beforehand and are encouraged to conduct independent research, internalizing emotional resonance. Teachers supervise and assess students' preparatory work. 2. In-class: Knowledge and emotions are further internalized through collaborative activities. Students are guided to share their translation insights, present topic-based reflections, and engage in critical discussions. The instructor concludes each session by encouraging and summarizing key points. 3. Post-class: Students consolidate their skills and potential. Teachers review the entire teaching process, identify common and typical issues, and refine the teaching plan accordingly. Updated learning resources are provided. Based on students' performance during pre-class preparation and in-class activities, process-based assessments and evaluations are conducted at both the individual and group levels. Students are expected to consolidate their learning, further expand their studies, and reflect systematically on challenges and solutions encountered during their autonomous learning and project execution.

3.4. Emphasizing "full-process" management through robust assessment and evaluation

To properly assess ideological and political education outcomes, a diversified evaluation system is proposed, combining theory with practice, emphasizing both process and results, and balancing individual competencies with group achievements. Evaluation will include three dimensions: Teacher Dimension: Routine assessments will incorporate specific indicators for IPE effectiveness, based on individual and group performance. Final examinations will include questions on fundamental translation principles and open-ended essay topics related to translation work. Student Dimension: Specialized surveys will be conducted, covering students' understanding of their major, perceptions of translation work, and reflections on impactful IPE segments, thus capturing students' perspectives on course effectiveness. Institutional Dimension: Expert supervisors with rich experience will conduct specialized evaluations, providing critical feedback and recommendations for course improvement.

4. Conclusion

Addressing the key challenges in the "Portuguese Translation" course—namely the insufficient integration of Ideological and Political Education (IPE), low student engagement, and inaccurate evaluation feedback—this study systematically reviewed the course's actual conditions and formulated a competency and knowledge checklist. It promoted a menu-based modular teaching approach, constructed a case repository aligned with knowledge module requirements, emphasized the central role of students by implementing a three-stage teaching method, and focused on full-process evaluation by establishing a three-dimensional evaluation system encompassing teachers, students, and the institution. After two rounds of teaching practice, classroom engagement improved significantly. Four students received awards in the National College Student "Double Innovation" Competition, and ten students won awards in translation competitions at the university level or higher. Feedback from expert supervisors indicated substantial improvement in the overall capability of the teaching team.

Funding project

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