



The current situation of integrating Ideological-political Education in Senior high school English reading teaching and some feasible suggestions

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Article Info

ISSN (online): 2582-7138

Volume: 03

Issue: 01

January-February 2022

Received: 02-01-2022;

Accepted: 18-01-2022

Page No: 388-392

Abstract

This paper takes a high school in the City of Taiyuan as an example to investigate the current situation of integrating ideological-political education into senior high school English reading teaching, and to illustrate the possibility and necessity of integrating ideological-political instruction into high school English reading teaching. This paper takes unit 3 *The Return of the Champions* of Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press High School "English" Selective Compulsory 1 as an example to explore the feasible ways of combining moral education into high school English reading teaching.

Keywords: Ideological-political instruction; senior high school English reading teaching; Current Teaching Status; Integration path

1. Introduction

After General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that ideological and political work should be carried out throughout the whole process of education and teaching in his important speech, (Xi Jinping's speech at the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Universities, 2016) ideological-political education via academic instruction as a new teaching concept has received more and more attention from educators and teachers. The concept of all round ideological-political education is much practiced in higher educational institutions, but rarely discussed in secondary education. However, high school students are in the critical period of forming correct values, and it is necessary to integrate ideological-political education (He, 2020), and make sure that they will become the loyal citizens of China. In addition, English textbooks contain a lot of ideological and political cultural knowledge, which can bring positive influence to students and help them develop Chinese sentiments and international perspectives. Based on the investigation of the current situation, this paper tries to explore the path of integrating ideological-political education into high school English reading teaching.

2. The Feasibility of Integrating Ideological-political education in High School English Reading Teaching

2.1 Good foundation for the integration of Ideological-political education

As an important part of the high school English curriculum, English reading teaching is arranged throughout the main stages of high school English teaching, and the teaching time is relatively longer than other linguistic skills since there are a lot of reading passages, which provides teachers with time and teaching materials to integrate ideological-political education. Therefore, it can be said that English reading course has a good basis for the integration of ideological-political education. What is more, the effective combination of high school English reading teaching and ideological-political education can gradually help students cultivate their national sentiment and international vision, which is also the main goal of ideological-political education.

2.1 Consistency of educational objectives of English courses

The overall goal of the general high school English curriculum is to comprehensively carry out the Party's education policy, cultivate and practice the core socialist values, implement the fundamental task of establishing moral education, further promote the development of students' core English subject literacy on the basis of compulsory education, and cultivate socialist builders and successors with Chinese sentiment, international vision and cross-cultural communication skills (2017). Therefore, from the perspective of humanistic education objectives, the educational objectives of the high school English course are consistent with those of socialist value education proposed by Mr. Xi Jinping, the General Party Secretary of China, which is more conducive to the integration of Ideological-political education in high school English teaching.

2.2 Richness and diversity of English reading chapters

Through the analysis of Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press English Compulsory 3 and Selective Compulsory 1, the author found that the reading passages in the textbook are rich in Ideological-political elements. The contents of these chapters are related to traditional culture, learning, life and social customs of other countries, which are very rich and diversified in content and pass universal good values. Moreover, English is a language course which cannot be separated from culture, and in the process of learning language skills, students are bound to come into contact with foreign cultures. In this process, students are subconsciously learning the target language culture, and there might be a possibility for some students to blindly promote foreign cultures (Sun, 2020), therefore, it is important to integrate ideological-political elements to ensure socialist value education. Teachers can make full use of these ideological-political elements to design various reading teaching activities, so as to continuously improve students' cultural and moral cultivation, enable them to comprehend the target language culture critically and dialectically, keep the core values of socialism with Chinese characteristics in their minds, and thus continuously cultivate students' national sentiment and international vision.

3. The Current Situation of moral education through Senior High School English Reading Teaching

3.1 Case study of an authentic reading lesson

During the first month of my internship in that high school, the author observed the English classes of the experienced teachers. The author is going to use one as an example to analyze the current situation of the integration of ideological-political education in English teaching. The title of this reading chapter is The Return of the Champions. The theme of this unit is the sportsmanship of faster, higher and stronger, and this reading chapter is about how the Chinese Women's Volleyball Team won the world championship again. The following are recording of class teaching and learning

reading activities.

1. lead in (about 8 mins for ideological-political education)
2. The teacher firstly shows the video of the Chinese women's volleyball team winning the Rio Olympics, and then asks: How much do you know about Chinese women's volleyball team ? After that, several students were invited to share their ideas. Then the teacher asked some questions for the students to answer when they read the text. One of them is what is the spirit of Chinese women's volleyball ? The question links the pre-reading stage with the while reading stage. The lead in section was still very successful in introducing the ideological-political element---the spirit of Chinese women's volleyball team, and students' curiosity was aroused.
3. While-reading (about 6 minutes for ideological-political education)

In the reading-in session, the teacher set up a total of three teaching activities for the students to discuss on their own.

Q1: What is the structure of the passage? What is the main idea of each section?

Q2: What achievements by other Chinese sports teams have made the greatest impression on you? Give an example of their sporting spirit.

Q3: What spirit does the Chinese women's volleyball team show in the passage? What can you learn from them?

The teacher spent about 3 minutes discussing the spirit of Chinese women's volleyball team with students and asked them what they had learned from it. The entire while-reading session lasted about 30 minutes, and the teacher spent the remaining 24 minutes explaining grammar and linguistic points and translating passage into Chinese. Later on, when they talked about head Coach, Madame Lang Ping, the teacher spent about 3 minutes explaining Lang Ping's contribution to Chinese women's volleyball to students.

3. Post-reading (about 2 minutes for ideological-political education)

In this section, the teacher designed a teaching activity: What else do you think has contributed to Chinese women's volleyball team's success? Then complete the mind map with your ideas and the examples that support them.

The teacher's design is good, and it is good for the integration of Chinese women's volleyball team. However, after completing the table, the teacher did not expand much, nor did she design corresponding activities for the students to apply the spirit of women's volleyball to their practical life or study. As a result, students only remembered what the spirit of women's volleyball was in this lesson, but did not how to internalize it into their daily life and study, which is not conducive to improving the integration effect of ideological-political education.

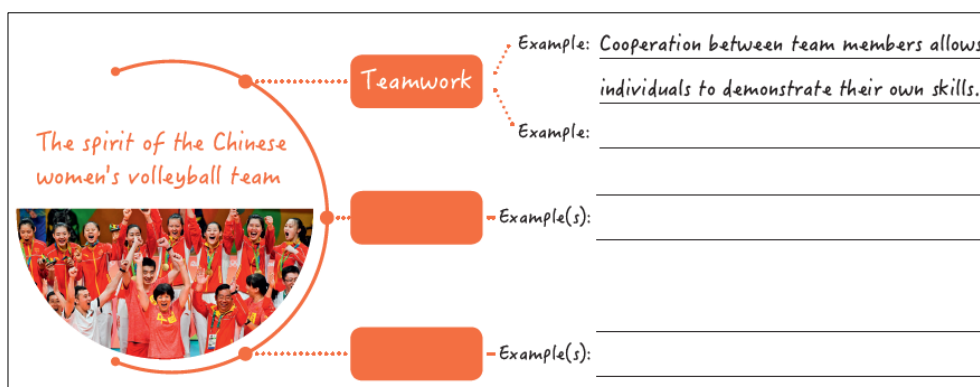


Fig 1

Through the above reading example, we can find that the teacher has the awareness to the integration value education in English reading teaching. However, the class time spent on the integration is relatively short. The aims of most of the teaching activities designed by the teacher are still for language learning. The integration is mainly done in the introduction part, and then discussed the spirit of Chinese women's volleyball with the students in the while-reading session. However, the post-reading session did not make good use of this activity to engrave the ideological-political education into the students' hearts. In fact, teachers can dig deeper in the post-reading session to educate students about life and values. For example, teachers can ask students to have group discussions on the following topics and invite them to share their views, or give a talk about how the spirits of Chinese women's volleyball team help them to achieve their life goals. (Choose one situation to talk. Work in groups.)

First of all, the group discussion can train the students' logical thinking and oral expression ability, thus sublimating the theme of the lesson. More importantly, students can understand women's volleyball spirit from different perspectives and share the ideas of their group members. It is hoped that in their future life and study, no matter what difficulties they encounter, they will use the spirit of women's volleyball to motivate themselves not to give up easily and dare to fight. And no matter where they are and what situation it is, they should put the national interest as well as the sense of national honor in the first place, thus cultivating students' correct outlook on life and values. Through this common teaching case study, the author tries to summarize the current situation of the integration of ideological-political education in high school English reading teaching in the following.

3.2 Current Situation of Integrating Ideological-political education in High School English Reading Teaching

3.2.1 The singularity of choosing ideological-political elements

Through classroom observations and questionnaire surveys, it was found that most of the reading materials came from textbooks and exercise books, and teachers did not select the reading chapters according to students' actual conditions. The effect of ideological-political education is as expected. And the reading chapters are selected by teachers without students' interests ignored. The prerequisite for students to be interested in the ideological-political elements is to stimulate them to read.

However, high school English teachers lack the awareness of exploring the ideological-political elements when designing

teaching activities, and many of them spend most of the class time on completing teaching tasks (Yu & Yan, 2021), such as the explanation of language points, rather than exploring these ideological-political elements and categorizing them in the limited teaching time. In fact, if teachers can explain these ideological-political elements with the grammar and phrases well in reading classes and let students receive a full ideological-political education, the teaching outcome will be one stone killing two birds: both the English language and value education content.

3.2.2 The traditional method of explaining ideological-political education in high school English reading teaching

Through several months of classroom observation, the author found that teachers mostly adopt the grammar translation method when explaining reading chapters involving ideological-political elements. Nowadays, some teachers are influenced by the traditional view of education, they ignore students' main position and turn the classroom into a "duck-fill" teaching, without paying attention to cultivating students' ideological and political awareness of. In fact, teachers can adopt task-based teaching method or communicative method when dealing with reading chapters with moral education content.

Take for example a text in Compulsory 3 of the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press of High School English, and the title of the reading chapter is The New Age of Invention. Most English teachers, when explaining this text, ask some students to stand up and translate some paragraphs, and then teach them the four major inventions of ancient China and the three major inventions of the West. But to cultivate students' ideological and political awareness, the teaching should not stop at this stage. If the teacher adopts a task-based teaching method and lets the students compare the four major inventions of ancient China and the three major inventions of the West, and tells the story behind each invention, this will be more conducive to cultivating students' sense of identity and pride in China's excellent traditional culture, and broadening their international perspective.

3.2.3 The development of reading skills is more favored in high school English reading instruction

In traditional English reading teaching, teachers focus more on developing students' reading skills, such as skimming and scanning. However, the main goal of ideological-political education is to cultivate students' national sentiment and international perspectives. If the cultural knowledge contained in reading materials is combined with ideological-

political education, it can provide spiritual strength for cultivating all-rounded talents (Yu & Yan, 2021). If language teaching focuses only on teaching reading skills, but not culture, then it is not conducive to cultivating students' national sentiment and international perspectives.

The task-based teaching method pays more attention to making students understand the discourse in context, but when teachers analyze the reading text, they still focus on some basic language knowledge, analyzing sentence structure and explaining out-of-the-way vocabulary. But in fact, teachers can combine the cultural knowledge contained in the reading materials with the purpose of virtue cultivation and moral education, and design more activities for students, such as guiding them talk about Chinese culture in English related with the content of the text and comparing the cultural elements with the counterparts in the target language, which is not only good for improving students' language skills, but also beneficial for integrating ideological-political education.

4. A suggested lesson planning of integrating value education in high school English reading teaching

Based on the above teacher's lesson example, the author tries to upgrade it from the perspective of blending ideological-political education in high school English reading teaching.

4.1 Teaching Objectives

1. **Knowledge objective:** Students will be able to grasp the main idea and structure of the text, as well as the vocabulary and expressions related to volleyball and women's volleyball spirit: Group of death; defending champion; steeliest nerves; perseverance; cooperation; spiking skills.
2. **Ability objectives:** (1) Be able to use relevant reading skills, such as skimming and scanning, to understand the general idea and structure of a text; (2) Students discuss the content of the passage in groups.
3. **Emotional Objective:** Be able to understand and learn the spirit of Chinese women's volleyball team, to cultivate the students' national sentiment and establish the correct outlook on life and values.

Table 1: Textual ideological-political elements

Teaching Sessions	Ideological-political elements
Lead in	The spirit of hard work and cooperation
While-reading	Chinese sentiment and national honor
Post-reading	Education on life and values

4.2 Teaching process

4.2.1 Preparation before class

[Teaching activity]The teacher encourages students to look up the history of the Chinese women's volleyball team and learn about its growth before class.

[Design Intention]Asking the students collect relevant background knowledge before class to stimulate their interest and thus pave the way for the class activities later.

4.2.2 Introductory session

1. **Activity 1:** The teacher starts the class with a video of the Chinese women's volleyball team winning the Rio Olympics and asks students to think about this question: How do you feel about their success? Students watch the video and share their feelings.
2. **Teaching activities:** (1) Watching the video can bring students into the authentic situation of the excitement after the women's volleyball team won the

championship, to inspire students' empathy. (2) Introducing the ideological-political element - the spirit of hard work and cooperation. After the glory and decline, the Chinese women's volleyball team withstood the pressure and regained the precious Olympic gold medal in the Rio Olympics, where there were many masters, with the spirit of tenacity and cooperation, showing their strong sense of national honor.

4.2.3 Pre-reading

1. The teacher shows a picture of the Chinese women's volleyball team and asks questions, students look at the picture and answer related questions.

Q1: Who are they?

Q2: How much do you know about their stories?

2. The teacher asks students to predict the main idea of the article based on the title and the photos in the book.

[Design Intention] Through these questions, students will be reminded of the Chinese women's volleyball team, thus laying the foundation for learning the spirit of women's volleyball later.

4.2.4 While-reading

The while-reading session is the key stage of integrating ideological-political education into English reading classroom activities. In this session, teachers can start from the reading content as a whole, explore the connection between the passages, establish the framework of the text, and teach relevant cultural knowledge and give values education as appropriate.

1. **Activity:** The teacher asked students to read the article in detail and find out the events about Chinese women's volleyball in chronological order; let students discuss in groups and answer the following questions: (1)What spirit does the Chinese women's volleyball team show in the passage? (2)What else makes them Olympic champions again? What are the examples that support your ideas?
2. **Design Note:** (1) Help students understand the main structure and general idea of the article and master the related reading skills. Through group discussion, students become aware of the importance of cooperative learning. (2) Introduce ideological-political element --- Chinese sentiment and national honor. The girls of Chinese women's volleyball team always put the honor of the country in the first place, so during that time when the women's volleyball team was in the doldrums, they still trained hard and fought hard with steel-like will to win the glory of the country in the Olympic games, which is worth learning form to every one of us.

4.2.5 Post-reading

1. **Activity:** The teacher asked the students to have a group discussion on the following topics and invited them to share their views. Give a talk about how the spirits of Chinese women's volleyball team help you to achieve success in your life. (Choose one situation to talk. Work in groups.)
2. **Design Note:** (1) Summarize the contents of this lesson, let the students talk about what they have learned and felt, and group discussion can exercise the students' logical thinking and oral expression ability, so as to sublimate the theme of this lesson. (2) Introduce

ideological-political element --- education on life and values. Students can appreciate more the power of the spirit of Chinese women's volleyball team, and in their future life and study, no matter what difficulties they encounter, they will use the spirit of women's volleyball to motivate themselves not to give up easily and dare to fight. And no matter what time, they should put the national interest as well as the sense of national honor in the first place, thus cultivating the correct outlook and values of students' life.

4.3 Teaching Reflection

To sum up, in order to better integrate ideological-political education in high school English reading teaching, the author has explored from the following three aspects.

First of all, before reading, the teacher should clarify the teaching objectives and find the entry point of ideological-political education. In other words, teachers should dig deeper into the textbook before class, explore the ideological-political elements in the text, and design the teaching objectives of the lesson according to this. Based on this, teachers can assign relevant tasks before class and ask students to collect and organize materials related to the reading materials, and then let them share them before class, so as to better integrate these ideological-political elements.

Secondly, the teacher should optimize teaching methods, such as introducing cultural elements, to promote the integration of ideological-political education. For example, in the process of reading teaching, teachers can design relevant reading questions for students to discuss. In the above English class example, the author designs three reading questions for students to discuss, that is, to let students understand the main content of the article, more importantly, to integrate ideological-political education, which provoked students to think about the spirit of Chinese woman's volleyball team. Therefore, teachers can optimize the design of their reading questions to promote the integration of the two.

Thirdly, the teacher should consolidate the exercises after reading, and connect ideological-political education with students' practical life. Teachers can design relevant exercises according to the theme of the unit, so that students can apply them to their actual lives and learning. For example, in the above example, the author designed a group discussion at the end of the lesson for students to discuss how to use the spirit of women's volleyball to motivate them when encountering difficulties in their future life and study. In short, teachers should closely contact with students' actual situation, consolidate the learning results of this lesson, so students can really apply what they have learned from ideological-political education to the real life.

5. Conclusion

English course is not only a course of knowledge and skills, but also a course for value education and cultivating a loyal citizen. The Party General Secretary, Mr. Xi Jinping, emphasizes that the fundamental task of establishing moral education should be taken as the basic task, and ideological-political education should be carried out throughout the teaching of various courses (Zhang & Xu, 2021). English reading class occupies an important position in high school English teaching, and should actively hold up the responsibility of nurturing the future builders of China. Moreover, high school students are in the critical period of forming correct values, and they need to establish a good scientific and healthy outlook on life, morality and values

during this period so that they are able to face their future study and life with a positive and optimistic attitude (Du, 2021). Therefore, the integration of ideological-political education in high school English reading teaching is an educational reform measure that is in line with the present economic, political and cultural situation of China, and the law of students' physical and mental development.

This paper takes a high school as an example and discusses the current situation and the possibility of integrating ideological-political education into high school English reading teaching, and finally the author uses one reading example to try to propose some paths for organically combining the two, so as to implant the socialist core values in the minds of the students and build up their sense of national pride and honor as well as helping the students to acquire necessary subject knowledge. The expected outcome is that they are able to confidently use the English knowledge they learn to spread China's excellent traditional culture to the world, and have a good sense of home and country and international perspective.

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Acknowledgement: An innovative research project for post graduate students funded by Taiyuan Normal University. 2021: A Study of the Present Situation of Senior High School English Reading Teaching from the Perspective of Ideological and Political Education. Project leader: Xu Dan.