

A Survey Study on Foreign Language Teachers' Teaching Competence of Curriculum Ideology and Politics

Taking Minjiang University as an Example

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ABSTRACT

Teacher is the key and main force in implementing the construction of curriculum ideology and politics. In this study, 59 teachers from College of Foreign Languages of Minjiang University in Fuzhou were selected as the subjects for the sake of examining teachers' cognition and practice of curriculum ideology and politics instruction by questionnaire. Results of this survey show that: the current foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics is barely satisfactory; political background and teaching year exert no statistically significant influence on foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics. What is more, most foreign language teachers bear certain burden and difficulty in implementing curriculum ideology and politics. These findings supply beneficial exploration and supplement to the research into the construction of foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics.

Keywords: *Teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics, Foreign language teachers, Political background, Teaching year.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since 2020, the idea of comprehensive promotion of "curriculum ideology and politics" and further giving full play to the educational function of each course has been clearly required in the "National Guidelines of Higher Education" [1], so as to construct all-round education pattern. In 2021, General Secretary Xi once again emphasized that "the foundation of colleges and universities should lie in building morality and cultivating people". Apparently, teacher who plays a leading role in the class teaching works as the concrete implementor for the fundamental task of "Building Morality and Cultivating People". As is known that only high-quality teachers could foster high-quality education; thus foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics is the key factor to comprehensively promote the curriculum ideology and politics [2]. With the setting of curriculum ideology and politics, all

teachers and courses should undertake the responsibility of ideological and political education. And in terms of foreign language teachers, the improvement of teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics should become the top priority [3]. What's more, the cultivation and enhancement of college English teachers' teaching consciousness and competence of curriculum ideology and politics is essential for continuously facilitating the construction of curriculum ideology and politics [4].

2. RESEARCH OVERVIEW

As a matter of fact, the new concept "foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics" is accompanied exactly with the appearance of "curriculum ideology and politics". According to Gao and Zhang, it means the individual mental characteristics and behavioural expression demonstrated through realizing students' value

shaping, ability betterment and knowledge accumulation, during which teachers are aware of excavating curriculum ideology and politics elements implicated in courses and further properly integrating them into each section and each aspect of teaching process in all kinds of college English teaching contexts[5]. In this case, foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics not only bears the connotations of general teaching ability, but also obeys the inner requirements of curriculum ideology and politics, which is a complexion combined with various capabilities and elements. To put it another way, foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics plays an indispensable role in achieving course teaching objectives, implementing the fundamental task of "Building Morality and Cultivating People".

As is well-known that students would have more frequent contact with foreign culture and ideology while attending foreign language courses, so foreign language teachers' ability of curriculum ideology and politics is exceedingly vital for the guidance of students' values[6]. This also explains why it is special and necessary to conduct curriculum ideology and politics in foreign language courses. Hence in the process of constructing curriculum ideology and politics, foreign language teachers should work as the leader to implement curriculum ideology and politics in all links of courses through teaching content, classroom management, evaluation system and daily words and deeds, so that students can form a correct world view, view of life and values[7]. In recent years, there are many studies at home constantly exploring foreign language teachers' curriculum ideology and politics in colleges and universities from cognition to practice, and some valuable and learnable instructions have been generated. For instance, Zhang and Wang deem that foreign language teaching is born with the curriculum ideology and politics, and teachers are supposed to conduct it suggestively so that students can naturally accept it without psychological aversion; otherwise the educational outcome will be affected[8]. Besides, foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics were systematically probed from the perspective of theory by Li[6] and Yang[9].

Although scholars have done some research into foreign language curriculum ideology and politics instruction, most of them are restricted within students or theories. Nevertheless, the related

studies focusing on teachers as the subjects and exploring foreign language teachers' cognition and practice of curriculum ideology and politics are lacking. That is to say, at present, the framework of foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics in colleges and universities has not been systematically constructed, and foreign language courses and ideology and politics education have not yet been well integrated. In light of the above-mentioned, this study attempts to survey the status quo of the construction of foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

By virtue of questionnaires and interviews, this study strives to make an investigation into the current foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics, and moves forward to dig out the existing difficulty of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics instruction in colleges and universities in the hope that some corresponding suggestions and solutions would be advanced. The survey concentrates on answering the following three questions: (1) How is the current status of foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics? (2) What kind of dilemma is the foreign language curriculum ideology and politics instruction in? (3) What factors will affect foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics?

On the ground of Wang's research [10], the questionnaire consists of three sections. The first section is the subjects' information, covering age, political background, professional title, teaching years. And the second is about foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics, which is composed of five parts with nine questions in total: Part A (2 questions) ("objective of curriculum ideology and politics"); Part B (1 question) ("content of curriculum ideology and politics"); Part C (3 questions) ("necessity of curriculum ideology and politics"); Part D (1 question) ("effect of curriculum ideology and politics"); Part E (2 questions) ("experience of curriculum ideology and politics"). The third section is related to the present difficulty of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics instruction, which is divided into 3 questions, and one is a subjective question whereas the other two are multiple choices. The multiple

choices used in the second and the third section all have five options, and each option corresponds to one score of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 (1=exceedingly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5=exceedingly agree).

In this study, 59 foreign language teachers from College of Foreign Languages in Minjiang University were selected as the subjects who bear different political backgrounds and teaching years and they have understood the meaning of the curriculum ideology and politics in college English instruction, guaranteeing the credibility and validity of this survey to a large extent. Moreover, the questionnaire was conducted online anonymously for teachers to complete independently and it is accompanied with a corresponding explanation of the curriculum ideology and politics in college English instruction. In the end, since there was no invalid questionnaire, all the results were preserved.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSES

All these collected data were first categorized and then processed with SPSS21.0, and further presented in terms of status quo of foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum

ideology and politics. Also, such teaching competence will be further compared with different political backgrounds and different teaching years. What's more, the extant dilemmas and challenges of foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics will be dissected.

4.1 Basic Information about Teachers

As clarified in "Table 1", the total number of respondents is fifty nine with 9 males and 50 females. Among them, there are four various ranges of age groups: five teachers between 20 and 30, twenty-three between 31 and 40, twenty-three between 41 and 50, and eight over 51. Additionally, the percentage of educators who lecture less than or equal to 5 years is 11.86%, between 6 and 10 years is 15.25%, between 11 and 15 is 23.73%, and more than or equal to 16 is 49.15%. Still, teaching assistants account for 8.47%, lecturer 64.41%, associate professor 25.42%, and professor only 1.69%. This means the majority of these foreign language teachers are at the age between 31 and 50; most of them are teaching assistants and have more than 16 years of teaching experience.

Table 1. Basic information about teachers (N=59)

Age Group	N	Percentage	Professional Title	N	Percentage	Teaching Years	N	Percentage
20-30	5	8.47%	Teaching Assistant	5	8.47%	≤5	7	11.86%
31-40	23	38.98%	Lecturer	38	64.41%	6-10	9	15.25%
41-50	23	38.98%	Associate Professor	15	25.42%	11-15	14	23.73%
≥51	8	13.56%	Professor	1	1.69%	≥16	29	49.15%
Total	59	100%	Total	59	100%	Total	59	100%

4.2 The Status Quo of Foreign Language Teachers' Teaching Competence of Curriculum Ideology and Politics

According to statistics, the average of foreign language teachers' cognition of curriculum ideology and politics instruction ranges from 3.0169 to 4.0113. Among them, the average of necessity of curriculum ideology and politics is the highest (M=4.0113, SD=.73073), which reflects that most foreign language teachers appreciate the significance of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics. However, the lowest average score is content of curriculum ideology and politics (M=3.0169, SD=.84060), implying that foreign

language teachers are not familiar with the main content of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics. Besides, the average of objective of curriculum ideology and politics (M=3.2458, SD=1.00372) reveals that foreign language teachers have a relatively clear comprehension of the objectives. Furthermore, the standard deviations of the content and the necessity of curriculum ideology and politics are less than 1, signifying that teachers' opinions on these issues are basically identical.

Still, the average of effect of curriculum ideology and politics ((M=3.6271) is higher than that of experience of curriculum ideology and

politics (M=2.9407). It means that the majority of these teachers hold that it is effective to implant curriculum ideology and politics into classes, while only part of them would extract elements of curriculum ideology and politics and share their experience with other instructors. What's more, the standard deviation of effect of curriculum ideology and politics (SD=.55393) indicates teachers' agreement on this issue, whilst their ideas on the experience of curriculum ideology and politics are inconsistent (SD=1.03190).

4.3 Influential Factors of Foreign Language Teachers' Teaching Competence of Curriculum Ideology and Politics

The researcher divided the participants into members of Communist Party of China and non-CPC members (CPC member=30, Non-CPC member=29), so as to examine the differences of foreign language teachers' cognition and practice of curriculum ideology and politics instruction with

different political backgrounds. Based upon the figures provided in "Table 2", the average value of the CPC member does numerically better than that of the Non-CPC member in all aspects of curriculum ideology and politics. Then by way of Independent Samples T-test, a conclusion can be drawn that there is no significant difference between CPC member and Non-CPC member in Part A (objective of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.350>.05), Part B (content of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.281>.05) and Part C (necessity of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.058>.05) in terms of cognition. Also, it can be discovered that teachers with different political backgrounds exert no statistical effect on the instructors' practice of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics in Part D (effect of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.135>.05) and Part E (experience of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.174>.05). Thus, different political backgrounds don't significantly influence the teachers' cognition and practice of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics.

Table 2. Comparisons of foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics with different political backgrounds

Variables	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	P
Part A	CPC	30	3.3500	.77848	.943	.350
	Non-CPC	29	3.1379	.94393		
Part B	CPC	30	3.1333	.97320	1.090	.281
	Non-CPC	29	2.8966	.67320		
Part C	CPC	30	4.1556	.64168	1.932	.058
	Non-CPC	29	3.8621	.51576		
Part D	CPC	30	3.7333	.58329	1.515	.135
	Non-CPC	29	3.5172	.50855		
Part E	CPC	30	3.0667	.67891	1.378	.174
	Non-CPC	29	2.8103	.74897		

a Note: (*P<.05; **P<.01)

b CPC=CPC member Non-CPC=Non-CPC member

c Part A=objective of curriculum ideology and politics; Part B=content of curriculum ideology and politics; Part C=necessity of curriculum ideology and politics; Part D=effect of curriculum ideology and politics; Part E=experience of curriculum ideology and politics

It is expected that teachers converting into the Communist Party of China will attend lots of party classes, where they can learn important thoughts and current news; thereafter they may have a deeper understanding of ideology and politics than the Non-CPC members. However, through the above data, it can be unearthed that political backgrounds do not have significant effects on the teachers' cognition and practice of foreign language

curriculum ideology and politics instruction, which is largely owing to the fact that China has poured huge efforts into the education about ideology and politics. Hence whether teachers are CPC-members or not, they will have frequent contact with ideology and politics in their daily life. Besides, with the rapid development of science and technology, people are not restricted within classroom lessons; thereby they can also have

access to important thoughts and current issues on the Internet. Especially for teachers, it is the fundamental teaching objective to cultivate students' character; as a consequence, political backgrounds do not significantly influence the subjects' cognition. As for the practice of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics instruction, although both the CPC-teachers and Non-CPC teachers have a basic understanding, they still need to master how to put foreign language curriculum ideology and politics into practice. Therefore, it is assumed that both the CPC and Non-CPC teachers haven't yet fully realized such importance and haven't received the relevant instructions about how to extract the elements of ideology and politics in the foreign language curriculum.

For the sake of looking into whether different teaching years will have an impact on the teachers' cognition and practice of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics instruction, the respondents were separated into two parts: teachers

who give lessons less than or equal to 15 years and teachers who teach over 15 years (L=30, O=29). In accordance with "Table 3", it can be clearly disclosed that the average value of teachers who lecture less than or equal to 15 years is higher than that of ones who teach over 15 years in Part A, Part C and Part D, while in Part B and Part E, the former is slightly lower than the latter. In addition, through processing the data with Independent Samples T-test, it can be displayed that teachers of different teaching years have no dramatic difference in Part A (objective of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.281>.05), Part B (content of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.876>.05), Part C (necessity of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.148>.05), Part D (effect of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.581>.05) and Part E (experience of curriculum ideology and politics) (P=.797>.05). In brief, the results imply that the discrepancy of teaching years exerts insignificant effect on the teachers' cognition and practice of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics instruction.

Table 3. Comparisons of foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics with different teaching years

Variables	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	P
Part A	L	30	3.3667	.68145	1.089	.281
	O	29	3.1207	1.01467		
Part B	L	30	3.0000	.90972	-.156	.876
	O	29	3.0345	.77840		
Part C	L	30	4.1222	.68079	1.466	.148
	O	29	3.8966	.48060		
Part D	L	30	3.6667	.54667	.554	.581
	O	29	3.5862	.56803		
Part E	L	30	2.9167	.68334	-.259	.797
	O	29	2.9655	.76685		

a Note: (*P<.05; **P<.01)

b L=less than or equal to 15 years O=Over 15 years

c Part A=objective of curriculum ideology and politics; Part B=content of curriculum ideology and politics; Part C=necessity of curriculum ideology and politics; Part D=effect of curriculum ideology and politics; Part E=experience of curriculum ideology and politics

Generally speaking, the older teachers may have a deeper understanding of the objective and the necessity of curriculum ideology and politics than the younger ones. Yet the study shows the younger teachers enjoy a numerical advantage in objective, necessity and effect of curriculum ideology and politics. For one thing, young people have more frequent contact with the Internet, and they have relatively higher ability to be accessible to some novel things. For another, China has attached

ascending importance to ideological and political education in recent years, so the young teachers can get in touch with ideology and politics earlier than the older ones. Nonetheless, the three parts show no significant divergence in the cognition and practice of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics instruction, which also unveils that these foreign language teachers' cognition and practice of such issue await further improvement. To put it simply, both the young and old teachers have an

unsatisfactory comprehension of the content of curriculum ideology and politics, and it is one of the reasons why teachers cannot accurately refine the ideological and political elements. Besides, since these teachers have been constantly under the burden of scientific research, teaching and family and the like, they would be worn out in updating their present teaching methods.

5. EXISTING DIFFICULTIES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE CURRICULUM IDEOLOGY AND POLITICS INSTRUCTION

In line with the statistical data, it can be displayed that the burden of implementing curriculum ideology and politics ($M=3.5763$, $SD=.12839$) is numerically higher than the difficulty of extracting information of curriculum ideology and politics ($M=3.1017$, $SD=.71184$). Speculation can be made that though it is indeed tough to extract the information of curriculum ideology and politics, “burden” is likely the fundamental reason why teachers are unable to deal with it easily. It is worth noting that both standard deviations of these two parts are within 1, indicating foreign language teachers share the same perspectives on the difficulty and burden of extracting information of curriculum ideology, which is mainly on account of the following two points.

In the first place, most teachers don't have a clear understanding of the content of curriculum ideology and politics, leading to the fact that teachers cannot accurately extract information of curriculum ideology and politics. In the next place, it lacks pertinent instructions to further guide teachers how to excavate and how to apply it to the real classroom teachings. If teachers insufficient with the related knowledge are forced to implement the curriculum ideology and politics education, they will bear much burden. Additionally, teachers are weary of updating the changing model of instructions. It will take lots of time to prepare for traditional lessons, not to mention the efforts to mix it with curriculum ideology and politics. Besides, traditional curriculum is often dedicated to the dissemination of foreign language and exam-oriented education. Under such circumstances, teachers will be lacking in enough energy and time to cultivate students' critical thinking ability and their values. And it is noteworthy that in subsequent interviews teachers deemed imparting knowledge and educating students as their duty, whereas what

is in urgent need now is the improvement of interestingness and timeliness during selecting the materials of curriculum ideology and politics.

6. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the ground of the research findings, it cannot be denied that currently foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics is favourable overall but still has much space for improvement. Accordingly, both schools and teachers must spare no efforts to promote teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics. Also, the study demonstrates that political background and teaching year didn't exert significant effects on teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics. What is more, teachers have difficulty in extracting information of curriculum ideology and politics and have burden of implementing curriculum ideology and politics. In view of the aforesaid problems, corresponding solutions could be put forward as follows.

Firstly, colleges and universities are supposed to provide more guidance for teachers so that they can have a more in-depth understanding of the content, objective and necessity of curriculum ideology and politics, which will lay a foundation for further application. In addition to cognition, if it is expected to enhance teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics, instructions about how to technologically extract and employ the elements of curriculum ideology and politics are also needed. In light of the study results, most foreign language teachers feel stressed to conduct curriculum ideology and politics instruction. If they can obtain some relevant guidance, they are very likely to understand it more deeply and conduct it more easily. Furthermore, besides colleges and universities, teachers should transform the thought of preparing and giving lessons as well. Certifications and examinations are certainly important; however, exam-oriented education has been out of fashion. Just as the saying of President Xi, the cultivation of students' values is the most essential, which is not equal to the low proficiency of knowledge, but to requiring instructors to mix knowledge with curriculum ideology and politics technologically. Most importantly, teachers should hold positive mental attitudes toward the implementation of curriculum ideology and politics. Especially for foreign language curriculum, as teachers and students will come into contact with

foreign culture for a long time, it is more crucial to develop learners' critical thinking ability so as to guide them to distinguish between foreign culture and Chinese culture. Finally, life-long learning serves as a key. Teachers should not be restricted into the available teaching materials, but also they can extract information from outside source, such as the current news, things which they learn through extra-curricular teaching materials, experience they get from the real life and so on. In reality, the process of such learning not only can help students progress in all aspects, but also make teachers grow up mentally.

Anyway, foreign language curriculum ideology and politics is a far-reaching topic and its relevant theories and practice should be taken into account in further empirical research. Naturally, there are still some defects in this study. First, the subjects and scope of the questionnaire are limited. The data of the survey may only represent the current condition of foreign language teachers' teaching competence of curriculum ideology and politics in Minjiang University. Consequently, it is recommended to expand the survey scope and sample size with follow-up dynamic studies covering more foreign language teachers from different types of colleges and universities. Without comparative and comprehensive cases of foreign language curriculum ideology and politics from other higher institutions, advice involved in this study may not be complete and authoritative enough as well.

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