EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2024): 8.481 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 11 | Issue:12 |December 2024

EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES TO PROMOTE REFORM IN MORAL EDUCATION THROUGH FOREIGN LANGUAGE COURSES

Tang Enping
School of Foreign Studies, Zhaoqing University, Zhaoqing, Guangdong, China

Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra19571
DOI No: 10.36713/epra19571

ABSTRACT

Against the backdrop of current educational reform, teaching evaluation has emerged as a crucial means of measuring teaching quality and effectiveness, highlighting its growing significance. However, traditional teaching evaluations frequently concentrate on knowledge acquisition and examination results, overlooking the evaluation of students' comprehensive qualities and the broader educational outcomes. Therefore, constructing a scientific and comprehensive evaluation system for educational outcomes is of great importance in advancing teaching reform and innovation. This paper aims to explore how to promote teaching reform, particularly in the practical application of moral education through courses, through the evaluation of educational outcomes. By analyzing the problems existing in current teaching evaluations and combining the practice of moral education evaluation in foreign language courses in School of Foreign Studies, Zhaoqing University, this paper proposes a comprehensive evaluation system for educational outcomes and elaborates on its development steps and application cases in teaching. This system not only helps improve teaching quality but also effectively promotes students' overall development.

KEYWORDS: *evaluation of educational outcomes; teaching reform; moral education through courses; evaluation system*

1. INTRODUCTION

Moral education through courses serves as an important pathway for nurturing talent in universities, and the effectiveness of evaluation has always been a hot and difficult topic in the field of education. With the acceleration of educational reform, teaching evaluation has increasingly highlighted its importance as a key tool for measuring teaching quality and effectiveness. However, traditional teaching evaluations often overly focus on knowledge acquisition and exam scores, neglecting the assessment of students' comprehensive qualities and educational outcomes. Consequently, establishing a scientific and comprehensive evaluation system for educational outcomes holds great significance in advancing teaching reform and innovation. This paper aims to explore effective evaluation methods and teaching reform strategies by analyzing the difficulties of moral education evaluation, in order to enhance educational outcomes and promote the reform and innovation of moral education through courses.

The current status of moral education evaluation through courses is marked by several challenges, including a pronounced tendency towards politicization, the problem of ideological homogeneity and rigidity, and a utilitarian approach to education. For instance, political ideologies can influence educational content and methods, leading to education being used as a tool for political propaganda. Additionally, the exclusion of diverse ideologies can limit the comprehensiveness of education. Furthermore, the focus on economic value and social status in education can overshadow the importance of individual development, resulting in a neglect of fostering creativity and innovation among students.

In May 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the "Guiding Outline for the Construction of Moral Education through Courses in Higher Education Institutions," providing basic guidelines for all teachers and courses in higher education institutions. Despite the guidance provided by official documents, many challenges are still faced in actual teaching processes. For example, professional course teachers tend to exhibit superficial and simplistic tendencies in their teaching philosophies regarding moral education, with teaching content being either too narrow or too broad, teaching methods appearing rigid and one-way, and issues of simplification in teaching effectiveness evaluation (Meng & Li, 2022). Among these challenges, the evaluation of the teaching effectiveness of moral

education is particularly noteworthy, becoming a focal point and difficult problem within the moral education system. Scholars have pointed out that the current teaching evaluation system has many deficiencies, such as the uniformity of evaluation content, the simplification of evaluation methods, and insufficient reliability and validity of evaluation results (Lu, 2021). However, with the application of big data analysis technology, we can more objectively and comprehensively assess the teaching effectiveness of moral education, deeply explore students' learning behaviors and emotional responses in the classroom, and provide teachers with more precise teaching suggestions and guidance (Meng & Li, 2022). Especially in the field of moral education through courses, due to the fuzziness of the concept of "moral education" and the difficulty in quantifying educational outcomes, the work of teaching evaluation becomes more complex. Therefore, there is an urgent need to explore a new teaching evaluation model to more accurately reflect educational outcomes and promote teaching reform and innovation.

1.1 The Contradiction between the Long-term Attitude Formation and the Immediacy of Evaluation

In the practice of moral education through courses, the formation of students' attitudes is usually a long and complex process involving their personal values, beliefs, and understanding of social phenomena. Traditional evaluation methods often pursue immediacy, assessing students' attitudes and understanding through one-time exams or simple questionnaires. However, this evaluation method is difficult to accurately reflect the true changes in students' attitudes, as the formation and transformation of attitudes are gradual processes that cannot be fully exhibited in a short period of time.

This contradiction leads to questions about the reliability of evaluation results. If evaluation methods cannot truthfully reflect changes in students' attitudes, the credibility of evaluation results will be greatly compromised. In addition, since the goal of moral education through courses is not only to impart knowledge but also to nurture talent, that is, to cultivate students' social responsibility, moral values, and civic awareness, it is difficult to effectively measure the educational outcomes of moral education through courses, making it impossible to accurately determine whether they have achieved the expected educational goals.

1.2 Fuzziness of "Moral Education"

The term "moral education" represents a broad and multidimensional concept that includes multiple important educational fields such as values education, moral education, civic education, and patriotism education, as well as other related educational content. Due to its broadness and multifaceted nature, the definition of the scope of "ideological and political education" appears relatively vague and unclear in practical operations. This fuzziness makes it difficult to accurately define the specific content of evaluation during the evaluation process (Meng & Li, 2022), thereby affecting the effectiveness and pertinence of the evaluation process, and making the evaluation results potentially unable to comprehensively and accurately reflect the actual educational effects. As Meng pointed out in her research, this fuzziness is an urgent problem to be solved, as it directly relates to the practicability of the evaluation system.

2. CONSTRUCTION OF THE EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

In response to the above issues, this paper proposes a comprehensive evaluation system for educational outcomes. The design of the teaching evaluation scheme for this system includes the following aspects.

2.1 Clarifying Evaluation Objectives

With the effectiveness of talent cultivation as the core, clearly set evaluation objectives, and particularly emphasize the teaching characteristics of "one course, one strategy." By meticulously designing teaching activities to closely integrate with the cultivation of professional talent, ensure that the evaluation process has a clear direction, focuses on key points, and effectively promotes the improvement of teaching quality and talent cultivation effectiveness. Before setting clear evaluation objectives, it is necessary to conduct exhaustive literature reviews and theoretical sorting. This entails extensively consulting literature pertinent to teaching evaluation and systematically mapping out the evolutionary context and prevalent practices in teaching evaluation, thereby clarifying the theoretical foundation of the evaluation of educational outcomes and providing solid theoretical support for the design and implementation of teaching activities.

2.2 Selecting Evaluation Dimensions

When formulating the evaluation system, the core objectives of moral education through courses should be taken as the starting point, carefully selecting evaluation dimensions that can accurately reflect the characteristics and requirements of moral education. These dimensions must not only possess broad representativeness but also exhibit clear relevance, thereby ensuring that they fully and profoundly capture the effectiveness of students' talent cultivation.

Based on the consideration of educational objectives, further clarify and delineate the evaluation dimensions, specifying the educational outcomes into a series of precise categories, encompassing national identity, institutional confidence, ethical awareness, professional identity, knowledge acquisition, skill improvement, emotional attitudes, and values. The setting of these dimensions aims to comprehensively cover students' growth and progress in moral education.

After determining the evaluation dimensions, various evaluation methods should be flexibly applied, such as self-evaluation by students, peer evaluation, and teacher evaluation, to improve the objectivity and fairness of the evaluation process. In addition, according to the different stages of the evaluation, the most suitable methods should be selected, for example, using standardized tests to quantify students' learning outcomes at certain stages, while at other stages, more detailed and in-depth evaluation information may be obtained through classroom observations, assignment analyses, or questionnaires.

2.3 Designing Evaluation Rubrics

When conducting evaluation work, it is first necessary to meticulously design specific evaluation rubrics based on the selected evaluation dimensions. This step involves formulating evaluation indicators, clarifying observation points, allocating weights, and setting scoring standards. The design of evaluation rubrics should have high operability and measurability, so that evaluators can make objective and fair judgments based on these rubrics during the actual evaluation process, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of evaluation results.

2.4 Implementing Evaluation and Providing Feedback on Results

During the process of teaching evaluation, strictly follow the pre-designed evaluation rubrics, carefully collect and record students' various data and their specific performances. Through in-depth analysis and detailed processing of these data, very precise evaluation results can be obtained. These results are then promptly fed back to the students themselves and their teachers, so that both parties can understand the students' learning status and room for improvement. These evaluation results not only serve as key reference bases for student rewards and selections but also play a crucial role in promoting students' overall development. Meanwhile, efforts should be made to seamlessly integrate evaluation with teaching, embodying the teaching philosophy of 'advancing teaching via evaluation' through fostering endogenous teaching cycles.

Implementing the evaluation system in practical teaching promptly identifies teaching process issues and enables targeted enhancements, making continual enhancements, thus optimizing and refining the evaluation system on a regular basis. Through this approach, it can be ensured that the evaluation system always keeps pace with teaching practice and that evaluation results can truly reflect students' learning effectiveness, providing strong support for teachers to help them better guide students, ultimately achieving common improvements in teaching quality and student abilities.

3. APPLICATION CASES OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EVALUATION SYSTEM IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

This paper introduces application cases of the effectiveness of educational outcomes in teaching evaluation system, taking the construction of the moral education through English courses at Zhaoqing University as an example. For example, the Comprehensive English course incorporates moral elements, including experiences of college life, interviews with exemplary students, visits to historic sites and scenic areas, as well as Cantonese opera culture. Various teaching methods are employed to enhance educational effectiveness, such as communicative language teaching and task-based learning. By utilizing a variety of evaluation techniques, such as student self-reflection, peer evaluations, and thorough teacher assessments, the overall quality of student learning has notably enhanced, thereby bolstering the effectiveness of education. Additionally, the course emphasizes the application of evaluation results, using them as important criteria for student rewards and selections, which further stimulates students' learning enthusiasm and creativity.

3.1 Integration of Moral Education and English Teaching

Finding entry points for moral education in foreign language teaching can significantly enhance the moral education effectiveness through courses (Xie, 2020). As a fundamental and core course, Comprehensive English course spans four semesters, with four credits per semester for a total of 16 credits. In the curriculum system of the English major at the School of Foreign Studies, Zhaoqing University (covering both public and professional courses), it accounts for 9.1% of the total credits, playing a crucial role in cultivating talents in the English field. Given its foundational, comprehensive, and important nature, this course is particularly suitable for exploring the integration of ideology into curriculum teaching.

Comprehensive English course offers a diverse range of content, covering campus life, health, environmental protection, family, friendship, animals, sports, and more, facilitating the integration of moral education content. Each teaching unit can naturally incorporate elements of moral education. For instance, Comprehensive English(Book IV)'s opening unit underscores the significance of goal-setting and mentors students in crafting and executing their 'personal annual goals'; the second unit advocates a scientific attitude towards religious issues; the third unit discusses how to cultivate good study habits; the fourth unit introduces the innovative spirit, exploratory mindset, and selfless dedication exemplified by Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the World Wide Web; the fifth unit fosters students' awareness of environmental protection through readings from Silent Spring; the sixth unit explores how to correctly distinguish between good and evil in human nature; the seventh unit focuses on improving musical literacy and aesthetic ability; the eighth unit discusses what constitutes a true friend; and the tenth unit explores the significance of college education. The themes of each unit can deeply explore elements of moral education. Through the analysis of text content, related topic discussions are naturally introduced, providing students with ideological inspiration, moral influence, quality improvement, and sentiment cultivation during the process of professional learning.

3.2 Diverse Teaching Methods

In the teaching process, teachers should play a leading role while ensuring students' active participation as the subject, utilizing flexible teaching methods and strategies to prevent the teaching process from becoming unilateral and monotonous. Given the specificity of foreign language classrooms, communicative language teaching is primarily adopted, supplemented by other teaching methods, to enhance the interaction between teachers and students and strengthen the cultivation effect of moral education in foreign language teaching.

Communicative language teaching emphasizes communicative activities in foreign language classrooms, including oral, reading, and writing communication. Oral communication is universally familiar to teachers and students, such as pair work, group discussions, and teacher-student question-and-answer sessions. Reading communication can be carried out on two levels: one is the dialogue between the reader and the author, and the other is the exchange between teachers and students about reading experiences. Traditional foreign language classrooms often focus on the practicality of reading comprehension when dealing with reading materials, which makes it difficult to fully exert the educational function of morality-infused courses. When reading texts, foreign language teachers can guide students to attempt to communicate with the author while reading in-depth, such as understanding the author's writing intention or presenting and recording their own different opinions. When explaining reading materials, teachers can share their own thoughts and questions when reading the text and communicate with students to stimulate students' reading experiences and cultivate their critical thinking abilities. In the process of teacher-student interaction, teachers ought to seize every opportunity to serve as mentors in shaping students' characters, acquiring knowledge, fostering innovative thinking, and fostering a sense of dedication to the country. As for writing communication, besides traditional composition exercises, the advantages of blended teaching can be leveraged to introduce moral topics related to the curriculum in the discussion area of online teaching platforms, encouraging students to express their true thoughts and extend classroom discussions beyond the classroom, combining offline and online teaching. Through the comprehensive use of oral, reading, and writing communication, two-way interaction between students and between teachers and students is achieved. An edited foreign language curriculum can be seamlessly integrated into teaching practice, exerting its subtle educational effect(Gu & Lin, 2016).

Based on communicative language teaching, foreign language morality-infused classrooms should flexibly employ various teaching methods, such as task-based learning, audio-visual teaching, and classroom presentation, to enrich communicative language teaching and make the classroom atmosphere more lively and interesting, thereby enhancing students' enthusiasm for participating in classroom activities. Task-based learning encourages students to complete set tasks through group cooperation, thereby cultivating their team collaboration abilities. Audio-visual teaching can stimulate students' learning interest and help them quickly immerse in the classroom topic. The listening, speaking, and reading abilities of foreign language majors should be integrated into various professional courses. Classroom presentation methods include teacher presentations and student presentations, with both individual presentations and teamwork. This method revolutionizes the traditional one-way teaching model employed by teachers and enhances classroom interactivity. In presentation activities, both teachers and students have the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery and understanding of knowledge, as well as prompting reflections on ideological and political content, facilitating a profound exchange that enhances mental and intellectual growth.

Taking Comprehensive English (Book I) as an example, the author designed fieldwork tasks for relevant groups based on the themes of each unit. The first unit focuses on campus life. For first-year students, the assigned task

is to gain an in-depth understanding of the campus environment and curriculum of the English major at Zhaoqing University. Following the guidance of the text content, the group took pictures of campus scenery, dining halls, and libraries and explored the specific requirements for studying the English major through interviews with upperclassmen. Students showcased their learning outcomes via PPTs and a short video in class, earning a positive response. Other students highly evaluated this group's performance, finding it both interesting and practical. While learning Comprehensive English course, students appreciated campus beauty and naturally grew fond of the environment. For upperclassmen, they recognized the significance of effective English learning methods and thereby boosted their confidence in mastering the language. These teaching methods seamlessly integrate learning objectives related to English knowledge acquisition, skill development, and emotional attitudes, yielding notable outcomes in terms of moral education.

3.3 Diverse Evaluation Methods

The Comprehensive English course utilizes a combination of evaluation methods, including self-assessment by students, peer assessment, and teacher evaluation, aiming to enhance the objectivity and fairness of the evaluation process. During classroom presentations, a combination of peer assessment and teacher evaluation is primarily adopted. After each group completes its classroom report, other students provide feedback through anonymous questionnaires, thereby avoiding any unnecessary psychological burden.ens on the students. Subsequently, the teacher provides direct evaluation in class and suggests improvements. The course encourages students to refine assignments based on feedback, offers bonus points for submitting two, and emphasizes continuous progress, aligning with the core principles of outcome-based education, namely student-centeredness, outcome orientation, and improvement. At the end of the semester, more than half of the groups submitted two assignments, one completed during the classroom presentation and the other revised based on feedback.

Furthermore, appropriate evaluation methods are selected according to different stages of teaching, such as standardized testing, classroom observations, assignment evaluations, and questionnaires. The Comprehensive English course flexibly applies these various evaluation methods in teaching practice. Most of the evaluation processes are recorded through the online learning platform, while classroom observations rely on teachers' notes.

3.4 Feedback and Application of Evaluation Results

The evaluation system for the teaching effectiveness of morality-infused foreign language courses should be constructed multidimensionally. At the teaching level, the questionnaire survey method can be an effective means. By distributing questionnaires on morality-infused foreign language courses to students, covering dimensions such as teachers' political awareness, ideological quality, curriculum planning for ideology-infused courses, and teaching and education abilities, combined with subjective evaluations and quantitative scoring, it helps teachers deeply analyze and summarize lessons learned, thereby optimizing the next stage of curriculum planning for morality-infused courses. At the student level, evaluation indicators such as ideology, moral cultivation, and professional qualities should be incorporated into course evaluations to guide students to attach importance to moral education in foreign language classrooms.

The Comprehensive English course is scheduled for six hours per week, ensuring substantial interaction time between teachers and students. Teachers have diverse methods for providing feedback to students. Firstly, there is immediate face-to-face feedback, such as during class activities and student presentations. After the presentations, audiences and teachers provide feedback immediately, lasting for 3 to 5 minutes. Secondly, online feedback after class is also a significant means, through discussion forums, quizzes, and other features on the online learning platform. Students can see likes or evaluations from peers or teachers on the platform, which can be instant or slightly delayed to allow students sufficient time for reflection and assimilation. According to student feedback at the end of the semester, feedback from teachers in this course is generally timely, and students can adjust and improve their learning methods based on feedback from teachers or peers.

The feedback results indicate that students primarily utilize this information to enhance their learning outcomes. For teachers, feedback provides crucial data support for teaching reform and innovation. Combining students' learning outcomes, teachers delve into whether the integration of professional courses with moral education is smooth, whether the educational goals are achieved, whether the teaching methods adopted are appropriate, and whether the existing evaluation system is scientific and effective.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper delves into the evaluation challenges faced by moral education through courses as a crucial path of education in higher education and elaborates on the limitations of traditional teaching evaluation in measuring students' comprehensive qualities and educational outcomes. In response to these challenges and shortcomings,

the paper proposes a comprehensive evaluation system for educational outcomes, which not only includes clear evaluation objectives but also involves selecting appropriate evaluation dimensions, designing scientific and reasonable evaluation gauges, and elaborating on how to implement evaluations and effectively provide feedback on evaluation results. Through practical application cases of the moral education system in foreign language courses at Zhaoqing University, this paper specifically demonstrates how the evaluation system effectively integrates course content with moral education, utilizes various teaching methods and evaluation approaches, and thereby significantly enhances students' comprehensive qualities and educational outcomes. This research not only contributes to the theory of teaching evaluation and enriches related theories but also provides important references and insights for universities to advance teaching reform and innovation.

REFERENCES

1. *Meng, Z., & Li, L. (2022). Several issues and improvement paths in the practice of ideological and political education in courses.* China University Teaching*, (3), 51–57.*
2. *Lu, D. (2021). The design and implementation of ideological and political education evaluation in courses.* Ideological and Theoretical Education*, (3), 25–31.*
3. *Xie, X. (2020). The practice and reflection of ideological and political education in courses in foreign language teaching in colleges and universities.* Journal of Shaoxing University*, (7), 91–94.*
4. *Gu, Z., & Lin, L. (2016). A survey on the teaching effectiveness of foreign teachers in spoken English courses: A case study of a university in Beijing.* Educational Modernization (Electronic Version)*. N.p.*