

# A Practice Study of Ideological and Political Theories Teaching in the Course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide* from the Perspective of “Telling China’s Stories”

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## ABSTRACT

Classroom is the main venue and students are the vigorous force of “telling China’s stories”. Ideological-political education not only strengthens all-round development of students but also improves the quality of talent training program for Thai language so as to train students as builders and successors for socialist cause with Chinese characteristics with both political integrity and professional competence. Given the new requirements of ideological and political theories teaching in universities in the new era, this paper first analyzes the current situation of ideological and political theories teaching in Thai language courses and puts forward the path of reform from the perspective of “telling China’s stories” by taking the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide* as an example. The author aims to build a strong learning ambience of “three-wide” education in class to improve the teaching efficiency and quality, which will contribute to building a Thai language program with characteristics and consequently broaden the employment scope of Thai language students.

**Keywords:** *Telling China’s Stories; Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide; Ideological and Political Theories Teaching in All Courses*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Taking “telling China’s stories” as the innovative development direction of teaching reform of ideological and political theory courses in the new era is not only the requirement of the times, but also has a great immediate relevance in China’s universities. *The Opinions on Deepening the Reform and Innovation of Ideological and Political Theory Courses in Schools in the New Era* issued by General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council General Office in 2019 presents that Chinese excellent traditional culture, revolutionary culture and heroic figures are the best materials for “telling China’s stories”<sup>[1]</sup>. University students are the vigorous force of telling China’s stories. In consideration of the training plan of foreign language talents in Guilin University, the author believes that in the reform of Thai language teaching it is urgent to enhance the publicity and ideological work, strengthen students’ ideals and beliefs, and train students to be the new people of the times who have the courage to take up the great responsibility of China. The talents of foreign languages must have a firm political stand, be familiar with the Party and national

policies, have an in-depth understanding of national conditions, be able to acquire Chinese wisdom from 5,000 years of Chinese culture and China’s stories, so as to well convey China’s voice. Teachers teaching Thai language in China’s universities also need to think comprehensively about combining ideological-political education with the language teaching in current situation. They need to establish an ideological and political theories teaching system that meets the requirements of the new era, making the ideological-political education relevant, up-to-date and popular among students.

## 2. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL THEORIES TEACHING IN THE COURSE *SERVICE STANDARDS OF THAI TOUR GUIDE*

By combing through the existing teaching resources and references on the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide*, the author finds that there is still a lack of studies on how to integrate China’s stories, especially stories of CPC history, into Thai language teaching,

namely, on how to well blend China's stories into the teaching designs and teaching cases. Although storytellers are plentiful, few combine both ideological and political elements with the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide*.

### **2.1. Lack of initiative**

The ideological and political theories cannot be well blended with the teaching of the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide*. This is because previously language teachers regard ideological and political education only as part of the teaching content in universities' public courses. As a result, teachers and students in Thai department lack motivation of using Thai language to tell China's stories which spread excellent Chinese traditional culture and Chinese wisdom.

### **2.2. Not paying enough attention to ideological and political education**

Teachers of the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide* do not put ideological and political education on a vital position. Since the teaching content of the course is taken from the Thai translation of tourist materials in domestic scenic spots, teachers mainly consider explaining Thai language knowledge to students as the priority in class to ensure students' acquisition of authentic Thai language, which cause students to be more familiar with Thai language and cultural customs rather than the Chinese ones, making it difficult to Chinese cultural traditions and stories of CPC history into Thai. As young generation in China today, college students' thoughts are still in the process of changing and forming. If the teachers of the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide* do not take the initiative to tell China's story and teach Chinese culture, students will be easily influenced by Thai culture and thoughts.

## **3. THE PRACTICAL PATH OF INTEGRATING IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL THEORIES INTO THE COURSE SERVICE STANDARDS OF THAI TOUR GUIDE**

Taking the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide* as an example, the author of this study tries to integrate the ideological and political theories into teaching professional knowledge of Thai guide service. The teaching objectives are clear, mainly covering the topics such as the vocabulary on Thai tour guide, Thai oral expression, receiving and seeing off guests, introduction of scenic spots, manners of tour guide, and norms of tour guiding industry, etc. In the teaching practice, the author blends China's stories, especially the story of the Red Army fighting along the Xiangjiang River in South China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region during the Long March in the 1930s, into the

ideological-political teaching reform of the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide*.

### **3.1. Giving Top Priority to Raising Teachers' Ideological and Political Awareness in Teaching**

First, it is necessary to raise teachers' ideological and political awareness to integrate ideological and political theories into their teaching practice of Thai language through telling China's stories. General Secretary Xi Jinping once said in a lecture with teachers and students of Beijing Normal University that college and university lecturers should strive to be the teachers with faith, virtue, knowledge and kindness<sup>[2]</sup>. Teachers need self-education and self-improvement in teaching and learning. Besides, teachers should also better their political ideology and literacy as well as professional ethics, so as to not just talk to talk but walk the walk and be the role model for students.

College and university teachers should take the initiative to learn and master Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, build up their confidence in Chinese culture and uphold the core values of socialism with Chinese characteristics, in order to lay the theoretical foundation for the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide*. In addition, it is necessary to participate in teaching seminars and open classes of ideological and political theories teaching in different courses, share experiences with other excellent teachers, learn the teaching approaches, and improve teaching ability, so as to integrate ideological and political theories comprehensively into teaching students' Thai language knowledge and skills, making and ideological-political education more relevant with the times. In July 2018, the author attended a training class of "Fostering Critical Thinking in Foreign Language Teaching" and received the certificate, jointly organized by National Research Centre for Foreign Language Education of Beijing Foreign Studies University and Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. In that class, the author systematically studied the principles, strategies, evaluation methods and action research of fostering critical thinking in teaching foreign language. In July 2020, the author attended the online training course for teachers of non-common languages in Guangxi universities and also received the certificate.

### **3.2. Excavating Ideological and Political Elements in the Teaching Resources**

Introduction is an important part of practice for tour guiding. Storytelling is a required skill. Telling stories, especially telling China's stories, enables teachers to achieve the goal of integrating ideological and political theories into the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide* by excavating the ideological and political elements in teaching resources. Textbooks are the

foundation of teaching. Hence, in the teaching process, teachers should firstly look for the ideological and political elements in the textbooks and make full use of them in class. Priority should be placed on telling China's stories so as to actively guide students to understand and uphold the core socialist values and the Four Matters of Confidence. Nowadays, college students started learning English at a very young age, and they not only have a certain understanding of Western countries' economy and society, but also are influenced by their cultures and politics to a large extent. For this reason, Thai language teachers in colleges and universities need to tell China's stories to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of Chinese culture, and foster their patriotic passion in class. The tour guiding textbooks usually contain three parts. The first part is a practical instruction of tour guide speech of local scenic spots in Thai, which covers many aspects in Chinese culture, history, geography, etc. And teachers can take examples of China's Four Great Inventions, the ancient Silk Road, the Belt and Road Initiative, etc. for ideological-political education. For instance, teachers may boost students' confidence in Chinese culture and national pride while introducing the tour guide speech of China's great rivers and mountains as well as beautiful scenic spots. Good tour guide speeches may leave foreign tourists with a lasting impression of the natural beauty of China. In the same way, teachers can flexibly adjust the tour guide speeches to improve the teaching effect. For example, adding traditional Chinese culture, such as traditional festivals, etiquette and customs into the teaching contents will help to spread China's excellent traditional culture and reinforce students' cultural identity and thus increase their cultural confidence. In addition, teachers may also add introductions of scenic spots with historic interests of CPC in the tour guide speeches by telling the story of the Red Army fighting along the Xiangjiang River in South China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region during the Long March in the 1930s for instance, to cultivate students' courage, dedication and patriotism, to pass the "Red Culture" heritage to the younger generation, and to guide students to practice the core values of socialism in their daily life. Through this way can teachers build up college students' confidence in the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics. In fact, according to the author's previous tour guiding experience, many foreign tourists are very interested in the deeds of the former Chinese leaders like Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, etc. It is necessary for the tour guide to give them a proper explanation along the way. The second part of the tour guiding textbooks is the professional ethics of tourism practitioners, which aims to train students to be disciplined and in awe of laws and regulations so as to build up their confidence in China's policies and learn to be law-abiding citizens. Competent tour guides need to be knowledgeable with moral integrity and rich in experience with practicing certificates. During the trip, competent tour guides need to be decisive to handle

various emergencies and properly interact with the members in the group tours, other tour guides in the tourist agencies and the officials in the tourist departments in different time and situations so as to minimize the complaints to the smallest extent<sup>[3]</sup>. In learning tour guide service standards, students will understand what to do and how to do to uphold the laws and core values of socialism as well as to be the people of moral integrity. The third part of the tour guiding textbooks is about the major activities during the trip, including dining, accommodating, transporting, sightseeing, shopping and entertaining. When lecturing this part, the teachers can also find out many ideological-political elements worth sharing, such as talking about Eight Cuisines and Ten Famous Types of Tea in China when it comes to the unit of Chinese Food Culture, getting to know the Four Well-known kinds of Embroidery when mentioning the Chinese silk, discussing Ten Distinguished Doctors when introducing the Traditional Chinese Medicine. These time-honored stories and facts will not only ignite tourists' interests in Chinese culture, but also cultivate a strong sense of national pride of the tour guides themselves. Besides, it is proved to be effective in practice that spreading excellent Chinese culture while promoting Chinese products during tour guiding can meet the tourists' needs and boost the economy all at once.

### ***3.3. Improving the Teaching Methods of Ideological and Political Theories in All Courses***

To tell the China's story and realize the ideological and political theories teaching in the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide*, teachers need to actively improve the teaching methods of this course. Teaching should not be mechanical, but imperceptible, just like the way the salt dissolves into foods. Therefore, the students would absorb the knowledge step by step. By using different teaching methods according to different teaching tasks and learning contents, the mode is student-led and teacher-directed. Teachers should apply the method of discussion, visual demonstration, on-site teaching, reading guidance and other activities in the class. The class will facilitate good teacher-student interaction and students should be lead to analyze on specific cases by utilizing the theory in the textbooks. Teachers may also convert abstract content to specific cases for students, for example, comparing a video of an excellent tour guide who is dedicated and helpful with another video of a tour guide who cheats on tourists. In this way, students would distinguish good from bad acts. And teachers can also take the opportunity to comment on how to lead a tour and to be an excellent model tour guide. Utilizing reading guidance in and out of class can build an innovation model of ideological and political theories teaching, which will give full play to its teaching effect in the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide*.

The course consists of online previews and offline lectures. Before arranging students' online previewing assignments, teachers should check and study the content, looking for excellent cases of Chinese culture and Chinese stories in line with the core socialist values<sup>[4]</sup>. Before each class, students are given a few minutes to take turns to talk about recent important news on the Internet and good deeds in the school in Thai. Through each teaching practice, teaching measures and methods are constantly enriched and students are influenced by teacher's ethics imperceptibly, which allow students to experience the fun of ideological and political theories courses in a relaxed and pleasant class interaction, so as to awaken students' inner kindness, national pride and cultural confidence.

### ***3.4. Reflecting Ideological and Political Elements in Teaching Evaluation***

Telling China's stories and realizing the ideological and political theories teaching in the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide* requires the establishment of teaching evaluation mechanisms and standards that reflect the ideological and political elements. Adhere to Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, teachers and students should practice the "Four Consciousnesses", establish the "Four Confidences", and carry forward the core socialist values. The teaching assessments for this course not only include the students' expressive ability in Thai and tour guide service skills, but also take into account various ideological and political elements such as the correct values, outlook on life, professional quality of tour guides, excellent morality, and ability to distinguish right from wrong. The ideological and political elements are embodied in the "Five-in-One" practical teaching system of "classroom teaching, virtual tour guiding, on-site practicing, innovation ability training, and political awareness enhancing", so as to make ideological and political theory education more effective, pragmatic, updated and closer to life, thereby cultivating the youngsters with lofty ideals, integrity, knowledge and a strong sense of discipline in the new era and producing patriotic talents with cross-cultural communication skills and international horizon for the companies and the society.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Tour guide is served as a non-governmental ambassador and tourism has played an important role in communication. Telling China's stories in the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide* can convey China's voice to the world. In order to strengthen ideological and political education of college students and blend the ideological and political elements into the courses, the effective ways include valuing professional ethics training in tourism, introducing excellent Chinese culture and realizing the aesthetic values of tourism. To integrate ideological and political theories into the course *Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide*, the teachers should consciously supplement moral education into the daily lecturing by introducing the basic reception flow, knowledge and skills of tour guides, and service specifications. To build a learning ambience of "three-wide" education<sup>[5]</sup>, teachers will focus on improving students' practical abilities and ideological quality in Thai tour guiding. In this way, can more qualified Thai professionals be trained for the tourism industry and China.

**Practical Research Project:** This paper is the research result of "Practical Study on the Integration of Teaching the Course Service Standards of Thai Tour Guide and 'Ideological-Political Education in Curriculum' in Universities", a special teaching and reform project of Guilin University in 2021.

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