



# Research on the Thematic Teaching of the Outline of Modern and Contemporary Chinese History Based on the BOPPPS Teaching Method

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**Abstract.** The BOPPPS teaching method originated in Canada. It is a complete, effective and closed set of teaching theories and methods, which has been adopted and promoted by many countries in the world. In China, the ideological and political theory course “Outline of Modern Chinese History” (hereinafter called the OMCH) is a compulsory course for college students, and this teaching method can also be used. However, the current OMCH course is widely used in a teaching mode that is based on the timeline and is loyal to the textbook. This mode is not only difficult to embed the BOPPPS teaching method, but also makes it difficult for students to master the core content. The thematic teaching can subvert the above teaching mode, and combine with the BOPPPS teaching method to present an excellent teaching system, so as to obtain a good teaching effect. This paper analyzes how to combine BOPPPS with thematic teaching to improve the affinity and pertinence of the curriculum, and to better play the educational function of ideological and political courses.

**Keywords:** BOPPPS · Thematic teaching · Ideological and Political theory course

## 1 The Conformity of Thematic Teaching and BOPPPS Teaching Method

In 2019, the Teaching Steering Committee of Ideological and Political Theory Courses in Higher Education Institutions of the Ministry of Education of China released the “Thematic Teaching Guide for “Outline of Modern and Contemporary Chinese History” on the basis of the 2018 edition of the textbook.” Thematic Teaching requires breaking the shackles of the original textbook chapters, and highly condensing the contents of the textbook according to different historical clues or themes to determine the number and content of teaching themes, and each themes can reflect a clear teaching goal and profound thinking. There is a close logical relationship and a clear historical context between the various themes, teachers design teaching and organize teaching activities around themes, so as to better support the course objectives. Its theoretical source is

Babansky's optimal teaching theory. All the modules of the BOPPPS teaching method serve the teaching objectives, and the content is rich but not scattered. Thematic teaching is also the teaching design and organization activities around a theme or teaching objectives. Therefore, BOPPPS teaching method and thematic teaching have a high degree of fit.

### **1.1 Both Seek to Transform the Textbook System into a Teaching System**

The textbook have a large time span, from the first Opium War in 1840 to 2022, a total of 182 years of history, including some ancient Chinese history. The content includes politics, culture, military, diplomacy, revolution and many other aspects. If we still teach according to the time line, although we are loyal to the textbook, it will make the OMCH course similar to the history of high school, lack of depth and height, and also cause the absence of the educational function of ideological and political courses, and cannot achieve the course objectives. Thematic teaching comes from the textbook and serves the teaching. It can highly condense the theme from the complicated textbook and achieve the core teaching objectives. The BOPPPS teaching method itself is a complete teaching system. Covering six modules including introduction, teaching activities are carried out around teaching objectives. The premise of the combination of the two must be the common pursuit of a teaching system that serves the teaching objective. If the BOPPPS teaching method is still applied in teaching of textbook system, it will inevitably lead to the problem of unclear theme and chaotic structure.

### **1.2 Both Pursue Teaching Activities Around Teaching Objective**

There is a core teaching objective in each thematic teaching. First of all, in the selection of teaching content and cases, we must follow the principle of taking the teaching objective as the core and the teaching content as the support, and select historical materials that can fully achieve the teaching objectives. If there are too many historical materials or low relevance to this theme, it cannot support the teaching objective. For example, in the theme "Why did we choose Marxism?", if you discuss Western socialist schools too much and ignore the learning process and practical exploration of Chinese intellectuals, it is impossible for students to deeply understand the thinking process of "choice". The teaching objectives also difficult to achieve. Similarly, in the BOPPPS teaching method, O (objective) is also the core of the entire teaching design, and the other five modules play a supporting role in content and teaching activity design.

### **1.3 Both Pursue the Logic of the Teaching System**

Ideological and Political courses are not "storytelling", but "reasoning". The core of Ideological and Political courses lies in theory, or the rational expression of cognition, and conforms to laws and logic. The story is well told, but the theory is not penetrating enough. The general mode of thematic teaching is as follows: ask questions - analyze problems - solve problems. It focuses on a teaching objectives, and the in-depth discussion of the theoretical logic is in line with the teaching requirements of Ideological

and Political courses. In terms of structure, each part of the thematic teaching should have an internal logical relationship, and try to achieve a closed loop in terms of logical thinking, clarify the internal hierarchical relationship between each part and each knowledge point, and skillfully design the transition form of each part, that is, each part Each teaching link must be interlinked to form a solid theoretical chain that cannot be broken, so that students can understand and master the scientific principles of Marxism. The general model of BOPPPS is: introduction of lesson-proposing objective-analyzing and solving problems around the objective-verifying the achievement of teaching goals-summarizing and reviewing. Similar to thematic teaching, it also pays great attention to the internal logical relationship of each link of teaching. It is not a loose and simple patchwork that is separated from the theme, but the relationship between each part is progressive. Through gradual deconstruction and verification, the teaching objectives is achieved.

## **2 Application of BOPPPS in the Theme “Two Gaps Before and After the First Opium War”**

The teaching content of this thematic teaching is the first lecture: “How to propose the historical task of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”. This is the cornerstone of this course. In this thematic teaching, taking China from prosperity to decline as the main line, it introduces the strong and glorious history of China’s feudal society before the Opium War, and also introduces that the West has entered the era of capitalism. As a result, the balance between the East and the West began to tilt, the gap gradually widened. Gradually, the capitalist-imperialist invasion of China, the decline of modern China, and the formation of a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society led to the source of “national rejuvenation”. In this lesson, in addition to the introduction according to the main line of the theme, according to the teaching content and students’ knowledge base, it is necessary to compare and analyze the huge gap between China and Western capitalist countries in technology, system, culture, etc. in the 17th to 19th centuries, so that students can more intuitively feel this gap, so as to have an in-depth understanding of the main contradictions and historical tasks of modern China, thus laying a good foundation for the learn of this course. According to the above theme, the teaching design based on BOPPPS is as follows:

### **2.1 Bridge-In**

The purpose of Bridge-in is to capture the interest of students, or to make students have questions related to this teaching. In this theme, two passages from Joseph Needham’s “History of Science and Technology in China” are used as the introduction for this class: 1. “China maintained a level of scientific knowledge that was unmatched by the West from the 3rd century to the 13th century AD.” 2. “Although ancient China has made many important contributions to the development of human science and technology, why did the scientific and industrial revolution not take place in modern China?” The purpose is to enable students to have the same questions as Needham and prompt students to think about the Joseph Needham problem, Introduce the main content of this lesson.

## 2.2 Objective

American educational psychologist Bloom, in his “taxonomy of educational objectives”, divides educational objective into three aspects: cognitive domain, psychomotor domain and affective domain, and each objective has multiple levels. In ideological and political courses, clear and achievable teaching goals are the core of teaching design. The cognitive domain set up in this theme teaching is to be able to describe the performance of China and the West in two periods, and to discuss the historical background proposed by the “great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”. Psychomotor domain: in the study of comparative analysis of the gap between the East and the West, be able to learn and use the method of comparative analysis. The affective domain is: on the basis of studying China’s glorious ancient history and modern decline, understand the source of “national rejuvenation”, so as to deeply understand “the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”, strengthen one’s ideals and beliefs, and deeply understand one’s responsibilities and missions. These three domains embody “taxonomy of educational objectives” of Bloom and are gradually deepened.

## 2.3 Pre-assessment

The pre-assessment can be used as a part of students’ knowledge reserve analysis. Through the pre-assessment, teachers can effectively grasp students’ knowledge reserves related to the teaching content before this teaching, so as to flexibly adjust the focus and progress of the teaching content. In this thematic teaching, the pre-assessment questions are: what do you know about the achievements of ancient Chinese science and technology and culture? What are the scientific, technological and cultural achievements of the modern West?

## 2.4 Participatory Learning

Participatory learning is consistent with the educational concept of “student-centered”. In teaching activities, the role of students should be participants rather than indoctrinated and thoughtless individuals. Therefore, in the process of teaching, students should be given enough time to study and think independently and the right to explain their views. Especially in Ideological and Political courses, participation not only focuses on the form of group discussion and answering questions, but also should pay attention to students’ thinking process and psychological experience in participation. Otherwise, the purpose of training students’ ability to analyze and solve problems cannot be achieved, and thus the Ideological and Political courses cannot truly become a high-quality course to improve students’ ideological and theoretical level.

In this theme, participatory learning is: 1. Reading materials and sharing ideas. When explaining the major turning point in the historical development of the East and the West, he released the material in the Yuketang: the factual record of Magalni’s visit to China, and asked the question: how will Magalny evaluate China? Do you think China can continue its ancient glory in modern times? After reading the materials, students can share their views on the projection screen through the Yuketang. Teachers can analyze



Fig. 1. Information reading and answering



Fig. 2. Questions and answers. A (bullet screen)

and guide according to these views. In this link, students participate in teaching through reading, thinking and writing (Fig. 1).

2. The interaction of the Yuketang bullet screens. After teaching the achievements of ancient China and the achievements of the modern West, students are required to use adjectives to summarize ancient China and the modern West respectively. And send it to the projection screen through the bullet screen function of Yuketang. Students can intuitively feel that these two times are out of reach or called the gap through the adjectives in the two bullet screens they made. Extend the historical background of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is derived from this (Figs. 2, 3, and 4).

### 2.5 Post-assessment

Post-assessment is an important way to know whether the teaching objectives have been achieved at the end of this teaching. The evaluation method can be designed according to the teaching content. The post-assessment design of this theme is divided into two open questions: 1. Please discuss the historical background of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Corresponding to the second point of the teaching objectives, check the students' mastery of the content of this class. 2. In the historical process of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, what kind of mission and responsibility

**What adjectives do you want to use to describe modern China?  
Please send your answer on the screen through the bullet screen of Yuketang.**

rigid      How could this happen      Refresh my knowledge  
Humiliating modern times      How could we do?  
Lagging behind can only be beaten      Where to go?  
Save China!      Divorced from the world development trend

**Fig. 3.** Questions and answers. B (bullet screen)

Awesome! My country      YYDS!      historical weight  
A powerful ancient oriental country      National identity  
Cultural influence is too strong      Rich, the technology tree is full  
Brilliant, difficult to surpass

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rigid      How could this happen      Refresh my knowledge  
Humiliating modern times      How could we do?  
Lagging behind can only be beaten      Where to go?  
Save China!      Divorced from the world development trend

**Fig. 4.** Comparison of the two answers

should young students have? Corresponding to the third point of the teaching objectives, examine students' understanding of national rejuvenation and their understanding of their future life plans or ideals and beliefs. Students can submit their answers by email, Yuketang and other ways.

## 2.6 Summary

The summary is the end of this lesson and the beginning of the next lesson. The summary of this theme is: the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is the theme of this course. "Rejuvenation" comes from the two "out of reach" mentioned in the theme (review of the content of this theme). Then, how did the Chinese people begin to explore and save the country? (content of the next theme).

## 3 The Significance of the Integration of BOPPPS and Theme Teaching of Ideological and Political Courses

BOPPPS has the same teaching pursuit with the thematic teaching of Ideological and Political courses. The integration of the two is one of the development directions of the current ideological and political teaching reform. It is of positive significance not only

to students, teachers, but also to the curriculum construction of Ideological and political courses.

### **3.1 Modularization of Teaching Design and Improvement of Design Quality**

In the context of “creating high-quality courses and eliminating low-quality courses”, we should carefully analyze the main problems existing in Ideological and Political courses, adjust teaching methods in time and update ideological and political education ideas and means in combination with the actual situation. As a complete and student-centered teaching model, BOPPPS teaching method can be used as the basic template of Ideological and Political course teaching design. Its positive significance lies in: Reduce the difficulty of teaching design and improve the quality of teaching design. The general teaching design of Ideological and political courses is relatively loose, most of which are the listing of materials and the elaboration of theories. It is difficult to have a high level, which makes the teaching objectives appear stiff and lack logic when they are displayed in front of students. BOPPPS teaching method has been mature and perfect, and has been adopted by many countries and schools. If it can be designed according to BOPPPS teaching method, teachers only need to focus on the idea and theoretical level of the course, and then design the corresponding teaching content according to the requirements of the six modules. This will undoubtedly reduce the difficulty of teaching design of Ideological and Political courses, but the logic of teaching design is stronger and the design level is higher.

### **3.2 Improve Students' Participation in Class and Promote the Realization of Teaching Objectives**

BOPPPS teaching method is student-centered and emphasizes students' sense of participation in the teaching process. This participation can be behavior or thinking. In Ideological and Political courses, the participation of students' thinking is extremely important, which directly affects whether the teaching objectives can be achieved. The essence of Ideological and Political class is as follows: “be reasonable”. Students should have the right and opportunity to question, explain and express the teaching content, and pay attention to giving students the right to speak and improving students' thinking ability. For example, adding brainstorming, discussion and other classroom participation links in the Yuketang, teachers analyze, sort out and guide various views formed in students' thinking participation and collision, so that students can form rational expression and rational understanding that meet the requirements of this course, so as to achieve teaching objectives.

### **3.3 Monitor the Quality of Teaching and Promote the Continuous Improvement of Teaching Ability**

The evaluation subjects of the Ideological and Political courses are generally peers, supervisors and students, and the methods include attending lectures, questionnaire surveys, teaching evaluations and other forms, but teachers' self-evaluation and monitoring are

ignored. The teaching objectives of Ideological and Political courses are often abstract, and the degree of quantification is low, so it is difficult to define whether to achieve the teaching objectives. At the same time, in the context of “student-centered”, teachers are required to reflect on their whole teaching process and effectively improve their professional level. If the teaching goal cannot be achieved, then this class will be a failure. As mentioned above, BOPPPS teaching method realizes the closed loop from proposing teaching objectives to verifying teaching objectives in every teaching, and pursues to get real teaching effect feedback in time in the classroom. It also means that every teaching is also an evaluation and monitoring of teaching quality. Teachers should compare the gap between students’ learning effect and teaching objectives during and after teaching, so as to promote their own efforts to improve teaching ability.

## 4 Conclusion

As a mature and easy to master teaching mode, BOPPPS, combined with the thematic teaching of Ideological and Political courses, has important application value in terms of teaching design, enhancing students’ experience and improving the teaching quality of Ideological and political courses. This is of great practical significance to improve the teaching philosophy and methods of Ideological and Political courses, meet the educational function of Ideological and Political courses, and improve the quality of talent training.

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