

# The Application of Interactive Case-Based Teaching Method in the Implementation of “International Law”

Yayi YAN, Wei ZHANG<sup>1</sup> and Jiaming ZHONG

*Xiangnan University, Chenzhou City, Hunan Province, 423000, China*

**Abstract.** Moral education in colleges and universities goes through the teaching of all the courses, which integrates into all the links of teaching and practice. In daily teaching, moral education is a kind of implicit education influencing in a imperceptible way. The teaching content of “International Law” includes profound moral education, which can effectively transfer from “ideological and political courses” to “ideological and political theories teaching in all courses”. Therefore, interactive case-based teaching method is a good way to achieve ideological and political teaching in a “silent and soft” way. Through interactive case-based teaching, moral education can be penetrated into the lecturing of professional course knowledge and a series of activities, which can form the course teaching with the integration of “intellectual education” and “moral education”, to integrate the values shaping, knowledge imparting and ability cultivation. In this way, the fundamental task of building morality and cultivating people will be fully implemented.

**Key words.** International Law; course teaching; interactive case-based teaching

## 1. Current Implementation of Ideological and Political Teaching in “International Law”

### 1.1 Lack of Coordination

At present, the teaching of international law lacks of systematic summary about the idea of international governance, and it has not systematically or comprehensively integrated into ideological and political teaching. Meanwhile, it has not formed the coordination with ideological and political education. The ideological and political teaching of “International Law” is a systematic work, so it is necessary to insist on the combination of teaching contents and ideological and political theories in all courses. It has to be advanced in an orderly way by combining the instruction of knowledge and the integration of ideological and political elements. Only with comprehensive consideration, strengthened coordination, and supportive advancement, can the teaching contents of “International Law” and ideological and political teaching achieve favorable comprehensive effects.

---

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author, Wei Zhang, Xiangnan University, Chenzhou City, Hunan Province, 423000, China; Email: 84514002@qq.com

It is the research result of The Key Cultivation Base for "The 14th Five-Year Plan" of Educational and Scientific Research (Lifelong Education Research Base(Fundamental Theory Area)) in Hunan Province.

1.2 Insufficient Extraction of Ideological and Political Elements

The extraction of ideological and political elements is to classify, induce, and summarize the ideological and political elements in the knowledge, and then integrate the elements at different levels. These elements are divided into primary ideological and political elements and secondary ideological and political elements. For instance, in terms of the basic principles of international law in the course of “International Law”, the primary ideological and political elements refers to national awareness, while national sense of honor, and the consciousness of maintaining national dignity and maintaining Chinese culture refers to secondary ideological and political elements (See Table 1).

**Table 1** Two-Level Classification System of Ideological and Political Elements in the Course of “International Law”

No.	Knowledge points	Primary ideological and political elements	Secondary ideological and political elements
1	Basic principles of international law, source of international law, countries	National awareness	National sense of honor
			Consciousness of maintaining national dignity
			Consciousness of maintaining Chinese culture
2	Territorial law, law of the sea, international air law, outer space law	National sovereignty	Defending territorial integrity of our country, patriotism
			Heroism, national spirit
			The spirit of aviation, exploring spirit, craftsman’s spirit
3	International human rights law, international environmental law	Values	National spirit
			Public ethics, moral sentiment
			Consciousness of ecological civilization
			Peace loving
4	Law of treaties, diplomatic and consular relations law, law of war, responsibility in international law, international dispute settlement	National spirit	Never forget the national humiliation, and cherish peace.
			Carry forward the national spirit of constantly striving to become stronger
			Patriotism
5	Private in international law	Values	National spirit
			Moral sentiment
			National sentiment
6	Law of international organizations	Confidence in political system	One of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, reflecting the responsibility as a great power
			Chinese peacekeepers, heroism
			Peace loving

### *1.3 Poor Effect of Ideological and Political Teaching*

In traditional teaching mode of international law, the ideological and political teaching is usually conducted through lecturing, resulting in the disconnection between professional knowledge and moral education. In this way, students are not highly involved in this activity, and the ideological and political teaching effect is poor. Therefore, to enhance the teaching effect of ideological and political theories in the course of “International Law”, it is necessary to strengthen the integration, to achieve the ideological and political teaching in a “silent and soft” way through interactive case-based teaching method. Abundant ideological and political elements should be integrated into all the knowledge of “International Law” courses. First, the ideological and political contents in “International Law” should be flexible and diversified. Although the previous ideological and political teaching was conducted by lecturing, educators should master all kinds of teaching methods with the development of new media nowadays. The rich ideological and political elements should be integrated into the course through various cases, such as videos, pictures, and words, so that students will remain strong interest in learning, along with the unconscious inflection of ideological and political elements. Second, the ideological and political contents in “International Law” should present appropriate level of difficulty. Students’ knowledge level and comprehension ability should be focused, and common knowledge principles and values should be well combined. When teaching the “International Law”, the teaching content should be combined with the mainstream values, to promote and complement each other. Third, the ideological and political contents in “International Law” should comply with professional characteristics. “International Law” is the compulsory basic course of undergraduate students in the major of law, so the ideological and political theories in this course should be based on the professional teaching system and complete knowledge framework of law courses. Through fully integrating ideological and political contents into the value system of the major in law, it will develop the national identity, social responsibility, and moral cultivation of students in Law School, to cultivate the talents with international outlook in the new era for socialism.

## **2. Necessity of Interactive Case-based teaching Method in Ideological and Political Teaching of “International Law”**

The legal thought of international law in modern China originates from traditional Chinese culture and traditional ideas, brewing an ideological system that manifests Chinese characteristics, safeguards Chinese interests, and promotes the world progress. Taking equality and independence as the bottom line and starting point, multi-civilization as the principle of communication, justice and effectiveness as the way of act, and mutual benefit as the final goal, it vividly reflects and actively guides the new pattern of international community state. All kinds of the features of the international law have provided favorable foundation to ideological and political teaching, so there is natural alignment between the teaching of international law and ideological and political education.

In recent years, case-based teaching has aroused the concern of numerous scholars. Case-based teaching, an interactive teaching method that teachers bring cases relating to the teaching contents into the teaching process, leads students to analyze the cases

and draw conclusions. [1] Current international affairs and news, some key international hot events in particular, are good teaching materials for the teaching of international law. These affairs and news cover the areas like diplomacy, military affairs, territory, and anti-terrorism, while these areas are the basic contents of the international law. When teaching international law, introducing current affairs and news as the case materials can stimulate students' learning interest, and can penetrate ideological and political education into the learning process of students. [2] Case-based teaching can form an effective closed cycle of knowledge learning, from independent inquiry, collaborative analysis, to introspection and internalization, which can lead students to complete given teaching targets through analysis, exploration, thinking, and discussion. The Chinese academic circles generally agree on the importance of the case teaching method in the ideological and political teaching of college courses. The academic community generally believes that the case teaching method is a practical method of ideological and political education. Some scholars believe that the case teaching method conforms to the laws of education and teaching and the characteristics of contemporary youth. Some scholars believe that by implementing this teaching method, it can improve students' interest in course learning, change students' prejudice against ideological and political theory courses, and optimize classroom teaching effects, which is beneficial to ideological and political theory. The further construction and development of theoretical courses. Therefore, the knowledge and emotions can be internalized, students' patriotism can be developed, the confidence in system can be insisted, and the process of learning the knowledge of international law and ideological and political education can be achieved at the same time.

### **3. Practice of Case-Based Teaching in Ideological and Political Teaching in the Course of "International Law"**

#### *3.1 Principles of Selecting Cases*

In the case-based teaching model that targets at ideological and political education, it is a vital part to select appropriate cases. Through the practice and effects of case-based teaching, the following features should be emphasized when selecting cases.

- (1) Typical. Typical cases in course teaching are the cases about hot social issues that students are interested in, which can not only offset students' contradictory feelings about explicit ideological and political education, but also largely carry out theoretical teaching for students. On the other hand, it can effectively give correct guidance to university students about public opinions.
- (2) Targeted. It requires that the selected cases should comply with the teaching content of "International Law", and also well integrate the ideological and political teaching of the course. On one hand, the selection of cases is to serve related teaching contents, which can not get away from the topic.[3] On the other hand, it should not be difficult to comprehend the cases, and the selected cases should be set in line with students' interest, knowledge preparation, and psychological characteristics. During case-based teaching process of "International Law", and according to some objective conditions, like students' group characteristics (such as English level, major direction, and career

planning) and changes of current affairs, the content of cases should be determined appropriately, and the theme and duration of cases should be chosen, to meet the actual teaching needs. As a compulsory basic subject for undergraduate students in Law School, “International Law” should contain the cases complying with students’ major characteristics. That is to say, the selected cases should enlighten the legal work that students may engage in the future, so that students are possessed with related knowledge accumulation and correct value direction when they engage in legal work in the future. Students differ in age, gender, and ideological situation, so even if they have similar conditions in all the aspects, they may have different ideas during their discussion due to different thinking directions or different comprehension.[4]Therefore, by seeking balance, teachers should find out the cases that most students can accept and can be integrated into their teaching according to different characteristics of student groups.

- (3) Systematic. It requires that all the selected cases should make ideological and political teaching in the curriculum well-arranged and logical coherent. A single case in the whole case set should reflect a certain or some knowledge points in the “International Law”, while the comprehensive cases can reflect the overall content of “International Law”. [5]Not only all the parts of a single case possess systematic ideological and political teaching, but also all the teaching cases should have systematic ideological and political teaching, as well as among the cases. In specific, there should be ideological and political elements at different layers or different dimensions in a single case, to form appropriate sequence. There should be clear logical relationships between the elements at the same level, or between the primary and secondary ideological and political elements. What’s more, there should be different ideological and political elements at different dimensions between cases. The integration of all the cases should contain the ideological and political elements of different levels and different aspects to the largest degree, so that the case set should be well arranged. The cases with similar themes or with different themes can complement each other.
- (4) Timely. It requires that all the selected cases should reflect the features or properties of ideological and political teaching of the time, which should be the cases that can present the most advanced and best ideological and political teaching fruits. In order to fully step into students’ learning, work, [6]and life from classes, books, or cases, the ideological and political education of “International Law” must select the cases that can keep up with the times and summarize new cases through continuous planning and arrangement. Through analyzing different legislation in different countries caused by different cultures and economic systems, teachers can help students insist on their confidence in laws and culture. For example, when illustrating international treaties, through analyzing the in-depth reasons of joining, not joining, or remaining related treaties, teachers can develop students’ patriotism and patriotic spirit. By analyzing some hot issues like “the typical case of the Belt and Road Initiative”, [7] teachers can lead students to correctly and objectively analyze international hot issues, establish correct world outlook and international concept, and understand the new situation and new challenges that China is facing in international environment. In this way,

students’ sense of mission can be cultivated, leading students to combine professional learning and individual development with national development.

3.2 Case-Based Teaching Design

Case-based teaching is a teaching method based on cases(See Figure 1), whose essence is to raise a dilemma for education, without specific solutions. While teachers are designers and promoters in teaching, encouraging students to take an active part in discussion. Taking international hot issues and news events as teaching materials, and according to teaching goals, case-based teaching method combines teaching contents, lets students understand relative concepts or theoretical knowledge about international law, and cultivates students’ ability of analyzing or solving problems about international law through interactive activities like discussion, debate, and questions.[8]It mainly conducts teaching surrounding case discussion and analysis, with students as the center of teaching activities, while teachers the guide and judge. This teaching method that connects theory with practice can stimulate students’ enthusiasm in participation to the largest extent, so as to enhance teaching timeliness and effectiveness.



Figure 1 Case-based teaching method

4. Implementation of Case-Based Teaching

4.1 Case presentation

The core teaching material of case-based teaching is about the case, which is an experience process of presenting events, raising questions, and perceiving ideas through reading materials, so case presentation is the first step of successful ideological and political teaching, as well as a basic step to lay a foundation for teaching quality. Teachers should lead students to read materials, think about questions by linking current affairs, complete ideological understanding by combining ideological and political analysis, and provide ideas for group interaction. [9]Cases about international current affairs and news take international hot issues and news events as teaching materials, which focus on typical, targeted, systematic, and timely materials. With the combination of teaching contents and ideological and political elements, it can well match materials with and text contents, so that students can fully integrate into the context of teaching materials, truly feeling about impact and influences from events. [10]Then, students will carry out in-depth thinking through ideological and political elements. Case presentation can be divided into three steps. First, before the presentation, the teacher provides ideological and political theory that complies with teaching materials, and then introduces fascinating context or segment to arouse students’ strong attention and careful study; secondly, during the presentation, the teacher is required to focus on important context of the case, [11]so that students can

form a focus and can rapidly understand the development, as well as the ideological and political elements of the case, thus stimulating students' enthusiasm in thinking and sense of participation. At last, after the presentation, review on key issues and important context of cases, to consolidate the learning about case knowledge and ideological and political elements. Meanwhile, teachers should raise questions, and leave room and time for students to think.

#### *4.2 Group Interaction*

Case presentation leads students to make primary recognition about materials by combining ideological and political elements and to form perceptual knowledge. While group interaction is a key link from perceptual knowledge to deep theoretical discussion, which is also an important process to make a qualitative leap about problem recognition by combining ideological and political elements. Group interaction can also be divided into three steps. First, raise questions about case presentation, and lead students to form the consciousness of problems by combining ideological and political elements within the scope of teaching content. However, teachers should not be overly involved in the process of shaping and thinking about problems, to form a set of problems. Second, students are required to form their groups freely, and from a group of exploring cases. During the process of forming groups, teachers should pay attention to group homogeneity (student members with different performance, grades, or personality, etc.).[12]Group members can complement each other in terms of way of thinking, logical analysis, and interests. At last, each group selects one or two students to make presentations, which can not only help students enhance their thinking in group discussion, but also help students hear about other group members' new problems, new thinking, and new ideas about cases. Therefore, students can form a more comprehensive and diversified comprehension towards ideological and political elements in the cases.

#### *4.3 Knowledge and emotional internalization.*

The last step and the final stepping stone of case-based teaching is knowledge and emotional internalization. After initial recognition and thorough discussion about cases, students should apply the ideas and thinking into real life, to achieve the effect of "internalizing in our hearts, and externalizing in our action, as well as the "soft and silent" educational effect about ideological and political education in the course. In specific, during the process of knowledge and emotional internalization, first, we should look back on cases, and strive to explore new perspectives and new ideas about cases, to achieve the effect of "understanding the present by reviewing the past". Second, expand cases. During this process, students should focus on analyzing cases by applying President Xi Jinping's theories about international governance, to achieve the effect of "drawing inferences about other cases from one instance". At last, combine with other cases and reflect on the present. Teachers should help students integrate President Xi Jinping's international governance theories into the analysis about international hot issues in life. No matter the classroom cases or book discussion, or the news, videos, or text browsing on mobile phones after class, teachers should guide students to consciously apply the ideological and political knowledge they have learned. Therefore, students can shape correct perspectives and habits of analyzing problems, which can bring sense of fulfillment and sense of happiness to their life.

## 5. Reflection on the Case-Based Teaching of Ideological and Political Education in the Course of “International Law”

If the case-based teaching of ideological and political education in the course of “International Law” can be fully applied in practice, it will be good for students to actively and positively learn the international law, as well as to be influenced by the “soft and silent” ideological and political education in the course.[13] Then, teachers will train students to consciously and actively integrate correct national consciousness, values, and patriotism into the process of analyzing and solving problems from the perspective of international law. The case-based teaching of ideological and political education in the course of “International Law” effectively integrates ideological and political work of school into professional courses, which can effectively improve the ideological and political teaching quality, as well as students’ ideological and political accomplishment.

### Acknowledgements

Thanks for the supports funded by 2020 Demonstration Ideological and Political Class Project of Xiangnan University—Teaching Reform and Practice of “International Law” under the Background of “Ideological and Political Education in Law Courses”.

### References

- [1] Fan Ruxin, Zhang Chaoyang. Application Mode of Case-Based Teaching from the Perspective of Multi-modality in Ideological and Political Teaching Reform [J]. *Journal of Changchun Normal University*, 2021,40(03):176-181.
- [2] Liao Li. On the Application of Case-Based Teaching in Undergraduate Teaching of International Law [J]. *Legality Vision*, 2015(23):288-290.
- [3] Cheng Quan. Discussion on Curriculum Reform of International Law under “the Belt and the Road Initiative”—taking “The Law of International Organization” as an Example [J]. *Legal System and Society*, 2020(13):204-206.
- [4] Yang Wei. On the Application of International Current Affairs and News in the Teaching of International Law [J]. *Legality Vision* (published in the mid-month), 2014(12):323.
- [5] Zhong Yubo, Wu Zhe, Meng Jingying, An Taiji. Effective Application of Case-Based Teaching in College Ideological and Political Courses—taking “Carrying Forward the Chinese Spirit and Building a Spiritual Home Together” as a Teaching Example [J]. *Modern Vocational Education*, 2021(24):134-135.
- [6] Tang Hua, Jiang Miao, Wang Hao. Reflection on Introducing Case-Based Teaching to College Ideological and Political Curriculum [J]. *The Party Building and Ideological Education in Schools*, 2018(21):63-64.
- [7] Xin Jinjin. Viewshed Analysis of Case-Based Teaching in College Ideological and Political Curriculum [J]. *Yangtze River Series*, 2018(21):208-209.
- [8] Zhu Yu. Analysis for Case-Based Teaching of International Law for Law Undergraduates in Local Colleges and Universities [J]. *Education Modernization*, 2017, 4(44):154-157.
- [9] Li Chen, Qu Dawei, Meng Weijun. An Empirical Study on Application of Case-Based Teaching in Specialized Course “Ideological and Political Education” [J]. *Journal of Ningbo Institute of Education*, 2019(21):1-4.
- [10] Min Hui. Education Function of Ideological and Political Education, as well as Philosophy and Social Science in Colleges and Universities. [J]. *Ideological and Theoretical Education*, 2017(7):21-25.
- [11] Rao Geping. Ontology, Object and Scope: A Discussion on the Basic Issues of International Organizational Law [J]. *International Law Research*, 2016(1): 63.



- [12] Liu Bin. A tentative discussion on the reform of undergraduate teaching of international law in China [J]. International Law Review of Wuhan University, 2015(1):388-389.
- [13] He Zhipeng. The "Tao" and "Technology" of China's International Law Teaching Improvement [J]. Chinese University Teaching, 2017(4): 320.