



Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning of Political Theory Subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City

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ABSTRACT

Published Online: December 13, 2023

This article studies the current status of teaching and learning political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City. The author surveyed 11 lecturers and 500 students at the school to propose solutions to improve the quality of teaching and learning of these subjects.

KEYWORDS:

Lecturers, Students, political theory, teaching quality, learning quality

INTRODUCTION

Resolution No. 32-NQ/TW of the Politburo on continuing to innovate and improve the quality of training and fostering political theory affirmed: "Innovating teaching and learning methods practice in the direction of promoting the positivity, initiative, and creativity of learners, taking learners as the centre, with learners actively participating in the training process; helps students continue to self-study, supplement, expand and improve knowledge, practice thinking methods, and the ability to apply and solve practical situations; Build a team of quality lecturers, with in-depth knowledge and practical experience, with appropriate teaching methods and dedication to the profession" (1). Political theory is one of the basic subjects in the current university curriculum. Studying political theory will help students form a dialectical materialist worldview, a revolutionary view of life, scientific methodology, and political theory as a guide to cultivating qualities and ethics; Directing children to practical humane actions, instilling in them patriotism; Have a steadfast and steadfast spirit, not be confused or waver in the face of complex fluctuations in life and developments in the country and the world. With that importance, improving the quality of learning political theory subjects is critical.

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**Cite this Article: MA. Trinh Thi Thanh (2023). Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning of Political Theory Subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City. International Journal of Social Science and Education Research Studies, 3(12), 2387-2391*

Current status of teaching and learning political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City.

First, The current status of teaching political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City

University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City has five lecturers teaching subjects related to political theory. Lecturers in the political theory department all have master's and doctoral degrees.

Lecturers in general and lecturers in the department of Political Theory in particular are sent by the Board of Directors to study for master's and doctoral degrees domestically and abroad to learn and improve their knowledge for teaching work. The political theory lecturers have completed their teaching tasks and participated in political and ideological education in the Party's Resolution study sessions. Teachers also enthusiastically participate in union activities at the school.

During the teaching process, teachers applied active teaching methods. If the teaching method of our country's general education before was the lecture method, the teacher read, and the students took notes. Students passively absorb knowledge but are now taught how to self-study, absorb information systematically, and have analytical and synthetic thinking; develop each individual's thinking capacity; Promote students' initiative and autonomy in the learning process. Up to now, the read-copy problem has been somewhat overcome.

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In some lectures, lecturers used videos, films, and applied theory to practice... to make students interested in learning. Generally, the school's political theory lecturers have closely followed practice, combining a vivid approach with lecture content. 61% of questioned students (305/500 students) said that lecturers often combine arguments with facts in the teaching process. This has aroused learners' interest and made them see the practicality of the subject.

Besides, there are still many lecture hours, the lecturers are mostly heavy on professional knowledge, and many classes pass in boredom and heaviness because the lecturers almost only know empty theories, only using one the presentation method is very monotonous... leading to lectures lacking vitality, attractiveness, persuasion, not being lively, not creating inspiration during class and creating a mentality of inhibition, compulsion, and restraint, pressure on learners.

Stemming from this misconception, in reality, many students have approached the lessons and exams of political theory subjects with a "coping" mentality, focusing only on "rote learning", "memorizing", and studying to pass exams, but the nature of the problem is hardly understood or does not need to be understood; Almost no passion and interest, no knowledge of how to apply theory into practice. With such starting point concepts and psychology, the quality and effectiveness of teaching the subject are worthy of alarm.

In teaching general and political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City, teaching methods need to be regularly innovated and guided. Promoting learners' abilities and taking students as active subjects are necessary to encourage students to be dynamic, proactive, creative, and independent in learning.

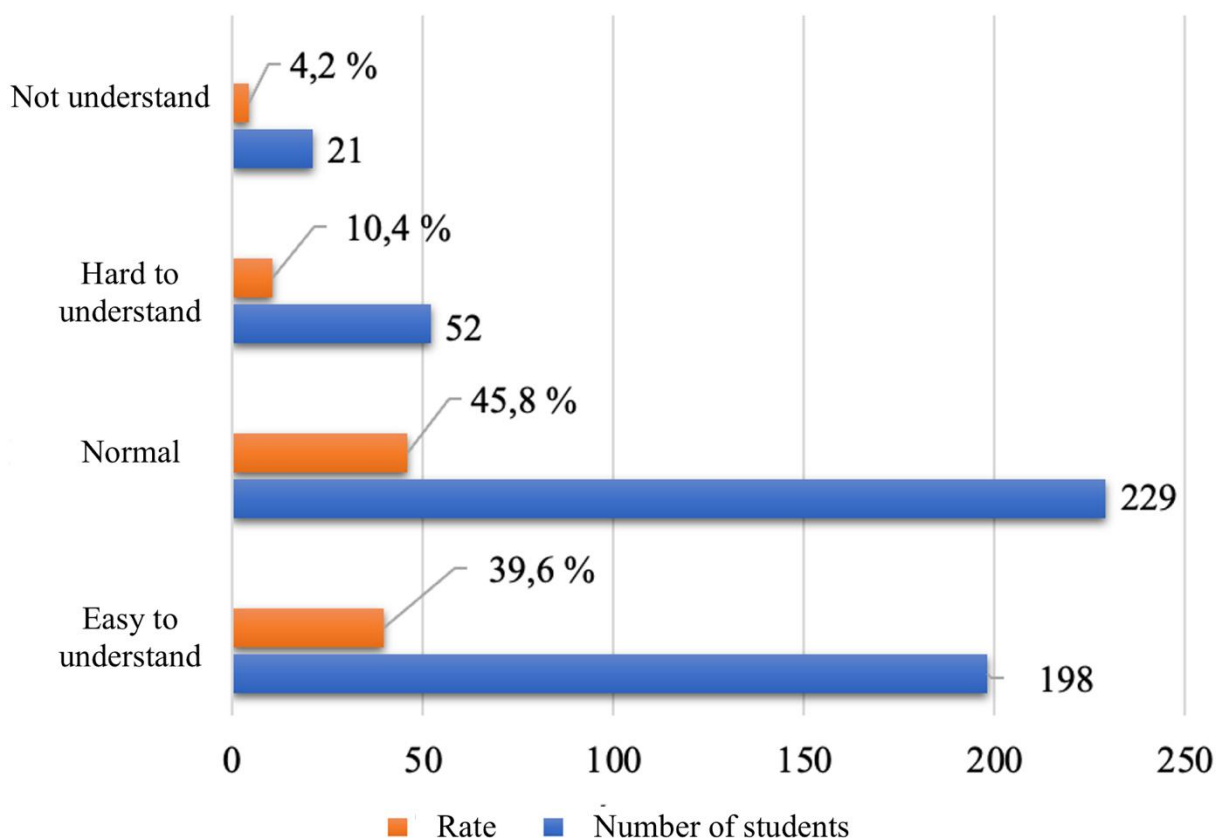


Chart 1.1. Student evaluation on teaching methods of political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City. (%)

At University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City, lecturers in the department have also actively innovated teaching methods to suit the content and program. The quality of that method innovation is assessed by students in chart 2.1, showing that 39.6% of the opinions think that the teaching methods of lecturers teaching political theory subjects are easy to understand; 45.8% rated it as usual, But there are still 10.4% of comments that the lecturers' methods are challenging to understand, especially

4.2% of the words think that the lecturers' practices are incomprehensible.

The above results show that the innovation of lecturers' teaching methods still has shortcomings and does not bring quality. Therefore, in society's current conditions and requirements, lecturers must actively explore and study to improve their teaching methods to suit students and help them understand the lesson, enhancing the quality of learning

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political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City.

Second, The learning status of students at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City. Teaching political theory subjects to first-year students who are just leaving high school and entering university and are eager to learn and explore the vast treasure trove of human knowledge. Many students have a high awareness of the goal of comprehensive education, desire to understand knowledge in many fields, and worry about academic results. A part of the students are not interested in the subject and only consider it as a side subject.

The attitude of a large number of students is that they are not excited, learn to cope, and are hesitant. According to the author's investigation, 55% of students (275/500 students) polled admitted that they never read the textbook before going to class, never read reference materials related to the subject. 44.4% of students (221/500 students) were asked to never update information on the internet about topics. Subject related issues, about 45.8% (229/500 students) responded that they never discussed issues of concern with lecturers. Many students are lazy to study and often skip classes if the lecturer does not manage the class closely. Students' poor learning attitudes also have a negative impact on teachers.

The learning methods of many students have not really created positive impacts to realize training goals. Most students in their early years are still accustomed to the high school learning style, heavy on memorizing mechanically, lacking the ability to think carefully to grasp the nature of knowledge, find ways to apply and connect theory with others. Learners have not yet mastered the knowledge and have not turned knowledge into their own property, so up to 40.4% of the students questioned (202/500 students) answered: Never interested in drawing out the meaning of methodology after completing political theory courses. There are many reasons leading to this situation. However, students' attitudes and learning methods are one of the main causes.

The above assessments show that there needs to be a further improvement in the quality of learning political theory subjects of students at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City.

Causes affecting the quality of teaching and learning political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City.

Many reasons affect the quality of teaching and learning political theory subjects of students at University of Transport and Communications, Campus, in Ho Chi Minh City. However, within the scope of the article, the author mentions two main causes.

Firstly, The reason from the teacher's side

Currently, under the strong development of the fourth industrial revolution, digital transformation has had a strong impact on all areas of social life. That process has brought many opportunities and challenges to education and training in our country in general. Teaching and learning activities of political theory subjects are not outside of that impact. Therefore, an important requirement today is that the team of lecturers teaching political theory subjects needs to improve and develop continuously to perform their role as knowledge transmitters effectively. But, not all teachers cultivate new knowledge of the times. The teaching methods of some lecturers are still heavy on traditional teaching methods. In lectures, not all content is oriented to students in connection with practice and specialized science, and they do not pay regular attention to the characteristics of technical school students to change methods accordingly. That teaching method makes learners feel stressed because of abstract, dry arguments.

The cognitive level of many lecturers does not keep up with the practical situation of society and scientific and technical progress. Most lecturers still have limited knowledge of natural and specialized sciences, so teaching the content of political theory subjects is still awkward. Lecturers also do not actively improve their expertise or learn specialized technical knowledge regularly.

Second, the reason from the learner's side

Besides the results achieved in the field of spreading political theoretical knowledge, we must also frankly admit that, for a long time, there have been many warnings about students, especially non-majors, political theory, do not like to study, or worse, are bored with studying political theory subjects. Many students learn to get enough points and not have to retake the exam.

Students have the habit of intuitive thinking, so most have difficulty accessing abstract knowledge of political theory subjects. Therefore, the ability to apply theory to explain practical problems is still very limited. There is very little student research and reading of other documents to understand subject knowledge. This is a very important issue, because with the rapid development of science and technology, information technology, and the explosion of the Internet, students' learning needs should be very high. But many students think that this is a secondary subject, not related to their specialized knowledge, so they do not study voluntarily, and determine the wrong purpose of learning, mainly learning to cope with it. That has directly affected the quality of the subject.

Proposing solutions to improve the quality of teaching and learning political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City

Innovating teaching methods for political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City

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Promoting students' positivity, initiative, and creativity in teaching is an inevitable trend in modern education. To achieve the above goal, it is necessary to increase the use of active teaching methods, specifically group work method, role-playing method, and situational method,... to promote students' positivity and initiative, specifically enhancing their ownership.

Each teaching method has its advantages and limitations in the teaching process. Therefore, in teaching, teachers cannot only use one unique way. If so, the lecture will be monotonous, dry and unable to convey knowledge to learners. It is necessary to use a combination of methods to create conditions for them to complement and support each other, paying special attention to the Active teaching methods, stimulating creativity and initiative of learners in the teaching process. It is necessary to pay attention to the characteristics of technical school students to choose appropriate teaching methods. On the other hand, it is necessary to thoroughly grasp the motto of closely linking theory with practice.

To implement this solution well, lecturers should switch from "monologue" to "dialogue", creating many activities for students to participate in the teaching and learning process. To do so, before attending class, both teachers and learners need to prepare the lesson content in advance. The lecturer proactively assigns lessons for students to read first. If they have questions, they should write them down in the form of questions. The lecturer will be responsible for providing necessary materials and official resources for students and clearly dividing tasks in each lesson for each individual or group. Thus, with prior preparation by lecturers and students, the lesson will become a discussion on an issue where the "stage" is where students present their views; The teacher only plays the role of moderating, coordinating and giving comments to increase the vividness of his presentation and explanation. Both teachers and learners should use technology support, such as: Figure Illustrations, videos, clips, learning websites...

Thus, to do this, diverse approaches are needed. In addition, interdisciplinary knowledge from other subjects are also important resources to help illuminate and deepen understanding of the content of the subject's issues. To innovate teaching methods for this subject to achieve optimal results, an issue that plays an extremely important role is class size. Each class should have 40 - 60 students/class. Students in the same major so that lecturers can easily apply active teaching methods.

Therefore, according to the author, to create excitement for students when studying political theory subjects, first of all, teachers must love the subject and love their teaching job. Because, when we love our work, we will put our heart, passion, and enthusiasm into it. That love will gradually come to the learner.

Among the learning methods, the core is the self-study method. If learners train themselves to have the methods, skills, habits, and will to self-study, they will create a desire to learn, arouse each person's inherent inner strength, and learning results will be multiplied.

Encouraging students to self-study and research is an issue of concern for many universities. Currently, most universities in political theory subjects have applied face-to-face and online teaching. University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City in the 2023-2024 school year has also begun a pilot for the subject Marxist-Leninist Philosophy. However, to do this well, lecturers need to help students understand the importance of self-study. It can be said that self-study is a direct factor in improving the quality of training at universities. In high school, students only need to master the knowledge imparted by teachers in class and teachers continuously test and evaluate students by assigning specific assignments. But at university, it is completely different. Students have to study, work, and acquire knowledge on their own without the guidance of instructors. Students themselves must research, reason, and think on their own. If students have good self-study ability, it will help them master the process of acquiring knowledge. Universities in this period are quickly turning the training process into a self-training process, which helps students self-improve and enrich their knowledge through self-study. University students mainly study this method. Nowadays, teachers act as learning guides; classes only provide the most basic knowledge and primary documents, while students learn to arrange their progress. In addition, there is no longer close inspection by instructors. Learning outcomes depend mainly on the students themselves. Students' self-study is increasing daily, requiring more and more effort because only self-study can equip themselves with the latest, most scientific knowledge and gain a lot of experience in practical activities. Besides, self-study also dramatically improves students' achievements and intellectual activities in understanding and absorbing new knowledge. Many famous educators have raised the need to self-study and organize self-study for students. During the self-study process, students will encounter many new problems; finding answers to those problems is the best way to stimulate students' intellectual activities.

Currently, instead of being teacher-centred, it has shifted to being learner-centred. Along with that change, the position of the learner has also changed; the learner is considered the main factor, the critical element. "centre" of the teaching process. The teacher shifts from the central position to being the organizer and leader of students in finding and absorbing new knowledge. The above change leads to the increasingly enhanced role of learners. Whether the teaching process is successful or not, whether it achieves high-quality results today depends mainly on the learner.

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Therefore, in order for the teaching and learning process to take place with high results, there must be combination and cooperation between lecturers and students. Students today must determine their new position and role, and must clearly define their tasks and learning goals so that they can participate in the learning process voluntarily and actively. Have a positive, cooperative attitude with teachers during the teaching process.

From studying the current state of teaching and learning, the author has proposed solutions to improve the quality of learning political theory subjects at University of Transport and Communications, Campus in Ho Chi Minh City. The above solutions have a dialectical relationship with each other, so when applying any solution should not be overlooked. Each solution has an important highlight ultimately improve the quality of learning political theory subjects.

Acknowledgments: This research is funded by University of Transport and Communications (UTC) under grant number T2023-PHIL_KHCB-001.

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