

# Integrating Professional Ethics Education into English Teaching: A Narrative Study of Curriculum Planning and Instructional Practice

Wen Ling Lou

School of Foreign Studies, Lingnan Normal University, Zhanjiang, Guangdong, 524048, China

---

**Abstract:** This study described the manner and process in which a faculty at the time of current study without philosophical expertise taught professional ethics offered by her Department of Applied Foreign Languages. The participants were undergraduate junior students majoring in Applied Foreign Languages. Qualitative data were collected from questionnaires, survey, individual interviews, and the researcher's teaching reflection. In this study the researcher primarily applied constructivist learning theory as the framework, bringing students varied learning access and opportunity. The results show that integrating curriculum planning and multiple both teaching and assessments methods not only develop students' understanding of professional ethics, but also increase students' competence of ethical judgment and ethical reasoning, thereby the students achieve effectively deep learning. The results also indicate that developing a holistic curriculum and instructional design significantly enhances students' professional ethics learning. Additionally, exposing students to diverse ethical discussions and readings improves their ethical sensitivity—a critical component for fostering self-reflection and change.

**Keywords:** Professional Ethics; Curriculum Planning; Instruction Design; Constructivist Learning Theory

---

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, due to the opening of the society, the new generation of thinking model and values have changed. The social atmosphere of quick success and instant benefit is pervasive resulting in the ethics is challenged seriously. In 2008, the National University Presidents Conference signed a joint declaration, emphasizing the mission of nurturing future talents is to let college students have five strengths: morality, innovation, self-study, macro-power and employability, and possess the basic character of modern citizens. Among this five, morality strength is to establish the integrity of college graduates and honesty. Former Harvard University President Derek Bok (2008) proposed an eight-educational goals, a university needs to have. The second and third are to enhance students' critical competence and moral reasoning competence, showing the importance and urgency of ethics and moral education. However, the division of labor in various industries is fine and closely woven, general moral education is insufficient to cope with today's social norms. Attaching importance to professional ethics education is significant increase gradually.

In Taiwan, the earliest professional ethics courses in the official university courses are only journalistic ethics. Some universities push professional ethics education through general education courses, and some are listed as required subjects. Professional ethics seems to have become an indispensable part of professional education, and its importance is no less than professional knowledge and technology. In the university where the current study located, the professional ethics course is a required course and its core competence of the course is character education. The whole students of the university must complete two credits of this course before graduation. Although the course is linked in the curriculum map in the general education, it has become a single course and individually offered by each different departments as a compulsory subject matter.

I was appointed to teach the 'Professional Ethics' course for the first time in my career. When I received this teaching assignment, my first reaction was: "How can the professional ethics course be offered in the Department of Applied Foreign Languages?" The following reactions were "What is professional ethics? "Can professional ethics be taught?" "What students should understand by the time they complete the course?" And, How to teach?" Because my study field is curriculum and instruction in English teaching, and I am not professional in philosophy and ethicist, possessing philosophical background. Thus, the purpose of this study was to deliberately integrate professional ethics teaching into an English course. This study used an action research method, taking this course as my experiment project, and my students in

this course as the research participants, to explore the courses of professional ethics offered by the Department of Applied Foreign Languages. Constructivist learning theory was theoretical framework used in this study, planning the curriculum and instructional design to explore the students' learning process and outcome.

## 2. Literature Review

Professional ethics refers to the ethics that professionals in all walks of life who follows when performing their work, thereby demonstrating appropriate and correct behavior, meeting social expectations, and shouldering their work responsibilities (Wesley and Buysse, 2006). Professional ethics includes core values, beliefs, and providing behavioral guidelines for workers and their work (Wesley and Buysse, 2006; Chang, Wu, and Shu, 2012 Chang, Wu, and Shu, 2012), emphasizing that the professional behavior and norms that among a professional group members can follow when interacting with each other or with society (Wesley and Buysse, 2006;). It has fictions of indicative (when encountering an ethical dilemma with interest conflicts), declarative (to let the general public understand the service principle and spirit of the profession), contractility (a contract that regulates the behavior of members of professional bodies, professional and public), symbolic (indicating professional responsibility to society, helping to enhance professional image and identity), image (avoiding public bias and misunderstanding), and protection (protecting professionals and refuses misconduct when the client has unreasonable requirements,) and, adjudication (resolving conflicts between professionals, professionals and clients), that can remind, inform members of professional groups the things they should do and they should not behave, and regulate and recommend the behavior and attitude for professional group members (Chung, 1996).

Wu (2003) stated that professional ethics should teach students to know three ethical competences, including (1) ethical "knowledge": Through the speculation of moral theory, strengthen the depth of students' critical and reflective capacity on professional ethical issues. (2) Ethical "skills": Extend the breadth of students' speculative professional ethical issues through ethical decision-making in case analysis. (3) Ethical "sentiment": Improve students' motivation and willingness to practice morality in their life and workplace by thinking about the relationship between morality and personal happiness. How does a course includes these elements above? A curriculum planning and content arrangement are essential.

### 2.1 Curriculum

The curriculum is derived from the *curre* Latin, with the meaning of runway and running. It means run to course (Pinar, 2004). In the educational literature, the curriculum is defined in as many as 120 (Portelli, 1987). The course can be interpreted as the vision of an educated adult, a plan for a journey of learning for a better life, or a way of learning and learning, and students who are real undertaking class activities. Some scholars have also suggested that the curriculum is a plan of deliberation and strategy, and is an action of supervision and adjustment. Null (2011) claimed that "curriculum is the heart of education" (p.1), it is about what should be taught and is a combination of thoughts, action, and purpose. March & Peters (2008) addressed that curriculum is carefully deliberated and strategically planned, carefully monitored, and adjusted. All materials must directly connect to professional learning in order to outline a holistic and progressive picture, enable students to use higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, and meet their various learning needs and expectation.

Kolb (1984) stated, "Essentially, learning takes place through the experience which the learner has, that is, through the reactions he makes to the environment in which he is placed" (p. 63). Likewise, Bruner (1960/1977) contended "learning for use." He stated that "whether the student knows the formal names of [various] operations is less important for transfer than whether he [or she] is able to use them" (p. 8). That means all learning provides learners the opportunity to engage with the discipline itself.

Taba (1962) defines that a course as a learning plan. The course that the teacher is planning what the student wants to learn. In other words, the course is a planned and a sequential learning of content, which is an integration of order and discipline, and process step by step teaching and practice.

In conclusion, a course includes subjects, objectives, curriculum content and materials, as well as the procedure, in which interaction process and results among teachers, students, and the environment all need to be considerate.

## 2.2 Teaching

Teaching is essentially described as an interactive process of social learning in the classroom, involving a complicated action and deliberate processes (Bartlett, 1990). It involves not only the transfer of knowledge to students, but also a career and a task more complex than criticism and realization (Lou, 2008, Sanders, and McCutcheon, 1986). To be a successful teacher, all the elements must be organized and arranged so as to help and nurture the learning of a particular group. In short, teaching can reflect the teacher's wisdom, judgment, personal experience and educational philosophy (Greene, Sanders, and McCutcheon, 1986, Bartlett, 1990).

Compared with general subjects, it is more complicated for teaching ethical education. For teachers, it is necessary they need to have holistic planning and consideration in the course content and designing instruction. Also, the assessment method needs to be more varied (Shen, 1996). Lin, (2000) pointed that general teaching method is divided into more than forty kinds according to the frequency of interaction between teachers and learners. However, if the use function of teaching method and the appropriate field of study are used, the instructional design for ethics course can employ presentation method or, discussion method, simulation method, and discovery learning method. The teaching of professional ethics should adopt a variety of teaching methods, such as lecture to theoretical knowledge and concepts, asking student to write assignments, individual or group reports, whole classroom questions and discussions, news and current events as case analysis, group discussions, situational simulations, commentaries, YouTube, videos, and movie appreciation (Wu, 2003, handout in a lecture; Keefer and Davis, 2012 ).

Shen (1996) addressed that teachers should teach ethical norms and rules in various professional fields after students obtain basic knowledge of ethics. They should not directly skip important course contents such as ethics theory, but ask students to do activities that teachers think those are "right" activities (Keefer, and Davis, 2012). Shen (1998) also stated "Teaching professional ethics usually carried out in two ways. The first is incorporative teaching approach and the second is professional ethics teaching approach. The former is in professional courses, such as business, biology, sightseeing courses, teachers discuss with students which are the norms should be comply, and timely provide some ethical awareness, and discuss how professional knowledge and technology should meet ethical requests; the later one it involves ethics, which refers to teaching in the form of general basic ethics and professional ethics, and evaluates various ethical theories and discusses ethical values in the course of teaching.

How to integrate relevant themes and topics into curriculum content and teaching implementation, curriculum transformation is one key. Curriculum transformation is a notion. It refers to teachers' deeper and personal understanding of subject content. It requires different thinking, judging what is the best instruction method for students; thereby teacher re-conceptualizing the existing subject knowledge into students' need to know or be able to practice the content of the course (Henderson Gornik, 2007), finally, combined with the teaching plan to construct student's learning (Lou, 2008).

Philosophy thinking of pragmatism supports "learning is an individualized constructive phenomenon," John Dewey mentioned in his book "Experience and Education" say that in order for subject learning to help academics. the student's past experience must be drawn and brought into an extended world by a discipline (Henderson, 1992). People learn and develop knowledge individually in social learning environments by constructing their own knowledge based on prior knowledge (Ackermann, 2001; Hmelo-Silver et al., 2007; Palincsar, 1998; Mayer, 2004) and schema based on the information presented to them. Constructivists asserted that learners construct knowledge rather than acquire new knowledge; hence, learning is an active process throughout the learners' experiences and the environment in which they are learning (Alanazi, A. 2016). Accepting constructivist learning theories means following the path of social learning pioneers such as Vygotsky and Leontiev as well as Brown, Collin, and Duguid. All of the aforementioned supporter of social learning contended that learning is an interactive, social process. In other words, constructive learning theory advocates that classroom knowledge is constructed and is a process in which teachers lead students to learn, rather than being taught to students through teachers or students' recitation and obtained it. Therefore, teachers are not the merely source of knowledge. Instead, instructor is responsible for guiding and interacting with students, and for assisting students in creating knowledge through dialogue (Kurt, Serhat.2023). In order word, teachers are facilitators who facilitate their students in constructing knowledge and learning journey (Lou, 2024). Through thoughtful dialogue, they help students actively construct and create their

own understanding of knowledge.

There has been a significant increase in curriculum materials available and curriculum content for ethic education (Keefer, and Davis, 2012). Zhang (2022) combined with the unit theme, highlighting ten contents of professional ethnics education which integrating teaching in her course such as business ethics, honest and honest conduct, team spirit and cooperation and so forth. Despise some scholars in Taiwan have mentioned the teaching methods for professional ethics courses, and these teaching methods have their own advantages, few of them are aimed at exploring the empirical results of students' learning on professional ethics through the concept of curriculum construction and teaching practice. Therefore, the research questions in this study are as follows:

- (1) How does curriculum content through constructive planning assist students in learning ethical norms???
- (2) How do curriculum and instructional design, along with teaching methods, assist students in learning?
- (3) How can curriculum planning and instructional design shape students' character and behavior?

### 3. Research Method

This study used qualitative approach. The course was divided into two parts, one was curriculum planning. The other was instructional design and practice. During the course progression, I modified the curriculum content and instructional methods at any time based on the student's reaction and feedback, so this study also had the meaning of an action research.

#### 3.1 Participants

The participants in this study were undergraduate junior students in the Department of Foreign Languages at a private university in Southern Taiwan, who took "Professional Ethics" course for a total of 16 students (15 girls, 1 male) at the time .The study was period of 18 weeks.

#### 3.2 The Course Description

##### 3.2.1 Curriculum planning

Albrecht and Sack (2000) used the accounting ethics course as an example, pointing out that if the curriculum lacks themes of values, ethics, and honesty, the course will be a criticized course. They both addressed that if students do not have the fundamental of ethical philosophy in advance, but the teacher directly teach accounting ethics in the classroom, then, whether or not the students can achieve the effect of expected learning is a question worthy to be considered. Base on this point, therefore, my curriculum "professional ethics" covered topics such as moral ethics, ethics norm, values, and integrity firstly, and then plan the progress based on the course objectives and teaching units and its content.

There are three professional feature programs in the Department of Applied Foreign languages: business English, tourism, and English teaching for children. Students in this department choose what feature as their future career at their third year. They take certain core courses for each area. Because the professional ethics was required course for all three areas of students, when I planned this course, I focused on business, tourism, and English teaching professions and ethics.

The course was divided into two phases: the first phase is from the first week to the eighth week. The course content centered learning on morality and ethics. At this period was concepts construction, which constructed the students' basic foundation of ethics and having them acquired practical ethical knowledge. In order words, this phase curriculum planning on moral theory, morality, and ethical theory was a preparation of fostering the students' ethical judgment, and reasoning skills in their future position.

The second phase was from the tenth week to the eighteenth week, entering the course core of "professional ethics." As mentioned earlier, there were three feature programs in my department: Business English, Tourism, and English Teaching for Children. Therefore, I divided the whole class into three groups based on three features programs and had the students to choose which profession they would potentially work after they graduate. In my curriculum, I assigned three sets of articles on ethics and ethical guidelines, tailored for each group, as after-school reading homework. These articles were mainly in English, with a few in Chinese. As a faculty member teaching professional ethics, I'm dedicated to embedding ethics education into my English curriculum to align with the department's goal of improving students'

professional English abilities.

### *3.2.2 Instructional design, teaching methods and Practice*

The instructional design was also divided into two parts. The first part was from the first week to the thirteenth week. In the meantime, I divided my teaching into two stages. In order to conform to my curriculum planning of learning on morality and ethics, constructing the students' basic foundation of ethics and having them acquired ethical knowledge, at the first stage, my teaching methods were lecture, group discussion, case analysis, and a mode of student self-learning. In the classrooms, I mainly taught the English articles and engaged the students' discussion activities.

I firstly led the students to read the English articles of the basic ethics, and explained the ethics terms so that they could know and understand those terms. I also selected a few Chinese articles on moral ethics such as interest theory, benefit theory, and morality theory for students to read. What my instructional design was that I wanted my students to learn the ethics terms and contents from English readings first, and then having them to read Chinese articles by themselves later thereby, the students would read both English and Chinese articles and learn easier.

In the course of lecturing ethics, I also led students to practice of thinking and critiquing to the news and events on TV or newspapers occurred in Taiwanese society at that time. I was intended to strengthen my students' ability on ethical theory perspectives and current affairs cases that students could learn, and asked students to put forward professional ethical judgments and critique in the case analyses and discussion. The case discussion was first discussed in groups, and then expanded into the whole class discussion, finally, I unified and summarized and made conclusions. Before each group discussion, I distributed questions I designed to the students. The each group had to respond to the questions and record them, and report to the whole class later. During the discussion, I paid attention from time to time to each group discussion and gave necessary assistance and input.

The second phase began in the seventh week. At this stage, I modified my teaching methods according to the students' feedback and suggestions. I grouped the students and personally led them to read Chinese articles and explicitly explained the content for the students. I also highlighted the main points of the English articles, and asked each group read after class. I scheduled the time when I will teach the article, so I asked students to pre-read it as homework in advance. In this way, when I taught the English article in the classroom, the students could immediately catch up the basic concepts and key points in real time. This instructional practice was finally very satisfied the students.

The second part of the teaching practice started from the fourteenth week to the end of the semester. This was the preparation phase of the students' final performance. Therefore, after fourteen weeks, my teaching structure was designed to give students complete autonomy. In the classroom, I gave the students autonomy and space engaging the students in group work. I asked each group of students designed a final project, which was a type of performance, in which each group will design a scenario and plot of play. My rationale for doing so is that the project work aligns with constructivist and experiential learning theories. This approach is in line with John Dewey's notion that one learns best by "doing."

At this stage, my role was a facilitator and a leader, asking questions from time to time to have students think. For example, when students design scripts, I reminded them that professional ethics such as value, morality, could not be taught through their soliloquy in the scenario. In other words, when they were performing, they could not be as a soliloquist, expressed resented by mouth, script, or narration. Instead, they should specifically perform the situation of the scenario through body language and dialogue, and performing. In this way, then the sense and awareness of professional ethics was indirectly expressed to their audience. In other words, ethics and morality could not be taught by mouth-to-mouth teaching, but the expression of "virtue" is to inspired and realized by human beings.

The learning assessment was not the focus of this study, but I also applied Wiggins and McTighe's (2005) theory as part of my curriculum planning and instructional design to understand my students' learning outcomes. They both provided six facets of understanding to help educators understand their students' learning consequences. I chose four of them: (1) Learners can explain what they have learned (can explain); (2) The learner can use the acquired knowledge to present in a performance manner (can apply); (3) the learner has a perspective on critical ethical issues (have perspectives); (4) the learner has a self-developed basis (have self-knowledge). In addition, the mid-term exam, writing reading reflections of articles, and student self-learning assessment were also used as basis for understanding the students' learning

outcomes.

### 3.3 Data Collection

The data collected in this study were collected using questionnaires, survey, individual interviews, and teacher reflection notes.

#### 3.3.1 Questionnaire and survey

I designed questionnaires and survey conducted in different time. One was at the beginning and one was at the end of the semester. The questionnaire and survey were for the whole class. All students were anonymous. The content of the questionnaire was the students' viewpoints on the curriculum content design and teaching structure, as well as their learning results. At the beginning of the questionnaire, the four-point scale (disagree, ordinary, agree, and very agree) was used, but the last question was open-ended. In this question, the students were asked to make evaluation and suggestions on my teaching practice and curriculum design. The final survey was a five-stage scale (very satisfied, satisfied, ordinary, dissatisfied, and very dissatisfied). I also added a self-evaluation for the students in the final questionnaire having themselves to evaluate their learning outcome.

#### 3.3.2 Individual interviews

A total of two interviews were conducted in this study. The first interview was in the week before the midterm exam (eighth week). Six students were randomly selected and interviewed. The interviews questions included the opinions on curriculum content planning and teaching practice, and the opinion of using multi-teaching method and the method of assessment how these influenced their personal learning. The second interview was the same students again happened at the end of the semester which I wanted to know these six students' learning had changed or transformed at the end of the semester, and further understood whether or not the meaning of professional ethics they had comprehended after midterm to the end of the semester.

#### 3.3.3 Notes on the instructor observations and reflection

The reflections mainly were based on my observation to the students during my teaching action, and students' feedback to me.

### 3.4 The data collection process

The questionnaire was conducted in the sixth week of the beginning of the semester. The purpose of this phase of the questionnaire is to learn from students' feedback, students' views and opinions on curriculum planning and instructional design so as to adjust my course content, teaching methods and structure. The first interview was conducted in the eighth week. At the beginning, the six students were very cautious in answering the questions. They protected themselves and did not say the true voice. The content of their answers were also very ambiguous. Therefore, each student I spent more time to complete. In the second interview, the students responded more positively and the content was more specific. Both interviews were recorded throughout the session so as not to miss any focus.

### 3.5 data analysis

The quantitative data obtained from the survey was presented in the form of a chart. As for the qualitative data, the main parts obtained from two interviews and the questionnaire. I analyzed the data and compared the learning of the students from their beginning to the end to understand my curriculum connotation planning and teaching implementation, as well as the students' response and suggestions for improvement. After the data was encoded, I briefly illustrated by a chart. The interviews were conducted in Chinese and translated into English by me. I applied a coding process to the transcripts written as a verbatim draft, and sent it back to the interviewed students, having them to see if there were any errors to ensure the accuracy of the transcription. After the transcripts were checked and were correct, I organized and analyzed the data; encoded and classified them based on different themes.

## 4. Results

After 16 weeks of instructional implement (excluding the mid-term and final exams) and data collection, the results were as follows:

The results of the questionnaires held in the sixth week made me a little frustrated. In the answers of the questionnaires, some students had extreme rebound about my curriculum design. Because the students had never learned any courses relevant to theories, they were some-

what hardly adjusted with this course, which taught theory as the beginning of the course. The following charts represent seven questionnaire questions, with the numbers indicating the number of student responses to each. I collected and categorized the responses based on the students' answers

(1) What is the biggest help for you in this class so far?

Table 1 The Biggest Help

Unhelpful	Helpful for English reading ability	Helpful for Ethics related knowledge	Helpful for English Writing	No answer
6	3	4	1	2

(2) What is the biggest learning obstacle for you in this class so far?

Table 2 Key Learning Obstacles

No obstacle	The ethical terminologies	too many reading articles and it's too hard to do	The assignments were too hard	No answer
4	4	4	3	1

(3) What portion of this course is the most helpful for you to acquire learning motivation so far?

Table 3 Course Elements Supporting Learning Motivation

No portions	Obtaining the ethical knowledge	Improving English reading ability	Making Career planning	Increasing the capacity of dealing with problems	No answer
3	5	2	2	2	2

(4) So far, what is the reason that cannot promote your learning motivation?

Table 4 Obstacles to Learning Motivation

No reason	The course is too tough and deep,	It's boring,	My English ability	too much readings	not filled out
3	3	5	1	2	2

(5) As a student of Department of Applied Foreign Languages taking this course, what is the most important things you need to effort?

Table 5 Key Efforts for Applied Foreign Language Students

Maintaining the current quo	self-improvement,	strengthening English,	doing the student's duties	Still learning	not filled out
2	1	6	3	1	3

(6) So far, what do you think this course: a) design, b) teaching arrangement, c) the course/teaching progress, all these three portions had met your expectations (or needs). If so, please write your opinion?

Table 6 Opinions on Course Design and Teaching Arrangements

Yes	No	Others	Not filled
4	7	4	1
The course design, teaching arrangements, and their progress are in line with the expectation.		Too much focus on reading	

(7) So far, do you think the course content is suitable? If not, please write your opinions and suggestions.

Table 7 Opinions on Course Content Suitability

Suitable	Unsuitable	Others	Not filled
5	8	2	1
But the study-load is too much; Need to use a single textbook information,	too much information and too many professional terminologies;	Suitable for this course, but not suitable for students at our school	

The eighth question was open-ended. All students were asked to write down their opinions and suggestions about this ethics course of professions. Doing so was to help myself to re-modify my course content and teaching design. Some students answered, some students did not respond. The students' suggestions are more noteworthy:

S3:need to provide more real-world ethic issues and cases.

S2:hopes the instructor's teaching can be more interesting and dynamic.

S8:hope that the instructor can use a way of final report instead of mid-term and final exams.

S4:I hope the supplementary articles can be simple and easy to read because too much information will make the students have no idea how they should start reading.

Any innovative curriculum and teaching attempts are prone to situations in which students may be unaccustomed. In particular, this new attempts, the instructional design of constructive learning and thinking training that instructor could not endure the tension relationship between she / he and her/his students. Thus, during each class teaching, I paid more attention to the students' attitudes and reactions, so that I could reflect my feasibility of the course content and teaching practice.

In a sense, teaching practice includes caring, dialogue, and reflection that constitute a cycle; and these components are interrelated and connected. Noddings (1992) stated that caring teachers are always willing to listen and respond deferentially to their students. "How to help students learn the professional ethics they are supposed to have?" This question has been constantly appearing in my mind. Therefore, when I read the students' responses of the questionnaire, it was just like my head was hit by a stick. Originally, I carefully planned course, the students not only could not accept, but also reduced their willingness to learn. Therefore, I wrote my reflection:

Perhaps, I was too eager to send the article to the students,  
and I thought that the students will read those articles at home.  
I completely ignored whether the students can digest those  
Chinese and English articles. Moreover, I also neglected that  
Students receive too much reading information hence they  
resisted learning.

There are also students' responses said that ethics course should be easy, and just talk about cases and discuss some examples. In response to this, I adjusted the course content and teaching strategies to supplement the more current cases and real-world issues in newspaper. For example, in terms of business ethics, take the case of a new black heart oil incident as an example. In terms of ethics of tourism, a customer's credit card incident stolen by a travel agency in Hualien City was taken as a real case and discussion. All these cases were my teaching material. Students were required to analyze and judge the ethics and behaviors that the cases violates in the professional workplace based on the perspective of ethical theory they learned in the classroom.

Regarding six individual interviews, I organized the interview data, coded process to the transcripts, and then finally I divides the data into five topics, as detailed below :

(1)Students' views on the importance of learning "professional ethics"

Students' views on the importance of studying "professional ethics" were varied. Some students thought that it was not imperative to learn. They would naturally learn in the future when they enter their workplaces. Some students thought that professional ethics was not necessary to be a required course. The course could offer as elective one for those who want to study and just take it.

(2)Students' views on having the basic knowledge of "professional ethics"

The students interviewed all agreed that learning professional ethics should have basic knowledge, step by step first as an ethical reasoning tool, and then give real ethic issues, so that the students have the ability to analyze and judge the real case.

(3)Students' views on the knowledge, judge ability and behavioral attitude of "professional ethics"

After eight weeks of studying, the students believed that they had learned the knowledge of professional ethics and could judge things according to the knowledge they had learned. For example, Yu Fan said:

Before I went to this class, I would just simply think  
the incident of selling the used oil in the market is  
not right Din-Shin Company did. I could not think  
further why the company shouldn't do it. But, after  
I attended this class, now I can clearly tell that the  
company's behavior had violated social corporate

responsibility and professional morality.

Yi Zhen mentioned that she has learned the “benefit theory” and “objectives theory” in professional ethics. She said after eight weeks of studying, she has effectively improved her judgment ability and reasoning. She said:

“At the beginning, the Prof. Lou distributed a newspaper and I didn’t know how to start at all. After these eight weeks of class and study, now I know where to start cutting and commenting when I get an ethical case.”

Jiahui also mentioned that taking this class has given her the ability to analyze the ethical case in the daily newspaper. For example, A fake cooking oil incident showed in the newspaper she could immediately judge that the oil trader violated the “good faith principle” in the business market.

#### (4) Students’ views on curriculum planning and its content

Among the six students’ interviews, some students thought that the curriculum planning was slightly dull and serious, and there was a drop between their expectation for the course content and learning direction. For example, Jiahui said:

“I thought this class was an easy one and we just discussed cases in the classroom. Who knows we have to read articles related to ethics, listen to Dr. Lou taught ethical knowledge, and study ethical theory. It was really boring, my god.”

Some students expressed their opinions of reading either Chinese or English articles was too difficult reflected by Junjie, Jiahui and Kiahui. They said that because the content of Chinese articles contains philosophical theories, it was difficult to understand. So they need to be explained by the instructor.

Brookfield (1995) indicated that a critical and reflective teaching process happens when teachers discover and explore their assumptions by observing their practice through four distinct lenses. One of the four lenses is students’ eyes. His words, “Seeing ourselves as curriculum planner through our students’ eyes” was a notion most impressive to me. This is also the best way I reflected and self-assessed when I heard students’ complains and arguments to my curriculum and instruction. I told myself needed to discard it and rethink my curriculum content and pedagogy.

Yu Ying’s response was active. She thought that the instructor, I distributed articles and explained them had helped her absorbed more knowledge about ethics. This helped her deepened the basic concept of ethics.

So, according to these response to my interviews above, I wrote my reflection in the teaching journal:

Regardless of whether the students were positive or negative about the content of my curriculum plan, I do need to make some adjustments in response to the students’ voices.

Based on my reflection, after the mid-term exam (the ninth week), I re-modified the curriculum and developed a student-centered teaching method.

#### (5) Students’ views on the multiple teaching methods

The teaching methods in this course used declarative teaching (reading and explaining articles, slides usage, group discussions, case analysis and reasoning), computer-assisted teaching, such as power points, judgment on the case of newspaper, and role-playing game. The students’ responses were varied and diverse. Generally speaking, they preferred teaching methods such as lectures, slide film teaching, case analysis, cooperative learning, group discussion and role- play.

At the end of the semester, I interviewed the original six interviewees again. In addition, I distributed questionnaires to the whole class. All the interview questions and questionnaire content surrounded the topics on my curriculum planning and the students’ learning needed, the students’ daily behavior changes and their improvement of English ability. I encoded the data into six themes and explains them as follows:

Table 8 Student Perceptions of Ethics Reading Requirements

Yizheng	Very much required. This is because professional courses require additional information and supplementary.
Jiahu	Required. This because the reading articles helps me to judge ethics issues in my future workplace.
Yuying	Required. The articles helps to understand the differences between ethics and professional ethics.
Yufan	Required. The samples in the articles can deepen my impression in professional ethics learning.
Junjie	Required very much because reading can promote my thinking skills.
Kiahui	It's really required because I have to obtain the ethics knowledge from readings firstly, then I have the capacity of thinking.

Table 9 Students' Conception of Importance Level for Reading Articles on Ethics and Professional Ethics in This Course

Yizheng	Extremely important. Reading these articles can help me improve my analytical skills.
Jiahu	Important. It improves my critique skills.
Yuying	Very important. I can absorb the essence of the articles and related knowledge.
Yufan	Extremely important. Because reading articles enhances my understanding and professional connotation.
Junjie	Important. It increases my thinking skills.
Kiahui	Very important. It is the only way to gain knowledge and I can think through reading relevant articles.

In terms of daily life behaviors and attitudes, Yizheng, Yuying, Yufan, Junjie and Kiahui said that they have changed their attitudes and daily behavior after taking this course. Nevertheless, Jiahu said that she has not changed.

Here were the responses from six interviewed students:

Table 10 Students' Views on Course Help in Adhering to Ethical Norms and Being a Quality Citizen

Yizheng	Yes. To me, It is more cautious with my Behaving in the daily life.
Jiahu	No. all are the same as before as I have been a good person already.
Yuying	Yes. It helps me pay more attention to my spoken words when I was talking to people. I also restrained my bad behavior a little.
Yufan	Yes. I thought of ethical morality to myself at the any time. Very often, I kept myself was self-disciplined and be self-aware.
Junjie	It's just okay. I keep matching myself words with deeds from time to time.
Kiahui	Yes. I am careful on my words and deeds to be good manner.

Table 11 Changes in Learning Attitude

Yizheng	Yes. After the mid-term examination, my study become more positive, and my motivation was stronger.
Jiahu	Nothing change. I have always maintained a consistently positive learning attitude.
Yuying	Yes. Before the start of the course, I don't think I need to take this course. At the end of the course, I found that there are still some concepts and knowledge that I want to learn. .
Yufan	Nothing need to change. My learning attitude has always been positive.
Junjie	It's just okay. But, I have paid more attention to the news on the newspaper, and generated more curiosity to make judgment.
Kiahui	Yes. At the beginning of the semester, I felt that I don't need to take this course. Later, I found that many ethical terminologies Introduced by the instructor, I changed my learning attitude.

Regarding the curriculum content and used teaching methods for the students' learning outcome and impact, the interviewees' responses were:

Table 12 Student Satisfaction with Course Content and Teaching Methods

	Course planning on content	The favorite Teaching Methods
Yizheng	Acceptable, I felt that it was a good curriculum planning and instructional design.	a) Group activities. Discussion articles, reading division of labor, students often interact. b) Role-playing, situational experience deepens cognition that the curriculum becomes interesting.
Jiahu	Sure. A clearer understanding of the events that may be encountered in my future workplace.	Short play, role playing.
Yuying	Satisfied. It is a very clear curriculum planning and teaching procedure, step by step.	a) Group discussion. b) The film analyses the plot and critique the characters' behavior, gaining thoughts and mastering more relevant knowledge.

Yufan	A positive curriculum planning. In the ways of making comments the instructor used deepened me understood the importance of this course we should take it.	Watching movie and analyzing its story.
Junjie	Satisfied, I have learned many basic knowledge and judgment ability for the ethics issues	Analyzing current news event, deepened my impression through specific life situations. Performing short plays and role-playing bring a sense of accomplishment.
Kiahui	The curriculum is well-down planned. It was from shallow to deep, from basic knowledge to professional knowledge which made me learn step by step.	The short play and role play enhance me the effective learning.

In terms of improving English skills, the six students agreed that there was a great improvement.

Table 13 Improving English language abilities

Yizheng	There is improved.
Jiahu	There are a lot of improvements. Knowing a lot of ethics terminologies.
Yuying	Yes. Reading speed is faster through reading, and comprehension skills have improved.
Yufan	Yes, my new vocabulary are increased a lot. My reading speed has been faster.
Junjie	My English ability has improved, and the reading speed has increased too.
Kiahui	There is a good progression on my reading comprehension.

As for the final survey to the whole class, it was a five-stage scale (very satisfied, satisfied, ordinary, dissatisfied, and very dissatisfied) were regarding the curriculum planning, curriculum content richness, and multiple methods of teaching and assessments. The results were as follows.

Table 14 Student Satisfaction with Curriculum Planning

very satisfied	satisfied	ordinary	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied
1	8	3	4	0

Table 15 Student Satisfaction with Curriculum Content Richness

very satisfied	satisfied	ordinary	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied
0	9	5	2	0

Table 16 Student Satisfaction with Diverse Teaching Methods

very satisfied	satisfied	ordinary	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied
1	9	3	2	1

Table 17 Student Satisfaction with Multiple Assessments

very satisfied	satisfied	ordinary	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied
2	8	3	2	1

The final self-evaluation was five-stage scale (very agree, agree, ordinary, disagree, and very disagree) to whole students on their learning outcome.

The results were below.

Table 18 Students' Feedback on Course Content Absorption

very agree	agree	Ordinary	disagree	very disagree
0	7	5	4	0

Table 19 Promoting the ability to judge the things of right and wrong and expressing oneself opinions

very agree	agree	Ordinary	disagree	very disagree
0	10	5	1	0

Table 20 Enhancing the Ability to Judge Right/Wrong and Express Opinions

very agree	agree	Ordinary	disagree	very disagree
0	10	5	1	0

Table 21 Improving Teamwork Capacity

very agree	agree	Ordinary	disagree	very disagree
0	12	3	1	0

Table 22 Understanding Ethical Issues, Developing Diverse Perspectives, and Applying Professional Ethics in Future Careers

very agree	agree	Ordinary	disagree	very disagree
0	10	5	1	0

Table 23 Possessing Mature Moral Cognition and Embracing Justice and Morality as a Modern Citizen

very agree	agree	Ordinary	disagree	very disagree
1	9	3	2	1

## 5. Conclusions and Suggestions

This study described an integration of ethics education into professional curriculum design, transforming curriculum knowledge into an observable, measurable ability to assess student learning outcomes in the Department of Applied Foreign Languages. Applying the learning theory of constructivism as the theoretical framework, I planned the curriculum and designed the instruction with multiple methods and assessments to explore the students' learning process and learning effectiveness. From the results, this study verifies that the constructivist curriculum and instruction is a learning action of stimulating thinking and leading, emphasizing that the gain of human knowledge is actively constructed by individual, rather than through passively delivery or absorb (Osborne, 1983).

Most students in their self-evaluation at the end of semester said that the course design is substantial and practical. And, the instructional design and approaches use are effective. Although the student's learning performance cannot be 100% as expected in this study, my curriculum planning and instructional design have been approved by the students. More important, this course has a certain degree of influence and change students' behaviors and attitudes, which also responds to the three research questions raised in this study. Of course, once a course is designed, it needs to be constantly reviewed and re-modified to satisfied students' needs and expectation. These judgments are reflective inquiry, which usually create some unexpected results, the so-called reflection for action (Hyun,1992).

The teacher assesses the student's learning outcome through reflection, modifies the course content, and teaching methods based on the student's learning condition. As for the teaching methods, when teaching ethics it is advisable to use varied and dynamic teaching methods, and it is considerate the length of teaching time, the resources acquisition, the individual learning motivation, level, and the main learning style. Furthermore, enabling students to formulate the ethical rules for their future potential careers through group works, so that students can achieve their learning objectives.

In this study, I provided a practical model by which I integrated professional ethics into three different professional areas in English Teaching, and in the designed course. Through instructional practice, I have gained valuable insights into curriculum planning and professional ethics teaching. The analysis and results discussed earlier in this study have also contributed to beneficial learning experiences in professional ethics for the students. I deeply ponder that it is not the matter I prepare materials prior to going to my teaching setting. Instead, I should select or adjust the teaching materials based on the students' level and the specific teaching situation. Despite this study has done as much as possible about holistic design and consideration in terms of curriculum and instruction, it might probably not entirely include the

aspects of issues on course content, instructional design, teaching methods, teaching resources and teaching materials. This will be future research and further exploration.

## References

- [1]Ackermann, E. (2001). Piaget's constructivism, Papert's constructionism: What's the difference. Future of Learning Group Publication, 5(3), 438.Retrieved from[http://www.sylviaatipich.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Coursera-Piaget-\\_Papert.pdf](http://www.sylviaatipich.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Coursera-Piaget-_Papert.pdf)
- [2]Alanazi, A. (2016).A Critical Review of Constructivist Theory and the Emergence of Constructionism. American Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences. Volume 2, 8 pages.
- [3]Albrecht, W. S. and Sack, R. J. (2000). Accounting Education: Charting the Course through a Perilous Future, Sarasota, FL: The American Accounting Association.
- [4]Bartlett, L. (1990). "Teacher development through Reflective Teaching," J. C. Richards and D. Nunan (eds.) Second Language Teacher Education, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. pp. 203-4.
- [5]Brown, J. S., Collins, A., & Duguid, P. (1989). Situated cognition and the culture of learning. Educational Researcher,18(1), 32-42. Retrieved from<http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a204690.pdf>
- [6]Bruner, J. S. (1977). The process of education. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1960)
- [7]Connelly, C., and C. Clandinin, (1988).Teachers As Curriculum Planners: Narratives of Experience, New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1988.
- [8]Dewey, J. (2004). "My Pedagogic Creed," in D. Flinders and S. J. Thornton (Eds.) The Curriculum Studies Reader (2nd ed.,pp.17-23). New York, NY: Routledge, (original work published).
- [9]Eisner, E. (2002). W., The Arts and the Creation of Mind, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press,
- [10]Graves, K. (1996). Teachers As Course Developers, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- [11]Greene, M. (1986 "Perspectives and Imperatives: Reflection and Passion in Teaching," Journal of Curriculum and Supervision 2.1): 68-81.
- [12]Henderson, J. G. and Gornik, R. (2007). Transformative Curriculum Leadership, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- [13]Henderson, J. G., and Hawthorne, R. D. (2000). Transformative Curriculum Leadership, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- [14]Henderson, J. G. (1992). Reflective Teaching: Becoming an Inquiring Educator, New York, NY: Macmillan.
- [15]Hmelo-Silver, C. E., Duncan, R. G., & Chinn, C. A. (2007). Scaffolding and achievement in problem-based and inquiry learning: A response to Kirschner, Sweller, and Clark (2006). Educational Psychologist, 42(2), 99-107.Retrieved from [http://www.usc.edu/dept-00/dept/education/cogtech/publications/hmelo\\_ep07.pdf](http://www.usc.edu/dept-00/dept/education/cogtech/publications/hmelo_ep07.pdf)
- [16]Hyun, E. (1992). "Transforming Instruction into Pedagogy through Curriculum Negotiation," Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy 3.1: 136-164.
- [17]Keefer, M.W. & Davis, M. (2012). "Curriculum Design and Assessment in Professional Ethics. Some Practical Advice1," Teaching Ethics. Fall, 81-90.
- [18]Kolb, D. A. (1984) Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development. Englewood Cliffs, NJ; Prentice-Hall.
- [19]Kurt, S. (2021).Educational Technology, c. . Retrieved Aug. 9, 2023 from <https://educationaltechnology.net/constructivist-learning-theory/>.
- [20]Lin, S. L. (2000). On the teaching methodology of ethical education. Philosophy and Culture, 27(4), 366-368.
- [21]Lou, W.-L. (2008). "Cultivating the Capacity for Reflective Practice: A Professional Development Case Study of L2/EFL Teachers," Unpublished dissertation, Kent State University,.
- [22]Lou, W.-L. (2024). Successful Integration of Cultural Learning Into English Teaching:

- [23]Curriculum Transformation and Implementation. US-China Foreign Language. June 2024, Vol. 22, No. 6, 298-313. doi:10.17265/1539-8080/2024.06.002.
- [24]Mayer, R. (2004). Should there be a three-strikes rule against pure discovery learning? The case for guided methods of instruction. *American Psychologist*, 59, 14–19.
- [25]March, J. K. and Peters, K. H. (2008). *Designing Instruction Making Best Practices Work in Standards-based Classrooms*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- [26]Ministry of Education. (2014, August 27). Declaration of University Presidents' Conference in 2008. Ministry of Education Electronic Newsletter. [http://epaper.edu.tw/print.aspx?print\\_type=news&print\\_sn=1971&print\\_num=0](http://epaper.edu.tw/print.aspx?print_type=news&print_sn=1971&print_num=0)
- [27]Noddings, N. (1992). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education*. New York: Teacher College Press.
- [28]Null, W. (2011). *Curriculum: From theory to practice*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- [29]Osborne, R. J. and Wittrock, M. C. (1983). "Learning Science: A Generative Process," *Science Education* 67.4: 489-508.
- [30]Palincsar, A. S. (1998). Keeping the metaphor of scaffolding fresh—A response to C.
- [31]Addison Stone's "The metaphor of scaffolding: Its utility for the field of learning disabilities." *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 31(4), 370-373.
- [32]Pinar, W. F. (2004). *What is Curriculum Theory*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates,
- [33]Portelli, J. P. (1987). "On Defining Curriculum," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 2.4: 354-67.
- [34]Sanders, D. P., and G. McCutcheon, (1986). "The development of Practical Theories of Teaching," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 2.1): 50.
- [35]Shen, C. C. (1996). The theories of ethics and professional ethics education. *General Education Quarterly*, 3(2), 1-17.
- [36]Shen, C. C. (1998). The ethical cognition of non-specialists in philosophy lecturing professional ethics. *Philosophy and Culture*, 8, 692-705.
- [37]Taba, H. (1962). *Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice*, New York, NY: Harcourt,.
- [38]Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher mental process*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- [39]Vygotsky, L. S. (1980). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- [40]Walker, D. F. and Soltis, J. F. (2004) *Curriculum and Aims*, New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- [41]Wesley, P. W. and Buysse, V. (2006). "Ethics and Evidence in Consultation," *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education* 26: 131-141.
- [42]Wiggins, g., and McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- [43]Wu, Z. (2003). How to teach "morality"? On the design and teaching of "professional ethics" courses (Seminar lecture notes, 2003).
- [44]Wu, Q., & Huang, X. (2005). The connotation and practice of teacher professional ethics standards. *Educational Research Monthly*, 132(2005), 44–58.
- [45]Yu, H. Y. (2005). Virtue-based professional ethics teaching. *Philosophy and Culture*, 32(8), 127-145
- [46]Zhang, Y. A Practical Study on the Integration of College Students' Professional Ethics Education into College English Teaching Based on Data Analysis. 2022 3rd International Conference on Education, Knowledge and Information Management (ICEKIM). Pp71-74
- [47]Zhang, B., Wu, W., & Su, F. (2012). Constructing professional standards for teachers with disabilities and professional ethics for special education teachers. Unpublished final report of the Ministry of Education Special Education Group Commissioned project. Ministry of Education Special Education Group.
- [48]Zhuang, D. M. (1996). *Library Professional Ethics*. Taipei: Wenhua Library Management Information Co., Ltd.
- [49]Burke, D. (2003). *What Does University Teach? Eight Courses Proposed by Harvard Presidents*. Translated by Zhang, S. N. Taipei: Commonwealth Publishing.