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Research on the Effectiveness and Boundaries of Generative Artificial Intelligence-Assisted Development of Ideological and Political Education Resources in College English Courses

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Abstract: The rapid spread of generative artificial intelligence has opened a new technical path for developing ideological and political education resources in College English courses, while also triggering ongoing debate over educational effectiveness and value risks. Rather than making an either-or binary judgment, this study takes "conditional efficacy" as its core analytical perspective. It disentangles the operating logic and preconditions of AI-assisted resource development from three levels—the efficiency mechanism, the adaptation mechanism, and the human–AI collaboration structure—and examines actual educational outcomes and limitations across three dimensions: resource supply, student participation, and teacher development. It then sorts out the generative logic and potential risks of cognitive, value, and ethical boundaries, and finally proposes a systematic governance path that regulates efficacy through boundaries, providing a practical framework for college English teachers to use AI in developing curriculum-based ideological and political education resources in a standardized and efficient manner.

Keywords: Generative artificial intelligence; College English; Curriculum-based ideological and political education; Resource development; Application boundaries

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1. Introduction

As the digital transformation of education deepens, generative artificial intelligence has gradually been integrated into various stages of university teaching and has provided a new technical path for developing ideological and political education resources in College English courses. Current discussions often fall into binary opposition: proponents emphasize the efficiency gains and personalized adaptation advantages brought by technology, while skeptics focus on the risks of ideological deviation and cultural misreading.

What truly has research value, however, is not the yes-or-no judgment of "whether it can be used," but the preconditions under which technological efficacy holds and the application boundaries that cannot be crossed. In addition, College English uses a non-native language as its carrier, and its corpus carries Western discourse presuppositions; cultural translation must balance linguistic accuracy and value fidelity, so resource development faces more complex quality requirements than ideological and political courses taught in the native language [1]. This paper proceeds layer by layer from efficacy mechanisms, multidimensional outcomes, and threefold boundaries to governance paths, exploring a balanced path between technological empowerment and value adherence, in the hope of providing a reference for standardized practice in frontline teaching.

2. Mechanisms and preconditions of generative artificial intelligence-assisted development of ideological and political education resources

2.1. Efficiency mechanism and its prerequisites

The efficiency mechanism of generative AI-assisted development of ideological and political education resources is chiefly reflected in two dimensions: content production and scenario creation. In content supply, AI can rapidly generate thematic materials such as news interpretations and historical reviews, significantly increasing the speed of resource supply. However, for this advantage to be translated into educational value, the generated content must be incorporated into a teaching sequence with clear objectives and serve an established educational logic, rather than being piled up in fragments. In scenario creation, AI can simulate authentic scenarios such as cross-cultural communication, promoting the integration of ideological and political education from "explicit attachment" to "contextual embedding." The key to its effectiveness is that teachers must define in advance the ideological focus and discussion boundaries of the scenario, rather than allowing the model to generate narrative frameworks on its own according to statistical logic.

2.2. Adaptation mechanism and its conditional constraints

The adaptation mechanism of generative AI offers technical possibilities for personalized supply of ideological and political education resources, but its effectiveness has clear limits. AI can push differentiated materials based on students' language proficiency and cultural cognition data, promoting a shift from "uniform distribution" to "precise matching." Yet this effect depends heavily on data quality and, more importantly, on teachers' professional judgment—algorithms can identify behavioral preferences, but what kind of value guidance students need cannot be fully decided by algorithms. At the same time, personalization contains an inherent tension between "precision" and "narrowing": if AI recommends resources solely according to students' interests, those necessary value issues that students have not yet noticed may be systematically ignored by the algorithm, thereby narrowing students' cognitive horizons.

2.3. Human–AI collaboration as a structural condition for efficacy

Human–AI collaboration is the structural condition for realizing the efficacy of generative AI-assisted development of ideological and political education resources; technological efficacy is always built on a collaboration structure led by teachers [2]. The reason the "three-stage integrated" practice model has achieved positive results lies in the retention of teachers' judgmental intervention at each stage: anchoring the ideological direction before class, guiding the process of discernment during class, and adjusting

guidance strategies after class. Educational efficacy comes from the collaboration structure rather than from technological output alone. Accordingly, three minimal conditions for efficacy can be distilled: prompts embed clear ideological and political intentions; generated results undergo teacher value review; and resources are incorporated into learning tasks that stimulate student thinking. None of the three can be omitted; otherwise, the advantage of technological efficiency may idle or even deviate from the educational direction.

3. A multidimensional examination of resource development outcomes

3.1. Resource supply level

From the perspective of resource supply, generative AI has a clear speed advantage in identifying ideological and political elements in textbook texts and generating related materials, and can produce cross-unit and cross-theme candidate materials in a short time, expanding the coverage of ideological and political education resources [3]. However, "breadth" itself is not equivalent to educational effectiveness; the key to effectiveness lies in whether teachers can select content that matches the cognitive access points of students at a particular stage. At the same time, AI-generated contextualized materials promote the integration of ideological and political education from the traditional "labeling-style" rigid superimposition to natural infiltration, but "natural" does not equal "traceless." If ideological and political intentions are excessively diluted in pursuit of natural expression, the clarity of value guidance will instead be weakened.

3.2. Student participation level

At the level of student participation, many practice-based studies have observed increases in students' classroom participation, and immediate questioning and feedback in human–AI interaction are regarded as important factors stimulating learning interest. However, the relationship between increased participation and value internalization is not simply linear; many lively classroom interactions often remain at the level of language practice and do not touch the deeper processing of value judgment. Truly substantive educational effectiveness is reflected in whether students can conduct value examination and correction of AI-generated content. For example, in the teaching design of "critical pre-translation editing—critical post-translation editing," students identify and correct stance biases in AI translations; this process itself is training in critical thinking and value judgment, and the effectiveness is embodied in students learning to question AI's biases rather than passively accepting what AI provides.

3.3. Teacher development level

From the dimension of teacher development, AI does effectively reduce the time cost of material collection and first-draft generation, giving teachers the opportunity to redirect the saved time and attention to front-end goal setting and back-end value feedback in ideological and political design. However, this redistribution of attention does not occur automatically. If the saved time is used to generate more scattered materials rather than to deepen value judgment, the reduction in burden may instead lead to a dilution of teaching judgment. At the same time, two different effects must be distinguished. When AI serves as a "thinking scaffold" to help teachers open up more design ideas, it can enhance teachers' capacity for ideological and political design. Still, if AI becomes an "answer provider" that replaces teachers in completing ideological and political judgments, in the long run it will weaken teachers' independent judgment of the value of ideological and political education resources.

4. Where do the boundaries lie? The generative logic of cognitive, value, and ethical boundaries

4.1. Cognitive boundaries

Cognitive boundaries are the first line of defense that cannot be crossed in AI-assisted development of ideological and political education resources. On the one hand, the factual hallucinations of AI-generated content are particularly harmful in ideological and political scenarios. Problems such as deviations in historical event details and inaccurate policy formulations not only reduce the teaching usability of resources but may also shake students' judgment of the overall credibility of ideological and political content. AI is essentially unable to distinguish "generation fluency" from "factual correctness," whereas ideological and political education treats factual accuracy as a rigid baseline. On the other hand, the limitations of algorithms and training corpora bring implicit value biases. Such risks do not appear as obvious errors but are embedded in the default logic of narrative perspectives and example selection. If teachers lack a sense of examination, biases will enter the classroom along with the resources.

4.2. Value boundaries

The core of value boundaries is that the responsibility for ideological and political education cannot be transferred. The responsibility for value orientation in curriculum-based ideological and political education can never be delegated to technical systems. No matter how prudent the wording of AI-generated content may be, the ultimate subject of value gatekeeping can only be the teacher, as explicitly required in relevant application guidelines of education departments [4]. The currently common "technical preliminary review + teacher final review" model responds to the need for gatekeeping in procedure, but it has inherent limits: if teachers assume that preliminary review has already completed screening, final review easily degenerates into formal confirmation. The real effectiveness of value gatekeeping depends on whether teachers hold ideological and political judgment standards independent of AI, rather than merely choosing among options given by algorithms.

4.3. Ethical boundaries

Adherence to ethical boundaries concerns the educational bottom line of technological application. The push for personalized ideological and political education resources relies on the collection and analysis of student learning data, and data in ideological and political scenarios often involve inferences about value orientations and ideological states. This requires clarifying reasonable limits on data use: inferability does not mean collectability, and collectability does not mean misuse; data governance norms must be implemented before technological application [5]. A deeper ethical consideration lies in protecting student subjectivity. When AI takes over material generation, scenario creation, and even guided questioning, students face preset discourse paths. Overly smooth AI dialogue may instead deprive students of the cognitive friction necessary for value growth, causing them to lose opportunities to confront confusion and make independent judgments.

5. How to govern: A conditional path for regulating efficacy through boundaries

5.1. Enhancing prompt quality through the "codifiability of ideological and political intentions"

To improve the educational efficacy of generative AI-assisted development of ideological and political

education resources, the first step is to start with prompt design at the source, consolidating prompt quality through the "codifiability of ideological and political intentions" and fundamentally preventing generated content from deviating from teaching objectives. Many teachers' prompts in resource development remain at a generic level, merely requesting the generation of English materials on a certain topic without embedding clear ideological and political teaching logic; the resulting materials appear rich in content but lack clear educational direction. Prompts should be shifted from generic to ideological-and-political task-oriented, explicitly incorporating three core elements: ideological focus, cognitive difficulty, and expected student behavior. For example, instead of the vague "generate English reading materials about traditional culture," one might specify "generate an English text centered on controversies over the international communication of traditional culture, suitable for sophomore language difficulty, guiding students to examine the boundaries between confidence and inclusiveness in cultural communication," so that the generated results carry testable teaching intentions from the outset. At the same time, prompt design itself should become a training ground for teachers' ideological and political literacy. Incorporating prompt design into regular teaching research activities is valuable not for mastering fancy prompting techniques but for forcing teachers to transform vague ideological and political educational intentions into clear and operable teaching language. If one cannot clearly state "what one wants students to think about and debate in this material," it essentially reveals that the ideological and political teaching design itself is vague and empty; teaching objectives need to be refined first before discussing the application of technical tools.

5.2. Rebuilding the value review process through "independent judgment first"

To safeguard the value boundaries of ideological and political education resources, the core is to rebuild a value review process centered on teachers' independent judgment and prevent technological output from inversely dominating value judgment. In many institutions, the current review process first looks at AI-generated content and then judges its quality, making it easy for teachers to be led astray by the algorithm's fluent expression and fall into a formalistic review of "passing what looks reasonable," making it difficult to detect implicit value biases. Effective value review should adjust the order of judgment and implement a "set standards first, then review output" model. Before contacting AI-generated results, teachers should first clarify the ideological and political bottom line and value orientation of the current resource development, list unacceptable expression deviations and stance principles that must be made explicit, and use these as a fixed reference framework for review, rather than being led by the surface plausibility of generated content. At the same time, the substantiation of review records should be promoted. Value review cannot remain at the simple check of "pass/fail"; it should simultaneously record what specific content was modified and on what basis. These modification records are not only visible traces of teachers' ideological and political judgment but also provide authentic materials for subsequent teaching research activities that can be reviewed and analyzed, promoting synchronous improvement of the value gatekeeping capacity of the entire teaching team.

5.3. Reconstructing student tasks through "critical use"

The governance of AI-assisted development of ideological and political education resources should not be limited to content gatekeeping on the teacher side but should extend to the design of learning tasks on the student side. Through task reconstruction based on "critical use," technological tools can be transformed into carriers for training value judgment ability. In the resource application stage, a "problem-finding" task module can be specially set up to guide students to treat AI-generated English materials as objects of

examination rather than the endpoint of learning, actively identify possible culturally stereotyped expressions, implicit narrative biases, and even factual omissions, and attempt corrective expression from a Chinese standpoint. Such a design turns AI from a mere "content source" into training material for critical thinking and value judgment, and also pushes the goal of curriculum-based ideological and political education from enabling students to "accept correct content" to cultivating students' "ability to form correct judgments," achieving a deeper upgrade of educational objectives. At the same time, value experience segments with "no AI friction" should be consciously preserved. Not all ideological and political learning is suitable for human–AI collaboration; emotional resonance, embodied experience, and sincere cultural expression are easily weakened in warmth and appeal by technological mediation. Governance paths should clearly delineate teaching segments that do not require technological intervention, avoid blindly pursuing full-process technological coverage, and leave ample space for genuine intellectual collision and emotional exchange.

5.4. Replacing generic training with "tiered capacity building"

Safeguarding application boundaries and unleashing technological efficacy ultimately depend on the systematic improvement of teachers' capacities. Traditional generic tool-operation training can hardly meet the complex requirements of ideological and political scenarios and needs to shift to a tiered and categorized capacity-building path [6]. For teachers, the core capacity is not proficiency in operating a particular AI platform, but the conditional judgment ability to accurately determine under what conditions AI-generated resources can directly enter the classroom and under what conditions they must be revised or even intercepted. Therefore, training content should shift from function demonstrations to condition discrimination and case review, carrying out practical training with authentic resource development cases so that teachers can master value gatekeeping standards and methods in specific scenarios. At the same time, the specific scale of application boundaries cannot be delineated once and for all by abstract principles. For example, what degree of AI participation is reasonable and what kind of cultural expression constitutes distortion require continuous case discussions within teaching research communities to form operable consensus standards gradually. This process of boundary negotiation is itself a process in which teachers' ideological and political judgment moves from individual cognition to public consensus, and it can improve the ideological and political control capacity of the teaching team as a whole.

6. Conclusion

Generative AI-assisted development of ideological and political education resources in College English courses is essentially a dynamic adaptation between technological tools and educational objectives. Neither should boundary risks be ignored because of the efficiency advantages of technology, nor should technological value be wholly rejected because of potential value hazards. The core of safeguarding the threefold application boundaries and unleashing the educational efficacy of technology always lies in upholding teachers' subject status in education. Through prompt design optimization, review process reconstruction, student task upgrading, and tiered capacity building, a human–AI collaborative resource development model with clear rights and responsibilities can be constructed. In the future, with continuous technological iteration and deepening teaching practice, application standards in different teaching scenarios can be further refined, promoting technology empowerment and value guidance to resonate together, so that technology always serves the fundamental goal of fostering virtue through education.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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