

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ONLINE TEACHING OF POLITICAL THEORY LECTURERS IN UNIVERSITIES TODAY

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Abstract: *E-learning promotes the application of information, communication technology and devices to meet people's diverse learning requirements in the most convenient way. In the context of Covid-19 epidemic, e-learning is being effectively applied in teaching at all levels, particularly in higher education. In political theory courses, which are mainly theory, it is possible to flexibly apply e-learning. To implement this method well, lecturers and universities must have a thorough preparation process, synchronous innovation content, examination and evaluation methods, and flexible combinations of advanced teaching methods for the best efficiency in teaching. The article focuses on clarifying the following points: the preparation process and online teaching of political theory subjects; achieved results; and some recommendations for solutions to improve the quality of e-learning at universities today.*

Keywords: *higher education, e-learning, improve quality, Political theory...*

I. Introduction

Political theory, including scientific modules of Basic Principles of Marxist-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's Ideology, History of Vietnamese communist party, Theory of State and Law, and Scientific socialism, were all important subjects taught in universities. Comprehensive and balanced development in the domains of ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics. These subjects are highly theoretical, academic and in

conscience, require high teaching capacities, qualifications, and methods of lecturers. Especially, in online training, this requirement is higher.

Be aware of the above problem and in order to prevent learning from discontinuity, implement the policy "Promoting the building of a learning society, lifelong learning" [1], The leaders, managers of universities have issued resolutions and directives to direct agencies, departments and sectors

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to be proactive with many solutions to improve the capacity, qualifications and teaching quality of political theory subject lecturers. In conditions of online teaching, universities have thoroughly grasped the Communist Party's viewpoint: "Promote research, transfer and strongly apply the achievements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in all fields of social life" [2], studied advanced teaching models of domestic and foreign educational institutions, implemented "shortcuts", "preemptive" in science and technology, invested in upgrading facilities and equipment for e-learning and teaching, selecting network operators, purchasing online teaching software copyrights, etc.

Most universities have organized training for staff and lecturers on the use of online teaching software; created an account for each lecturer and student to use on computers, phones, and tablets with an internet connection; ensure safety and efficiency... Google, Zoom, Skype, Microsoft team, Facebook workplace application, and other popular software were used.

However, online teaching is still new to some universities and rarely used for theory lecturers. When implementing online training, many shortcomings and limitations were revealed, such as the amount of knowledge taught online is less than face-to-face due to the time for online teaching being less than face-to-face teaching. The interaction with lecturers about the lesson through an intermediary device makes many students feel uncomfortable and inflexible in terms of words and ideas. Some students in the

process of listening to lectures still have to do work, so sometimes they don't pay attention during the lecture. In the online learning process, the internet connection and smart connected devices have errors or problems with operation... So, it has a big impact on the quality of teaching and learning of various subjects, including political theory in universities.

II. Theoretical basis

2.1. Online training lecturers

The development of information and communication technology and its application in education has brought a change in the teaching and learning process.

Electronic learning (e-Learning) is a form of learning through which learners can self-study anytime, anywhere through electronic multimedia materials (lectures, voiceovers, audio, images, videos, graphics, etc.). Lecturers participating in online training must be competent in online teaching skills; be able to manage, orient, guide, and answer learners through online training; be proficient in using the online learning management system and information technology means as required by universities and the Ministry of Education and Training's lecturer standards. [4].

Online training is teaching activity through application software on the internet environment, ensuring that lecturers and learners interact synchronously or asynchronously in the teaching and learning process. An e-learning system is an online teaching software system and information technology infrastructure (hereinafter referred to as the e-learning

technical infrastructure) that allows managers and organizations to train through an e-learning environment, including software to organize online teaching directly; an e-learning management system; an e-learning content management system [3].

It has set new requirements for online training lecturers on information technology competencies and other pedagogical skills (Carril te al, 2013) [5]. Much research has shown that lecturers have the following roles:

- *The lecturer plays the roles of syllabus builder, learning materials manager, and evaluator.* Lecturers contribute to the development of course programs, documents, and e-learning materials; conduct direct, honest, and objective assessments based on modern and scientific assessment methods.

- *The lecturer plays the learning content guiding role.* The lecturer orients the subject content as well as the lesson for students, key knowledge logically systematizing and matching with the students' grasping ability.

- *The lecturer plays the role of revealing knowledge.* When researching new content, problem, or lesson, the lecturer suggests promoting research of learners' activities, helping students study knowledge in the right direction of the lecturer and content learned in a subject or lesson.

- *The lecturer plays a supportive role for the students.* The content of subjects and lessons will be made more attractive and easier to understand if the lecturer supports the students in researching,

documenting, and absorbing knowledge during the study.

- *The lecturer plays the role of a guide to the students.* The lecturer guides students through lessons, reading documents, doing exercises, and thinking about specific cases, assisting them in transitioning from the learning process to self-learning and transferring human knowledge into their own.

- *The lecturer plays the role of evaluating and testing student outcomes.* The lecturer makes comments and evaluations on students' learning results to identify each student's thinking in the learning process and helps students have feedback on the learning results to learn better contemporaneously.

- *The lecturer plays the role of facilitator.* Lecturer coordinates, guides and promotes the teaching and learning process in order to achieve goals.

2.2. Political theory subjects online training lecturers at universities today

Lecturers do main activities such as: organizing e-learning lessons to give lectures and guide students to study; assigning learning tasks; testing and evaluating students' learning results; monitoring and supporting students to exploit learning content from e-learning materials; advising, supporting, and answering questions of students.

Online training in political theory subjects is similar to others. Before starting the course, the lecturer conducts content compilation, developing learning guide documents and popular learning plans for students. Students access a

virtual classroom to master the planning and execution of the learning process. Contents are compiled, designed, and packaged by lecturers and designers into e-learning materials with various formats such as text, video, question banks, case studies, open discussions, etc. These materials are put on an e-learning system for students to study. The lecturer will suggest topics for discussion on the forum, and students will ask questions to clarify the content. In addition, students will attend learning sessions where instructors will guide and answer students' learning content directly according to topics. A lecturer can also give students practice questions. These questions should be directional, suggestive, and have flexible application of the views of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's Ideology, Vietnamese communist party's point of view and applies it to life so that students can be easy to think and apply them. Through interactions and instructions on the students' work, lecturers encourage and motivate learners to maintain their learning. During the learning process in the virtual classroom, students can do exercises at the end of each lesson to assess acquired knowledge, helping students assess their learning level as well as consolidate accumulated knowledge. Lecturers have the role of providing assignments, tests, and evaluations of student learning outcomes.

2.3. Factors affecting online training process of political theory subjects in universities

Political theory subjects training program

The training program includes subjects, training objectives, learners' tasks, knowledge and skills to be acquired, training methods, lecture theory timeline, case study, test and evaluation methods at the end of the course.

In particular, the political theory subjects' academic programs must be based on practical needs, closely adhere to the training objectives, and ensure advanced science. The training program also must be dynamic and continuous. The programs and content updates are closely related to the overall training industry, contributing to the skill knowledge and ethical practice of students.

E-learning materials

The e-learning materials, which were built completely, diversely, and attractively, will be a tool to help students and lecturers exploit, process, and acquire scientific knowledge. In addition, it is also necessary to have reference materials, supplementary materials such as documents of the Party and State... in order to supplement knowledge and enhance scientific knowledge in accordance with each historical development period.

The quality teaching of the lecturers

Online training lecturers play an important role in guiding students to study, helping them acquire knowledge, and forming and developing students' capacities and qualities to achieve their goals.

The online training method applies modern information and communication technology. It requires political theory lecturers to adapt to new methods, be

learner-centered, have skills and methods of teaching in an e-learning environment, update advanced teaching methods, and inspire and promote students' self-study ability with the enthusiasm of the lecturers.

Technology infrastructure for e-learning

Technology infrastructure is also an important factor affecting the quality of teaching, including online technology system platforms, content management systems, learner management systems, data management systems, etc. The systems operate smoothly and stably, helping to keep the training process continuously updated.

III. Methodology

Improving the quality of online training of political theory lecturers in universities is based on methodology such as observing, synthesizing, analyzing, and proving... The first and main method used is the method of summarizing the practical experience. Accordingly, the authors have experience in teaching political theory subjects and operating online training. Over the last few years, the authors have drawn the advantages and disadvantages of online teaching, which have generalized into the knowledge required to write this study.

The writing is also based on the new requirements that have been set for lecturers in general and political theory lecturers in particular. The new requirements for education and training reform according to Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW, dated November 4, 2013: “fundamentally and comprehensively renovate education and training to meet the requirements of

industrialization and modernization in the context of a socialist-oriented market economy and international integration”; request for effective implementation of Resolution No. 35-NQ/TW, dated October 22, 2018, of the Government Cabinet “Strengthening the protection of the Party’s ideological foundation and fighting against wrong views, hostile in the new situation”...

IV. Research results on basic solutions to improve the online teaching quality of political theory subject lecturers at universities

Online teaching of Political Theory subjects has evolved and will continue to evolve in tandem with staff and lecturers’ awareness and ability to exploit and apply information technology, particularly political theory lecturers. In order to teach quality political theory subjects through e-learning, lecturers need to focus on content and requirements. There are some suggested solutions that follow:

Firstly, choose focus content, prepare lesson plans and allocate appropriate time for each module.

Political theory lectures are compiled according to the standard curriculum of the Ministry of Education and Training, or the specific set of lectures of each university. So, they will be convenient for lecturers to teach and for students to search. Due to limited online teaching time, it is not possible to spread out the content, but teachers need to focus on the key knowledge, choose the illustrative examples that are close to the content and standards, and best represent the theory to save time for students to be

able to absorb the lesson. Accordingly, there is only introductory content to ensure the systematic and logical nature of the lesson, orienting students to self-study, then spending time mainly to teach and answer questions that are identified as important points.

Online teaching, the preparation of lesson plans and lectures, especially lesson plans and electronic lectures for theoretical subjects, should be selected, designed to focus on the central content, and use appropriate effects, suitable language to ensure a simple and easy-to-see for learners to follow. Teaching online, learners listen more than they see. They should avoid designing too many slides or putting on slides with too many colors or font sizes...

Second, the issues raised for discussion or multiple choice questions must really adhere to the content, have an easy-to-understand and diverse design, and clearly specify the time to answer.

Direct or indirect communication is necessary to create interaction with learners. The questions are used to cover the entire course content. Students can mobilize knowledge immediately, research and answer easily in a short time. Or let “order” students research a certain issue related to the lesson that they are in charge of, promoting the students’ initiative and positivity.

Questions are being given to students at the same time as e-learning material before class starts. It is necessary to diversify assessment forms to encourage the creativity of students. Lecturers emphasize the importance

of organizing synchronized classes on e-learning systems. The debated issues given to students should be related to the views of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, etc., and request students to evaluate, comment, apply, and compare current reality. Lecturers can collect students’ ideas and feedback. Each selected topic will help students understand the lesson’s basic issues and apply them in reality. It is also given answers to students through suggested answers after each discussion. In the following topics, lecturers can send reference materials to students, including videos, text, et al., for students to learn before lessons. On the other hand, lecturers can design multiple-choice question forms to increase interaction, independent research thinking of students and offer them a certain period of time to do it. This will create a happy atmosphere in the classroom and attract the attention of students who will enjoy the lesson.

The testing and assessment forms also need to be more flexible than teaching in an offline class. Accordingly, after each online lecture, it is recommended to provide content that requires students to write essays. These can be handwritten or typed, with a length of about 3–5 A4 pages, ensuring the theory is attached to reality. Students do the test, send photos or scans via zalo, email, or forum. Lecturers will download, grade, and comment. Each student will have more time to study the lesson content, consolidate and deepen the knowledge acquired in class.

Third, improve lecturer qualifications in information technology exploitation and application at universities.

This is a particularly important solution, which directly determines the quality of online teaching lecturers. In other words, it is not possible to have good and quality online lectures when the lecturers have poor capacity to exploit and apply information technology. Accordingly, lecturers need to actively research, improve their understanding, exploit, and apply information technology in the process of compiling lesson plans, lectures, and teaching reality, adapting themselves to technology. They must improve their ability to handle situations arising, such as: getting out of class; or being hijacked as a speaker... Lecturers teaching political theory should research to know how to use it, contact the technical team to support teaching, manage training, and train online when there are unresolvable situations.

Before the class, the lecturer needs to spend a certain amount of time reviewing the electronic lesson plan, entering the room, taking steps to stabilize online classes, reminding students to turn on and adjust the camera, choosing a quiet space to study, and checking the learning aids... Besides, lecturers coordinate with the class manager to roll up attendance and manage students in class.

The lecturers must focus on strengthening the methods and sticking to the target audience to deliver online political theory lectures effectively. It is necessary to pay attention to many issues such as coordination, technical team, and academic advisory board, especially the students' self-discipline in learning. Each student must take the initiative to determine his or her attitude, thought,

serious study style, self-discipline, and self-study. Besides, each student needs to increase their focus, actively think, and discuss the issues that the lecturer poses, ensuring it is direct and concise. After each lecture, students need to exploit the system of materials, ask questions, and follow the direction of the lecturer.

V. Conclusion

Thus, in order to improve the quality of teaching for political theory modules, the management board of universities and lecturers need to be well-prepared for the online teaching process. Besides, in addition to the initiative, flexibility, and creativity of the lecturers, students are also an important factor in each lesson to really help the learning process. The lecturer is flexible in clarifying the content that students do not understand or the basic content and views. In creating study habits for students, lecturers clarify each main topic, flexibly teach students, and assist students in becoming accustomed to commenting, evaluating, and assisting in class. Political theory modules: Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's Ideology, History of Vietnamese communist party, Theory of the State and law... from theory to reality (manifestations, causes, solutions) help students grasp the lesson knowledge as well as apply it in real life. Therefore, lecturers teaching these courses also need to be required in terms of competence, qualifications, and teaching methods.

The above issues can be the necessary reference content to teach political theory subjects online with high quality and effectiveness while achieving

the goals. Of course, each specific lecturer, with different capabilities and strengths, is in charge of different teaching content - the required content is also different. Applying the above issues requires flexibility and creativity.

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