



An Integrated Teaching Model: The Combination of Traditional Methods and Digital Technology in Teaching Political Theory Today

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ABSTRACT: In the context of digital transformation and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, teaching Political Theory requires significant innovation to meet the demands of modern education. This paper analyzes the strengths and limitations of traditional teaching methods and digital technology in Political Theory instruction. While traditional methods ensure theoretical depth and ideological orientation, digital technology enhances interactivity, visualization, and learner engagement.

The paper proposes an integrated teaching model (blended learning) that combines face-to-face instruction with digital tools such as AI, e-learning platforms, multimedia, flipped classrooms, and online interactive systems. This model helps transform learning from passive reception into active knowledge construction while improving teaching effectiveness and learning quality.

The study affirms that integrating traditional pedagogy with digital technology is an appropriate and inevitable direction for enhancing Political Theory education in the digital era.

KEYWORDS: Political Theory education, digital transformation, blended learning, traditional teaching methods, digital technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI), flipped classroom, higher education.

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Teaching political theory at universities is a strategically important task that directly contributes to safeguarding the Party's ideological foundation and fostering political steadfastness among learners and students. Nowadays, this work is facing intertwined opportunities and challenges arising from two era-defining trends: the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the increasingly complex ideological struggle in cyberspace. This reality requires political theory education to undergo a strong transformation.

Traditional teaching methods continue to play a foundational role; however, they still tend to be academic and dry, lacking sufficient appeal and interactivity to compete with the multidimensional and complex flows of information in the digital environment. Innovation and the proactive application of advanced technologies in teaching have now become mandatory requirements, consistent with the Party's policies, especially the spirit of Politburo Resolution No. 57-NQ/TW on "breakthroughs in the development of science, technology, innovation, and national digital transformation."

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF POLITICAL THEORY EDUCATION

Political theory education is a key task in the ideological work of the Communist Party of Vietnam, aimed at equipping learners with theoretical knowledge in a fundamental and systematic manner. It helps learners develop a scientific worldview and methodology, enhance their theoretical thinking capacity, strengthen leadership abilities, political courage, and revolutionary moral qualities, thereby enabling them to successfully fulfill assigned responsibilities.

The system of political theory knowledge has been crystallized from scientific doctrines such as Marxist-Leninist Philosophy, Marxist-Leninist Political Economy, Scientific Socialism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, and the History of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Teaching political theory is a specialized educational activity intended to convey the system of knowledge concerning Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, the Party's guidelines and policies, as well as the laws and policies of the Vietnamese State. Its purpose is to form a scientific worldview, political conviction, political courage, and revolutionary ethics for learners. At present, political theory subjects are taught within the system of universities, colleges, and political schools (elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels), including the Court Academy.

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Teaching political theory plays a very important role in helping learners form the worldview and methodology of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, thereby enabling them to correctly and creatively apply theory to practical activities. On that basis, it helps learners remain steadfast in Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, while strengthening confidence in the Party's guidelines and policies and the State's laws and regulations. As a result, learners remain committed to the ideal goal of national independence associated with socialism, thoroughly grasp the Party's guidelines and viewpoints, and possess the ability to apply such knowledge in life. V.I. Lenin affirmed: "Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement."¹

Throughout the process of leading the revolution, the Communist Party of Vietnam has clearly recognized the position, role, and importance of political theory education in protecting the Party's ideological foundation. Conclusion No. 94-KL/TW dated March 28, 2014, issued by the Secretariat, emphasized the need to: "Renew the study of political theory within the education management system in order to create new progress with higher quality and effectiveness, thereby contributing to ensuring that Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, and the Party's guidelines and viewpoints maintain a leading role in social life."²

The Documents of the 13th National Congress of the Party also identified the need to: "Continue strongly innovating the content and methods of ideological work in a proactive, practical, timely, and effective direction; enhance the combative nature, educational value, and persuasiveness in the dissemination, education, and study of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, the Party's viewpoints and guidelines, and the State's laws and policies."³ At the same time, political theory education must aim to "strengthen the protection of the Party's ideological foundation and resolutely and regularly combat and refute wrongful, hostile, and politically opportunistic viewpoints."⁴

Teaching political theory in the current context is facing a strong demand for innovation in order to meet the changing characteristics of learners in the digital era. While traditional methods continue to play an important role in transmitting foundational and standardized systems of knowledge, digital technology opens up new possibilities for enhancing interactivity, visualization, and the personalization of the learning process. Therefore, building an integrated teaching model that effectively combines these two groups of methods has become an inevitable trend.

2. TRADITIONAL METHODS IN TEACHING POLITICAL THEORY

Traditional methods in teaching Political Theory are primarily based on the central role of the lecturer, with the objective of conveying the theoretical system in an accurate, logical, and ideologically oriented manner.

First, the lecture-based teaching method

Lecturing is the most common method in teaching Political Theory, not only because of its traditional nature but also due to the characteristics of the subject, which require precision, systematic structure, and clear ideological orientation. In essence, this is a method of knowledge transmission based on deductive logic, in which the lecturer plays the central role and proactively organizes content in sequence, from basic concepts to principles and laws. For example, when teaching about the relationship between matter and consciousness in Marxist-Leninist philosophy, the lecturer must not only present definitions but also clarify different levels of cognition: from identifying matter as what exists prior to and independently of consciousness, to analyzing consciousness as a reflection of objective reality, and finally demonstrating the determining role of matter over consciousness in all social activities.

The core strength of this method lies in its ability to "standardize cognition," meaning that it helps students approach theoretical content correctly from the outset, thereby avoiding misunderstandings or distorted interpretations. This is particularly important in Political Theory subjects, which are highly abstract and easily interpreted subjectively. According to *University Teaching Methods*, lecturing is an effective means of transmitting a large volume of knowledge within a short period of time.

However, the limitations of this method extend beyond merely reducing learners' activeness; more profoundly, it may create an "illusion of understanding," whereby students feel they have understood the material because the lecture is delivered smoothly, while in reality they have not undergone the process of independent analysis and application.

Second, the dialogue method (question-and-answer)

The question-and-answer method serves as a transition from knowledge transmission to cognitive interaction. From a pedagogical perspective, this method is not simply about asking questions, but rather a process of guiding thinking through a structured system of questions, ranging from knowledge recall to analysis and evaluation. This process compels students not only to remember but also to think and reason. The strength of the dialogue method lies in its ability to create "cognitive conflict," when students recognize gaps in their understanding and actively seek ways to fill them. However, the effectiveness of this method depends greatly on the lecturer's questioning skills and the students' level of preparation; if the questions are too easy, they will not stimulate thinking, but if they are too difficult, students may become passive or avoid participation.

Third, the group discussion method

This method is particularly suitable for developing critical thinking and the ability to apply theory to practice. Unlike dialogue methods (which usually take place between the lecturer and an individual student), group discussion creates a multidimensional exchange environment in which students must present, defend, and adjust their viewpoints in response to others. For example, when

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studying the role of the State in the socialist-oriented market economy, lecturers may assign groups to analyze a specific policy, such as electricity price regulation or business support policies after a crisis. During the discussion process, students not only apply theory but also confront differing perspectives, thereby recognizing the complexity of reality. The value of this method lies in transforming knowledge from “something learned” into “something debated.” However, without clear guidance (for example, the absence of central questions or evaluation criteria), discussions can easily become emotional exchanges lacking theoretical foundation or dominated by a few more active individuals within the group.

Fourth, the method of analyzing classical texts

The analysis of classical texts plays a distinctive role in teaching Political Theory because it allows students to directly approach the original sources of theoretical thought. When studying works such as *The Communist Manifesto* or *Duong Kach Menh (The Revolutionary Path)*, students not only absorb the content but also learn methods of reasoning, argument construction, and the use of evidence employed by great thinkers. This process helps develop systematic theoretical thinking rather than mere memorization of conclusions. However, the limitation of this method is that it requires a high level of reading comprehension, abstract thinking ability, and substantial time investment; without appropriate guidance, students may find the material difficult to access or engage with it only superficially.

In general, traditional methods in teaching Political Theory possess clear advantages in ensuring the systematic nature, depth, and accurate orientation of knowledge. However, their major limitation lies not only in reducing learners’ activeness, but also in their failure to fully exploit students’ capacities for self-study, interaction, and practical application within the context of modern education. These limitations create the need for supplementation and integration with new teaching methods, especially through the application of digital technology.

3. DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING POLITICAL THEORY

Regulation No. 11-QĐ/TW dated May 19, 2021, issued by the Secretariat regarding standard political schools, also introduced criteria aimed at standardizing and modernizing provincial political schools, thereby creating momentum for schools to strengthen the application of information technology in the management and teaching of Political Theory.

In 2024, the Politburo issued Resolution No. 57-NQ/TW dated December 22, 2024, on breakthroughs in the development of science and technology, innovation, and national digital transformation, paving the way for initiatives such as the “Digital Literacy for All” movement — a national program to popularize digital knowledge and skills among the entire population, launched at the end of March 2025 with the participation of the Prime Minister.

The development of digital technology has created new methods in teaching Political Theory, contributing to overcoming the limitations of traditional teaching methods.

First, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which is exerting profound impacts on all aspects of social life, AI has become a core technological factor, bringing both opportunities and challenges to every field, including the teaching of Political Theory. AI offers enormous potential in personalizing learning pathways, “softening” content that has traditionally been considered dry and abstract, and freeing lecturers from mechanical tasks so they can focus more on inspiring and guiding students’ thinking.

Political Theory subjects involve a vast body of knowledge, and AI serves as a data-processing tool capable of self-learning and generating new content. It enables lecturers to quickly systematize knowledge, filter and verify the authenticity of sources, and automate the search for quotations, statistics, and related arguments.

With AI technology, learners can access Political Theory knowledge anytime and anywhere through online learning platforms, mobile applications, and learning management systems. Abstract concepts and complex theoretical issues can be proactively explored and reviewed multiple times by students through AI-personalized digital resources. This not only addresses the issue of limited classroom time but also strongly promotes self-directed learning, transforming the process of knowledge acquisition from passive to active.

Generative AI allows theoretical content to become more “accessible” and “youth-oriented” by supporting the creation of creative and visual learning products. Instead of merely reading lengthy texts, students can interact with intelligent chatbots to ask questions about terminology, learn through animated videos, vivid infographics, or podcasts analyzing real-life situations. This two-way interaction helps students become more engaged and enables them to absorb and retain theoretical knowledge more naturally.

The overarching issue in applying AI to Political Theory teaching is the need to proactively master technology, use AI intelligently and under control, and always place human factors at the center.

Second, online learning systems (e-learning)

Online learning systems have recently been widely used, allowing teaching and learning activities to be organized flexibly in terms of space and time, while also expanding students’ opportunities for self-study. In particular, within modern teaching models, online learning is often used as a pre-class learning stage, helping students acquire foundational knowledge before participating in

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classroom discussions and in-depth analysis. Platforms such as Moodle and Google Classroom are not merely repositories for documents, but comprehensive learning environments.

According to a UNESCO report (2023), e-learning helps expand access to knowledge and promotes lifelong learning, especially in the context of modern higher education.

Third, the use of video and multimedia

The use of video and multimedia in teaching helps visualize concepts that are highly abstract in Political Theory. Research conducted by the OECD indicates that multimedia content significantly improves memory retention and deep understanding compared to methods relying solely on verbal instruction.

Fourth, online interactive platforms

Online interactive platforms such as Mentimeter and Kahoot make it possible to transform traditional classrooms into real-time, two-way interactive environments. Lecturers can present situational questions, students can use their phones to choose answers, and the results are displayed instantly in chart form. If the majority of students select incorrect answers, lecturers can pause to conduct deeper analysis and even ask certain students to explain their choices.

In addition, through Kahoot, lecturers can organize a “mini-game” consisting of five to seven review questions at the end of a lesson, creating a light competitive atmosphere while still reinforcing knowledge. This approach not only increases concentration but also enables lecturers to quickly assess the entire class’s level of comprehension.

Fifth, digital technology

Digital technology is an effective tool for supporting case-based learning methods (learning through practical situations). In this approach, students are placed in specific real-life contexts and are required to apply theory in order to analyze and make assessments. This approach helps theory no longer remain abstract, but instead become a tool for explaining and evaluating practical issues, thereby enhancing learners’ political thinking capacity and ability to apply knowledge.

However, alongside its advantages, the application of digital technology in teaching Political Theory also presents many limitations.

- First, dependence on technology may reduce depth of thinking if learners merely absorb information quickly and fragmentarily without engaging in theoretical analysis.
- The online learning environment can easily lead to distraction, especially when students lack self-study skills and time-management abilities.
- Another issue is the digital divide, as not all students have access to devices and stable internet connections. According to UNESCO reports, inequality in access to technology remains a major barrier to digital education. In addition, according to the OECD (2021), the overuse of technology without pedagogical orientation may lead to “shallow learning,” reducing learners’ capacity for deep thinking and complex analysis.

4. THE INTEGRATED MODEL IN TEACHING POLITICAL THEORY TODAY

From the analysis of the two groups of methods above, it can be seen that each possesses its own strengths and limitations.

Traditional methods are strong in theoretical depth but limited in interactivity, whereas digital technology enhances flexibility and visualization but carries the risk of “superficializing” knowledge if lacking proper orientation. Therefore, the integrated teaching model (blended learning) is considered the optimal solution for systematically combining the strengths of both approaches while overcoming the limitations of each individual method. According to Charles R. Graham, blended learning is not merely a simple “combination,” but rather an intentional design integrating face-to-face and online teaching in order to optimize learning effectiveness, with each component serving a distinct pedagogical function.

First, the integrated model: preserving the traditional “essence” while elevating it through digital “forms.”

In teaching Political Theory, this model can be implemented through three closely interconnected stages, forming a complete learning cycle rather than separate activities (Before - During - After).

In the pre-class stage, online learning serves as the “first exposure” to knowledge. Instead of requiring students to encounter entirely new concepts in class, lecturers transfer the delivery of foundational content to the online environment, enabling students to form an initial understanding beforehand. The significance of this step lies not only in saving classroom time, but more importantly in creating a “cognitive foundation” that allows students to enter the classroom with a certain level of preparation. According to modern educational perspectives, this represents a shift from the model of “what is taught in class” to “what is done with knowledge in class.”

During the in-class stage, the lecturer’s role shifts from “transmitting knowledge” to “organizing and guiding cognition.” Classroom time is used to address difficult content, issues prone to misunderstanding, or topics requiring debate, rather than repeating material students have already reviewed. Students discuss, formulate arguments, and engage in mutual critique. The lecturer acts as a moderator, standardizing knowledge and connecting discussions with officially recognized viewpoints. It is precisely at this stage

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that the strengths of traditional methods, such as in-depth lecturing, dialogue, and group discussion, are maximized, ensuring theoretical depth and political orientation.

After class, the online environment continues to be used to reinforce and expand knowledge. This is the stage of “deep cognitive processing,” where students must apply acquired knowledge to solve specific problems or participate in discussion forums to exchange viewpoints with peers. The combination of written assignments, discussions, and lecturer feedback helps consolidate knowledge and develop independent thinking skills.

An important point to emphasize is that the integrated model is not merely the division of activities according to time (before - during - after), but also a clear allocation of functions between teaching methods: online learning assumes the role of providing information and supporting self-study, while face-to-face teaching assumes the role of orientation, deepening understanding, and controlling the quality of cognition.

Thus, the integrated teaching model not only enhances the effectiveness of knowledge transmission but also contributes to transforming the very nature of the learning process: from passive reception to the active construction of knowledge. This is the appropriate direction for improving the quality of Political Theory teaching in the context of modern education.

Traditional methods: Maintain the lecturer’s role in orientation, guidance, and direct inspiration. Face-to-face interaction helps resolve complex ideological issues that machines cannot replace.

Digital technology: Utilize infographics, documentary videos, and mind maps to concretize theoretical concepts. Instead of merely reading and copying, students access information visually, helping them better retain systems of arguments and ideas.

Second, the flipped classroom model, gamification, and multidimensional interaction in cyberspace

The flipped classroom model, gamification, and multidimensional interaction in cyberspace are also extensively applied.

The flipped classroom model is a modern educational method that reverses the traditional process. In this model, students independently study lecture materials (videos, documents) at home and use classroom time for discussion, practice, and clarification under the guidance of the teacher. This model places learners at the center, promoting proactiveness, deeper thinking, and the ability to apply knowledge.

Under the flipped classroom model, learners are required to watch online lectures before coming to class. Classroom time is then devoted to learning activities that help learners enhance mastery of skills through practical exercises and collaborative discussions. This model encourages learners’ initiative in exploring and researching issues. Learners can access lesson videos at any time, pause lectures, take notes, and review content whenever necessary, which is something impossible in traditional teaching methods. The flipped classroom model enables learners to understand theory more thoroughly, preparing them to participate effectively in group learning sessions and advanced practical exercises during class.

With this model, the teacher’s role changes from that of a passive transmitter of knowledge to that of a facilitator and supporter, while learners shift from passivity to active critical engagement.

Gamification in testing and assessment refers to the application of game elements such as scores, badges, leaderboards, and instant feedback into the assessment process. This method helps increase motivation, reduce psychological pressure, and improve participation and responsiveness compared to traditional testing methods.

Instead of stressful oral examinations, lecturers use tools such as Kahoot, Quizizz, or Plickers to review knowledge related to Party History, Ho Chi Minh Thought, and other subjects through competitive game formats. This creates an energetic atmosphere and enables lecturers to immediately assess learners’ levels of understanding through real-time data.

The method of multidimensional interaction in cyberspace refers to forms of communication and information exchange occurring simultaneously through multiple channels and directions (individual-to-individual, individual-to-organization, group-to-group) via social networks, forums, and online applications. This approach connects learners with the digital environment.

At present, the establishment of forums and Zalo/Facebook groups for 24/7 academic exchange has become a useful tool. Digital technology extends the reach of lecturers, allowing students to express personal viewpoints more naturally compared to the formal pedagogical environment of the classroom.

5. SEVERAL DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF POLITICAL THEORY TEACHING TODAY

First, from the perspective of educational institutions, greater attention should be paid to enhancing awareness and digital transformation capacity among administrators and lecturers. Regularly organizing training programs, workshops, and specialized courses will enable lecturers to quickly access modern technologies and teaching methods, thereby applying them effectively in practice.

Second, continued investment in synchronized and modern information technology infrastructure is necessary for successful digital transformation. Educational institutions should upgrade network systems, improve the speed and stability of internet connections, and develop smart classrooms equipped with advanced technological devices, thereby creating a solid foundation for implementing modern teaching methods.

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Third, it is necessary to develop and expand digital document systems and electronic learning materials. The digitization of textbooks, multimedia lectures, and the creation of electronic resource banks will allow learners and lecturers to access and utilize materials more conveniently, while also effectively supporting self-study, research, and teaching activities.

Fourth, teaching methods should continue to be innovated in the direction of applying digital technology. The application of advanced teaching models such as flipped classrooms, the combination of online and face-to-face learning, and the use of Big Data analytics tools and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in assessing learning outcomes will help improve the overall quality of education in general, and Political Theory subjects in particular.

Fifth, mechanisms and policies supporting the process of digital transformation should be developed and refined. Policies encouraging and rewarding initiatives and the effective application of digital technology in teaching need to be concretized in order to create motivation and promote innovation in teaching activities.

6. CONCLUSION

It can be affirmed that traditional methods and digital technology are not contradictory, but rather complementary in the teaching of Political Theory. While traditional methods ensure systematic structure and theoretical depth, digital technology contributes to enhancing interactivity and accessibility to knowledge, despite certain limitations relating to depth of learning and implementation conditions.

The integrated teaching model is therefore an appropriate direction in the current context, helping improve training quality and meeting the requirements of educational innovation in the digital era. Lectures will become more visual, reducing the abstract nature of theoretical subjects; more current and timely, allowing the latest resolutions and policies to be updated into lectures with only a single click; and more connected, narrowing the gap between classical theory and the pulse of modern digital life.

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