

# Research on the Strategy of Integrating Chinese Excellent Traditional Culture into College English Teaching

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**Abstract**—Language is an important carrier of culture, and culture is the spiritual core of language. The close interrelationship between the two makes college English teaching a kind of language teaching as well as cultural teaching. In the process of language teaching, paying full attention to traditional culture education is very necessary. Integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into college English teaching will have a positive effect on improving college students' English language application ability, intercultural communication ability, and enhancing cultural accomplishment and moral sentiment. Based on the status quo of traditional culture education in college English teaching, this paper puts forward the specific countermeasures of integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into college English teaching and explains its positive significance.

**Keywords**—college English; teaching; traditional culture; cultural education; strategy

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Chinese nation has a history of 5,000 years of civilization. China's excellent traditional culture is extensive and profound, and it contains rich philosophies, wisdom, and morality and so on. With the continuous deepening of global cultural exchanges and the "rise" of Chinese culture in the world, in the higher education, the integration of Chinese excellent traditional culture has far-reaching significance, and especially in the process of language teaching, it is necessary to pay full attention to traditional cultural education. Language is an important carrier of culture, and culture is the spiritual core of language. The close interrelationship between the two makes college English teaching a kind of language teaching and cultural teaching. In the traditional concept, it will be very difficult to integrate Chinese traditional culture into college English teaching. However, if the cultural education is limited to western culture in college English teaching, it will not be conducive to the cultivation of college students' comprehensive ability and quality, and even affect the establishment of correct values. With the advancement of college English teaching reform in China, the integration of Chinese excellent traditional culture into college English teaching will have a positive effect on improving college students' English

language application ability, intercultural communication ability and enhancing cultural accomplishment and moral sentiment. This paper will be based on the status quo of traditional culture education in college English teaching, put forward the specific countermeasures of integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into college English teaching and explain its positive significance.

## II. THE STATUS QUO OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE EDUCATION IN COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING

In the current college English teaching, the integration of Chinese traditional culture has not been fully paid attention. The characteristics of English teaching make college students contact many western cultures in the process of learning English. Especially, students of English majors also have the ability to express western culture such as western history, western customs and western festivals in English. In contrast, the ability to tell Chinese history and stories in English needs to be improved, which has led to the phenomenon of "Chinese Culture Aphasia" to a certain extent. The term "Chinese Culture Aphasia" was originally proposed by Cong Cong, a professor of Nanjing University. From the perspective of Cong Cong, there is a misunderstanding of intercultural communication in English teaching in China, that is, it only focuses on the teaching of cultural content in English-speaking countries, but ignores the learning of the Chinese cultural background, which is also the main body of communication, and as a result, the ability of college students to express Chinese culture in English is generally insufficient. [1] In fact, the dissemination of the excellent traditional culture of the nation is also a key point for effective intercultural communication.

There are many reasons for the phenomenon of "Chinese Culture Aphasia" in college English teaching, including insufficient attention of the education department, lack of Chinese traditional culture content in college English teaching, and insufficient teacher-related teaching ability. In the traditional college English teaching concept, Chinese traditional culture is not an important part of its teaching. It does not reflect the deserved status of Chinese traditional culture in the existing college English syllabus and textbooks.

In the current college English teaching, relying on the content of teaching materials for classroom teaching is the mainstream teaching mode. Most teachers teach English vocabulary, grammar, etc. according to the content of the textbook, and also have a certain degree of penetration into the western culture behind it. In this teaching mode, both teachers and students have misunderstandings in the cultivation process of intercultural communication competence. They believe that as long as they learn English well and understand enough western cultural knowledge, they can achieve cross-cultural communication smoothly. On the one hand, the existing college English textbooks lack the relevant content of Chinese traditional cultural knowledge in the process of design and compilation. On the other hand, college English teachers themselves lack the traditional Chinese cultural knowledge reserves. Whether teaching according to the content of the textbooks, or the expansion of teaching outside the teaching materials can not transfer enough Chinese cultural knowledge in college English teaching. The phenomenon of "Chinese Culture Aphasia" caused by many reasons will greatly affect the reform and development of college English teaching in China and the cultivation of cultural communication ability of college students, which will further affect the effectiveness of international talent training in China.

### III. THE SPECIFIC COUNTERMEASURES OF INTEGRATING CHINESE EXCELLENT TRADITIONAL CULTURE INTO COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING

#### A. *Establishing the Correct Teaching Concept and Improving the Status of Chinese Traditional Culture in College English Teaching*

From the perspective of teaching objectives and syllabus, it is necessary to clarify the status of Chinese traditional culture in college English teaching and guide universities and teachers to establish correct teaching concepts. As mentioned above, college English teaching is both language teaching and cultural teaching. In college English teaching, if English language teaching is the foundation, then improving the comprehensive use of language and cultivating intercultural communicative competence is the fundamental goal of teaching. In the traditional English teaching concept, western culture has become an indispensable teaching content recognized by universities, teachers and students. However, the teaching of Chinese traditional culture has long been in a dispensable awkward situation. In the process of cross-cultural communication in reality, it is necessary to not only be able to listen to each other's views, but also realize the effective dissemination of own views. If college students don't understand Chinese traditional culture, and they don't have a cultural knowledge base, then they can't tell Chinese history and customs in English and it is difficult for them to become promoters of Chinese traditional culture to "go out" in cross-cultural communication. Therefore, it is imperative to integrate Chinese culture, especially China's excellent traditional culture, into the teaching activities of all aspects of college English teaching.

#### B. *Optimizing the Content Structure of Teaching Materials and Increasing the Proportion of Chinese Cultural Knowledge*

At present, college English teaching is mainly based on classroom teaching. The content of classroom teaching is based on the content of teaching materials. An important part of integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into college English teaching is to optimize the content structure of teaching materials and increase the proportion of Chinese cultural knowledge. Incorporating more Chinese cultural knowledge into college English textbooks not only provides an important carrier for college students to learn Chinese cultural knowledge and enhance their ability to express Chinese cultural knowledge in English, but also promotes the scientific and systematic culture education in college English teaching. In the process of optimizing the content structure of teaching materials, attention should be firstly paid to increase the content of Chinese excellent traditional cultural knowledge, including historical stories, philosophical thoughts, famous classics, festival customs, architecture, Chinese medicine, martial arts, nations, diet, tea ceremony, etc., to enrich the cultural knowledge of students as well as promote national pride and cultural confidence. On this basis, it is needed to increase the English vocabulary and articles that can reflect Chinese traditional culture. For example, the word "dragon" is very different in the interpretation of Chinese and western cultures. In China, "dragon" is considered to be a symbol of honor and auspiciousness; in western countries, "dragon" is synonymous with evil. Understanding this kind of difference as well as the culture behind this difference is an important basis for cultivating students' ability to use English as a carrier to spread China's excellent traditional culture. It is worth noting that Chinese classical masterpieces and historical classics generally require higher reading ability. For non-professional college students, there is a certain difficulty in understanding and mastering of this kind of works. This puts higher requirements on the preparation of college English textbooks, that is, it should be expressed in an easy-to-understand way as much as possible to reduce the difficulty of learning and enhance the interest of learning, and at the same time, it is convenient for students to apply what they have learned to the process of cross-cultural communication. [2]

#### C. *Enriching Teaching Methods and Improving the Effectiveness of Teaching Activities*

In college English teaching, classroom teaching is undoubtedly the most important component. In the process of classroom teaching, the teaching orientation should be clarified. In a limited time, it should be taught in a way that from simple and complicated and from easy to difficult; the principle of the combination of knowledge and fun should be adopted for overall design of the teaching activities. In the traditional classroom teaching mode, the integration of study group discussion and role-playing can effectively cultivate students' ability of self-learning and improve the efficiency of teaching activities. These teaching methods are gradually integrated into college English classroom teaching. On the basis of teaching cultural knowledge according to the teaching content, different tasks can be set for different

learning groups, such as introducing Chinese traditional festivals to foreign friends, telling a historical story, etc., setting up roles in the group, creating communication situations, testing learning results, establishing a sense of identity of "cultural communicators" and improving communication skills.

On the basis of the task-based Chinese culture teaching, integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into college English teaching needs to further enrich teaching methods according to the characteristics of cultural learning, and scientifically use cultural contrast method and cultural display method. [3] Cultural contrast method refers to the comparison teaching between Chinese traditional culture and western culture. In the cultural contrast, students are guided to establish correct cultural values in a multicultural environment. For example, it is suggested that teachers set the tasks of contrast between Chinese and western marriage customs, and contrast between Chinese and western food culture. Through the setting of topics close to daily life and communication, students can better learn Chinese and western cultural knowledge, experience cultural differences in cultural contrasts, and enhance the choice of cultural values. The cultural display method refers to broadening the cultural vision of students through cultural physical display. For example, in the classroom teaching, professionals are invited to perform tea show, classic reading, playing traditional folk instruments, etc., to activate the classroom atmosphere and motivate students to learn Chinese traditional culture knowledge. Another example is to set up a cultural practice course to lead students out of the classroom, participate in cultural practice activities such as festivals, and set up teaching tasks in practice activities so that students can learn relevant cultural knowledge independently before the event, and further deepen their recognition of traditional culture by participating in activities, providing a practical basis for students' cross-cultural communication after leaving the campus.

#### *D. Strengthening Teacher Training and Improving Teachers' Chinese Cultural Accomplishment*

Incorporating Chinese traditional culture into college English teaching should not only start from the teaching content and teaching activity design level, but also strengthen the teacher training and improve the Chinese culture cultivation of English teachers, in order to give full play to the leading role of teachers in specific teaching practice. From the perspective of colleges and universities, it is necessary to provide more educational and training opportunities for English teachers so that they can master Chinese culture systematically, give full play to their professional advantages, constantly improve their ability to express Chinese culture in English, and promote the integration of language teaching and cultural teaching. While improving their cultural literacy and imparting excellent cultural knowledge, teachers should also guide students to learn more about the traditional Chinese culture books outside the classroom. The Chinese classical works in Chinese and English such as "Guwen Guanzhi", "A New Account of the Tales of the World", "The Records of

History", "Journey to the West", "Chinese Culture" and "Silk History" should be served as must-read extracurricular readings so that students can expand their knowledge and improve their traditional Chinese culture through self-study in addition to classroom learning. In addition, students can also be encouraged to take courses related to Chinese culture in school, which will provide students with more ways to learn Chinese culture outside the English classroom.

#### *E. Strengthening Tracking Evaluation and Building a Reasonable Teaching Evaluation System*

To achieve effective cultural education in college English teaching, it is necessary to strengthen the tracking evaluation. It is necessary not only to add relevant content of Chinese traditional cultural knowledge in the final exam, but also to conduct staged tests, and to comprehensively evaluate students' learning outcomes in combination with classroom performance. The fundamental purpose of incorporating Chinese traditional culture into college English teaching is to cultivate students' intercultural communication ability. The detection of ability should not only be realized through daily examinations, but also through setting up practical evaluation links, detecting students' cultural literacy and cross-cultural communication ability through situational simulation, building a scientific and reasonable teaching evaluation system and playing the result-oriented role so as to ensure the quality of Chinese cultural education in college English teaching.

#### IV. THE POSITIVE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INTEGRATION OF CHINESE EXCELLENT TRADITIONAL CULTURE INTO COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING

It is very positive to integrate Chinese excellent traditional culture into college English teaching. From the perspective of college English teaching, the integration of Chinese traditional culture knowledge into college English teaching can not only cultivate students' cultural literacy and intercultural communication ability, but also enhance students' interest in learning English. As a language subject, English learning is relatively boring, and incorporating rich cultural knowledge into boring learning can mobilize the enthusiasm of students to a certain extent. [4] For Chinese traditional culture, non-professional students have not learned systematically, but have different levels of understanding. Systematic learning of relatively familiar knowledge will make students feel intimate in the process of learning English, establish cultural pride and at the same time, build confidence in learning. From the perspective of cultural education, college students are in the critical period of establishing cultural values. Especially for English majors, the understanding and learning of western culture makes them in a state of intertwined multicultural values. Incorporating Chinese traditional culture education into college English teaching can enhance the choice of college students' cultural value, make them absorb the essence and discard the dregs in the contrast of eastern and western cultures, establish correct cultural values, and have the ability to correctly treat different cultural phenomena and understand different cultural connotations. Cultural

education can not only guide college students to establish correct cultural values, but also promote Chinese traditional culture, which is the need of Chinese culture to go to the world. Chinese traditional culture has experienced more than 5,000 years of development and precipitation. Excellent traditional culture is worthy of inheritance and promotion. With the implementation of China's new strategy of opening up to the outside world, it is not only the obligatory responsibility of college students to carry forward China's excellent traditional culture to the world, but also the need of national development. The integration of China's excellent traditional culture into college English teaching will have positive and far-reaching significance for the promotion of Chinese traditional culture in the process of China's opening up.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into college English teaching will have a positive effect on improving college students' English language application ability and intercultural communication ability, as well as enhancing cultural accomplishment and moral sentiment. This paper sorts out the status quo, puts forward five strategies, and systematically expounds the importance of integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into college English teaching.

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