

# Research on the Teaching Methods of Integrating Chinese Culture into College English Teaching under the Strategy of “Chinese Culture Going Global”

Rongrong Pan<sup>1,\*</sup>, Min Yang<sup>1</sup> and Zhou Chen<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Language School, Kunming University, Kunming, Yunnan 650214, China

\*Corresponding author.

## ABSTRACT

The study is aimed to explore the effective teaching methods to reinforce the teaching of Chinese culture in traditional college English class through a case study. It pointed out that the lack of culture-related teaching contents, limited Chinese culture literacy of teachers and poor cultural awareness of students are the most prominent problems in the current college English class. Three constructive teaching methods were proposed respectively to replenish the teaching contents, improve the comprehensive literacy level of teachers, strengthen students' cultural confidence and intercultural communicative competence. The results will contribute to provide new possibilities for the introduction of Chinese culture in college English course and to promote the overall development of “Chinese Culture Going Global” strategy.

**Keywords:** English Teaching; Culture Teaching; Teaching method; Chinese Culture Going Global

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The strategy of "Chinese Culture Going Global" is a cultural construction policy in China, which was put forward at the beginning of the 21st century. On October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Xi Jinping pointed out in *the Report of the 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the CPC*, "Without a high degree of cultural confidence and cultural prosperity, there will be no great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Only by strengthening people-to-people exchanges between China and foreign countries can we promote the building of International communication capacity, tell Chinese stories well, show a true, three-dimensional and comprehensive China, and improve the soft power of national culture." The cultural self-confidence of the Chinese nation depends on the vigorous publicity of the brilliant culture of the Chinese nation. With the change of International situation and the development of domestic economy, the strategy of "Chinese Culture Going Global" has become the best way to improve cultural confidence and strengthen cultural soft power of China.

The latest *College English Teaching Guide (2017)* makes it clear that: "The teaching objective of college English is to cultivate students' English application ability and enhance their intercultural communicative awareness as well as communicative competence. Through learning and using English, students can understand the scientific and technological progress directly. Also, they will give better insights into outstanding culture and civilization in the world. Meanwhile, it can help to strengthen the national language power, spread Chinese culture effectively and promote extensive exchanges with people of all countries, which will meet the needs of national development." The

reform of CET-4 and CET-6 has also complied with the trend and demand of the development of China. The latest translation part in the exam is to translate a Chinese paragraph into English, and the score has been increased from 5% to 15%. The students' ability to introduce Chinese culture in English is related to China's economic, historical, cultural and social development. The "Chinese Culture Going Global" strategy, have brought new challenges and opportunities to college English teaching in the new era which requires college English teachers to attach great importance to the introduction and infiltration of Chinese culture in regular teaching to help students perceive mother tongue culture, to cultivate students' literacy in expressing Chinese traditional culture in English, and also to enhance their ability to spread Chinese culture to the outside world.

## 2. CURRENT SITUATION OF CHINESE CULTURE TEACHING IN COLLEGE ENGLISH CLASS

As one of the most widely offered courses in universities in China, college English shoulders the dual responsibility of improving students' English application ability and intercultural communication ability. However, nowadays, whether in teaching contents or teaching process in college English courses, teachers often pay more attention to the introduction of background knowledge of English topics. Too much teaching of Western culture made teachers ignore the two-way communication of language which caused the "Chinese culture aphasia" phenomenon in students' language learning become increasingly

prominent. A great number of similar problems also emerged as listed below.

### ***2.1. The Lack of Materials with Chinese Culture in Teaching Contents***

Taking the mainstream college English textbooks into research, more than 90% of the articles in most textbooks are written by British and American writers. The contents of the articles cover the social situation, customs and values in Europe and the United States, but the contents related to Chinese themes are rare, and the materials about Chinese culture are even rarer. Wang Fei (2010) made an analysis of the cultural background of the 1-4 volumes of the *New Comprehensive College English Course* published by Shanghai Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. The results showed that 68.7% and 53.1% of English-American culture were selected and deployed respectively. The proportion of Chinese culture is 1.56% and 4.1%, reflecting the traditional culture and enterprise development. In those limited contents of Chinese culture, most of them involve only part of Chinese traditional culture. Materials that reflect the economic and social development of China in the new era are very few. The lack of language input, such as vocabulary and expression of Chinese culture, hinders the development of students' language output ability to tell Chinese stories seriously.

### ***2.2. Outdated Culture Teaching Ideas and Methods of Teachers***

Most English teachers in colleges and universities are those who majored in English linguistics, English education, British and American culture or English translation. In the process of their education, they acquired very limited knowledge concerning Chinese traditional culture, and their awareness of Chinese culture communication is also very weak. Therefore, most college English teachers tend to ignore the importance and necessity of Chinese culture in college English teaching. For a long time, in the process of college English education, teachers often pay attention to the cultivation of language ability while ignore the background culture, especially the teaching of mother tongue culture. In addition, in examination-oriented or grade-oriented teaching, most teachers' teaching methods remain unchanged all the year round, which is obviously not suitable for the needs of cultural teaching in the new era, so the reform of teaching ideas and strategies is imperative.

### ***2.3. Weak Awareness in Learning Chinese Culture of Students***

Influenced by the economic globalization, most college students focus on absorbing the values of western culture

in the process of English learning, which leads them to worship western culture blindly and ignore the cultural critical consciousness. Currently, most students have mastered the basic ability of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation in college English class. They are able to introduce some western cultural traditions briefly. However, when introducing the cultural background and characteristics of their own country, students will meet many problems, such as lacking of suitable vocabulary, improper expression and so on.

On the other hand, students' motivation to attend English class is simply to finish their homework and pass the examinations. They often neglect the intercultural communication function of language, especially the role of it as a bridge in the dissemination of mother tongue culture. Telling Chinese stories well in English and spreading Chinese voices will help to show the world a true, three-dimensional and comprehensive China. Only when students maintain such cultural awareness can they adjust their learning motivation in college English class and spread brilliant Chinese culture to the world.

## **3. EXPLORATION OF TEACHING METHODS OF CHINESE CULTURE IN COLLEGE ENGLISH CLASS**

In the trend of marginalization of college English course, the requirement of integrating Chinese culture into teaching not only challenges college English teachers, but it also brings new opportunities for us. The introduction of Chinese culture in college English class has gradually become an indispensable part of foreign language teaching. How to improve students' English expressing ability of Chinese culture has become a significant goal for college English teaching. How to adjust the current English teaching contents and teaching methods in China so that it can cultivate a new generation of talents to meet the needs of the country has become an important research direction of college English teaching reform.

### ***3.1. Integrating Chinese Culture Module in Teaching Contents***

#### ***3.1.1. Excavating Chinese cultural elements in the existing teaching materials***

Under the condition of using the existing teaching materials, college teachers may try to make full and reasonable use of the textbooks. Excavating and expanding Chinese cultural related materials in teaching is a must for English teachers. By embodying the essence of the traditional Chinese cultural spirit in English class, teachers will make the students not only understand the western culture, but also deepen the understanding of the Chinese traditional culture. Meanwhile, teachers will complete the

crucial task given to the college English curriculum by Chinese cultural education.

### *3.1.2. Complementing high-quality Chinese culture related materials in various forms*

Similar to language teaching, culture teaching needs to be carried through gradually and subtly throughout the whole teaching process. In terms of the limitations of the traditional English textbooks concerning Chinese culture, it is necessary for teachers to increase the input of Chinese culture related materials. By doing this, students' Chinese culture consciousness and social consciousness will be cultivated in English classes. Teachers can make full use of online resources to prepare diverse forms of Chinese cultural materials for each unit, including related vocabulary, video, audio, news, etc.

Students will also be able to collect and exchange their knowledge of Chinese culture during classroom discussions and group activities. Their ability of using English to tell Chinese stories will be greatly improved. With time goes by, students will be capable of presenting the positive events in English in the the aspects of society, economy and history in China, and delivering positive energy in English.

## **3.2. Integrating Chinese Culture in Teaching Process**

### *3.2.1. Improving Chinese cultural qualities of teachers*

As the guide of students' English learning, teachers have irreplaceable influence on students' language ability and cultural communicative competence. Thus, teachers should take the lead in changing the inherent cultural teaching concept, revising the misleading cognition that college English class should focus more on western culture while neglect of promoting the cultivation of Chinese traditional culture. Teachers have to strengthen the awareness that contemporary college students should master multiculturalism and equip themselves with intercultural communicative competence. Colleges and universities should also create opportunities for university teachers to learn Chinese traditional culture. Only when the personal Chinese cultural literacy of college English teachers improved can they better serve the teaching of Chinese culture in English classroom and train new foreign language talents for the national "going global" strategy to enhance the core competitiveness of Chinese culture.

### *3.2.2. Enhancing the integration of Chinese culture in the teaching design*

*The Guide to College English Teaching* (2017) makes it clear that intercultural communication courses should be included in the curriculum of college English, which highlights the humanistic connotation of college English course, and aims to cultivate students who can tell Chinese stories well and spread Chinese voices as the teaching objectives of college English course. Therefore, students should be able to introduce and discuss at least some general topics related to Chinese culture, society and economy after studying College English courses. Students are capable of understanding the connotation of Chinese culture deeply, analyzing the cultural differences from a multicultural perspective as well as finding their own cultural identity, and spreading the mother tongue culture consciously.

In order to achieve the above teaching objectives, the design of college English teaching activities should be more stereoscopic and pluralistic. Teachers can adopt an efficient online and offline mixed teaching model with advanced teaching ideas, such as *Production-Oriented Teaching Approach* and PAD Class Model to accurately grasp the integration and penetration of Chinese culture in the links before, while and after class. Before class, teachers guide students to pave the way through textbooks and online network platform resources. Several bilingual materials that students are more interested in, such as Chinese history and culture, folklore and contemporary development characteristics could be chosen to combine with Chinese traditional culture as the carrier, so that students can take the initiative to express the theme of Chinese culture in English. The content should be from easy to difficult, and to some extent, it's better to make it inspirational and interesting. While the class, in the course of teaching the subject of the unit, the teacher can guide the students to discover the differences or similarities between Chinese and Western cultures, and cultivate their ability to explore and think critically. At the same time, through the comparison between Chinese and Western cultures, students have pluralistic cultural awareness and equal awareness of cultural exchange. Classroom forms should be diverse, practical and speculative. Teachers can help students express the elements of Chinese culture in English by restoring life and creating situations, so that students can quickly establish a direct relationship between language and objective things and improve the effectiveness of the classroom. After class, students are required to complete more challenging language output tasks to enhance the internalization of Chinese cultural knowledge, to improve their awareness and ability of cross-cultural communication and Chinese cultural communication.

### 3.2.3. Adding the Chinese culture content into curriculum evaluation system

The contents of Chinese culture should be included in the formative assessment and final evaluation of the semester. The ability to export knowledge of Chinese culture is tested on a regular basis in a written or oral manner. This part of the score will be included in the final evaluation. In the final examination papers, teachers should moderately increase the investigation of the content of Chinese culture, such as the vocabulary of Chinese traditional culture, the content of common sense of Chinese culture. The social development, economy, history and culture of China should also be covered in the test. Not only will this evaluation system provide a positive and reasonable assessment method for Chinese culture teaching in college English class, but it will also strengthen students' attention to the expression of Chinese culture, which improves cultural confidence and mother tongue cultural literacy in students. It will lay a solid foundation for students to spread Chinese culture in cultural exchanges, so as to achieve the strategic goal of "Chinese culture going global".

### 3.3. Integrating Chinese Culture in Learning Process

To integrate Chinese culture into college English teaching, teachers should cultivate students' interest in Chinese culture and arouse their enthusiasm and initiative in learning Chinese culture as well as using English to express Chinese culture. What teachers play is not the leading role, but the guiding role, that is to say, teachers must help students improve their autonomous learning ability of Chinese culture and enhance their cultural awareness. The improvement of students' ability to express Chinese culture in English requires them to strengthen the practice of language input and output actively. The translation part of the CET-4 and CET-6 has made clear requirements for the expression of Chinese culture. Only when students have the basic vocabulary of Chinese culture can they not be afraid of challenges. CET-4 and CET-6 translation practice is just a small microcosm of Chinese culture in English. Students have to change their inherent cognition first and infiltrate Chinese cultural expression into every aspect of life, then tell and spread Chinese stories to the world.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Under the guidance of the strategy of "Chinese culture going out", the teaching contents of college English is no longer limited to understanding all aspects of foreign society, but also to make Chinese culture go global and let the world understand China more comprehensively. College English teachers should carry out the idea of making English teaching serve China's development.

Under the call of the era of building a cultural power, college English teaching must be guided by the strategy of "Chinese culture going out". Teachers need to gradually change the inherent teaching idea of emphasizing the cultivation of language skills and neglecting the introduction of mother tongue cultural elements. In the process of integrating Chinese culture into college English classroom teaching, students' ability to use English to spread Chinese culture should be effectively improved, and the historical mission of spreading Chinese culture should be shouldered. A large number of compound talents with good foreign language ability, world vision and cross-cultural communication skills have been trained to serve the cultural development of China.

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