



# Exploring Chinese Pre-service EFL Teachers' Reasons for Spreading China Stories in English

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**Abstract.** With their special role and advantage, pre-service EFL teachers need to and can spread China stories to their future students and foreigners. Moreover, some young students merely pursue western culture blindly due to negative influence of English globalization. They need educators to correct their attitude. Chinese culture itself is worth learning and passing down and spreading abroad.

**Keywords:** Pre-service EFL teachers · English globalization · China stories · Chinese culture

## 1 Introduction

English, as a most widely used language in the world, has greatly influenced other countries that do not take English as mother language. In terms of the close relationship between language and culture, the U.S.A. and the G.B. are well developed, and their cultures have a far-reaching effect on the other countries in many aspects, such as politics, economy, ideology and even daily life. This is the unavoidable tendency and result of the development of English globalization. Meanwhile, against this big international background, five-thousand-year long Chinese culture may be attacked more or less. When facing the present situation, Chinese pre-service EFL teachers can take actions, such as calling for their future young students to learn Chinese culture and telling China stories in English well. By doing this, they not only spread Chinese culture in the world, but also improve its influence and strengthen their own national confidence and pride. The following are the four detailed reasons for pre-service EFL teachers are to spread China stories.

## 2 The Particular Role and Advantages of Pre-service EFL Teachers

In the era of fast development of technology, especially Internet development, pre-service English teachers like other college students get a golden opportunity to learn English

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well based on the wonderful English learning equipment, various smart devices and rich resources from Internet. Furthermore, they also have competent English teachers with advanced teaching belief and high efficient teaching methods. These teachers have reached an agreement that the final aim to learn English is not only to pass exams, but also to communicate with others in spoken or written English. For pre-service EFL teachers who majored in English teaching with their English talent, as the future teachers of socialist country — China, they not only shoulder the historic responsibility by acting as thinkers, designers and builders like many other young people from other walks of life, but also need to become China stories tellers. Most importantly, it is because they will teach younger primary school students or junior even senior high school students English. From this aspect, we can see that pre-service EFL teachers are to influence thousands of students through their English teaching for a long time.

On the other hand, pre-service EFL teachers, they are a group of all young people shared with the same advantages. They have young age and bright future and great mission [6]. Just as Chairman Mao once said on Moscow campus in 1957: the world belongs to us, it belongs to you too, but finally it belongs to you. Young people are like the sun rising at 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning [5]. Sixty years later, President Xi Jinping also said that it is impossible to realize Chinese dream — the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation without the continuous efforts made by young people generation after generation.

An ancient scholar, Liang Qichao from Qing dynasty (1636–1912), once said: if young people are strong, China can be strong. If young people are intelligent, China can be intelligent. If young people are rich, China can be rich. If young people are independent, China will be independent. If young people are free, China will be free. If young people make progress, China may make progress. If Chinese young people do better than European people, China may win Europe. If Chinese young people are powerful in the world, China may be powerful in the world too [3].

Furthermore, pre-service EFL teachers are very familiar with Chinese culture after birth except only few who were born in foreign countries. They have received the Chinese culture both at home and schools widely. They also learn about culture related to Chinese painting, calligraphy, music, songs, musical instruments, folk dance, martial arts, etiquette, architecture, tea and liquor and so on. All of the above supplies them with a rich repository to spread Chinese culture towards their students and foreign countries in English. All of this contributes to the treasury of Chinese culture and ensures that the younger students grow well.

### 3 Some Unsatisfying Chinese Young Students

Naturally, good combination of deep Chinese culture and English language make sure that young people express and introduce Chinese culture towards foreign countries smoothly. Moreover, as young people, they dare to express themselves with the progressive mental maturity. All of the above is the satisfying case or ideal one, however, reality may be another case. We cannot deny the fact that some students have been attracted by Western culture. Their mental development cannot catch the speed of cultural development. Immature mental state and lack of wise judgement make them forget

or lose their own Chinese culture. They tend to follow foreign culture blindly without thinking the harmful consequences of their wrong behavior. Just like what Karl Jaspers said when traditional culture is forgotten, the whole society is filled with savage. It is like something that breaks away from nature or basis, which tends to flutter aimlessly [1]. Furthermore, they are weak in Chinese foundation and short of Chinese culture too. Their English is weak too due to their basic knowledge, learning strategies, learning views and learning motivations. All of the above obstacles prevent them to reach the basic communication aim, let alone relying on them to spread Chinese culture. However, we cannot deny a fact these students are not the mainstream of the young people. These students call educators' attention and badly need help from them.

#### **4 Effect of English Globalization**

English globalization means especially the Great Britain and the United States use the English as a link to dominate other countries by invading their politics and economy. Generally speaking, English globalization has two sides of influence. On the positive side, it makes use of English as a lingua franca for better comprehension and close contact among the countries in the whole world. As a result, the world becomes a global village due to English. The 18th century witnessed that the Great Britain started to invade other countries and areas. English is spreading throughout the world through this way. There is over 6000-year history of speaking English. It is common to notice that the collection of legal instruments or historical records in every famous worldwide library is written in English. Nowadays, it seems that as long as one can study English well, everyone can make more friends from all parts of the world. It is the same to get more knowledge and culture [2]. On the negative side of English globalization, as a lingua franca, English is taken as a tool to invade other countries by means of cultural infiltration, and following to attack the political and economic parts of these countries. It seems that it is impossible to prevent the cultural invasion from the English-speaking countries. The opposite sides of English globalization imply that we need to hold an objective attitudes towards it with critical thinking. It is wrong to ignore all the strong points of English globalization and merely concentrate on all its shortcomings.

#### **5 Significance and Value of Chinese Culture**

Chinese culture, here, mainly refers to Chinese traditional culture. China stories are the model of Chinese culture in this article, so China stories can be equally treated as Chinese culture. Chinese traditional culture, in essence, is what Chinese people have created by themselves. It is a culture integrity or existence that is widely influencing social life and spiritual life of Chinese people on Chinese land for five thousand years. It demonstrates the deep spiritual pursuit of Chinese nationality and it is a spiritual mark with unique Chinese nation [4]. In the remarks on the meeting to memorize the 95 anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party, President Jinping Xi said that the Chinese traditional culture has a very long history with very wide and expansive content. It covers politics, economy, thoughts, the military and medicine and so on, while focusing on ideology culture. Chinese valuable traditional culture takes

the Confucianism as the core, mingling with the essence of Taoism and Buddhism and making their own functions with its own features.

Many experts summarized the values of Chinese traditional culture. There are six values all together [3].

Firstly, the Chinese traditional culture has a great cohesive force. It connects 56 nationalities living in the land of 9600,000 km<sup>2</sup> into an unity which is linked by a blood tie. This unity is called Chinese nation. This culture also ensures that Chinese brilliant civilization can last uninterruptedly and it becomes an continuous country with an ancient civilization.

Secondly, this culture advocates patriotism and social responsibility. Some famous saying such as Gu Yanwu's 'Every man is responsible for the rise and fall of the world.' and Zhu Geliang (181–234)'s 'Doing the great service for the country' and Fan Zhongyan (989–1052)'s 'Being the first to worry about the affairs of the state and the last to enjoy oneself' are all about the patriotism and social responsibility.

Thirdly, it also calls for the up-and-coming spirit. The words 'a gentleman should constantly strive for self-improvement just like the evolution of the universe, a gentleman should generously cultivate for social commitment just like the earth bears everything on it.' from the *Book of Changes* and the words 'be born at hardship, died of happiness' from Mencius and the words 'man can conquer nature' from Xuncius are all to advocate people to be enterprising.

Fourthly, Chinese culture stresses moral principles. Confucian benevolence can be found in 'being unable to establish oneself, one should help others to do so.' Mohism calls for universal love, which proposes the principles of mutual respect and mutual benefit. Both of the above is to propose the moral principles including respecting the old and caring for the young, being nice to others and working selflessly for the public interest.

Fifthly, the Chinese traditional culture contains the simple dialectical thinking. The traditional world view holds that the world is integrated and systematic, it also stresses the changes, development and mutual connection of all the things. Both of the above demonstrates the simple dialectic and materialistic thinking. Lastly, this culture implies the broad-mindedness. Chinese culture advocates tolerance, self-renewal and open mind-ness such as 'all the people of the world are brothers'. All of this proves that Chinese civilization has a very broad spiritual connotation and this is the root of Chinese civilization never stops its step.

Chinese valuable traditional culture is called the root and soul of the Chinese nation. How to seek the root and find the soul is the context of the times to inherit the Chinese culture. How to solve the cultural conflicts with other foreign countries is concerned with fostering our especially young people's culture confidence. Young people need to have this confidence that they can solve the above conflicts relying on valuable traditional Chinese culture. What can young students export towards foreign countries? The answer lies in their world perspective and harmonious concept. As a result, it will put forward three "harmony" civilizations to the highest position. They are family harmony, social harmony and world peace.

## 6 Conclusion

There are four reasons why pre-service Chinese EFL teachers need to learn to tell China stories. They are teachers' role and advantages. They are unpleasant with some young students. English globalization's influence and rich Chinese culture has produced conflicts. As pre-service Chinese EFL teachers they need not only to instruct their future students to master Chinese and English well, but to develop their critical thinking to make a wise judgement on different cultures. It is essential to teach them to hold a right attitude towards different cultures by considering them from various perspectives. Educators' final aim is to cultivate the young students to be people with patriotism and international perspective. To be a Chinese person without learning English might limit his world horizon. While Chinese without their own culture not only affect their development in China, it also sets barriers for them to learn any other cultures. It seems that one's own culture is still fundamental. It is prior to any second or foreign culture definitely.

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