

Strategies of Native Culture Integration in College English Teaching Based on “Education of Chinese Ethics and Culture in All Courses”

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Abstract

Language is one of the carriers of culture. Language teaching cannot be divorced from cultural teaching. As an important compulsory course of general education in university, college English has long largely ignored the teaching of native language nature, which affects students' cultural consciousness and confidence. The aphasia of Chinese culture in inter-cultural communication has caused wide concerns and worries in the field of foreign language teaching. Based on the concept of education of Chinese ethics and culture in all courses, the first part of this paper introduces the basic idea of education of Chinese ethics and culture in college English teaching and the problem of aphasia of English expression for Chinese cultures which leads to the lack of cultural consciousness and confidence. Then in the second part, the paper deeply discusses and explores the reasons for Chinese culture aphasia in college English teaching from the perspectives of teaching syllabus, teachers and students, textbooks and teaching materials and assessment systems. The third part of the paper puts forward a series of efficient strategies from the aspects of teaching and learning ideas, teaching mode, curriculum setting and evaluation mechanism. Finally, conclusions and reflections that need further consideration and research are discussed in the fourth part of this paper.

Keywords

Native Culture Integration, College English, Education of Chinese Ethics and Culture in All Courses, Cultural Aphasia, Strategies

1. Introduction

Ideological and political education of college students becomes increasingly important in China. The idea of Chinese ethics and culture education in all courses

has been widely implemented in colleges and universities. The Construction Guidelines of Chinese Ethics and Culture Education in All Courses of Universities and Colleges were issued by Education Ministry of China on June 1st, 2020.

Chinese culture consciousness is the comprehensive and objective analysis and recognition of Chinese culture's elements, general structure, and its history, present and future under the directions of Marxism and the leadership of the CPC. Our cultural confidence is built based on the high consciousness and identification of native language culture (Huang, 2020).

As a significant course of college liberal education and humanistic education, college English plays a crucial part in cultivating students' comprehensive cultural qualities and strengthening their cultural consciousness and confidence. However, the problem that native language culture is not given enough emphasis has long existed in college English teaching. The aphasia of English expression for Chinese culture is particularly serious in the subjects of non-English majors (Xiao, Xiao, Li, & Song, 2010). Quite a few students cannot expertly and availably express and spread Chinese cultures in English. The serious phenomenon of cultural aphasia is unfavorable for students to build cultural consciousness and confidence. Meanwhile, native language culture can play a role of positive transfer in students' foreign language learning. Analyzing the lack of mother tongue culture education in college English teaching, this paper proposes the integration mode of native culture in college English teaching based on the concept of education of Chinese ethics and culture in all courses in order to provide valuable references for teachers and scholars.

2. Analysis of the Reasons for Native Culture Aphasia in College English Teaching

2.1. Syllabuses and Curriculum Setting

Syllabus is the basic outline of college English teaching and important criteria of teaching practice. Domestic college English teaching syllabus has long been attaching importance to students' development of language knowledge and skills but ignoring the teaching of Chinese culture expression in English. On account of the powerful status in teaching, the culture of English-speaking countries naturally becomes dominant in English teaching, with native language culture marginalized, which may cause the cultural nature of foreign language teaching to be drastically shielded thus weakening the cultural function of language teaching (Zhang, 2017). The statement about culture in the section of "teaching characters and goals" in College English Curriculum Requirements issued in 2007 is enhancing comprehensive cultural literacy. In the section of "higher requirements" it is stated that students can translate and introduce articles about Chinese conditions or culture. It is stated in the part of "development objectives" in College English Teaching Guide published in 2014 that students are capable of translating materials of certain degree of difficulty about Chinese and western conditions or culture by means of dictionary. Thus it can be seen that the ability

requirements for expressing Chinese culture in English have been being listed in higher demands but not in basic demands and there is no detailed explanation or guide, which determines that English ability of expression for Chinese culture may be easily neglected in the making of college English teaching outline and teaching requirements.

2.2. Teachers and Students

Quite a few English teachers lack strong awareness of native language culture education and the ability of target language expression for native cultures. Because of the limitations of their major, the knowledge structure and system of English teachers focus on British and American culture, which results in the “congenital deficiency” that they themselves lack profound Chinese cultural foundation. What’s worse, it cannot be denied that a certain number of teachers themselves are even weak in national confidence due to long-term impact of western culture and ideas. They are more likely to be loaded in favor of English cultural values. College English teaching aims to develop students’ ability of cross-cultural communication as well as language skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing. In teaching practice, teachers tend to pay more attention to the instruction of English language and spend limited time in the teaching of English expression for Chinese cultures. A questionnaire survey both for teachers and students made by Song (2009) found that 82.5% students argued that teachers occasionally supplemented Chinese culture in teaching, and 10.5% students reflected teachers seldom did that; 83.1% students stated that it was somewhat difficult for them to search for English books about cultural introduction of China, and 16.9% students couldn’t get access to this kind of books. 68.7% teachers only heard about the wording of “Chinese culture aphasia”, and 12.5% teachers had never heard about the research of this kind. 68.8% teachers thought cultural knowledge mainly played a role of improving students’ learning interest and couldn’t be taken for test or homework emphasis.

Besides, a majority of college students learn English mainly in order to pass various examinations like CET4/6, TOEFL, IELTS, GRE, and NEEP, or to get a good job with English examination certificates. English learning with utilitarianism will lead to the consequence that they will put emphasis on learning of language level including English words, sentences, passages, listening, etc. and rarely pay close attention to the target language expression for native natures. Therefore, the lack of systematic supplement of native cultural nutrition is likely to result in students’ neglect, disapproval even doubt about native language culture (Kong, 2014). As time passes, students are easily to be influenced by western thoughts and gradually develop blind worship to western cultures.

2.3. Textbooks Teaching Materials

As a significant tool for teachers and students, textbook plays a guiding and decisive role in the process of teaching and learning. It is the main basis for stu-

dents' test. Nowadays, the textbooks and teaching materials utilized in college English teaching mainly meet the requirement of globalization and social and economic development. Although many teachers attach great importance to developing students' cross-cultural communicative competence and cultural literacy through integrating cultural elements into textbooks and supplementary materials, Chinese culture is difficult to be incorporated in the teaching materials. Most contents of college English textbooks in China derive from original English thus resulting in the fact that English textbooks are British and American culture—based with rare Chinese excellent culture integrated in them. By analyzing several state-compiled college English textbooks can we find in **Table 1** that it is a realistic fact that there is a limited number of articles referring to Chinese culture in English textbooks.

2.4. Mechanism of Assessment

The examination emphasis in college English test focuses on the ability of English listening, speaking, reading and writing. The test about the ability of expressing Chinese culture in English is nearly completely neglected. The adjustment of the paper structure and question types of CET4 was made in August, 2013 by National CET Committee. The part of translation would refer to the topics of Chinese history, culture, economy and social development. For example, the translation part of the test paper in December, 2013 examined the English expression for Chinese culture elements like Chinese knot, Four Great Inventions, classical Chinese garden. It made a vast number of examinees at loose ends because of long-term lack of English input of Chinese culture and the cultivation of students' relevant ability. As the most authoritative college English examination in China, the reform of CET released important signal that the English input ability of Chinese culture would gain more and more attention. However, the English assessment system in most universities and colleges in China rarely refers to students' English ability of expression for Chinese cultures either in final examination or in formative evaluation.

Table 1. A survey of state-compiled college English textbooks.

Textbooks	Total number of passages	Passages about Chinese culture	Passages about cultural difference
<i>College English Integrated Course</i>	80	2 (2.5%)	0 (0%)
<i>21st Century Practical College English</i>	64	2 (3.12%)	3 (4.6%)
<i>Experiencing English Integrated Course Book</i>	96	4 (4.17%)	4 (4.17%)
<i>New Vision College English</i>	64	1 (1.56%)	0 (0%)
<i>New College English</i>	64	1 (1.56 %)	5 (7.5%)

3. Strategies for the Native Culture Integration in College English Teaching Based on the Education of Chinese Ethics and Culture in All Courses

3.1. Transforming Teachers' Idea of Education and Inspiring Their Spirit of Innovation

As the implementer, demonstrator, collaborator and conductor of the whole college English teaching program, teachers serve as the decisive factor for the educational quality. Therefore, it is required that English teachers should strengthen their own awareness of Chinese ethics and culture education in all courses. While constantly improving English professional capability, teachers are required to consciously consolidate their own knowledge reserve of Chinese excellent culture and enhance their cultural literacy. It is only when teachers themselves resolve native language culture aphasia and foster their cultural consciousness and confidence that they may carry out the concept of Chinese ethics and culture education in all courses to realize moral and cultural education. Xi Jinping pointed out on the panel of 2014 September 9th with teachers and students representatives in Beijing Normal University that how strong the conscientiousness teachers have, how big the stage will be. College English teachers are obliged to shoulder the responsibility of cultivating students' national spirit, strengthening their sense of national pride, and promoting their expression ability to disseminate ethnic cultures, thus establishing college English course as an important front for enhancing students' national spirits.

3.2. Further Defining Teaching Syllabus and Teaching Objectives

Despite some statements about the education of Chinese culture in college English class, the requirements seem somewhat thin, scattered and implicit. There is lack of objective systematic and detailed descriptions about how to implement Chinese culture integration, to what extent, how to evaluate teaching and learning. The majority of English educators and teaching administrators will feel confused without specific descriptions and detailed rules or regulations. The building of native culture consciousness should start with humanistic teaching design of college English syllabus. It is strongly suggested that relevant departments should define and elaborate detailed regulations and approach of Chinese culture teaching to the maximum.

College English teaching syllabus is the teaching plan that transforms college English teaching objectives into teaching practice. As the essential basis of college English teaching, it contains teaching goals, requirements, teaching contents and so on. In order to highlight the guidance of syllabus in native language culture teaching, it is necessary that the concept of education of Chinese ethics and culture in all courses should be explicitly stipulated, the target language teaching plan should be elaborated which embodies the idea of "moral education and cultural education". Adherence to the organic unity of teaching and learning, teaching and education, knowledge instruction and values guidance is the first step to

resolve Chinese culture aphasia and erect Chinese cultural consciousness and confidence because only in this way can the source problem for college English be solved.

3.3. Exploiting Ideological Elements in Textbooks

Most articles in college English textbooks are extracted from works by English or American writers or scholars. The content about Chinese culture is hardly ever referred to in most versions of English textbooks. Therefore, it is required for teachers to fully exert their subjective initiative, dig into the implicit elements of moral and ideological education and conduct identification, arrangement and processing to make them naturally incorporated into English education. Much of the time teachers need to supplement the contents of textbook by organic unity with other teaching materials in order to integrate Chinese culture elements into the topic of unit by means of supplementing, extending and sublimating.

Taking New Vision College English Book One for example, none of the units of the textbook involves culture or condition about China except Unit two with a part of introduction on Sichuan hotpot. But by research and analysis on the topics of the remaining seven units, five of them can be incorporated with Chinese cultural elements through natural approach of integration, which is listed in **Table 2**.

3.4. Optimizing Efficient Teaching Approaches and Perfecting Evaluation System

Realizing the deep integration of “Chinese ethics and culture education in all courses” into college English teaching requires teachers to adopt various valid teaching methods such as the combination of curricular and ex-curricular and the combination of online and offline. Teachers are supposed to guide students to jump out of textbooks and develop their role of subjectivity. Students need to be instructed to initiatively participate in the learning experiences by making use of the immediacy and interactivity of Internet information technology. For example, students can realize language and native culture learning to the maximum by means of campus network, WeChat group, QQ group, flipped classroom, audio, video and micro lecture. Besides, it is encouraged for teachers and students to make full use of Chinese media resources like Beijing Review, China Today, China Daily, The 21st Century, Learning Power App from which a lot of English expressions for Chinese culture, politics, economy and customs can be learnt.

The main evaluation methods extensively used in college English nowadays are formative evaluation and summative evaluation. The English output ability of Chinese culture may be incorporated into the assessment system as reference basis for students’ English capacity. Meanwhile, it might be suggested that abutting joint be made between final examination and CET4 by setting new question types testing students’ ability to express Chinese culture in English.

Table 2. Examples of five units integrating Chinese culture into unit topic.

Unit	Topic of passage	Integration of Chinese culture
Unit1 A New Start	Five tips for freshmen	Comparing universities in China and America and guide students to build correct attitude toward college life
Unit3 Face to Face	Never making judgment by appearances	Supplementing the Chinese allusion of “judging by appearances”
Unit4 Love, actually	The Writer’s attitude toward mixed marriage	Comparing Chinese and western view of marriage
Unit6 It Runs in the Family	Stories of the author’s daughter and mother who are the most important women in his life	Talking about Chinese view of affliction and cultivating students’ emotion
Unit8 The Green Revolution	Environmental protection	Chinese contribution to the world environmental protection and energy saving

4. Conclusion

The idea of “education of Chinese ethics and culture in all courses” has become increasingly significant and widely implemented in colleges and universities in China. Along with the acceleration of the process of globalization, “going global” of Chinese academy and culture has become an essential component of national strategies (Shu, 2013). Meanwhile, the development of economic globalization also relies on the communication of language and culture, and the function of language and culture as the mark of national identity becomes increasingly prominent (Dai & Wang, 2011). As an important general education compulsory course, College English undoubtedly shoulders the duty of cultivating cultural consciousness and confidence of students because language education cannot be separated from culture teaching that can make the teaching rich and comprehensive. However, there is very limited Chinese culture education in college English teaching. The Chinese culture aphasia results from a fact that native language culture has long been ignored in college English class. The deep reasons for that can be explored from the perspective of syllabus, curriculum setting, teachers and students, textbooks and mechanism of assessment. Based on the concept of education of Chinese ethics and culture in all courses, this paper puts forward targeted and specific strategies and approaches for implementing Chinese culture integration and education into college English teaching which have provided referable suggestions for college English teachers and teaching administrators. First, teachers are required to change their teaching ideas and establish their own awareness of moral education; second, teaching syllabus and objectives need adjusting to reflect ethical and cultural education in English course; third, it is significant and critical to dig into the ethical and cultural elements in textbooks and teaching materials; last but not the least, teaching modes and evaluation system require to be optimized by teachers and administrators.

Several issues also need close attention in the implementation of Chinese culture education in college English class. It is strongly required that college English

teachers should play a role of “beacon” who shoulders the responsibility to help students set up correct sense of cultures and values.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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