Research on the Methods of Integrating Traditional Chinese Culture into College English Ideological and Political Education

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Abstract: The status of College English courses in the current curriculum system of most Chinese universities cannot be ignored, which is reflected in the wide coverage of majors, considerable class hours, and long teaching time. In the meanwhile, the latest *National College English Teaching Guide* (2020) clearly states that College English should actively integrate into the ideological and political education system of the curriculum, and contribute to the goal of cultivating students' morality and talent. Therefore, in this article, the author attempts to fully explore and extract the core and characteristics of Chinese culture, integrate traditional Chinese culture into College English lessons, enrich the curriculum content of College English, and achieve the same frequency resonance of knowledge transmission and value guidance.

1. Introduction

In order to meet the requirements of higher education reform and development in China in the new era, as English teachers in universities, we should focus on the organic combination of shaping correct values, imparting language knowledge, and cultivating English language application ability [1]. It is a topic that is worth to be explored in depth for the ideological construction of College English courses. Besides, president Xi has repeatedly emphasized that excellent traditional Chinese culture is the spiritual lifeline of our nation. Adhering to the idea of cultural confidence and treating cultural confidence education as an important starting point is a typical approach for many university courses to connect with ideological and political education. The fact that college English as a public course in the curriculum system of universities not only provides a broad and efficient educational platform for promoting the concept of "enhancing cultural confidence", but also should bear a considerable function of ideological and political guidance. Therefore, this article takes the College English lessons as the research object to explore how to combine Chinese traditional culture with the ideological construction of College English, achieve the unity of explicit and implicit education, help students establish positive values, and then implement the fundamental task of cultivating college students who possess both morality and talent.

2. The Problems in Present College English Ideological and Political Education

In recent years, there has been a heated discussion in the educational field about the integration of traditional Chinese culture and ideological education in College English courses, and many insightful achievements have been produced. However, through the author's observation of the English lessons in her college and the other same level universities in the province, it is not difficult to see that there are still many problems in the ideological construction of College English courses. It can be summarized as follows: the integration degree of ideological content with language teaching content is relatively low; Teachers have strong randomness and lack systematic construction in designing ideological teaching content; The accuracy and creativity of the ideological elements used are still insufficient. Many teachers put their time and energy into students' language expression training, or focus on explaining professional grammar knowledge to students, without explaining stories about Chinese culture or highlighting the essence of excellent traditional Chinese culture in the classroom [2]. Some English teachers have insufficient understanding of the ideological and political contents of the course, fail to analyze from multiple

perspectives whether the teaching process is reasonable, and do not choose targeted teaching methods based on the actual situation. When integrating ideological and political elements into English courses, they tend to be more mechanized, treating the implementation of ideological education of the curriculum as a task to complete, and the conditions of disturbing the original teaching outline and taking over the planned teaching contents repeatedly occur, not only leading to lots of confusion, but also the role of ideological education is limited. It also undermines the stability of the existing theoretical system of College English.

3. Methods of Effective Integration Between Traditional Culture and College English

In the process of thinking about the construction of ideological activities, we always adhere to a principle that we cannot forcefully impose ideological education on the curriculum during the teaching process, and should not divide the in-class teaching time into a separate part for ideological education. For the course of College English, ideological education should be natural and gentle, and we should promote a "subtle" English ideological education [3]. Hence, we attempt to design a three-stage curriculum combining pre-class, in-class, and post-class tasks, skillfully integrating traditional Chinese culture into College English classes.

Chinese traditional culture regards "benevolence, moderation, humility, and sincerity" as its philosophy of life, "self-cultivation, family unity, governance, and world peace" as its values, and "world unity, one family under heaven" as its worldview. It is the sum of spiritual and material wealth that combines Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism [4]. It is an intangible teaching material for universities to guide college students in self-cultivation, establish spiritual qualities, and cultivate patriotism. The integration of College English courses and traditional Chinese culture can enable students to compare excellent traditional Chinese culture with Western culture on the basis of a correct understanding of the diversity of world culture, shift from fostering a single cultural quality to building critical thinking ability [5]. And we believe it will guide students to inherit and develop traditional Chinese culture, becoming transmitters of excellent traditional Chinese culture to the outside world.

3.1 Online and Offline Tasks Combination to Fully Motivate Students

To implement ideological and political education in College English courses, relying solely on offline classrooms is far not enough. Hence, before each unit, teachers should dig into the combination of excellent traditional culture and college English teaching based on the theme and specific teaching content of each unit. Teachers should prepare corresponding audio, video or text materials, and use a certain learning software as the medium (such as the current commonly used learning apps like *Xuexitong* and *Cloud Class* in colleges and universities). Through these network learning platforms, teachers can upload and share various learning materials they have prepared, so as to make following preparations for the subsequent offline independent inquiry and cooperative learning. Teachers assign pre-class tasks, urge students to read these pre-class materials, forming their own thoughts, recording their insights, and posting them to the information sharing column of *Xuexitong*. Students can share and communicate with each other there to activate their knowledge background, achieve ideological and political goals, as well as the teaching objectives.

For students in higher grades or with relatively good English foundation, teachers can only provide topics or delineate scope, allowing students to fully exercise their autonomy. According to the teacher's requirements, they can browse and collect relevant information on traditional Chinese culture before class, understand the background information and content of the text, organize and summarize language knowledge and ideological elements on their own. In this situation, teachers must promptly follow up on students' autonomous learning before class and provide them with timely and positive feedback.

When delivering online and offline pre-class tasks, teachers should take students' major characteristics into consideration, which also requires teachers to do sufficient preparation before class. We can't turn College English into a politics course, so it's necessary for teachers to think carefully, dig deep into the textbook and assign tasks connected with the specific majors. In course

design, teachers transfuse ideological and political content into students' language learning and professional development, allowing the three aspects to be combined and work together to promote the improvement of students' thinking, character shaping, and language progress.

3.2 In-class Ideological and Political Education is the Main Battlefield

After making abundant pre-class preparations, students have gained a certain understanding of language knowledge and cultural ideological elements before class. On this premise, during the offline teaching process, teachers can naturally integrate Chinese cultural elements into language teaching activities through interpretation, explanation, and carry out ideological education about corresponding themes. In every single step of the classroom teaching, such as lead in, knowledge transfer, task driven, etc., teachers should carefully formulate plans. As the main body of learning activities, students can complete independent inquiry and cooperative learning through story sharing, role playing, group discussion, etc., to build an English learning community, promote students' deep thinking on the specific theme and content they have learned, and promote in-depth learning. We aim at making English learning no longer limited to low-level language forms such as memorizing words and mastering grammar. But through English language learning, it opens up students' ideas, broadens their horizons, triggers emotional resonance, pays attention to practical problems, and adheres to integrity and innovation. The improvement of humanistic literacy and cultural confidence can also be fulfilled through this learning process. The textbook we use now is the *New Horizon College English* edition three. In this new version, the editors have added many learning parts about Chinese culture, which could be effectively used by us in class. Besides, the teachers can flexibly combine elements of Chinese culture with textbook, set up multi-cultural communication situation for students, and let the ideological knowledge become an easier thing to accept and master.

We must also recognize that the effective organization of ideological and political education in classroom requires English teachers who have outstanding ideological abilities and knowledge reserve, as we believe that the power of teamwork should be utilized. We should establish a teaching team to integrate Chinese culture into College English teaching. The members of the teaching team have a clear division of labor and perform their respective duties, and regularly discuss and determine the academic year, semester, month, and even weekly tasks. Through cooperation and communication, members of the teaching team gradually enhance their awareness, continuously improve relevant teaching resources, improve the efficiency, and optimize course effectiveness. Teamwork can make the integration of Chinese culture into College English teaching become a highlight, forming team characteristics at the same time. It not only makes College English teachers to be more willing to participate, but also allows them to further receive the significant influence of Chinese culture.

3.3 The Utilization and Feedback of Diverse Learning Platforms After Class

After all, the teaching time in class is limited. For college students, consolidating and extending their knowledge storage after class is also an important means to improve themselves. According to our understanding of students and the questionnaire surveys, under the influence of the Big Data Era and modern lifestyle, nowadays college students have different ways of obtaining information from previous students. Therefore, teachers should also think actively to maximize students' access to ideological information and make the cultural knowledge become long-term memory and deep memory. Therefore, we have come up with the idea of leveraging the advantages of mobile learning to enable students to accumulate ideological and political knowledge in a manner of "drop by drop" [6]. We will share daily English short videos, articles, or quizzes related to Chinese culture with students, sourced from China Daily, CGTN, teacher self-created and so on. Establish a college English official account on WeChat, and students can upload articles about Chinese traditional culture and stories on this official account in turn or in the unit of one class. This method might probably be difficult, but it will also stimulate students' interest and help them gain a sense of achievement in English learning. Instruct students to make short videos introduce Chinese traditional culture in both Chinese and English, and upload them to TikTok, Weibo, or other various

video platforms to build and demonstrate college students' sense of social responsibility and deliver China's business cards to the whole society and even to the world. In conclusion, under the internet environment, using decentralized learning methods allows students to experience the charm of traditional Chinese culture over time. The fragmented, mobile, and networked approach to ideological and political learning can stimulate students' interest in learning, allowing them to understand the true meaning of Chinese culture anytime and anywhere, and internalizing ideological and political learning into a habit.

In the after-class activities section, we can set up 1-2 group tasks each semester to let students tell Chinese stories in English, demonstrate traditional Chinese culture and customs in English, introduce the famous mountains and rivers of our country, cultural heritage, and other themes. Conducting group tasks has been a teaching feature of our school for many years. Every semester, students in the class voluntarily form groups of 5-8 people to cooperate and complete the theme tasks assigned by teacher. In recent years, English teachers in our college have been thinking about group task themes with practical meaning related to Chinese culture, tilting the proportion of group task topics towards Chinese ideology and culture. Students ultimately submit group works or present their teamwork in class. During the entire process of discussing research directions, collecting and organizing materials, and completing the final work, students can receive guidance from the teacher at any time. Ultimately driven by self-directed learning, students can enrich their knowledge of both Chinese and English, and subtly broaden their spiritual realm.

In addition, we can organize Chinese culture English translation, speech, or writing competitions to enhance students' English expressing abilities in Chinese culture through these competitions. By organically combining competition and classroom learning, students can enhance their ability to use English and promote personal literary attainment.

4. Conclusion

German existentialist philosopher Jaspers once said that education requires faith, and the education without faith is merely a teaching technique. In College English classes, students can come into contact with a large number of English materials through the study of teaching contents and textbooks, and then understand the humanities, history, politics, and other aspects of foreign countries. By designing courses before, during, and after class, and introducing traditional Chinese culture, teachers can enable students to more intuitively experience the differences between Eastern and Western cultures through the comparison between China and foreign countries, stimulate their enthusiasm for telling Chinese stories in English. It will enrich students' spiritual world, helping them establish correct values. It is of great significance for cultivating composite talents in college with high humanistic and professional qualities.

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