

# Study on Cultivation of College Students' Ability to Tell Chinese

Yuan Xiao

School of Foreign Language, Hainan University, Hainan, China.

xiaoyuan862023@163.com

**Abstract.** Telling Chinese stories well is an important way to improve the country's cultural soft power. Cultivating college students' ability to tell Chinese stories in English can not only expand their international horizons, but also enhance the influence of Chinese culture in the world. However, there is a phenomenon that the foreign communication of Chinese culture is missing and lost in the teaching practice of college English in some universities at present. This paper will analyze the phenomenon of neglecting to cultivate college students' ability to tell Chinese stories well in college English teaching procedures, discuss the content of English teaching that promotes the spread of Chinese culture to the outside world, deeply interpret the teaching mode of "telling Chinese stories well", propose strategies and methods to cultivate students' ability to tell Chinese stories well in English teaching, so as to provide some references for the improvement of College English teaching mode.

**Keywords:** English teaching; College student; Tell Chinese stories well; Ability.

## 1. Introduction

College students are the reserve force for "telling the Chinese story"[1]. How to cultivate their ability to tell the Chinese story well in the process of English teaching and train them to become a new generation who can shoulder the mission of national rejuvenation is an issue that must be considered in English teaching.

### 1.1 Background of this Study

"Telling a good Chinese story" is an important way to enhance the national cultural soft power and strengthen China's international influence. In order to tell the Chinese story well and spread the voice of Chinese culture to people all over the world, we need to strengthen the cultivation of students' ability to tell the Chinese story well in English teaching, cultivate excellent English application talents, and promote the cultural integration of Chinese and foreign countries. However, influenced by the traditional English teaching mode, the ability of contemporary college students to tell Chinese stories well in English is obviously insufficient. In the process of English teaching, teachers in major universities across the country pay more attention to foreign language and culture to varying degrees, while neglecting the cultivation of students' Chinese cultural literacy, and the national culture learning atmosphere of English class is not strong enough. At the same time, students are not sufficiently aware of the important role of telling Chinese stories well to enhance the national image, and they think that it is not their responsibility to promote Chinese culture abroad, which leads students to pay more attention to textbook knowledge in their studies rather than the learning and practical skills of culture.

### 1.2 Purpose and Significant of this Study

In order to better promote Chinese culture to the world, display the social landscape of contemporary China and enhance the national image. Based on the existing research results, according to the current situation of neglecting Chinese culture in English Teaching in China, this paper will discuss from the aspects of using narrative teaching method to update teaching content, strengthening the construction of teaching staff, and building more display platforms for students to

tell Chinese stories, so as to promote English teaching reform and cultivate students' ability to tell Chinese stories well.

Integrating "telling Chinese stories well" into the process of English teaching can not only improve students' cultural cultivation, but also promote the current English classroom teaching reform, get rid of the influence of traditional exam oriented education philosophy, make English teaching focus more on the improvement of core literacy, give full play to the role of English education in promoting cultural exchanges between China and the West, and make education and teaching work more in line with the main theme of national political, social and economic development.

## **2. Problems in Cultivating Students' Ability to Tell Chinese Stories Well in English Teaching**

In terms of the current situation of English education in China, English teaching in colleges and universities tends to be the same as English teaching in secondary schools, with the focus on English grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension, and students in colleges and universities are also accustomed to this mode of English classroom.

### **2.1 Neglecting Chinese Culture in English Teaching**

At present, the absence of Chinese stories is common in college English classrooms. On the one hand, foreign culture is commonly emphasized in college English teaching. Chinese culture is neglected. This is reflected in all aspects of college English textbooks, English teaching design, and teaching implementation. From the perspective of China's current mainstream teaching materials, the vast majority of college English course texts are foreign stories or articles, and there are fewer texts related to Chinese culture or Chinese stories[2]. And in terms of teaching design, foreign language teaching in China has long emphasized the need to try to get rid of the influence of the mother tongue. As a result, students in English classes are only familiar with the language and customs of the target language country, but not with Chinese history and traditional culture. On the other hand, colleges and universities also lack the attention to Chinese culture in setting English courses. The current English optional courses are mostly focused on English language and culture, the culture of British and American countries, but ignore the combination of Chinese culture and English, which limits the way for students to understand the knowledge and content of Chinese culture and Chinese stories in English, and indirectly leads to the lack of students' ability and interest in cross-cultural communication.

### **2.2 Students Lack of Opportunities to Demonstrate their Ability**

The key point of telling Chinese stories well in English is "telling", and students in colleges should go through as many corresponding exercises and demonstrations as possible before they can really master the ability of telling Chinese stories well. Although there are many large English subject competitions, many universities do not pay enough attention to them and lack the publicity of related platforms and opportunities, and colleges do not convey the importance of the competitions to students, which can not effectively attracts students to participate in the exercises and hinder their ability to improve. At the same time, students in colleges also lack of opportunities to tell Chinese stories in English in their daily lives. The lack of necessary opportunities for students to demonstrate their abilities in telling Chinese stories at universities can easily lead to the phenomenon of students being afraid to speak and tell, thus seriously hindering the process of cultivating students' abilities.

### **2.3 Teachers' Knowledge Base of Chinese Culture is not Sufficient**

In contrast to the main position of students in the process of English teaching, English teachers in colleges are the leaders in cultivating college students to tell Chinese stories well in English, which requires English teachers to have certain knowledge of Chinese culture[3]. From the current situation of universities, some English teachers have shortage of Chinese culture knowledge and neglect

Chinese culture in English courses, which is reflected in the fact that they seldom supplement Chinese culture content in English courses. Besides, universities do not provide English teachers with training on Chinese cultural knowledge, which affects the improvement of English teachers' Chinese cultural knowledge. The assessment of English teachers in colleges is relatively traditional and fixed, focusing on the English teachers' professionalism, but seldom involving the degree of teachers' mastery of Chinese cultural knowledge, which affects the enthusiasm of English teachers to learn Chinese cultural knowledge and participate in relevant training. This makes Chinese teachers lack of Chinese cultural literacy, which results in they can not bring more rich teaching content to students.

### **3. Ways of Cultivating Students' Ability to Tell Chinese Stories Well in English Teaching**

There are many ways to cultivate students' ability to tell Chinese stories well in English language teaching. This paper will focus on three aspects: using English narrative teaching method to tell Chinese stories, strengthening the construction of teaching staff and the leading role of subject competition, so as to make suggestions for truly promoting the cultivation of students' ability to tell Chinese stories well.

#### **3.1 Using the English Narrative Teaching Method to Tell Chinese Stories**

Using the English narrative teaching method to tell Chinese stories not only can enable teachers and students to deepen their understanding of the Chinese stories and promote their own narrative skills, but also help foreigners to know a more comprehensive and realistic China through vivid stories.

##### **3.1.1 Teaching with Cultural Videos**

Narrative is more than storytelling, it is a style of life and a way of teaching. As narrators, teachers must first make clear that the teaching procedures are about "storytelling" and not "reasoning"[5]. Teachers should not teach in a fill-in-the-blank manner, but should try to use the vivid experiences that come from life. With the continuous development of science and technology, the materials available in English teaching is becoming more and more diversified. Therefore, the English classes should not only focus on the textbooks themselves, but also learn from literature, movies and dramas, and learn from the skills of telling stories well. Therefore, teachers in colleges and universities can choose video materials related to Chinese culture in the teaching process to change the status quo of boring English classes in colleges and improve students' cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication skills. For example, in the classroom, a clip of BBC documentary "The Story of China" can be shown and students are asked to find out the factors that do not match Chinese history and culture and make analysis and explanation[4]. In this way, students can not only learn authentic English expressions in cultural video teaching, but also get some inspirations of narrative strategies and develop their ability to tell Chinese stories well. In order to enhance the interest and vividness of the story, teachers can also guide students to splice stories, properly add myths and legends, and compare the characters in Chinese stories with similar foreign characters. In this way, the stories with strong Chinese flavor become more specific and vivid, and can also attract the attention of foreign audiences.

##### **3.1.2 Cultural Discourse Integrated into Teaching**

Using cultural discourse in English courses is also an important way to cultivate students' narrative skills. In the process of teaching English, teachers can select chapters related to traditional Chinese culture for teaching, and let students use their own vocabulary and sentence patterns to retell the text in English, so as to develop their ability to actively analyze and compare cultural differences and improve their cross-cultural communication awareness and English narrative skills. This narrative teaching mode allows students to receive knowledge while being infected by culture, and also allows foreign audiences to feel the beauty of Chinese culture more genuinely.

### 3.1.3 Creating Interactive Teaching Situations

The pedagogical space in which the narrative act takes place refers not only to the physical environment in which the foreign language course activities take place, including the classroom and online environment, but also to the invisible psychological environment. A certain emotional field is formed between teachers, stories and students, which has infectious permeability and produces positive or negative effects[6]. In the process of teaching cultural narratives in foreign language courses, a good teaching context allows teachers and students to better express their views, attitudes and emotions, and also allows students to listen more carefully. The teaching context can be created throughout the whole teaching process, from the lead in at the beginning, the interactive session in the middle, to the evaluation and feedback at the end, all of which can be used in specific ways in a targeted manner. In the narrative teaching process, the teaching context can be set in the form of small stories and narrative sentences that fit the teaching theme and mobilize students' emotions. Small stories refer to a single event, the smallest unit of narrative, and contain the three core elements of actor, object, and event. Narrative sentences are single sentences that contain story elements. For example, when explaining the Chinese traditional festival Dragon Boat Festival, the teachers can set up a series of activities in the classroom such as sharing experiences of dragon boat rowing competition and the experiences of wrapping "Zongzi", etc. The setting of these contexts is related to students' personal experiences and corresponds to the goal of practicing good Chinese storytelling, which can trigger great narrative enthusiasm among students.

### 3.2 Strengthening the Construction of Teaching Staff

In order to tell the Chinese stories better and achieve the goal of cultivating students' ability to tell the Chinese stories well in English teaching, it is crucial to strengthen and improve the construction of teachers' education team. First of all, teachers can improve their political and moral qualities by actively studying Xi Jinping's thought of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, so that students can feel the charm and personalities of teachers in the process of acquiring knowledge[7]. Secondly, teachers should strengthen their reading and understanding of classical literature, accumulate knowledge of Chinese culture, improve their ability to express Chinese culture and ideological values in English, and become the excavators, narrators and disseminators of good Chinese stories. In addition, teachers should work together, get in touch with cutting-edge research theories, academic hot spots, intelligent technologies and innovative models, and keep abreast of new media technologies and information dissemination patterns, so as to innovate ways and means of cultivating students' ability of "telling Chinese stories well".

### 3.3 Strengthening the Leading Role of Subject Competition

To achieve the goal of cultivating college students' ability to tell Chinese stories well in English teaching, it is necessary to make good use of the subject competitions in the process of teaching practice. Encourage college students to understand and be familiar with current affairs, and actively engage in innovative practices on how to tell Chinese stories well and introduce China to the world in English. Every year, various English subject competitions are held in China, with the aim of enabling contemporary college students to understand relevant national policies, improve their sense of identification with Chinese culture, and then develop their ability to use foreign languages to promote China's political, economic, and social development to the world. For example, the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press and the China Foreign Language and Education Research Center jointly organize the "FLTRP·ETIC Cup" English Public Speaking Contest every year, and the topics of speeches in the contest are almost always related to hot topics in Chinese society. This requires participants to prepare their speeches by repeatedly browsing authoritative media interpretations and editorials, and to have a very in-depth understanding of the country's social and economic development. The fact is that without knowledge and familiarity with the current affairs of the country, it will be difficult to achieve the desired results in the competition. This is the practical action of "telling the Chinese story well and letting the voice of China be heard by the world", so in

order to cultivate the ability of college students to tell the Chinese story well, the teachers and students must pay more attention to the role played by subject competitions in the process of English teaching practice.

#### 4. Conclusion

In the context of the new era, it is significant to cultivate students who are rooted in the local community, have a global perspective, and tell Chinese stories well in English in the process of teaching English in universities. Following the direction guided by General Secretary Xi Jinping, university English teaching has gradually become an important way to help students build cultural confidence and promote the international dissemination of Chinese stories. Therefore, after recognizing the shortcomings of the current English teaching of Chinese culture, university English teaching should, according to the characteristics of students and the needs of the times, improve the penetration rate of Chinese culture in English courses, enhance ideological awareness, improve teaching methods, and increase language practice, etc., and strive to enhance students' cultural confidence, cultural literacy, and the ability to apply English in telling Chinese stories, so as to help expand the world influence of Chinese culture[8].

Due to limited time and ability, the study has not been more in-depth on the current situation of cultivating students' ability to tell Chinese stories in English teaching, and the suggestions made in this paper may have certain limitations and subjectivity. However, more attention still need to be paid to the lack of Chinese culture in the existing English teaching model, and more research should be conducted on the better development of College English teaching model.

#### References

- [1] Liu, S. (2019, October). Reform of ideological and political theories teaching in English major courses based on the idea of "Telling China's Stories Well". In 2019 2nd International Conference on Education, Economics and Social Science (ICEESS 2019) (pp. 109-112). Atlantis Press.
- [2] Sun, F. (2022). "Telling Chinese stories well" in English Classroom: Model Reconstruction and Teaching Practice University(08), 181-184.
- [3] Fu, Y. & Liu, H. Research on the Cultivation of College Students' Ability to Tell Chinese Stories in English. Journal of Guangdong Institute of petroleum and Chemical Engineering (02), 86-89
- [4] Kou, Y. Q. & Zhou, X. T. (2018). Research on English Narrative Teaching of Spreading Chinese stories Educational modernization (38),91-93. doi:10.16541/j.cnki.2095-8420.2018.38.045.
- [5] Fu, X. Q. & Zhang, H. L. Design and Practice of Intercultural teaching in the Integrated English course for English Majors. Foreign language circle, 2017(01):89-95.
- [6] Feng, K.(2021). Narrative Foreign Language Teaching Design from the Perspective of Curriculum Ideology and Politics. Overseas English(24),141-142+160.
- [7] Jin, Z. Y. & Ma, C. Y. (2021). Tell the "Chinese Story" of the New Era well: Connotation interpretation, realistic dilemma and path innovation. Journal of Taiyuan Party School(06),38-44.
- [8] Yue, Z., & Li, Z. (2020, November). Telling the Chinese story and letting the voice of China be heard. In 2020 Conference on Education, Language and Inter-cultural Communication (ELIC 2020) (pp. 661-666). Atlantis Press.
- [9] Webster, L., & Mertova, P. (2007). Using narrative inquiry as a research method: An introduction to using critical event narrative analysis in research on learning and teaching. higher education review.
- [10] Zhou, S. (2022). Telling Chinese stories well in the context of cognitive psychology: Innovative expression of cultural variety shows. Psychiatria Danubina, 34(suppl 1), 833-835.