

On Cultural Teaching in College English

Hailiang Zhang¹

¹Jilin Engineering Normal University, Changchun, 130000, China.

Abstract

Cultural teaching is the main problem that perplexes English teaching in many colleges and universities. However, there is still a lack of uniform teaching standards and methods in China. Based on this practical demand, this paper first expounds the theoretical basis of College English culture teaching from the actual situation of College English teaching, and then discusses the cultural teaching countermeasures in College English from the perspective of cultural differences, in order to provide valuable reference for the majority of English teaching workers.

Keywords

English teaching; Cultural teaching; Cultural differences; Higher education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cultural pluralism and economic globalization are the main characteristics of the 21st century. As a special cultural composition, language is not only a component of culture, but also a carrier of culture. It is playing an increasingly important role in the 21st century. English teaching in colleges and universities is essentially a platform for cross-cultural teaching. Students need to form skilled language skills, qualified language accomplishment and profound cultural accomplishment in the learning process. Infiltrating cultural teaching in college English teaching can provide richer language situations for college English teaching, and to a certain extent improve the subjective initiative of college students in learning English knowledge, so as to fully exert the potential cultural charm of language. The College English Curriculum Standard clearly points out that "college English teaching is a teaching system with foreign language teaching theory as its guiding content, cross-cultural communication, application skills, learning strategies as its main content, and integration of diversified teaching methods". Thus, English culture teaching and language skills training are an inseparable whole. To improve the quality of English teaching in colleges and universities, we should realize the effective integration of culture teaching and language skills training.

2. THEORETICAL BASIS OF COLLEGE ENGLISH CULTURE TEACHING

2.1. The Development of English Culture Teaching in Colleges and Universities Is A Realistic Demand for the Development of Higher Education

With the development of economic globalization, higher education is bound to develop towards globalization and internationalization. Globalization and internationalization refer not only to more frequent communication, but also to closer cultural integration and the integration of China's excellent national spirit with the international excellent spirit. In the Outline of the National Medium-and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020), it is clearly pointed out that higher education should promote cultural development, strengthen cultural exchanges and enhance students' understanding of multiple cultures [1]. The influence of China's higher education in the world plays a decisive role in determining whether China's higher education will continue to develop. In other words, whether higher education can

influence the world through China's unique cultural charm on the basis of absorbing the advanced development experiences and cultures of various countries.

2.2. The development of College English culture teaching is the necessity of improving English teaching level

As mentioned above, language is an integral part of culture, while language is also the carrier of culture. If language and culture are separated, students' understanding of English will inevitably be in an incomplete and profound state. As far as English translation is concerned, high-level English translation is not a simple semantic translation, but involves many aspects such as style and meaning. The translator must have a sufficient understanding of the culture carried by the language itself in order to fully display, transform and express the meaning carried by the text.

For example, the main problem that puzzles college students in learning English at present is the cultural differences of words. For example, Vice-Chancellor is not equal to "vice-Chancellor". In many British universities, the post of "Chancellor" often represents "honorary post". For example, the "chancellor" of Singapore National University is concurrently held by the president of Singapore [2]. However, in some American universities, the position of "Chancellor" is equivalent to that of president of China. English and Chinese languages may have the same meaning, but under the influence of cultural and social systems, there may be some differences in the meaning of their expressions or in the context of their use. Another example is that in Chinese, "peacock" usually means good luck and good wishes, while "proud as a peacock" means commendation and happiness. However, in English, "peak-cock" means vain and ostentatious although it means "proud as a peacock".

3. COUNTERMEASURES FOR COLLEGE ENGLISH CULTURE TEACHING

3.1. Giving Consideration to Language and Culture and Perfecting Teaching System

According to the above analysis, we can understand that language and culture are inextricably linked. If college students do not understand the cultural background behind the language, they cannot really apply it freely. For example, "carry coals to Newcastle", if students do not have enough knowledge of "Newcastle", they may mistakenly think that "Newcastle" is "New castle", then the text will be understood as "send coal to new castle". The teaching of English culture should start from the overall level. Starting from the planning of the teaching syllabus, the inclusion of culture and language should be considered. Each unit covers the corresponding English cultural knowledge and social background knowledge. Classroom exercises and after-class exercises should highlight the differences between Chinese and western cultures. Teachers should have a conscious and focused integration of culture and language in the teaching process to analyze the text in detail. The introduction of culture by language and the interpretation of language by culture can avoid mistakes in grammar teaching and vocabulary teaching, and ensure that students' language expression ability and cultural accomplishment can be improved at the same time [3-4].

3.2. News Integration of Textbooks and Enrichment of Teaching Content

According to the "cognitive teaching theory", we can understand that there are three main factors that affect the learning of English knowledge of college students: first, the learning basis of college students; second, whether college students effectively combine new knowledge with existing knowledge in the process of learning new English knowledge; third, whether college students consciously analyze the relationship between knowledge in the process of learning. In order to improve the quality of College English teaching, teachers should guide students consciously and emphatically, and analyze the knowledge with the existing knowledge or the

current event that students are interested in. As shown in Figure 1, the existing language of students and the existing culture, new cultural knowledge and new language knowledge of society are mutually influencing and complementary. Therefore, the author believes that teachers can integrate the current news, teaching materials for teaching. It takes some time to determine and compile the contents of college English teaching materials, among which the contents are unavoidably outdated and show a certain lag. In the Internet era, English newspapers, English reports and so on can be obtained through the Internet, and the content reported by major media can be described as a great achievement of modern English. And these news have extremely high actual effect, and have outstanding attraction for college students with strong curiosity [5]. Teachers can use video and audio to guide students to analyze news content through case analysis and text integration, and encourage students to express their opinions independently in English, so as to find special cultural events in news and achieve the realistic goal of expanding students' cultural vision, thus truly realizing the transformation from examination-based English teaching to application-based English teaching.

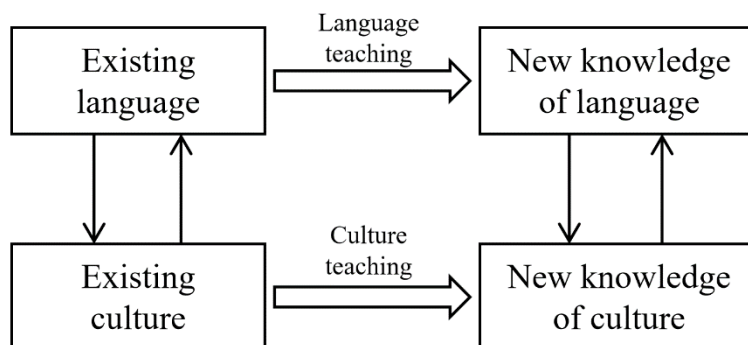


Figure 1. The relationship between the relevant elements of college English learning

3.3. Comparing Cultural Differences, Seeking Differences and Keeping Similarities

Cultural differences are not only the current obstacles that affect the effectiveness of English teaching in higher vocational colleges, but also the starting point to improve the quality of English teaching. English teachers in colleges and universities should take the comparison of cultural differences as the task in the teaching process, and deepen students' understanding of English knowledge content by pointing out cultural differences, so as to really break the barriers of Chinese and western languages and cultures. Teachers should first guide students to have enough knowledge and understanding of the cultural differences between China and the West from the thinking level. Chinese language expression has always advocated from big to small. For example, time often states "when, when, when and when" and addresses often state "what country, province, city and county", but the English expression is just the opposite. Some scholars have pointed out that this is because Chinese people think as a "whole thinking" and the language framework is usually the whole before the part. However, western countries think that different parts make up the whole, so language expression is often "inductive" and word order statement is linear. This difference is directly manifested in English grammar, syntax and discourse structure. Therefore, in the process of teaching, teachers should guide students to break the traditional unified thinking mode and change the traditional sentence expression method.

Teachers should deepen students' understanding of cultural differences by making use of familiar cases and sentence expression norms in students' life. For example, teachers can make students realize that in the process of communication with foreigners, they should choose "safe topic" as much as possible, and can talk about cities, transportation, weather, etc., and avoid talking about wages, age, politics, etc. Because the western concept of privacy and security is relatively mature, talking about salary, age, politics and other content may infringe on personal

privacy. Another example is that many students like to watch American TV series and Hollywood movies in their daily life, and when they see the characters in the plays casually being "God", they follow suit. Teachers should make students realize the "taboo" of this kind of expression in real life, for example, it is extremely impolite to use "God" casually in front of Christians. In addition, in the aspect of sentence organization, we should conform to the western linear expression, put the important content first, and then elaborate on other content.

3.4. Developing Cultural Activities and Optimizing Learning Atmosphere

Teachers can consider taking "students" as the main body to carry out "cultural learning" activities in the classroom, and create special dialogue scenarios with western characteristic contexts to guide students to hone their language abilities in the context environment. For example, teachers can guide students to simulate westerners' meals, business negotiations and other scenes in the classroom, so that students can play different roles in the classroom to carry out dialogues, so that students can intuitively experience different dialogue scenes in the classroom. At the same time, the school can organize regular western culture lectures, English film culture analysis, English drama performance competition, etc., so that students can actively participate in various activities with cultural background, thus forming a good cultural atmosphere in the school.

3.5. Introducing Cultural Assessment and Innovating Assessment Model

"Culture Test" is an important measure to test English culture for students, to test the effectiveness of culture teaching and to change the direction of English culture teaching in colleges and universities. The culture test model proposed by language and culture scholar Wright has important guiding significance for English culture teaching in colleges and universities of our country. The model divides language and culture test into four aspects of "cultural awareness, social etiquette, cultural differences and values". In the test model, multiple choice questions, judgment questions, open interpretation questions, etc. are covered. The test content involves celebrities, living habits, social etiquette, behavior patterns, language styles, conversation methods, geographical names, etc. College English teachers should fully consider the actual situation and formulate test systems that conform to different learning stages.

4. SUMMARY

To sum up, in College English teaching, the integration of western culture has become the consensus of colleges and universities in China. College English teachers should deeply realize the cultural principles and language rules that need to be paid attention to in the cultivation of language communication ability. At present, in the teaching materials and syllabus of our country, a perfect teaching system has been built in the aspects of pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, but the teaching of culture is in the state of "feeling the stone and crossing the river". The content of culture is rich and the cultural differences are complex. Therefore, in the teaching process, it is first necessary to determine the specific teaching contents from a macro level, and then to optimize the original teaching methods in terms of teaching and assessment, so that students can have a deeper understanding of grammar and sentences through cultural differences. In addition, college teachers should also actively apply current high-tech technologies, such as the Internet, campus network, MOOC, etc., to break through the timeliness of college English teaching and expand the depth and breadth of English teaching. The teaching of English culture in colleges and universities must conform to the changes of the times. The relevant contents of the article need to be further improved, and it is hoped that the vast number of teaching workers will continue to explore in practice.

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