

# The Application of "Chinese Story" in Higher Vocational College Students' English Teaching

Yang Wang<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Higher Vocational and Technical College, Shanghai University of Engineering Science, Shanghai, China

## ABSTRACT

Along with the further development of globalization, English has become an important tool for international communication. In higher vocational education, English teaching should not only pay attention to the imparting of language knowledge, but also pay attention to the overall development of students, especially the cultivation of cultural literacy and family feelings. The effective application of "Chinese Story" in higher vocational college students' English teaching will not only help to improve students' English language ability, but also enhance their cultural confidence. To explore how to effectively use "Chinese story" in vocational English teaching, we explore effective teaching strategies and methods to stimulate students' interest in learning, improve their cross-cultural communication ability, and inherit and carry forward the excellent traditional Chinese culture.

**Keywords:** Chinese story, Ideological and political education in courses, Higher vocational English teaching.

## 1. INTRODUCTION: THE CONNOTATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION IN COURSES

One of the main tasks of higher education is to "cultivate virtue and foster talent", and ideological and political education is an effective measure to ensure the implementation of this fundamental task. Ideological and political education in courses refers to a form of ideological and political education that organically integrates the principles, requirements and contents of ideological and political education with the teaching design, textbook development, classroom implementation and course evaluation of courses through the carrier of courses and implicit educational methods. The main form of implementing ideological and political education in courses is to integrate ideological and political education elements, including theoretical knowledge, value concepts and spiritual pursuits of ideological and political education, into various courses, and imperceptibly influence students' ideological consciousness and behavioral habits. And it is necessary to integrate ideological and political education into higher vocational English

courses to promote patriotism and enhance cultural confidence.

## 2. "CHINESE STORY" IN HIGHER VOCATIONAL ENGLISH TEACHING

### 2.1 The Importance of "Chinese Story" in Higher Vocational English Teaching

"Chinese Story", covering the many stories of the Chinese nation outstanding traditional culture, deeply rooted in the Chinese people's psychological and cultural foundation, is our valuable cultural heritage. It mainly includes ancient Chinese myths, folklore, historical events, allusions and other stories that reflect the values of the Chinese people. In addition, "Chinese Story" can also refer to a series of special stories about people published by the current news media. These stories show the struggle, diligence and tenacity of the Chinese people and are vivid examples of the realization of the Chinese Dream. At the same time, "Chinese Story" also represents a new global perspective, that is, from the standpoint of the Chinese nation, tells the development of contemporary China, the inner world and life experience of the Chinese

people in the new era, and the profound imprint of the nation in the new era.

Integrating "Chinese Story" into English teaching is an effective way to realize curriculum ideology and politics. It can pass on socialist core values while learning the language, and cultivate students' moral sentiment and social responsibility. In addition, telling "Chinese Story" well is also crucial to improving the quality and effect of English teaching in higher vocational colleges. And it enriches the teaching content and stimulates students' interest in learning, so that English learning is not only the training of language skills, but also the improvement of cultural literacy and the expansion of international vision. Therefore, telling "Chinese Story" in an appropriate way in higher vocational English classes is not only an effective means to develop curriculum ideology and politics, but also has far-reaching significance for training high-quality technical talents with international competitiveness.

## ***2.2 The Value of Applying "Chinese Story" to Higher Vocational English Teaching***

### ***2.2.1 Developing Higher Vocational Students' Cultural Confidence***

"Chinese Story" contains rich historical culture and modern development achievements. And through the story in the higher vocational English teaching, students can more deeply understand the unique value and charm of Chinese culture. This sense of cultural identity is the basis for cultivating cultural self-confidence. When students tell Chinese stories to the world in English, they are not only spreading culture, but also strengthening their own cultural confidence. This confidence is key for students to remain culturally independent and innovative in the age of globalization.

### ***2.2.2 Enhancing Cross-cultural Communication Competence***

Under the background of globalization, cross-cultural communication ability becomes an important skill in the workplace and international communication. By learning and telling "Chinese Stories", students are able to practice how to accurately and vividly express the views and values of Chinese culture in English. This ability not only helps students to better display the image of China on the international stage, but also promotes their

understanding and respect for other cultures, thus enhancing their intercultural communication ability.

### ***2.2.3 Promoting Cultural Exchanges Between China and Foreign Countries***

"Chinese Story" in higher vocational English classroom communication, provides a platform for Chinese and foreign cultural exchanges. Through these stories, students are able to show the world China's traditional wisdom and modern innovations, while also learning about the cultural characteristics of other countries. Such mutual display and learning of cultures help to build an open and inclusive international cultural exchange environment, promote mutual understanding and respect among different cultures, and realize mutual learning and common prosperity of cultures.

## **3. STRATEGIES FOR APPLYING "CHINESE STORY" IN HIGHER VOCATIONAL ENGLISH TEACHING**

### ***3.1 Integrating Chinese Wisdom and Values***

Under the background of telling "Chinese Stories" well, English teaching in higher vocational colleges integrates Chinese traditional wisdom, philosophical thoughts and socialist core values, so that students can deeply understand Chinese culture. Teachers can choose some stories with characteristics of traditional Chinese culture, such as ancient Chinese fables, idiom stories, and some historical events and characters that reflect Chinese wisdom and values. For example, when the subject of the course involves "Inheritance and Innovation", teachers can introduce the story of "Da Yu Controlling the Flood". In this allusion, Da Yu's father Gun had always adopted a "blocking" method when trying to control the water but failed to achieve success. Da Yu inherited the task of flood control from his father, but adopted the way of "thinning without blocking" through innovation, and finally succeeded in flood control. Through this story, students not only learn about the values of loyalty, inheritance and innovation, but also retell the story in English and exercise their language skills. Teachers could also organize the students to discuss the significance of these values in modern society and encourage them to apply this spirit to their learning and life.

### ***3.2 Emphasizing on the Interpretation of Cultural Differences***

In the higher vocational English teaching, teachers should guide students to understand and respect the culture of English countries and at the same time, to spread Chinese culture. This requires teachers to pay attention to the interpretation of cultural differences in teaching and help students understand and compare the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western cultures. For example, when giving English lectures related to the subject of holiday, teachers can show pictures or videos of the Spring Festival in China and Christmas in the West to guide students to discuss the similarities and differences between the two festivals. In this way, vocational students learn Christmas related English language innovation, but also practice introducing the Chinese Spring Festival traditions and cultural customs in English at the same time. In addition, this also enables students to have a deep understanding of different cultures, establish cultural self-confidence and spread the excellent culture of the country.

### ***3.3 Associating Life Experiences***

Teachers can tell stories in English by combining their own practical experience or guiding students to tell their own life experience. For example, when the subject of "Business Travel" is mentioned in the business English course, the teacher can combine his own experience of checking in at the airport when he is on a business trip abroad. By introducing the efficient management of domestic airlines, the teacher could share with the students the efficient service of the motherland that he personally feels. Teachers can also allow students to combine their own experiences. Through this teaching method of combining real life experience, students are more willing to accept the sharing of real cases around them.

### ***3.4 Methods of Applying "Chinese Story" in the Higher Vocational English Teaching***

The application of "Chinese Story" in higher vocational English teaching is not only limited to telling "Chinese stories" in English, but also in "listening, reading, writing and translating" practices in higher vocational English teaching. For example, the English version of Chinese traditional festival introduction, historical stories, modern

achievements and other audio or video materials, can be used to design some listening comprehension questions, thus achieving the purpose of listening practice. In addition, in the reading teaching, English articles, books or magazines containing Chinese stories can be selected as reading materials. These materials can cover many aspects of Chinese history, culture, society, etc., and are designed to broaden students' international perspective while improving their English reading comprehension. Teachers can guide students through intensive reading, extensive reading, etc., to deeply understand the Chinese story in the article, and encourage them to think and discuss critically. In translation teaching, some English sentences or paragraphs containing Chinese elements can be selected and students can translate them into Chinese, or conversely, some Chinese story paragraphs can be translated into English. Through translation practice, students can have a deeper understanding of the differences between Chinese and English and improve their translation and intercultural communication skills. At the same time, it can also deepen students' understanding and recognition of Chinese culture.

## **4. THE CHALLENGES AND COUNTERMEASURES OF APPLYING "CHINESE STORY" IN HIGHER VOCATIONAL ENGLISH TEACHING**

### ***4.1 Challenges***

#### ***4.1.1 Higher Vocational Students Having Insufficient Awareness of Spreading Chinese Culture***

Under the current globalization background, as the builders of the future society and cultural communicators, the consciousness of vocational college students in the dissemination of Chinese culture is particularly important. However, in reality, the consciousness of vocational college students in this field is generally insufficient, which not only affects the international communication effect of Chinese culture, but also restricts the improvement of students' comprehensive quality. Vocational students tend to focus more on the study of professional skills, but neglect the cultivation of cultural literacy. This kind of education mode that emphasizes practical skills leads to students' insufficient knowledge and understanding of

Chinese culture, and it is difficult to spread Chinese culture effectively.

On the one hand, due to the limitations of class hours and other factors, few higher vocational colleges specifically set up Chinese culture courses. And in English teaching, to varying degrees, teachers attach importance to the introduction and explanation of foreign languages and cultures, thus ignoring the cultivation and improvement of students' national cultural accomplishment, and the learning atmosphere of mother tongue culture is not strong enough. On the other hand, students generally do not fully understand the significance of spreading Chinese culture, or simply think that the Chinese Stories or those major events are far away from them, or even have nothing to do with them. As a result, they ignore the learning of cultural level and are seldom aware of spreading Chinese culture.

#### *4.1.2 Higher Vocational Students' Lower English Proficiency*

Higher vocational college students' English foundation is weak, and they are lacking in confidence to express their ideas in English. And even if they would like to spread Chinese stories to the outside world, their English proficiency and cross-cultural communication ability is limited, so they dare not speak in English in most cases. Therefore, it is an urgent task for vocational English teachers in the new era to rebuild students' language confidence and cultural confidence in teaching practice and improve their ability to tell Chinese stories in English.

#### *4.1.3 Lack of Appropriate Teaching Materials*

Another challenge is that there is a lack of suitable teaching materials, namely, systematic and high-quality English teaching materials for "Chinese Story" are scarce in the market. The selection of Chinese stories in the existing teaching materials is limited and the form is single, which cannot meet the diversified teaching needs. Secondly, there are not enough multimedia resources like vivid audios, videos and other multimedia materials, which are essential to help students understand and tell Chinese stories. However, even if there are some high-quality animations, documentary and other relevant resources, due to copyright problems, sometimes it is inconvenient to obtain and use these materials.

#### *4.1.4 Students' Lack of Interest and Motivation*

Some higher vocational college students think that English learning is mainly about passing exams and obtaining certificates, and they do not pay enough attention to the cross-cultural communication task of spreading Chinese stories and have little enthusiasm. Plus, it is difficult for them to tell Chinese stories in English. Therefore, students are afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at by others, which will lead to a fear of difficulty and affect their enthusiasm for even trying to tell Chinese stories in English.

#### *4.1.5 Teachers' Capacity and Time Constraints*

Although some teachers have a solid English language foundation, they do not dig deeply into the connotation of Chinese culture and have insufficient cross-cultural communication knowledge reserve, which makes it difficult to effectively guide students to understand and tell Chinese stories in class, nor can they accurately correct students' mistakes in cultural expression. What's more, higher vocational English courses need to complete the established teaching syllabus, and the class hours are limited, so it is difficult for teachers to complete the routine teaching tasks and fully carry out the teaching activities of "Chinese Story" in the limited time.

In conclusion, based on various reasons, teachers do face some difficulties while applying "Chinese Story" in higher vocational English teaching. In-class teaching often lacks the systematic integration of Chinese cultural elements in the curriculum and teaching content, which makes students lack a comprehensive understanding and deep recognition of Chinese culture. As a result, it is difficult for students to actively and accurately express the core values and unique charm of Chinese culture in cross-cultural communication. In addition, some higher vocational students lack the sense of spreading Chinese culture. Therefore, strengthening the students' awareness of spreading Chinese culture admits of no delay, and it is an important way to promote students' all-round development. Plus, lack of appropriate materials, teachers' limited ability and teaching time constraints all contribute to the difficulties.

## **4.2 Countermeasures**

### **4.2.1 Emphasizing on Language Teaching and Cultural Introduction**

First of all, teachers could sort out Chinese story-related vocabulary, such as historical stories, folklore, traditional art and so on, for students to memorize. And then it is also helpful to carry out vocabulary practice activities, such as vocabulary solitaire, the competition of filling in the blanks and the like. At the same time, students should be taught word formation to help them understand and memorize new words. Additionally, before telling the Chinese story, the teacher should introduce the relevant cultural background in detail, and make students feel directly through pictures, videos, physical displays and other ways. For example, when telling the story of "The Spring Festival", it is a good idea for the teacher to show photos of the traditional decorations and celebrations during the Spring Festival, and play the dragon and lion dance videos to help students understand the connotation and lay the foundation for English expression.

### **4.2.2 Enriching Teaching Materials**

It would be great if teachers of English and Chinese in higher vocational colleges could work together to compile teaching materials of "Chinese Story" in both English and Chinese. The teaching materials cover various types of Chinese stories, and are equipped with the original story, vocabulary annotation, cultural interpretation, English expression examples, and after-class exercises, which is convenient for the students to learn on their own. Besides, teachers could make use of the resources on the Internet, screening high-quality audios and videos of Chinese stories. At the same time, teachers are encouraged to make their own teaching materials, such as recording their own audios or videos telling Chinese stories, with English subtitles, and sharing them on the study platform for students to learn.

### **4.2.3 Stimulating Students' Interest and Motivation**

It is advisable to carry out English story speech contests, short play performances, dubbing contests and other activities among the students. They could participate either in groups or by individuals, and it is also a good idea to provide rewards for outstanding students, thus stimulating their enthusiasm for participation. For example, students

are asked to adapt classic Chinese stories into English short plays for performance in groups to improve their English expression skills and their understanding of Chinese stories in the preparation and performance process. On the other hand side, by inviting foreign employees or overseas students in China to share their experiences, teachers let the students know the importance of the Chinese stories in international communication. For example, showing the students the examples of Chinese culture being welcomed in foreign countries can make them realize that they can become ambassadors of Chinese culture, therefore, enhance the students' sense of mission and learning motivation.

### **4.2.4 Improving Teachers' Ability and Optimizing Teaching Arrangements**

The university should regularly organize teachers to participate in cross-cultural teaching training, invite experts to give lectures and hold workshops to improve teachers' Chinese cultural literacy and cross-cultural teaching ability. In addition, teachers should be encouraged to participate in academic seminars, exchange teaching experience with peers, and learn the latest teaching methods and outcomes. What's more, teachers should carefully design the teaching arrangements, and make a reasonable combination of the "Chinese Story" teaching and the routine teaching contents. For example, when teaching tourism-related topics in the English language class, teachers should introduce the stories behind the famous tourist spots in China. And in the English writing class, teachers could organize the students to write Chinese stories in English, so as to improve the teaching efficiency and achieve the teaching goal within a limited time.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

In short, under the background of globalization, to tell Chinese stories in an effective way, students will have to master certain cross-cultural communication ability and the required English language skills. Facing the new situation, English teachers in higher vocational colleges should also put importance to introducing traditional Chinese culture and the achievements of modern development apart from teaching the English language knowledge, so as to enable students to deeply understand and master the connotation of Chinese culture and lay a foundation for them to spread Chinese stories in English.

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