

Research on College English Teaching from the Perspective of Chinese Cultural Discourse Power

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Abstract: This paper summarizes the phenomenon of cultural aphasia in college English teaching. The solution to this problem lies in strengthening Chinese Cultural discourse power and building students' cultural confidence based on combining the core values of Marxism & socialism with Chinese characteristics. This paper probes into the methods from the perspective of teachers, students and college English class learning.

1. Introduction

In his report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "Culture is the soul of a nation. If culture develops well, the country will prosper; if culture prospers, the nation will become strong. Without a high degree of cultural self-confidence and cultural prosperity, there will be no great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation." The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is closely linked with a high degree of cultural self-confidence. Chinese should cultivate the national cultural self-consciousness and possess the national cultural self-confidence.

All problems arise from culture and all problems are solved by culture. (Zhou Zhenggang 2012; Huang Xiaobo 2012). Over the past three decades, the utilitarian value orientation dominated by instrumentality has shackled the creativity of English learners. English language education neglected the innovative implantation of localized culture and lost the cultural core and humanistic values (Zeng Min, 2012). At present, in College English teaching, some domestic experts and scholars have made a preliminary study on the Chinese culture entering the classroom (Dai Weidong 2008; Zhang Shan 2017). Some scholars have studied the phenomenon of "cultural aphasia". They believe that the lack of introduction of Chinese culture in English textbooks has led to the phenomenon of cultural aphasia (Cong, 2000; Deng Wenying, Ao Fan, 2005). Qian Mu (2011) believed that "the formation of cultural self-confidence has its own law, cultural cognition is the premise, cultural exchange is the condition, and the control of cultural discourse is the key".

2. The Concept of Discourse Power and the Importance of Establishing Chinese Cultural Discourse Power

Discourse power, in short, refers to the ability to influence the direction of social development and public judgment and choice of direction. Ideological discourse power mainly refers to the ability to guide people and determine the direction of public opinion in the social ideological trend. The "ideological discourse power" in the Party's ruling discourse system mainly refers to the ideological discourse power and dominant power of Marxism and socialist core values. To grasp the ideological discourse power is to make Marxism dominant in the social trend of thought, that is, to make the core values of Marxism and socialism with Chinese characteristics become the guideline of action for the people.

2.1 Constructing Foreign Discourse System, Telling Chinese Stories Well and Promoting International Discourse Power

International discourse power is an important component of ideological discourse power. In the era of globalization, the power of the ruling party's ideological discourse largely depends on the international discourse power. Improving international discourse power is in fact a struggle for discourse power and leadership in the field of global ideology and in the contest of different ideological and public opinions. Xi Jinping pointed out that in order to enhance the international discourse power in propaganda and ideological work, the key lies in "guiding people to understand the current situation in contemporary China and to observe the outside world". That means the mainstream ideology should be able to guide people to accurately "interpret China" and dialectically "see the world". The mainstream ideology must clarify the development path of contemporary Chinese society, especially the unique system model; it must comprehensively and rationally clarify the relationship between China and the world, and carry out effective external propaganda.

To achieve this goal, it is essential and important to construct a discourse system with Chinese characteristics. First, only by adopting the discourse system with Chinese characteristics can we explain the uniqueness of China. Through effective discourse system, people can fight back the "construction" of Western ideology on China's reality, and let the world understand "Chinese modernization". Secondly, only by using the discourse system with Chinese characteristics can we treat the external world objectively and rationally. "Discourse hegemony" and "discourse trap" are the consistent methods of ideological infiltration in Western countries. Chinese need to take "Chinese discourse" and "Chinese theory" as the basis point, reveal the ideological intention behind them, and enhance self-confidence in international competition. Thirdly, only by using the discourse system with Chinese characteristics can Chinese do a good job of external propaganda. China has met a lot of misunderstandings in the world. Only by strengthening the construction of discourse system and striving to create new concepts and new categories that integrate China and foreign countries, can Chinese tell stories well, disseminate Chinese voices well and enhance discourse power in the world.

2.2 Enhancing Cultural Confidence by Promoting Excellent Traditional Culture

Confidence is indispensable to the insistence of ideological discourse power. We should adhere to road self-confidence, theoretical self-confidence, institutional self-confidence and cultural self-confidence. Chinese excellent traditional culture plays a vital role in enhancing cultural self-confidence.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping has viewed traditional culture more actively and constructively, emphasizing the important role of Chinese traditional excellent culture in the ideological construction and the construction of core values. In fact, it emphasizes that we should absorb the nutrients of governing the country and government from the excellent traditional Chinese culture, enhance cultural self-confidence, and provide rich cultural resources for the construction of ideological discourse power. First, the excellent Chinese traditional culture is the "spiritual lifeline" which has been accepted by Chinese people. General Secretary Xi pointed out on many occasions that the excellent traditional Chinese culture is the "root" and "soul" of the Chinese nation and the "spiritual lifeline" of the Chinese nation. Secondly, the excellent traditional Chinese culture is an important source of cultivating socialist core values. Thirdly, the excellent traditional Chinese culture will help us to enhance the soft power of culture in our external propaganda. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that the excellent traditional Chinese culture is our deepest cultural soft power and can enhance our international voice in diplomatic exchanges. Fourthly, Chinese excellent traditional culture can guard against Western "cultural hegemony" and adhere to "spiritual independence". Excellent traditional culture helps us to build up national and cultural self-confidence. In the face of the impact of Western culture, it helps us to maintain "independence" in ideology and spiritual culture.

3. The Current Situation of College English Class

As a global language, English plays a leading role in cultural inheritance and ideology. According to some scholars' questionnaires and tests on undergraduates of well-known universities, it is found that up to 90% of the students cannot express Chinese culture accurately and fluently in English. "Chinese cultural aphasia" is caused by many reasons. One of the reasons is that the teaching of target language culture is overemphasized. In China, both foreign language teachers and foreign language syllabus makers have put too much emphasis on the cultural input of the English-speaking countries, but they have not paid enough attention to the teaching of mother tongue culture. In College English textbooks, the introduction and teaching of background knowledge are dominant by reflecting English-speaking countries' cultural customs, geography, history, ways of thinking, values and so on, while Chinese cultural content is rarely reflected in the above aspects. For example, there are 64 texts in the four volumes of *New College English Edition*, 38 of which are related to Western culture, accounting for nearly 60% of the textbook, while only 1 of them is related to Chinese culture, accounting for 1.5%. Another example is that there are 172 articles in *New Horizon College English*, only 5 of which are related to Chinese culture.

So as a teaching content, what kind of teaching form should Chinese cultural discourse power take to enter the classroom? Efforts should be paid to solve this problem.

4. The Methods in Establishing Chinese Cultural Discourse Power

By Contrasting Chinese and Western cultures in classroom teaching, students' cultural self-confidence can be constructed.

Firstly, English teachers should have an access to understand and love Chinese culture. Through consciously introducing cultural modules, they can base themselves on sharing of localization and internationalization, guide students to recognize and reflect on the spirit of Chinese culture and its development history, enhance their awareness and self-confidence of national culture, and incorporate the essence of English culture, so as to shoulder the responsibility of training to stand out in the fierce international competition.

Secondly, English teachers should cultivate cultural awareness by learning western culture, as well as traditional culture. How to balance the introduction of western culture and Chinese culture in teaching is still a problem. Teachers can neither overemphasize the importance of Chinese culture nor import too much Western culture. Students should be taught to accept and absorb culture critically and differentially to form their own cultural outlook.

Thirdly, most undergraduates are born after 2000. This generation bears the following feature: they are keen on using electronic device to acquire knowledge and information. Under such background, students are supposed to take advantage of online learning to arouse learners' interest and improve their sensitivity to cross-cultural communication. Interest is the cognitive tendency to explore something actively. This kind of cognitive tendency makes students give priority to something and have a yearning mood. When interest further develops into a tendency to engage in practical activities, it becomes a hobby. When students are interested in certain things, they will actively engage in relevant practical activities.

Finally, CBI teaching method can be adopted in the teaching mode. Content-based Instruction (CBI) refers to the combination of English language and textbook content. Through repeated listening, speaking, reading and writing training of multiple articles on the same subject content, students are trained to acquire English skills while mastering a certain professional topic. The design of teaching activities combines with the teaching content and integrates language training into the subject content of learning. Teaching is mainly content-driven rather than language-driven.

Take *New Standard College English*(Book Three)for example, in Unit 4 *No Place like Home*, teachers can lead students to compare the different concepts towards home between Chinese and westerners. Chinese are more attached to home compared with westerners. Chinese are inclined to own a house rather than renting a house because house symbolizes success and stability. While westerners prefer to rent a house since they change jobs frequently. In Unit 6 *High Days and*

Holidays, students can find out the similarities and differences by comparing Spring Festival and Christmas. The similarities lie in the unity of family member, friends and relatives. The differences cover the forms and origin of the religion. In Unit 8 *Tales Ancient and Modern*, students feel quite interested about the Greek Mythology. Teachers can take advantage of this opportunity to encourage students to find some Chinese tales. Through comparison, students can dig out the deeper reasons for these differences so that they can deepen the understanding of the diversity of culture.

Conclusion

In a word, in College English teaching, we should link cultural modules and compare Chinese and Western cultures so that students can be familiar with Chinese culture, cultivate their confidence in Chinese culture and enhance their sense of national pride and superiority. College English classroom can also fulfill the new mission of the new era: to train students to master bilingual languages and their culture; to inherit Chinese excellent culture internally; to disseminate Chinese advanced culture externally; to enhance China's soft power and to make Westerners understand China. At the same time, if college students in the new era are familiar with both Chinese and Western cultures, they can improve their intercultural communicative competence and become more skilled in international exchanges, and grow into compound talents with an international perspective.

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