



Chinese Storytelling Theme-oriented in English CBI Teaching and Research

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Abstract. Content-based instruction (CBI) has been evolved in China for many years. Its terminal aim of English language teaching enables learners to acquire communicative capacity by theme language output. In this paper, we make a brief exposition and analysis of CBI and its evolve into integration of Ideological and Political Education Practice (IPEP) in College English Course by the approach of the scenario of Chinese storytelling theme teaching and learning. We further exploration on Chinese storytelling that has imposed CBI teaching model innovation from theme-language instruction into integrated skill approach of English language teaching and learning.

Keywords: Chinese-story telling, content-based instruction (CBI), Ideological and Political theme education, Digital Narrative Competency.

1 Introduction

1.1 CBI Theory and Its Evolution in China

Content-based instruction (CBI) first appeared in mid-1980s with the publication of Bernard Mohan's work, *Language and Content*. Following closely on Cantoni-Harvey (1987) and Crandall (1987)-both of which helped to further launch this movement. Since the time CBI has been applied in virtually all parts of world, numerous additional CBI models continue to evolve. A recent innovation in CBI is sustained-content language teaching (SCLT) (Pally, 2000; Murphy and Stoller, 2001)[1]. The sustained content simulates (David Nunan, 2004)[2] the conditions and demands of the subject matter classroom, it allows language learners to more deeply engage the content, in the process acquiring the academic vocabulary language skills needed for the mainstream. The language teacher doesn't need be a content area expert, but the content serves as a point of departure for language instruction. In this way, CBI resembles theme-based instruction and the content is sustained, and students work with only one topic, which differs from theme-based courses typically cover a variety of topics and task-learning. These years, although CBI in China's foreign language teaching has not new theory, but it has been developed into practical formulation of Content and Language Integration (CLI) that promote language instruction of skill-oriented learning output. Sustained language content delivery has been valued in our teaching recent

years especially on Chinese storytelling, which develops CBI theory on learners' language value and language output.

1.2 CBI Theory in English Ideological and Political Theme Education

Content-based instruction theory has been integrated in English Ideological and Political theme education. Learners' language output is around the topic of Chinese stories, which has meaningful methods for learning practice as follows:

1.2.1 Humanistic Approach

Chinese-story telling is the practice of the humanistic view of language in the context of foreign language learning, which addresses the issue of "emphasizing language over content." Learning language is inseparable from learning culture. Through language, one learns the culture of English-speaking countries, and through culture, one learns the language. It is important to listen to and read a wide range of topics in books and articles (history, literature, biographies, science, technology, economy, politics, military, etc.). This humanistic approach not only improves language proficiency but also broadens knowledge in various fields, and allows one to learn the essence of another culture, appreciate culture diversity and introduce native culture naturally.

1.2.2 Communicative Approach

"Because language is a unique means of communication for humans, there is an intrinsic connection between communicative teaching and humanism," "In an era where technology is highly developed, communication networks are unprecedentedly broad and fast, modern people need to communicate with the outside world more than ever. Language, especially foreign languages, is a fundamental way for modern people to enhance their extensive and profound cultural literacy" (Li Xiaojun, 1999) [3]. Chinese-story telling ensure the teaching goal for practical ability that is most important aspect of communicative approach. During the output of theme content, learners play the role of storytellers who present the communicative competence on language proficiency, practical English skill, and cognitive and perceptual abilities.

1.2.3 Whole-person Education Goal

The "College English Teaching Guide" (2020 Edition) states that college English courses have both instrumental and humanistic characteristics. The teaching objectives of college English are to cultivate students' English application abilities, enhance cross-cultural communication awareness and communication skills, while also developing independent learning abilities, improving comprehensive cultural literacy, and fostering humanistic spirit and critical thinking skills. The humanistic essence and educational objectives of college English courses necessitate a shift in college English teaching from a knowledge-based approach to one that is centered on abilities, qualities, and values, offering a guiding teaching content for the ideological and political

construction within college English courses. Storytelling as an important part of learning objectives, it has further developed and integrated in CBI design and activity.

2 The Exploration of Telling Chinese Stories in College English Teaching

2.1 The Connotation of Chinese Storytelling Theme-oriented CBI Teaching

Theme-oriented teaching is essential part of CBI that involves creating an environment conducive to learning, fostering a love for learning, and preparing students for their future endeavors. The essence of integrating Chinese storytelling-themed teaching involves two key aspects: identifying information knowledge of China's history, culture, traditions, and values; and the method of spreading those stories or traditions into communication scenario.

Teachers should reconstruct teaching materials according to CBI teaching process. Explore Chinese stories as materials for language learning, helping students learn Chinese and understand the cultural context behind the language. Especially, many Chinese stories contain moral lessons and can serve as supplementary materials for moral education. Incorporating Chinese story-themed teaching into the curriculum not only enriches the content but also cultivates students' comprehensive qualities, enhances their cultural confidence, and broadens their international perspective. Generally, English course undertake the theme content of cultural heritage, value education, historical education, aesthetic education, cross-cultural communication and so on.

2.2 The Approach of Chinese Storytelling Theme-oriented CBI Teaching

The connotation and significance CBI is that under the guidance of the unit's overarching theme, teachers connect the various texts within the unit, transforming disjointed knowledge points into a coherent sequence, a connected web, and integrating them into a systematic knowledge framework. So teachers classify the acquisition procedure into the models of theme, text, topic, thread, task, and transition. According to the models, that allows students to gradually form a deep understanding of the unit theme through activities such as comprehension, application, and innovation. Focusing on the main thread of themes and topics, and using language knowledge as the underlying thread. The whole procedure refines the thematic significance and taps into the educational value of the unit. This approach transforms teaching from being fragmented to interconnected, from transmission to application, and from superficial to profound level. There are some specific approaches to teaching as follows

2.2.1 Scenario-teaching Design

Students are not language learners but story narrators. Students should learn how to construct and express stories, including the beginning, development, climax, and conclusion of the story. Students need to use the target language in storytelling, showcasing their language knowledge, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, which de-

depends on content-based design. Theme is applied into specific scenario teaching designs. Choose real-life scenarios relevant to learners or design imagined scenarios that connect with learners' life experiences. Teachers plan activities such as role-playing, situational dialogues, mock interviews, etc., to allow learners to practice language use in practice. Teachers encourage learners to explore language use in different scenarios independently outside the classroom and improve their language skills through reflection. Continuously adjust the teaching design based on learners' performance and feedback to meet the needs of different learners. Scenario design is not only to improve students' language skills but also help them appropriately use language in different social and professional environments.

2.2.2 Cultural Awareness

Students are encouraged to use their creativity to produce unique and engaging narratives. As a narrator, narrative discourse and narrative structure should consider the audiences' emotion and cultural diversity. So, the course content on the theme of "Cross-cultural narration of Chinese Stories" includes three aspects: "Why to tell", "What to tell", and "How to tell it well" (Sun Shuguang, 2021) [4]. Delivery of culture awareness should consider the element of audience. Incorporate cultural backgrounds and customs into the teaching to help learners understand the socio-cultural context of language use. By understanding the essence of these stories, students can communicate them clearly and effectively when interacting with individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Besides, The emotional investment in the narrative not only achieves a "deeply moving" effect that ordinary information transmission cannot reach, but also establishes a foundation of thought and emotion for the presentation of values in the narrative. Utilizing the power of "empathy", they can make these Chinese stories resonate with a broader audience, fulfilling the goal of spreading Chinese narratives and their cultural significance.

2.2.3 Digital Narrative Competency Framework

The Digital Narrative Competency Framework for Foreign Language (DNCF) [5] is an educational approach aimed at cultivating students' foreign language abilities through digital storytelling. Empowering the CBI teaching model with DNCF means integrating the Digital Narrative Competency Framework into content-based teaching, allowing students to improve their language abilities through actual subject content learning and to strengthen the practice and application of language through narrative activities. Utilize multimedia, virtual reality, and other technology tools to enhance the realism and interactivity of the scenarios. That is crucial means for the practical use of language in learning and teaching anywhere and anytime. In the context of foreign language digital storytelling, the narrative structure, narrative discourse and cross-cultural awareness are three essential elements that contribute to effective communication and expression, according the classification of students' digital narrative ability by Yang Hua [6]. All the factors interact with students' digital medium capacity, which further develop the theme of Chinese storytelling.

From the teaching aspect, students need to possess basic skills in using digital tools and platforms, including social media, blogs, and video production software. Furthermore, in digital storytelling, students need to demonstrate an understanding and respect for different cultural backgrounds. So, this framework typically includes comprehensive aspects: creative thinking, digital literacy, language competence, critical thinking, collaboration and communication. The framework for digital narrative skills in foreign languages consists of interconnected elements: narrative structure, narrative discourse, and cross-cultural consciousness. It manifests in the value shaping and cultural self-awareness contained within the narrative creations of college students. Narrative target stimulates students' interest and language code transmission. Narrative information and acquisition are from the combination of real scenario and content materials. Although teachers become the leader of theme, students should learn to cooperate with others, create narratives together, and communicate ideas effectively in autonomic learning. Meanwhile, integrate technological tools into narrative creation could improve the quality and appeal of the narrative. These capabilities collectively form the core of college students' digital narrative ability in foreign languages, helping them to communicate and express themselves more effectively in a globalized and digital society.

3 Conclusion

3.1 Restructuring of Knowledge and Cultivation of Learning Ability

Analyzing and discussing Chinese stories can cultivate students' critical thinking skills, encouraging them to consider issues from different perspectives. The emotional elements in Chinese stories can evoke students' empathy and cultivate their compassion and moral sense. Encouraging students to use their imagination and creativity based on their understanding of Chinese stories, and to create new stories or adapt existing ones.

3.2 Blended Learning and the Cultivation of Innovative Abilities

Chinese storytelling theme explores CBI teaching approach that focuses on cultivating English language skills in translation from Chinese to English, unifying the socialist core values. So, learners should have the ability to understand and innovate in the dissemination of Chinese culture. During the learning and teaching, blended learning method can provide students with a richer and more interactive learning environment, enabling them to use foreign languages in real contexts while improving their creativity, critical thinking, and collaborative skills. Learning English opens the door to a deeper understanding of foreign thought patterns and cultural customs, allowing us to compare the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign cultures. This enables us to tell Chinese stories in a form that is easily perceived, understood, and recognized by foreigners.

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