

Strategies to Enhance the External Publicity Skills of English Majors

Yufei Zhao

Dalian Minzu University, Dalian, Liaoning, 116600, China

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Abstract: In the context of globalization, the external publicity skills of English majors are increasingly vital for enhancing China's international image and cultural soft power. This study examines the current status of external publicity skills among English majors and identifies challenges from the perspectives of students, teachers, and departments. Key issues include insufficient knowledge of Chinese culture, lack of practical application opportunities, limited integration of multicultural perspectives in the curriculum, inadequate professional training for teachers, scarce resources for Chinese cultural education, and predominantly exam-oriented assessment methods. To address these challenges, the study proposes strategies such as enriching the curriculum with Chinese cultural content, providing enhanced professional training for teachers, developing comprehensive teaching resources, increasing practical opportunities for students, allocating more resources for cultural education, and implementing diversified assessment methods. By adopting these strategies, educational institutions can better equip English majors with the skills needed for effective external communication and promotion of Chinese culture on the global stage.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Significance

As an important language for international communication, English places higher demands on the external publicity skills of English majors[1]. In the context of globalization, improving students' external publicity skills not only helps enhance China's international image and cultural soft power but also boosts students' employment competitiveness[2]. However, many English majors currently lack sufficient skills in expressing Chinese culture and national conditions, which affects their confidence in external communication and limits their performance on the international stage[3]. This study aims to explore the necessity and significance of cultivating English majors' external publicity skills to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for improving students' skills in this area.

1.2 Research Objectives and Methods

This study aims to comprehensively understand the current status of external publicity skills among English majors and propose targeted cultivation strategies through interviews with students,

teachers, and department heads. Using the interview method as the primary research approach, this study gathers first-hand information to analyze the current situation, identify challenges, and suggest improvements [4]. The specific research objectives are as follows:

(1) To assess the current status and challenges faced by English majors in effectively expressing Chinese culture and national conditions.

(2) To explore the role of teachers and their suggestions for cultivating external publicity skills among English majors.

(3) To analyze the planning and support provided by departments in fostering external publicity ability of the English major students.

(4) To propose specific course settings, assessment methods, and cultivation strategies aimed at enhancing the English Majors' external publicity ability.

2. Analysis of the Current Status of External Publicity Ability

2.1 Analysis of the Current Status from the Student Perspective

Based on interviews with students, it is evident that many of them exhibit significant deficiencies in understanding and expressing Chinese culture and national conditions[5]. These deficiencies manifest primarily in the following two areas:

(1) Insufficient Knowledge Reserve

Some students indicated that they have a genuine interest in Chinese culture and are motivated to learn about it. However, they noted that the current curriculum guidelines provide limited coverage of Chinese cultural themes. Many students reported that they mostly learn about the culture of English-speaking countries during their studies, leading to an inadequate understanding of Chinese culture and national conditions. This results in insufficient knowledge reserves for confident expression in external publicity[6].

(2) Lack of Digital Literacy

Proficiency in digital tools and platforms is essential for creating, distributing, and analyzing content. Many students feel that their digital literacy and new media skills are insufficient. With the development of information technology, external publicity increasingly relies on new media platforms. However, English majors often lack necessary skills and knowledge in new media operations, online communication. This restricts their ability to promote externally and compete in the digital landscape[7].

(3) Lack of Practice Opportunities

Students generally believe that the current course design lacks practical components, making it difficult for them to apply their knowledge in real external publicity scenarios. As a result, they feel that their practical abilities are not fully developed. They express a desire for more hands-on experiences, such as internships, simulations, or projects that simulate real-world communication challenges. Without these opportunities, they have to struggle to bridge the gap between theory and practice, hindering their ability to effectively engage in external publicity activities.

2.2 Analysis of the Current Status from the Teacher Perspective

Teachers play a crucial role in the cultivation of external publicity skills, but several issues were identified in the interviews:

(1) Limited Integration of Multicultural Perspectives

Some teachers observed a lack of integration of multicultural perspectives in the curriculum, resulting in a narrow focus on Western culture to the exclusion of other cultural contexts. Many teachers pointed out that existing textbooks and teaching priorities are more oriented towards the

culture of English-speaking countries, with relatively little introduction to Chinese culture. This imbalance in the curriculum limits the English Majors' comprehensive understanding of Chinese culture[8].

(2) Lack of Professional Training

Some teachers feel that they lack sufficient professional training in external publicity education, which encompasses not only content but also effective communication methods. This deficit in training hampers their ability to effectively guide students in promoting Chinese culture. Effective communication requires not just knowledge of content but also proficiency in various communication techniques and strategies.

(3) Insufficient Resources for Chinese Cultural Education

The interviewed teachers emphasized a scarcity of resources, including textbooks, teaching materials, and cultural exchange programs, specifically designed to deepen students' understanding and appreciation of the profound and extensive history of Chinese culture. Directly selecting suitable materials for teaching from such a rich cultural heritage proves challenging. Currently, the development of relevant teaching materials is still in its infancy, hindering comprehensive cultural education [9].

(4) Language Barrier in Teaching Materials

Certain teaching materials, often written in English, may present language barriers for students, particularly those who are not proficient in the language. This challenge goes beyond mere comprehension difficulties; it also impedes students' ability to fully engage with and internalize cultural content. Students may struggle to grasp nuanced cultural concepts and historical contexts when faced with language barriers, thereby hindering their overall learning experience. Addressing these language barriers is essential for ensuring equitable access to cultural education and promoting a deeper understanding of diverse cultural perspectives.

The above challenges hinder students' comprehensive understanding of Chinese culture and their ability to effectively promote it. Addressing these issues is essential for fostering a deeper appreciation of cultural diversity and enhancing students' external publicity skills.

2.3 Analysis of the Current Status from the Department Perspective

Departments play an essential role in supporting and planning the cultivation of external publicity skills, but some issues were identified:

(1) Lack of Systematic Planning

It was acknowledged there is a deficiency in systematic planning and specific support measures for cultivating external publicity skills among the English majors. This absence makes it challenging to execute and evaluate relevant educational initiatives effectively. Specifically, there is a need for better coordination between courses and a more balanced allocation of Chinese and English cultural content to ensure a seamless integration of cultural perspectives across the curriculum[10].

(2) Limited Assessment System

The existing assessment methods are predominantly exam-oriented, which directly impacts the cultivation of students' abilities. This exam-focused approach fails to develop students' practical external publicity skills. A course teaching model that relies mainly on written exams does not encourage the application of knowledge in real-world scenarios, making it challenging to comprehensively assess and cultivate students' external communication skills. Diversified evaluation methods are needed to better align with the goal of enhancing students' practical skills in external publicity.

3. Strategies for Cultivating External Publicity Ability

3.1 Course Setting and Teaching Content

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the current status from the perspectives of students, teachers, and departments, the following strategies are proposed to address the identified issues and enhance the external publicity skills of English majors:

(1) Curriculum Enrichment and Integration

Curriculum guidelines should be revised to include a more substantial focus on Chinese culture. Courses specifically dedicated to Chinese history, traditions, arts, and contemporary issues should be incorporated into the curriculum. It is also necessary to integrate multicultural perspectives into the curriculum to provide a broader understanding of various cultural contexts, helping students appreciate the global significance of Chinese culture. To further enrich students' learning experiences and practical skills, the inclusion of extracurricular practical credits and elective courses could be implemented. By offering optional courses that emphasize hands-on experiences and real-world applications, students can actively engage with Chinese culture beyond theoretical knowledge.

(2) Professional Training for Teachers

It is suggested that departments should organize regular professional development workshops and seminars focused on external publicity education, covering both content and communication strategies. Training in cross-cultural communication techniques, should also be provided to enable teachers to effectively guide students in promoting Chinese culture. Furthermore, cross-cultural communication techniques should be integrated into the professional training to equip teachers with the skills to guide students effectively. By understanding the cultural nuances and communication styles of audiences with different cultural background, teachers can better support students in their promotional efforts to resonate with diverse cultural contexts.

(3) Development of Comprehensive Teaching Resources

For departments and teachers, it's crucial to prioritize the creation of educational materials that not only highlight Chinese culture but also emphasize its global significance. These materials should cater to students' varying levels of proficiency and promote critical thinking, storytelling, writing, and translation skills. One approach is to develop a series of textbooks and teaching materials that incorporate diverse content related to Chinese culture, such as history, traditions, arts, and contemporary issues. These materials should include engaging texts, multimedia resources, and interactive activities to stimulate students' interest and facilitate their learning process. Additionally, digital resources and online platforms can be created to complement textbooks and provide students with opportunities for interactive learning and practice.

(4) Practical Opportunities for Students

To effectively bridge classroom learning with practical application, establishing partnerships with cultural institutions, media organizations, and international bodies is essential. These collaborations facilitate the offering of internships and real-world simulation projects, providing students with invaluable hands-on experience. Through project-based learning modules, students engage in real-life publicity projects, both locally and internationally, honing their skills and gaining practical insights. Moreover, tapping into the diverse resources of international students within the college offers another avenue for enhancing students' publicity skills. By sharing stories with international students, foreign language majors not only deepen the understanding of China among their peers but also refine their abilities in external communication. This exchange fosters cross-cultural understanding and enriches students' global perspectives. Furthermore, participation in international conferences or competitions as volunteers presents additional opportunities for skill development. By volunteering at such events, students not only gain exposure to international audiences but also

actively contribute to promoting Chinese culture on a global platform. This firsthand experience enables students to refine their communication skills, expand their networks, and make meaningful contributions to cross-cultural dialogue and exchange. Last but not least, departments can leverage VR technology to create virtual reality environments that immerse students in various aspects of Chinese culture, such as traditional festivals, historical landmarks, cuisine, and artistic performances. Through these immersive experiences, students can gain deeper insights into and experiences of Chinese culture, providing them with rich and vivid material for their external communication efforts.

(5) Diversified Assessment Methods

Diversified assessment methods that focus on practical skills, such as presentations, project reports, and real-world publicity campaigns should be encouraged and applied. To effectively integrate diverse assessment methods and emphasize the transformation of knowledge into practical skills, departments and teachers should prioritize formative assessment, which focuses on providing ongoing feedback to students to facilitate their progress. Encouraging and applying assessment methods that highlight practical skills, is essential for promoting students' ability to apply what they have learned. Furthermore, creating opportunities for peer assessment and collaboration can enrich the learning experience and provide students with valuable insights into their own progress. Peer evaluation allows students to receive feedback from their peers, learn from each other's strengths and weaknesses, and develop important teamwork and communication skills.

By implementing these strategies, institutions can significantly enhance the external publicity skills of English majors, equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to effectively promote Chinese culture on the global stage.

4. Conclusion

In the process of implementing the cultivation strategies, comprehensive evaluations and feedback should be conducted. The effectiveness of the cultivation strategies can be evaluated through students' academic performance, the quality of their assignments, and their participation levels. Additionally, regular surveys and questionnaires can be conducted to collect students' feedback and understand the actual effects of the cultivation strategies. Timely adjustments and optimizations should be made to ensure the effective enhancement of external publicity skills.

In view of the potential issues and challenges that may arise during the implementation of the cultivation strategies, further exploration of future work is necessary. For example:

(1) Improving Teachers' Awareness and Ability in External Publicity: Research how to further enhance teachers' awareness and ability in external publicity teaching through professional training and exchange activities, thereby improving their guidance level in external publicity education.

(2) Strengthening Departmental Support and Guidance: Strengthen departmental support and guidance for external publicity education to ensure the rational allocation and effective use of related educational resources.

(3) Utilizing Advanced Educational Technology: Explore how to use advanced educational technology, such as online learning platforms and virtual reality technology, to enhance students' external publicity skills and promote the innovative development of external publicity education.

Through the above efforts, more effective support and guidance can be provided for the continuous improvement of the external publicity skills of English majors in China, promoting significant achievements in external publicity education and making a greater contribution to enhancing China's cultural soft power and shaping its international image.

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