

Exploration of the Pathways for Integrating “ICH” into College English for Art&PE Majors under the Perspective of Cultural Confidence: A Case Study of “E English Course 1”

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Abstract: Integrating “Intangible Cultural Heritage” (ICH) into college English for art and physical education majors not only effectively combines professional knowledge with English, but also reflects comprehensive qualities and cultural confidence. This study, from the perspective of cultural confidence, analyzes the current situation of integrating ICH into English teaching, exploring ways in which it can effectively be incorporated into the English curriculum. Through the excavation of the educational value of ICH, the design of teaching objectives, the development of teaching content, and the optimization of teaching methods, this study aims to achieve an organic integration of ICH elements into the English curriculum. This process integrates knowledge transfer and value guidance, promotes innovation and development in the English curriculum of art and physical education universities, and cultivates outstanding talents with a global vision, cultural confidence, and expertise in arts and sports.

1. Introduction

Cultural confidence refers to the belief in the advanced nature of Chinese socialist culture. Adhering to cultural confidence is to stimulate the historical pride of the Party and the people in excellent traditional Chinese culture, and to form a widespread consensus and value recognition of the socialist core values in society^[1].

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is an important component of excellent traditional Chinese culture. It is a vivid testimony to the continuous inheritance of Chinese civilization and an important foundation for connecting national feelings and maintaining national unity^[2].

Intangible Cultural Heritage refers to various practices, performances, expressions, knowledge, and skills regarded as cultural heritage by various groups, organizations, and sometimes individuals, as well as their associated tools, objects, crafts, and cultural spaces^[3].

ICH includes many traditional art forms such as traditional opera, martial arts, paper-cutting, calligraphy, and painting, all of which are excellent educational resources closely related to the majors

of art and physical education students, and can resonate with them. When these cultural forms are expressed in English, they not only breathe new life into traditional arts but also inject new vitality and creativity into English language teaching, promoting students to form correct cultural awareness, cultural self-consciousness, and cultural confidence.

2. The Current Situation of Integrating “ICH” Culture

“E English Course” Second Edition is a university English textbook specifically designed and written for art and sports colleges and art and sports majors in comprehensive universities. This textbook is based on art and sports characteristics and showcases outstanding Chinese traditional culture in various aspects such as sections, selections, and exercises. This textbook itself includes a large number of intangible cultural heritage projects, but due to some reasons, the true embodiment of intangible cultural heritage in English teaching is still very lacking.

For example, from the perspective of teachers, some English teachers lack sufficient traditional cultural literacy and high teaching levels, and cannot well integrate intangible cultural heritage with the curriculum. Some teachers, due to their own professional reasons, have more exposure to Western culture and a relatively superficial understanding of traditional culture, especially intangible cultural heritage. They do not understand the history it contains, or only have a superficial understanding, making it difficult to accurately convey it to students, and may even mislead students. At the same time, due to the limitations of teaching level, some teachers use relatively rigid methods and means when integrating “ICH” culture into English classes. For example, they often simply introduce some words, phrases, or sentences related to ICH culture, or simply let students watch some related videos or pictures, without organically combining these outstanding Chinese traditional cultures with university English teaching. They only focus on the surface, ignoring the deeper connotations and historical background, and are disconnected from modern society when integrating ICH culture, lacking an introduction to its application and development in modern society, making it difficult to arouse students’ interest and help them integrate ICH into their actual lives.

From the student’s point of view, most art and sports majors have poor English foundations and do not know much about “ICH,” and the combination of ICH and English. Through conversations with students, it is learned that a small number of students did not continuously study English in middle school, such as studying English in junior high school, but choosing Japanese, Russian, or other languages in high school. After entering university, they had to switch to English again due to the foreign language curriculum settings of the university they were attending, which brought certain difficulties to their learning and the teacher’s teaching. In addition, most students, even if they have been studying English all the time, have not improved their English proficiency due to their poor foundation. Students do not know how to express some important elements of outstanding Chinese traditional culture in English, and in cross-cultural communication, they either feel at a loss or are pale and weak in promoting outstanding Chinese traditional culture ^[4].

From the perspective of learning evaluation methods, the final exam and Band B exam questions involve very little ICH content, and the assessment of usual performance also lacks content in this area, and students lack a certain learning motivation. According to the requirements of the school, art and sports students of our school need to pass the Band B exam to have the opportunity to obtain a university diploma. The difficulty of the Band B exam is relatively small, equivalent to English from junior high school to high school, so in the question types of the Band B exam, including reading comprehension and English-Chinese translation, there will be no paragraphs with a long length and a relatively high difficulty, and the composition is also inclined to application writing styles, so it is basically difficult to involve the content of “ICH” culture. As a common assessment method, the final exam is also similar to the Band B exam in terms of question types and difficulty, so there is basically

no appearance of ICH. Of course, usual performance is also very important, but because they already have heavy professional course tasks, coupled with their insufficient attention to English, the in-class and after-class tasks assigned by the teacher cannot be well completed, so the effect is unsatisfactory.

3. Effective Ways to Integrate ICH

The integration of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) into ideological and political education in universities must permeate the entire process and adopt a holistic approach. Drawing from practical experiences and summarized methodologies in ICH inheritance, the pathways for incorporating ICH into university ideological and political education encompass the following four aspects:

3.1 In-depth Exploration of “ICH” Elements in Multiple Dimensions, Organically Integrated into University English Classroom Teaching

Teachers should study the textbook carefully and explore the existing “ICH” elements from it. The “ICH” content in the textbook “E English Course 1” is also relatively rich. For example, in the second unit, the cultural express section: “what is dragon boat racing?” talks about the custom of the Dragon Boat Festival - dragon boat racing; in the third unit, the “listening and speaking” section, the listening material in the passage section is about Chinese freehand brushwork painting. In the fifth unit, the “listening and speaking” section, the “conversation” section uses Tai Chi as the listening material, and the “passage” section is Chinese paper-cutting; in the sixth unit, the “cultural express” section is titled Chinese martial arts. In addition, intangible cultural heritage elements are also scattered in the after-class exercises, such as traditional Chinese medicine, such as other folk handicrafts. Therefore, exploring “ICH” elements based on textbook content is currently the most important way to carry out ideological and political teaching in the curriculum. This method can be closely integrated with the teaching content, and collective teaching and research by teachers can comprehensively consider and discuss the angles, content, and methods of integrating ideological and political elements into teaching. All the ICH elements and their forms are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: ICH elements in the textbook

ICH	Ideological and Political Elements	Unit/Section	forms
traditional Chinese medicine	saving lives and healing the wounded, willing to dedicate, people-oriented	units 1 & 2: comprehension	translation exercises
Dragon Boat Racing	national cohesion, team spirit	unit2: culture express	reading comprehension oral expression
Chinese painting	cultural confidence and national identity, patriotic sentiment	unit3: “listening and speaking”	reading comprehension oral expression
calligraphy	perseverance, striving for excellence	unit3: passage A: pre-reading	translation exercises, oral expression
Tai Chi	humility and caution, confidence and composure, perfection, inclusiveness, harmony	unit5: “listening and speaking”	listening exercises
paper-cutting	truth, goodness, beauty, people-oriented, stimulating imagination and creativity	unit 5: “listening and speaking”	listening exercises oral expression
folk handicrafts	craftsmanship and labor values, innovative spirit and practical ability	unit 6 post-class translation exercises	translation exercises
Chinese Kung Fu	hard work and perseverance, courage to strive, national confidence, responsibility sense of mission	unit6: culture express	listening exercises oral expression

Based on Local Traditional Culture, Collect Local “Intangible Cultural Heritage” Resources.

Guangxi boasts a wealth of intangible cultural heritage resources. According to data from the Guangxi Intangible Cultural Heritage website, there are 70 national-level intangible cultural heritage projects, including well-known items such as Liuzhou River Snail Rice Noodle Making Techniques, Zhuang Ethnic Group's March 3rd Festival, Zhuang Opera, Yao Ethnic Group Costumes, and Liu Sanjie Folk Songs. The autonomous region-level list includes as many as 1115 items, such as Yao Ethnic Group Butterfly Songs, Guiping Southern Fist, Beihai Shell Carving Techniques, and Yao Ethnic Group Pan Wang Legends^[5], covering intangible cultural heritage projects in music, sports, art, and other fields. Teachers and students can personally visit local intangible cultural heritage museums or visit and appreciate local intangible cultural heritage works exhibitions, collect, organize, and translate them into English, present them in class, or submit them as homework. Combining English knowledge with traditional culture and hot topics in real life can improve personal abilities, cultivate national sentiments, enhance social responsibility awareness, and strengthen cultural confidence from both professional learning and English learning perspectives.

There are many useful ICH elements online, and we can search for and collect plenty of them through the online platforms. The emergence of communication and sharing platforms has enabled the promotion of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) skills to reach a broader audience, particularly demonstrating strong appeal to younger demographics such as university students^[6]. The popularity of information networks provides convenience for teaching. Outside of the classroom, English teachers can provide students with some foreign-language intangible cultural heritage websites to increase English reading volume during self-study. At the same time, according to the needs of the course, a network platform can also be built to create a thematic and systematic online three-dimensional Chinese and English teaching resource, integrating courseware, knowledge expansion, and information sharing. Some people can be assigned to collect articles related to "intangible cultural heritage" and upload them to the English class group, or they can be appropriately classified.

3.2 Scientifically Formulate Teaching Syllabi, Carefully Design Teaching, and Reflect the Effective Integration of "ICH" Elements and the English Discipline

Teachers need to clarify the educational goals suitable for the students major in art and sports, and then formulate a teaching syllabus that is consistent with it, paying special attention to the integration of intangible cultural heritage elements. When arranging the content of each teaching unit, the teaching syllabus should be based on the characteristics of the English discipline and the students' learning abilities. At the same time, learning time should be reasonably arranged to ensure that each teaching unit has enough time to deeply understand intangible cultural heritage. When designing teaching methods, teachers should choose a variety of teaching strategies, such as lecturing, discussion, case studies, and group cooperation. Evaluation methods should be reasonably selected, including exams, assignments, projects, and presentations, to comprehensively understand students' learning progress. The teaching syllabus can also provide some teaching resources, such as textbooks, reference books, and online resources, so that students can further expand and strengthen their knowledge.

Teaching design needs to be based on the textbook content, selecting content with intangible cultural heritage elements from the textbook. Through the textbook, determine the type of course: listening and speaking class? Reading class? Or writing class? Translation class? For example, in translation teaching, teachers should choose more text content related to intangible cultural heritage, so that students can specifically understand intangible cultural heritage through the translation of these texts, and actively learn more about the background, formation process, and current situation of intangible cultural heritage, thereby experiencing the values behind the culture^[7]. All of these should be considered when designing teaching. The way to introduce English classes is relatively diverse,

which is a good way to show “intangible cultural heritage” elements. Considering the characteristics of art and sports students who are lively, individual, and like to perform, they like simple and direct teaching activities, and can activate students’ enthusiasm for learning by appreciating intangible cultural heritage pictures, watching intangible cultural heritage bilingual videos, game activities, and performances.

3.3 Strengthen the Study of Traditional Culture and Build an English Teacher Team with Traditional Cultural Literacy

Through relevant learning and training, interdisciplinary majors and related teachers can discuss and exchange ideas, and cooperate in conducting subject research and practice. And the ability to integrate traditional culture into English teaching should be improved. Therefore, English teachers also need to learn more about ancient Chinese history to improve their cultural literacy and professional knowledge reserves. By reading relevant books and studying the creative background and life of ancient poetry, teachers can better understand the connotation and emotion of poetry.

Reading and studying local literary works is one of the important ways to improve cultural literacy. Teachers can use Internet resources, pay attention to relevant blogs and websites, watch relevant videos, etc., to understand the latest cultural trends and events.

Adhere to the correct value orientation and improve cultural professional literacy. In teaching, it is necessary to scientifically permeate excellent Chinese traditional culture. English teachers first need to continuously improve their understanding and professional literacy, especially to have a relatively solid cultural literacy, lead by example, and continuously learn and absorb the beneficial components of Chinese traditional culture, so as to give students a positive influence, so that they can continuously enrich Chinese traditional culture while learning English.

Teachers should pay attention to the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western cultures. Cultural factors are always behind foreign language learning. Even the communication skills of excellent language learners may be limited due to cultural reasons, and their understanding of the surrounding world may be hindered. Therefore, only by establishing a grand cultural awareness view can cross-cultural communication be better realized. In teaching, teachers should find the combination point of Chinese traditional culture and English teaching, conduct more comparative reading and help students interpret it.

Teachers should grasp the pulse of the times and disseminate excellent Chinese culture. In teaching, teachers should always pay attention to major events and related reports that promote the prosperity and development of the motherland that occur around them, and create output opportunities for students. Teachers should guide students to deeply understand Chinese cultural background knowledge and improve the accuracy of English or Chinese expression.

3.4 Use Diversified Teaching Methods to Increase Students’ Emotional Experience and Effectively Integrate “ICH” Elements

Innovative teaching methods are an important way to improve teaching effectiveness. The diversification of teaching methods can help students gain a deeper understanding of knowledge and better express their emotions and thoughts. For most art and sports students who have a weak foundation in English learning and lack interest in studying, an entertaining approach can be adopted. Through games, interactions, discussions, and other forms, students’ interest and enthusiasm for learning can be stimulated. Therefore, in addition to the commonly used lecture method, comparative teaching, thematic teaching, situational teaching, and task-based teaching methods can be reasonably selected based on specific teaching content.

In the application of the comparative teaching method, teachers must select objects or phenomena

with high similarity but notable differences for comparative study, aiming to identify their similarities and differences. For example, in the “Listening and Speaking” section of Unit 3, both the conversation and passage mention the French Impressionist painting “Impression, Sunrise” and Chinese freehand painting. Teachers can display “Impression, Sunrise” and a representative freehand painting, allowing students to intuitively perceive the differences through comparison. Especially for design students, who have a certain level of expertise in this area, they can be guided to express their views in simple English. This not only enriches their professional knowledge but also enhances their English language expression skills.

Task-based teaching emphasizes active student participation and collaboration. It is a new teaching model advocated in higher education, focusing on cultivating students’ application and innovation abilities. Specifically, teachers can implement teaching according to the process of “assigning tasks—executing tasks—completing tasks”^[8]. For example, a teaching activity themed around “paper-cutting” can be conducted. In the “Listening and Speaking” section of Unit 5 in the first volume, the passage is a listening exercise about “paper-cutting.” Before class, students can gather relevant knowledge, and during class, they can give brief English presentations to deepen their understanding of this craft. Then, through listening and speaking, they can complete the tasks in the textbook. After class, interested students can learn paper-cutting, thereby gaining a more profound understanding of the value and charm of Chinese folk art and strengthening their sense of mission and responsibility for cultural heritage. Additionally, students can improve their English oral expression and communication skills through role-playing or simulated dialogues.

4. Conclusion

Integrating ICH into art and PE university English courses synergizes language learning with professional development, boosting both English proficiency and cultural confidence. By leveraging ICH’s educational value and adopting innovative pedagogies, educators can cultivate globally minded, culturally grounded talents capable of contributing to China’s cultural and socialist advancement. As globalization deepens, embedding ICH into English teaching holds profound significance for fostering cross-cultural competence and preserving cultural heritage.

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