

# The Teaching Design of Introducing Chinese Culture into College English Classroom Teaching with Experiential Teaching Method

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## Abstract

This study discusses the application value and necessity of experiential teaching method in English classroom teaching in Chinese universities. Based on experiential teaching method, this study focuses on 40 non-English major sophomore students from a university in China. The translation section of the College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) is used as cultural input material to design specific teaching activities for introducing Chinese culture in English classroom teaching at the university level. Combining specific teaching designs, the advantages of applying experiential teaching method in university English classrooms are proposed, such as optimizing and innovating teaching modes, creating diverse teaching situations for teaching, exercising students' language proficiency, enriching and optimizing teaching content, and breaking the traditional teaching mode of 'spoon-feeding' and increasing the frequency of interaction between teachers and students.

**Keywords:** experiential teaching method, college English Classroom, Chinese culture, teaching design

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background

The teaching objective of English in Chinese universities is to comprehensively improve students' English application ability and communication ability, enable them to achieve autonomous learning and development, and meet the requirements of the current era and society (Cai, 2005). Experiential teaching method focuses on enhancing students' learning experience in specific contexts and practices, enabling them to gain more insights and experiences in English. The application of experiential teaching method in English classroom teaching in Chinese universities meets the needs of the times and social development, not only can enhance students' classroom participation and enthusiasm in the process of English classroom teaching, break through the traditional teaching method of 'spoon-feeding', but also directly affect the teaching effect, helping to improve their overall English literacy and abilities. Therefore, to some extent, experiential teaching method is one of the important tools to improve the teaching level of English in Chinese university classrooms. It is evident that the implementation of experiential teaching method is necessary in English classroom teaching in Chinese universities.

The National College English Test (CET-4, 6), which is an important criterion for evaluating English teaching in Chinese universities, underwent a major reform in 2013. The previous single sentence translation from Chinese to English was changed to translating a paragraph about Chinese culture into English. The length of the CET-4 translation is 140-160 Chinese characters, and the length of the CET-6 translation is 180-200 Chinese characters. The score for the translation section also increased from 5% to 15% (Yang, 2003). It can be seen that the Higher Education Department of the Chinese Ministry of Education is also reforming university English teaching based on the current era when China urgently needs to go global, emphasizing the cultivation of Chinese university students' ability to spread Chinese culture in English. However, the university students who are tasked with the responsibility of spreading Chinese culture severely lack the ability to express their native culture in English, a situation that has been dubbed as 'Chinese Cultural Aphasia'. Cong (2000) pointed out that Chinese Cultural Aphasia is a deficiency in our country's English teaching, and Chinese culture should be introduced into English education.

## *1.2 Research Objective*

This study uses the translation section of the National College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) as cultural input materials to design specific teaching plans for inputting Chinese culture in college English classrooms using experiential teaching methods. The research aims to achieve three main objectives: first, to broaden the teaching mindset of English teaching in China by applying experiential teaching methods in college English classrooms and exploring applicable methods and strategies; second, to address the difficulties encountered by Chinese college students in learning English, known as ‘Chinese cultural aphasia’, and find solutions to improve their ability to express Chinese culture in English, thus contributing to the international dissemination of Chinese culture; third, to enrich and improve teaching methods in college English classrooms, enhance students’ motivation to participate in English learning, improve learning efficiency, and enhance the effectiveness of English teaching in classrooms, providing teaching ideas for college English classrooms in China.

## **2. Teaching Strategies of Experiential Learning Method**

“Teaching” and “learning” are an inseparable organic whole, complementing each other and advancing together. The transformation of teaching methods will inevitably raise the requirements for students’ learning methods. In experiential teaching mode, teachers should provide students with opportunities for experience through various methods, and guide students to participate in the learning process of ‘participation-experience-internalization-externalization’ (Yang, 2001).

### *2.1 Situational Experience Method*

American psychologist Rogers (1969) believes that “successful teaching relies on a genuine understanding and trusting relationship between teachers and students, and relies on a harmonious and relaxed classroom atmosphere.” In teaching practice, teachers need to create a warm and pleasant classroom atmosphere in order to make students willing to acquire knowledge and stimulate their enthusiasm for learning. The situational experience method is a way to enhance students’ emotional experience by appropriately using objects, pictures, music, role-playing, and other means to experience different situations, combined with specific teaching content and students’ actual conditions.

### *2.2 Shift Perspective Method*

The shift perspective method refers to the role exchange between teachers and students in teaching activities, using a cooperative learning method of ‘letting students take the stage and speak, and teachers provide feedback’ (Shi, 2010). If classroom teaching is only ‘teachers lecturing and students listening’, students will always be in a passive position, making it difficult to effectively stimulate students’ enthusiasm for learning and improve their overall quality. Therefore, for some teaching materials that are suitable for student understanding, students can learn and understand on their own and take on the role of the teacher to explain on stage. Before the presentation, carefully guide from the topic to the arrangement of materials and then to the presentation method; after the presentation, provide serious evaluation, pick up deficiencies, and summarize. This teaching and learning method makes the classroom more active, students more enthusiastic, not only helping students firmly grasp the knowledge they have learned, but also promoting the development of students’ thinking. At the same time, it allows students to share the joy of their own success, truly becoming the master of learning, greatly improving the efficiency of classroom teaching and the initiative of student autonomous learning. This kind of role reversal experience can help students better understand that they are the subject of learning rather than passive recipients in traditional teaching models, and has a great impact on changing students’ learning concepts.

### *2.3 Multimedia Teaching Experience Method*

The multimedia teaching experience refers to the use of multimedia technology to provide students with good auditory and visual conditions during the teaching process, so that students can acquire knowledge more efficiently and comprehensively through experience (Zheng, 2005). In the teaching process, teachers can use multimedia courseware, audio-visual materials related to the teaching content, allowing students to have an immersive experience. Through audio-visual stimulation, students can more intuitively understand and remember the knowledge they have learned.


### 3. Teaching Design

#### 3.1 Participants and Setting

(1) Research Object: 40 sophomore non-English major undergraduate students from a university in Henan Province, China, aged 18-20. These students have completed one year of English learning in university, adapted to university life, developed independent learning habits, spent roughly the same amount of time studying English, and have no experience studying abroad. These 40 students will take the College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) in the third semester (first semester of sophomore year). (2) Teaching content: Translation part of “New Horizon College English” and CET-4 past translation questions; (3) Teaching objectives: Students can successfully complete the task of translating Chinese cultural paragraphs into English in the national College English Test Band 4, with a basic correct understanding of the questions, coherent expression, and no mistranslation or omissions.

#### 3.2 Specific Teaching Design of Experiential Teaching Method

Based on the content and teaching progress of “New Horizon College English”, this study designed an experimental phase lasting one semester (16 weeks) with 8 inputs of Chinese cultural content in the university English course, including “tea culture”, “Dujiangyan”, “Spring Festival”, “Tai Chi”, “Peking Opera”, “paper-cutting”, “lanterns” and “lion dance”. The materials are all translated parts of CET-4 past exam papers, with content being the Chinese introduction of a certain culture. This study takes “Tea Culture” as an example to illustrate the specific teaching design of experiential teaching method in inputting Chinese culture in university English classroom teaching. The specific teaching design of “Tea Culture” is as follows:

Teaching Process		
Teaching Session	Teaching Content and Behavior Intent	Design
★Participation	<p>★Introduction of the topic</p> <p>【Teacher Behavior】 Display short video</p>  <p>【Guiding Words】 How much do you understand about tea culture? Let’s enjoy a video first.</p> <p>【Teacher Behavior】 The video presentation ended.</p> <p>【Guiding Words】 What have you gained from this? Please share.</p> <p>【Student Behavior】 Students process and talk about “understanding of tea culture” according to the information obtained from the video.</p> <p>【Guiding Words】 Today let’s learn how to express Chinese tea culture in English together.</p>	<p>Teacher use the <i>Multimedia Teaching Experience Method</i>, playing audio and video materials related to the classroom content, so that students can have a sense of immersion. Auditory and visual stimuli can give students a more intuitive understanding of the content they are learning, leading to deeper memory retention.</p>

## ★Experience

【Guiding Words】 Take a minute to browse through the cultural materials below and think about which parts are the key difficulties in translation.

Translation text material:

Tea has been in existence for 5,000 years. Legend has it that when **Shen Nong** was drinking hot water, a few leaves of wildtrees fell into his pot and the hot water immediately gave off apleasant fragrance. He took a few sips, feeling quite **refreshed**. Thus tea was discovered.

Since then, tea has become popular in China. Tea plantations spread all over the country and tea merchants became rich. Expensive and **elegant** tea sets became a status symbol. Today, tea is not only a healthy drink, but also an integral part of Chinese culture. More and more international tourists learn about Chinese culture while tasting tea.

【Student Behavior】 Carefully read the translated text material

【Guiding Words】 If you are a teacher, what do you think are the key difficult points that professors need to pay attention to when translating texts.

【Student Behavior】 Put yourself in someone else’s shoes.

【Target language】 Explain the translation difficulties you encountered after browsing the materials and how teachers may view the potential challenges students face in translating texts.

## ★Internalization

【Teacher Behavior】 Feedback and evaluate the key difficulties and points raised by students and those preset by teachers in advance, and focus on teaching accordingly, guiding students to translate materials correctly.

Cultural Expansion:

“**Shen Nong**” is the leader of an ancient tribal alliance in China. When translating Shennong, because there is no corresponding English word in ancient Chinese culture, we can directly translate it into pinyin as “Shen Nong”。

“**refreshed**” refers to making tired spirits excited, which can be translated as “refresh” here.

The meaning of “**elegant**” is elegant and tasteful; beautiful without being cliché. Here we can translate it as “elegant”.

【Guiding Words】 Let’s try to translate the text material for five minutes!

Teachers adopt the *Shift Perspective Method*, through exchanging roles between teachers and students, allowing students to look at and think about problems from the perspective of teachers, enabling students to take an active role in the classroom, which is conducive to stimulating students’ enthusiasm for learning and improving students’ overall quality.

When guiding students in translating Chinese culture into English, they should first understand the meaning in Chinese, and then proceed with the translation. Once students have mastered this translation method and have a deep understanding of Chinese culture, they will be able to apply it to other similar cases. Over time, they will gradually become proficient in expressing Chinese culture in English.

## ★Externalization

【Guiding Words】 Okay, I believe everyone has completed their translation tasks. Now we will check everyone's completion status in the form of a role-playing game.



【Teacher Behavior】 Displaying the Courseware to Create a Scenario

【Guiding Words】 Role play in pairs, one student plays the girl in the picture, and the other student plays the boy in the picture. The teacher will select 5 pairs from the whole class for role play. Other students please watch the performances of these 5 pairs carefully and provide your feedback after the performance. Now, you have five minutes to prepare.

【Student Behavior】 Five groups take turns to perform role-playing on stage. After each group finishes, other students provide feedback on the lines, performance details, translation strategies, etc.

【Teacher Behavior】 Praise the role-playing of Group Five and provide feedback teaching on common issues that exist.

## ★Summarization

【Teacher Behavior】 Show example of translations of materials

【Guiding Words】 Today we learned how to express Chinese culture in English - tea culture. I believe everyone has also accumulated some vocabulary and expressions from it, and the translation examples are for reference only.

Teachers use the *Situational Experience Method*, according to specific teaching content and students' actual situations, appropriately apply courseware to create scenarios, create a warm and pleasant classroom atmosphere, and enhance students' emotional experiences.

Role-playing has always been a favorite form of expression for students. On the one hand, it can enhance students' enthusiasm for learning, and on the other hand, it can make students think and reflect on the content they have learned. Through role-playing, students can enhance their sense of cooperation and improve their language expression abilities.

Summarize the content learned in this lesson, the teacher guides students to recall the content learned in this lesson, and strengthen students' understanding and memory.

#### 4. Discussion

By incorporating experiential teaching methods into the specific teaching design of Chinese culture in college English classrooms, we can see the advantages of experiential teaching methods in college English classrooms, such as optimizing and innovating teaching modes, creating diverse teaching situations for teaching, exercising students' language proficiency, enriching and optimizing teaching content, and breaking the traditional teaching mode of 'spoon-feeding' and increasing the frequency of interaction between teachers and students.

##### 4.1 Optimization and Innovation of Teaching Modes

In the new era, with the rapid development of information technology and internet technology, students' needs and teaching requirements are constantly increasing. The application of experiential teaching method in English classroom teaching respects students' subjectivity, values their learning experience, and is committed to guiding them towards personalized and autonomous development, reflecting the effectiveness of English teaching. Through communicative situations and practical applications, students are able to master the learning content and learn how to use it instead of learning the language in isolation. This teaching method embodies the principles of communicative teaching, reflects the new progress in contemporary foreign language teaching theory, and is closely related to the task-based teaching method and communicative teaching method advocated

by the foreign language teaching community.

#### *4.2 Creating Diverse Teaching Situations for Teaching*

Czech educator Comenius (1632) wrote in “The Great Didactic”: “All knowledge begins with the senses.” Creating scenarios mainly involves two aspects: emotional context and learning context. Creating emotional context is to stimulate students’ interest, motivation, and attitude towards learning. Creating learning context is to provide students with diverse classroom learning methods. Various learning tasks designed in the teaching process: (1) Creating emotional context. Start by playing videos related to the learning tasks, such as when discussing tea culture, use multimedia to play relevant scenes, allowing students to experience this knowledge and stimulate their interest in learning. (2) Creating learning scenarios. Based on students’ diverse learning styles, form groups and carry out various activities, such as English speech contests, interpretation contests, role-playing, etc., to consolidate classroom teaching outcomes and enhance students’ ability to flexibly apply English knowledge.

#### *4.3 Exercise Students’ Language Proficiency*

In English classroom teaching, experiential teaching method should not only focus on allowing students to participate in practical experiences, but also focus on encouraging them to actively express their own experiences using English knowledge. For example, according to real needs, teachers can regularly have students, in the form of selecting representatives in groups, role-play or give speeches before the start of classroom teaching. Other students can also ask questions about the speeches given by the group representatives. The whole process can not only improve students’ English speaking ability, but also enhance their listening skills, create a positive classroom atmosphere, and stimulate their active learning.

#### *4.4 Enrich and Optimize Teaching Content*

Teachers can collect more high-quality teaching materials and resources related to the course content through various channels on the basis of integrating textbook content, so as to carry out English teaching in a more diverse form from multiple perspectives, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of English teaching. When designing classroom teaching content, teachers should not only highlight the advantages of experiential teaching methods, but also fully consider students’ learning cognition and acceptance levels, reasonably select and design teaching content, create teaching situations, truly integrate experiential teaching throughout English classroom teaching, enabling students to have a deeper understanding of English knowledge, organize the English knowledge system, and truly enhance English comprehensive literacy and abilities. Rich teaching content arrangements and diverse teaching designs can stimulate students’ learning interests, improve their learning effectiveness, and elevate their classroom teaching levels.

#### *4.5 Break the Traditional Teaching Mode of ‘Spoon-Feeding’ and Increase the Frequency of Interaction*

In traditional teaching environments, teachers mostly adopt the ‘spoon-feeding’ teaching model, with little interaction between teachers and students, making classroom teaching very monotonous and boring, leading to students losing interest in learning English. In experiential teaching environments, teachers break the traditional teaching model and begin to use diverse teaching methods such as role-playing experiences, situational experiences, etc. Teachers emphasize close communication and interaction with students, truly understanding their emotional and cognitive changes during the English learning process, and promptly identifying the difficulties they encounter in learning English. Teachers also enhance the frequency and effectiveness of classroom interaction through reasonable grouping, encouraging every student to actively participate, engage in mutual discussions, share experiences, reflect independently, and summarize collectively, thus gaining more experiences and achievements, thereby promoting their overall English competence and abilities. Creating contexts that are more relevant to teaching content and student preferences can better stimulate their interest in learning, and enhance their motivation to participate.

## **5. Conclusion**

### *5.1 Limitations*

Experiential teaching method greatly enhances students’ initiative, enthusiasm, and learning efficiency in learning English by utilizing three-dimensional teaching resources. However, like any teaching method, experiential teaching also has its shortcomings, mainly manifested in: (1) In terms of time, it takes time in class to experience the situation in order to let students experience the language usage scenarios, which may occupy the time for other teaching content; (2) From the perspective of cultivating students’ language skills, experiential teaching, due to its emphasis on students’ practical language proficiency, may result in a decrease in the difficulty of the corresponding teaching materials, which is not conducive to the cultivation of students’ reading

ability; (3) From the perspective of task completion, experiential teaching requires more time for lesson preparation, which sometimes conflicts with the task of processing a large amount of language information within a short period of time as required by the curriculum.

At the same time, this study is based on the theory of experiential teaching method and only adopts specific teaching designs, without applying them to specific teaching practices.

### 5.2 Suggestions

Experiential teaching method is a breakthrough from traditional teaching models, and is a more practical teaching method. Experiential teaching method should be adopted in college English classroom teaching, not only helping students to deeply understand course knowledge and content, but also exercising their English practical ability and improving their English proficiency. In addition, experiential teaching method requires higher comprehensive quality and teaching skills from teachers. During the teaching process, teachers must change their teaching concepts, break the situation of lecturing based on a book in the past, have keen observation and innovation abilities, be good at collecting some teaching materials suitable for contemporary university students from seemingly plain and ordinary daily life, and create scenarios in the classroom for students to experience. When applying experiential teaching method, teachers not only need to change teaching philosophies, optimize and enrich teaching forms and content, but also fully consider students' learning needs, guide them to actively interact and express themselves, effectively improve the efficiency and quality of English classroom teaching.

In conclusion, the author has conducted research and discussion on the application value and necessity of experiential teaching method in English classroom teaching in Chinese universities. The author has proposed the concept and model of using experiential teaching in university English teaching, which can reflect the essence and advantages of experiential teaching. By designing specific teaching using experiential teaching method to introduce Chinese culture in university English classroom teaching, the author has identified many advantages of applying experiential teaching method in university English classroom. It is hoped that the content discussed in this article can serve as a catalyst for researchers in experiential teaching.

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