



The Application of Heroic Narrative in English Teaching among Chinese Vocational Universities

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Abstract: Heroic narrative is a form of traditional literary with rich cultural connotations and artistic value. The heroic narrative is a storytelling device that portrays a protagonist, often referred to as the hero, embarking on a challenging journey or quest. The hero is typically portrayed as courageous, virtuous, and possessing extraordinary abilities or qualities. In the context of English teaching in Chinese vocational universities, heroic narratives can be used as reading and analysis materials. Creating heroic narratives can improve students' writing ability and creative thinking, learning the cultural elements in Chinese heroic narratives can enhance students' cultural self-confidence, strengthen students' belief in heroes and their love for the country and improve their ability to apply English. By conducting a questionnaire and analyzing the responses, the author designs a variety of out classroom teaching activities in the form of tutoring the English corner activities and holding a series of competitions, this paper aims at exploring the application of heroic narrative in the English teaching of vocational universities in China, in order to cultivate students' excellent qualities of Chinese heroes, such as patriotism, filial piety, courage and honor and integrity. And at the same time the research result can provide some useful enlightenment for English educators in vocational universities.

Keywords: heroic narrative, vocational university, English teaching

1. Introduction and the research questions

Although some progress has been made in the teaching and research of English teaching in vocational universities, there are still areas for improvement in traditional English teaching in universities. The obvious shortcomings are that the teachers are mainly focused on the researches of classroom teaching and ignored the role of outside classroom teaching activities. The teaching in the classroom is mainly based on comprehensive tutorial teaching materials, usually are the lecture texts with a small amount of audio-visual teaching content. Classroom teaching activities are mainly focused on grammar problems or reading comprehension questions. The student participation is mainly in the forms of answering questions, doing group presentations as each unit learning objectives, which is less situational teaching materials and lack of real narrative teaching materials.

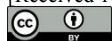
2. Theoretical basis

2.1 Communicative language teaching: (CLT for short)

CLT, also known as the "notional functional approach," has been widely adopted in both its theoretical research and teaching practice. In the field of English language teaching, CLT usually refers to "Communicative Language Teaching", which is a student-centered, communicative-oriented, context-oriented teaching philosophy[1].

CLT theory advocates that learners should learn in an authentic language environment. Students learn by doing, pay attention to the communicative function of language, and emphasize students' independent learning and active participation. Compared with the traditional grammar translation method, CLT pays more attention to the cultivation of students' actual language proficiency and language communication ability, advocates students to independently explore language rules and knowledge in the context, and encourages students to carry out real language communication[2].

The teaching methods of CLT include language input, situational teaching, communicative activities, language reflection, etc., aiming at enable students to improve their language skills through practicing the language. CLT theory has a wide influence on English teaching and has become one of the mainstream methods of English teaching.



2.2 Experiential English teaching theory

Experiential English teaching theory is a teaching concept that emphasizes learners' experience, participation and perception in context, also known as "immersive English teaching" or "interactive English teaching".

This theory advocates that learners should learn English through interaction, experience and participation, focusing on learners' experience and perception in real contexts, as well as learners' active participation and independent inquiry. Experiential English teaching emphasizes learners' active participation in the learning process, is highly practical, pays attention to learners' practical application in real contexts, and helps students better understand and master language[3].

The practical methods of this teaching theory include the use of multimedia, situation simulation, role-playing, gamification learning and other means to create authentic language environments and interactive scenarios, encourage students to use English in these situations, and improve language use and communication skills[4].

The theoretical foundations of experiential English teaching theory include human cognitive and emotional psychology, which believes that learners learn through emotional engagement and interaction, while also emphasizing learners' enthusiasm and initiative.

3. Literature Review

Vocational education is a part of China's higher education, and the party and the state attach great importance to the development of vocational education [5]. University English teaching is an indispensable part of vocational education, according to the requirements of the University English Teaching Guide, vocational university students are required to have career-related English application ability requirements, that is, real listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Although the research on English teaching in vocational universities has made some progress, the teaching problems of traditional vocational universities and universities are still worthy of the attention of teaching and education researchers, with a single form, boring teaching content, and little student participation in learning scenarios. Moral education is one of the important contents of vocational college education. In order to educate students holistically, moral education is infiltrated while teaching English language in university English courses [7]. Through questionnaire surveys, case studies and practical teaching, the paper explores the improvement of students' English application ability, moral literacy and comprehensive ability by the practice of applying the heroic narratives in English teaching in vocational universities.

Linguist H. Goodenough pointed out: "Culture is knowledge acquired through society, and language is a set of knowledge systems acquired by the special language talent of human beings through the trigger of acquired social language environment, so language is part of culture." [7]

Heroic narrative is a form of traditional literature telling heroic deeds, which has rich cultural connotation and artistic value, and is an important part of world literature. The heroic image in the heroic narrative represents a positive, brave and fearless spiritual outlook, which is the common spiritual wealth of mankind. China has a rich history of national heroic narratives that have played a significant role in shaping the country's identity. In modern history, China has witnessed several significant events and figures that have become part of the national heroic narrative. For an example: The Long March (1934-1936): The Long March was a strategic retreat by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) during the Chinese Civil War. The arduous journey covered thousands of kilometers and involved battles, hardships, and sacrifices. It is regarded as a symbol of resilience, determination, and revolutionary spirit, contributing to the rise of the CCP and the eventual establishment of the People's Republic of China [8].

In the teaching of English in Chinese vocational universities, heroic narratives can be used as reading and analysis materials to improve students' reading skills and text appreciation skills. Creating heroic narratives improves students' writing skills and creative thinking. Learning the cultural elements in heroic narratives can enhance students' intercultural communication skills, and comparing heroic narratives in different cultures can deepen students' understanding of cultural differences [9]. Applying local heroic narratives to university English teaching, heroic narratives often have a strong cultural overtone, which can be used to teach culture and background, and students learn Chinese cultural elements of heroic narratives: for example, students can learn the historical and cultural background of traditional heroic stories, or understand the cultural influence and reflection of contemporary heroic stories. By learning the cultural elements in the heroic narrative, students can enhance their admiration for national heroes, take heroes as examples, inherit the spirit of heroes, establish heroic aspirations, study hard, serve their society and country like heroes, and students can also better understand English culture, and at the same time improve cross-cultural communication skills.

4. Research methods and processes

English teachers at Jiangxi University of Software Professional Technology hope to introduce heroic narrative elements into the curriculum to improve students' language ability and cultural vision. Before designing the

teaching activities, the author collects data by doing a questionnaire and analyse the responses,then designs the specific out classroom teaching activities based on the responses. By doing a series of teaching activities,she hopes to help students understand and explore the cultural elements behind heroic narratives, as well as their application in creative thinking and intercultural communication skills. The out classroom teaching activities are held once per term respectively aiming at training students to take part in different kinds of competitions:the translation competition,spoken contrast and handwriting competition.The competitors are required to translate,read,or write the heroic stories. The effectiveness can be evaluated by the increasing number of competitors for the out classroom teaching activities ,the prizes the competitors achieve and the number of various competitions held by our university.

4.1. She designed a series of heroic narrative teaching activities to achieve the following goals:

- (1) help students understand and explore the cultural elements behind heroic narratives and improve moral literacy;
- (2) improve students' English language ability and reading comprehension ability;
- (3) stimulate students' creativity and imagination;
- (4) Enhance students' intercultural communication skills.

4.2. Through questionnaire surveys, students learn heroic stories in English, and the case analysis of teaching exploration concludes.

A simple questionnaire survey on the application of heroic narratives in English teaching in vocational universities.

4.2.1Data analysis

Tables present the survey responses respectively. For each question, the response figures include the percentage for each of the categories and the number of responses.

Table 1 The Response to question1 :categories , Numbers And Percentages

As Table 1 shows, the percentage of people who think that heroic narratives are valuable in English teaching in

categories	Number	percentage
A. Yes	34	89.47%
B. NO	0	0%
C. Not sure	3	7.89%
(Null)	1	2.63%
The number of valid people	38	

vocational universities, accounting for 89.47%.

Table 2 The Response to question2 :categories , Numbers And Percentages

categories	Number	percentage
A. Learned	29	76.32%
B. Not learned	8	21.05%
(Null)	1	2.63%
The number of valid people	38	

As Table 2 shows, the percentage of people who has learned the heroic narratives in class in vocational universities, accounting for 76.32%.

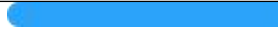




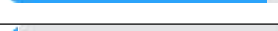
Table 3 The Response to question3 :categories , Numbers And Percentages

categories	Number	percentage
A. Learned	10	26.32%
B. Not learned	27	71.05%
(Null)	1	2.63%
The number of valid people	38	

As Table 3 shows:the percentage of people who hasn't learned the heroic narratives in class in vocational universities, accounts for 71.05%.



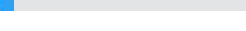
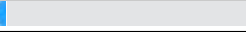
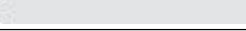

Table 4 The Response to question4 :categories , Numbers And Percentages

categories	Number	percentage
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A. Expand cultural horizons	37		97.37%
B. Improve language skills	36		94.74%
C. Enhance reading comprehension	36		94.74%
D. Enhance imagination and creativity	32		84.21%
E. Contribute to the improvement of intercultural communication skills	35		92.11%
(Null)	1		2.63%
The number of valid people	38		

As Table 4 shows: It can be seen from the data that the proportion of options A, B, C, and E is above 90%, indicating that heroic narrative has significant benefits for expanding cultural horizons, improving language ability, enhancing reading comprehension and improving intercultural communication ability. The proportion of option D is 84.21%, indicating that heroic narratives can also enhance imagination and creativity. Therefore, there are many advantages applying heroic narratives in English learning.

Table 5 The Response to question5 :categories , Numbers And Percentages

categories	Number	percentage
A. Design hero narrative teaching activities	0	 0%
B. Guide students to explore the cultural elements behind heroic narratives	4	 10.53%
C. Stimulate students' creativity and imagination	2	 5.26%
D. Use technology to enhance teaching effectiveness	1	 2.63%
E. All of the above	30	 78.95%
(Null)	1	 2.63%
The number of valid people	38	

When applying heroic narratives in English teaching in corresponding vocational universities, most people (78.95%) believe that various methods should be used comprehensively, including designing heroic narrative teaching activities, guiding students to explore the cultural elements behind heroic narratives, stimulating students' creativity and imagination, and using technology to enhance teaching effects.

In order to better apply heroic narratives in English teaching in vocational universities, teachers can adopt the following teaching strategies:

4.2.2 Design hero narrative classroom teaching activities

Different forms of heroic narrative teaching activities, such as reading, analysis, discussion and writing, can be designed to allow students to understand and apply heroic narratives from different angles and ways.

(1) First classroom teaching, reading and analyzing heroic narratives: Heroic narratives can be used as reading and analysis materials, which helps students improve reading comprehension and literary analysis skills. Teachers can guide students to read and analyze elements of the heroic narrative, such as themes, plots, characters, forms, and more. Through reading and analysis, students can improve their understanding and appreciation of English literature.

(2) Create a heroic narrative: Students can be asked to write a heroic narrative, which can improve their writing ability and creative thinking. Teachers can provide some inspiration, such as elements and structure of traditional heroic stories, or students can choose topics and characters that interest them. Through creation, students can hone their writing skills and expression skills, while also gaining a deeper understanding of the characteristics and structure of heroic narratives.

(3) Learn the cultural elements in heroic narratives: Heroic narratives usually have strong cultural elements, which can be used to teach culture and background. For example, students can learn about the historical and cultural context in our country's heroic stories, or learn about the cultural influences and reflections of contemporary heroic stories. By learning the cultural elements in heroic narratives, students can better understand English culture, understand the heroic image and values in our culture, and also improve their cross-cultural communication skills.

4.2.3 Design hero narrative second class teaching activities

Competition and education integration, makes full use of hero narrative materials, extracurricular use of reading hero narrative stories, hero narrative translation, hero narrative story calligraphy competition and other forms to

cultivate students' reading, writing, translation ability to design hero narrative teaching, teaching and research activities.

(1) The Party Committee and the English Department of the Ministry of Public Education jointly organized the "Party History Oral Language Competition", organized the majority of students to read and learn the heroic stories of the Party history outside the classroom, and guided students to explore the cultural elements behind the heroic narratives. The "Revolutionary Hero Story Translation Competition" can guide students to analyze the shaping of heroic images, the development of plots and cultural backgrounds, etc., and help students deeply appreciate the values and ideas expressed in heroic narratives.

(2) English calligraphy competition, let students use their own beautiful calligraphy to write heroic story materials, enhance students' understanding of heroic images.

It can also stimulate students' creativity and imagination. Students can be encouraged to create heroic narratives, give play to their creativity and imagination, and exercise their skills of language expression and creative thinking skills.

Using a variety of resources and competition formats to present heroic narratives from different cultures to enhance students' interest and participation in learning. Students learn China's heroic stories through reading, writing, translating and speaking, so that students can get into the heroic deeds and spirit in their minds and put them into learning actions, and at the same time improve students' English language application ability.

5. Research results and summary

By the practice of applying heroic narrative in the teaching of English in our university, the following goals have been achieved:

1. Compared with traditional university English teaching, the reform of research enhanced the role of second classroom teaching.
2. Enriched the teaching content, in addition to traditional teaching materials, made full use of Chinese heroic stories, and used real narratives as teaching materials.
3. Made the innovation in teaching forms and teaching activities of the integration of competition and education, the second classroom teaching activities mainly highlight student participation, do situational teaching, combine the first classroom and the second classroom, and transform teachers' teaching to student-centered experience teaching.

In summary, heroic narrative has important practical value in English teaching in Chinese vocational universities. Teachers should pay attention to the teaching and application of heroic narratives, and adopt a variety of teaching strategies to help students improve their language skills, cultural awareness and intercultural communication skills. Further researches need to be held and more competitions need to be designed.

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APPENDIX

A simple questionnaire survey on the application of heroic narratives in English teaching in vocational universities, for reference:

(1) Do you think heroic narratives are valuable in English teaching in vocational universities?

- A. Yes B. None C. Inconclusive

(2) Have you learned heroic storytelling in your English classes?

- A. Learned B. Not learned

(3) Have you studied heroic storytelling in the second class of the English course?

- A. Learned B. Not learned

(4) What benefits do you think heroic storytelling can bring to English language learning? (Multiple selections possible)

- A. Broadening cultural horizons B. Improve language skills
C. Enhance reading comprehension
D. Enhance imagination and creativity
E. Contribute to the development of intercultural communication skills

(5) How do you think heroic narratives can be better applied in English teaching in vocational universities?

- A. Design hero storytelling teaching activities
B. Guide students to explore the cultural elements behind heroic narratives
C. Stimulate students' creativity and imagination
D. Use technology to enhance teaching effectiveness
E. All of the above

(6) How do you think heroic narratives should assess student learning outcomes?

- A. Reading comprehension test B. Writing assignments
C. Discussion and debate D. Creation of works E. All of the above

(7) Do you have any suggestions or opinions on the application of heroic narratives in English teaching in vocational universities? Please write below

Thank you for participating!

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