

# Research on the Reform of English Teaching in Secondary Vocational Schools Based on the Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture

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**Abstract:** Chinese excellent traditional culture holds a unique status and extremely high value. It is the root and soul of the Chinese nation. The ideological concepts, humanistic spirit, philosophical wisdom, etc., contained therein are precious wealth of the Chinese nation. They also play a unique role in the field of education and teaching, serving as important tools to improve teaching quality and enhance the humanistic literacy of talent cultivation. Secondary vocational schools are important positions for cultivating technical talents, and English is an important basic course in secondary vocational schools, playing an indispensable role in cultivating students' cross-cultural awareness and international vision. Integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into English teaching in secondary vocational schools is an inevitable requirement of the times and an effective way for teaching reform. This paper explores the effective application of Chinese excellent traditional culture in English teaching in secondary vocational schools, gradually deepening from the application significance to specific teaching strategies, so as to give full play to the educational value of Chinese excellent traditional culture, improve teaching quality, and cultivate high-quality technical talents with both English literacy and cultural literacy.

**Keywords:** Chinese excellent traditional culture; Secondary vocational education; English teaching; Teaching reform

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## 1. Introduction

The English course in secondary vocational education is a fundamental and core subject with strong applicability. It teaches students language knowledge and application skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, while also playing a crucial role in cultivating their international vision, cross-cultural awareness, and other aspects. Integrating fine traditional Chinese culture into English teaching can actively promote the development of students' core English competencies. Meanwhile, it helps students establish cultural confidence and develop national pride. Additionally, the application of fine traditional Chinese culture enables students to form a correct understanding of foreign cultures, understand foreign cultural elements objectively with an open and inclusive attitude, and further highlight the practicality of English teaching in secondary vocational education. Based on this, English teachers in secondary vocational schools should actively explore the application of fine traditional Chinese culture in teaching, promote the inheritance and promotion of Chinese culture, and cultivate high-quality vocational talents with all-round development.

## **2. The practical significance of integrating excellent traditional Chinese culture into English teaching in secondary vocational schools**

### **2.1. Promoting the all-round development of students**

Against the backdrop of the new era, English teaching not only requires students to master solid English knowledge and skills, but also emphasizes the cultivation of their cross-cultural awareness and the enhancement of cross-cultural communication abilities. It aims to help students demonstrate humanistic care for the world on the basis of fostering their patriotic feelings. The English classroom in secondary vocational schools serves as a crucial platform for cultivating students' cross-cultural communication skills and enhancing their cross-cultural awareness, acting as a window to open up their cultural exchanges in an international perspective <sup>[1]</sup>. On the one hand, textbooks are an important channel for students to comprehensively and deeply understand the world. However, due to factors such as slow updating speed and limited space, textbooks still have shortcomings such as one-sided and outdated values, which also pose certain obstacles to cultivating students' cross-cultural communication awareness <sup>[2]</sup>. On the other hand, taking excellent traditional Chinese culture as an important supplement to English teaching and expanding knowledge to students can effectively make up for the deficiencies of teaching solely based on textbooks. It can reduce the difficulty of learning, enhance students' interest in learning, create a teaching context with the significance of cross-cultural communication, and improve students' practical communication and application abilities.

### **2.2. Complying with the development trend of the times**

China's more than 5,000 years of civilization has accumulated the essence of excellent traditional Chinese culture, which contains profound philosophical concepts, moral norms, and humanistic spirit. These cultures not only help students develop good writing habits but also provide spiritual support for their future life and study <sup>[3]</sup>. In addition, excellent traditional Chinese culture is the fertile soil of socialist core values, which have gradually taken shape in the process of inheriting and developing traditional Chinese culture. Learning traditional Chinese culture, which is consistent with the values of the new era, is crucial for shaping students' complete personalities. Integrating excellent traditional Chinese culture into English teaching in secondary vocational schools allows students to be imperceptibly influenced by the culture, internalizing fragmented cultural knowledge and phenomena into positive cultural awareness, thereby establishing a strong sense of national cultural confidence <sup>[4]</sup>. At the same time, high-quality education in traditional Chinese culture can help students remain firm in the context of multiculturalism, inheriting and promoting the excellent parts of Chinese culture.

## **3. English teaching strategies for secondary vocational schools based on Chinese excellent traditional culture**

### **3.1. Innovating teaching methods to stimulate students' interest**

In the process of integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into English teaching, teachers can first start with teaching methods. According to the characteristics of the curriculum, teaching needs, and students' actual situation, they should explore more innovative and practical teaching strategies to provide students with more learning channels, offer novel learning experiences, stimulate students' interest in English learning, and optimize classroom teaching quality. First, integrate digital teaching methods. Teachers can use multimedia technology to provide students with various forms of teaching resources such as pictures, audio, and videos, fully mobilizing students' multiple senses <sup>[5]</sup>. For example, in English reading teaching, teachers can take excellent cultures such as intangible cultural heritage skills as the teaching theme. They can first introduce them through videos to stimulate students' interest in in-depth learning; then introduce relevant backgrounds in English, teaching students English reading skills while allowing them to understand the exquisiteness of intangible cultural heritage skills and cultivating students' firm cultural confidence <sup>[6]</sup>. Similarly, in oral English teaching, teachers can also introduce virtual reality technology, play the production process of intangible cultural heritage items to students, let students play the role of cultural communicators, introduce intangible cultural

heritage culture to everyone, exercise students' good English language expression ability, and deepen their understanding of intangible cultural heritage culture. Second, adopt situational teaching methods. Before teaching, teachers can select representative elements of Chinese excellent traditional culture, such as calligraphy, Peking Opera facial makeup, Chinese painting, etc., and supplement with English explanations to create a teaching environment full of the rhythm of Chinese excellent traditional culture in the class. In the teaching process, teachers can prepare targeted cultural elements. For example, when explaining vocabulary knowledge, teachers can introduce traditional buildings in different historical periods and regions of China, allowing students to learn the usage of comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives while appreciating them. At the same time, teachers should also encourage students to interact, let students compare the styles and forms of different buildings, use vocabulary in practice, deepen their understanding, and improve their English practical level<sup>[7]</sup>. Finally, adopt project-based teaching methods. The project-based teaching method takes the project as the main line, highlights the dominant position of students in teaching activities, and has a certain degree of practicality, guiding students to understand and internalize theoretical knowledge in practice, improve practical application ability, and realize the organic integration of Chinese excellent traditional culture and secondary vocational English. Teachers can set up projects themed on Chinese excellent traditional culture, such as practical and interesting activities like "Introducing China's Intangible Cultural Heritage to the World" and "Introducing the Customs of Xinjiang in English", and guide students to complete project tasks by themselves through links such as student group planning and task execution<sup>[8]</sup>. This activity can not only enhance the interest and appeal of English teaching but also allow students to improve their English literacy on the basis of understanding Chinese excellent traditional culture.

### 3.2. Enriching teaching contents and broadening knowledge horizons

Integrating excellent traditional Chinese culture into secondary vocational English teaching can enrich teaching contents and broaden students' knowledge horizons. In English teaching, teachers can introduce elements of excellent traditional Chinese culture through various forms and channels, enabling students to master English knowledge while enhancing their understanding of excellent traditional Chinese culture<sup>[9]</sup>. Firstly, introduce classic traditional Chinese stories. For example, when teaching a family-themed course, teachers can introduce classic stories such as Mencius' Mother Moving Three Times and Yue Fei's Mother Tattooing on His Back, and introduce excellent works like Zhuzi's Family Instructions, allowing students to understand the family tradition culture in excellent traditional Chinese culture. Through in-depth comparison with excellent Western family cultures, students can not only deepen the unit theme but also enhance their cross-cultural understanding ability by expanding learning materials. Secondly, integrate traditional festival teaching. When explaining Western traditional festivals such as Christmas and Halloween, teachers can introduce Chinese traditional festivals like the Spring Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival. By comparing the origins, customs, and cultural connotations of Chinese and Western festivals, students can be helped to understand cultural diversity more comprehensively and strengthen their cultural confidence<sup>[10]</sup>. Thirdly, incorporate traditional art elements. When teaching English poetry, teachers can combine Chinese classical poetry to analyze the similarities and differences between Chinese and English poetry in rhythm and imagery, thereby improving students' aesthetic ability and cross-cultural expression ability. In terms of expanding the channels for acquiring materials, teachers can utilize the abundant, open, shared, and diverse online resources to provide students with rich learning materials<sup>[11]</sup>. Based on this, teachers can adopt an online-offline blended teaching method, using online learning platforms to provide students with diversified learning resources, such as high-quality courses, text charts, videos, audio, etc., allowing students to choose extended learning materials according to their interests and achieve personalized learning. Teachers can also start from English textbooks, deeply excavate the elements of excellent traditional Chinese culture contained therein, and integrate corresponding knowledge materials, so that students can enhance their cultural understanding ability on the basis of learning English knowledge. For example, in classroom teaching with the theme of environmental protection, teachers can introduce the traditional philosophical idea of "the unity of man and nature"; when explaining etiquette culture, integrate the Confucian concept of "propriety, righteousness, integrity, and shame", etc. Through diversified learning means, students can be cultivated to have solid

English skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, experience rich cultural connotations, and form deep cultural feelings <sup>[12]</sup>.

### **3.3. Connecting in-class and out-of-class learning to achieve comprehensive integration**

English teaching should not be confined to the classroom. Instead, its practicality should be fully leveraged to extend English teaching to out-of-class activities. First, diversify practical teaching activities. Teachers can lead students on field trips, such as visiting museums, cultural heritage sites, or meeting inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, allowing students to experience the charm of excellent Chinese traditional culture and understand the profound significance behind it. During these activities, teachers can provide simple introductions in English, which not only consolidates students' English skills but also enhances their cultural identity and stimulates interest in exploring excellent Chinese traditional culture in depth <sup>[13]</sup>. At the secondary vocational school level, activities like English cultural festivals can be organized, including English drama performances, English speeches on excellent Chinese traditional culture, and English recitations of classic poems, to achieve the organic integration of excellent Chinese traditional culture and English. Encouraging students to actively participate and showcase their talents helps them enhance cultural confidence and improve English literacy in practice. In the process of preparing for these activities, students need to deeply explore the connotations of cultural symbols that interest them, and gain an in-depth understanding of relevant Chinese traditional culture by consulting literature and collecting online materials. Meanwhile, they should focus on improving their English expression and application abilities, applying theoretical knowledge to actual performances. This not only exercises their language skills but also deepens their understanding of Chinese culture, realizing the integration of education and entertainment. Second, integrate out-of-class knowledge into classroom teaching. Teachers should pay attention to current hotspots related to excellent Chinese traditional culture in daily life, observe cultural phenomena in life, and consciously accumulate teaching materials, integrating the culture that students can contact in daily life into English teaching <sup>[14]</sup>. On the one hand, students can apply life experiences to English learning, reducing the difficulty of learning. On the other hand, vivid cultural cases with a touch of life can further help students appreciate the connotations of excellent traditional culture, stimulate their enthusiasm for exploration, cultivate their awareness of applying English to real-life scenarios such as daily life and work, and improve their practical English skills.

## **4. Conclusion**

Guided by the excellent traditional Chinese culture, English teaching in secondary vocational schools has radiated new brilliance. Teachers of English in secondary vocational schools should adopt a positive and developmental attitude, update their teaching concepts, recognize the value of applying excellent traditional Chinese culture to English teaching in meeting the expectations of the times for vocational education and promoting students' all-round development, and actively explore its effective application in teaching. Then, by connecting in-class and out-of-class activities, innovating teaching methods, and enriching teaching contents, the deep integration of excellent traditional Chinese culture and English teaching can be achieved, promoting students' mastery and practical application of English skills. Meanwhile, it helps students gain a deeper understanding of the charm and significance of excellent traditional Chinese culture, realizes the simultaneous improvement of English literacy and cultural awareness, and cultivates high-quality talents with all-round development <sup>[15]</sup>.

## **Disclosure statement**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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