Research on Oral History Teaching in Colleges and Universities Based on Online and Offline Mixed Teaching Modes

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Abstract: Oral history teaching is a reform path of the current history teaching and research model in colleges and universities. But the oral history teaching is a very complicated process, in order to ensure the long-term stability of oral history teaching, one is to have stable resources, the other is to need long-term attention of the audience. This requires us to guide students to establish an oral history resource platform by using the mode of mixed online and offline teaching, and ensure the long-term stability of oral history teaching through the operation of the platform. As a result, the innovation of oral history research and practice is also formed.

Keywords: Oral history; Online and offline; Mixed teaching model

1. Introduction

In the traditional sense, oral history is a method of collecting and using oral historical materials to study history. This method of research requires in-depth interviews with the witnesses, the parties and the general public of historical events, the collection of oral materials, and the construction of historical understanding with the interviewees [1,2]. This seems to be a completely offline research and teaching logic. But in fact, in recent years, the method of "Internet + oral history" has quietly emerged, providing a new material channel for historical research and a new way for history teaching.

2. Analysis of current situation

In the present teaching environment, oral history is still in the experimental stage. On the one hand, the concept of historical materials in traditional historiography needs to be changed. On the other hand, the basic methods

of oral history cannot be mastered only by learning history. After all, oral history is not only a way to collect historical materials and study history, but also a way to contact society and people, and a new means of historical education. It has its advantages. Its popular and vivid features can easily arouse students' interest. This has a great positive effect on introducing oral history into history teaching. At the same time, it can change the face of history teaching in the past and make it a dynamic activity full of vitality and rich content. Meanwhile, it can break the boundary between the classroom and society, promote teachers and students to become working partners, and contribute to the communication between teachers and students. Additionally, for local colleges and universities, it also has the practical value and utility of paying attention to local culture and serving local society, which is worthy of vigorous promotion and development. Next, the author will concretely analyze the present situation and predicament of oral history teaching, and think about the path of oral history based on this.

Firstly, at the moment, the teaching mode of history in most colleges and universities still revolves around the "two centers" of teacher's classroom teaching and textbook teaching [3]. As a result, middle school students are less involved in discussion in classroom teaching and lack practical teaching links. Traditional teaching enables students to master systematic subject knowledge. However, repeated and monotonous use of this method for a long time will affect students' autonomy and enthusiasm for learning. Therefore, the use of oral history in teaching practice can not only play the main role of students but also bring different teaching methods to the subject.

Secondly, from the perspective of memory heritage, since 2015, the state has paid attention to the development and excavation of memory heritage, which is accomplished by the operation of oral history. Therefore, the intervention of oral history in the inheritance and protection of memory heritage has become a hot topic in the academic circle. The departments of history in major universities have begun to explore and study the combination of oral history and cultural heritage. Many places have even set up oral history research centers to continuously pay attention to the protection and inheritance of memory heritage, which means that oral history teaching in colleges and universities is indispensable.

Thirdly, from the perspective of normal colleges, the core of the new curriculum reform in primary and secondary schools, which is being rapidly promoted, is to guide students to take the initiative to participate in hands-on practice, independent thinking, and cooperative exploration through experiential goals, and develop students' ability to collect and process information, acquire new knowledge, analyze and solve problems, and communicate and cooperate, to form good feelings, attitudes, and values [4]. Such reform puts forward new requirements for the training of normal university students. The teaching of history in normal universities must focus on cultivating innovative talents with solid basic knowledge, profound theoretical accomplishment, and strong practical ability, to adapt to the new teaching environment of primary and secondary schools [4]. Oral history teaching, as the most important practical teaching method in the history curriculum, will become the focus of teaching reform in normal colleges and universities.

Therefore, oral history teaching is different from conventional classroom teaching, which only requires a careful grasp of 40 to 50 minutes of each lesson. It is a long-term process, which requires the right topic, the right topic, the appropriate interviewee, a skilled interviewer, and excellent interview techniques. It cannot be completed in one or two short lessons but needs repeated practice. In the process of continuous practice, we should gradually master oral history skills. They also need to be able to select a suitable oral history project by studying local history and culture, identify a relevant oral history interviewee, and conduct a thorough study of local history and culture through oral history interviews. This requires teachers to further mobilize students'

enthusiasm for historical research and train students' ability to do historical research based on helping students master the oral history methods. Therefore, oral history teaching needs to break from routine by incorporating innovative methods in course arrangement and the design of practical teaching activities, utilizing subject models and base models to effectively conduct practical oral history teaching.

3. The application of online and offline mixed modes in oral history teaching

Specifically, oral history follows a complete "life cycle," starting with the formation of plans and background research, followed by the selection of narrators and the completion of interviews. This is then followed by the storage and analysis of interview data, and finally, the sharing of the interview data with the public to foster a broader historical understanding [5].

Based on existing research, we find that three main challenges arise in oral history teaching practice. The first challenge is ensuring the richness and feasibility of the research content, as relying solely on textbooks makes it difficult to conduct meaningful research. The second is guaranteeing the active participation and subjectivity of students in oral history teaching. The third is determining how to effectively apply the outcomes of oral history practice.

To address these challenges, the author focuses on designing a teaching and research program with a hybrid online and offline practice platform. First, we can attract more organizations or individuals needing oral history collections through bidding. Second, we can leverage school resources to form teams for collecting and researching oral history materials. Finally, the results of practical teaching can be published and disseminated on the network platform, in compliance with legal and ethical standards, to enhance influence and ensure the platform's sustainable operation.

Additionally, it is important to note that oral history is not merely a class or an activity but a comprehensive historical research process. Therefore, experienced teachers must collaborate with students to conduct interviews systematically, typically in groups. This requires school-level coordination to ensure the orderly progress of students' practical teaching activities.

Oral history is closely linked to video recording, often supplemented by sound and video documentation. This not only necessitates financial support for teaching practices but also calls for interdisciplinary collaboration. Different disciplines must engage in technical discussions on oral history, fostering a teaching model that integrates online and offline interaction. Today, platforms such as video-sharing sites, public accounts, and social media provide ample opportunities to display oral history projects. Through interdisciplinary exchanges, we can enhance social influence and maximize the value of practical teaching.

The hybrid online-offline model of oral history facilitates the construction of thematic frameworks, showcasing its innovative aspects. From a theoretical perspective, oral history expands its scope beyond major historical events and figures to include the lives and experiences of the general public. This integration of multiple perspectives creates a holistic study of societal aspects.

From a methodological perspective, oral history research extends beyond the traditional focus of historiography, which centers on political evolution and written documents. It incorporates the life experiences of individuals in various social domains such as politics, economy, culture, and science. This approach redefines society at different historical stages as a comprehensive whole, using vertical timelines and horizontal narratives to explore individual and group experiences. This "networked" format of historical research achieves a cross-

integration of vertical and horizontal dimensions, offering a more nuanced understanding of historical events and societal dynamics. Compared to traditional historiography, oral history represents a significant academic breakthrough, driving innovation in both historiographical theory and methodology

4. Online and offline mixed teaching scheme design

Based on the considerations, our teaching plan is designed with two goals and three main sections.

(1) Short-term goal: Establish courses related to oral history and create an oral history teaching practice base. This will enable history department students to begin teaching and practicing oral history as early as possible.

(2) Long-term goal: Deepen the historical and cultural research of Zhaoqing's local society through students' teaching practice activities. The ultimate aim is to form a sustainable team to contribute to the development of local society and culture.

Next, the specific design content of the three sections:

(1) Building relevant courses for oral history practice in the history department curriculum: Currently, the course of oral history research and teaching in China is generally titled "Oral History and Social Memory," providing theoretical guidance for oral history. Additionally, courses such as "Oral History and Video Recording Methods" are set up, focusing on the practical aspects of oral history work. Some institutions also offer courses like "Fieldwork of History" which integrates anthropological fieldwork with historical research. These courses explore not only oral history but also various forms of local cultural heritage, such as inscriptions, festivals, temples, crafts, and the like. In designing this program, it is necessary to further integrate the talent training program and utilize appropriate curricula and teaching methods.

(2) Formation of an oral history team: A core oral history team led by teachers should be established to promote practical training in oral history and execute specific practical teaching activities. This represents the offline component and the main focus of oral history practice teaching. During this process, teachers are responsible for guiding students in mastering oral history interview techniques and field investigation skills. This section corresponds to the offline stage of practical work.

The goal of oral history is to collect relevant historical materials about historical figures and events through archival research, in order to record, reproduce, and preserve history truthfully [6]. Therefore, a specific oral history project must be considered an "academic unit" within the context of the history discipline. A "historiography unit" should consist of multiple interview units, with a robust academic capacity and self-containment [6].

Engaging students in oral history should encompass various types of projects. For example, community projects can focus on the oral history of urban residents' lives and customs. Event-based projects often include the oral history of social events. Additionally, personal projects, such as school history and unit history interviews, are common, as well as industry projects, which may cover oral histories of non-genetic heirs and industry professionals.

If only a limited number of interviewees are involved in each project type, the value of a series is diminished, and the comprehensive depiction of a "historical unit" is lost. This approach fails to provide a holistic view and limits its support for historical research. Therefore, if possible, it is more valuable to undertake oral

history projects with significant academic capacity, inclusive participation, and a broad range of interviewees. These projects can contribute to a more extensive display of results and enhance the research content. Moreover, for a school unit, different teachers in the history department can collaborate more effectively, combining scientific research with related oral history projects.

However, there is still one ambiguity in this idea that needs to be refined through practice. This concerns the operation of the oral history base in the Xijiang River Basin. Firstly, if the base serves solely as a teaching practice platform, providing students with opportunities for hands-on experience, the value of their results may not be fully realized. To maximize outcomes, if the base can secure more support from the school and even local government annually through research projects, it can guide students in completing oral history investigations. Additionally, this would facilitate further research and result dissemination, thereby serving the local community effectively.

Secondly, oral history is not just a class or activity, but a comprehensive historical research process. As such, it requires a significant time investment from teachers. On-site oral history activities necessitate a large number of students conducting interviews and recordings in groups. Consequently, all history department teachers must collaborate and set aside personal agendas for the collective effort. More importantly, college leaders should prioritize and fully support these efforts to ensure the smooth, safe, and organized execution of students' practical teaching activities.

In addition, oral history is closely linked to video recording. Typically, oral history interviews are supplemented with video recordings to enhance professionalism and authenticity. However, this requires financial support and training for students in photography and video recording techniques. Presenting research results through oral history combined with video recordings can yield greater impact and credibility.

To complement this, an online "oral history practice teaching platform" should be established. This platform will systematically conduct oral history-related investigations and research activities. It acts as an intermediary, operating as a public welfare social organization. Initially, it will accept bids for oral history projects from various groups within society. Subsequently, relevant practice units will carry out these projects.

In the later stages, the goal is to integrate cultural resources, and communication resources, and drive the development of the oral history subject. This subject could encompass families, communities, or villages—each serving as a flexible academic unit. The platform will showcase a variety of historical and cultural resources obtained through oral history practice. If the platform gains sufficient attention and dissemination, it will attract more organizations seeking to preserve oral historical materials, even facilitating the arrangement and classification of cultural and creative industries. A model of social practice combining production, academia, and research will be established, driving in-depth research and understanding of regional culture.

The platform employs an "Internet + oral history + creativity" model and operates under the "social enterprise" framework. With proper management, it can sustain its own profits and losses, potentially contributing to local cultural development. Specifically, we can conduct different types of project research. For example, community projects—an oral history of life and customs of residents in Zhaoqing Fucheng area before the founding of the People's Republic of China. Event projects—an oral history of the Anti-Japanese War. Personal projects—interviews with inheritors of the century-old Zhaoqing Shop. Industry projects—Duan Yan master's oral memory materials. Group projects—interviews on the entrepreneurial history of new residents in Yanqian Village, Zhaoqing, etc. In the "historical units" listed above, if each unit only interviewed one or two interviewees and changed places with one shot, it would not be able to truly reflect the overall picture of the

"units" and it would not be able to provide group oral historical materials for the present and future generations. Therefore, if conditions permit, it will be more valuable to carry out the oral history project with a certain academic capacity and a majority of the interviewees, which can also contribute to the revival of local culture through the subsequent display of results and the improvement of research content.

Once the online platform is set up, we can have an oral history application or website. Then, the theoretical achievements can be determined by the academic units initiated by the oral history practice teaching activities. Of course, it can also make relevant changes according to the recent focus of local cultural work in Zhaoqing City and better combine with local cultural development strategies. However, this approach requires initial capital. The author has explored the possibility of integrating this activity with students' summer social practice and scientific research projects to facilitate research. The goal is to complete the operation of a project and generate a series of scientific research results. Additionally, to emphasize the communication aspects of online platforms, documentaries will be created based on oral history projects to further enhance communication efforts. Furthermore, the author will continue to refine this model and develop a teaching research paper based on this case.

Finally, let's explore a series of results that can be achieved if the platform is established. The first is the theoretical achievement, which can be assessed through the academic units initiated by oral history practice teaching activities, as mentioned previously, allowing for better alignment with local cultural development strategies.

Moreover, oral history is closely tied to video recording. To diversify our results, we can incorporate video recordings during the oral history interviews and create documentaries post-interview to present the discussion topics of a particular academic unit more effectively.

How will this series of achievements be promoted and applied? The author believes that, due to its validity as a historical document, oral history, like any other historical research, must be rigorously planned and conducted. Designers should pay attention to the importance of carefully crafted interview questions, high-quality sound recordings, and proper archiving. Today, researchers can utilize oral history archives as windows into life at another time, and these personal records may be the only remaining records of a bygone way of life.

Therefore, by completing the above projects, we will be able to amass a substantial collection of oral history archives. These archives can be compiled into books and published, representing the historical and cultural features of Zhaoqing's local society. Additionally, further research can be conducted on local history and culture, exploring the significance of local society to history and the region.

Furthermore, through the practical teaching of oral history, we can gain a deeper understanding of related issues. We may undertake more diversified research, such as exploring oral history technology and methods, standardizing oral history workflows, and studying cultural heritage and cultural anthropology. This will significantly expand the research achievements in local history and culture, as well as facilitate the establishment of research teams. These teams will train students for further academic pursuits and enable more in-depth research and development of local history and culture in Zhaoqing.

Also, if the online platform can be independently operated as a public welfare social enterprise, it will adopt an independent operational mode and serve as a development path integrating production, academia, and research, fostering greater growth and impact.

5. Conclusion

Introducing oral history into history teaching can, on the one hand, transform the traditional logic of history education into a more dynamic and engaging practice. On the other hand, it can break down the boundaries between the classroom and society, as well as between teacher and student [7]. Using the mixed mode of online and offline oral history teaching will enhance the practical teaching process by making effective use of network resources. This approach allows students to explore more interesting interview subjects, engage with a broader social scope, and achieve greater social impact.

The establishment of the oral history research base in Xijiang Valley will significantly benefit students' historical practice. Students will immerse themselves in society, experience historical scenes, and engage with reality from multiple perspectives. Additionally, this approach encompasses a wide range of research areas, including upper social fields, the lives of ordinary people, societal changes, and public perceptions of history. It effectively combines "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches to writing history. However, since the reform focuses on topics serving local society and culture, it naturally contributes to the protection and promotion of local heritage.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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