

# How to Cultivate Intercultural Communication Ability in English as an International Language

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**ABSTRACT.** *With the continuous development of China's development process, in order to meet the needs of social development talents, colleges and universities in the development of English education, training students' intercultural communication ability provides a new teaching challenge for traditional English teaching. English as an international lingua franca requires English teaching in colleges and universities to be committed to a multi-standard and standard teaching philosophy and to promote a win-win and equal cultural attitude. Based on the current English as an international lingua franca, this paper analyzes the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence.*

**KEYWORDS:** *English; international lingua franca; cross-cultural communication ability*

## 1. The significance of intercultural communication ability

Intercultural communication refers to the communication between people of the national language and those who are not native speakers or culturally different<sup>[1]</sup>. In general, cross-cultural communication is how to be fluent when dealing with foreigners, and What should be noted. With the development of economic globalization, language expression is an indispensable means for China to leave the world stage, and English is currently the only universal language in the world, especially in economic and trade, cultural exchanges and public relations between countries. The role is obvious, so English teachers in colleges and universities shoulder the methods to guide students to learn English, helping young people to

absorb the good cultural connotations and national customs of Western countries<sup>[2]</sup>. Therefore, the cultivation of intercultural communication ability plays a very important role in economic and trade, cultural exchanges, and public relations measures. Colleges and universities should strengthen supervision measures in this area so that students' English proficiency can be improved.

## **2. English as an international lingua franca**

### ***2.1 One-way change, multi-directional inequality, equality***

Intercultural communication in the context of English lingua franca essentially changes from one-way to multi-directional. First, the communicative objects have changed from English native speakers to English speakers from any corner of the world, including not only the original English native speakers, but also all non-English native speakers with different pragmatic-cultural backgrounds. This means that the location of intercultural communication has changed from a national or English-speaking country to anywhere in the world<sup>[3]</sup>. For example, a Chinese and a Korean use English for face-to-face communication in Thailand. Therefore, the two sides of the communication from the original English as an unequal relationship in the context of foreign languages (that is, English native speakers have the right to ruling the language) into an equal relationship, which is an important prerequisite for English as an international lingua franca in the context of intercultural communication.

### ***2.2 Focus on understanding the weight gain in action***

In terms of communicative goals, cross-cultural communication in the context of English lingua franca is to implement some kind of action, rather than simply understanding English-speaking countries. The new goal orientation shifts cross-cultural communication from pure information acquisition to clear task implementation. The past intercultural communication was often aimed at understanding English-speaking countries, understanding Western culture, and acquiring scientific knowledge. However, in the new situation of English as an international lingua franca, intercultural communicators often carry specific

communication tasks, such as talking with foreigners, going to other countries, attending international conferences<sup>[4]</sup>, and so on. In the process of implementing the task, the first consideration for intercultural communicators is to express the meaning clearly and make things, and it is not important that the language expression conforms to the language, pragmatic and cultural norms of the native speakers.

### ***2.3 input variable input + output***

From the perspective of communication content, in the context of English as an international lingua franca, intercultural communicators not only need to use English to input foreign cultures from communicative objects from all over the world, but also need to export their own culture to them. Under the new situation, "It is imperative to spread your culture in English."<sup>[5]</sup> This is quite different from the intercultural communication content that used to learn English as a foreign language. At that time, English learners expected to learn the culture of the latter from their own native speakers, so the topics of conversation were often related to this, and less involved in the learner's own culture.

## **3. The status quo of English teaching in the context of international lingua franca**

### ***3.1 There is a deviation in the purpose of English teaching***

Many colleges and universities still use traditional teaching concepts and methods. They believe that English teaching is only to cultivate students' ability to master language and lexical. Teachers who believe in cultural backgrounds are mainly responsible for specialized cultural knowledge courses such as "Anglo-American Profile" and "Anglo-American Culture"<sup>[6]</sup>. In the teaching, the teacher is mainly teaching, emphasizing the comparison of vocabulary, sentence pattern and grammar. English teaching has completely become the teaching of English knowledge. The cultural knowledge involved in the text is only skipped by water, and rarely it involves the cultivation of language skills. The student's learning methods are also very rigid, focusing on the understanding of words, sentence

patterns, and grammar, and rarely paying attention to the cultural background contained in the article. Some students even feel that if the teacher does not teach vocabulary and grammar in the classroom, there is no learning in this class.

### ***3.2 Strong comprehensive ability and lack of cultural understanding***

Although some students have strong ability to use language comprehensively, they always encounter obstacles in the process of communication. Integrated language ability is one of the important foundations of intercultural communication, but it is far from enough to have such qualities in order to carry out cross-cultural communication smoothly. Language mistakes are easy to get the understanding of the opposite party, but pragmatic mistakes and cultural misunderstandings often lead to friction and even communication failure.

## **4. Cultivate students' cross-cultural communication ability countermeasures**

### ***4.1 Teaching standards***

In the context of English as an international lingua franca, the establishment of teaching reference standards includes the identification of teaching objectives and the selection of appropriate language specifications. In the new situation, the identification of teaching objectives is a key factor in determining the direction of English teaching. The goal of English teaching should be inclined from the cultivation of English language ability to the cultivation of intercultural communication ability, especially to strengthen the ability to understand foreign language culture and express the ability of parental culture. In the new situation, the significance of choosing the appropriate language specification for English teaching is also self-evident. At present, there are three main points of influence: the first is to adopt criteria based on successful learners in the country; the second is that standards based on English as an international language should be adopted; the third is The standard of using English native language also takes into account the localization characteristics.

### ***4.2 Teaching Resources***

In the context of English as an international lingua franca, the focus on teaching resources is mainly reflected in the recruitment of teaching staff and the preparation of teaching materials. The recruitment of qualified teaching staff in the new situation is crucial to the development of intercultural communication skills. On the one hand, it is necessary to select local teachers with strong cross-cultural communication skills, and to strengthen the intercultural communication skills for existing teachers; on the other hand, English native speakers and non-locals when hiring foreign teaching staff English native speakers should be considered. In the past, the professional quality of foreign teachers was mainly reflected in language ability. However, in the context of English as an international lingua franca, in addition to paying attention to whether they are proficient in English and have excellent teaching skills, it is necessary to examine whether candidates are familiar with many countries. Whether culture has the experience of cross-cultural communication. This is conducive to creating a multicultural environment in the teaching process, enhancing students' cross-cultural awareness and ability to observe and reflect on foreign cultures.

In the context of English lingua franca, the idea of teachers using teaching materials is also facing a fundamental change. Simple language teaching materials can not meet the current situation needs. The selected teaching materials and supplementary materials should also include cultural and communicative factors (such as videos of multicultural and intercultural contextual communication activities and recording materials of multiple "accents"). To meet the needs of today's intercultural communication skills development. Specifically, in addition to providing exotic cultural information, textbooks and supplementary materials should also include an introduction to national culture. By introducing, comparing and contrasting various Chinese and foreign cultures, we will help students deepen their understanding of Chinese culture, enhance their understanding of commonalities and differences among different cultures, and establish a cultural attitude of equality, tolerance, cooperation and mutual benefit.

#### ***4.3 Teaching Practice***

In order to strengthen the cultivation of students' intercultural communication

ability, teaching practice can be innovated from the aspects of classroom teaching and student performance evaluation in the context of English as an international lingua franca. Classroom teaching is a face-to-face interaction between teachers and students, and has a direct effect and influence on students' intercultural communication skills. In the new situation, classroom teaching should strengthen experiential teaching, use video of multicultural and intercultural contextual communication activities and multiple "accent" recording materials to carry out virtual immersion teaching, so that students can have an intuitive feeling of intercultural communication. Impressions to stimulate their interest and sensitivity to foreign cultures, and gradually introduce cultural awareness. At the same time, it is necessary to pay attention to cross-cultural communication training assessment, conduct evaluation based on communicative activities, and evaluate students' intercultural communicative competence by examining the performance of students in communicative activities (especially cultural observation and reflection ability, cultural empathy ability, meaning Consultation ability, etc.) In addition, it is recommended to use the method of formative assessment to dynamically evaluate students during the teaching process, especially for the immediate generation of assessments, which can follow the teaching standards and ensure the effective implementation of the syllabus.

## **5. Conclusion**

All in all, to cultivate students' ability to accurately and fluently express Chinese thought and Chinese culture in intercultural communication is also in line with the current strategic arrangement of China's "one belt-road" and new-type big country diplomacy. I hope this study can play a certain role in the reform of English teaching reform in China, especially in intercultural communication.

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