

The Cultivation of Intercultural Communication Awareness in English Teaching under the View of the Core Competence of English Subject

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ABSTRACT. *The Core Competence became the prominent key point in English teaching with the proposition of quality-oriented education. Being the important part of the core competence of English, cultural accomplishment requires more in intercultural communication awareness and ability. On the basis of the necessity of the cultivation of intercultural communication awareness in English teaching, I'd like to analyze the current situation of the cultivation of intercultural communication awareness in English teaching nowadays and offer the targeted proposals and strategies of cultivation, in order to find some enlightenment in enriching the connotation of English teaching and improving the teaching methods, and also integrating English language teaching with culture knowledge, so as to improve the students' capacity of intercultural communicative awareness.*

KEYWORDS: *Core competence, English teaching, Intercultural communication awareness, Strategies of cultivation*

1. Introduction

Language can be a mirror, which reflects a nation's culture and represents its content. Professor Wang Zuoliang, the famous stylistic expert, once said, "No one can master a language without understanding the social culture in it." For mastering a language, it's necessary to understand the root of it, the culture. It's impossible to communicate with the others smoothly if you don't know the culture behind the language you use. The ultimate goal of language learning is communication. A good language user is usually required to know of certain local culture and Intercultural awareness and communicative skills. Therefore, the teachers should pay more attention on the cultivation of intercultural awareness and communicative abilities and focus on improving students' language using ability, which is to cultivate the perfect language users who have the comprehensive communicative abilities.

2. Under the perspective of core literacy of this discipline, the necessity of cultivating cross-cultural communication consciousness

Since the Ministry of Education first proposed the cultivation of “cultural awareness” in 2001, the goal of this course has become an important part of the English curriculum standards, which has received great attention from the education community. The “Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standards” promulgated in 2011 clearly mentioned the cultivation of intercultural communication skills. Subsequently, in the “Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening the Curriculum Reform and Implementing the Fundamental Tasks of Lide Shuren” issued by the Ministry of Education in 2014, the concept of “core literacy system” was first proposed. After the “core literacy” education concept was put forward, the requirements for students’ cultural quality further emphasized the importance of cultivating cross-cultural communication awareness. It can be said that in the core literacy system of English subjects, cultural awareness directly reflects the value orientation of students for the core literacy of this discipline. Cultural awareness refers to the understanding of Chinese and foreign cultures and the recognition of excellent culture. It is a cross-cultural cognition, attitude and behavior orientation that students show in the context of globalization. Cultural awareness is the basis for ensuring students to use language properly. As one of the core literacies of English, in the teaching of cultural awareness, cross-cultural communication consciousness has become the prerequisite focus of core literacy teaching.

2.1 Language owns humanity and instrumentality

Language is the carrier of culture. When use language as a tool to communicate, we not only transmit information, but also convey the content of culture and thought. As a language, English is more than a means of communication but a tool for thinking. It is also inextricably linked to the culture of English-speaking countries (and even other non-English-speaking countries). The process of learning English is a process of mastering another communication tool, and also an important way for students to contact other cultures and form cross-cultural awareness and ability. It is also a process to promote the further development of students’ thinking. The humanity knowledge contained in the language also plays a role in the process of language use and promotes our understanding of language. At the same time, the cultural knowledge background will directly affect students’ deep understanding on language. In different cultural backgrounds, if you want to communicate properly, you must understand the corresponding cultural background and follow the rules of communication to ensure the courtesy of communication.

2.2 Language plays a key role in the globalization process

For any country, cultural mutual learning of different civilizations is one of the important driving forces for historical development. Cultural traditions have a major

impact on the country's historical process, moreover shape the most basic characteristics that distinguish it from other nation-states. In the spread of culture, language is an important factor. It is a social and cultural phenomenon and is closely related to the development of social culture. Each language has a cultural normative and emotional connotation. In all forms of culture, language is the outer shell of culture and the carrier of civilization. It is the most effective tool for knowledge to be passed down from generation to generation. In the process of globalization, language plays an irreplaceable role. Nowadays our society is more than a multi-ethnic society, but a society in which many ethnic groups develop together. In this diversified world, we shall have the ability to understand, respect, and identify cultures, and learn to choose the essence of a certain cultural and build up corresponding cultural attitude. In this process, teachers also need to learn to guide students to help students shape good cultural literacy, so that students can have a clear cultural standpoint in the process of world development.

2.3 Helps to reduce learning disabilities caused by cultural differences

In English learning, students often experience inability to understand knowledge due to cultural differences. Such a situation is not only bad for students' learning, but also affects students' enthusiasm for learning. If we can enhance students' cross-cultural communication awareness in teaching, we will be able to reduce the cultural barriers that cultural differences bring to students as much as possible, and achieve the effective improvement on learning efficiency. Therefore, in the cultivation of students' intercultural communicative competence, it is inevitable to improve students' cultural awareness. This is the key for China to be linked with the world and the inevitable requirement for the sustainable development of English teaching. Therefore, in the process of English teaching, we shall guide students to recognize different cultural phenomena, encouraging them to learn to discern cultural differences, and cultivate them intercultural communication skills, so as to help these young people to establish correct cultural awareness and enhance their ability to discriminate the culture. Then to lay a good foundation for them to be adapt to multiculturalism in the context of globalization.

3. The status quo of training intercultural communication awareness in English teaching.

Although many English teachers have realized the importance of cultural awareness in student learning at the present stage, and teachers have begun to pay attention to the guidance of cultural awareness in teaching. Under the influence of many factors, the cultivation of students' intercultural communication consciousness still exists some problems. Failure to properly handle these issues in a timely manner will directly affect the effectiveness of English teaching.

3.1 Lack of cross-cultural communication awareness

As the leader of English classroom teaching, teachers have the obligation and responsibility to guide intercultural consciousness deeply in the teaching process. However, in language teaching, many teachers pay too much attention to the cultivation of students' language ability and ignore the influence of cultural awareness on students. Especially in the context of exam-oriented education, teachers often regard language proficiency as the primary task of teaching. Although teachers are also concerned about the guidance of cultural awareness, they often worry that the expansion of cultural knowledge will occupy a large amount of classroom teaching time, thus reducing the supplement and explanation to their students' intercultural communication knowledge to a certain extent. Some teachers even avoid to mention it. Studying in such an environment for a long time is not conducive to the formation of students' cultural awareness, and is not benefit to the improvement of students' cross-cultural communication awareness. If over a long time in this way, it will be difficult to improve students' core literacy in English.

3.2 Lack of cultural practice and corresponding cultural circumstance

As a language subject, English learning and understanding need to be established in a certain cultural environment. The cultivation of intercultural communicative competence is not a simple rote learning can get, need in the process of English application, penetrates through the interpretation of knowledge in different context of exercise and expressing, but part of the teachers of the non-computer majors in modern teaching environment still adopts the traditional teaching model, students as the main body of the class didn't get proper position, inflexible teaching can't make students fully understand native speakers of English as a national development history, customs, religious culture, and cultural background. However, in English teaching in China, few students can truly enter the cultural environment related to English. In the classroom, in order to improve students' performance, teachers will also deliberately avoid content related to cultural situations, but focus more on the teaching of vocabulary and grammar. Students have long been learning in an environment lacking relevant cultural practices and cultural contexts, often in a relatively passive position and unable to effectively engage in cross-cultural communication activities. In an environment lacking of cultural practice and corresponding situations, students are in a state of passive learning for a long time and cannot use the English language context flexibly, so it is difficult for them to internalize English knowledge effectively.

3.3 Ignoring the importance of mother tongue culture in teaching

At this stage, the textbook will also cover some articles about the nationalization of our nation. This requires teachers to enhance the importance of our mother tongue culture in English teaching, and infiltrate and spread our culture to achieve cultural exchange. However, at this stage of teaching, teachers did not realize the importance

of mother-tongue culture, which directly led to the inability to build students' confidence in the culture of the mother tongue during learning English. Over time, influenced by other cultures, some trend of Hari (fan on Japanese culture), Hahan (fan on South Korea culture), and Haoumei (fan on European culture) appeared.

3.4 Lack of diverse methods to penetrate cross-cultural communication awareness

In teaching, most teachers use the single guidance to approach students when dealing with cultural differences. Few teachers will consciously adopt a variety of ways to input cross-cultural knowledge, or explain cultural factors in textbooks in details. Even if some teachers will introduce cultural introductions and adopt only a single model, it is difficult to stimulate students' interest in learning, which makes it difficult for students to improve their cultural awareness in a short period of time. This is not enough for the requirement of cultivation of students' cross-cultural awareness. In order to improve the current situation of teaching, it is necessary to optimize the method of permeating the intercultural communication consciousness and enrich the content of teaching.

4. Strategies for Developing Students' Intercultural Communication Awareness

When facing with the problems in the cultivation of intercultural communicative awareness in English teaching, teachers should analyze the actual situation of teaching at this stage and find out the ways to deal with them, thus changing the current situation of cultivating cultural awareness in English teaching. By effectively integrating cultural teaching into language guidance, students' awareness of intercultural communication can be promoted, which lays a good foundation for the improvement of students' core literacy.

4.1 Improving Teachers' Cultural Literacy

In the process of cultivating the awareness of intercultural communication, teachers are not only the guide but also the leader of teaching. Teachers, as the direct transmitters of culture, will play an active role in the study of students' English culture. Therefore, improving teachers' own cultural literacy is of great significance to the infiltration of English cultural knowledge into the classroom. In view of this, besides giving a good lesson, teachers should also take the initiative to update their own knowledge system and cultural knowledge after class. They should not only confine themselves to the superficial understanding in teaching plans and textbooks, but also broadly explore, conscientiously understand and grasp the core of the transmission in classroom teaching. In peacetime, teachers should pay more attention to combining the actual situation with classroom teaching, actively understand the geographical knowledge of the West, understand the social etiquette of the West, and understand the customs and customs of the West. Only when teachers have certain cultural literacy can they impart cultural knowledge to students more comprehensively and become the communicators and interpreters of Chinese

and Western cultures. In addition, English teachers should constantly reflect on their own teaching methods and be good at summing up practical teaching experience, and they should grasp the value orientation under the influence of Chinese and Western cultures, avoid blind exclusion and exaggeration, and build up the consciousness of cultural equality with mutual respect, mutual understanding and communication..

4.2 Integrating Practical Activities and Relevant Situations

Through practical activities and rich situations, students can be exposed to the language environment and feel the cultural charm of the language. In this process, it can be divided into two modes: inside and outside the classroom.

In the classroom, teachers can refine the traditional teaching methods through the design of reasonable scenes, so that students can experience the differences between domestic and foreign cultures in the scene watching, and improve their own cultural literacy. For example, teachers can use multimedia to set the scene for foreign friends to eat, so that students can watch and learn that in western countries, women are respected everywhere, in the scheduling of meals, the host should generally invite the hostess to take a seat, while the male host should retire to the second, and in Western food culture, the host and his guests are respected. Different from China's respect for the elderly and status, even though some of the guests who eat in western countries have higher status, status and age than the main guests, the main guests are still the focus of attention of the host. In addition, Westerners usually wear black clothes rather than white clothes when attending funerals, which is also a reflection of cross-cultural differences. Students can understand these differences while watching the scenes, so as to understand the differences between domestic and foreign cultures and improve their own cultural literacy. Outside the classroom, teachers can recommend some public numbers and forums to students in teaching, so that students can understand the real cultural differences and language environment in the network environment while learning knowledge, and set up diversified communication activities for students. In this way, cultural exchanges at home and abroad can be realized. At the same time, teachers can also build a network platform for students to encourage students to communicate with foreign teachers through mobile phone software. Such a way can not only help students improve their oral expression ability, but also improve their listening and intercultural communication ability, so as to achieve good results at one stroke.

Guiding students through various modes can change the dull atmosphere of traditional teaching mode, activate classroom atmosphere and arouse students' enthusiasm, thus providing help for the cultivation of students' intercultural communicative awareness.

4.3 The Importance of Understanding Native Language Culture

Mother tongue culture plays a central role in the cultivation of cultural

communicative awareness. In English learning, it is necessary to pay attention to the traditional culture and recognize the important role of mother tongue. In order to ensure the cultivation of students' intercultural communicative awareness, it is also necessary to conduct in-depth guidance in combination with the actual situation.

In teaching, on the one hand, teachers should guide students to understand mother tongue culture, and learn to learn and understand mother tongue culture. On the other hand, teachers also need to guide students to broaden their horizons, help students constantly improve their abilities in learning, and encourage students to actively explore different cultures. Only knowing one's friends and knowing the other one can we communicate with each other in a competitive world. For example, when explaining relevant knowledge about Fine Arts-Western and Chinese and Pop Arts, students need to have a certain understanding of mother tongue culture and Western art, in order to understand and feel the charm of cultural diversity more comprehensively.

4.4 Using diversified mode of infiltration guidance

With the development of society, it is difficult for a single teaching mode to meet the requirements of long-term teaching development for teaching practice. In the process of cultivating intercultural communicative awareness, the adoption of diversified modes of infiltration and guidance has become particularly critical. In teaching, we can combine the following modes to guide students:

4.4.1 Physical picture combination guidance

In traditional guidance, teachers need to pay more attention to words, grammar and sentence patterns. In order to improve students' awareness of intercultural communication, it is also necessary for teachers to integrate language environment and create language atmosphere so that students can understand the connotation of knowledge in a variety of guidance. Because of the abstractness of language, teachers can choose some pictures and objects related to English according to the actual situation, thus letting students to feel the cultural thoughts expressed in English sentences in the concrete content, and then enrich their learning experience.

4.4.2 Contrastive teaching guidance

There are great differences between Chinese and Western cultures, which requires teachers to guide students to pay attention to the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western cultures in teaching. Through learning activities, it can let students understand the main customs of British and American countries, compare Chinese culture and customs, and guide students to learn to understand, respect and tolerate differences, and draw the best essence of all cultures. For example, there are great cultural differences in the composition of sentences and texts due to the differences between Chinese and Western ways of thinking. In the

teaching of English writing in middle school, teachers should help students understand the cultural connotations contained in sentences and texts, so as to help students improve their cross-cultural competence in English writing. For example, active and passive expressions are common in English, and have nothing to do with eroticism. However, in Chinese, the passive expression often refers to some “bad” aspects, which cause people’s negative emotions. For example, in Chinese, people often say “I was stolen”, “he was criticized by the teacher”, “I was misunderstood by others” and so on. These are the aspects that can cause people to have negative emotions, and they all use passive expressions. Therefore, in the teaching of English sentences and discourses, teachers should take “the difference of thinking between China and the West” as the entry point to help students better understand the thinking differences of different languages in different countries, and to better construct oral and written expressions of intercultural communication sentences and texts. Only by fully absorbing the cream of advanced culture at home and abroad can we achieve the goal of cultivating the students’ core qualities.

4.4.3 The role-playing guidance

Role-playing is a mode in which students perform different tasks in a specific language situation to express their ideas of roles through language, action and so on. In the process of role-playing, students’ listening, observation and imagination will be significantly improved. At the same time, role-playing will also have a positive impact on students’ interest, and deepen students’ understanding and mastery of knowledge. Therefore, in the process of cultivating intercultural communicative awareness, role-playing can be used to guide students and help them understand English knowledge more comprehensively.

5. Conclusion

From the above, effective culture education is the process of guiding students to get abundant intercultural knowledge, to have an intercultural attitude of respecting, tolerance, equality and openness, to cultivate an objective and unbiased intercultural mindset and world philosophy, and developing effective intercultural communication skills. The core competence of English subject requires students to improve their abilities of thinking and expressing themselves in English when solving practical problems, to form correct cultural values and coordinate developing language ability, cultural awareness, thinking quality and learning ability. In order to complete the above coordinated developments in English teaching, teachers have to “teach not only language and culture as well”, which means teachers should intentionally make cultural impact to improve students’ cultural sensitivity, and deepen students’ cultural understanding through the comparison and induction among different cultures to guide them to use language correctly. Therefore, in the introduction of English teaching, it’s necessary to know about the actual situation of students and problems in teaching, and then find out some targeted solutions. Through continuous guidance, long-term study and active

rethinking, the traditional teaching pattern can be optimized. It's possible to enrich the content of teaching, to create a good teaching environment, and to help students to integrate language learning with cultural knowledge and to enhance their intercultural communication awareness to entirely achieve the result of foreign language education.

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