

Strategies for Cultivating Intercultural Communicative Competence in College English Education

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Abstract: *In order to effectively cultivate college students' English intercultural communication ability, this paper analyzes the significance of intercultural communication ability training, discusses the current situation, carries out relevant research, and finally puts forward the training strategy. The strategies in the paper can effectively cultivate students' English intercultural communication ability and enable them to switch their thinking mode in communication, which is conducive to the quality of communication.*

Keywords: *College English education, Intercultural communication ability training, Cultural barriers*

1. Introduction

In the past, students' intercultural communicative competence in college English education was a neglected goal until our country made remarkable achievements in international development in recent years during which the communication between countries has become closer. People realized the importance of cross-cultural communication ability. When many English majors communicate with foreigners, language output is adopted to organize language based on Chinese cultural ideas, sometimes resulting in misunderstanding to foreigners, or bad communicating experience, whereas in terms of information input, students often have difficulty in understanding, which leads to a decline in the quality of communication, often ending hastily, and exposing the lack of cross-cultural communication ability of students. Therefore, in order to solve this problem and support the development of the country, colleges and universities have the responsibility to strengthen the cultivation of cross-cultural communicative competence.

Students, industries and countries have close relationships, and each attaches great importance to its own future development. In the relationship among the three, students are the starting point of development. Students will enter industries after graduation and seek their own development through their personal abilities, synchronously promote the development of industries and the country as well. Focusing on the relationship among the three, students as the starting point of development must have the ability to meet the requirements of the industry, while the development of modern countries and the frequent contacts with foreign countries prompted the industry to put forward the requirements of cross-cultural communication. Therefore, as a platform for training organizations and conveying talents, colleges and universities have the responsibility to train talents according to the requirements of the industry and improve student's ability of cross-cultural communication in English, so that students can smoothly enter enterprises and seek their own development and promote the development of the industry and the country, consequently, the cultivation of English cross-cultural communication ability is beneficial to the future of the three.[1-2].

The first step in developing English cross-cultural communicative competence is to build up cross-cultural awareness, which can help students change their thinking, organize their language and ensure the quality of communication. Students can also stand in their own cultural perspective on the output of information, which shows that students are ideologically firm, and not be affected by external information. The reason for protecting student's ideology through English intercultural communicative competence is that some students lacked such awareness in earlier intercultural communication, so they were influenced by foreign information. This phenomenon must be controlled, and the cultivation of English cross-cultural communicative competence is obviously a good way to control this phenomenon, which shows its great significance. [3-4].

2. The Current Situation of the Cultivation of College Student's Intercultural Communication Ability

2.1. Overview

Taking Zhejiang Yuexiu University of Foreign Languages as an example, this university has put forward the requirement of intercultural communication ability in English education, under which teachers need to organize students to have practical communication in the English corner in addition to explaining basic English knowledge, learn more about the cultural background of foreign countries, and at the same time, teachers should introduce some knowledge about the cultural background to students in class, so that students can compare the differences between Chinese culture and foreign culture, and know how to communicate with foreigners, the overall basic flow is shown in Figure 1.

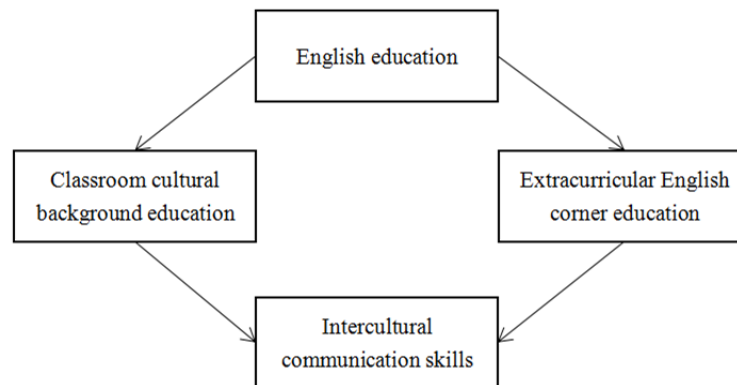


Figure 1 The basic process of cultivating college English intercultural communicative competence

2.2. Problems in Cultivating Intercultural Communicative Competence in College English Education

Although colleges and universities have begun to emphasize the cultivation of English intercultural communication ability, there are still some problems in the training system in reality, which are as follows:

First, not all colleges and universities have English corners, because there are not many foreigners coming to campus, or colleges and universities lack foreign cultural background information. In most cases, they can only provide students with the cultural background education of a small part of the country. However, in real work, students may communicate with people from any country. In this case, students still cannot communicate well [5-6].

Second, the intercultural communicative competence in English culture, is usually carried out common through hands-on teaching approach, which enables students to grasp the theory, but disables them to get the intercultural communication ability. The reason is that by teaching students to remember the theory of intercultural communication pattern only, such aspects as student's train of thought, communication habits, and thinking mode do not change. Cultural barriers exist, and it's difficult for the students to break through, so when students come across problems in the actual process of cross-cultural communication, they have difficulty in dealing with the matter encountered in the actual communication interaction from the theoretical point. This showed that students are lacking in real communicating ability and they have to apply their knowledge into their practical use[7-9].

Third, the learning style for college students to get cross-cultural communication ability is unitary. The cross-cultural communication is usually conducted between students and teachers on one-to-one basis. Teachers set communication training object beforehand, and students follow the instructions and arrangements, so the students learn in a passive way. English communication between each other is quite limited and can't be fully done in cross-cultural communication. In addition, teachers shoulder multiple educational responsibilities, so it is impossible to communicate with students one by one all the time, indicating that the low frequency and long cycle of communication between teachers and students is not conducive to the improvement of students' English intercultural communication ability [10].

Fourth, English cross-cultural communication ability training is not only for students to master relevant skills, more importantly, it aims to cultivate student's autonomous consciousness of cross-cultural communication. But the cultivation in the colleges and universities in this area is weak, so college student are short of cultural vision, narrow-minded in cross-cultural knowledge, weak in autonomous

learning consciousness. As a result, the improvement of English intercultural communication ability is slow and unsatisfactory. In the case of Zhejiang Yue University of Foreign Languages, the frequency results of student's autonomous learning of cross-cultural communication are shown in table 1, which can be seen that the students learn the cross-cultural communicating knowledge in five months with low frequency, indicating the student's learning autonomy, and low frequency of learning will inevitably lead to student's narrow vision of cross-cultural knowledge and English culture.

Table 1 Statistical results of the frequency of self-learning intercultural communication knowledge among college students

Time	The frequency of
The first month	0
The second month	0
The third month	4
The fourth month	0
The fifth month	1

3. Strategies for Cultivating College Student's Intercultural Communicative Competence

3.1. Overall Thinking

Through research and analysis, this paper sorted out the cultivation strategy of English intercultural communication ability. The overall idea of English intercultural communication ability after the adoption of post-strategy is shown in Figure 2.

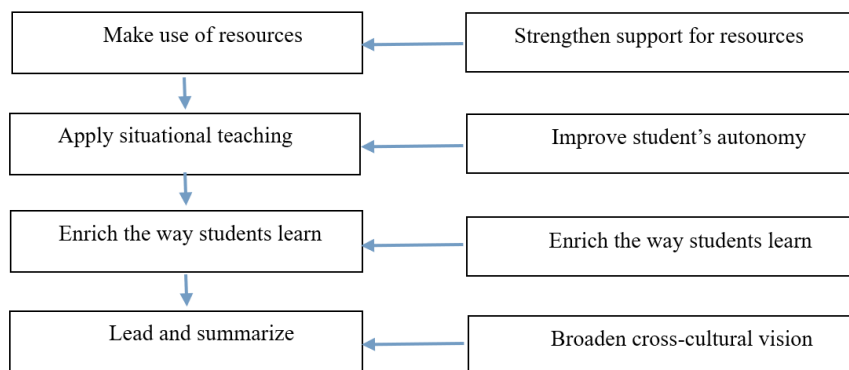


Figure 2 Overall thinking of the strategy (the left is the strategy and the right is the purpose of the strategy)

3.2. Strategies

In view of the four major problems in the current situation of the cultivation of college English intercultural communicative competence, the following will analyze the relevant strategies in Figure 2:

First, if the training resources for universities to carry out cross-cultural communicating ability training are limited, it is feasible to refer to network to obtain the related resources because the network can break through the limitation of real physical time and space. Physical resources can be converted to the electronic form and got widely circulated. Therefore, college students will have an easier access to resources on English intercultural communication ability. For example, it is difficult for colleges and universities to establish English corners offline, instead, they can build English chat rooms on the Internet, equivalent to online English corners, and then develop corresponding apps for students to download and use, so that students can communicate with foreigners through the Internet, providing a good environment for students to exercise their English intercultural communication skills. In this regard, colleges and universities can establish resource sharing centers with other colleges and universities through the Internet to promote resource interaction and consolidate the resource foundation of English intercultural communication ability.

Secondly, college English teachers need to make changes in teaching methods. Situational teaching method is suggested when intercultural communication itself is a communication situation. Therefore,

creating corresponding situations for students to communicate in the situation can effectively cultivate student's English intercultural communication ability. Taking the teaching of Zhejiang Yuexiu university of Foreign Languages as an example, before the change of teaching methods, student's intercultural communication competence and autonomy was very low, and their learning depended heavily on teachers. However, after the change of teaching methods, student's intercultural communication competence was significantly improved and they would actively study independently. Table 2 shows the test results of student's intercultural communication competence before and after the change of teaching methods.

Table 2 Test results of student's intercultural communication competence before and after the teacher's teaching methods were changed

Test indicators	Before the change	After the change
Output of local culture	Good	Optimal
Foreign cultural understanding	Poor	Good
Statement correctness	Good	Optimal

Third, focusing on the status quo of English cross-cultural communication ability training, teachers must change and enrich the student's learning ways. Teacher must realize that students are not independent in study and should be given more chances to have close interaction between them. Therefore, teachers' cooperative teaching method could be used for teaching, which is not only a kind of teaching method, but also a way of student's learning. For example, when the teacher organize group study on American and Chinese business communication, or the Americans and the British entertainment communication, etc., he can ask the team to assign roles and students can communicate with each other around the theme. In the process of discussion, the teacher can go through the groups and tell how, or to provide training or help. So as long as teachers give each group chance to put forward the theme, thus cross-cultural communication happening and their English intercultural communication ability being significantly improved. Besides cooperative teaching method, teachers can also use other methods to change student's learning style, such as self-presentation method, which emphasizes student's learning autonomy. Teachers can make use of situations to promote students to carry out cross-cultural communication with others, independently show their learning results, and create dialogues based on situations.

Fourthly, after the completion of the strategies above, teachers should organize students to guide and summarize, in order to broaden student's cross-cultural vision and English knowledge, and play a role in cultivating their internal qualities such as English cross-cultural awareness. As a guide, summary provide students with ideas about how to make the improvement in the future. Teachers should ask students to find out problems about personal inadequacy, and prompt students to find the accurate direction and go for the improvement.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, it is very important to cultivate student's English intercultural communication ability from the modern perspective, which is directly related to the future development of students, industries and countries, and can also guarantee the role of ideology. As the problems of English cross-cultural communication ability training are still present, colleges should attach more importance, and have the problems-related strategy reform to tackle the problems. This can effectively cultivate student's English ability to have the cross-cultural communication and improve related internal quality, so that they can be more dedicated to the industry, and the national development as well.

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