The Application and Practice of Intercultural Communicative Competence in English Teaching

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Abstract: *With the acceleration of globalization, cross-cultural communication is becoming more and more frequent in various fields. As an international language, the teaching goal of English is not only limited to the transfer of language knowledge, but also to cultivate students' intercultural communication ability. This paper explores the application and practice of intercultural communication competence in English teaching, analyzes the current situation and problems of intercultural communication competence training in English teaching, puts forward feasible teaching strategies, and demonstrates their effectiveness through practical cases, aiming at providing useful references for the improvement of English teaching quality and the development of students' intercultural communication competence.*

Keywords: Intercultural Communication Competence, College English, Teaching, Application Strategy.

1. Introduction

Under the background of the new era, with the rapid development of China's social and economic construction, the integration of cross-cultural communication in various industries is getting deeper and deeper, and the exchange and cooperation between different countries and regions are getting closer and closer. As the main language tool of international communication, the importance of English is self-evident. Integrating cross-cultural literacy into the English education system of primary and secondary schools in China has become one of the core elements of curriculum standards and teaching guidelines [1]. As an important indicator to assess an individual's comprehensive ability, it plays a key role in enhancing an individual's competitiveness in the workplace and promoting international communication and collaboration. Traditional college English teaching has been difficult to meet the development needs of modern education, and the country has put forward higher requirements for English majors. At present, the field of college English education still faces challenges in cultivating cross-cultural communicative competence. Specifically, some college English curriculum design emphasizes the teaching of language skills, but ignores the deep integration of cultural education. At the same time, some teachers have yet to improve their personal experience and professional ability in cross-cultural communication, which to some extent limits their ability to effectively guide students to participate in cross-cultural practice activities. These problems restrict the effectiveness of the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence in college English education [2]. Therefore, it is of great significance to explore the essential meaning of intercultural communication competence, examine the current status and limitations of college English teaching in this ability cultivation, and study the strategies and paths to strengthen this ability cultivation for optimizing college English education and cultivating interdisciplinary talents with national feelings, international vision and professional skills.

2. The Concept and Connotation of Intercultural Communicative Competence

Effective intercultural communication refers to the exchange of information between people from different regions and with cultural diversity. It covers a wide range of linguistic expressions (including oral communication and written text), cultural characteristics, social norms and psychological aspects. It requires to deal with various obstacles and challenges arising from cultural differences, which becomes increasingly critical in the tide of globalization. This process includes not only the transmission of information through speech (spoken and written), but also non-verbal communication, such as body language, facial expressions, vocal qualities, and the surrounding environment. Due to the differences in verbal and non-verbal communication, the communication parties may encounter misunderstandings and even conflicts. Therefore, to enhance the in-depth understanding of each other's cultural roots and customs, and to respect the attitude of differences, has become a necessary condition to promote smooth communication [3].

Intercultural communication competence requires a certain amount of cultural common sense [3]. It is an important part of intercultural communication competence to understand the history, geography, religion, customs, social system and other aspects of different countries and regions. Cultural knowledge can help learners better understand each other's behavior and way of thinking, and avoid misunderstandings and conflicts caused by cultural differences.

On the one hand, intercultural communication competence requires a certain cultural awareness, which refers to the sensitivity and cognitive ability to cultural differences, to be aware of the differences between different cultures, and to respect and tolerate these differences. The cultivation of cultural awareness helps learners to keep an open mind in cross-cultural communication and actively adapt to and integrate into different cultural environments. On the other hand, a positive emotional attitude is essential for cross-cultural communication. It includes interest, curiosity, respect and tolerance for different cultures, as well as maintaining confidence, patience and optimism in cross-cultural communication.

3. The Core Value of Cross-cultural Communication Skills in College English Teaching

In a multi-cultural learning environment, by comparing different cultures, students can deeply understand the deep charm and essence of language, and practice and improve the application and transformation ability of English in diversified cross-cultural activities.

3.1 Requirements for Intercultural Communication in the Era of Global Interconnection

With the acceleration of global integration, international exchanges and cross-cultural communication are becoming more frequent. English, as a bridge language for international communication, is of self-evident importance. In the college English teaching system, strengthening the cultivation of cross-cultural communication ability can help students better adapt to the needs of the global Internet era, so as to be more competitive in the future international arena. This requires students not only to be proficient in English language knowledge, but also to have a deep understanding of the culture, historical context and social landscape of English-speaking countries, and to master the etiquette and customs of interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. Through cross-cultural teaching, students' English listening and speaking ability will be exercised, their English expression ability will be improved, and their cognition and adaptability to English culture will also be significantly enhanced [4].

3.2 Strengthen the Comprehensive English Application Ability

The College English Syllabus clearly points out that English teaching at the stage of higher education should focus on improving students' listening and speaking skills to ensure that they can communicate effectively in the future workplace and social interactions. Intercultural teaching provides a platform for students to be exposed to multicultural ideas, values and lifestyles, and enhances their sensitivity and tolerance to cultural differences. This not only helps students to better integrate into different cultural environments in international exchanges, but also promotes their deeper grasp of English grammar rules and vocabulary use. By interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds, students will gain a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural, historical and social background of English-speaking countries, so as to better understand and use the English language.

3.3 Shaping Students' Global Perspective and Cross-cultural Cognition

Language is the carrier of culture and the key to explore the target language culture. Language and culture complement each other and evolve together. Without cultural environment, language learning will lose its foundation. Without language, culture cannot be passed on. Cross-cultural teaching gives students the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the unique features of different cultures and the cultural connotations of English-speaking countries, thereby

broadening their global perspective. Through contact with people from different cultural backgrounds, students can develop cross-cultural awareness, enhance cross-cultural sensitivity, and enhance adaptability and communication skills in cross-cultural environments. This means that they will better understand the behavior patterns, values and ways of thinking of people from different cultural backgrounds, so that they can interact and communicate with them more effectively.

3.4 Meet the Needs of High-Level Development of Higher Education

Internationalization of higher education is an inevitable trend in the current education field. Integrating cross-cultural communication into college English teaching will help promote the internationalization and diversification of English education, train talents with international vision and cross-cultural communication ability, so as to meet the development needs of the era of globalization and enhance the international competitiveness of China's higher education. This requires college English teaching to keep up with the pace of internationalization of higher education, actively introduce cross-cultural communication content, and cultivate students' international vision and cross-cultural communication ability [5]. By strengthening international cooperation, introducing high-quality educational resources and holding international exchange activities, the quality and level of college English teaching can be constantly improved and the process of internationalization of higher education in our country can be promoted.

4. Problems in Integrating Cross-cultural Communication Skills into College English Teaching

Under the current situation of rapid development of society, training talents with excellent English ability and high cross-cultural communication level has become an inevitable demand for promoting social progress. At present, many colleges and universities have gradually realized the importance of intercultural communication competence training and have paid more attention to it. However, there are still many problems in actual college English classroom teaching, which need to be solved properly.

4.1 Students' Enthusiasm in Class Participation is Not High

Nowadays, with the rapid development of Internet technology, the teaching mode of college English has been changed to some extent, and the traditional teacher-dominated situation has been improved [6]. However, most of the current classroom activities still focus on the practice of language knowledge, and the expansion and improvement of knowledge in practical application are relatively lacking. Some students rely too much on teachers' explanation in the learning process, have weak independent thinking ability and weak awareness of taking the initiative to participate in class discussions, resulting in low class participation, which not only affects their own learning effect, but also hinders the development of cross-cultural communicative knowledge application ability. In addition, some students have a

superficial understanding of cross-cultural communication, and do not fully realize the importance of cultural background knowledge in English learning, and lack a sense of identity with different cultures. This concept not only restricts the development of students themselves, but also makes their performance in cross-cultural communication scenes unsatisfactory and limits the improvement of daily communication ability.

4.2 The Teaching Concept of College English is Backward

Although some teachers have been aware of the key role of cross-cultural communication in English learning, due to the long-term influence of traditional teaching concepts, in the classroom teaching process, they often focus on the transfer of language knowledge, but pay little attention to the introduction and explanation of cultural background knowledge [7]. Traditional teaching concepts focus on the inculcation of language knowledge, especially the mastery of grammar rules and vocabulary, but neglect the integration of cultural background knowledge and the cultivation of students' practical communicative ability. This teaching concept not only limits the development of students, but also has a negative impact on the overall quality of college English teaching. In addition, due to the lack of adequate understanding and cognition of different cultural backgrounds, students can hardly use their English knowledge flexibly in cross-cultural communication scenes, and the cultivation of cross-cultural communication ability is greatly limited.

4.3 College English Teaching Methods Need to be Improved

At present, some English teachers still follow the traditional teaching mode, focusing too much on the indoctrination of language knowledge, and relatively ignoring the cultivation of students' practical communicative skills. This one-way knowledge transfer mode often makes students in a passive state of acceptance, lack of active learning interest and motivation. In the classroom, students are more listening than actively participating, and there is a clear gap between the absorption of knowledge and practical application. In addition, some teachers fail to adopt diversified teaching methods and strategies, which is difficult to effectively stimulate students' internal learning enthusiasm, which also indirectly hinders the effective integration and practice of cross-cultural communication in English teaching.

4.4 Students' English Practical Application Ability Needs to be Improved

In college English teaching, the lack of students' practical application ability has become an urgent problem to be solved. Although many students have mastered a solid foundation of grammar and rich vocabulary, they are unable to use English in practical contexts [8]. On the one hand, students have few opportunities to use English in real or simulated real environments, and practice is seriously insufficient. Due to the limited communication time in the classroom, it is difficult to meet the needs of students' actual language use, which makes it difficult for their English application ability to be substantially improved. On the other hand, students' lack of understanding of the cultural background and social

communication rules of English-speaking countries also limits their performance in cross-cultural communication. When communicating with foreign friends, misunderstandings and even conflicts caused by cultural differences occur from time to time, which not only affects the smooth communication, but also hinders the cultivation and improvement of cross-cultural communication ability, thus limiting the in-depth development of English teaching in this field.

4.5 Evaluation System to be Optimized

The evaluation mechanism of English education in some colleges and universities needs to be further optimized and upgraded. A sound and efficient evaluation mechanism can not only accurately and comprehensively measure students' learning effectiveness, but also provide teachers with specific and targeted teaching feedback, so as to promote teaching quality to a new level. However, the current English teaching evaluation system in some colleges and universities has the following problems to be improved: The first problem lies in the limitations of the evaluation content, which excessively focuses on the test of language knowledge, but ignores the comprehensive assessment of students' actual language application ability and cross-cultural communication ability. This phenomenon may cause students to focus too much on the pursuit of scores in the learning process, while ignoring the essential purpose and practical application value of language learning. Secondly, the assessment methods appear to be rigid and one-sided, generally relying on a single written test form, lack of comprehensive inspection of students' oral English, listening comprehension, reading analysis and writing ability, and it is difficult to truly reflect students' English level, nor can it provide sufficient and effective feedback information for teaching. In addition, the formulation of some evaluation criteria also needs to be more scientific and objective [9]. In some colleges and universities, the research and demonstration work in the early stage is insufficient, resulting in a certain disconnection between the evaluation standards and the actual teaching needs, and failing to give full play to the due role of evaluation.

5. Application Strategies of Cross-cultural Communication in College English Teaching

With the acceleration of globalization, cross-cultural communication ability has become one of the necessary qualities for talents in the new era. The core goal of intercultural communication is to carefully cultivate students' communication ability in the complex environment of multi-culture interweaving. This ability is not limited to the proficiency of the language level, but also reflects a keen insight, deep understanding and sincere respect for the nuances of different cultures. Through this training process, students' international vision can be enhanced comprehensively and deeply, so that they can communicate freely, smoothly and accurately when facing people from different cultural backgrounds, so as to better adapt to the trend of globalization.

5.1 Stimulate Learning Interest with Diverse Teaching Methods

In college English teaching, the use of diversified teaching methods to stimulate students' interest in English learning is undoubtedly the key to the successful implementation of cross-cultural communication application strategies. Enhancing students' interest in learning English plays an important role in integrating cross-cultural communication into the applied strategy system of college English teaching. In order to stimulate students' interest in English learning effectively, teachers can widely adopt a variety of interesting and interactive teaching methods.

5.1.1 Situational teaching model

Situational simulation teaching method is an effective way. According to different English learning topics, teachers can carefully create a variety of realistic language communication scenes, such as restaurant ordering, airport inquiries, business negotiations, etc. In these simulation scenarios, students need to play different roles and interact with their English knowledge. Through this immersive experience, students can not only exercise their ability to use English accurately and flexibly in real situations, but also have a deeper understanding of the rules of using English in different scenarios and cultural background knowledge [10]. For example, in the scenario simulation of ordering food in a restaurant, students can understand the differences in restaurant etiquette and dish expression in different countries, so as to better master the skills of using English in real life.

5.1.2 Discuss teaching methods in small groups

Group discussion method also has unique advantages. Teachers can organize students to have group discussions around specific English learning content, such as an English article, a cultural phenomenon, etc. In the process of group discussion, students can express their opinions, share their views and ideas, inspire each other and make progress together. This interactive way of learning can not only improve students' thinking activity, cultivate their critical thinking and teamwork skills, but also allow students to exercise their oral English expression skills in communication and enhance their self-confidence. For example, when discussing the topic of western festival culture, students can share their understanding of different festivals, compare the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western festivals, and have a deeper understanding of the connotation of Western culture, while improving their English expression skills.

5.1.3 Film teaching materials

At the same time, teachers can also skillfully introduce a variety of teaching materials, such as classic English literature, wonderful movies, beautiful music, etc., to help students deeply understand the unique charm of English culture, so as to stimulate their interest in learning in all aspects.

As an intuitive and vivid art form, film can provide students with real language environment and rich cultural information. Teachers can select some representative English movies, such as "Forrest Gump", "The Pianist at Sea", "The Pursuit of Happyness", and organize students to watch. In the process of watching the movie, students can listen to the dialogue of the characters, observe the expressions and body language of the characters, and feel the pronunciation, intonation, speed and expression of English in different situations. After watching the movie, teachers can organize students to have a discussion, share their understanding of the cultural elements and theme ideas in the movie, and further deepen their understanding of English culture. For example, when watching Forrest Gump, students can learn about the historical changes, social culture and people's values in the United States in the 20th century, and at the same time learn many practical English expressions and oral skills.

5.1.4 Music teaching content

Music is an artistic language that crosses national boundaries and has strong appeal and attraction. Teachers can choose some classic English songs, such as "My Heart Will Go On", "Yesterday" and "Viva La Vida", for students to enjoy and learn to sing. By learning to sing English songs, students can improve their English listening skills and language sense, and understand the cultural background and emotional connotation behind the songs. For example, the song "My Heart Will Go On" not only has a beautiful melody, but also is closely connected with the romantic love story of the movie "Titanic". Students can feel the praise and pursuit of love in Western culture during the singing process.

5.2 Innovate College English Teaching Concepts

In the current era of globalization, English, as the universal language of international communication, is an important tool for cultural exchange. Therefore, teachers should actively change their teaching concepts, abandon the traditional mode of imparting single knowledge, organically integrate language knowledge with cultural knowledge, and take cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence as the core goal. In the teaching process, teachers should not only pay attention to explaining the basic knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary, but also dig deep into the cultural background, values, ways of thinking and other cultural elements behind the language. For example, when explaining English vocabulary, teachers can introduce the origin, evolution and meaning differences of words in different cultural backgrounds, so that students can understand the close connection between language and culture.

5.2.1 Personalized teaching

Teachers should fully realize that each student is a unique individual, and they have significant personality differences in learning ability, interests, learning styles and other aspects. Therefore, teachers should fully respect the individual differences of students, pay attention to their different needs, and carry out careful teaching design and activity arrangement according to the actual situation of students. In the teaching process, teachers can adopt hierarchical teaching, personalized tutoring and other ways to meet the learning needs of students at different levels, so that every student can find their own development space in English learning.

5.2.2 Rich classroom teaching activities

Teachers should actively encourage students to actively

participate in classroom activities and give full play to their subjective initiative and creativity. Classroom activities should not only be a one-way knowledge output of teachers, but also an interactive communication platform between teachers and students. Teachers can design various forms of challenging classroom activities, such as role play, group project, class debate, etc. In the process of participating in these activities, students can not only improve their English language ability, but also cultivate the communication ability, teamwork ability, problem solving ability and other comprehensive qualities required for cross-cultural communication.

5.2.3 Expand extracurricular practical activities

Teachers can also organize a variety of extracurricular English activities, such as English corner, English speech contest, English drama performance, English culture festival, etc., to provide students with more opportunities for language practice and cross-cultural communication platforms. In the English Corner activities, students can communicate freely with foreign teachers and other students, share their opinions and ideas, and practice their oral English expression skills and cross-cultural communication skills [11]. In the English Speech Competition, students are required to give a speech around a specific topic, demonstrate their English language proficiency and thinking skills, and understand the views and values of different cultural backgrounds. In the English drama performance, students can experience the charm of English culture deeply by playing different roles, and improve their language ability and performance ability. In the English Culture Festival, students can have an all-round understanding of the cultural customs and historical traditions of English-speaking countries by holding English exhibitions, cultural lectures, food experiences and other activities, and enhance their sense of identity and understanding of English culture.

5.3 Strengthen the Integration of Theory and Practice

In the college English teaching system, the organic integration of theory and practice is a crucial principle. In the teaching process, teachers should attach great importance to students' solid grasp of basic language knowledge and systematic training of language skills. It is not only necessary to ensure that students have a deep understanding of English grammar, vocabulary and other basic knowledge, but also to guide them to skillfully apply these theoretical knowledge to practical communication occasions, so as to improve cross-cultural communication ability.

5.3.1 Strengthen the appreciation of British and American literature

English literary works are the treasures of English culture, which contain profound cultural deposits and rich language expression skills [12]. Teachers can guide students to read some classic English literature works, such as Shakespeare's plays, Dickens' novels and so on. Through reading these works, students can not only come into contact with the original English expressions, improve their reading comprehension ability and vocabulary, but also have a deep understanding of the historical background, social features

and cultural values reflected in the works. For example, when reading Shakespeare's Hamlet, students can feel the various contradictions and the complexity of human nature in the British society during the Renaissance, and appreciate the beauty and depth of the English language.

5.3.2 Diversified practical activities

Teachers should also actively organize diverse practical activities, such as English writing and oral expression. English writing can exercise students' ability to translate knowledge into written language, and cultivate their logical thinking and language organization ability. Teachers can assign various types of writing tasks, such as argumentative essays, narrative essays, letters, etc., so that students can continuously improve the accuracy and fluency of language expression in the writing process. Oral expression activities provide students with the opportunity to use English in real contexts [13]. Teachers can organize activities such as role playing, group discussion and English speech, so that students can overcome their nervousness and improve their oral fluency and self-confidence in the interaction with classmates and teachers.

5.4 Improve the Evaluation System of Cross-cultural Communication Competence

In the field of college English teaching, it is of great significance to construct a perfect evaluation system and pay attention to students' intercultural communicative competence [14]. This measure can not only measure students' comprehensive English level and practical application ability in an all-round and multi-dimensional way, but also become a powerful driving force to promote teachers to optimize teaching methods and improve students' comprehensive literacy.

5.4.1 Build a diversified evaluation framework

In today's English teaching environment, the traditional single assessment model has been difficult to adapt to the needs of The Times. It is necessary for colleges and universities to establish a set of multi-dimensional evaluation system, which should include students' performance in class, such as the enthusiasm to participate in discussions, active thinking, etc. The quality of job completion, including accuracy, innovation and efficiency of completion; Oral communication skills, including pronunciation accuracy, fluency, logical expression, etc. There are also contributions in group cooperation, such as teamwork ability, communication and coordination ability. Through such a multiple evaluation system, students' learning status can be presented in a more comprehensive and detailed way, so that teachers can accurately grasp the learning needs of each student, thus providing a strong basis for personalized teaching.

5.4.2 Strengthen the assessment of cross-cultural communication competence

In the whole evaluation system, emphasis should be placed on the assessment of cross-cultural communication ability [15]. A series of targeted tasks can be designed, such as case analysis questions, which require students to use their

cross-cultural knowledge to analyze cultural conflicts or communication problems in specific situations and propose solutions; Role-playing activities, setting role scenes of different cultural backgrounds, allowing students to interact and communicate in simulated situations, showing their understanding and coping ability of different cultures; Simulate the dialogue session, simulate the real cross-cultural communication scene, and investigate the performance of students in language use and cultural sensitivity. Through these diverse task Settings, students' cross-cultural communication ability is tested comprehensively.

5.4.3 Introducing third-party evaluation agencies

In order to ensure the objectivity and fairness of the evaluation system, colleges and universities may introduce professional third-party evaluation agencies to participate in the evaluation work [16]. These institutions, with their rich experience and professional capabilities, are able to provide scientific and reasonable assessment criteria as well as advanced assessment tools. They are independent of the school and teachers, and conduct assessment from a neutral perspective, thus effectively avoiding the interference of subjective factors, ensuring that the assessment results are true and reliable, and providing accurate reference for teaching improvement and student development.

5.4.4 Establish an efficient feedback mechanism

The key to perfect the evaluation system lies not only in improving the evaluation method, but also in how to make full use of the evaluation results. Therefore, it is necessary to establish an effective feedback mechanism. Through this mechanism, the results of assessment are communicated to students and teachers in a timely manner. For students, they can clearly understand their own strengths and weaknesses in the learning process, and clear the direction of efforts; For teachers, they can adjust teaching strategies and methods timely and optimize teaching content according to feedback information, so as to continuously improve teaching quality.

6. Conclusion

At present, in the context of the rapid advancement of global integration, international communication and interaction become increasingly close, which makes the exploration of the application of cross-cultural communication in college English teaching become particularly critical [17]. Integrating cross-cultural communication elements into college English teaching system can effectively improve students' comprehensive language application ability, guide students to form a correct cognitive framework, cultivate their global vision and cross-cultural sensitivity, and enhance their social skills and comprehensive literacy. Based on the current practical problems of integrating cross-cultural communication ability into college English teaching, this paper puts forward targeted application strategies, including innovating teaching concepts and methods, stimulating students' learning enthusiasm, innovating teaching thinking, combining theory and practice teaching, and improving teaching mode, so as to achieve the established goals of cross-cultural communication teaching. It also provides strong support and clear guidance for promoting the development of students' comprehensive language skills and cross-cultural communication ability.

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