

Original Paper

A Strategic Study on the Cultivation of Intercultural Communication Competence in University English Courses

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Received: March 19, 2025

Accepted: April 28, 2025

Online Published: May 15, 2025

doi:10.22158/wjer.v12n2p121

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/wjer.v12n2p121>

Abstracts

Under the background of deepening globalization, intercultural communicative competence has become one of the necessary core qualities for college students. College English courses have become an important way to cultivate students' language proficiency and cultural literacy, and bear the important responsibility of cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence. The purpose of this paper is to systematically analyze the current situation, challenges and strategies of cultivating intercultural communicative competence in university English courses through in-depth collection of data and searching for references, with a view to providing reference for the reform of university English teaching. The study shows that students' intercultural communicative competence can be effectively enhanced by integrating course contents, innovating teaching methods, strengthening practice links, improving teachers' quality and constructing evaluation systems.

Keywords

College English, Intercultural, Communicative Competence

1. Introduction

Intercultural communication refers to the exchange of information and interaction between people of different cultural backgrounds. In the context of globalization, cross-cultural communication has become an important bridge connecting different countries and regions. With the booming development of international trade, education cooperation, tourism and other fields, talents with intercultural communication skills have become the sought-after objects in all walks of life. As an important part of higher education, the university English program not only undertakes the task of cultivating students' language ability, but also shoulders the important responsibility of cultivating students' cultural literacy and cross-cultural communication ability. Therefore, it is of great practical significance to study the strategy of cultivating intercultural communicative competence in university English courses.

2. The Current Situation of Cultivating Intercultural Communicative Competence in College English Courses

2.1 *The Importance of Intercultural Communication Skills is Becoming More and More Prominent*

At a time when the wave of globalization is surging, the links between countries around the world are getting closer and closer, and international exchanges and cooperation are becoming more and more frequent. The importance of intercultural communication competence as a core quality for college students to adapt to the development trend of this era is becoming more and more prominent.

From the perspective of personal development, college students with intercultural communication skills can stand out in the international job market. Whether they work in multinational enterprises or participate in international academic exchange programs, they can establish good cooperative relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds and broaden their career development space by virtue of their excellent cross-cultural communication skills. At the same time, in cross-cultural communication, students can come into contact with diversified cultural concepts and ways of thinking, enrich their life experience, and improve their comprehensive quality and innovation ability.

From the national level, the intercultural communication ability of college students is directly related to the international competitiveness and cultural soft power of the country. In the competition of globalization, the country needs a large number of talents with international vision and intercultural communication ability to promote the development of international trade, cultural exchange, scientific and technological cooperation and other fields. By cultivating the intercultural communication ability of college students, it can promote mutual understanding and trust among different countries, spread the excellent culture of the country, and enhance the image and influence of the country in the international arena.

As a key course to cultivate students' language ability and cultural literacy in higher education, university English program naturally shoulders the important task of cultivating students' intercultural communication skills. Through English teaching, students can not only master English, the international common language, but also understand the culture, history and values of English-speaking countries, laying a solid foundation for cross-cultural communication.

2.2 *Analysis of the Current Situation of Intercultural Communication Skills Cultivation in University English Courses*

At present, there are still obvious problems in the content setting of university English courses that emphasize the teaching of language knowledge and language skills training, while paying insufficient attention to the teaching of cultural knowledge and the cultivation of cross-cultural communicative competence. Most of the course content centers on language skills such as grammar, vocabulary, reading and listening, and teachers devote a lot of time and energy to the teaching of language knowledge and training of language skills, aiming to help students pass various English exams.

For example, in the arrangement of textbooks, although there are some articles involving cultural

contents, they are often only used as auxiliary materials for language learning, lacking systematic and in-depth. Students may only have a brief understanding of some cultural phenomena in English-speaking countries, such as festivals and customs, but they know little about the values, ways of thinking and social background behind these cultural phenomena. This kind of content setting, which emphasizes language but not culture, leads to the fact that it is difficult for students to really understand the connotation of English culture in the process of learning English, and they are unable to organically combine the language knowledge with the cultural background, thus affecting the cultivation of cross-cultural communicative competence.

The traditional teaching method of college English is teacher-centered, with the teacher occupying a dominant position in the classroom and mainly adopting the lecture method to instill knowledge and train skills. Teachers explain words, grammar and texts word by word and sentence by sentence in accordance with the established syllabus and textbook content, while students passively accept the knowledge and lack the opportunity to actively participate and think.

This kind of teaching method ignores students' subjectivity and creativity, and it is difficult to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning. In the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence, traditional teaching methods have obvious limitations. The cultivation of intercultural communicative competence requires students' active participation, active experience and in-depth thinking, but the traditional teaching methods cannot provide students with such a learning environment. Students only mechanically memorize language knowledge and cultural information in class, and lack simulation and practice of intercultural communication situations, making it difficult for them to truly master the skills and methods of intercultural communication.

The cultivation of intercultural communicative competence cannot be separated from rich practice sessions. Only through actual language communication and cultural experience can students apply the language knowledge and cultural knowledge they have learned to actual communication and improve their intercultural communicative competence. However, the practice link in the current university English courses is relatively weak, and students lack real cross-cultural communication scenes and opportunities.

In the curriculum, although there are some activities such as speaking classes and English corner, these activities are often in a single form and limited in content, which are difficult to meet students' needs for intercultural communication practice. Moreover, most of these practical activities take place on campus and lack contact with the real international environment, so students cannot really feel the complexity and challenge of intercultural communication. In addition, the number of international exchange programs organized by the university is limited and the participation threshold is high, so only a few students can benefit from them, and most of them lack the opportunity to participate in international exchange, which also restricts the enhancement of their intercultural communicative competence.

The intercultural communicative literacy and intercultural communicative competence of university

English teachers directly affect the teaching effect and the cultivation of students' intercultural communicative competence. However, the intercultural communicative literacy and intercultural communicative competence of some university English teachers need to be improved.

Although some teachers have solid knowledge of English language and rich teaching experience, they do not know the culture of English-speaking countries deeply enough and lack practical experience in intercultural communication. In the process of teaching, it is difficult for them to integrate cultural knowledge and language teaching organically, and they are unable to provide students with vivid and real cases and guidance on intercultural communication. In addition, with the development of the times and the increasing frequency of cross-cultural communication, new cultural phenomena and cross-cultural communication problems keep emerging, and some teachers, due to the lack of continuous learning and self-improvement consciousness, are difficult to keep pace with the times and unable to meet the needs of cultivating students' cross-cultural communication skills.

3. Challenges to the Cultivation of Intercultural Communication Skills in College English Courses

3.1 Complexity of Cultural Differences

Cultural difference is an invisible mountain in cross-cultural communication, which is not only reflected in values, ways of thinking, behavioral habits and other deep levels, but also subtly permeates every detail of daily communication. Imagine when an Eastern student from a collectivist country tries to understand why a Western student from an individualist country shows strong individual will in a team project, the cultural difference will be revealed, which may lead to misunderstanding and even unnecessary conflicts. Helping students to cross this mountain in university English courses means not only teaching them the language itself, but also guiding them to learn to appreciate and respect the unique charms of different cultures, so as to cultivate true intercultural communication skills. Specific measures may include introducing reading materials with multicultural backgrounds and organizing international cultural exchange activities, so that students can learn to think differently in practice and enhance their understanding of and respect for different cultures.

3.2 Existence of Language Barrier

Language is a bridge for cross-cultural communication, but at the same time, it is also the first difficult barrier that many students face. Imagine a beginner who tries to discuss a complex academic topic with a foreign friend in English, but has difficulty in expressing his ideas accurately due to insufficient vocabulary or grammatical errors, which not only hinders effective communication, but also may dampen the student's self-confidence. Therefore, university English programs must pay attention to the improvement of language proficiency when cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence. This can be achieved through layered teaching, intensive listening and speaking training, and the use of language learning software to help students gradually overcome language barriers and speak to the world with confidence.

3.3 Limited Teaching Resources

On the road of pursuing efficient intercultural communicative competence cultivation, the limited nature of teaching resources often becomes a constraint. Whether it is the simulation of real contexts, opportunities for international communication, or multicultural experience materials, all of them need sufficient resources to support. However, in the face of resource bottlenecks, university English teachers can adopt innovative strategies, such as using Internet resources, developing online collaborative platforms, promoting inter-school cooperation, and even encouraging students to create their own cross-cultural communication projects as a means of integrating and optimizing existing resources and maximizing teaching effects. At the same time, teachers can also design classroom activities that are highly interactive and participatory, such as role-playing and simulated international conferences, so that students can have a rich intercultural communication experience even with limited resources.

4. Strategies for Cultivating Intercultural Communication Skills in College English Courses

4.1 Integrate Course Content and Strengthen Cultural Literacy Education

By integrating cultural elements into the university English courses, teachers should integrate cultural elements into language teaching and help students understand and respect cultural differences by explaining cultural background, social customs, values and other aspects. For example, when explaining vocabulary and sentence patterns, teachers can introduce relevant cultural background knowledge to help students better understand and use the language. Offer intercultural communication courses. In order to cultivate students' intercultural communication skills more systematically, colleges and universities can offer a special intercultural communication course. The course should cover the basic theory of intercultural communication, practical skills, case studies and other content, to help students fully understand the connotation and requirements of intercultural communication.

4.2 Innovative Teaching Methods to Stimulate Learning Interest

Task-based teaching method can be adopted. Task-based teaching method is a task-centered teaching method that aims to emphasize students' learning and use of language in the process of completing tasks. In college English courses, teachers can design some cross-cultural communication tasks through teaching, such as cross-cultural group salon, international conferences and so on, so that students can improve their cross-cultural communication skills in the process of learning to complete the task. Utilizing multimedia teaching means, multimedia teaching means can enrich the classroom form and improve the teaching effect. Teachers can use multimedia to show pictures, videos, audio and other materials in different cultural backgrounds to help students feel the cultural differences more intuitively. In addition, teachers can utilize online network platforms and social media to provide students with more opportunities for cross-cultural communication.

4.3 Strengthen the Practice Link to Improve Communicative Competence

Organize cross-cultural communication activities, cross-cultural communication activities are an

important way to improve students' cross-cultural communicative competence. Colleges and universities can organize international student exchanges, overseas study tours and other activities, so that students can communicate with people from different countries and cultural backgrounds to learn and interact. With such activities, students can personally experience the communication and behavioral styles of different cultural backgrounds and improve their cross-cultural communication skills. In college English courses, teachers can also simulate cross-cultural communication scenarios, such as business negotiation, tourism consulting, etc., so that students can use their knowledge and skills to communicate in the simulated scenarios. This kind of communicative activity can improve students' language use ability and cultivate their intercultural communicative competence.

4.4 Enhance Teachers' Quality and Strengthen the Construction of Teachers' Team

To strengthen teacher training, colleges and universities should strengthen the training of college English teachers to improve their intercultural communicative literacy and intercultural communicative competence. The training can include intercultural communication theory, practical skills, case studies and other aspects. Through training, teachers can better understand and apply intercultural communication knowledge and improve students' intercultural communication ability. Encourage teachers to participate in intercultural communication activities. Colleges and universities should encourage college English teachers to participate in intercultural communication activities, such as attending international academic conferences and going overseas for further training. By participating in these activities, teachers can broaden their horizons, understand the educational concepts and teaching methods in different cultural contexts, and provide more ideas and methods for cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence.

4.5 Construct Evaluation System to Promote Comprehensive Development

Establish a diversified evaluation system, in order to comprehensively evaluate students' intercultural communication competence, colleges and universities should establish a diversified evaluation system. The system should include language proficiency, cultural literacy, communication skills, emotional attitude and other aspects. Through diversified evaluation, teachers can understand students' intercultural communicative competence and development needs more comprehensively and provide targeted guidance for their personalized development. Focusing on process evaluation, process evaluation is a kind of evaluation that pays attention to the learning process of students. In college English courses, teachers should focus on evaluating students' intercultural communication process, paying attention to their performance, progress and difficulties in the communication process.

5. Case Study

Intercultural Communication Course Reform Practice in a University, a university has carried out a course reform practice in response to the problem of insufficient cultivation of intercultural communication ability in the university English course. The university integrates the content of intercultural communication into the university English course, opens a special intercultural

communication course, and adopts the task-based teaching method and multimedia teaching means. At the same time, the university also organizes rich cross-cultural communication activities, such as international student exchange meetings and simulated international conferences. Through the practice of reform, the intercultural communication ability of students in this university has been significantly improved. This university has effectively improved students' intercultural communicative competence by integrating course contents, innovating teaching methods and strengthening practical aspects. Its reform practice provides useful reference and inspiration for other universities.

Intercultural Communication Competence Training Program for English Teachers in a University, a university has carried out an intercultural communication competence training program for teachers of English in response to the problem that the intercultural communication literacy and intercultural communication competence of university English teachers need to be improved. The program invited famous experts from home and abroad to give lectures, covering intercultural communication theory, practical skills, case analysis and other aspects. Through the training, the intercultural communication literacy and intercultural communication competence of the university's teachers have been significantly improved. By strengthening teacher training, this university has improved teachers' intercultural communicative competence and provided a strong guarantee for cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence. Its training program provides useful reference and inspiration for other universities.

6. Conclusion and Prospect

This paper systematically analyzes the current situation, challenges and strategies for the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence in college English courses through in-depth collection of data and searching for references. The study shows that students' intercultural communicative competence can be effectively enhanced by integrating course contents, innovating teaching methods, strengthening practical aspects, improving teachers' quality and constructing an evaluation system. These strategies not only help to improve students' language use ability, but also help to cultivate their cultural literacy and global vision.

In the future, with the development of globalization and the continuous progress of network information technology, intercultural communicative competence will become one of the necessary core literacies for college students. College English courses should continue to strengthen the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence, constantly innovate teaching methods and means, and improve teaching effectiveness and quality. At the same time, colleges and universities should also strengthen communication and cooperation with the international community to provide students with more intercultural communication opportunities and resources. It is believed that in the near future, college English courses will play an important role in cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence.

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