

The Cultivation of English Intercultural Communicative Ability

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Abstract

Under the current reform of foreign language teaching in universities and colleges, the cultivation of college students' intercultural communicative ability has attracted extensive attention in the field of foreign language teaching. It is universally acknowledged in the industry that foreign language teaching is no longer a pure language teaching, but also a combination of cultural teaching and emphasis on cultivating students' intercultural communication ability. By analyzing the current situation of English teaching in China, this paper explores the necessity of cultivating intercultural communicative ability in English teaching, which specifically analyzes the composition of "intercultural communicative ability" and thinks about the specific methods of cultivating intercultural communicative ability in English.

Keywords

English teaching, cultivation, intercultural communicative ability, composition.

1. Introduction

First and foremost, in recent years, with the development of reform and opening up, foreign exchanges have become increasingly frequent, and exchanges between countries have become more and more extensive. The opening of the international Internet has made more people involved in intercultural communication without leaving their homes. The large demand of interdisciplinary talents has posed new challenges to foreign language teaching. Therefore, it is of significant to cultivate intercultural communication ability.

2. Organization of the Text

2.1. The Theoretical Basis

Edward T. Hall held a view: "Intercultural communication is simply defined as interpersonal communication between members of different cultures."¹ Gao Yihong, a Chinese scholar, divides the cultivation of intercultural communicative ability into two aspects: cultural crossing and transcending. Transcending focuses on the understanding of the culture of the target language and the improvement of communicative ability, while "transcending" focuses on obtaining general and overall cultural awareness and reflective and tolerant attitude. It is believed that transcending is the preparation for cultural crossing, and cultural crossing is the inevitable result of transcending.

2.2. Demands of Current Situation

In foreign language teaching, school students have to cultivate the ability of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating some materials, and the content of these materials are involved in all aspects of the target language country social life, materials are permeated by the national language, the code of conduct, values, customs and habits, interpersonal relationship, spirit etc. Therefore, in foreign language teaching, teachers should pay attention to students' intercultural difficulties, helping students to analyze the cultural characteristics of the target language country, and comparing the similarities and differences between Chinese and foreign cultures.

The study from the American linguist Sapir's theory of the relationship between language and culture, the American scholar Ms. Yun Kim's cross-cultural communicative ability theory and Chinese scholars Gardner, the intercultural communication ability training of the two aspects of concepts, and to explore the cultivation strategies of college students' intercultural communicative ability, in order to cultivate practical ability to intercultural communication and outstanding graduates.

2.3. Communication Barriers Caused by Cultural Differences

Zheng Xiaoquan held a view: "Cultural differences also exist in who can be complimented."³ Foreign languages are full of strong foreign cultural color. Therefore, for students who lacking intercultural awareness, they think foreign languages are all boring abstract coding symbols. Even if the teacher explains the meaning of words to the students, it will not make it form a fresh and perceptible concept in the minds of students. It is very difficult for students to memorize the coding symbols on the paper and understand their meanings. Moreover, the native language culture has had the deeper precipitation in the student's mind, therefore, students are accustomed to thinking, understanding and applying the coding symbols of foreign languages in accordance with the Chinese concept and thinking mode. As a result, a large number of misunderstanding and sentences are bound to occur, and even great losses are caused to the teaching work.

3. Problems and Strategies for Cultivating College Students' Intercultural Communicative Ability in Foreign Language Teaching

For a long time, foreign language teaching in China has focused on the cultivation of students' language ability, but not enough attention has been paid to the use of language, ignoring the use of language in practical situations. In class, most teachers only pay attention to the correctness of language forms, rarely teach how to properly use language forms, introducing little cultural knowledge of the target language, and rarely involve cross-cultural communicative ability and social and cultural knowledge in the test. Students spend most of their time and energy looking up dictionaries, memorizing words, analyzing sentence structures and doing mock tests. For them, it seems that with the knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, they can read and cope with all kinds of examinations. Even if the students trained in this teaching mode hold all kinds of certificates, many of them are still "deaf" and "dumb" in intercultural communication. They cannot communicate properly with authentic foreign languages in external communication and often make "cultural mistakes".

In non-English speaking environment, it is very difficult to master the cultural knowledge of other countries systematically and comprehensively in only several years. For this reason, in the process of foreign language teaching, efforts should be made to enrich English teaching materials to broaden the students' knowledge, at the same time should improve teachers' cultural knowledge training and teaching ability. Teachers must follow the trend of the times, exploring and summarizing the effective teaching methods.

3.1. Large Classes Are Taught in Groups

Large classes can be divided into small groups, so that the foreign language teaching process becomes a bilateral language activity to communicate ideas. In the activity, dialogues such as business negotiation, job interview, restaurant service, travel and vacation, seeing a doctor, shopping and so on can be simulated.

3.2. Topic to Discuss

Designing the topic and having a group discussion at a given time. Then, each group selects one student to give an oral report to complete the assigned task. This can stimulate the enthusiasm

and initiative of students to participate in activities, so that each student can get the opportunity to exercise and practice.

3.3. Through Vocabulary Teaching

Word is the basic structural unit of a sentence and an essential factor in communication. Vocabulary teaching cannot be taught for the sake of vocabulary teaching. Cultural differences are an important part of vocabulary teaching. Only by comparing the differences between Chinese and English cultures, can students really understand the connotation and meaning of words in the process of vocabulary learning, and be able to use the words they have learned for communication.

3.4. Through Reading Teaching

There are abundant reading materials in English textbooks, which also contain many intercultural factors and create conditions for carrying out intercultural teaching. In fact, English reading is also a kind of intercultural communication. The reading materials that students are faced with is written in a foreign language that are closely related to a culture which students are not familiar with. To truly understand the content of the reading materials, one should not only master enough language knowledge, but also understand the customs, culture and religion of English-speaking countries. Only in this way can we fully understand it in reading. Therefore, in terms of the expansion of textbook knowledge, teachers should actively use various resources and collect materials related to the topic together with students. In addition to textbooks, teachers should choose English articles reflecting the similarities and differences between Chinese and western cultures as supplementary reading materials for students so that students can indirectly understand western customs and values.

4. Conclusion

It is very important for students to acquire cultural knowledge outside the classroom. For Chinese students, reading foreign literature can enable them to enter another cultural atmosphere and understand the values, customs, religious beliefs, social relations and other cultural content of the nation. Newspapers and magazines are one of the most direct ways to understand the current international social dynamics at all levels and various social problems and social relations. Teachers can also organize students to watch movies and videos in foreign languages and discuss them, which is also an effective way to enrich intercultural communication knowledge. At the same time, we should make full use of foreign teachers' resources, inviting foreign teachers to give lectures, and encouraging students to communicate directly with foreign teachers so as to improve their intercultural communication ability in real communication. Xiao Shiqiong held a view: "In a word, we should try our best to diversify "culture" and localize the main goal of cultural teaching."⁴

Due to the influence of various factors such as geography and natural environment, different nationalities have different ways of life, so their culture has national character. Culture is diversified rather than simplex. Culture is changing, not static. Therefore, in English teaching, we should not only pay attention to language teaching, but also strive to create a language environment for communication, cultivating students' strong cultural awareness so as to learn and develop pragmatic ability in practice. Finally students will achieve the cultivation of intercultural communicative ability in English teaching.

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