

# On the Cultivation of Students' Intercultural Communication Competence in College English Teaching

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## Abstract

**With the development of economic globalization, the distance between countries and people is rapidly shortened, and there are more and more communication opportunities between different countries. As a result, the frequency of English usage is greatly increased, and the importance of intercultural communicative competence is becoming increasingly prominent. College stage is the main stage for students to cultivate their intercultural communicative competence. This paper analyzes the current situation of cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence in college English teaching, summarizes the existing problems, and discusses how to develop students' intercultural communicative competence.**

## Keywords

**College English; English teaching; Intercultural communication.**

## 1. Introduction

It is a tool for interpersonal communication. Different languages come from different cultural soils, and the proficient use of any language can not be separated from a deep understanding of the culture behind it. In the final analysis, any language should be applied to interpersonal communication. In college English teaching, it is an inevitable requirement of the times to cultivate students' intercultural ability, which is helpful to improve students' English literacy and comprehensive ability, help students to understand and get familiar with the cultural habits and background of foreign language use on the basis of mastering the essence of their own culture. (Liu,2020)

## 2. Overview of Intercultural Communicative Competence

Intercultural communicative competence is a kind of language empathy, which means that when one party communicates with foreign language users, it can communicate normally on the basis of accurately understanding the culture and ideas behind the other party's language. (Song, 2019) Cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence can not only publicize their excellent culture in the process of communication with foreigners, but also accurately understand the meaning behind languages and cultural background. This requires that college English teaching should not aim at students' mastery of exam knowledge and skills, but aim at cultivating students' ability to use language accurately and flexibly.

## 3. Importance of Cultivating Intercultural Communicative Competence

Incorporating the culture and customs of English-speaking countries into college English teaching can enhance students' interest in learning English, and also help students better understand English language habits and usage methods. Only when students can fully understand the geographical knowledge, traditional customs, language and culture, communication etiquette, historical tradition and religious culture of English-speaking

countries, can they make appropriate speech and behavior according to specific communication situations in foreign communication activities, and at the same time understand each other's language and behavior in this situation, so as to achieve the purpose of harmonious communication between the two sides. On the contrary, if you don't know the cultural customs and language habits of English-speaking countries, it will easily lead to the rash and disrespectful behaviors that do not conform to the etiquette and customs of the other party, leading to misunderstanding and even bad influence.(Jia,2020) In addition, intercultural communication ability has become the latest requirement for talents in the current era. Students should cultivate their own cultural quality on the basis of English theoretical knowledge, and combine a lot of practical experience to make themselves have strong communication skills.

#### **4. Deficiencies in Cultivating Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence in College English Teaching**

The first is the lack of teaching content. Under the traditional teaching mode, university teachers pay more attention to using teaching materials to cultivate students' reading and translation abilities, and secondly, to help students master exam-taking skills. In the process of teaching, teachers do not attach importance to cultural differences. In addition, non-English majors seldom come into contact with the course of cultural communication, which leads to many students not understanding the content of intercultural communication knowledge, and even if they know it, they know very little, which leads to the inability to use language correctly. Secondly, the awareness of intercultural communication is weak. Since the development of college English teaching in China, teachers have been the main body in the whole teaching process, and students have been in a passive state in the learning process. In this process, students only learn English reading and writing skills and related grammar knowledge, and basically have no chance to communicate orally. In addition, college students usually focus on CET-4 and CET-6, which also causes teachers to pay more attention to grammar and word explanation in the teaching process, and seriously lacks the cultivation of cultural differences and intercultural communicative competence. This kind of teaching method leads students to study English mainly for exams, and the emphasis of learning is also on language forms and grammar knowledge. Students don't pay attention to the cultural background, but only learn English language knowledge, which makes it easy for them to misunderstand when communicating with others. (Li,2020)

Furthermore, the lack of learning context. To achieve better language learning, context must be combined. In the process of teaching, university teachers often ignore the importance of context in language teaching. The lack of context in the teaching process is mainly manifested in two aspects: first, the lack of situational context. When teachers guide students to study reading, they only focus on vocabulary learning and grammar knowledge learning in the article, ignoring the special nature and situation creation of the article, which makes students unable to use English thinking to understand the corresponding content, and ultimately leads to poor teaching effect; Second, when learning the article, the teacher do not introduce it according to the local customs, cultural characteristics and historical background of the article. Usually, students can't comprehend English well, in fact, it is because they lack understanding of the history and background behind the article. (Xu,2019)

## 5. Strategies for Cultivating Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence in College English Teaching

First of all, teachers should establish a correct concept of intercultural communication. If you want to cultivate students' intercultural communicative competence, and the most important thing is to let students set up correct ideas in their minds. Teachers must pay attention to fully display students' dominant position in the teaching process, and be good at combining language skills with the content of cultural teaching. In addition, teachers should also teach students about cultural differences, and let students understand the differences between western culture and Chinese culture by analyzing the different customs and time concepts between the two countries, so as to learn from each other's strengths and build up correct cultural values.

Secondly, teachers should scientifically select the teaching content. With the deepening of China's education reform, the types of teaching materials in China have become diverse. If teachers want to further cultivate students' intercultural communicative competence, it is very important to choose good teaching materials. At present, some colleges and universities have spent a lot of thoughts on English teaching. They have chosen some textbooks that integrate more classic reading contents, and also contain corresponding English cultural knowledge materials. However, under the influence of traditional teaching methods, most teachers pay more attention to students' grammar and word practice, ignoring the teaching content of cultural differences, which makes students unable to achieve language communication well. Therefore, teachers must highlight the teaching focus when choosing teaching materials. In the process of teaching, teachers must integrate into the corresponding cultural background of English-speaking countries, and infiltrate intercultural content while highlighting cultural content.

Furthermore, teachers should strengthen the infiltration of native culture. Cultural exchange is a two-way interactive process. Only when students have a better understanding of local traditional culture, can they make full use of English to introduce Chinese culture skillfully in the process of communication, so as to better spread excellent traditional culture. Therefore, teachers should add more content of Chinese culture in and out of class, enhance the external expression ability of Chinese culture, carry forward national culture and enhance the awareness of cultural equality. Meanwhile, in the process of teaching, teachers should help students learn more about traditional culture and customs in China and encourage them to express themselves, so that students can demonstrate what they have learnt and deliver their own opinions in a clearer way when encountering cross-cultural exchanges.

.At the same time, we can also understand the value of Chinese and western cultures and the differences in language expression. Combining with the comparison of different cultures, we can understand the differences and migration between different cultures and deeply realize the important value of cross-cultural learning. Finally, teachers should increase the oral environment through various practical activities. Or teachers can create more oral situations for students by introducing various practical activities, and help students to exercise their language expression ability and cultivate their English thinking in practical oral communication. For example, theme activities can be carried out through some western festivals to help students understand the historical traditions and customs of western festivals in the festive atmosphere; Students can also be encouraged to rehearse famous English dramas by setting up English clubs and organize campus English song contest, poetry reading contest, etc., so that students can further improve their language ability in more oral English environment. Schools can also hold special lectures on cultural differences between China and the West to help students have a deeper understanding of the differences in cultural thinking.

## 6. Conclusion

Cultivating college students' intercultural English communicative competence is not an easy task, but a gradual process that takes a long time. Colleges and universities should pay attention to the cultivation of students' intercultural English communicative competence, break the traditional teaching ideas in teaching methods, improve students' correct, decent and efficient English expression and communicative competence, and cultivate high-end practical talents for the country.

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