

# Cultivation of Cross Cultural Awareness in College English Teaching

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## Abstract

Language and culture are inseparable. Learning a foreign language must understand the culture of the language. This paper points out the current problems existing in the culture and language teaching of College English Teaching in China. It also points out that the importance of cultivation of cross-cultural awareness, and provides the principles and specific methods for cultivating students' cross cultural awareness.

## Keywords

Cross cultural awareness, College English teaching , cultivation strategy.

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## 1. Introduction

Culture is a complex social phenomenon, and it has penetrated into all aspects of human society, including material life and spiritual life. Language is a dimension of social culture. Language as an important part of culture, its particularity mainly lies in that language is the carrier of cultures, and any language is the reflection of profound cultural connotations. At the same time, language is the main tool of learning culture. The process of learning a language should also be the process of leaning a culture, so we can say the relationship between the language and culture is very close. There is no doubt, if students' foreign language learning only mechanically memorizes lists of vocabulary and grammar rules, and does not understand the culture of language, which is also a lack of the cross cultural awareness, then he is unable to correctly understand the language and properly use it.

## 2. The concept of cross cultural awareness

According to the view of Hanvey (1979), cross-cultural awareness is refers to the cross cultural communication in participants of culture factors and understanding of the sensitivity, that the sensitivity of the similarities and differences of cultural differences and similarities and common culture and in the use of foreign languages, according to the target language culture to adjust the consciousness of their understanding of language and language output. Usually for the following aspects: one is for those who are considered to be weird surface cultural phenomenon understanding; second, for those with the native culture instead and is considered to be incredible and the lack of the concept of significant cultural identity cognition; the third is through rational analysis on cultural characteristics of cognitive; the fourth is from holders of cultural differences in the perception of cultural differences (1) The four level is the highest level of cross-cultural awareness, requires participants to have "Empathy" and "culture into" ability. The so-called "Empathy" is put ourselves to consider other people's sadness and fortune, will own "substitution" the other side of the mind, which can cause emotional resonance. "Acculturation" is in the part of understanding based on the different cultural differences, will be placed in their own cultural background of each other observation and thinking. Cross cultural awareness is mainly awareness of cultural differences, enhance the sensitivity of cultural differences is the premise of effective intercultural communication. For English learners, when he or she comes in contact with different cultures, should according to have the cross culture consciousness and fully mobilize their

sensitivity to different cultures, that is language learners must pay attention to the understanding and use of all aspects of the target language, especially its cultural connotation, this can be smoothly cross culture communication.

### **3. The status quo of cross cultural awareness training**

As many experts and scholars have pointed out that culture has a very broad concept, College English teaching as an example, it involves the English national history, geography, customs, customs, behavior norms and values, each have very rich content. In the end, between language and culture between the two are a kind of fish and water. Language is the carrier of culture, it is the main form of culture, belongs to the cultural category. In fact, there is no any language not rooted in the culture specific. At the same time, the language also reflects the characteristics of a nation. Language and culture are mutual influence, interaction. Namely, understanding the culture must understand the language, and understanding the language must understand the culture.

Although plays an important role in the cultivation of cross-cultural awareness, but the current situation of College English Teaching in China is not optimistic. In recent years, although many teaching materials in the arrangement of melting into the new teaching guiding ideology, that is, to face the world, facing the future, geared to the needs of modernization, perfusion in enhancing the intention of students' communicative competence. But in "foreign language teaching cross cultural communication" and "must be in the cross cultural awareness in foreign language teaching" the two problems, is far from a consensus. Over the years, College English teaching widespread multiple input languages, less input culture, classroom knowledge input, less input of extracurricular knowledge, the abstract theoretical analysis, less specific sentiment, of language ability and attention, the communicative ability to less attention. Due to the exam oriented education is teaching for examination, it pays attention to strengthening the training teaching. Hence, the score became the standard to measure the students of English as a foreign language, the concept limits the teaching methods, so as to improve the quality as the goal of foreign language teaching is subject to examination oriented Education. The use of inappropriate language is caused by cross cultural differences. Do not understand the cultural differences appear wrong culture is more serious than language errors, because the language errors are only the surface structure of the error, and error and cultural means communication barriers.

### **4. The principles and approaches of the cultivation of cross cultural awareness**

In view of the importance of non English Majors' English learning situation and cross-cultural awareness, we should take some measures, to follow certain principles and take some measures, positive and effective to cultivate students' cross-cultural awareness. Seelye H.N., in his book "Teaching Culture", he presents several practical teaching principles: (1) through teach language understanding culture (2) cultural behavior become each lesson learning an important part (3) let the students get corresponding socioeconomic status (4) let the students of their own culture and the target culture have understanding (5) to recognize that not all culture teaching to change the students' cultural behavior, but to allow students to understand people's behavior is affected by the culture, and should understand that (2) The Regents, and Shu dingfang Mr. also accordingly put forward principles of the cultivation of cross cultural awareness, i.e., the adaptation principle, the stage principle, communication principle and penetration principle. Adaptability principle requires that teachers provide language materials, into the cultural content and students' English learning is closely related to the language content and vivid language to highlight, the authenticity of the scene, material life, cultivate students' emotion, arouse the students' thirst for knowledge, understanding of their own nation, culture of other nationalities also give understanding and respect, and promote the formation of reasonable cross cultural psychology. Stage refers to the principle of cultural teaching should fully consider students' language level, cognitive ability and mental state of the, use from the shallow to the deep, from the outside to the inside of a gradual approach to education, let the students fully understand the nature of the cultural content. Communication refers to the principle of cross cultural awareness cultivation is to improve students'

intercultural communicative competence and the communicative teaching method, students to understand the language of the national cultural background, customs and way of life, culture through language communication by transmission and communication and language cultural permeation through the development of rational communication. Permeability principle emphasizes the process of cultivating cross-cultural awareness is not only a simple teaching indoctrination, and should be reflected in the language of communication, emotional expression.

The cultivation of intercultural awareness can be carried out from the following aspects:

Using current teaching materials to cultivate students' intercultural awareness

Contemporary College English textbooks is no longer a knowledge single isolated individuals, but in natural science, literature and cultural knowledge learning organic fusion materials. These textbooks have been given a lot of cultural factors in the process of writing. The text often involve western politics, economy, culture, religion, architecture, geography, industry, agriculture and other, and text information content big, could vividly reproduce the differences between Chinese and Western culture, readability is strong. Teachers in lesson preparation and class if it has a strong humanistic ideological and cultural knowledge and the teaching of College English is not only a pure language communication, it will become highly appreciate the taste of art appreciation class. At the same time teachers can improve students the concept of education, literary accomplishment, values, social life and customs of cross cultural awareness, so as to greatly improve the students' comprehensive ability of using language.

Cultivating students' cross cultural awareness in classroom teaching

The cultivation of students' intercultural awareness, in addition to the teachers to use textbooks, classroom teaching is also an important factor that can not be ignored. The basic form of the classroom teaching is also the students' communication simulation stage. In the society, students will use the knowledge and skills that learned in the English class, and devote to the true cross cultural communication. (3)

Using extracurricular activities to cultivate students' intercultural awareness

In order to make up for the lack of classroom teaching, English teachers should make full use of extracurricular activities, to create for the students to understand the English culture, cultivate communicative competence of opportunity. (4) For example, you can hold English speech contest, English debating competition, student organization is a cultural phenomenon and cultural content speech and debate. At the same time, can also set the English corner, English salon, regularly carry out some rich knowledge and fun games. Also can organize some English lectures, invited school returned overseas teachers or foreign teachers to introduce knowledge of some of the culture and customs, hold foreign language film or music appreciation, more to understand English speaking countries study, life and work, so that it can more truly to experience the western culture, and to learn how to appreciate.

## 5. Conclusion:

Realizing cross cultural communication is the fundamental purpose of English teaching. Improve the quality and efficiency of English teaching, to improve students' English application ability is an important task facing the Chinese University Education in the 21st century. Students in the speech event, only the their social experience, cultural background and cultural knowledge as their thinking activities of the important basis, and his understanding of the culture, so in the learning of language knowledge, at the same time, we can know the why however, express ideas have words to say. Anyway, a good foreign language learner is not only a language tool user, but also should be the recipient of another culture. Training of students in College English Teaching of cross cultural awareness is a very complex problem, the culture methods should also be multi angle, multi-level (5). Teachers only according to the textbooks, students, environment and so on many factors, strengthen the cultivation of cross cultural awareness in College English teaching, to promote students to better learn the target language and culture with innovative ideas and overall development capacity of new talent in the 21st century, truly the goal of English teaching.

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