

On the Cultivation of Cross-Cultural Communication Capability in College English Teaching

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Abstract: The cultivation of cross-cultural communication capability is a great challenge in college English teaching, with language being the greatest barrier. Language, which carries the culture and history of a nation, is of great significance to English teaching and learning. This thesis aims to explore the wide application of cross-cultural communication capability and thereby encourage cross-cultural communication in English teaching.

1. Introduction

Cultural exchange is realized through language, which indicates that language is the major driving force of cultural communication, making both closely intertwined with each other. Culture contains language, and abundant cultural content is expressed via language. Besides, since people think differently, the way people express themselves with language also varies. Therefore, language could not only promote cultural exchanges, but also reflect the personality of the speaker and the way he/she expresses his/her ideas. Looking from another perspective, different regions and countries have different cultures, which makes it difficult for people to communicate with each other. In light of this background, when learning a language, it is urgent for students to improve their cross-cultural communication capability, with the purpose of increasing the tolerance when cultural differences are met. As the most widely-used lingua franca, English has its own place in various cultures. Therefore, when learning English, students should, with the purpose of promoting cultural exchanges, “absorb the essence and discard the dregs” to improve their own cultural literacy. This thesis will explore how to cultivate cross-cultural communication capability in college English teaching.

2. Summary on the Studies of Cross-Cultural Communication Capability

In recent years, cross-cultural communication capability of college students has attracted the attention of greater audiences. Studies of cross-cultural communication capability can be divided into three categories:

The first involves studies and discussions on theories, concepts, major contents, way of thinking, and existing knowledge reserves, aiming to summarize existing discoveries and the status quo of the studies in this field across the globe.

The second is made up of analyses and studies on the development of cross-cultural communication in China, aiming to explore the ways of cultivating cross-cultural communication capability and the relevant achievements from various perspectives.

The third consists of observations on the cultivation of cross-cultural communication capability from the perspective of English teaching.

3. Cross-Cultural Communication Skills in College English Teaching

English learning in college mainly is comprised of the linguistic knowledge per se, as well as the practical aspects, specifically in its application and learning method. Cross-cultural communication capability, the focus for language application in the future, is of no doubt the major content of English teaching. As a language in itself, English, like many others of its kind, also display the

characteristics of a linguistic system, i.e., applicable in oral and written communication, as well as for any scenarios in daily life and work. In order to improve the cross-cultural communication capability and comprehensive cultural literacy of students, English teaching should meet the following requirements:

3.1 Reform of the Teaching Mode Should Be Taken as the Priority

Teaching mode decides the overall direction, aims and process of teaching. Reform of the teaching mode can not only change the teaching method, but also the teaching philosophy, making students (not the teacher) the center of a class and attaching importance to the students' capability of independent learning and verbal communication skills.

3.2 Encouraging Communication in English Should Be the Focus.

Different cultures are governed by their own intrinsic relationships. Understanding the underlying culture that is related to the language is the precondition of using and learning the language. Encouraging oral communication, improving the proportion of language training, learning different cultures, as well as increasing the attention paid to and strengthening the implementation of culture education are the major ways of improving cross-cultural communication capability.

4. Strategies and Effect of Applying Cross-Cultural Communication in College English Teaching

4.1 Adopting a Scenario-Based Lecture Setting

College English courses in China do not have language application scenarios, which makes it difficult for students to understand the cultural connotation expressed in the textbook. The lack of communication and understanding forces students to learn the contents by rote, making it hard to stimulate their interest in English. Combining cultural exchanges with the lecture to enrich the learning process and improve learning efficiency is an importance direction of applying cross-cultural communication.

4.2 Creating a Cultural Context

In College English teaching, students' awareness of cultural exchanges should be improved as the priority. By simulating different teaching scenarios in class and creating cultural communication context, sound teaching effect and be achieved and the students' cross-cultural communication capability can be improved.

4.3 Adopting Collaborative Learning Mode

In colleges, collaborative learning modes are being applied more and more extensively. Such methods could also be used in teaching cross-cultural communication. Students can improve their cultural exchange skills in collaborative ways during or after English classes, which, owing to the positive results, has won the recognition of more and more teachers and students.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, at the time when we are ushering the advent of economic globalization, the importance of cross-cultural communication should be highlighted in English teaching. In order to improve the English level of students and promote cultural exchanges, the cultivation of capabilities meant for such purposes should follow the trend of the time, done amongst the international community, and take the characteristics of teachers, class, and students as a whole into consideration. Indeed, cross-cultural communication capability also reflects one's cultural literacy. English learning should not only cover listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation, but also an understanding of the culture carried by English, so as to improve the learners' cross-cultural communication capability.

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