

Strategic Research on the Training of Intercultural Communication Competence in College English Teaching

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Abstract—Today, as various communications among countries are gradually deepening, the demand for comprehensive talents with intercultural communication competence is increasing. However, due to the influence of various factors, there are all sorts of defects existing in college English teaching that undertake the important task of the training of comprehensive talents with intercultural communication competence. This paper carries out an in-depth discussion on the current situation and deficiencies of the training of intercultural communication competence in college English teaching in China, and puts forward corresponding improvement strategies and countermeasures from the aspects, such as completing the teaching system, improving the quality of teachers, changing the teaching strategies and optimizing the evaluation mechanism in a targeted manner, to provide beneficial theoretical reference for the training of intercultural communication competence in college English teaching in China.

Keywords—College English communication; intercultural communication competence; training strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

At present, with the acceleration of the process of global integration, the communication and contact among countries are becoming close with each passing day. There is a great demand for international talents in various fields, especially the comprehensive quality talents with strong intercultural communication competence, who are in urgent need of the market [1].

As a communication tool, English in teaching should be given attention on the explanation of knowledge, and more importantly, students' communication competence should be improved, especially in the communication under the background of multi-culture. Therefore, it is an imperative and important task to train students' intercultural communication competence by adopting scientific ways in the teaching of college English.

II. THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF TRAINING STUDENTS' INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE IN COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING

A. *Being Able to Broaden Students' Horizons and Enhance Their Interest in Learning*

As a language learning, it is relatively boring. Especially in the traditional English teaching in China, it often centers on the memory of words and grammar, which gives rise to a large number of students to lose interest in English learning and to regard English learning as a task and burden. [2] Under the quality-oriented education system, especially for the English teaching for college students with certain critical thinking skills, the teachers should change this "passive" and "oppressive" way, give full play to the main body role of students, and mobilize the initiative and enthusiasm of students to participate.

Language is the carrier of culture. In case the teachers want to train the intercultural communication competence of the students, they should consciously integrate cultural contents into language teaching. At the same time, by teaching and introducing folk customs, local conditions and customs, cultural history and other knowledge around the world, it can greatly arouse students' interest in learning, broaden their horizons, and at the same time, it can also make the students feel the pleasure of learning among English learning, so as to really take a fancy to English and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of learning.

B. *Being Able to Deepen Students' Understanding of English and Improve the Ability of English Application*

Language is a complex tool. It is not only the solitary combination of phonetics, vocabulary and grammar; especially there are the deep cultural factors, which cannot be realized by rote memorizing some vocabulary or grammar in a short period of time. This is why some Chinese students that have learned English for many years have a large number of vocabulary and relatively authentic pronunciation, but have encountered a large number of difficulties in communication in foreign countries. [3]

In college English teaching, the teachers should carry out training on students' intercultural communication competence,

create and simulate authentic English application environment, carry out relevant practical activities, and let students solve practical problems in English in a relatively authentic situation. This can not only deepen students' comprehension and understanding of English through differences between cultures, but also form correct English thinking habits and can improve the practical application ability of English.

III. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE TRAINING OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING

A. *The Training Goals Are Not Clear Enough, and the Scientific Teaching System Has Not Been Formed*

Compared with Chinese teaching in China or English teaching in foreign countries, the teaching of intercultural communication competence in China is still in the fledging period, and has not formed the scientific teaching system, especially there are no clear teaching goals. In many universities, although the corresponding teaching practice has been carried out, it is not enough to just regard it as a "dependency" or "embellishment" of language teaching. [4] The specific reasons are as follows:

First, there is lack of corresponding cultural identity. When carrying out intercultural communication, the teachers first of all need to have corresponding cultural identity of different countries and regions. However, in the traditional English teaching in China, some teachers rarely take the initiative to introduce the national cultural background of the language learned to the students, as a result, the students have many deviations in cultural cognition. On the other hand, some teachers excessively publicize the advantages and merits of foreign culture, which affects students' recognition of their own national culture. Generally speaking, in this traditional teaching method, the students cannot establish the comprehensive understanding of foreign culture, and it is difficult for the students to correctly deal with the relationship between indigenous culture and foreign culture, which greatly affects the training of intercultural communication competence.

Second, the teachers have not realized the importance of training intercultural communication competence. A large number of teachers still adopt the traditional model in teaching as evidenced by they just explain vocabulary, reading, grammar and other aspects, without creating a communication environment for the students, reserving corresponding communication time or adding corresponding cultural teaching contents in teaching. Due to the lack of corresponding guidance, the students rarely consciously contact with excellent cultural knowledge and literary works of different countries and regions and are short of opportunities and conditions to improve their understanding of foreign culture, therefore, the effects of intercultural communication competence training is greatly reduced.

Third, there are no clear teaching goals. The understanding of the importance and status of intercultural communication competence is not in place, and it is only that some knowledge related to cultural teaching is interspersed in English teaching. As for what kind of teaching goals to achieve, what kind of

content to teach and how to evaluate the teaching effects, there are no clear regulations. In addition, there is a lack of supporting teaching resources and facilities, which makes the training of intercultural communication competence lack of corresponding basis and methods. [5]

B. *The Teachers Must Improve Their Professionalism and the Complete Professional Teacher Team Must Be Built*

Because the teachers have a strong leading role in teaching, their own quality and teaching ability directly affect the quality of teaching effect. In the aspect of intercultural communication competence training, a large number of university teachers have not received professional and systematic intercultural communication competence training, so their own professional quality needs to be improved.

First, the teachers themselves are short of the quality of intercultural communication competence. Some teachers who are aware of this are self-taught or teaching while learning, which not only takes the tortuous path, but also greatly reduces the effects. [6] Moreover, a large number of teachers have no awareness of the training of intercultural communication competence. Meanwhile, they not only fail to take the initiative to improve their own quality in this aspect, but also fail to take the initiative to guide the students to carry out competence training in this aspect in teaching. It is important that they not have the corresponding competence and quality to carry out the teaching with different national cultural historical background and communication mode on the students.

Second, there is a lack of high-quality teachers with intercultural communication competence. At present, the training of intercultural communication competence is imperative, but neither universities nor scientific research institutes have specially trained teachers' competence in this aspect. In the process of teachers' re-education, the knowledge involved in this aspect is not enough, which greatly affects the construction of teaching body, and then affects the work progress of the training of intercultural communication competence in universities in China.

C. *Teaching Concept Is Backward and the Teaching Mode Needs Innovation*

At present, a large number of teachers' teaching philosophy are still lagging behind in college English teaching in China, and the traditional teaching methods and means are also adopted, which are disconnected from the realistic situation and directly affect the training of intercultural communication competence.

First, the key teaching points are biased. In the process of teaching, some teachers spend too much energy on the teaching of language knowledge. Especially for the teachers with a relatively long teaching age, they still centre around the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and syntax in the teaching process, and less on the teaching of culture [7]. In addition, there are certain biases in the arrangement of teaching hours as evidenced by more efforts are devoted to the training of basic English ability, but the arrangement of time for conversational communication ability is relatively small.

Second, the practice of intercultural communication is less. At present, the conversational communication of college English is mostly concentrated in the classroom, and it is usually carried out by answering the questions of teachers. It is just to train the sentence patterns and grammar that the students learn at that time, and the contents of the practice cannot be separated from the course books, which is relatively narrow. There is no corresponding excavation of the cultural knowledge and connotation behind the language, nor the creation of an authentic communication environment, which results in the lack of the sense of substitution. In the process of oral communication, it is often influenced by the "negative transfer" factor of the mother tongue, and the "Chinglish" that is not know whether to laugh or cry will appear.

D. The Evaluation System Is Not Perfect, and the Evaluation Mechanism Needs to Be Optimized

Scientific evaluation mechanism is an important precondition to promote the continuous improvement of teaching, but at present, there is no reasonable evaluation system for the evaluation of intercultural communication competence training in college English teaching.

On the one hand, teaching achievements are also the important factors that lead the evaluation of teaching results. At present, the evaluation index of college English teaching in China is relatively single, and some other indexes and factors besides teaching achievements are not taken into account enough, especially the training of intercultural communication competence is not attached enough importance. As a wind vane to test the teaching effects, the lack of communication competence training in the evaluation criteria will certainly give rise to the indifference of the teachers and the students.

On the other hand, the methods of evaluation are relatively single. Although some universities have broken away from the formalization of evaluation, they genuinely let students evaluate students. However, only students' evaluation of teachers is relatively single, and the single evaluation results may be appeared. For example, in terms of intercultural communication competence, if there is no corresponding teacher's guidance, there is no certain teaching atmosphere, and it will not necessarily cause the attention of the students. Therefore, even if the teachers do not carry out the teaching in this area, they may not get a good evaluation. On the contrary, even if the teachers have done the corresponding work in the training of communicative competence, they may not obtain good evaluation results. This may affect the enthusiasm of teachers to carry out the work.

IV. STRATEGIES FOR CULTIVATING STUDENTS' INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE IN COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING

In order to better cultivate the intercultural communication competence, under the guidance of the current English teaching reform, the teachers must pay attention to the teaching of cultural knowledge background, help students to comprehensively understand the way of English communication and cultural value contained, and then improve the intercultural communication competence of students and

comprehensively improve the comprehensive quality of students.

A. Improving Teaching Awareness and Teaching System

The first is to understand and respect cultural differences. The premise of carrying out intercultural communication is to let students understand the differences between different cultures correctly, respect the differences and reduce the cognitive deviation. The current social background is very conducive to the elimination of cognitive deviation. The teachers can guide students to learn more about the cultural differences of different countries and regions through the Internet, so as to prevent the condition of "seeing with one eye". Especially in the training of intercultural communication competence, if there are conflicts and differences between different cultures, the teachers must guide students to deal with them correctly, especially the training of students' all-inclusive attitude to treat the differences between different cultures. In this way, it will expand students' horizon and mind while learning intercultural communication competence by training.

The second is to establish the theoretical system of intercultural communication. The teachers should carry out relevant teaching researches, reform the teaching contents of English course strictly in accordance with the "College English Course Requirements", define teaching goals and optimize teaching resources. It should define the relevant theoretical contents and goals of the cultivation of intercultural communication competence and formulate the specific teaching goals and contents, so that the teaching can be "based on the evidence". [9] In the process of teaching, the teachers should make clear the teaching goals and contents of each course and more scientifically and reasonably offer the courses related to intercultural communication. For example, English courses can be offered according to the level and needs of students, which can be divided into compulsory courses and optional courses. It is necessary for the courses to focus on the cultivation of basic language skills, which is applicable to the common students; the optional course should focus on the cultivation of communication competence, particularly the cultivation of intercultural communication competence, which is suitable for the students who have some spare time in English learning and have much stronger interests in English. Through the continuous improvement of course setting, the English intercultural teaching system will be improved.

B. Improving the Quality of Teachers and Building the Professional Teams

The first is to strengthen the opportunities for teachers to study abroad by the method of "going global". The school can create or strive for opportunities for teachers to further study abroad through various means and dispatch some excellent teachers to renowned foreign universities for academic exchanges or topic discussions, so that teachers can by themselves feel the cultural differences in different countries and regions, bring back some of the advanced teaching ideas and teaching methods and improve the English teaching of the school as a whole.

The second is to introduce some excellent foreign teachers from some advanced countries to carry out the teaching by the method of "bringing into", which focuses on the cultivation of students' oral communication competence. When introducing foreign teachers, the school should not only pay attention to whether they have the corresponding educational background, but also pay attention to their own comprehensive quality. Because the cultivation of intercultural communication competence is a process of gradual penetration, in addition to the knowledge explanation and activity organization in the classroom, the teachers will carry certain cultural information among the words or in the communication with the students after class. Once the quality of the teacher is defective, it will bring the students wrong guidance.

The third is to promote the spread of intercultural knowledge by taking the opportunity of cooperation and exchange with other colleges and institutions. For example, the school can invite well-known experts from academic circles to the school to hold lectures on intercultural communication to improve teachers' consciousness and level of intercultural communication. Consequently, an excellent teacher team in combination with Chinese and foreign teachers will be built.

C. Enriching Teaching Methods and Changing Teaching Strategies

The first is to increase the communication activities of extracurricular practice. The best way to improve communication competence is to carry out the authentic practice. The teachers can make full use of the existing resources and conditions and organize some intercultural communication activities in combination with the actual teaching reality. For example, the teachers can hold some English culture salons, invite foreign teachers and foreign students to participate in them, and carry out English conversation communication and cultural exchange together. On the basis of improving students' oral English ability, the activities can strengthen their awareness of intercultural communication. In addition, the teachers can organize or guide students to organize some intercultural communication learning clubs, and hold some English performances, cultural knowledge interesting speeches and other activities with the clubs as the carrier to exercise students' communication competence. In addition to the created language environment, the teachers can also guide students to some famous tourist attractions as volunteers, and make full use of the opportunity that provides consulting services for foreign tourists to understand the differences between Chinese and foreign cultures, so as to improve their language communication competence. [10]

The second is to upgrade teaching methods and pay attention to cultural integration. The teachers can make full use of online teaching resources or multimedia teaching methods to help students understand the thinking mode and communication mode of foreign communication, and deeply explore the cultural value contained behind the communication mode. For example, the teachers can play some short videos of foreign manners and customs before class, so that students can experience the cultural differences contained. In addition, the teachers can also guide students to find some dialogue videos

of different communicative situations on the Internet on their own initiative, so as to deepen students' understanding of western culture. It is worth noting that the purpose of introducing culture-related knowledge in intercultural communication competence is to understand the differences between Chinese and foreign cultures, to better improve students' language communicative competence, rather than the appreciation or abandon of a certain culture. Therefore, in order to cultivate students' ability to distinguish different cultures, for example, when introducing films, animation or other forms of culture, it is necessary to screen their contents. It must severely criticize and abandon the culture contents that involve in the split of the motherland, violence, pornography and so on so as to help students establish the healthy concept of intercultural communication.

The third is to pay attention to multicultural infiltration. In the specific teaching process, the teachers should, on the basis of the specific teaching contents, infiltrate the multi-culture into every link of college English teaching, select the corresponding cultural background in a targeted manner, guide the students to enter the carefully created cultural situation to feel the differences of different cultures, especially through understanding the differences of these different cultures, to cultivate the way of thinking in English and get rid the influence of native language thinking in the communication. It is worth noting that the cultivation of intercultural communication competence is not made in a short duration of time, but a long-term process. Therefore, the teachers should not only run through the cultivation into all links of English teaching, but also penetrate into every aspect of students' learning and life. The teachers can not only spread foreign cultural knowledge in the classroom, but also carry out the introduction to foreign cultural knowledge in dormitories and canteens in order to guide students to pay attention to different regional cultures.

D. Improving the Evaluation Mode and Optimizing the Evaluation Mechanism

Scientific teaching evaluation mechanism can effectively facilitate teachers to change teaching methods and improve the intercultural communication competence. On the one hand, the teachers should introduce a variety of teaching evaluation indicators, especially the cultivation of intercultural communication competence should be incorporated into the evaluation system in case the single teaching evaluation mechanism of the traditional achievement theory wants to be changed, so as to establish the more complete and comprehensive scientific evaluation system. In addition to the evaluation of exam results, the teachers should also consider a variety of indicators such as communicative competence and usual performance. On the other hand, the teachers can change the single evaluation method by the ways of the students can carry out evaluation on teachers or the teachers can carry out evaluation on students, and the students and teachers should evaluate each other, the students should evaluate each other and the teachers should evaluate each other. In addition, the teachers should also take the methods of checking and accepting the lessons to master the teaching situation of

teachers, and timely understand the teaching process and effect of intercultural communication.

V. CONCLUSION

To sum up, the cultivation of intercultural communication competence in college English teaching can not only broaden the horizons of students and improve students' interest in English learning, but also elevate students' cognition of English and better enhance their English application ability, so as to become the comprehensive high-quality talents that the country and society need. However, in the current situation, there are some deficiencies in the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence in college English teaching in China, such as the imperfect teaching system, the lack of professional teachers, the lagging teaching mode and the incomplete teaching evaluation system. Therefore, in the context of the current college English teaching reform, the school should actively update the concepts and teaching methods, put forth effort from the establishment of perfect teaching system, the promotion of teachers quality, the renewal of teaching methods, the optimization of teaching evaluation mechanism and other aspects, so as to effectively boost students' intercultural communication competence.

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