

# *Study on the Teaching Model of Intercultural Business Communication*

Dongjin Wang

School of Language Studies  
Chongqing University of Technology  
China, 400054  
djwang@cqut.edu.cn

**Abstract**—With the development of educational globalization, college English teaching should not only emphasize students' language learning, but should also pay more attention to the cultural and ability preparation for students and try to cultivate their intercultural communicative abilities. This paper first analyzes the significance and necessity of the course Intercultural Business Communication under the current background of globalization, and then it discusses how to make the course reform in accordance with the teaching content and methods of this course. Finally, this paper concludes an effective teaching model which combines theory teaching with multiple teaching methods and activities, aiming to intrigue students' interest in learning this course and cultivate students' intercultural communicative competence.

**Keywords**—Globalization, Intercultural Business Communication, Teaching model, Intercultural communicative competence

## I. INTRODUCTION

Under the influence of globalization on human society, the concept of globalization gradually permeates through political, economic and cultural fields of our society, and then the concept of educational globalization has subsequently emerged. Educational globalization helps to realize the internationalization of talent training mode, educational quality, academic diplomas and educational service. The purpose of educational globalization is to cultivate future talents with international vision, international communicative ability and international competitiveness [1].

Educational globalization raises new and higher requirements for the college English teaching. According to *College English Curriculum Requirements (On Trial)*, the goal of college English teaching now is to cultivate students' comprehensive application ability of English, improve their cultural literacy so as to meet the need of domestic economic development and international communication [2]. Therefore, under the background of globalization, college English teaching should not only emphasize students' language learning, but should also cultivate their comprehensive abilities including their cooperative ability, adaptive ability, innovative ability and communicative ability. Therefore, college English teaching should pay more attention to the cultural and ability preparation for students and try to cultivate students' abilities to make intercultural business communication.

## II. INTERCULTURAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Intercultural Business Communication is a comprehensive course combining professional knowledge of commerce and the application of language skills, which tries to help students overcome and solve the conflicts caused by the different cultural backgrounds, value systems and thinking modes [3]. The basic requirements for this course are: having basic understanding of all kinds of background knowledge of other cultures including different social customs, etiquettes, superstitions, taboos and so on; having the abilities to deal with the culture conflicts in intercultural communication; grasping the basic principles of intercultural communication and guaranteeing the success of international communication and cooperation. Therefore, as for this course, students should not only have the abilities of using English to communicate, but should also master the relative knowledge in business and commerce and have a better understanding of different customs and demands in different cultures. The aim of this course is to cultivate students' sensitivity and flexibility of cultural differences, help students to alleviate and overcome culture shock, broaden their views, deepen their understanding of the world, improve their cultural accomplishment and enhance their intercultural communicative competence.

Intercultural Business Communication is an integrative course of multiple disciplines including linguistics, psychology, sociology, management science, aesthetics and anthropology [4]. Thus, this course puts forward the higher requirements for the teaching methods, the classroom teaching styles and the design of classroom activities.

## III. CLASSROOM TEACHING MODEL OF INTERCULTURAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Intercultural Business Communication is a discipline with very strong practicality [5]. Therefore, if we only teach relative theories ignoring the combination between the theories and the practice of business activities, students inexperienced in business communication could not really master intercultural communicative knowledge and skills, not to mention solve practical problems in intercultural business communication. Thus, while teaching basic theories, teachers should also adopt multiple teaching methods and design diverse classroom activities in order to apply those theories with practice and attain better teaching results.

### A. Theory teaching

Theoretical study is the basis of cultivating intercultural communicative competence [6]. Theory teaching is still the most common method adopted in the course of Intercultural Business Communication. It is the best way to transmit massive information and systematically introduce relative theories and concepts to numerous learners. The advantage of theory teaching is that teachers can give full play in lecturing based on their teaching plans, which is easier to control and saves much time.

But, in this kind of one-way communication, timely feedback from students can't be provided to teachers, and the lack of interaction between teachers and students can easily make students feel tired and then lose their interest in this course. Therefore, in the theory teaching, some vivid examples and colorful pictures can be used to maintain students' interest and excitement.

### B. Topic discussion

Compared with the one-way communication of theory teaching, topic discussion is a better and more effective way to arouse students' initiative and enthusiasm of learning this course. According to the content of each chapter, teachers can first design some interesting and relative topics related to intercultural business communication. Then, during the class, students can be divided into several groups and given enough time to make discussion on each topic in pairs or in groups. After the discussion, teachers can ask students to answer some questions or invite some students to make presentations in class.

Unlike the theory teaching, making discussion is a two-way communication, during which information can be transmitted not only among students, but also between teachers and students. On one hand, teachers can have immediate feedback from students and get to know students' opinions and problems. On the other hand, students can have more opportunities to develop their ways of thinking, explore new ideas, practice their communicative skills and deepen their understanding of intercultural communication through discussion and independent thinking.

### C. Case study

Case study approach is the necessary teaching method in Intercultural Business Communication, which pays more attention to the development of students' innovative ability and their ability to solve practical problems, not merely teaching principles or rules [7]. Teachers can choose some novel and typical cases in intercultural business communication. During the class, students try to analyze the phenomenon and causes for those cases through debate or discussion. Through case study, students place themselves in the simulative business context where they can interact and cooperate, make communication and analysis, construct knowledge, master relative knowledge and skills, and develop intercultural communicative capabilities.

Unlike the traditional teaching methods, case study approach does not evaluate students' performance on whether they can give a correct answer or not, but emphasizes the students' process of independent analyzing and thinking. In

case study, students can apply the relative theories into practice, learn to think independently and empathetically, and try to avoid cultural conflicts in business negotiation. At the same time, case study can make those abstract theories more intuitive, reinforce the interaction between teachers and students, create a more active classroom atmosphere and deepen students' understanding of relative theories and rules. Therefore, case study approach can effectively enhance students' intercultural communicative competence.

### D. Movie appreciation

In the traditional class, teachers usually adopt the traditional teaching methods such as lecturing, reading and analyzing to introduce speeches, manners and behaviors in business activities of different countries. Thus, the classroom atmosphere seems to be very boring which can't intrigue students' interest in learning this course. In such cases, teachers should try to change their traditional way of teaching. They can choose some movies which are relative to the content of intercultural communication to be shown in class, such as *The Wedding Banquet*, *Pushing Hands*, *Gua Sha* and so on. While appreciating those movies, students can feel the clashes and conflicts resulting from cultural differences more intuitively. After the movie appreciation, teachers can also ask students to discuss and conclude their feelings and opinions after watching those movies or give them assignments like writing articles or reports. Through these assignments, students can really feel and understand every aspect involved in the intercultural communication.

Movie appreciation can make the course more visual and intuitive, provide students with quite real business context, and make the classroom teaching more diverse. Moreover, movie appreciation which integrates pictures, sounds and words can also make the best of students' auditory and visual sense, help to enhance their figurative and associative memory, arouse their enthusiasm of learning this course so as to improve their learning efficiency.

### E. Presentation

Making presentations is the best way to help students experience cultural differences personally. First, teachers assign relative tasks based on business theme and context. The topics should include business etiquettes and social customs of different cultures, such as how to introduce yourself and others in business context, how to make greetings and handshakes, how to present and receive business cards, how to send and receive gifts, diet manners, social taboos and so on. Then the whole class will be divided into several groups with about 10 students for each group. Every group member should be assigned respective task such as collecting relative materials, making multimedia courseware, role playing or making classroom presentation. Students should try to fulfill their tasks outside the class and then share what they have collected and obtained with other students by making presentations. After the presentation, teachers should finally evaluate and summarize the performance of each group and make a conclusion.

Through this kind of experimental teaching method, students can really participate in the classroom activities, think independently, and learn to cooperate, learn to share and

exchange information and have a better understanding of cultural differences.

#### *F. Application of network platforms and resources*

In recent years, with the rapid development of network and the application of multimedia technology in college English teaching, college English course reform has been technically guaranteed and promoted. Intercultural Business Communication can also take advantage of network platforms as the auxiliary mode to improve teaching and learning effects [8].

Before and after the class, teachers can use the forum on the network to organize students to speak out their own opinions around a certain topic or a certain case, which can give students the opportunities to express their opinions freely and improve their enthusiasm. Moreover, teachers can recommend some useful and helpful network resources to students and ask them to discuss and exchange their feelings and ideas after reading relative information, which is the best way for students to deepen their understanding of intercultural communication. On the other hand, teachers can use the forum to answer students' questions, explain some difficult points for them and help students to solve some difficult problems they may encounter when learning the course. Through the network platforms, students' cooperative learning abilities will be greatly enhanced and their self-consciousness of learning will be improved.

#### IV. SUMMARY

The teaching objective of Intercultural Business Communication is to cultivate students' intercultural communication competence in business context. In accordance with the teaching content and methods of this course, this paper puts forward a teaching model which combines theory teaching

with multiple teaching methods and activities including topic discussion, case study, movie appreciation, making presentation and application of network platforms.

On one hand, we hope to find ways to intrigue students' interest in learning this course and cultivate students' abilities to make intercultural business communication. On the other hand, we try to explore and find a suitable and effective classroom teaching model for the course of Intercultural Business Communication.

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