

Cultivation and Implementation of Intercultural English Communicative Competence

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Abstract: Language is the bridge and tool of communication and language teaching is the most important approach for language mastery. Currently, intercultural communication has become quite common in international communication, while there are still certain limitations in domestic cultivation of intercultural communicative competence. It is imperative to improve corresponding competence cultivation. Based on the development regulations of language and culture, we explored teaching methods of intercultural education in daily English teaching, and established the basis of intercultural communicative competence for learners. This work is hoped to give a reference to the improvement of intercultural communicative competence.

1 INTRODUCTION

International communication is increasingly common after China entering into the international community and becoming part of international politics, economy and culture. English teaching has become an important type in current various cultural educations. As one communication tool, the value and significance of language are reflected in intercultural communication. Besides basic skills of English language, English teaching should also combine English language competence with daily English culture, encouraging students to have intercultural communication with English. In fact, students always learn English under long-term exam-oriented education that focuses on English teaching on basic language skills. Although they are quite familiar with the solution of question formats in English subject, these students lack experience in the application of English language, especially in the communication with English language skills (Wang Ying, 2007). As the fundamental objective of English language learning, skillful intercultural communication is relatively difficult for our students who are in the cultural environment of Chinese language for a long time. Therefore, it is important for the cultivation and implementation of intercultural communicative competence for students in daily English teaching.

2 CONNECTION BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE BASED ON COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Daily interactions of humans gradually create language as one stable communication tool. Its specific significance is given by culture. Every language presents unique life experience of one specific national group (Zhu Aifang, 2013). It has the cultural characteristics of the nation. The exploration of cultural background knowledge as well as language teaching can improve the communicative character of language. English teaching without situation and culture of English-speaking countries may fail to bring comprehensive mastery of intercultural communicative characteristics in English language. Therefore, language and related culture based on communicative competence are an inseparable organic whole (Zhang Min, 2014).

In addition, the mastery of communicative competence needs familiarity of English culture as well as Chinese culture. Specifically, it is beneficial for the popularization of Chinese culture in foreign countries during intercultural communication. Besides, with characteristics of native thinking model and culture, unique ideas and wisdom are contributed to cultural communication. It is

conducive to the understanding of Chinese culture for foreigners and the success in intercultural communication.

3 NECESSITY OF COMPETENCE CULTIVATION IN INTERCULTURAL ENGLISH COMMUNICATION

Firstly, daily communicative activity involving foreign culture is becoming increasingly common with current frequent intercultural communication and rapid globalization. Intercultural English communication has been a realistic requirement. Although there are only several countries where English is the first language in the world, English is still widely used as the second language and even the language of international communication. Besides, English-speaking countries have an important effect on global politics, economy and culture. English has become an intercultural communicative tool in different cultural environment. Successful English communication is determined by the good mastery and application of English skills as well as the understanding of differences between Chinese and English culture. Then with the basis, related culture will be flexibly applied in English communication.

Secondly, the influence of cultural awareness on language learning is the important foundation of competence cultivation for intercultural English communication. Indicated by current development of linguistics, the understanding of related cultural knowledge can prevent language learning from becoming mechanical imitation and transform it into innovative language application model. The purpose of English learning is to acquire English culture and related information. So the mastery of English language culture is required for comprehensive exploration of language connotation such as deep and underlying meanings of English vocabularies and expression. Therefore, cultural awareness has important practical significance for English language learners who attempt to have ability of culture adaptation.

Thirdly, the cultivation of cultural awareness has become one objective of current English teaching. Corresponding requirement of English curriculum standard is produced from primary grades to higher institutions. Cultural awareness always acts as part of comprehensive application ability of English language in all levels of English teaching. For students, English language skills can be mastered by repeated training and mechanical memorization,

while the values and connotation of English language culture need mastery of related culture. These aspects are the key points and difficulties of English teaching actually. Faced with common exam-oriented education, most learners learn English just for admission tests or corresponding certificates of English language competence. They never have deep exploration and study of English language culture, leading to the wide condition of dumb English. Failure of intercultural communication with English language is determined by the inexperienced application of English language and the lack of cultural background knowledge.

4 BASIC PRINCIPLE OF COMPETENCE CULTIVATION IN INTERCULTURAL ENGLISH COMMUNICATION

English teachers are required to carry out teaching activities with the combination of English cultural characteristics and basic laws of language learning. They should avoid the blindness of cultural knowledge teaching in daily English courses. With emphasis on the systematicness and scientificity of cultural infiltration, teachers can guide English learners for further study of English language under the background of English cultural knowledge.

Firstly, in the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence, English teachers need to pay attention to the basic principle of progression. The differences of English levels for most English learners are determined by several aspects such as the ages and personal emotion. The accumulation of English knowledge is a progressive process along with the perfect of mental maturity of learners. Therefore, virtuous English teaching is required to follow the progressive process from simpleness to complexity in the communicative competence cultivation. Meanwhile, English learners need to gradually understand related English cultural knowledge when teachers perfect their teaching work.

Secondly, English teachers have to connect English culture with practical language application in the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence. Meanwhile, they need to avoid excessive attention to obscure and impractical language knowledge. The combination of basic language skills and English cultural knowledge has a positive effect on the process of English cultural learning for language learners. Basic language skills (e.g. vocabulary and grammar) and English cultural

knowledge are an inseparable and close whole that is beneficial for English learning and teaching.

Thirdly, related screening of English cultural knowledge is required in the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence. English teachers should be responsible for the selection and arrangement of teaching contents. Meanwhile, interestingness of English cultural knowledge needs to be considered in the process of edition. With the principle of moderation, teachers have to elaborately explore and research the teaching methods in the elementary stage. Besides, reasonable estimation of students should be conducted for their educational level of English language and cognitive competence of language cultural knowledge.

5 CULTIVATION SKILLS OF INTERCULTURAL ENGLISH COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

Direct note is used as one method for the explanation of related English cultural knowledge. It can be shown in written form or in oral form (e.g. film aside). The distributed handout for English learners can have notes for difficult cultural points such as some fixed use of English or specific expression of English. Teachers can add comments in the handout as their notes to interest learners in English language cultural knowledge. Direct note can also be used for explain sentences with ambiguity in certain English cultural backgrounds. The wide application of culture aside can ensure that learners receive better education of related English language cultural knowledge in English teaching. Finally, long-term memories are formed by the combination of culture aside with teaching textbooks.

Comparison is another method for the summarization of English cultural knowledge. It is a relatively common method in intercultural language teaching. There are huge differences in Chinese culture and British & American culture caused by historical society and natural conditions. The differences exist in various aspects of language cultural knowledge in both sides. Therefore, for the demand of teaching, intercultural English language teaching can start from the differences comparison of two cultures in order to strengthen the memory and impression of learners.

The third method for English teaching demand is the systematic introduction of cultural knowledge. English language culture has its characteristics with certain systematicness that can be generalized into a

simple model. Based on the brief framework and model of English language culture, teachers can introduce some related English language knowledge to students. Meanwhile, students can master the knowledge with the systematic framework. Compared with nonsystematic lesson aside, the teaching method can progressively help student better master related English language knowledge, although it is a time-consuming process.

In addition, practical training and simulation games can be adopted in the teaching of intercultural English language knowledge. Generally, methods of dramatic play and scene simulation help language learners pay attention to the situation and related language culture in communication. Besides, the form of cultural package can be used in intercultural communicative teaching. Cultural package refers to the knowledge package of culture with the combination and edition of language situation and language cultural knowledge like the custom of gift. Problems and solutions of related cultural package will help students with their knowledge review of English language culture.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Systematized knowledge teaching of English language culture can bring mature application ability of English knowledge to students in daily English teaching. English cultural knowledge can increase their interest of English learning and improve their comprehensive humanistic quality, establishing a solid foundation for intercultural international communication. Although current intercultural English language teaching is still immature, its continuous perfection will finally realize the cultivation of communicative language ability and the improvement of comprehensive English application ability for learners.

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