

Exploring the Implementation Path of Cultivating Intercultural Communication Skills in Business English

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Abstract: With the acceleration of globalization, the importance of intercultural communication skills in the field of business is becoming increasingly prominent. Intercultural communication skills are one of the essential professional qualities that students majoring in Business English must possess. However, many universities neglect the cultivation of students' intercultural communication skills in their teaching. This thesis aims to analyze the connotation of intercultural communication skills, combine with the innovation of teaching Business English in universities, and explore the practical path of cultivating intercultural communication skills. By studying the application of intercultural communication skills in the field of Business English, this thesis aims to provide effective solutions for universities to improve their intercultural communication skills and meet the trend of Business English development, thereby promoting their success in cultivating students' intercultural communication skills.

Keywords: Business English teaching in college; Cross-cultural communication ability; Students.

1. Introduction

With the accelerated pace of globalization, the number and scale of multinational corporations are constantly increasing, and cross-border economic activities are becoming more frequent. In this context, intercultural communication skills have become an indispensable part of business activities. In the business field, possessing good intercultural communication skills can help individuals better handle cross-border business cooperation, resolve cross-cultural conflicts, improve work efficiency, and promote the internationalization of enterprises. This study aims to investigate the practical path of cultivating intercultural communication skills in Business English, enrich and improve relevant theories, provide theoretical support for the cultivation of intercultural communication skills in China, and enable university students to obtain better opportunities and development space in their career development.

2. The Connotation and Importance of Intercultural Communication Skills in Business English

Intercultural communication competence refers to the ability of individuals to freely switch and communicate in different social and cultural contexts. It is an extension and development of social interaction skills and an indispensable ability in foreign language communication. It is an important part of Business English teaching and a crucial way to cultivate students' English practical skills and business capabilities^[1]. The cultivation of intercultural communication competence can be achieved through learning language and cultural knowledge, expanding international perspectives, and participating in cross-cultural communication activities. For individuals, enhancing intercultural communication competence is not only a skill but also a quality that helps them communicate and cooperate with others more confidently and successfully in different cultural environments.

Business English intercultural communication competence refers to the essential ability to communicate across cultures using English in the business field. It includes understanding business activities in different cultural contexts, mastering cross-cultural communication skills, and mastering Business English. This is a comprehensive ability that covers aspects such as language proficiency, cultural awareness, communication skills, and adaptability. It is an important ability required for cross-cultural communication in a business environment.

3. Practical Paths for Cultivating Intercultural Communication Skills in Business

English Under the Theoretical Framework

When people from different ethnic cultures communicate, they need to overcome barriers in cross-cultural communication due to differences in language expression, cultural background, and other aspects. However, many domestic universities in China have not paid sufficient attention to the cultivation of intercultural communication skills in their teaching, leading to many teaching problems. The theoretical framework proposed in this paper can clarify the goals, methods, and evaluation standards for the cultivation of intercultural communication skills in Business English, helping teachers and learners better organize and implement teaching activities. The theoretical framework for the cultivation of intercultural communication skills in Business English is divided into three major parts: sociocultural theory, language learning theory, and intercultural communication theory, which are important for guiding practice and improving effectiveness, and can help cultivate more effective intercultural communication skills.

3.1 The Role of Sociocultural Theory in the Development of Intercultural Communication Skills.

Sociocultural theory is used to explain how human behavior and social phenomena are influenced by culture and the social environment. This theory posits that individuals' thoughts, behaviors, and cognitive abilities develop and form within a sociocultural environment, and that culture and social factors play a crucial role in shaping individuals. Sociocultural theory emphasizes the inevitable influence of culture on individuals' cognition and behavior, guiding learners to understand and respect the concepts, values, habits, and beliefs of different cultures, and cultivating learners' cultural stance and inclusivity. The theory regards culture as the fundamental driving force behind human behavior. By fostering a deep understanding of and respect for different cultures' backgrounds, values, and social norms, sociocultural theory helps individuals better adapt and integrate into intercultural communication skills cultivation. It provides learners with a profound understanding and respect for different cultures' perspectives, thereby assisting them in successfully engaging in intercultural communication.

3.2 The Application of Language Learning Theory in the Development of Intercultural Communication Skills in Business English.

Language learning theory is a theoretical framework that studies the process and laws of language learning. It mainly explores how humans acquire, master, and use language, as well as the factors and methods of language learning. According to language learning theory, learners need to improve their language skills through a large amount of language input. In the cultivation of intercultural communication skills in Business English, applying the ideas of language learning theory involves providing a large amount of Business English materials, such as recordings of business meetings and business correspondence, to expose learners to and allow them to imitate authentic Business English expressions, thereby enhancing their language output ability. The theory emphasizes that language learning needs to take place in a real language environment. Through activities such as role-playing in simulated real business scenarios and participating in business meetings, learners can use Business English in context, improving their ability to communicate in actual business interactions.

3.3 The Implications of Intercultural Communication Theory for the Development of Intercultural Communication Skills in Business English

Intercultural communication theory refers to the theoretical framework that studies how different cultures engage in effective communication and understanding. This framework primarily investigates the differences between cultures in language, values, social customs, and the ways these differences influence people's thinking and behavior patterns. Intercultural communication theory guides learners to focus on cultivating an understanding of cultural differences, cultural tendencies, and building trust. The theory emphasizes the need to pay attention to and understand the differences between cultures. Therefore, in cultivation, we should also focus on students' cultural orientation, enabling them to better adapt to different cultural environments.

4. Practical path of cultivating intercultural communication ability in business English

Intercultural communication competence is a form of English practical ability that places high demands on teachers' work experience and practical skills^[2]. However, many English teaching professionals in universities lack experience in English negotiation and foreign trade, which can lead to the adoption of rigid and superficial approaches in Business English teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to promote reforms in intercultural communication teaching in university Business English programs and explore new practical pathways for cultivating intercultural communication skills in Business English.

4.1 Updating Teaching Content and Curriculum Design

Compared to traditional Business English classrooms, intercultural communication courses should emphasize the importance of intercultural communication teaching, and update teaching content and curriculum settings based on cultivating students' English and business abilities. Overall, intercultural communication skills are based on important prerequisites such as language knowledge and

skills, basic business knowledge, business communication skills, and English expression ability. If students lack relevant foundational abilities, the cultivation of intercultural communication skills becomes a castle in the air^[3]. Therefore, in Business English teaching practice, teachers should emphasize teaching English basic knowledge and basic abilities, strengthen students' ability training in English listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation, so that students can proficiently use English for oral communication. Additionally, introducing sociocultural theory in teaching helps students deeply understand business behavior norms and communication methods in different cultural backgrounds, guides students to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, and provides a professional knowledge foundation for cultivating intercultural communication skills.

4.2 Selection of Teaching Methods and Approaches

Innovative English teaching models aim to cultivate students' intercultural communication skills through diverse teaching methods. In teaching practice, teachers can use methods such as flipped classrooms and learn-before-teach to motivate students to actively collect and organize information about Western and Eastern cultures. By allowing students to gain an understanding of cultural differences between the East and the West, they can then engage in self-directed learning with guidance and feedback. In the teaching process, teachers should use communicative teaching methods, live simulation, role-playing, case teaching, and other methods to cultivate students' intercultural communication skills. For example, students can watch videos of business English negotiations, read English newspapers and magazines on international trade, and be encouraged to communicate with foreign students or friends to cultivate their intercultural communication skills in various forms of English practice.

4.3 Utilization of Multimedia Teaching and Internet Resources

Utilizing multimedia teaching technologies such as video, audio, images, etc., to demonstrate business scenarios and communication methods in different cultural backgrounds, helps students to experience and understand the challenges and skills of intercultural communication. Multimedia teaching can be adjusted and adapted according to different teaching environments and learners' characteristics, and an assessment and feedback mechanism can be constructed to improve effectiveness. At the same time, online resources can provide a basis for evaluation and feedback in the cultivation process, helping teachers and learners to better understand the effectiveness of cultivation, and adjust and improve cultivation methods in a timely manner.

5. Summary and Outlook

The cultivation of intercultural communication skills is closely intertwined with English cultural teaching. Only when students have a deep understanding of this can their intercultural communication skills be better cultivated. With the continuous development of technology, future English intercultural communication skills cultivation will pay more attention to the integration of technology and tools for business applications. The popularity of mobile devices and the Internet will promote the cultivation of intercultural communication skills, moving from traditional classrooms to a combination of online and offline teaching models, improving the flexibility and effectiveness of teaching. Therefore, in the teaching of Business English majors, we should actively explore the practical path of cultivating intercultural communication skills in Business English under the theoretical framework, attach great importance to the cultivation of students' intercultural communication skills, and promote the continuous improvement of China's Business English practical teaching capabilities.

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