

The Current Situation and Countermeasures of Intercultural Communication Competence Cultivation in Higher Vocational English Teaching

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Abstract: The intercultural communication competence is one of the main objectives of higher vocational English teaching, and it is very important to cultivate students' cross-cultural consciousness. This paper studies the cultivation of intercultural communication competence in higher vocational English teaching, expounds the significance of intercultural communication competence, analyzes the current situation and shortcomings of cross-cultural teaching, and puts forward strategies and ways for improvement. This paper aims to promote the comprehensive English ability and enhance the competence of intercultural communication of higher vocational college students.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication; English Teaching; Higher Vocational College

Cultivating students' intercultural communication competence in higher vocational English teaching is an important aspect of the core literacy ability and the inevitable requirement of the development of the current times. In addition to accurate pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and other requirements, it is also important to be familiar with the cultural background of western countries and to promote our excellent culture.^[1] Therefore, we must pay attention to the cultivation of intercultural communication competence in English teaching.

1. The important significance of cultivating intercultural communication competence in higher vocational English teaching

1.1 It can help to meet the demands for talents in today's society.

With the development of science and technology and the increasing globalization cooperation, the requirements for talents are also different from the past. For language ability, it is no longer measured by grades, but focuses on comprehensive ability. Hence English teaching should take cultivating students' actual communication ability as the starting point, and pay attention to the improvement of students' comprehensive quality, so as to meet the current policies and development needs of China.

1.2 It helps to improve the students' practical communicative competence.

The purpose of language learning is to communicate with foreigners. Without enough understanding of the cultural differences, it is easy to produce misunderstanding, or even offend others. Therefore, students should not only have a solid theoretical knowledge base, but also master sufficient cultural knowledge.^[2]

1.3 It helps to enhance the confidence in the domestic culture.

A common way of cultural teaching is to compare the differences between Chinese and western cultures. In this process, we can not only have enough understanding of western culture, but also have a deeper learning of domestic culture. Thus, it increases the confidence in the domestic culture and has the sensitivity to cultural differences, so as to improve the ability to use the two languages.

2. The current situation of the cultivation of intercultural communication competence in higher vocational English teaching

2.1 Insufficient attention to intercultural teaching and backward educational concept.

Many higher vocational colleges only set up one-year English course in the first grade. Due to the small number of class hours and the weak foundation of students, teachers tend to focus on vocabulary and grammar teaching, and only briefly explain the cross-cultural knowledge. In this kind of teaching atmosphere, students have a low interest in English learning and inactive participation in class activities. The purpose of learning is limited to complete the teaching content, and pass the examination. Both in the setting of teaching purpose and the actual teaching activities, there are not enough arrangements for cross-cultural contents.

2.2 Insufficient intercultural teaching experience of English teachers.

Although some English teachers in higher vocational colleges have realized the importance of cross-cultural teaching, the

implementation is not smooth. First of all, because of their own lack of cultural knowledge, teachers can not achieve a systematic and complete grasp of the knowledge neither for domestic culture nor cultural differences. In order to avoid some mistakes in the process of lectures, teachers usually do not take the cultural background knowledge seriously. Secondly, because of the pressure of teaching and scientific research, if teachers want to prepare these materials deeply, it will inevitably bring a great burden to the lesson preparation, which is also a practical difficulty for some teachers. Moreover, how to properly combine the textbook content with cross-cultural knowledge and how to arrange the appropriate class activities are also difficult problems faced by teachers.

2.3 Poor evaluation methods.

In the examination process, there are not many questions specifically targeted for cross-cultural ability. Even if they have a certain amount of cultural knowledge, students are also not guaranteed to have the ability to use English properly in practical communication. When designing the assessment scheme, it is difficult for teachers to set a standard for the evaluation content and score of cross-cultural ability, and students do not know exactly to achieve what level in this aspect, which means that they can be regarded as passing the exam.

3. Approaches and strategies of cultivating intercultural communication competence of higher vocational college students

3.1 Comprehensively improve the level of attention to the training of intercultural communication competence.

Higher vocational colleges, teachers and students should all recognize that intercultural communication competence is a necessary ability for talents. First of all, suitable textbooks should be selected. Teaching materials should cover cultural difference knowledge and involve the local conditions and customs of different countries. Each cultural knowledge point should be listed clearly in the teaching plan, and appropriate teaching activities should be designed. Secondly, teachers should improve their own cross-cultural teaching ability. By reading relevant books, learning network resources or participating in short-term training, teachers can enrich their own cultural knowledge in order to achieve good teaching results. In addition to teachers' explanation, class activities can also include typical case analysis, debate or appreciation of foreign classic films to let students directly experience the differences between China and the West in various aspects. Finally, students should also make full use of the network resources, take the initiative to learn the cultural backgrounds of different countries, develop the habit of accumulating and thinking, and constantly improve their intercultural communication competence.

3.2 Adopt a variety of teaching methods, carry out a variety of extracurricular activities, and create a good learning environment.

The mixed teaching method can become a common means of cross-cultural teaching. Before class, teachers can upload the relevant materials to the teaching platform. Students complete self-study tasks before class, and the class time mainly focuses on answering questions and clarifying doubts. Students can also be organized in groups to prepare a topic about cultural differences, such as differences in Chinese and Western festivals. Then the group will show the results, and the teacher will comment on them. It's worth noting that in addition to introducing foreign cultures, we should also penetrate into the mother language culture so as to enhance the cross-cultural awareness. After class, community activities can be organized, such as English singing competition, poetry recitation competition or English drama. Teachers can also give seminars to activate the learning atmosphere of the whole campus.^[3]

3.3 Design proper intercultural communication competence evaluation methods.

Assessment methods should be combined with process assessment and termination assessment. Multiple evaluation methods can stimulate students' learning motivation and interest. More oral test contents can be added such as setting a scene for students to complete a dialogue or a task. Pragmatic communicative strategies should also be added to the written test. Through the phased assessment, both teachers and students can realize which aspect of learning is still insufficient, and then adjust the teaching content and teaching methods in time. Only in this way can language ability be closely combined with cultural teaching.

4. Conclusion

In short, cultivating the intercultural communication competence of higher vocational college students is the practical need of today's society, and it is also the responsibility of higher vocational colleges to cultivate qualified and practical talents. Only by fully realizing its importance, analyzing the problems existing in the current teaching, and adopting effective solutions and strategies, can teachers effectively improve the comprehensive ability of students, and help higher vocational colleges to train more qualified talents for the society.

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