

# Foreign Language Teaching and Talent Training in Colleges and Universities from a Cross-cultural Perspective

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## **Abstract:**

Cultivating cross-cultural awareness is a very important task in College English teaching. This not only adapts to the current English talent training goal, but also further strengthens students' understanding of western culture and improves students' English communication ability. This paper first analyzes the lack of cultural content in College English teaching. Then this paper analyzes the reasons why the cultivation of cross-cultural communication ability is relatively weak and the cultivation of students' cross-cultural awareness and ability has not been done well. On the basis of explaining the connotation and importance of cross-cultural communication, in order to improve this phenomenon, this paper analyzes college English teaching and talent training from a cross-cultural perspective. Finally, it puts forward reasonable suggestions on how to cultivate students' cross-cultural communicative competence in College English teaching.

**Keywords:** *Cross Cultural Awareness, English Teaching, Talent Training, Communicative Competence..*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

As an independent teaching goal, "cultural awareness" was proposed in the English curriculum standard for full-time compulsory education (experimental draft) for the first time. As an important part of cultural awareness, cross-cultural awareness has also been valued by English subject education in the stage of basic education [1-2]. In the stage of compulsory education, especially in the stage of basic education, the cultivation of cross-cultural awareness is becoming more and more important in English teaching. At the same time, it is also the inevitable requirement of economic globalization [3].

Language is not only the carrier of culture, but also an integral part of culture [4-5]. The driving force of language development and change is the development and change of culture. Therefore, as a language, English can not be mastered and understood without cultural learning. The cultivation of cross-cultural awareness can improve students' social and cultural understanding [6]. Cultural comprehension is the

comprehensive ability to understand the deep structure of language, which is based on the ability to understand language [7-9]. Therefore, in the stage of basic education, English teaching should not only pay attention to language symbols and language skills, but also pay attention to the cultural content in language use and cultivate cross-cultural awareness.

## **II. THE CONNOTATION AND STRUCTURE OF CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM**

### **2.1 Elements and structure of cross-cultural awareness in English classroom**

In English classroom, as the smallest unit of cultural education, the constituent elements of cross-cultural awareness play a fundamental role in the design of English classroom teaching and the cultivation of cross-cultural awareness. Therefore, the following will analyze the elements and structure of cross-cultural awareness in order to clarify the content of cross-cultural awareness training in primary school English classroom.

In primary school English classroom, cross-cultural awareness, as a kind of knowledge, has both explicit and tacit parts. Knowledge is a whole composed of three internal elements: symbol, logic and meaning: symbol is the expression form of knowledge, logic is the rules and methods of knowledge composition, and meaning is the law and value system implicit in knowledge symbols [10]. Therefore, it can be inferred that the same cross-cultural consciousness as knowledge is also composed of the above three parts; But at the same time, cross-cultural awareness has its characteristics different from other knowledge. The inner layer of cross-cultural consciousness is the part of psychological elements, which is silent; The middle layer is composed of rule elements, which is technical knowledge; The outer layer is the language symbol part, which is explicit knowledge. The above description is shown in Figure 1:

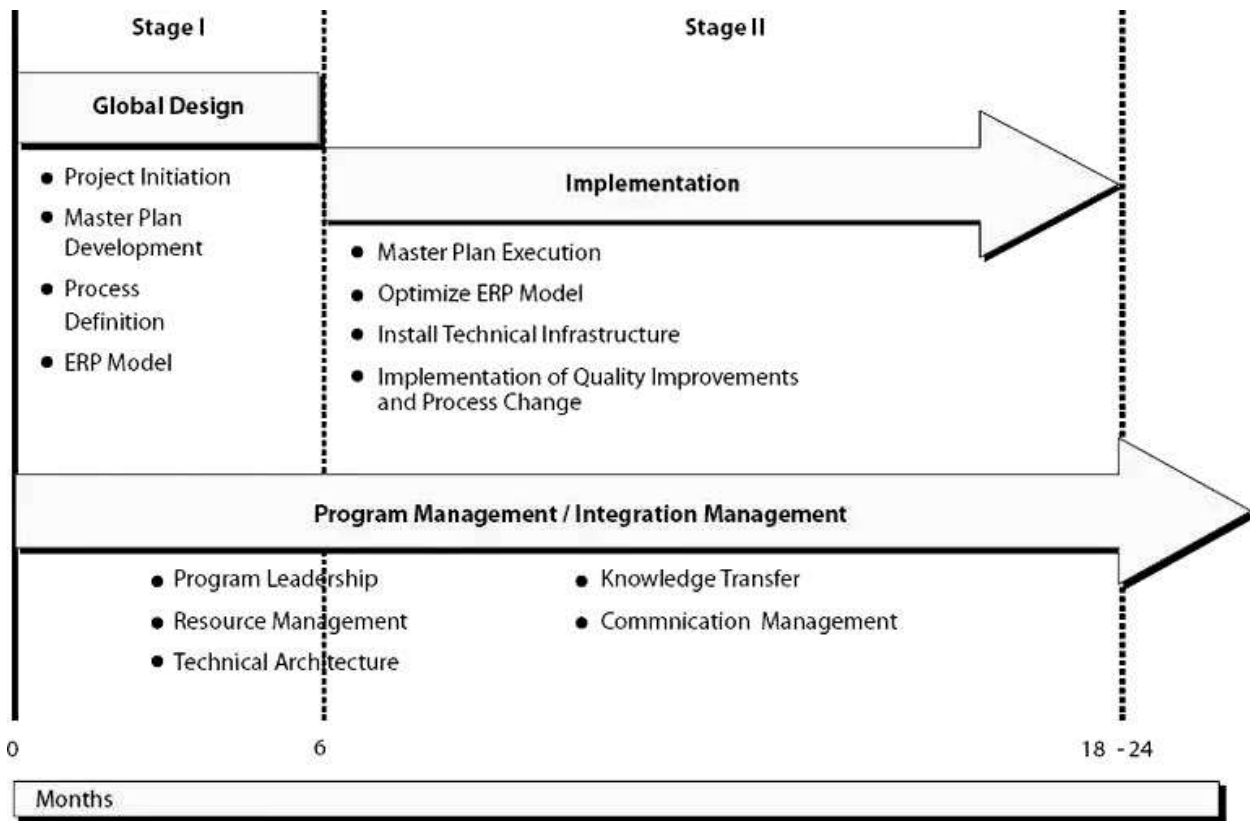


Fig 1: Element structure of cross-cultural awareness in English classroom

## 2.2 Characteristics of cross-cultural awareness in English classroom

Nature is the attribute that distinguishes one thing from others. Culture is a unity of multiple natures, and cross-cultural consciousness as its branch is no exception. Since human development, each region has its own unique customs, and cultural knowledge exists in certain factors such as time, space, value system and so on. This determines that cross-cultural consciousness has the characteristics of territory and nationality. The process of understanding culture is not a pure process of individual reflecting the objective world, but a form of continuous integration and interaction between individual and historical situation. In the study of William's thought of cultural sociology, he made a new interpretation of the institutional nature of culture. "In this definition, culture is a description of a special way of life. This description not only expresses some values and meanings in art and learning, but also expresses some meanings and values in system and daily behavior." In other words, in William's view, the cultural national customs, the orientation of behavior and the semantics of vocabulary all reflect the essence of the social system. As a state of consciousness of cultural communication, cross-cultural awareness will also be restricted by social systems. Therefore, people's attitudes towards cross-culture under different systems are different. The rule level in the structure of cross-cultural consciousness is the most institutional level, which plays an important role in the coordination of human relations. The institutionalization of cross-cultural awareness is the embodiment of the norms of cultural regionality and diversity. In the process of cultivating cross-cultural awareness, it is not necessary to integrate various social systems, but to achieve cultural

recognition and understanding on the basis of respecting the systems of other countries, so that people can better adapt to different living conditions and make better use of world resources.

The process of language acquisition is also the process of cultural acquisition. When learners learn a second language, the rules of verbal communication and nonverbal communication are the institutional embodiment of cross-cultural awareness. Learners summarize and extract the rules and requirements of cross-cultural communication through cross-cultural experience.

### **III. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING APPROACH OF CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM**

#### **3.1 Experience based cross-cultural awareness learning process**

The content of cross-cultural awareness includes the behavior, thinking mode and values of cross-cultural communication. When students are exposed to cross-cultural learning, the first thing they observe is the behavioral activities of cross-cultural communication, and these superficial cultural phenomena and cultural behaviors are the first key to open the door of students' cross-cultural awareness. In a sense, learning activities are more through individual psychological activities to transform the external knowledge and experience of individuals into their own experience, that is, to obtain cognitive experience. In English teaching, teachers cultivate students' cross-cultural awareness. In addition to allowing students to understand cultural behavior and thinking habits, they also need to deeply let students understand their own cultural values, the values of other nationalities and the similarities and differences between eastern and Western cultures, so as to finally achieve the purpose of empathy and truly have cross-cultural awareness.

The learning of cross-cultural awareness is a step-by-step process, which can not be achieved overnight, nor can it be crammed into students. Students' observation is the first step in the formation of cross-cultural awareness based on experience. They perceive their own culture, foreign culture and cultural differences in cross-cultural communication. The feeling brought by this observation does not last long and is in the surface stimulation, but it can bring learners curiosity and desire for knowledge. With this curious attitude, students further conduct internal reflection, summarize and summarize the exposed surface phenomena, and form a set of their own cultural consciousness, but the unverified cultural consciousness does not have authenticity and correctness in the students' brain. After teachers' correct guidance and demonstration, they deduce a more objective cross-cultural consciousness. Finally, by creating a teaching environment, teachers provide students with a reliable place for cross-cultural awareness. Through cooperative learning, teachers carefully experience the connotation of cross-cultural awareness in the atmosphere of cross-cultural scenes (See Figure 2).

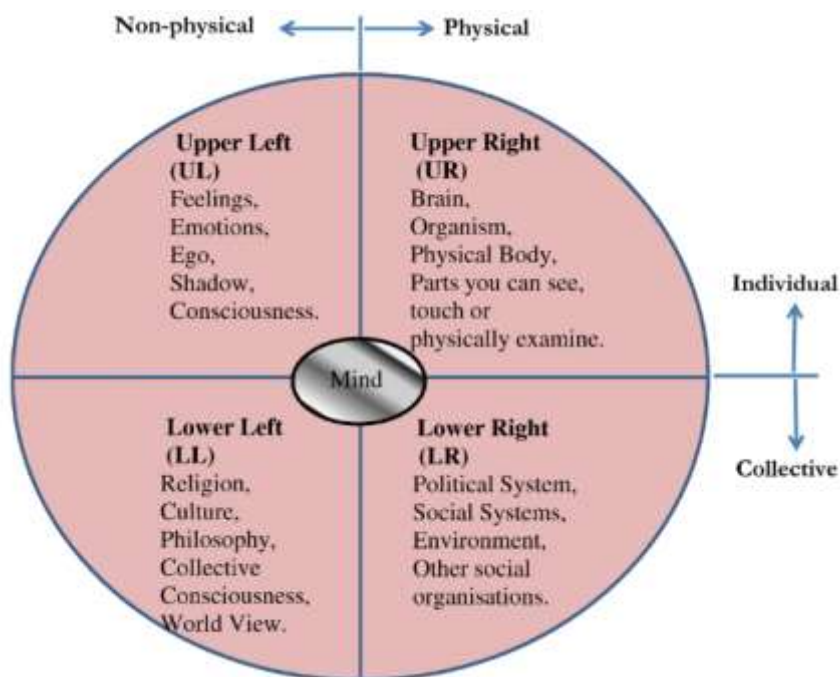


Fig 2: The representation of cross-cultural consciousness from outside to inside

### 3.2 Experiential learning approach to cultivating cross-cultural awareness in English classroom

The experiential learning of cross-cultural awareness cultivation in English classroom presents an infinite cycle, in which new knowledge is generated and old knowledge is updated. This study divides experiential learning into six parts: experiential perception, reflective observation, recall and epiphany, abstract induction, guiding summary and action deduction.

(1) Experience perception. Experiential perception is the first step of all learning processes, especially experiential learning process, and it is also the beginning of cognition. When learners come into contact with objective things in experience, they form the corresponding perception. This perception is based on the understanding of objective things on the basis of existing experience. In the process of experiential teaching, teachers provide students with the scene of cross-cultural communication and the cultural environment of English-speaking countries. Learners participate in the scene as protagonists. (2) Observe memories. Learners observe the customs, behavior orientation and values of English speaking countries through contact with different cultural environments. Learners form some shallow cultural experience and understand some cultural habits through observation and perception. (3) Reflection and epiphany. When learners discover the differences in cross-culture, they reflect on the differences in consciousness and principles behind their culture, and try to explain cultural phenomena through their own knowledge. The process of learners' reflection is the process of reconstructing perception. (4) Abstract induction. The Epiphany and cognition obtained by reflection in the cultivation of cultural awareness are imperfect, so learners need to summarize these cognition and epiphany in the process of experience. This stage is a process of creating knowledge, which enables learners to give full play to their creativity, initiative and

autonomy. (5) Summary and guidance. Learners' summarized knowledge can only be based on existing knowledge, so it is not systematic and accurate. At this time, educators need to guide and summarize on the basis of learners' induction. (6) Action deduction. Teachers' guidance to learners helps learners form systematic knowledge, but the result of learning is not to generate knowledge, but to turn knowledge into wisdom. Action deduction is to experience knowledge in life and form a deeper understanding in the learner's brain. Learners imagine themselves as protagonists to feel the charm of cultural communication, so as to achieve cultural empathy and cultural identity, and finally realize the harmonious progress of cross-cultural communication.

#### **IV. EXPERIENTIAL TEACHING MODEL AND STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM**

##### **4.1 Experiential teaching model for the development of cross-cultural awareness in English classroom**

The experiential teaching mode of the development of cross-cultural consciousness is the unity of a series of operational education steps and learning response based on experience. In the registration stage of consciousness, reflective observation, abstract concept and action research are all direct and restricted by the stimulating situation. With the emergence of interpretative consciousness, stable representations, concepts and actions began to develop. I put forward the following teaching mode (i.e. experiential teaching mode to cultivate students' cross-cultural awareness), which mainly includes the following steps:

(1) Create situations. Experiential perception is not only the starting point of experiential learning, but also runs through the whole experience, including both the experience of concrete things and abstract perception. Learners gain the perception of cross-cultural symbols through experience. The degree of feeling depends on the perceptual materials and perceptual situations provided by teachers. (2) Set questions. In the process of experiential learning, the conflict of dialectical opposition is the conflict between the adaptation and assimilation of experience to the external world and the existing conceptual structure. These are two processes that occur at the same time, and they are also the driving force of cognitive development. (3) Hint guidance. When guiding experience, teachers need to know when students' experience behavior is dominated by emotion or thinking. At this stage, according to the teacher's hint, learners empathically think about the nonverbal behavior habits and rules behind western language and cultural communication. (4) Inspire discussion. The cognitive law of learners is a cognitive conflict caused by doubt, and the conflicting individuals tend to integrate and reach a consensus. Learners can judge the value of cross-cultural awareness through thinking analysis and abstract experience, but this only depends on the speculation of learners' survival experience. At this stage, teachers inspire students to share and discuss their own cognition; Learners reach a consensus on cross-cultural value levels through discussion and synthesis. (5) Summarize. Based on the direct understanding and indirect understanding formed by learners' discussion in the previous stage, teachers should organize students to extract knowledge from experience and encode information. (6) Reflective evaluation. Learners apply cross-cultural awareness to practice again through experience, and accurately test the assumptions and knowledge experience formed in the previous experience. Teachers evaluate the process of students' experience to help students

understand whether their cross-cultural awareness is correct, so as to strengthen students' learning motivation.

4.2 Experiential teaching strategies for the development of cross-cultural awareness in English classroom

(1) Visual experience strategy. The so-called visual experience is an experience process based on vision, in which the subject perceives the object through multimedia and field observation, and then transmits the objective facts to the brain to form emotional feelings and aesthetic interests. Visual experience has the characteristics of intuition, diversity and comprehensiveness. In the process of visual experience, teachers should pay attention to the selection and screening of visual information. The selected visual materials should fully reflect the characteristics of cross-cultural phenomena and form a sharp contrast with their own culture. Only in this way can we enhance the visual impact of the experimenter and stimulate the explorative spirit of the experimenter.

(2) Role play strategy. Under the pressure of examination oriented, the school's long-term English teaching stays in the study of examination oriented skills. In the process of teaching and research, it is found that role-playing, as a teaching activity simulating the real situation, can better solve this problem. On the one hand, students can improve their oral English expression ability and promote their team assistance ability. On the other hand, through role-playing, they can strengthen their understanding of the culture and cultivate students' inductive ability and innovative spirit.

(3) Cooperation and communication strategy. Cooperative communication strategy refers to the strategy that teachers arrange cultural themes and students carry out cultural communication in a cooperative way according to their existing experience and knowledge. In classroom teaching, teachers put forward a phenomenon of cross-cultural consciousness to inspire students to think about the reasons for this phenomenon; Students are divided into groups to discuss, put forward hypotheses, generate universal significance from the hypotheses, and then discuss with teachers until the final teacher summarizes the results of discussion and communication.

## V. CONCLUSION

Throughout the whole development purpose of English education in China, from "learning from foreigners and mastering skills to control foreigners" to paying attention to cultural education, until the new curriculum standard clearly puts forward the English teaching goal of "cultural consciousness" at the beginning of the 21st century. Cross cultural consciousness has the characteristics of system, sensitivity and consciousness. Therefore, cross-cultural consciousness itself shows strong vitality and difference. This requires our education to have a broad mind to understand and tolerate different subjects' grasp of cross-cultural consciousness, and guide in the process of experience with correct values. Therefore, based on the cultivation of cross-cultural awareness, this paper discusses an adaptive experiential teaching model. Based on the connotation and characteristics, nature and generation conditions of cross-cultural

consciousness and the impact of experiential learning on the cultivation of cross-cultural consciousness, this paper explores the experiential teaching strategy and mode of cross-cultural consciousness cultivation.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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