

## Analysis of Practical Business English Talent Teaching Mode Under Cross-Cultural Communication

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### Abstract

In traditional Business English teaching, teachers tend to focus on linguistic ability as grammar and vocabulary and ignore the development of students' intercultural communication competence. That makes students' Business English studying imperfect. Many failed cases in international trade have shown that what Chinese lack is intercultural communication competence. This paper mainly discusses the Business English Teaching Based on Cross-cultural Communication. Though analysis of the origin, characteristics, teaching objectives and prospects for development of business English and the relationship between business English teaching and cross-cultural communication, this paper introduced the current situation in the new era of business English teaching and the importance of cross-cultural communication and so on, and then given some suggestions for better class curriculum and teaching methods in accordance with the new intercultural communication background.

**Key words:** Culture; Cross cultural communication; Business English; Teaching mode; Practical talent

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## 1. INTRODUCTION OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

### 1.1 Definition of Culture

Culture is a very broad concept, and we give it a strict and precise definition is a very difficult thing. Many philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, historians and linguists have been trying to define the concept of culture from the perspective of the respective disciplines. However, so far still didn't get the definition of a recognized and satisfying definition. According to the statistics, all kinds of different definitions about "culture" at least are more than two hundred. Broadly speaking, culture is a social phenomenon which is a product of people long to create form. Culture is also a kind of historical phenomenon. every culture is an accretion. Specifically, culture is the condensation which in the material and also free from material. Culture is the national history, geography, local conditions and customs, traditions, ways of life, literature and art, behavior standards, ways of thinking, values, etc. It is a universal recognition in communication between human ideologies of an inheritance.

### 1.2 Definition of Cross-Cultural Communication

Cross-cultural communication (or intercultural communication) refers to the communication between the native speakers with the non-native speakers. It also refers to any communication in the background differences of language and culture between people. Popularly speaking it is that if you deal with foreigners (because of differences in language and cultural background), you should know what problems pay attention to, and how to appropriately communicate. From the perspective of English majors, the concept of "cross-cultural communication" can be defined like this: In certain communication scenarios, the speakers with different cultural background use the same language

(native language) or target language to complete the oral communication. It includes the following several points:

### **1.2.1 Both Sides of the Speakers Must Come From Different Cultural Backgrounds**

The difference of cultural background is a broad concept; it refers to the differences between different cultural zones, and also refers to the difference between internal subculture in the same culture zone, especially the cultural differences between China and the European and American countries. Because from the point of the actual situation of cross-cultural communication, because of the difference of cultural background lead to communicative mistakes can easily cause conflict (mainly by China and the European and American countries) of interpersonal communication. The interpersonal communication of China and the Asia countries, such as Japan, South Korea, and Southeast Asia countries although have cultural differences, but more smoothly, that is because these countries and China belong to the Oriental culture, there are many similar places in cultural orientation and communication between each other.

### **1.2.2 Both Sides of the Speakers Must Use The Same Language Communication.**

It is obvious that if one side of the speaker uses a kind of language and the other side uses a different language, communication will not help forward. But now that both sides of the communicator from different cultural backgrounds and to use the same language, so that the language for communication on one side is the native language and for the other party must be the second language (the acquired “target language”).

### **1.2.3 Both Sides of the Speakers Must Be the Real-Time Communication**

The ways of cross-cultural communication are varied. It can be a language symbol of communication, can also be the nonverbal symbols in communication, such as goods, posters, object, image, performance and other forms of physical and chemical symbols of communication; It can be the scene of the two-way communication, also can be through the medium of one-way communication, such as television, radio, newspapers, advertising communication way of communication; It can be oral communication, and also can be a written communication, such as letters, documents, etc.. From the angle of Business English, we mainly focus on real-time oral communication, which are the two sides of face to face conversation. In addition, it also includes written communication associated with oral communication, which is word spread mode communication.

## **2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS ENGLISH AND CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

### **2.1 Business English and Intercultural Verbal Communication**

Language learning cannot be viewed as a substitute for the study of culture and taught. In the real intercultural business communication, cultural mistake is more serious than grammatical mistakes. “Communication and language” are recognized as an effective way to deepen understanding of cross-cultural communication. Language is the carrier of culture, and culture becomes the kernel of the language package. The use of language is subject to its space-time category’s influence of social groups, religion, geography and social environment. The understanding of literal language is difficult to cross “super language barriers” to the deep understanding of culture and communication. As the product of the age, languages greatly promote and restrict the people’s thinking. To a large extent, social convention unconsciously affects the social reality. With intercultural communication, culture happening to change and adapt to the time from the material to the society on ideology and each level. Under the background of Business English, researching on cross-cultural communication, especially business Chinese-English cultural communication, we need to seize the business general trends in the wind among clouds of business and linguistic features, dialyze its load patterns of behavior and cognitive style, as well as the values and world view to provide intercultural communication a guide to practice.

In the real business communication environment, under the high strength work pressure, learning and understanding both Chinese-English culture and using them well cannot do by only a few guides, newspaper and magazine reports, as well as the technical manuals of foreign trade. In international institutions, the language of communication in cross-cultural communication develops on reception, publicity, communication, interview, cooperation and exchanges, in oral, written and audio-visual level. In formal business negotiations and day-to-day operations, its situation and task and other background determines its use of the style and content, different from in other environments, such as using different linguistic features in the academic exchanges. Even in the business communication environment, business negotiation and daily business activities involved in the content and style are very different. To study linguistic features as well as the cultural symbol its conveying meaning of Business

English communication environment, it is necessary to catch one of them, for example, the cross-cultural contact telephone, E-mail, fax, cross-cultural reception of the hotel, conference, entertainment, exchange gifts, etc. and collecting other parts of the language characteristics and the case, then sorting the language and symbols and its conveying meaning, etc., and seek off the language attached outlook, values, and cultural practices.

English as an international business language, the duality of language and culture has been accepted. The communication skills that we should possess in international business contacts are not relying on simple grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary to complete. It is indispensable to understand and mastering of the culture. The pragmatic competence of the words, however, should not because of admitting English culture extent to ignore the integrity of the English language. Otherwise, people of different cultural background lose the effective language platform and communication channels with English as a common business communication tool.

## **2.2 Business English and Intercultural Nonverbal Communication**

Linguistic behavior is only one part of intercultural business communication behavior; Apart from this all the communicative behavior (or the nonverbal communicative behavior), also convey rich cultural information loyally. Knapp even argues that only combining language system and body system, could form a complete communication system. Cross-cultural studies can't miss this neurotransmitter.

The purpose of cross-cultural studies, by contrast, is to find out the similarities and differences between English and Chinese culture to increase the understanding of culture, to achieve cross-cultural awareness before communication, and can understand the differences of two cultures, anticipate and avoid possible misunderstanding and cultural conflict. In communication "create a social atmosphere of mutual acceptance" can make the Business English communication and cross-cultural communication smoothly and improve the effectiveness of business.

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## **3. ON BUSINESS ENGLISH TEACHING BASED ON CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

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### **3.1 Current Situation of Business English Teaching in China**

Over the past 30 years, Business English has sparked the interest, but business cross-cultural training and cultural education consciousness are still inadequate. Throughout the current Business English teaching materials, there are still all the letter of credit (L/C), document against payment (D/P) or document against acceptance (D/

A) terms, and enquiries, back plate such basic sentence patterns and the paradigm. These Business English teaching materials are less refers to the overall paradigm systematically and study English national business culture, especially nonverbal communicative behavior patterns and cultural norms. The school curriculum generally only involves ordinary English and basic business knowledge. College students' understanding of the general situation of English-speaking countries is very shallow, and their learning motivation is not high and clear, and the teaching effect is not obvious. Cross-cultural issues in international trade become self-study courses after working.

In foreign language teaching, more attention paid to the cultural knowledge teaching, the cultivation of cross-cultural communication ability also got widespread attention. Now the question is not whether is necessary, but how to implement in Business English teaching reform. We are currently opening some Business English teaching class, or some cultural background or cultural comparison class, but most of them are directly related to international business training in listening, speaking, reading, writing, translation or other language skills and professional knowledge of economic and trade of the teaching emphasis in English. It is completely necessary because this is the most important foundation. But the ultimate goal of Business English teaching should be training the English competence and skills of cross-cultural communication in a business environment. Especially in the economic globalization today, highlight the cultivation of intercultural communication ability in the Business English teaching is especially important. Therefore, we must fully realize the importance of intercultural communication ability.

Although many colleges and universities in China have realized the importance of Business English teaching with the intercultural knowledge, but efforts are not enough. Currently, our basic Business English teaching is carried out in accordance with the "English + business" model that makes the students think that master English and know some knowledge of business can work in a foreign company. They do not realize the importance of studying intercultural communication knowledge, so that in the work they are seriously lack of communication skills.

### **3.2 The Application of Chunk Theory in Business English Teaching From the Perspective of Intercultural Communication**

"Chunks refer to the relatively fixed language structure with the frequent using of the form, structure and the determined using context of the lexical meaning." Business English is often used in business documents like business letter and the purchase and sale contract. Business activities use the programming language. The application of high frequency business expressions involving form, meaning and context and content will

be relatively fixed. Characteristics of lexical chunks in Business English teaching mainly displays in the following aspects:

(a) There are a lot of distinguished name in Business English, they usually refer to the economic dynamics in international trade or international financial policies, regulations, international trade institutions' and the organizations' names and so on. For example: British Council for the Promotion of International Trade, European Free Trade Association (EFTA), International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Economic Community (EEC), European Common Market, etc.

(b) The widely use of Business abbreviations reflects the specialty of language chunks in Business English. For example: FOB (free on board), CIF (Cost, Insurance and Freight), Encl (enclosure), Mt. (metric ton), B/L (bill of lading).

(c) There are a large number of professional terms in Business English. For example: target market, departmentalization, protective tariff, etc.. In addition, a lot of the meaning of the words in Business English is largely different with the general English. Such as the phrases "add up to", the original meaning is "in total", but the business communication meaning is "taken something altogether"; the original meaning "wet" is "waterish", but in Business English it means "someone is inexperienced".

(d) Business idioms are common in business letters. For example: Enclosed a catalogue and some samples; I will appreciate it if you will reply as soon as possible; As requested, we sent you the products; This offer is subject to your final confirmation dated June 28<sup>th</sup>. In addition, business idioms can use connected. It refers to the business people frequently using synonyms with connected method to avoid the misunderstanding of both parties. Its purpose is to strengthen the efficiency of Business English in actual working. For example: meet and satisfy, terms and conditions, etc..

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## 4. SPECIFIC TEACHING MODES BASED ON CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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On the teaching methods, the simple translation teaching method is obviously unable to meet the requirement of modern market communication. Communication ability training and sensitivity and ability training of pragmatic competence certainly will form a part of the teaching and scientific research. At the same time, the contrast of Chinese and English cultural differences should be enhanced on the teaching way. And formally, multi-channel should be introduced such as multimedia video information, pictures, slide, network, etc., this all can bring students intuitive feelings. Inspecting others' work and learning, exploration, performance simulation, the

English corner and parties, etc., can also help create more forms of culture and language environment for students. Given the lectures, invited Chinese culture proficient to introduce the cultural differences and even invited experienced practitioners to give lectures to combine business instances with cultural differences, so that students can be through analysis, discussion and other effective way get cultural education. Of course, other effective training mode of the culture, such as intellectual model, regional simulation model, self-awareness model and so on, can also be referenced. Through all of this way, we can cultivate practitioners' ability of cultural adapting and understanding of management of cross-cultural communication in the assimilation of the environment.

How to cultivate cross-cultural communication ability in Business English teaching, teachers need to constantly groping in teaching process and summarizes the effective methods of teaching. The following five sections are respectively introduced five teaching methods of Business English.

### 4.1 Situational Teaching Mode

Situational teaching mode to simulate some business scenarios in the classroom to create the formation of a certain language environment, so that students can learn knowledge and theory in simulated situations. In situational teaching mode teachers should create a real language situation to students. Only in this way can stimulate students' enthusiasm of participation and creativity, make the textbook knowledge combined with practice, and then enhance the memory of the student with the knowledge. Through the creation of the real scene of business, teachers can form Business English language atmosphere, let the students get hands-on practice and experience in interactive activities, learn the Business English knowledge, and improve their Business English communication skills and practical skills, so as to achieve the goal of improve the quality of classroom teaching. In the process of simulating teaching, we can put the class into a company scene, teachers can be the chairman of the company and the students assigned to the different "department". Every student in different departments have different jobs, "attend class" becomes "go to work". Students can experience and practice of specific business activities in a simulated business environment to deepen the understanding of business knowledge, so as to improve the students' ability of operation and applicative competence. The main goal of Business English teaching is to cultivate students' communicative ability, so students should learn how to use language to express appropriately.

### 4.2 Communicative Language Teaching Mode

The task of communicative teaching mode is to develop students' communicative competence, which is different from the traditional "language" ability teaching. The

characteristics of the communicative teaching method are combined the structure and function of language in communicative teaching. It requires that teachers should not only cultivate students in listening, speaking, reading, writing and other aspects of language skills, but also to teach students to flexible use these language skills in English communication. For example, when talk about the Telephone Skill section, the teacher can offer a variety of business occasions phone listening material to let students imitate and find out the form of expression as students like after listening, and then let the students practice for many times until they can skillfully use. The right purpose of Business English teaching requires students to use specific language in a specific context. Business English teaching content with strong practicality, can foster a student business professional skills and cross-cultural communication ability, therefore, communicative teaching method should be widely used in Business English teaching.

#### **4.3 Task-Based Teaching Mode**

The use of task-based teaching method takes the student at the center, and exercise students' business communication ability. Task-based teaching method is a kind of teaching method based on the communicative task. This teaching method centered on students and teachers as the leading factor. Teachers set goals, and then students around the target task to make plans, to complete the task through their own efforts, and to evaluate their completion, finally to draw lessons. Task-based teaching method can stimulate students' interest and cultivate students' innovation consciousness and ability to solve problems in the process of completing the task. In Business English course, teachers should try to set some simulation enterprise environment, so that can let the students actively practice some English communication skills in the general situations, such as social contact, business telephone, communication, interview, negotiation, etc. It is important to note that in the process of accomplish these tasks to let the students paying special attention to cross-cultural differences. For the differences of language or nonverbal differences appeared in the process of communication caused by students' misnomer, teachers should organize students to discuss and give correct guidance. After the completion of the task, teachers can require students to exchange and summary the issues of cultural differences in the communicative process to avoid make mistakes again.

#### **4.4 Case Teaching Mode**

Case teaching mode is a teaching method on the basis of the case. Case essentially is some open questions which are asked, and have no specific solution. Teachers play the role of the designer in the teaching and guide students to actively participate in the discussion, and then find out a better solution. For example, in the teaching the part of

cash flow of the New International Business English, the teacher can let students find out the way that can make cash flow by themselves under the classroom, and then discuss which one or which several methods suit to the status of the company of the book. Through discussion, students can deepen the understanding of the knowledge points. Case teaching method is not like the traditional teaching method. This method requires teachers have a rich reserve of knowledge, and have strong ability of controlling the possible solutions of the case. So the case teaching method to teacher's request is higher, the teachers also need to constantly enrich and improve themselves to qualify for Business English teaching better.

Full use of case teaching method can cultivate the students' ability of analysis. Because of cross-cultural communication skills and ability is a kind of comprehensive quality, it includes many factors, in addition to language skills, cultural knowledge, cross-cultural communication theory and practice, and there is "some habits and skills applicable to any communication between different cultures". Therefore teachers must encourage students to take an active part in all kinds of different types of cross-cultural communication activities in a planned way to create and use as many opportunities as possible, open channel, let the students throw themselves into the reality of cross-cultural communication and contact with people of different cultures, to communication, observation and experience cultural differences, so that enhance the sensitivity of culture, learn and use the intercultural communication skills, and finally enhance the ability of cross-cultural communication.

About Business English problems of cross-cultural communication, teachers also can set some cases to let the students analyze, doing so will help to stimulate students' interest in learning and deepen impression. For example, a lot of animals in English and Chinese culture have completely different meaning. "White elephant" brand batteries with good quality in our country was poor sale in Europe and America market. According to the students' understanding of animal images in English, white elephant means useless things so that they find out the causes of failure of the brand. To do so that can let students remember the cultural differences, and more importantly, can let students realize the importance of intercultural knowledge, then help to cultivate the students' cultural awareness.

#### **4.5 Role Playing Mode**

In Business English class, teachers can timely insert some "role play" activities; let the student to carry on the real business practice. The meeting needs product managers, force resources manager, general manager seven characters, such as product managers, human resources manager, etc., seven students respectively arranged in each group to play a role. The teacher gave each student a

piece of paper which reads the task the role should be to complete. And then let the students hold a meeting based on the demand of the role, through discussion, find out the solution. After the simulation meeting, the teacher should make comments on the performance of each person. Through this role playing activities exercise which combined with the actual case, the students can improve the ability to deal with various problems in the business environment.

Because there will be some internship opportunities of business activities to a lot of students in college, in order to better develop the students' cross-cultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence, teachers can ask students to write internship logs or reflective records, put the intercultural elements in contact with the work into recorded, and organize class students to communicate regularly. In this way, teachers can expand students' thinking, broaden their horizons, deepen their understanding of business culture and train the ability of the business communication.

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## CONCLUSION

In the construction of Business English teaching, cultivating the consciousness of intercultural communication is very important. Teachers should fully realize the importance of intercultural communication and cultural teaching in Business English teaching and adopted a new type of Business English teaching mode to cultivate students' cross-cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication skills. So as to make students overcome cultural barriers in the business activities in the future and to achieve effective communication. All of this will help to smoothly promote the international business activities and to better achieve Business English practical talent training goal.

All in all, Business English teaching needs this kind of teaching materials which combined the cross-cultural communication knowledge and business instances, and needs the reasonable science curriculum to improve the students' learning motivation, and then train the talents who can adapt to the globalization economy environment. It requires students' analyses the modern business management and marketing from the perspective of cross-cultural communication to make the teaching better service to actual business. And the cross-cultural communication teaching should become the indispensable course for students majoring in Business English. Making the students adapt to the environment changing in different patterns and have the sensitivity to the difference between different cultures and can normally communicate with people of different cultural background, increasingly becoming an important factor that multinationals filter talents. Therefore, both as a staff on-the-job training of the multinational company or a course for economic and trade professional students, intercultural communication research and teaching increasingly become a necessary subject and a magic weapon of winning the business of the people. With the knowledge of the Business English based on the cross-cultural communication, we can avoid cultural misunderstandings and conflicts and jump out of the dilemma of the extreme nationalism. And finally, we will learn to respect each other's cultural norms and values and can communicate with the people of alien cultural background on an equal footing, coordinate the different cultures.

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