

Culture and Pragmatic Competence Development

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Abstract: The ultimate goal of language teaching is to cultivate students' communicative competence through written or oral means. In traditional teaching, teachers overemphasize the importance of language knowledge and neglect the cultivation of students' pragmatic competence, which often leads to various language barriers and pragmatic failures in communication. Therefore, foreign language teaching must focus more on the cultivation of students' pragmatic competence in order to meet the requirements of personnel training in the field of cross-cultural communication. Starting from intercultural communication, this paper probes into the cultivation and acquisition of pragmatic competence, and puts forward relevant suggestions on the cultivation of pragmatic competence in current foreign language teaching in China.

1. Introduction

One of the purposes of foreign language learning is to communicate smoothly. In the process of communication, people will inevitably be influenced by different social cultures. Nowadays, people from different cultural backgrounds in the world are communicating more and more frequently. In the process of contact and collision, different cultures will interact, infiltrate, absorb and integrate with each other. At the same time, they will also have an impact on cross-cultural communication. Academics believe that language is the carrier of culture, the former can reflect the content of culture, while the former's form and rules of use are constrained and influenced by the latter. Successful intercultural communication requires not only solid foreign language competence, but also the ability to use language to communicate appropriately, that is, pragmatic competence. If we do not have pragmatic competence, there will be cross-cultural communication barriers in the actual communication process, which will lead to misunderstandings. Foreign language teaching aims at improving learners' communicative competence, which includes pragmatic competence. An important goal of foreign language teaching is to cultivate students' pragmatic competence in foreign languages. Therefore, it is necessary to study pragmatic competence in cross-cultural communication in order to improve students' overall cross-cultural communicative competence.

2. A Study on the Plasticity and Feasibility of Cultivating Pragmatic Competence

As pragmatic failure is more complex than linguistic failure, scholars at home and abroad have explored it from the perspectives of pragmatic awareness, contextual adaptation, communicative competence and even cognitive schema. In the research of increasingly mature pragmatic competence, the cultivation of pragmatic competence is one of the focuses. A large number of empirical studies have shown that the cultivation of pragmatic competence is plasticity and feasibility. In the field of intercultural communication, the theory of communicative competence has laid a foundation for the study of pragmatic competence. Anne Barron pointed out that people's interest in communicative competence triggers the study of pragmatic competence. It is precisely because of people's attention to pragmatic competence that different interpretive models of communicative competence emerge in the field of linguistics and applied linguistics. Interlanguage pragmatics has emerged as a new research field to explore the acquisition of pragmatic competence of second language or foreign language learners. Foreign studies on the cultivation and acquisition of pragmatic competence have been relatively mature. Some researchers have discussed the role of explicit and implicit teaching methods in the cultivation of pragmatic competence, and pointed out that explicit teaching is more

effective than implicit teaching in the cultivation of pragmatic competence. Some researchers have compared the effects of different teaching methods on the development of social pragmatic competence of foreign language learners, and found that deductive teaching method is more effective. Domestic scholars have also put forward countermeasures for the cultivation of pragmatic competence from the aspects of the composition and influence of pragmatic competence. At the first National Topic Forum on Pragmatic Competence and Development held in East China Normal University in November, 2001, experts pointed out that pragmatic competence is a comprehensive competence. The study of pragmatic competence should not be confined to the field of pragmatics, but should be studied and cultivated from a multi-disciplinary or multi-dimensional perspective. In addition, many studies have carried out teaching experiments on the selection of textbooks and the arrangement of group activities in classroom teaching. The results show that the cultivation and acquisition of pragmatic competence are feasible.

3. How to cultivate learners' pragmatic competence in foreign language teaching

Firstly, through cultural teaching, learners can deepen their understanding of the target language culture and enhance their cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication awareness. Cultural teaching is actually the imparting of cultural knowledge related to people's communication or foreign language teaching. It studies the similarities and differences between two or more societies and cultures. Through teaching, English teachers can make students more sensitive to cultural differences and apply them to practical communication, thus laying the foundation for successful communication. Secondly, students' contextual awareness should be cultivated in grammar teaching, pragmatics teaching and intercultural communication teaching. John J. Gumperz pointed out that our effective communication in society is proportional to our understanding of the society. Pragmatic competence is the ability to recognize the context, understand other people's speech accurately in the context, and express oneself appropriately. Pragmatic competence here covers sensitivity and appropriateness of expression to various contexts, including linguistic context and foreign language context. For most English learners, pragmatic failures in intercultural communication are often unconscious, but for native speakers, they are difficult to understand or even misinterpret as impolite behavior. Traditional language teaching emphasizes the training of grammar and skills, and seldom considers contextual factors. To cultivate the contextual awareness of language users, we should reduce the excessive dependence on linguistic forms, strengthen the pragmatic function of language, and learn to judge the meaning of language with the help of situational context. Only by identifying and analyzing specific contexts can we choose appropriate language expressions for expression, which is of great significance to achieve cross-cultural communication smoothly.

In addition, teachers should also change traditional teaching concepts, enhance cultural literacy and innovate teaching models in teaching. The process of foreign language learning is the process of cultivating students' pragmatic competence. Therefore, teachers play the role of organizers, guiders and supervisors in the whole process of learning. The change of teachers' teaching concepts, the improvement of classroom teaching modes and the enhancement of pragmatic awareness play an important role in the cultivation of English learners' pragmatic competence. Foreign language teachers should reform the traditional teaching methods, strengthen the cultivation of learners' pragmatic competence, analyze the cultural background of language use, strengthen cultural infiltration, weaken the cultural differences between East and West, and minimize cultural conflicts. Teachers also need to enhance their own cultural literacy and pragmatic awareness and competence. Only in this way can we cultivate students' pragmatic competence and examine our English teaching from the perspective of pragmatics, so as to better correct the deviation between teaching content and teaching form.

4. Conclusion

Foreign language teaching should not only cultivate students' linguistic competence, but also their pragmatic competence. The cultivation of students' pragmatic competence is a long-term process,

which requires students to accumulate pragmatic knowledge and understand more cultural connotations. Therefore, in all aspects of English teaching, teachers should strengthen the cultivation of students' pragmatic competence, improve students' cultural background knowledge, so that students can eventually use the target language correctly and communicate smoothly with native speakers.

References

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