

The Cross-Cultural Training of College English Teaching Under the Concept of “Internet+”

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Abstract. Objective: To improve the college student’s English level by combining English language teaching with cultural teaching through “Internet+” technology. Method: This paper introduces the concepts of “Internet+” and Cross-Culture, and analyses the importance of cultural factors in English teaching. It also studies the teaching content of the combination of English teaching and cultural teaching. It mainly includes the cultural connotation of English words, English syntax and discourse structure features. Beyond this there are the cultural background, ways of thinking, communication styles, behaviour, and their values in Anglo-American countries. In addition, this paper builds flipped English classroom teaching modes based on MOOC and Micro-Class, and introduces the current mobile learning environment and generalized learning environment. Results: Compared with the traditional teaching mode, “Internet+” provides abundant teaching resources for English teaching, and diversified learning approaches. These advantages can meet diverse needs of students’ English learning, which greatly mobilizes the learning interest. At the same time, the combination of cultural teaching has further improved students’ English learning efficiency. Conclusions: According to their individual needs, both teachers and students can choose appropriate teaching methods so that they can learn English quickly and efficiently. Meanwhile, applying Internet technology can help students better understand the cultural background of Anglo-American countries, which is conducive to the integration of English learning and cultural knowledge and improving Cross-Cultural communication skills.

Keywords: *Internet+, English teaching, Cross-Cultural communication, flipped classroom, mobile learning*

1. Introduction

English teaching in China has undergone various forms of reform. However, the teaching effect is still not satisfactory. Although the students trained have proficient language skills, their Cross-Cultural communication skills are very poor. There are a lot of misunderstandings when it comes to actual communication with British and American people, which leads to problems in communication. In the end, teachers ignore the cultural differences between Anglo-American countries and China in the teaching process, which leads to many mistakes made by college students in the actual use of English. Therefore, it is urgent to combine the cultural knowledge of Anglo-American countries with English language teaching.

With the rapid development of global information technology, “Internet+” has penetrated into the corner of people’s daily life. The curriculum teaching has also kept up with the trend of the times. It has become increasingly common to apply the Internet technology to teaching. However, English teaching under the background of the “Internet+” era has not received enough attention, and there is no systematic research and application by professional staff. The new idea and goal of education reform in the era of “Internet+” is the perfect integration of information technology and English teaching to realize the new mode of English teaching. That is to say, this mode will not only learn from the essence of traditional English teaching, but also use the multimedia teaching methods and digital teaching resources provided in the “Internet+” era to reform and innovate traditional English teaching mode. And then a new English teaching mode adapted to the development of the “Internet+” era was formed [1].

Based on the “Internet+” technology, this paper studies the importance of cultural factors to language learning, combines cultural teaching with language teaching, and establishes a flipped English classroom mode that allows students to learn English in multiple ways. At the same time, the Internet provides a more convenient way and abundant knowledge for students’ English learning, which fully mobilizes students’ interest, thereby improving students’ English skill.

2. Concept Introduction

2.1 “Internet+”

“Internet+” refers to Internet-based communication technology, computer technology, network technology, and multimedia technology. It is a representative product of social development. In the information society, it has become an indispensable part of human society. In other words, “Internet+” is “Internet + various traditional industries”, but this is not just a simple combination of the two. In fact, it uses information and communication technology and the Internet platform to allow the Internet to be deeply integrated with traditional industries, creating new development ecology. It represents a new social form, that is, to give full play to the optimization and integration of the Internet in the allocation of social resources, to deeply integrate the innovation achievements of the Internet in various economic and social fields, to enhance the innovation and productivity of the whole society, and to form broader new forms of economic development that use the Internet as an infrastructure and enablement tool. “Internet+” can continue to provide Chinese online learning platform with rich and diverse resources and strong support.

2.2 Cross-Cultural Communication

The world is diverse and there are various cultural traditions. People of different cultural backgrounds often have various Cross-Cultural communication behaviors. Both sides in communication can use the same language to talk, and also use gestures, expressions and other body language. Communication is a process of exchanging information between the two parties. For the exchanged information, the expressor needs to explain it through language, so that the other party can understand as much as possible what they are expressing, which is the encoding process. And the receiver needs to understand and digest the received information through their existing information system, which is the decoding process. It is almost impossible to achieve the same understanding of the exchanged information between the two sides, and Cross-Cultural communication makes it harder to achieve the same meaning understanding because of the differences in the cultural background of the two parties. The communicative effect depends on the extent to which the two parties in communication give the same meaning to the exchanged information, that is, the extent to which misunderstandings can be ruled out. Therefore, the communicative effect does not mean whether the receiver understands the linguistic meaning expressed by the expressor or the expressor conveys his own meaning, but to what extent they share each other’s information [2].

3. The Importance of Cultural Factors in English Teaching

For both researchers and ordinary foreign language learners, cultural competence, that is, knowledge about customs, habits, values, beliefs, and meaning systems, should undoubtedly be an integral part of foreign language learning. Context contains cultural rules. Communicative behaviors that occur in specific contexts are limited by culture. Therefore, to achieve effective and decent communication, communicators are required to understand the grammatical knowledge of the language (grammatical competence) and interpret the cultural meaning implied in the context (cultural competence). And the two competences complement each other to form communicative competences [3].

Foreign language teaching without cultural factors is inaccurate and incomplete. For foreign language learners, language learning is meaningless if they know nothing about the habits or national conditions of people whose native language is the target language. The importance of the target language culture has gradually become apparent as language learners have more and more frequent contact with foreign cultures. The biggest obstacle they encounter in Cross-Cultural communication often has nothing to do with language proficiency. Instead, it is the lack of mother tongue culture, and its direct consequence is pragmatic failure. Cultural language errors are more likely to cause adverse effects in Cross-Cultural communication than simple language errors. If the

speaker has language problems such as inaccurate pronunciation, improper words and grammatical errors, the receiver will generally understand and even admire the speaker's courage to talk [4]. However, it is difficult for the receiver to forgive the speaker's pragmatic errors. It can be seen that foreign language learners should note the target language culture when learning a language.

4. Cross-Cultural Teaching Based on “Internet+”

4.1 The Content of Cultural Teaching

Culture is complex and diverse. Thus, in the actual classroom teaching process, teachers should properly organize and summarize the cultural content, and combine it with English teaching. As shown in Table 1, English teaching via “Internet+” can be specifically summarized as follows:

(1) Cultural connotation of English words

This part includes the reference categories, emotional colors, and associative meanings of English words, as well as the metaphorical and extended meanings of idioms, allusions and proverbs. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to the contrast of the cultural meanings between English and Chinese when teaching vocabulary.

(2) Background knowledge of British and American culture

Cultural background is an important part of British and American culture. The cultural knowledge of ethnic customs, geography, social behavior patterns, and history in Anglo-American countries is the basis for students to reasonably associate and speculate on the content of the article, and can help students understand the meaning of the article.

(3) English syntax, Discourse structure features and British and American ways of thinking

English sentences are long, with verbs as the core. The main and side branches are clear, and the levels of main and subordinate components are clear. They have a tree structure. English sentences have a strict grammatical structure and obvious logical relationships with emphasis on analysis. Chinese sentences are short, without strict grammatical constraints, and they focus on parataxis. The twists and turns of English verbs can represent the concept of time, while Chinese uses the adverbial of time to express the concept of time. The English text structure is generally straight, while the Chinese text is spiral or curved. English articles have clear themes, clear context, and strong logic. The Chinese essay is characterized by subtle euphemism and winding paths. Teachers can use comparative analysis to allow students to grasp the characteristics of English syntax and text structure. Affected by the characteristics of English text symbols, British and American people have formed the habit of giving priority to logical thinking during the process of English acquisition. In the process of acquiring Chinese, the Chinese people, under the influence of the characteristics of Chinese characters, have formed a prominent imagery habit.[5]

(4) British and American communication style and behavior

There is a huge difference in behavioral and communicating habits between Anglo-American countries and China. Under normal circumstances, Americans are more straightforward and go straight to the subject when they are communicating. China tends to be subtle and euphemistic in interpersonal communication, considering the feelings of each other as much as possible. The performances in speech act mainly include title, greeting, farewell, greeting, wish, thanks, praise, taboo and euphemism. The performances in non-verbal behavior mainly include body movements, facial expressions, clothing, tones, volume, punctuality and body distance.

(5) Values of Anglo-American countries

In British and American culture, people are more individualistic, including personal strivings, independence, protection of privacy, and the pursuit of freedom and difference. However, Chinese culture pays more attention to collective honor. Thus, the values formed are very different.

Table 1. Cultural Content

Cultural behavior			Cultural psychology	
Necessary for life	Interpersonal relationship	Entertainment	Social values	Life values
Emotional attitude	Opinion	Privacy		
Temporal and spatial significance	Family life	Marriage Customs	Concept of ethics	Aesthetic concept
Knowledge education	Social responsibilities	Religious activities		

4.2 English Teaching Mode Based on “Internet+”

Compared with the traditional teaching mode, flipped classroom as a new type of teaching mode (Figure 1) is a revolution in education and teaching in the “Internet+” era, which has overturned the traditional teaching process. This mode requires students to watch teaching videos and learn new knowledge in advance. Then they can interact with classmates in class under the guidance of teachers and learn from each other to achieve the goal of outputting language and internalizing knowledge.

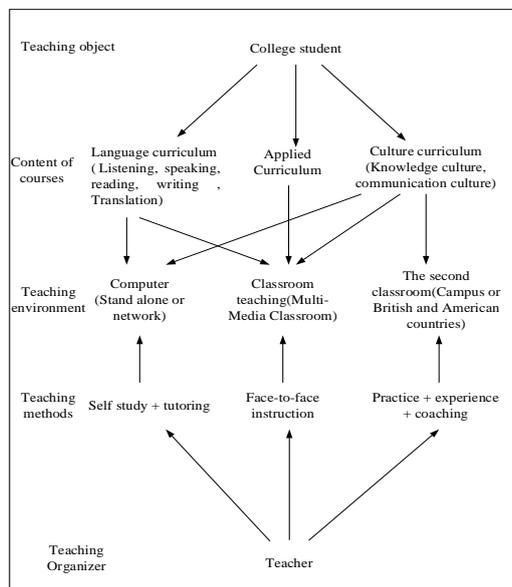


Figure 1. English Teaching Mode Flow Chart

(1) Flipped English classroom teaching mode based on MOOC

MOOC is the teaching mode based on the Internet platform and relying on the Internet, which is the combination of modern information technology and curriculum teaching in the “Internet+” era. Also, it is very different from traditional curriculum, which is mainly reflected in the steps such as the lecturer, the main body and number of learners, the time and space of the lecture, the learning motivation of the learner, the network feedback mode, as well as the course evaluation and planning [6]. MOOC’s education approach has provided a deep understanding among the online platform, students, teachers, and educational content.

(2) Flipped English classroom teaching mode based on Micro-Class

Micro-Class is based on teaching videos. Teachers only explain a certain teaching link or knowledge point instead of teaching the entire course. Some short videos are uploaded to the network so that learners can watch it repeatedly to master a certain knowledge point. Its main content includes not only a refined explanation of key knowledge, but also lesson plans, courseware, and quizzes corresponding to knowledge points, which are also called micro-resources. Micro-Class is an extension of classroom teaching and an important guarantee for achieving the flipped classroom. The process of this teaching mode is divided into four steps. Before the class, the teacher records the video and sends it to the students. Students are required to watch and learn the

knowledge points in the videos to complete the various teaching links. During the class, the teacher divides students into several groups for cooperative learning, and then members of each group report and exchange the learning fruits. Summary and reflection are made after the class. Micro-Class has distinctive themes, clear goals, rich resources and real environment. And it is easy to use [7].

4.3 English Teaching Environment Based on “Internet+”

(1) Mobile learning environment

At present, almost every university student has a mobile phone. The app WeChat on it can provide students with learning content and materials. Students can use WeChat to learn English online. Compared with computers, mobile phones are small and easy to carry. Students can learn anytime and anywhere, thus the online learning is popular with teachers and students. At the same time, one-way teaching of teachers in class is gradually replaced. Students can use fragmented time to learn, and repeatedly learn classroom knowledge to achieve multiple interactions between teaching and learning. English learning platform on WeChat uses public platforms or personal clients to transfer data, share teaching resources, and interact with each other.

(2) Generalized learning environment

Teachers upload the English learning materials of all courses to the online learning platform, and students can actively choose suitable learning resources for personalized and generalized learning according to their learning process and interests. Establishing an open and interactive English education and learning platform on the Internet will help achieve organic interaction among teachers, students and resources. The diversified English assessment mechanism established by the information-based teaching system improves the self-correcting ability of learning and saves teachers’ time to enhance teaching efficiency [8].

5. Results and Discussion

Combining “Internet+” with English teaching, integrating it into cultural knowledge teaching, and reforming the English teaching mode requires more people’s participation and more relevant technical support. With the development of electronic information technology and the popularization of the Internet, a lot of British and American cultural knowledge can be quickly found on the Internet. If students can make good use of the Internet for English learning, the effect will be very impressive. The traditional “spoon-feed” teaching mode of English will be greatly challenged. Knowledge-based learning methods will gradually be replaced by new Internet education methods, and students will have more autonomy and selectivity in learning.

Figure 2 shows the frequency of English teachers choosing the Internet for auxiliary teaching. From the figure, it can be seen that most college English teachers have begun to use the Internet for teaching English courses, which proves the feasibility of “Internet+” applied to teaching.

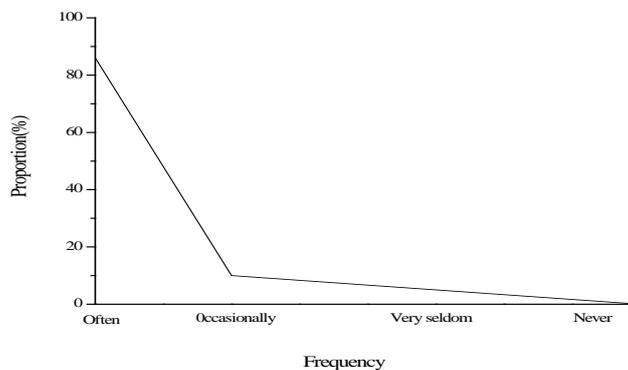


Figure 2. Frequency chart of teachers choosing internet teaching

The advent of the “Internet+” era has not only brought opportunities to English teaching but also been a huge challenge for teachers. Front-line English teachers must bravely face the reform and innovation of the English teaching mode and accept new things. They need to use new teaching ideas and methods to enrich themselves instead of the traditional way of education thinking and the backward education mode. This requires the continuous efforts of English teachers to keep up with the pace of the new era, build a multi-interactive learning environment, and update the English teaching system. Teachers should make full use of the advantages brought by the new era of “Internet +”, and combine corresponding cultural knowledge education to improve the effect of English teaching. In the new era of “Internet+”, people can arm their mind with knowledge, actively use the excellent teaching resources on the Internet, and combine with their classroom teaching to form a brand-new personalized education mode and a personalized teaching style. Teachers should establish advanced education and teaching awareness, fully mobilize students’ enthusiasm and make students like their classes. They also need to cultivate students’ interest in learning, improve teaching quality, and establish aspirations for lifelong learning. In addition, it is necessary to cooperate with colleagues to achieve a win-win situation, create a mobile learning and generalized learning environment, meet the individual needs of students, and improve the efficiency of English teaching.

6. Conclusion

The use of “Internet+” has brought new opportunities to English teaching. More language knowledge, more visual cultural differences, and more ways of teaching have provided diversified ways for college students’ English learning. Both teachers and students can choose the appropriate teaching and learning methods according to their individual needs. With the mobilization of personal interests as the starting point, they can learn English quickly and efficiently. At the same time, the application of Internet technology can more vividly understand the cultural background of Anglo-American countries, which is conducive to the integration of English learning and cultural knowledge to improve Cross-Cultural communication skills.

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