

The Influence of the Main Taboo Customs Differences Between Tibetan Nationality and English-speaking Countries on Intercultural Communication

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ABSTRACT

Against the background of cultural globalization, the communication between Tibetan and British people is becoming more and more frequent. However, in cross-cultural communication, the result of communication is not ideal because of unintentionally touching each other's taboo customs and cultures. Therefore, understanding the taboo customs and cultures of other countries will be conducive to promoting intercultural communication. Based on this understanding, this paper discusses the significance of taboo, analyzes the main differences between Tibetan and English taboo customs and the influence of the differences on intercultural communication, and puts forward that understanding the differences between Tibetan and English taboo customs is beneficial to improve intercultural communication ability, which is conducive to the external dissemination of Tibetan culture and the greatest degree of integration of the two cultures.

Keywords: *Tibetan and English, Taboo culture, Custom difference, Influence.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In intercultural communication, people often encounter an inevitable and very sensitive problem — taboo. "Taboo" is defined in Chinese dictionaries as "Forbidden or taboo words or deeds". In international academic circles, "taboo" is collectively called "tabu", which originates from the local language of the Polynesia islands in the Pacific Ocean, and it is transliterated as "taboo" or "tabu" in English, and also translated as "tabu" in Chinese, which has become a common term in anthropology and folklore [1]. Taboo means "sacred", "untouchable" or "things that need extreme attention". Therefore, taboo includes two aspects: one is that people believe in or revere certain things in religious beliefs and social customs, or some taboo behavior. Second, people generally agree to restrict themselves in public [2]. From the above explanation, people can draw a conclusion that language is closely related to social and cultural background. Therefore, taboo custom

culture, as a culture of all countries, often appears in the process of language communication. With the further development of cultural globalization, the modes of cultural exchange, cultural fusion and cultural infiltration among different races and nationalities have become a ubiquitous phenomenon of intercultural communication. In today's multi-cultural communication, people of different ethnic groups to overcome the language and culture differences in communication are not easy. Tibet, on the Qinghai Tibet Plateau, is "the Belt and Road" hub for neighboring countries such as the Nepal. The Tibetan people living on the Qinghai Tibet Plateau are attracting more and more attention from overseas people in Europe and the United States because of its unique plateau culture, social customs and habits [3]. Therefore, in more and more Tibetans and European and American people intercultural communication activities, people are required to understand and respect each other's cultural differences, and taboo is a very sensitive topic in intercultural communication, because it involves people's language and

behaviour habits. In today's social interaction, taboos are omnipresent, ranging from politics, culture and diplomacy, to food, clothing, shelter and transportation, and social interaction, due to the differences in taboos and customs, Tibetans and people in Europe and the United States have different understandings of the same information, and different concerns. To understand the main taboos and customs of the Tibetans and European and American people can reduce and avoid obstacles in intercultural communication between them, and can improve the effectiveness of intercultural communication between the two ethnic groups, in order to strengthen mutual cultural exchanges and exchanges, to achieve successful intercultural communication.

2. THE DIFFERENCES OF MAIN TABOOS BETWEEN TIBETAN AND ENGLISH IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

2.1 Etiquette Taboos Between Tibetan and English

This taboo is rich and colorful in social life. It originally evolved from a custom or tradition, and then it was established by customs through special regulations. Many people give Tibetan people warm hospitality, quite heavy etiquette such a very practical evaluation, so their social taboos are mainly as follows:

When walking, it's taboo to be ahead of others, especially taboo in front of the elderly, monks and teachers; when they meet on the way, they must give way with courtesy; when offering tea or rice to guests, it is forbidden to use dirty bowls, old bowls or have cracks in the bowl gap; when serving tea and wine to guests, it is forbidden to use dirty bowls and put hands on the mouth of bowls. For people with high moral integrity, such as the elderly, monks, teachers and so on, it is taboo to call their names, and the word of respect "La" should be added after the name. "Hada" is an indispensable gift for each other. When "hada" is taken over and given to each other, people must bend down and stretch out their hands to show respect. When guests come to the house, it is forbidden to put empty barrels, empty baskets, etc. on the road or in front of the guests. When crossing mountains and lakes, it is forbidden to make loud noise, which may bring rain, snow and hail.

The taboos in western countries are mainly as follows:

Handshake taboo: it's taboo to shake hands with elders, women or strangers actively and casually;

Walking taboo: it's taboo to walk in a drunken way, shake obliquely, spit or litter everywhere;

Road talk taboo: when meeting acquaintances on the road, it is taboo to talk in the middle of the road or on the roadside for a long time; when talking with women on the road, they should talk while walking and avoid standing on the road;

Visit taboo: it's taboo for guests to visit suddenly without making an appointment; when visiting relatives and friends, it is taboo not to take off your hat after entering the door; sit opposite women and taboo smoking;

Condolence taboo: when visiting patients, it is forbidden to talk for a long time; when mourning the dead, it is taboo to mention the dead first.

Of course, people in Europe and the United States also have one of the biggest social etiquette taboos, which is personal privacy (personal privacy generally includes personal age, properties, salaries, marriages and love, etc.). Privacy is sacred and inviolable. Unless he wants to, other people must not violate it. Therefore, when talking with European and American people, people must not involve things in the field of privacy.

2.2 Language Taboo Between Tibetan and English

Language is originally a social tool, people use it to exchange ideas and transmit information, but in the environment with little understanding of natural phenomena and natural forces, language is often associated with some natural phenomena, and is endowed with a superhuman and supernatural force that it does not have. It is believed that language itself can bring happiness and disaster to people, and that language is the root of misfortune and happiness, and anyone who offends this root will be punished. On the contrary, those who please this source will be protected and blessed, which naturally leads to the taboo of language [4].

Tibetan language taboos are reflected in all aspects of social life, religion and religious belief is an important area of Tibetan taboos. Tibetans believe that language has a soul and amazing power, and generally speaking, they are especially taboo to say the word "Death", if you hear someone say

"You die without the burial ground", so it is full of curses. For example, to the death of living Buddha and eminent monks, you should say "Parinirvana" and "Nirvana"; to the death of long-lived old people, you should say "to die in bed of old age". Another example: Tibetans rarely talk about the names of the dead. They always use euphemistic words of "Xing Xia" (meaning: when you die, Amitabha Buddha will welcome you to the Western Paradise without suffering from reincarnation, which is often used for eminent monks and other respected people) and "Ce Dai" (meaning the end of life, which is used for ordinary people) to show their respect. Tibetans refer to their deceased elders as "Palayi", the father of heaven and "Malayi", the mother of heaven. In daily life, when encountering some important things, they often like to swear. Such as: "Ni-ma-La-sha" (sunlight sincerity testimony), "Gen-qu-song" (three treasures testify), "Jue-yi-xi-nuo-bu" (as witnessed by Sakyamuni Buddha, the treasure of Ruyi) and so on. Such oaths and curses are the result of worship of language [5].

The language taboos of British and American people are shown in that they are deeply influenced by Christianity, and the Christian God's name Jeehovah (Jehovah) is the biggest taboo word. In British and American culture, the White supremacy used vicious racial discrimination words to curse black people. For example: the words "nigger, niggra, niggruh" and other words are completely taboo words with strong insulting color to call the black people. Racial discrimination in American English is not limited to African Americans. For example, Italian Americans are called dagos, Jewish Americans are called kikes, Polish Americans are called Polacks, and Chinese Americans are called chinks.

2.3 Religious Taboo Between Tibetan and English

Among all kinds of taboos, religious taboos are the earliest. All countries in the world have different religious beliefs. Since there are religions, there are religious precepts. Religious precepts are actually religious taboos, and different religions have different taboos. As we all know, Tibetan people are basically all the people who believe in Tibetan Buddhism. Therefore, most of the taboos and customs are related to their religious beliefs. They believe that obedience to natural phenomena will give people peace, happiness and auspiciousness. If it is violated, it will bring evil, disaster and misfortune to people. Among the

numerous taboos of Tibetans, we mainly talk about the following aspects.

Taboo killing: The biggest taboo of the Tibetans is to kill. For example, Zan-pu-song-zan-gan in the "Ten good laws of Buddhism" stipulates: don't kill, means not to kill people, and also not to hurt all living animals at will, this aspect is stricter with the ordained monks. For the general public, even if the ants climb on the body, they will not kill them, but on the ground to let it crawl away. Tibetans are forbidden to kill wild animals and birds and beasts. They also eat beef and mutton, but they do not slaughter themselves. Tibetans are absolutely forbidden to eat donkey meat, horse meat and dog meat, and they also taboo other people's fishing and eating fish. They think that fish is their patron saint, and eating it will be punished by heaven.

Taboos in Holy Land: if you encounter religious facilities such as temples, Nima heap, and pagodas, you must make a detour from left to right; It is not permitted to cross the brazier; the prayer wheel and sutra cylinder cannot be reversed; smoking, spitting and defecation are prohibited in Buddhist pagodas and other religious places; taboo others touch their heads with their hands.

Kitchen God taboo; it is strictly forbidden to cross the stove, it is forbidden to spit to the fire stove, taboo to burn bones and fur in the fire stove etc. The stove should be kept clean, and it is strictly forbidden to put unclean things on the side; it's taboo to dump garbage directly into the stove for burning. When you go out, you should pray to the kitchen god for blessing.

People in Britain and America mainly believe in Christianity, The core of Christian religious taboos is embodied in "The Ten Commandments" in the Bible, which are:

- "You shall have no other gods before me".
- "Do not worship idols".
- "That shalt not speak my name in vain".
- "Remember the Sabbath day".
- "Honor your father and your mother".
- "You shall not murder".
- "You shall not commit adultery".
- "You shall not steal".
- "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor".
- "You shall not covet your neighbor's house".

In addition to the "Ten Commandments of God", there are other taboos in Christianity. It is said that in India, it is taboo to hold a wedding in the evening, and in Tonga, it is taboo to leave home and go to work on Sundays.

2.4 Dietary Taboos Between Tibetan and English

Diet is an important part of one's life, this kind of dietary taboo includes not only the content of diet, that is, what kind of food to avoid, but also the way of diet, that is, a certain behavior or way to avoid when eating.

In the Tibetan diet taboo, they generally only eat beef and mutton, and do not eat horses, donkeys, mules, dog meat. Some Tibetans do not even eat chicken, pork or eggs. There are fish, shrimp, snakes, eels and seafood, except for some urban residents (mostly young people) eat a small amount of food, and the vast majority of pastoral and agricultural areas of the people never eat. They never prey on birds, pheasants, especially snowy pheasants like La chargome (lha-bya-gong-mo), Tibetans respect birds as gods, taboo hunting [6]. In the meat taboo, they also taboo to eat fish. Among dietary taboos, Tibetans also have more taboos against eating garlic. If you want to go to the Holy Place, you must not eat garlic. When the Tibetans pass the knife to the guests during the meal, the tip of the knife should not face the guests, but the handle of the knife should face the guests. When the guests left, the taboo tea was not finished and remained in the bowl. Tibetans must toast with their right hand when making a toast to their guests. They must not toast with their left hand, because in their custom, they toast with their left hand when worshipping the dead.

The dietary habits of Americans are quite different from those of the Tibetans. The dietary taboos in Britain and the United States are shown in their avoidance of fat meat, sticky bones and skin of chickens and ducks (except for the skin of roast ducks and roast chickens). It is forbidden to eat food made from the heads, feet and internal organs of various animals, taboo to eat a variety of animal meat, such as dog meat, snake meat and so on. Avoid eating garlic, fermented bean curd, shrimp paste, fish sauce and other flavour too strong condiments. They also have many taboos regarding dietary rules. For example, when eating soup should not make a sound; it is forbidden to gobble while eating; they taboo the clanging sound when eating with knives and forks. Especially, it is taboo

for westerners to pick teeth in public places after meals or sprinkle salt; it is taboo to talk when your mouth is full of food; when eating, one should avoid pointing knives and forks at guests; it is taboo to put the knife and fork into your mouth and lick the food on it; it is also taboo to put your tableware in someone else's position.

3. THE INFLUENCE OF THE TABOO CUSTOMS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TIBETAN NATIONALITY AND ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES ON INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

It is very important for intercultural communication to know the meaning of taboo and the difference of taboo customs so as to avoid all kinds of taboos in communication. In today's era of cultural globalization, different races and nationalities have different cultural origins and customs, so when communicating with each other, the understanding of information is very different. In the process of daily communication, due to the lack of knowledge of cultural taboos, communication errors are very common. Due to different cultural backgrounds, people of Tibetan and British races will inevitably show insufficient understanding of cultural taboos in communication, which can easily lead to communication errors, misunderstanding and even dissatisfaction.

In order to better carry out cross-cultural communication, people should use some communication skills and strategies in intercultural communication, so as to avoid mentioning taboo topics or touching each other's taboo customs and culture. On the one hand, before intercultural communication, people should accumulate the taboo culture knowledge of the other party, so as to fully understand and master the taboo custom culture of the other party's country. In addition, in the process of cross-cultural communication with each other, people should observe each other's facial expression and voice, so as to understand each other's state and mood, and then find the right way of communication. For example, in daily communication, "Personal privacy" is a taboo custom that is worth knowing deeply. In Tibetan areas, when communicating with each other, people can ask personal questions such as ages, properties, salaries, marriages, love and other personal privacy. But in western countries, when talking with each other, people can't talk about their personal privacy,

otherwise it will lead to misunderstanding and even conflict. Due to the differences of taboo customs, people of different regions and races will have different views and cognition, and different ways of thinking and communication modes. For example, in the etiquette of being a guest, westerners think that arriving early is to disturb the host and should arrive on time or two minutes late. In Tibetan areas, according to the thinking habits of most Tibetan people, the guest should arrive early and can help the host do some preparatory work.

People seek the similarities and differences of Tibetan and English taboo customs, which can effectively overcome the barriers in their intercultural communication, so as to strengthen the cultural exchange between Tibet and English. At the same time, people also need to understand the integration and communication process of the two cultures. In the process of intercultural communication, people should look at taboos from the perspective of development and connection. In addition, both sides of communication should strengthen the cultivation of cultural knowledge and awareness of the target language countries, learn more about the thinking and behaviour habits of other countries. In today's era of cultural globalization and cultural integration, it is important to understand as much as possible the differences in cultural taboos caused by different cultural backgrounds, only in this way can intercultural communication be carried out effectively and efficiently, and can communication errors caused by different taboos and customs be avoided.

4. CONCLUSION

All in all, the differences of taboo customs exist in intercultural communication and run through all the cultural activities of human beings, it involves all aspects of people's life and is the embodiment of a country's culture. Taboo regulates our behaviour, telling us what to do and what not to do, taboo warns us of morality and restrict our code of conduct so that people don't make mistakes or make fewer mistakes. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the taboo culture between Tibetan and British nationalities, get rid of the confinement of intercultural communication mode, and establish a good sense of cultural differences, so that Tibetan culture and British and American culture can promote and learn from each other. Therefore, in order to better conduct intercultural communication, people should not only pay attention to the

existence of a variety of taboo customs and cultures, but also pay attention to the use of communication skills and countermeasures. At the same time, it is necessary to deepen the understanding of Tibetan customs and cultures, social and cultural characteristics and nationality of all nationalities in the world, in which this is conducive to the external spread of Tibetan culture, but also to the greatest degree of integration of the two cultures, so that the history of human culture can go further.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

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