

Cross-cultural Communication

跨文化交际



李桂荣 莫莉莉 编著



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内 容 简 介

全书共 10 章,涉及文化与交际、言语交际、非言语交际、性别差异与文化交际等诸多跨文化交际内容。每章由案例、正文和练习组成,系统介绍章节所涉知识点。

本书可作为高等院校英语专业的文化类课程的教材,也可作为其他专业大学本科和研究生相关必选课或选修课教材,同时也适用于涉外工作人员、英语教师和英语爱好者。

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前言

本教材的编写背景:

《国家中长期教育改革和发展规划纲要(2010—2020年)》指出:“鼓励学校优势学科面向世界,支持参与和设立国际学术合作组织、国际科学计划,支持与海内外高水平教育、科研机构建立联合研发基地。加快创建世界一流大学和高水平大学的步伐,培养一批拔尖创新人才,形成一批世界一流学科,产生一批国际领先的原创性成果,为提升我国综合国力贡献力量。”这一目标的提出,为我国高等教育未来10年的发展指明了方向,同时也为各高校的教育改革和进一步发展提出了更高的要求。加强国际学术交流与合作,加速国际化办学是各高校未来10年的首要任务,在这样的背景下,跨文化交际能力的重要性日益凸显。如何快速而有效地培养学生跨文化交际意识、提高其跨文化交际能力就成了摆在高校工作者面前的首要任务。为此,我们为英语专业的大学本科和研究生编写了英文版的《跨文化交际》,旨在通过该教材的授课,在培养英语专业学生跨文化交际意识与能力的同时,使其充分认识到其文化使者的责任与义务,并在国际化办学、国际交流与合作的过程中做出应有的贡献。

本教材的编写结构及特色:

1. 在众多原版资料的基础上,本书对跨文化交际内容进行了认真筛选和精简,选取了具有代表性的十大方面,如文化与交际、言语交际、非言语交际、性别差异与文化交流、文化身份与文化交流、国际商务与跨文化交际、外语教学与跨文化交际、跨文化婚恋、文化冲突、跨文化交际能力,分为10个独立的章节进行编写。每章内容由案例、正文和练习组成,以点概面地系统介绍了相关的跨文化交际知识点。

2. 本书每章一般选取与其讲解知识点相关的3~4个案例,并附有思考题及案例分析,起到“抛砖引玉”之效,为正文讲解将要涉及到的知识点做一定铺垫。书中的案例或来源于编者亲身跨文化交际实践,或参阅其他文献,生动真实,具有很

强的实用性,对案例分析具有很强的说服力。

3. 每章的单元练习包括对跨文化交际相关术语的理解、跨文化现象的案例分析和讨论反思。同时,练习单元最后还附有 1~2 篇阅读材料,补充一些相关的跨文化知识,学习者或课程教师可以选择性地指导阅读,从而拓展文化视野。

4. 本书对语言进行了一定的提炼和简化,如在引用原版术语定义的同时,从不同角度对其加以阐释,使其更通俗易懂,便于学生自主学习。

5. 本书择选与跨文化交际息息相关的国际商务、外语学习、跨文化婚恋为题材,把握当下跨文化交际的主要脉动,旨在唤起广大学习者“学以致用”的热情,而不是把跨文化交际仅作为一种理论学习。其实,跨文化交际是起源于跨文化实践而逐渐形成的行为准则和理论延伸。

本教材适用对象:

本书可作为高等院校英语专业文化类课程的教材,也可作为其他专业大学本科和研究生相关必选课或选修课教材,同时也适用于涉外工作人员、英语教师和英语爱好者。

本教材由浙江万里学院外语学院英语系莫莉莉教授和李桂荣老师合作编写。其中,莫莉莉教授完成了第 1 章、第 2 章、第 4 章、第 6 章和第 7 章的编写工作,李桂荣老师完成了第 3 章、第 5 章、第 8 章、第 9 章和第 10 章的编写工作。另外,美国 Norwich 大学访问学者、山东财经大学国际教育学院的冯春环副教授在本书的编写过程中提供了大量的参考资料,并提出了很多宝贵的建议,在此深表谢意。由于编者水平所限,疏漏之处实属难免,恳请学界同仁及读者不吝指正。

编者

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Contents

Chapter 1 Culture, Communication, Intercultural Communication	1
Warm-up Cases	1
1. Culture	3
1.1 Definitions of Culture	3
1.2 The Characteristics of Culture	4
1.3 Culture and Language	6
2. Communication	7
2.1 Definitions of Communication	7
2.2 The Characteristics of Communication	8
2.3 The Scope and Classification of Communication	10
3. Intercultural Communication	12
3.1 Definition of Intercultural Communication	12
3.2 Barriers in Intercultural Communication	12
3.3 Intercultural Communication Competence	15
Exercises	16
Glossary	20
References	21
Keys to Exercises	22
Chapter 2 Verbal Communication	23
Warm-up Cases	23
1. Cultural Variations in Verbal Communication	25

1.1	Addressing	25
1.2	Greeting and Leave-taking	26
1.3	Appologizing	27
1.4	Invitation and Response	28
1.5	Compliment and Response	30
2.	The Reasons for the Differences in Verbal Communication	31
2.1	High-context and Low-context Cultures	31
2.2	Individualism and Collectivism	33
2.3	Different Cultural Thought Pattern	34
3.	Special Forms of Oral Communication	35
3.1	Oral Presentation	36
3.2	Telephone Calls	37
4.	Cultural Impact on Language at Various Levels	38
4.1	Word Meaning	38
4.2	Idioms	39
4.3	Topics	40
4.4	Pragmatic Transfer	41
Exercises		42
Glossary		47
References		48
Keys to Exercises		49
Chapter 3 Nonverbal Communication		50
Warm-up Cases		50
1.	Definitions of Nonverbal Communication	52
2.	Functions of Nonverbal Communication	53
2.1	Repeating	53
2.2	Complementing	54
2.3	Substituting	54
2.4	Regulating	54
2.5	Contradicting	54
3.	Categories of Nonverbal Communication	55

3.1	Kinesics	55
3.1.1	Gestures	56
3.1.2	Facial Expressions	58
3.1.3	Postures	59
3.2	Chronemics	60
3.2.1	M-time (Monochronic time)	61
3.2.2	P-time (Polychronic time)	62
3.3	Proxemics	62
3.3.1	Hall's Spatial Distance	62
3.3.2	Personal Territory	64
3.4	Silence	65
4.	Significance of Nonverbal Communication	66
	Exercises	67
	Glossary	71
	References	72
	Keys to Exercises	72
	Chapter 4 Cross-gender Communication	73
	Warm-up Cases	73
1.	Sex and Gender	75
2.	Feminine and Masculine Communication Cultures	76
2.1	Different Features of Feminine and Masculine Culture	76
2.2	The Reasons for the Differences	78
3.	Cross-gender Communication Strategies	80
	Exercises	81
	Glossary	88
	References	88
	Keys to Exercises	89
	Chapter 5 Identity and Cross-cultural Communication	90
	Warm-up Cases	90
1.	Definitions of Identity	93
2.	Cultural Identity	94

2.1	Definitions of Cultural Identity	94
2.2	Formations of Cultural Identity	94
2.3	Characteristics of Cultural Identity	95
3.	Identity and Cross-cultural Barriers	96
3.1	Stereotyping	96
3.1.1	Definitions of Stereotyping	96
3.1.2	The Stereotyping Process	97
3.1.3	Means of Acquiring Stereotypes	97
3.1.4	Pitfalls of Stereotype	98
3.2	Ethnocentrism	99
3.2.1	Definitions of Ethnocentrism	99
3.2.2	Forms of Ethnocentrism	100
3.2.3	Negative Impacts on Cross-cultural Communication	100
3.2.4	Efforts to Overcome Ethnocentrism	101
3.3	Prejudice	102
3.3.1	Definitions of Prejudice	102
3.3.2	Manifestations of Prejudice	103
3.3.3	Functions of Prejudice	105
3.4	Racism	106
3.4.1	Definitions of Racism	106
3.4.2	Manifestations of Racism	107
3.4.3	Forms of Racism	108
4.	Overcoming Cultural Biases Based on Identity	109
Exercises		110
Glossary		112
References		113
Keys to Exercises		113
Chapter 6 Culture and International Business		114
Warm-up Cases		114
1.	Business across Culture	117
1.1	Initial Contacts	117
1.2	Punctuality	120

1.3 Dining Rules and Dressing Codes	121
1.4 Superstition and Taboos	124
2. Negotiation and Managing Differences	125
2.1 Negotiation Differences	125
2.2 Management Differences	127
3. International Business Strategies	128
3.1 Negotiation Strategies	128
3.2 Marketing Strategies	130
Exercises	131
Glossary	140
References	141
Keys to Exercises	141
Chapter 7 Cross-cultural Communication and Language Teaching	142
Warm-up Cases	142
1. Culture, Language and Education	144
2. The Importance of English Language Teaching	145
2.1 English as an International Language	145
2.2 English as a Language in Education	146
2.3 English as a Dominant Working Language	147
3. Language Teaching and Intercultural Communication Competence	147
3.1 The Importance of Intercultural Communication Competence	147
3.2 Linguistic Proficiency and Communicative Competence	148
3.3 How to Improve Intercultural Communication Competence	148
Exercises	150
Glossary	156
References	156
Keys to Exercises	157
Chapter 8 Cross-cultural Communication in Intimate Relationships	158
Warm-up Cases	158
1. Friendships in Cross-cultural Communication	161
1.1 What Is a Friend?	161

1.2 Cultural Varieties in Friendships	162
2. Love Affairs in Cross-cultural Communication	164
2.1 What is a Date, Romance, Love or Marriage?	164
2.2 Suggestions on Cross-cultural Marriages	165
3. Families in Cross-cultural Communication	167
3.1 Family Types	167
3.2 Cultural Impacts on Families	168
4. Cultural Factors in Cross-cultural Intimate Relationships	170
Exercises	172
Glossary	177
References	178
Keys to Exercises	178
Chapter 9 Cultural Differences/ Value Differences	179
Warm-up Cases	179
1. Cultural Differences	181
1.1 Two Types of Cultural Difference	181
1.2 Cultural Differences in Sensation and Perception	182
1.2.1 Physiological Differences	182
1.2.2 Sociological Differences	182
1.2.3 Psychological Differences	183
1.3 Cultural Differences in Etiquette	183
1.3.1 Cultural Differences in Hospitality	183
1.3.2 Cultural Differences in Modesty	184
1.3.3 Cultural Differences in Privacy	184
1.3.4 Cultural Differences in Directness	184
2. Values	185
2.1 Definitions of Values	185
2.2 Classifications of Values	186
2.3 Functions of Values	186
3. Cultural Patterns	187
3.1 Definitions of Cultural Patterns	187
3.2 Major Taxonomies of Cultural Patterns	187

3. 2. 1	Hofstede's Cultural Patterns	187
3. 2. 2	Hall's High/Low Context	197
3. 2. 3	The Kluckhohns & Strodtbeck's Value Orientations	199
3. 3	Remarks on Cultural Patterns	203
Exercises		204
Glossary		206
References		207
Keys to Exercises		208
Chapter 10	Developing Intercultural Competence	210
Warm-up Cases		210
1.	Intercultural Awareness	213
1. 1	Definitions of Intercultural Awareness	213
1. 2	Four Levels of Intercultural Awareness	213
2.	Culture Shock	214
2. 1	Definitions of Culture Shock	215
2. 2	Stages of Culture Shock	215
2. 3	Ways of Coping with Culture Shock	218
3.	Intercultural Adaptation	219
3. 1	Acculturation	219
3. 2	Factors Affecting Intercultural Adaptation	220
3. 3	Intercultural Adaptation Strategies	222
3. 4	Intercultural Adaptation Outcomes	224
4.	Intercultural Competence	225
4. 1	Definitions of Intercultural Competence	225
4. 2	Factors in Intercultural Competence	226
4. 3	Skills to Improve Intercultural Competence	227
Exercises		230
Glossary		233
References		234
Keys to Exercises		235

Chapter 1

Culture, Communication, Intercultural Communication

Warm-up Cases

Case One

A couple of Germans are invited as language teachers in a big city in China. One day, they went to a café for a drink. Owing to the language barriers, they had to communicate with the waitress with gestures. After studying the menu carefully, they pointed to a set and ordered two. After a long preparing, the waitress offered eight sets for them. Facing so many dishes and cups crowded on the table, the German couple were astonished. After a long and difficult argument, the manager got to know the reason: The German intended to order two sets by pointing out his thumb and the second finger, while this gesture indicates eight in China.

Questions:

1. Why do such kinds of cases frequently occur during cross-cultural communication?
2. What is culture-shock? Could you cite one or two examples to illustrate it?
3. Do you have any suggestions on how to avoid culture-shock?

Comments:

A necessary way to avoid culture shock during cross-cultural communication is to get to know more about the others' culture. Many ways are effective, among which literature is of course one of the key ways of gaining insights from other perspectives. In this sense the more we read the accounts of others the less trapped in our own solipsism we may be. Conversely the less we read about or have

the opportunity to think about and investigate others, the more likely we are to misunderstand them.

Case Two

I was dressed up in a graduation gown and waiting in a queue with others to receive my master's award from my university. In front of me was a student from Mauritania called Djack. As one's name was read out one went forward to the podium, shook the proffered hands of various deans and dignitaries, and then returned to the aisle. As the student's name was read out and the award given, the audience would clap. When Djack's name was read, he muttered to me, "Just you wait and see the claps I get—he got a master's and he's a black!" Indeed, I noted that the claps he received were louder and more effusive than they had been previously.

Questions:

1. Suppose the audiences are from Asia, Europe and America. What do you suppose the intentions of the audiences were?
2. Why did the black student say "Just you wait and see the claps I get—he got a master's and he's a black!" What does he interpret from the audience's claps?

Comments:

When a person's intentions are read in a way other than they are intended to be read, then we may talk about this as being an instance of "mis-communication" (MC). Or, to put it in another way, different interpretation of the same event might be the indication of different cultural concept, which might lead to misunderstanding in cross-culture communication. It is much easier for this to occur if one is ignorant of how the other person or people you are with is/are likely to read events. The more sensitive one can become to this multiple reading of events, the better.

Case Three

If in the dining hall, a fly was seen in a glass of beer, an Englishman, with a gentleman's manner, would say: "Give me another one please"; a Frenchman would pour the beer out; a Spanish man would put the money on the table and leave without a word; a Japanese would summon the manager and criticize: "Do you do your business like this?"; an Arab would call the waiter over and give the beer to him, saying, "I'll buy you a drink," and the more humorous American

would say to the waiter: "Please serve the fly and the beer separately. If the customer likes the fly, he could put it into his beer, what do you think?"

Questions:

1. What do the varied reactions to the same situation indicate?
2. Do you think a person from East could appreciate the American way of humor? Why?

Comments:

These expressions above vividly generalized varied reactions to the same situation due to different ethnic origins. Social interaction is one of the primary expressions of human behavior and differences are apparent depending on different nationalities and different mental activities.

1. Culture

1.1 Definitions of Culture

There are many schools in dimensioning the definition of culture. So far there is no agreed one. But if we study the different definitions carefully, we may find actually they are interpreted in different ways in different cultures.

First of all, the dictionaries present very formal and comparatively more complete explanations. *The Modern Chinese Dictionary* (1998) defines culture as "the total sum of material and spiritual wealth created by the mankind in the process of the social and historical development, especially, literature, art, science, education, etc. ; the ability to use the written language and possession of book knowledge; (in archaeology) the aggregation of historical remains, relics of the same historical periods".

In *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2001), culture is "the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively; the customs, civilizations and achievement of a particular time or people; improvement by mental or physical training".

Then different scholars define culture from their unique angles. "Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1871).

"Culture is the total accumulation of beliefs, customs, values, behaviors, institutions and communication patterns that are shared, learned and passed down through the generations in an identifiable group of people" (Davis, 2001).

"Culture is the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving. Culture can therefore include everything from rites of passage to concepts of the soul" (Samovar & Porter, 2000).

We could see that definitions given above are interpreted from different perspectives such as cognitive, social, linguistic, anthropological, psychological, etc. But they share one point in common. That is, culture involves at least three components: what people think, what they do, and the material products they produce. Tylor's definition is a general one, and it is universally accepted. And the definition of Samovar & Porter lays more emphasis on anthropological aspect. Since our goal is to focus on the interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds, we prefer their anthropological view of culture in our study of intercultural communication.

1.2 The Characteristics of Culture

Culture is not innate, but learned.

"According to a standard view, a culture is a complex set of shared beliefs, values, and concepts which enables a group to make sense of its life and which provides it with directions for how to live" (Fay, 1996). In Fay's point, "culture is pictured as a text the vocabulary and grammar of which its members learn. Indeed, in this view, becoming a member of a particular culture is a process of enculturation conceived as learning to read the culture's basic text and making it one's own." In this sense, culture is learned, not inherited. It derives from one's social environment. Marshall R. Singer's remarks well illustrate how culture is learned: As animals, all of us must eat, drink, sleep, find shelter, give and receive affection, and meet all of the other biologic requirements that flesh is heir to. But what we eat and when we eat and how we eat are all behaviors we have learned from the groups in which we have grown up. Not only the language I speak and the way I think but even what I see, hear, taste, touch, and smell are conditioned by the cultures in which I have been raised (p4).

Culture is also shared.

A culture penetrates its individual members mentally so that they possess a certain mind-set, physically so that they possess certain basic bodily dispositions, and socially so that they relate to one another in certain characteristic way. So

people with the same cultural background most probably behave, think and communicate in similar ways.

Culture is adaptive or dynamic.

No culture is fixed except the dead ones. It has to evolve as the people in the culture have to develop, new technology and inventions are frequently invited and many social and historical events continuously occur. To name just a few: China WTO entry, the popularity of computers and mobile phones. What big difference they have made in our life and in our culture! Meanwhile, owing to the assimilation and dissimilation of different cultures, a culture may acquire certain features of others. For example, Chinese wedding used to be very standard and traditional with red as the only lucky color. But nowadays, the white wedding gown which is typical western element is getting more and more popular on Chinese weddings. This is a typical example of the diffusion of the western culture.

Culture is composed of various interrelated facets.

That is, when one facet of culture is touched or changed, many other aspects of culture are affected. For example, September 11 terrorist attacks on America in 2001 have brought profound changes to American culture. The destruction of World Trade Center has not only changed the skylines of New York, but U. S. government policies, environment protection, security, people's attitude toward life, even their belief in religion.

The big earthquake and its following tsunami and nuclear radiation in spring 2011 in Japan serves as another equally illustrative example. It has made its effects deeply felt in many areas: export, tourism, economy, environment protection, architecture, medical systems, people's lifestyle, attitude, values, etc.

Culture is symbolic.

Cultural symbols can take various forms: language (verbal or non-verbal), architects, arts, eating habits, dressing styles, etc. A minor gesture could easily betray one's identity. Even knowing not any Japanese, one can tell the friendly welcome by the bows a Japanese person makes; a designed pattern on a plate can be read as a suggestion of the origin whether from Arabic countries or China. In China, the Great Wall is a symbol of greatness, while similarly, in America, the Statue of Liberty is a symbol of American freedom. Another well-illustrative example is the popularity of the red color in China. It appears on almost all kinds of occasions and places: weddings, festivals, the windows of driving cars, etc. It is a symbol for good luck or for driving out evils or misfortune.