

跨文化视角 英语阅读教程 4

English Reading Course for Intercultural Perspectives

—Developing Intercultural Communication
Competence

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跨文化视角英语阅读教程

English Reading Course for Intercultural Perspectives
—Developing Intercultural Communication Competence

第四册

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前言

《跨文化视角英语阅读教程》1-4册是根据《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》(以下简称《大纲》)精心设计编写的。《大纲》提出了注重培养学生的跨文化交际能力和对文化差异的敏感性、宽容性以及处理文化差异的灵活性。同时《大纲》又对21世纪外语专业人才的培养规格作了概述,对21世纪外语人才的能力作了如下定义:外语专业学生在工作中的运用能力主要指能够从事不同文化间交流与合作的能力、交际能力、协作能力、适应工作的能力、独立提出建议和讨论的能力、组织能力、知人处事的能力、灵活应变的能力等。我们认为这不仅仅指语言的交际能力,而且是跨文化交际能力在工作环境中的具体体现。本套教程就是为了达到这一教学目的而编写的:它不仅具有英语专业阅读教程的特征,注重语言运用能力的训练,而且更注重在语言学习与教学中提高学生的跨文化交际能力。

本教程主要有以下特点:

一、教材编写体现跨文化交际研究成果

教材主要编者都是长期从事跨文化交际和外语教学研究的专家,在教材编写中充分体现了跨文化交际学科和外语教学的融合。

二、将跨文化交际能力的培养融入语言学习与教学之中

语言是文化的组成部分,语言也是文化的媒介,而文化则通过语言得以体现,因此语言与文化学习不可分割,学习语言也是在学习所学语言国家的文化。对此,本书精心设计了 Learning Culture through Quotes/Proverbs 这一练习,希望通过学习和分析格言或谚语所传达的某个国家的文化价值观,察觉该国人民的行为特征。这一练习将语言——文化——行为三者融为一体,学生参与讨论,既能锻炼学生的语言运用能力,理解谚语与文化之间的关系,又能提高学生的思辨性思维能力,增强跨文化意识。

三、培养评判性阅读与批判性思维能力

学习课文的目的不仅仅在于理解课文所传递的内容,还应该超越课文内容,理解作者的言外之意,联想与课文相关的内容与思想。Building Critical Reading and Thinking Skills 这一练习旨在引导学生思考和讨论与课文相关的其他内容或现象,鼓励学生结合社会现象与个人经历,从不同的角度、不同文化视角分析问题,阐述观点。此外,这些练习均鼓励学生以小组的形式参与讨论,在小组讨论中让学生学会如何倾听他人发言,如何处理与自己不同的观点,提出不同的观点,如何在班级里做小组发言人,并从中学会如何与他人沟通,以培养学生评判性阅读和思辨能力以及英语语言运用能力。

四、注重跨文化交际技能训练

跨文化交际技能是培养跨文化交际能力最主要的方面,因为全球思维、跨文化知

识和跨文化调适只有在跨文化案例语境中,通过应用跨文化交际技能才能将四者融为一体,才能真正体现跨文化交际能力。因此案例是一种语境,学生只有通过分析(把跨文化知识、全球思维、跨文化调适、跨文化技能融为一体),才能提高跨文化交际能力。如果教师讲解案例和进行跨文化点评时不注重引导学生自行分析和讨论,就会像教师把口语教材当作阅读教材讲解一样,本应进行能力训练而变成了知识传授,学生看似都理解,但之后都不会应用,因此案例分析(Case Study)应该是学生进行讨论与分析,从中提高跨文化交际能力的最佳手段之一。

五、四册教材均以跨文化交际能力培养为主题

跨文化视角英语阅读教程分为四册,每册主要围绕一个主题,体现独特的跨文化视角与技能,其目的都是围绕跨文化交际能力的培养。第一册:培养批判性思维技能;第二册:进行有效跨文化沟通;第三册:理解东西方文化差异;第四册:培养跨文化交际能力。

本套教程获“上海大学重点教材建设项目”资助,参加编写的学校有:上海大学、上海外国语大学、同济大学、华东理工大学、上海理工大学、广西大学、南昌航空大学和浙江工商大学。

本套教程可供本科英语专业、商务英语专业(方向)作为阅读课(泛读课)、跨文化交际课(跨文化商务沟通课)教材,也可供大学英语选修课、高职高专商务英语专业选用。

庄恩平

2008年10月

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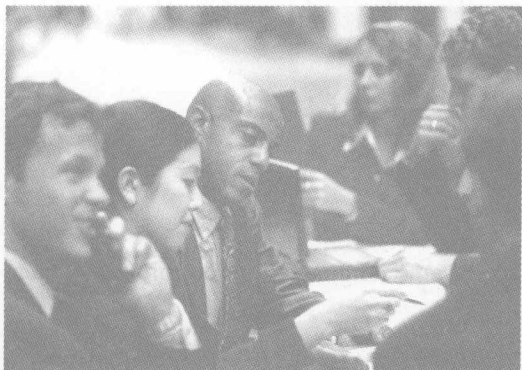
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UNIT 1

Intercultural Competence: A New Critical Skill



In today's world, people are more likely to meet someone with a different cultural background, and their cultural backgrounds may become a barrier in intercultural communication. So how to communicate effectively and appropriately?

The key to an effective intercultural communication lies in intercultural competence, which comprises the awareness and perception of different cultures, the ability of adaptation to cul-

tural differences and the communication skills to achieve an effective communication.

In this unit, you will learn the new concept of intercultural competence and its application in the workplace. It can help you to be aware of the importance of developing intercultural competence, which can help you achieve effective intercultural communication.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will

- ◆ Be aware of the misunderstandings that may occur in intercultural communication because of cultural differences;
- ◆ Better understand the three major components of intercultural competence;
- ◆ Develop further thoughts on possible solutions to the problems companies may face when they enter the global market;
- ◆ Think over the feasible approaches or steps to build your intercultural competence.



Before You Read



Learning Culture through Proverbs

Read the following proverbs. Answer the questions with a partner.

Proverb 1

A bad workman always blames his tools.

1. What is the literal meaning of this proverb in Chinese?
2. What does this proverb imply?
3. If people from two different countries speak the same language, do you think they can always understand each other? Why or why not?

Proverb 2

He who is ashamed of asking is ashamed of learning.

1. What is the literal meaning of this proverb in Chinese?
2. What message does this proverb transmit to you?
3. This is an American proverb. Asking questions is a good way for learning. What do you think American students would do when they are having lessons? And what would Chinese students do?



Building Critical Reading and Thinking Skills

With a partner or in a small group, answer the following questions.

1. Have you had any unforgettable experiences when communicating with foreigners? Which one impresses you most?
2. What do you think is the biggest problem when you communicate with people with different cultural backgrounds? Why do you think so?
3. The passage you will read is "Intercultural Competence: A New Critical Skill". From the title of this passage, can you guess what will be discussed?



Reading Passage

Intercultural Competence: A New Critical Skill

Susan Eckert

Intercultural competence is now a critical requirement, and as such, suggests that organizations develop new **proactive** strategies that will enable them to compete in a global market, while individuals seek to develop the skills that will prepare them to interact with and work alongside individuals from different cultural backgrounds and perspectives. As competencies are made up of an essential combination of knowledge, skills, and attitude, intercultural competence addresses:

- 1) Knowledge: Developing a keen awareness regarding the importance of culture, specifically one's own culture, in building effective intercultural relationships.
- 2) Skills: Building constructive communication and conflict resolution skills for more effective intercultural experiences.
- 3) Attitude: Understanding the benefits associated with cultural diversity, and therefore, the importance of building effective intercultural skills.

Moving Beyond Awareness and Meeting the Challenges

"When HR practice supports the creation of a **workforce** that has the skills needed to run diversity into an advantage^①, diversity is more likely to lead to positive performance outcomes."

You may be wondering why, if cultural diversity is so *beneficial* to both organization and employees, are some companies and individuals resistant to it? The energy behind this resistance usually stems from one of the following three issues: 1) resistance to or fear of change, 2) fear of all things different, and/or 3) resistance to learning.

Fear and resistance reflect attitudes, which are often difficult to influence. It takes an appropriate mix of education, skills training, and ongoing support to allay fears and to shift attitudes.

proactive *a.* 先行
一步的, 前瞻
性的

workforce *n.* 劳动
力

inclusive *a.* 包括
在内的

misinterpretation
n. 错误的解释

preconception *n.*
先入为主的观
念

cluster *v.* 群集

initiative *n.* 自发
性; 主动性

backlash *n.* 强烈
反响; 对抗性
反应

mindset *n.* 心态

concerted *a.* 统一
的

Employees must understand how cultural diversity ties into organizational strategies. They must be trained in key communication, conflict resolution, and intercultural skills. Organizational programs, practices, and initiatives must align with and provide support for these strategies. Perhaps of most importance, leaders must serve as role models, demonstrating the same behaviors that will help to shape an **inclusive** culture.

The truth is that cultural diversity initially does present difficult challenges, such as increased opportunities for **misinterpretation**, miscommunication, and therefore conflict. Employees know this. Organizational leaders know this. Current organizational realities provide additional challenges, especially for companies taking their first very important steps toward incorporating cultural diversity as a competitive strategy. For example, a Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Survey on Barriers to Advancement found that 74 percent of human resource professionals agree that minorities face barriers in the workplace and that these barriers stem from stereotypes, **preconceptions** based on race or ethnicity, exclusion from information networks, and lack of mentoring opportunities or role models. Statistics also show that women and minorities tend to be **clustered** in staff positions and in low-to-middle management levels, therefore, ensuring that the contributions from these segments of the workforce are solicited and utilized becomes a key **initiative** in the pursuit of an inclusive environment. A recent **backlash** from white males^② — they claim diversity initiatives, rather than promoting an equal playing field, but only turn the tables and place white males at a disadvantage — has also challenged organizations to find new ways of involving and considering the contributions of this tradition to shape culturally inclusive environments.

While these challenges may initially prove difficult to navigate, case studies have shown that ongoing education, training, communication, and support can help to ultimately transform the “us versus them” mentality, which tends to define many organizational cultures, into a more collaborative, or inclusive, **mindset**. Working effectively across cultural difference requires a **concerted** effort, an assumption of accountability by all employees, a long-term focus, and organization-wide development of greater cultural awareness and communication skills.

Costs of Low Intercultural Competence

Given changing **demographics** and the increasingly global scope of the labor market, the organization that fails to create an organizational culture that supports inclusiveness will likely face:

- 1) Low levels of employee attraction and **retention** — nontraditional employees who feel pressured to **conform** and abandon their unique strengths will move to other organizations that will accept them on their own terms;
- 2) Threats to their ability to compete in an increasingly global market, and therefore, their ability to survive long term;
- 3) A higher rate of **lawsuits**.

The number of job **discrimination** complaints filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in the United States increased by 4 percent in 2002 — the highest in seven years. The highest growth in the post-9/11 era was represented by religious discrimination (21%), age discrimination (14.5%), and national origin bias (13%). A broader perspective demonstrates the significance when you consider that these lawsuits make up about a quarter of the US federal civil **docket**.

The **implications** for individuals are equally as significant. Effectively marketing oneself in a highly diverse labor market where building effective working relationships with international colleagues will increasingly become a requirement relies in large part on the ability to demonstrate a high level of intercultural competence. Those who choose not to develop these critical skills will face greater challenges in competing against skilled international talent, thriving in the workplace, developing their careers, and pursuing opportunities to join successful organizations. Fortunately, the first step to developing intercultural competence is relatively safe because it involves self-exploration.

“Common sense suggests and research confirms that to produce superior performance within **heterogeneous** groups, members need to have advance awareness of the ways in which they are different from and similar to the other members and how this may impact their work.”

demographics *n.*
人口统计学数据

retention *n.* 保留
conform *v.* 与……一致

lawsuit *n.* 诉讼

discrimination *n.*
歧视

docket *n.* 诉讼事件表

implication *n.* 暗示

heterogeneous *a.*
多种多样的，
混杂的



Notes

1. run diversity into an advantage: 这里的意思和 give full play to diversity 类似, 即将多样性的特色变为竞争优势, 这也正是跨文化能力培养的目标之一。
2. A recent backlash from white males: backlash 原意指鞭子或鞭打, backlash 给人以反抽一鞭的生动形象, 可以用来表示社会或公众对某件事情或某人讲话的负面反应。英语里与此相近的说法是 backfire 等。



After You Read



Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion

With a partner or in a small group, answer the following questions.

1. Intercultural competence is made up of three components, namely knowledge, attitude and skills. What's your understanding of each component for intercultural competence?
2. How can you account for cultural diversity in organizations? Is it positive or negative? What's your argument?
3. When organizations are facing difficult challenges of cultural diversity, what should they do to navigate these challenges?
4. Do you agree with this statement that intercultural competence should be a basic quality for any professional in the age of globalization? Give an account for your argument.
5. Do you think intercultural competence is what college students are supposed to develop while they are learning English? Make comments on its necessity if you think it is important.



Expanding Vocabulary

Read the definitions and example sentences from the text. Then write a sentence of your own.

1. **beneficial to:** helpful to

Example from the text: ... why, if cultural diversity is so beneficial to both organization and employees, are some companies and individuals resistant to it?

Write a sentence of your own: _____

2. **resistant to:** opposed to

Example from the text: ... why, if cultural diversity is so beneficial to both organization and employees, are some companies and individuals resistant to it?

Write a sentence of your own: _____

3. **align with:** come together in agreement or alliance

Example from the text: Organizational programs, practices, and initiatives must align with and provide support for these strategies.

Write a sentence of your own: _____

4. **stem from:** originate from

Example from the text: ... these barriers stem from stereotypes, preconceptions based on race or ethnicity, ...

Write a sentence of your own: _____

5. **in the pursuit of:** in the process of trying to achieve something

Example from the text: ..., ensuring that the contributions from these segments of the workforce are solicited and utilized becomes a key initiative in the pursuit of an inclusive environment.

Write a sentence of your own: _____

6. **navigate:** understand or deal with something complicated

Example from the text: While these challenges may initially prove difficult to navigate, case studies have shown that ongoing education, training, communication, and support can help to ultimately transform the “us versus them” mentality.

Write a sentence of your own: _____

Case Study

At a business conference in Cairo, Egypt, an American attendee approaches two men: a Japanese and an Arab.

American: "Good morning, gentlemen. I'm John Smith." He extends his hand to the Arab and then to the Japanese. "Do you mind if I join you?"

Arab: Shaking the American's hand with both of his.

"Welcome, welcome, to Cairo. Please join us."

Japanese: Steps backward, bows slightly, then shakes Smith's hand. He says nothing and prepares to exchange business cards.

Arab: "Are you enjoying yourself, John?"

American: "Oh, sure, it's very nice here. What do you do, sir?"

Arab: "I'm Salleh, from Egypt, and I'm the president of my trading firm. I'm here to meet our friends and look at some of the new products available."

American: Turning to the Japanese. "And your name, sir?"

Japanese: Silently hands Smith his business card.

American: Glances at it quickly and puts it in his pocket. "Oh, you're Mr. Suzuki."

Japanese: "Yes, with NEC Corporation."

American: "Oh, NEC! And what do you do at NEC?"

Japanese: Smiles.

Arab: "Well, should we all go to have some coffee and enjoy our new friendship together?"

American: "I'm sorry guys, but I have to go and talk with someone from the French group. Maybe we can get together later. It was nice to meet you. Goodbye." He walks away and introduces himself to the French group.

Analyze the case

1. Do you know how Japanese greet each other?
2. What did the American do when the Japanese handed him his business card? Do you think the Japanese businessman would feel happy about the American's reaction? Why or why not?
3. Why did the American cut into the conversation and walk away so soon? Try to explain it from the perspective of some American people's behavior and values.