

跨文化视角 英语阅读教程 2

English Reading Course for Intercultural Perspectives

—Carrying Out Effective Intercultural
Communication

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跨文化视角英语阅读教程

English Reading Course for Intercultural Perspectives

—Carrying Out Effective Intercultural Communication

第二册

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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,了解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 and 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,本应进行能力训练但却变成了知识传授,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目的

《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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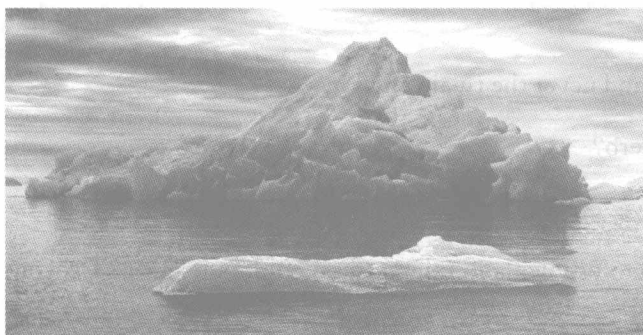
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UNIT

1

Culture and Communication



Culture is like an iceberg. The tip of the iceberg is easy to see. It includes the visible aspects such as the accepted practices and taboos of working in another culture.

The remaining huge chunk of the iceberg hidden below the surface includes the invisible aspects of a cul-

ture such as the values, traditions, experiences and behaviors that define each culture.

Venturing into different cultures without adequate preparation can be just as dangerous as a ship attempting to navigate icy waters without charts, hoping to be lucky enough to avoid hitting an iceberg. The difference is that the ship will know immediately when it hits an iceberg.

By definition, intercultural awareness means not only becoming culturally fluent in other cultures but having a solid understanding of your own culture.

Cultural differences must be understood and acknowledged before they can be managed.

In this unit, you will learn to understand the relationship between culture and communication, and also learn how to communicate interculturally with people from different cultures.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will

- ◆ Better understand the relationship between culture and language;
- ◆ Recognize how verbal and nonverbal behavior are influenced by culture;
- ◆ Be aware of invisible barriers in intercultural communication;
- ◆ Increase your intercultural awareness and sensitivity;
- ◆ Learn how to communicate interculturally with people from different cultures.



Before You Read



Learning Culture through Proverbs

Read each proverb. Answer the questions with a partner.

Proverb 1

East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.

1. What is the message of this proverb?
2. Is the message positive or negative; optimistic or pessimistic? Why do you think so?
3. How can one relate this proverb to problems in intercultural communication? Do you agree?

Proverb 2

Don't go near the water until you learn how to swim.

1. What is the message of this proverb?
2. This proverb gives advice, or a warning. How do you think it might apply to learning a foreign language? Do you agree?



Building Critical Reading and Thinking Skills

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

1. What do you think is the relationship between culture and communication?
2. Do you think it is possible to learn a foreign language well without learning the culture where it is spoken as a native language? Explain.
3. Explain, in your own words, what these two similes mean:
 - Culture is like an iceberg.
 - Studying a foreign language without learning the culture is like learning how to drive a car by studying a driver's manual and never getting behind a steering wheel.



Reading Passage

Culture and Communication

Kathy J. Irving

It has been said that without a culture we cannot see, but with a culture we are forever blind. In other words, each of us is born into a culture that teaches us a number of shared understandings and expectations. We usually learn our own culture's ways of doing, speaking, and thinking so well that it becomes difficult to think, feel, and act as people in other cultures do.

As the basic building blocks of communicating, words communicate meaning, but as we have seen, the meanings of words are much influenced by culture. Meaning is in the person, not in the word, and each individual themselves is the product of a particular culture that passes on shared and appropriate meanings. Thus, if we want to learn to communicate well in a foreign language, we must understand the culture that gives that language meaning. In other words, culture and communication are inseparably linked; you can't have one without the other. Culture gives meaning and provides the context for communication, and the ability to communicate allows us to act out our cultural values and to share our language and our culture.

Our own native language and culture are so much a part of us that we take them for granted. When we travel to another country, it's as if we carry along with our passports, our own culturally designed lenses through which we view the new environment^①. Using our own culture as the standard by which to judge other cultures is called **ethnocentrism**, and although **unintentional**, our ethnocentric ways of thinking and acting often get in the way of our understanding other languages and cultures. The ability and willingness to change lenses when we look at a different culture is both the cure and the prevention for such cultural **blindness**. Studying a new language provides the opportunity to practice changing lenses when we also learn the cultural context to which it belongs.

When **linguists** study a new language they often compare it to their own, and consequently they gain a better understanding of not

ethnocentrism *n.*

民族中心主义

unintentional *a.*

无意的

blindness *n.* 盲目

无知

linguist *n.* 语言学家

家

necessitate v. 使
成为必要

clarify v. 澄清,
阐明

verbal a. 言语的

perceive v. 感知,
察觉

only the new language, but of their own language as well. Students who study a foreign language will also learn more about their native tongue by comparing and contrasting the two languages. You can follow the same comparative method in learning more about a culture — your own compared to that of others. Remember that each culture has a developed set of patterns that are right and appropriate for that culture. If people do things differently in another culture, they are not “wrong” — they are just different! Always thinking that “culturally different” means “culturally wrong” will only promote intercultural misunderstanding.

Learning about American culture along with American English does not **necessitate** your becoming “Americanized” and acting just like an American^②, but it does mean making an effort to understand American people and their culture. In other words, it helps you to see like an American without your having to be like an American.

You Can Talk, but What Do You Communicate?

How often have you heard someone say, in an attempt to **clarify**, “Yes, that is what I said, but that’s not what I meant^③”? Just because we talk, it does not mean that we actually communicate what we intend. Communication can be defined as any behavior that is given meaning, whether the behavior is **verbal** or nonverbal, intended or unintended, consciously or unconsciously performed. So, it is impossible not to communicate, even though one does not always communicate in words.

The clothes we wear, the way we decorate our homes, the cars we drive, the way we address people, the jobs we choose, the mates we choose — all these things communicate different things to different people, and they may communicate more (or less) than we intend. It depends on how the receiver of the message sees, thinks, and feels as much as it does on what the sender says, thinks, and feels. Communication is a very complex process, even among people from the same culture who speak the same language. The potential problems and the likelihood of miscommunication multiply when communication takes place between people from different cultures.

Communicating Interculturally

Intercultural communication occurs whenever a person from one culture does something that is given meaning by a person from another culture. Communicating across cultures is made difficult by each person’s ethnocentric tendencies to **perceive** objects, events, and be-

havior through lenses designed in the person's own culture. But an honest desire to communicate with people from other cultures, coupled with an attempt to understand cultural differences, will go a long way in helping you become a successful intercultural communicator.

Communicating in a new culture means learning what to say (words, phrases, meaning, structure), who to communicate with (the role and status of the person), who you are (how you perceive yourself), how you communicate the message (emotional components, nonverbal cues, intonation), why you are communicating in a given situation (intentions, values, assumptions), when to communicate (time), and where you can or should communicate. This sounds like an impossible task—but remember, you learned to do all these things in your own native language and culture, mostly without thinking about them. The difference is that now, as an adult learning a second language and culture, you must think about the process.

An **awareness** of the following potential problem areas will help you avoid difficulties when communicating with other people from other cultures:

- Linguistic differences in grammatical structure and **semantic** differences in word meaning and usage.
- Nonverbal aspects of communication, such as **gestures** and other symbolic cultural behaviors.
- **Preconceived** ideas that **cloud** your ability to see and understand a person as he or she wants to be seen and understood.
- Value judgments about the behavior of people based on what you think is “right”.
 - Anxiety or discomfort that defeat your intentions and create discomfort for the person with whom you are trying to communicate.

Notice that only one of these problem areas is directly related to the linguistic aspects of communicating in a second language and culture. To be an effective intercultural communicator, you must pay attention to the social, psychological, and cultural aspects of communication, not just the grammar. Much evidence shows that communicating intercultural is not easy, but that does not mean it is not worthwhile or is to be avoided. As we are in the 21st century now, we have no choice, given the world we live in. If we are going to survive in a globalised world, we must learn to communicate intercultural. But we need not dwell on the dark side. Learning to be a successful intercultural communicator^④ can be an exciting, enjoyable, and rewarding

awareness *n.* 意识

semantic *a.* 语义的

gesture *n.* 手势

preconceive *v.* 事先认为

cloud *v.* 遮蔽, 蒙蔽

experience that will open up new doors to both personal and professional growth and satisfaction.

Developing Cross-cultural Awareness

Developing cross-cultural awareness usually goes along with learning a new language and being exposed to a new culture; such exposure reveals both cultural similarities and differences. Sometimes it is the similarities between cultures that surprise us as much as the differences. Once a little four-year-old American traveling in China was overheard exclaiming, "Look, Mommy, that little Chinese boy is eating ice cream, too."

Cross-cultural awareness is the ability to understand cultures — your own and others — by means of objective, non-judgmental comparisons. It is an appreciation for and an understanding of cultural **pluralism** — the ability to get rid of our ethnocentric tendencies and to accept another culture on its own terms.

Studying a second language without learning the culture is like learning how to drive a car by studying a driver's **manual** and never getting behind a steering wheel. We study a foreign language in order to communicate with people who have learned their native language not in a classroom, but in natural, everyday interactions with people and situations in their culture. They have learned the intentions behind words and phrases mostly without consciously thinking about them; it has been part of their culture and they have taken it for granted. We, however, as adults learning a second language, must make a conscious effort to examine the cultural context of the language we want to learn.

It is impossible to be entirely objective when we observe another culture. Having been brought up within the context of a particular culture, we have been influenced and shaped by its values, even if we cannot **articulate** them. Although it should be one's goal to observe another culture with pure objectivity, this is very hard to do. We must remember that in comparing cultures, "different" does not mean "bad" or "inferior" — it just means "different".

It is important to remember that although many moments of discomfort occur when we are interacting with people from other cultures, no one culture is **inherently** better or worse than any other. Each culture has its own set of values, norms, and ways of doing things that are considered "right" for it. That one culture's way of doing things is right for its people does not necessarily mean it is "right" for everybody,

pluralism *n.* 多元
论, 多元化

manual *n.* 手册,
指南

articulate *v.* 清晰
地说

inherently *ad.* 天
性地, 固有地

and herein lies the potential conflict in cross cultural encounters.

Becoming more aware of the influence of cultural values has many positive consequences. It leads to better understanding of ourselves and of others. We become more **tolerant** and less **defensive**, and we can enjoy the cultural differences as much as the similarities. After all, **variety** is the **spice** of life!

tolerant a. 容忍的, 宽容的
defensive a. 防御的, 自卫的
variety n. 多样性, 变化
spice n. 趣味, 情趣



Notes

1. our own culturally ... the new environment: 这里 **culturally designed lenses** 意为“文化透镜”, 以此来说明人们都是通过自己的文化视角来观察新环境, 评判是非。在单一文化社会环境中我们尚且应该学会换位思考, 不能以自己的观点作为是非的标准, 在多元文化环境中我们更应该学会以跨文化视角分析不同的观点与现象。
2. Learning about American ... like an American: 这句话阐述了两个观点: 一是学习某一国家的语言就是在学习该国的文化, 因为语言是文化的传播工具; 二是学习美国语言与文化不是让学习者的行为像美国人一样, 而是以此帮助学习者更好地了解美国社会与美国人的行为。
3. that is what I said, but that's not what I meant: 此句意为“此言非我本意”, 我们用母语进行交流时也常说这样的话。有时我们能听懂对方的话, 但不一定能理解对方所指的意思。明白这一点对跨文化交流很有帮助。
4. a successful intercultural communicator: 指“成功的跨文化沟通者”, 也可用 an effective intercultural communicator (有效的跨文化沟通者)。这段提出一个概念 a successful/effective intercultural communicator, 而不是 an intercultural communicator, 因为在跨文化语境中任何人都是 an intercultural communicator, 但不都是 a successful/effective intercultural communicator。



After You Read



Questions for Critical Thinking and Discussion

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

1. Do you agree that culture gives words their meanings? Can you identify two “culturally-

- loaded” words or phrases in English and in Chinese ?
2. What does the sentence “always thinking that culturally different means culturally wrong will only promote intercultural misunderstanding” mean?
 3. Have you ever been surprised or shocked by the verbal or nonverbal behavior of foreigners? Think about foreign TV shows or movies that you have seen and describe what you saw. Now ask yourself if you were judging the situation based on the rules of your own culture. Decide whether the behavior you observed was surprising for cultural reasons, or the person involved actually behaved in a way that would be inappropriate in your culture.



Checking Your Understanding

Paraphrase the following quotes in simple and clear sentences. Use your own words but be sure to keep the same meaning.

Quotes	Paraphrases
a. It has been said that without a culture we cannot see, but with a culture we are forever blind.	
b. ... our own native language and culture are so much a part of us that we take them for granted.	
c. Using our own culture as the standard by which to judge other cultures is called ethnocentrism, and although unintentional, our ethnocentric ways of thinking and acting often get in the way of our understanding other languages and cultures.	
d. Communicating across cultures is made difficult by each person's ethnocentric tendencies to perceive objects, events, and behavior through lenses designed in the person's own culture.	
e. Becoming more aware of the influence of cultural values has many positive consequences. It leads to better understanding of ourselves and of others.	