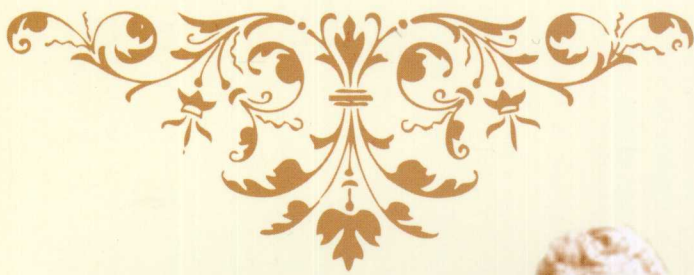




普通高等教育“十二五”重点建设规划教材
面向“十二五”高等教育课程改革项目研究成果

跨文化交际 案例分析

KUAWENHUAJIAOJI
ANLIFENXI



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Preface

前言

跨文化交际课程是英语学习者了解和掌握不同文化之间差异和交际的一门重要课程，也是一门实践性和应用性较强的课程。许多学生在具体实践中做不到融会贯通，跨文化交际的失误仍然存在。为了使學生能积极融入课堂，培养他们的实际交际能力，授人以渔，举一反三，作者编写了《跨文化交际案例分析》教材。

该教材以學生获取知识的认知途径为基本突破口，采取了与普通教材不同的编写方式，从事物的特殊性到普遍性的哲学规律，引导学生根据案例来分析跨文化交际的理论体系和中西方文化的基本差异，从而达到能提高其基本交际能力的目的。通过阅读案例，明确问题；通过分析案例，找出原因；通过制定方案，解决问题。

该教材的编写基本涵盖了跨文化交际失误的内容；坚持以案例分析为主，理论介绍为辅；增强其趣味性阅读，案例丰富，具有实用性、现代性、真实性、典型性和价值性特点；课后练习可以对学生进行一次举一反三能力的培养；全英文编写，适合大学以上各种层次学习者的需求；案例结合日常生活与外贸等相关领域，做到尽量覆盖知识、技能、文化3个方面，达到授人以渔的目的。

该教材的使用能在课堂上达到以学生为主，着眼于其能力培养的目的；强调集体合作，而非个体单干的理念；培养学生身临其境地解决问题，并在不圆满的条件下做出自己独立的决策，从而不断提高决策能力，使得抽象的理论形象化、具体化，做到学以致用。

该教材适用于高等学校大学英语拓展课程，英语专业选修课程，外贸、外事、旅游、对外汉语等专业的必修课程，也可作为高校英语教师的参考资料。

在教材的编写过程中，外教 Peter Kelly 及 Terrence Moeller 提供了一定的案例并对案例进行了必要的分析。东华理工大学教务处对该教材的出版给予了支持。

编者

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Part I

Culture and Communication



Culture is to communication what water is to fish. Speakers from different cultural backgrounds may have different interpretations of what it means to be truthful, relevant, brief, or clear with regard to conversation and body language.

When we discuss culture and communication, we should be aware of the total spectrum of communication, which includes language, non-verbal communication, customs, perceived values, and concepts of time and space. What happens when people from different cultures interact face-to-face?

People with experience of different cultures, through travel or work, know that they do things in different ways. Common examples are giving gifts, seating guests at dinner, and the way language is used to communicate.

Learned from childhood, the rules guide our attitude toward communication and our belief in what is correct and what is not. These hidden beliefs determine how a person communicates, and how he or she expects communication to be offered. We all learn to expect messages to be given in certain ways.



Expectations are crucial in cross-cultural communication. Not only do they govern our unthinking reactions and beliefs of what is or is not polite, but also determine what things mean.

For example, Westerners expect disagreement to be clearly stated. It may happen, however, that a Westerner discovers that a Chinese is doing something different to what was agreed upon. He will tell the other, probably patiently and politely, that he is not happy about this. Of course, the Chinese will feel offended because that makes them “lose face.” Although both of them are respecting the rules of etiquette, they still think the other is wrong and wonder about whether they can trust each other.

Successful communication is never easy, even when communicating with someone from our own culture. We may try to be clear, but many things can go wrong. Communication is rarely perfect, even with best friends or family members. Different cultural expectations make cross-cultural communication much harder.

Overcoming cultural barriers is difficult, but possible. People must first own an awareness of the foundations of the other people's culture, i. e. , not just what the expectations are but why they are so. To communicate with people from another culture we must endeavor to think about communication the way they do and understand why it is important and proper for them to think that way. Then proper tips for the cultural communication should be grasped.

What is culture?

What is CULTURE? There are hundreds of definitions of culture. Some view culture as the knowledge, beliefs, art, laws, morals, customs, and so on, of a particular group, as distinct from those of other groups; Others think that a culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioral conventions, basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behavior and each member's understanding of others' behavior.



It is mostly agreed that culture can be summarized as 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 cover everything relating to human life and experience.

Culture is also the coherent, learned, shared view of a group of people about life's concerns that ranks what is important, furnishes attitudes about what things are appropriate, and dictates behavior. For the purpose of cross-cultural studies, culture can be viewed as the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and effective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. These shared patterns help identify the members of one culture group while at the same time they distinguish those of another group.



1.1 Characteristics of culture

Cultures around the world share five common characteristics: culture is shared, learned, based on symbols, integrated and selected.

Culture is shared

A culture is shared by a society. The members of the culture share a set of ideals, values, and standards of behavior, and this set of shared ideals is what gives meaning to their lives, and what bonds them together as a culture.

The members in the society mostly agree about the meanings of things and why they should be so. They share symbols of that culture including language, visual symbols, company logos, icons, religious images, and national flags.

As almost everyone belongs to a number of different groups and categories of people at the same time, people unavoidably carry several layers of mental programming within themselves, corresponding to different levels of culture. For example:

- a national level
- a regional and/or ethnic and/or religious and/or linguistic affiliation
- a gender level
- a social class level
- a generation level
- an organizational or corporate level

So in this sense, everyone is simultaneously a member of several different cultural groups and thus could be said to have multicultural membership.

Culture is learned

Culture is not an innate sensibility, but a learned characteristic. Without the advantages of knowledge from those who lived before us, we would not have culture. All of us are born with basic needs — needs that create and shape behavior — but how we go about meeting those needs and developing behaviors to cope with them is learned.

From childhood, people begin learning about their culture at home with their family members and they know how they interact with each other, how they dress, and the rituals they perform. When they grow up, they enter into the community. They are educated and through watching others and participating activities, they form



their own relationship and take their place in the culture.

Proverbs are a good way for people to learn their own culture. In colorful and vivid language, they offer an important set of instructions for members to follow. People also learn culture from folk tales, legends, and myths. A trip to any museum in the world quickly reveals how the art of a culture is another method of passing on that culture. In the modern world mass media provides people with abundant and quick access to touching their culture.

That the culture is acquired through the process of learning has several important implications for the conduct of international communication.

First, such an understanding can lead to greater tolerance in respect of cultural differences, and make the intercultural communication more successful in the practical settings.

Second, the learned nature of culture stimulates people in the multicultural environment to learn the other cultures with full of confidence and put it into function as well.

And finally, it leads people to grasp the deeper skills in training programs relevated to the different cultures and lessens the barriers of the global cultures into the slimmest degrees.

Culture is based on symbols

Through the symbols like language, art, religion, money and etc., the culture can be transmitted successfully from one person to another, and from one generation to the next. The use of symbols is at the core of culture. In this way the ideals and thoughts of one culture can last and its uniqueness can attract people from other cultures.

Symbols tie together people who otherwise might not be part of a unified group. They allow people to package and store their culture as well as to transmit it. The minds, the books, pictures, films, religious writings, videos, computer accessories and the like enable a culture to preserve what is deemed to be worthy of transmission. This makes each individual, regardless of his or her generation, heir to a massive repository of information that has been gathered and maintained in anticipation of his or her entry into the culture.

Cultural symbols can take a host of forms, encompassing gestures, dresses, objects, flags, religious icons, and the like. Yet the most important symbolic aspect of culture is language — using words to represent objects and ideas.



Culture is integrated

In order to keep the culture functioning, all aspects of the culture must be integrated. The language must own its function in describing the ideas and ideals and pass them from one generation to the next. Without the integration of language into the structure of the culture, confusion and dysfunction would reign and the culture would collapse.

Each culture, past or present, is coherent and complete within itself — an entire view of the universe. If we can view cultures as integrated systems, we can begin to see how particular culture traits fit into the integrated whole, and consequently how they tend to make sense in the setting.

Culture is selected

In every culture, only part of behavior patterns from the total of human experience can be presented. The selection of these contents is mostly based on the basic assumptions and values that are meaningful to each culture because each individual has only this limited experience. That is why some cultures attach importance to privacy so much, while other cultures do not. This characteristic is important to all learners of cross-cultural communication.

There are two reasons for that: First, what a culture selects to tell each generation is a reflection of what a culture deems important. Second, the notion of selectivity also suggests that culture tends to separate one group from another.

These characteristics of culture exist in every culture, no matter where the culture is located in the world. The manipulation and sculpting of these characteristics decides how a culture defines itself and sets it apart from other cultures.

There are some other characteristics of culture, e.g. *Culture is a dynamic system* that means culture changes as time goes by. The diet culture, clothes culture, and greeting culture vary greatly in different times. A typical example is the greeting culture in China. In ancient times, people would kneel down before their elders or their masters, and they would bow to each other with their hands folded in front of them if they were friends or of the same social status. After 1911, Chinese people began to adopt the Western way of greeting — shaking hands. From the 1980s, more ways of greeting began to appear, such as waving one's hand and saying "Hi," or hugging each other.

Although cultures do change, most change affects only the surface structure of the culture. The deep structure resists major alterations. Elements such as values,



ethics and morals, definitions of freedom, the pace of life, etc. are so deep in the structure of a culture that they tend to persist generation after generation.

1.2 Three things culture does

Culture ranks what is important

Different cultures have their own value orientation and what is important in one culture may be virtually meaningless to another. Cultures rank what is important. In other words, cultures teach values or priorities. Values underlie attitudes. They also shape beliefs. In business settings or other multicultural environment, it is necessary to understand what motivates the people from other cultures.

Culture furnishes attitudes

An attitude is learned, and it is a tendency to respond in the same way to the same object or situation or idea. Attitudes can change, although change can be difficult. Attitudes are based on beliefs as well as values. Beliefs are convictions or certainties based on subjective and often personal ideas rather than on proof or facts. Belief systems or religions are powerful sources of values and attitudes in cultures. Culture furnishes attitudes in its function.

Culture dictates how to behave

Behavior comes directly from the attitudes about how significant something is — how it is valued. Values drive actions.

1.3 The components of culture

The components of culture mainly include the attitudes, beliefs, customs, traditions, art and achievements of society that are passed on to each generation. But the most interesting fact about culture is that everyone has a culture of its own, which decides the different understanding to the components of a culture.

To make it easier to understand, normally culture includes the following components that can be put together to form **Emeralds**(祖母绿):

Environment — geography, climate and places in the country;

Math, science, tools and technology — inventions, buildings, roads,

What is communication?

Everyone communicates and has a preconceived notion of what communication is and how it takes place. The origin of the word “communicate” can be traced back to the Latin word “communis,” which means “common.” And it has a close relationship with “commonality.” Etymologically, it’s obvious that the precondition of communication is what people is having and sharing in common. For people sharing the same culture have a lot in common, so the communication between them is much smoother than that between people of different cultural backgrounds.



Communication can be defined as that which happens whenever meaning is attributed to behavior, or to the residue of behavior. When someone observes our behavior or its residue, and gives meaning to it, communication has taken place regardless of whether our behavior is conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional.

Judging from this definition, we can say that communication is a form of human behavior, and the aim of which is to satisfy people’s need to interact with others. And all people have such kind of need, and this need is met through the act of communication. Communication is a kind of symbolic activity and a dynamic process of encoding and decoding. When people give the verbal or non-verbal signs meanings, communication takes place.

Because communication is a process of encoding and decoding, it is complete only when the initiator’s behavior is perceived by the addressee. These transactions



must include all conscious and unconscious, intentional or unintentional, verbal or non-verbal, contextual stimuli that act as cues about the quality and credibility of the message. When cultural dimension is taken into consideration, the issue will be more complex. Symbols are used by all cultures to represent realities; however, the symbols used to represent the realities are quite different in various cultures. We can take the action of greeting for example. In some culture, smile in a casual manner is regarded as a proper way of greeting, whereas in another greeting involves of bowing formally in silence, and in yet another a hug will do.

2.1 Characteristics of communication

Communication is the basis of all human interaction. Whether we live in a city in Canada, a village in India, a commune in Israel, or the jungles of Brazil, we all participate in the same activity when we communicate. The results and the methods might be different but the process is the same.

Normally, the main characteristics of communication can be summarized as follows.

Communication is dynamic

Culture is an ongoing, ever changing activity. When people communicate, they are constantly affected by each other's messages and as a consequence, people undergo continual change. Each time one is influenced, one changes in some way and people never stay frozen when in communication.

Communication is symbolic

Communication involves the use of symbols. Symbols are things used to stand for, or represent, something else. Symbols are not limited to words; they also include nonverbal display and other objects (e.g., the flag). Within a culture, there is sufficient agreement that people can communicate with relative clarity on most topics of communication.

Communication is interactive

Obviously, communication must take place between people. When two or more people communicate, their unique backgrounds and experiences serve as a backdrop for the communication interaction. Also, interaction implies a reciprocal situation in which each party attempts to influence the other.



Communication is irreversible

The moment we have said something and the other has received and decoded the message, we cannot retrieve it. We are all familiar with the phenomenon that we unconsciously or unintentionally send a message to someone and this sometimes results in what is called “put your foot in your mouth.”

Communication takes place in a physical and a social context; both establish the rules that govern the interaction. Communication never occurs in isolation or vacuum. We always interact with others within specific physical surroundings and under a set of specific social dynamics.

2.2 Types of communication

Communication is a process of exchanging information, thoughts, ideas and emotions. The process involves four key factors, namely message sender, message, communication channel and message receiver. The whole communication process is like that the message sender encodes the message and sends it through the communication channel, while having received the message, the receiver decodes the message, processes the information and sends an appropriate reply via the same communication channel. It can occur via various processes and methods and, there can be various types of communication according to the channel used and the style of communication.

Types of communication based on communication channels

Based on the channels used for communicating, communication can be broadly divided into *verbal communication* and *non-verbal communication*.

Verbal communication can be further divided into oral and written communication. Oral communication refers to the spoken words in the communication process. Oral communication can be of different forms, it can be a face-to-face communication or a conversation over the phone, and it can also be a chat over the Internet. As for verbal communication, factors such as voice modulation, pitch, volume, and even the speed and clarity of speaking have a great influence on it. Written communication involves any type of interaction that makes use of the written words. The effectiveness of it depends on the style of writing, vocabulary used, grammar, clarity and precision of language.

Non-verbal communication generally refers to body language, facial expressions



and visuals, diagrams or pictures used for communication. It includes the overall body language of the person who is speaking, which will include the body posture, the hand gestures, and overall body movements. The facial expressions also play a major role while communicating since the expressions on a person's face say a lot about his/her mood. On the other hand, gestures, like a handshake, a smile or a hug, can independently convey emotions. *Non-verbal communication* can also be in the form of pictorial representations, signboards, or even photographs, sketches and paintings.

Types of communication based on style and purpose

According to its style and purpose, communication can also be classified into formal communication and informal communication. Each of them has its own set of characteristics.

Formal communication refers to communication that has to occur in a set format. Business communication or corporate communication is a typical example of this sort of communication. As its name shows, the style of formal communication is very formal and official. Official conferences, meetings and written memos and corporate letters are the usual forms of this type. Formal communication can also occur between two strangers when they meet for the first time. The characteristics of formal communication are straightforward, official and precise.

Informal communication refers to free unrestrained communication between people who are acquainted with each other. Informal communication requires two people to be on a similar wavelength and hence occurs between friends and families. Unlike formal communication, it does not have any rigid rules and guidelines; it even does not necessarily have boundaries of time, place, and fixed subject for that matter since we all know that friendly chats with our loved ones can simply go on and on.

2.3 Barriers to communication

There are a number of factors that act as hurdles when it comes to effective communication. Some of the main communication barriers are listed below.

Physical barriers

Physical barriers are often due to the nature of the environment. One physical barrier is often created by marked out boundaries for individuals. In the workplace, such barriers can be caused by the different seating arrangements for staff members of different status. This distance factor can be a hindrance in normal workplace