

跨文化交际教程

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION THEORY AND PRACTICE

刘凤霞 编著

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**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION:
THEORY AND PRACTICE**

跨文化交际教程

刘凤霞 编著

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前 言

关于文化的界说,人们历来争论不休,莫衷一是。不论文化有多少不同的定义,有一点是很明确的,即文化的核心是人。“人既是文化的创造者,又是文化成果的享受者;既是文化的主体,又受着文化的制约;文化既是人的文化,人也是文化的人”(董广杰:2001)。人们的生活,无论是物质的还是精神的,始终是发生在特定的文化氛围中,而文化反过来又影响和形成人们的所思所想,所作所为。文化使得我们承继同一种文化遗产群体中的个体拥有共同的知识、信仰、价值观、生活方式、行为方式、思维方式、道德规范等;文化教给我们如何看待世界,如何判断美丑、正误,如何待人接物,如何表达情感。文化因素隐含在我们生活中的各个方面,小到准备什么样的早餐,大到如何处理国际间事务。可以说,文化无所不在,文化的辐射范围几乎无所不包。

人类学家将文化分为三个层次,即高级文化、大众文化、深层文化。高级文化包括哲学、文学、艺术、宗教等;大众文化则指人们在长期社会交往中约定俗成的风俗习惯、生活方式、行为模式等;深层文化指人们的价值观念、审美情趣、思维方式、时空观、道德观等。这三层文化紧密相联,深层文化是文化的核心和精华,是现实的根源。高级文化和大众文化均植根于深层文化,反过来,深层文化又通过人们的行为准则、生活习俗、艺术形式、文学作品等多种渠道和形式反映到大众文化和高级文化中。“生长于一种文化的人自然地继承了深层文化和大众文化。人们的思维与行为往往无形中被深层文化支配”(浦小君:1991)。例如,西方人的守时反映出其时间就是金钱的价值观;中国人常常以含蓄的方式表达不同看法,则反映出我们求同性的中庸和谐的价值取向。

作为文化的主要载体,语言与文化之间始终存在着不可分割的

内在联系。譬如,在工业化社会里,其语言中反映技术的复杂性和专业性的词汇很多,而在以狩猎、种植为主的社会里,有关动、植物种类的词汇常常被人们所熟知。譬如,汉语中表示亲属关系的词名目繁多,且长幼有序,男女有别,血缘姻亲属性一目了然。这一特点源于汉民族封建宗法制度以及中国人重家庭、重亲属的传统文化。而英语中贫乏笼统的亲属称谓语则折射出英格蘭民族平等看待亲属关系的文化特征。语言能够折射出一种文化对世界的感悟和认识,透过语言则能窥见一个民族绚丽多彩的文化。“当民族在人类历史上作为一种语言、居住区域、经济生活、心理状态上稳定的共同体出现时,语言就深深地打上了民族的烙印,成为民族文化最典型的表征。一个民族的文化心理结构深藏在民族语言之中,因而语言的结构具有民族文化的通约性”(张岱年、方克立:1994)。因此,语言不能脱离文化而存在,语言教学也不能忽视教授目的语文化。文化学习是培养学习者跨文化交际能力中不可或缺的内容。

有研究者指出,跨文化交际是一个综合系统,其中包括语言、文化、社会、心理等相互密切联系,并为交际提供适用的行为规范和准则的子系统。交际双方的语言行为和交流方式均受到双方共有的交际系统的影响和制约。如果中国的英语学习者用英语同英语本族人交流,他必须对英语民族在交际中所适用的规则和准则,以及隐含在这些规则和准则背后的社会、文化,尤其是民族文化心理、价值观等因素有尽可能多的了解,才能保证跨文化交际的顺利进行。不同的社会有不同的交流方式和规范,这些方式和规范无不受到文化的影响和制约。不同民族之所以有其特有的思维、感悟、信仰、行为,是因为他们所接受到的信息不同,以及这些信息中传递的文化不同。如我们从孩提时代就开始懂得该跟谁说话,说什么,怎么说,这些交际规则都来自日常生活中的耳濡目染。Hall指出,“文化即交际,交际即文化”两者之间联系如此紧密,以至于“很难区分哪个是原声(voice),哪个是回应(echo)”(转引自 Samovar et al: 2000)。综上所述,在培养学习者跨文化交际能力的过程中,文化教学举足轻重。如果说自然语言是交际中的有声语言的话,那么文化就是交际中的无声语言,同样支配和制约着人们的交际活动。

传统意义上的文化教学是教授目的语国家的历史、地理、国家机构、文学艺术以及影响理解文学作品的背景知识。自 20 世纪四五十年代以来,随着社会科学,尤其是人类学和社会学的发展和影响,语言学、教学专家们开始认识到,了解和分析一个民族的居住环境、生活方式以及他们的思想、行为对于学习该民族的语言十分重要,并研究将这些内容纳入文化教学。

本书试图从文化课中的文化教学入手,从大的文化框架内选择了一些反映目的语文化现象的主题进行讨论与对比,如家庭、教育、工作、体育、保健等,并选择编入了一些国内外在中西方文化对比研究领域中的相关成果,旨在通过对英语国家较为典型的主流文化现象进行描述、阐释、讨论以及与我们本国文化的对比,培养学生对目的语文化的兴趣和理解力,进而使他们主动观察、分析、对比、评价,并从深层文化探讨和研究中西方文化之间存在的差异,以有效提高学生的跨文化交际能力,为他们能够较为客观、系统、全面地认识英语国家的文化,宣传本国文化打下基础。

本书每一单元主要内容分两个部分:阅读与讨论和课堂任务,所涉及的内容大多属探索性的。阅读材料用来提供有关背景知识,课堂教学很大程度上是在给学生留有思考、探讨空间、开放式的讨论中进行。主要课堂活动是学生在小组内讨论并完成相关任务,即用目的语对英语国家和本国特定的文化现象进行调查、描述、分析、讨论、辩论、演讲等。学生在对某个特定文化现象进行观察、调查、搜集资料、分析、发表见解的过程中,锻炼其获取知识、多角度观察事物、思考问题、学习进行科学研究的方法和能力。本书的附录对课文中的讨论题及课堂任务提供了部分参考。

本书借鉴国外相关教材的编写方法,结合我国英语教学的实际编写而成,适合于大学英语教师、英语专业本科生和研究生,以及英语翻译、导游和英语爱好者。

由于水平有限,难免有疏忽和错误,敬请读者批评指正。

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交际与文化

培养跨文化交际意识旨在通过对不同文化的客观比较和对比,使语言学习者领悟自身文化,理解别国文化,排除民族中心论,欣赏文化多元性,进而与操本族语言者有效交际。

文化和交际不可分割。人们所有交际活动都受其文化的支配和制约。我们用语言进行交际,而语言在很大程度上又受到文化的影响。因此,学习用一种新的语言与其本族人交际,就要掌握一种新的规范和新的价值体系。语言和文化与我们如此密不可分,以至于使我们将它们视为自然,习以为常,甚至常常用本民族的习惯与规范去审视其他民族的行为。本族人受其交际规范潜移默化的影响,耳濡目染,通常是自然习得。而对语言学习者来说,只有通过有意识地学习,才能获得别国文化的相应的知识。跨文化交际研究,致力于将某一民族人与人之间相互理解和交际的无意识知识明确化。学习者在阅读本章过程中将获得跨文化交际的一些必要知识。



Unit 1 ①

Communication and Culture

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. ②

Reading and Discussion

Passage 1

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. And 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, an understanding of, cultural pluralism—the ability to get rid of our ethnocentric tendencies and to accept another culture on its own



terms. Many cross-cultural interactions go sour due to a lack of such an awareness.

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.

Discussion

1. Discuss the following questions in groups.
 - What does the “exclamation” of the little American reflect?
 - What does “ethnocentric tendencies” mean?
2. Comment on the following views.
 - 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.
 - As adults learning a second language we must make a conscious effort to examine the cultural context of the language we want to learn.

Passage 2

Communication

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 meanings and expectations. We usually learn our own culture's ways of doing, speaking, and thinking so well that it becomes difficult to think, feel, speak, and act as people in other cultures do.

As the basic building blocks of communication, words communicate meaning, but as we have seen, the meanings of words are very much influenced by culture. Meaning is in the person, not in the word, and each person is the product of a particular culture that passed 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.

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But 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. 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 context of the culture 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 only the new language but of their own language as well. Students who study a foreign language will also learn more about their own native tongue by comparing and contrasting the two languages. You can follow the same comparative method in learning more about culture—your own, as well as others'. Remember that each culture has developed a 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.

The clothes we wear, the way we decorate our homes, the car 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 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.

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 behavior 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