College English Teaching Design and Practice Based on Cross-cultural Theory

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Abstract—The theoretical bases for the thesis are cross-cultural foreign language education theory, systemic education theory and multimedia-assisted English teaching theory. At first, the thesis summarizes and analyzes every unit involving cultural knowledge in College English textbook *Oxford English* used in Shanghai at present, demonstrating the feasibility of culture teaching in the elementary stage of College English. Then based on systemic teaching theories, the thesis analyzes teaching aim, teaching demand, teaching environment, teaching content, teaching strategies, evaluative strategies and implementation of culture teaching. Next, the thesis designs specific courses to match daily teaching activities by way of collecting culture teaching materials, designing culture teaching content and relevant teaching strategies. When designing specific courses, I take advice from experts and teachers on the front, develop three teaching cases and use courseware for teaching practice.

Index Terms—College English teaching; cross-cultural theory; teaching design and practice; teaching evaluation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Recently, culture teaching in foreign languages has developed by leaps and bounds in educational field. Many experts, scholars, educational institutes and teachers on the front are willing to attempt to accept such culture teaching pattern. However, after investigation, I find that most culture teaching research is confined to university because some educational researchers think it is not necessary for culture teaching in elementary stage. They also think that College English learning is a basic stage in which they need focus on accuracy of pronunciation, tone, grammar and accumulation of vocabulary. Others hold that complexity of culture teaching makes it difficult to teach in practice. Although many educators in elementary stage think highly of culture teaching, recent research has been still confined to theory [1]. Due to difficulties in culture teaching practice in elementary stage, the thesis presents some problems of culture teaching in College English and gives some preliminary solutions in the hope of sharing and seeking for more solutions.

II. DEMAND ANALYSIS OF COLLEGE ENGLISH IN CROSS-CULTURAL TEACHING

A. Demand of growing social exchanges

With the development of society, there are more and more international communications, especially in English. Therefore, adding some reasonable and relevant cultural knowledge in College English will contribute to communicating in natural and native-like English.

B. Demand of education for international understanding

Education for international understanding is a new educational idea which recognizes cultural diversity and emphasizes understanding, tolerance and respect in cross-cultural exchange. In terms of education, the idea emphasizes cultural diversity such as cognition, emotion, will and behavior for the purpose of better exchange and cooperation. Since the idea of education for international understanding is more scientific, many educational institutes begin to introduce it at present. In essence, education for international understanding belongs to cross-cultural education field, so we can call it education for cross-cultural understanding. Because cross-cultural education not only focuses on cultural education among nations and regions but also that of different classes, areas and sexes[2]. Obviously, cross-cultural education will contribute to development of education for international understanding if conducted in elementary education stage.

C. Demand of relevant course standard

The nature of English teaching is a combination of knowledge and humanity, and a combination of tool and practice. What's more, the first item of curriculum idea is: "improving students' social communicative competence in the background of multi-culture embodies a demand of the Age and English curriculum happens to provide an important learning resource for that (middle and primary school teaching material reform committee in Shanghai, 2005)". In this case, students will learn more about communication on the condition of putting English in the social development.

III. CROSS-CULTURAL TEACHING SYSTEM DESIGN

A. Learners' Feature in Middle School

(1) General feature analysis

There are many advantageous factors for learners in middle school in terms of culture teaching. Firstly, there is a rapid development of logic for learners in middle school, especially abstract logic, which is helpful for understanding certain cultural phenomena. Secondly, they have steadier attention than they do in primary school, which embodies in keeping paying attention to their interested things for a relative long time [4]. Thirdly, they have independent thinking ability which helps in identifying cultural phenomena. Fourthly, they have more interest and enlarged interpersonal demand, which also contributes to cultural communication. Fifthly, middle school students tend to explore, which means they prefer to acquire cul-

tural knowledge and skills by themselves or cooperating with others.

(2) Learners' motivation analysis

My investigation of interview and questionnaire shows that students are motivated to learn western culture. Firstly, students are interested in cultural phenomena in English learning [5]. To some degree, they have self-developing consciousness and would like to accept learning content and teaching methods related to cultivating cultural communication skills.

TABLE I.
THE OXFORD ENGLISH CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE TEACHING MATERIAL ANALYSIS—OXFORD 7A

Relationships	Unit 1 Relatives in Beijing	interpersonal relationships
	Unit 2 our animal friends	entertainment
	Unit 3 Friends from other countries	interpersonal relationships
My neighborhood	Unit 4 Jobs people do	the social responsibility
	Unit 5 Choosing a new flat	necessary cultural life
	Unit 6 Different places	
	Unit 7 Signs around us	
Diet and health	Unit 8 Growing healthy, growing strong	Ideological education
	Unit 9 International Food Festival	necessary cultural life
	Unit 10 A birthday party	
	Unit 11 My food project	

TABLE II.
THE OXFORD ENGLISH CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE TEACHING MATERIAL ANALYSIS—OXFORD 7B

Garden city and its neighbors	Unit 1 Writing a travel guide	entertainment
	Unit 2 Going to see a film	
	Unit 3 A visit to garden city	
Better future	Unit 4 Let's go shopping	
	Unit 5 What can we learn from others?	Social values
	Unit 6 Hard work for a better life	Life values
	Unit 7 In the future	Life values
The natural elements	Unit 8 A more enjoyable school life	Social values
	Unit 9 The wind is blowing	
	Unit 10 Water festival	Sense of time and space

TABLE III.
THE OXFORD ENGLISH CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE TEACHING MATERIAL ANALYSIS—OXFORD 8A

My life	Unit 1 Pen friends	Ideological education
	Unit 2 Work and play	
	Unit 3 Trouble	
Amazing things	Unit 4 Numbers	aesthetic
	Unit 5 Encyclopedias	Ideological education
Science fiction	Unit 6 Nobody wins (1)	
	Unit 7 Nobody wins (2)	

TABLE IV.
THE OXFORD ENGLISH CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE TEACHING MATERIAL ANALYSIS—OXFORD 8B

Nature and environment	Unit 1 Trees	Ideological education
	Unit 2 Water	
	Unit 3 Electricity	
Mass media	Unit 4 Newspaper	Ideological education
	Unit 5 Magazine articles	entertainment
Leisure time	Unit 6 Travel	
	Unit 7 Poems	entertainment

TABLE V.   THE OXFORD ENGLISH CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE TEACHING MATERIAL ANALYSIS—OXFORD 9A

Myths, traditions and opinions	Unit 1 Ancient Greece	Ideological education
	Unit 2 Traditional skills	Social values
	Unit 3 Pets	entertainment
Computers vs humans	Unit 4 Computers	
	Unit 5 The human brain	
Fighting crime	Unit 6 Detectives	entertainment
	Unit 7 Escaping from kidnappers	

TABLE VI.
THE OXFORD ENGLISH CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE TEACHING MATERIAL ANALYSIS—AXFORD 9B

Environment and life	Unit 1 Ancient Greece	Natural conception
	Unit 2 Traditional skills	
	Unit 3 Pets	
Recreation and entertainment	Unit 4 Detectives	entertainment
	Unit 5 Escaping from kidnappers	

But they lack consciousness of related cultures to which teachers need draw their attention. Secondly, there are many opportunities for students to communicate in English in their daily life, which sometimes will cause cultural conflicts. Therefore, they have real demands for learning culture [6]. Thirdly, teachers will remind them consciously in the process of teaching before investigation so that students can have a better understanding of some cultural conflicts.

B.   Cross-cultural Teaching Content in College English

English textbook of middle school used in Shanghai includes many cultural content, such as English etymology and variation involving countries like Britain, America, France, Canada and Australia, etc., which shows that culture teaching has been emphasized in theory. Next, I will display relevant content involving cultural knowledge in *Oxford English* textbook used in Shanghai at present, as shown in Table 1-6.

C.   Cross-cultural Teaching Strategy Analysis in College English

(1) Cross-cultural teaching strategy in vocabulary

There is lots of cultural information in vocabulary, which reflects different values of speakers. Thus, we should focus more on historical origin or cultural connotation except word meaning and usage. This teaching way not only arouses students' interest but also combines vocabulary teaching with culture teaching. For instance, the word "holiday" derives from Genesis "On the seventh day God finished his work. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy".

(2) Cross-cultural teaching strategy in reading

Some people think the approach of combining reading teaching with culture teaching is to choose those reading materials involving cultural content. But the final purpose of the approach is to improve students' discourse comprehension ability without taking real cultural functions into consideration. To this end, we should turn our attention to reading content by means of designing pre-reading and post-reading tasks. For example, before students start to read a passage of American food culture, teachers should ask some questions about Chinese food culture and ask them to compare American food culture with Chinese

food culture. Teachers can guide them to make such comparisons after reading, during which some grammars can be taught.

(1) Cross-cultural teaching strategy in listening and speaking

Listening and speaking activities can help students have a real experience of cross-cultural communication. While many listening and speaking materials are not systemic □ only individual paragraphs, which easily make students confused. As a result, they are strange to real or natural listening materials. Therefore, listening materials in culture teaching should have the following four features: authentic; representative to reflect different cultural aspects in target language and native language; systemic to combine language teaching with culture teaching for the purpose of "half the work with double results"; and suitable by considering students' listening ability in the selection of listening materials. For example, choosing what they can understand and express, as shown in Figure 1.

(2) Cross-cultural teaching strategy in writing

Middle school students already have writing ability and we should keep in mind that we have to consider cultural context, or it will lead to Clingfish. Generally speaking, students in basic educational stage often write a narration closely related to their daily life and another writing type is document writing like letter and notice. Both can combine with culture teaching. For narrative writing, we should pay attention to culturally practical experience. For example, when teaching the theme of "school life", teachers, through reading or audio-visual materials, let students know a day of school life of American peers and remind them of the difference between them. Then, in the process of writing, teachers teach them to correct language expression in order to combine culture teaching and language teaching, as shown in Figure 2.

There are also a great deal of cultural information on format, expression, structure and content in terms of document writing. For instance, firstly, there is a difference of address format between western counties that are from small to large in size and China that is on the contrary; secondly, Chinese people prefer to add mane and date in the end of letter while western people prefer to add them on letterhead; thirdly, when writing e-mail, western people don't leave a blank in every paragraph while Chinese

people like leaving two blank spaces, as shown in Figure 3. In fact, culture is not invariable for it will become more scientific and convenient. A case in point is that many Chinese write e-mails in western way now.

IV. CROSS COLLEGE ENGLISH TEACHING SYSTEM DESIGN BASED ON MULTIMEDIA

A. Teaching Method

Multimedia provides teachers and students with rich, vivid and easily understandable teaching conditions. Vivid pictures and bright colors make it easier for students to understand knowledge. This kind of teaching is equipped with PPT that is designed by multimedia teaching principle. Certainly, blackboard can't be totally replaced by multimedia and overuse of multimedia will exert adverse teaching effects. Therefore, we should rationally utilize PPT to have a good teaching effect, as shown in Figure 4.

(1) Presenting teaching content through teacher's oral teaching

Teacher's oral teaching, as an old method, still plays an important role. A refined class design with various teaching methods like situated learning and cooperative learning will make a difference. We use many teaching strategies of oral teaching in the process of the experiment, as shown in Figure 5.

Presenting teaching content via sound and image

Multimedia provides vivid teaching methods with the help of videos and audios. As we all know, auditory and visual senses are important ways of acquiring knowledge, information and language. A large amount of drills like that will be helpful for their language sense. What's more, making use of audios and videos will contribute to vivid understanding in the process of teaching cultural knowledge. For example, when involving "How can we get information" in 8BM2 Mass Media of the experiment, the teacher plays an audio and displays pictures for students to have a visual understanding of what they have learnt.

(2) Presenting teaching content through body language

Body language is a voiceless language that outputs information by body or body gesture on visual organ of receiver to form one expression as a "language". It can be said that every word and gesture will make a deep impression on students. Thus the whole experimental process pays much attention to body language.

Figure 1. Applying Oral Teaching Strategy

Figure 2. Applying Presented Audio-visual Teaching Content

Figure 3. Applying Teaching Strategy of Open Questions

Figure 4. Applying Time Management Strategy

Figure 5. The application of class discussion teaching strategy

B. Strategies for Teaching Activity

(1) More suspense

Asking questions can stimulate their motivation and enthusiasm. Besides, progressive suspense will make class more smooth and attractive. But the most important thing is to analyze textbooks comprehensively and design reasonable questions according to students' features. Helping students know cultural difference and enlarge their knowledge in a natural way in the process of seeking for answers. We use more questions in Unit 2 Going to See a Film.

(2) Open questions

Appropriate open questions will have a good teaching effect. On one hand, students can fully express their ideas, which show their initiatives, on the other hand, they will improve students' ability of analyzing and solving problems. Therefore, we should ask more open questions to help students think, analyze and seek for answers for questions. For example, we use open questions like "Why did Datong lie for his father? Do you think it is good for Datong's doing?" in Unit 2 Going to See a Film.

(3) Classroom discussion

There has been much research on strategies related to self-exploration teaching in recent years, which emphasizes the importance of classroom discussion. Self-exploration teaching is a teaching method in which students explore and build up their knowledge via self-learning and cooperative discussion based on students' preview and teacher's elicitation and guidance. The teaching method cultivates students' such abilities as finding and solving problems, innovation and practice. Self-exploration teaching strategies indeed play a role in debatable culture teaching. There are many discussions designed for students in the experiment like strategies in 8BM2 Mass Media, as shown in Figure 6.

V. CONCLUSION

The theoretical bases for the thesis are cross-cultural foreign language education theory, systemic education theory and multimedia-assisted English teaching theory. At first, the thesis summarizes and analyzes every unit involving cultural knowledge in College English textbook *Oxford English* used in Shanghai at present, demonstrating the feasibility of culture teaching in elementary stage of College English. Then based on systemic teaching theories, the thesis analyzes teaching aim, teaching demand, teaching environment, teaching content, teaching strategies, evaluative strategies and implementation of culture teaching. Next, the thesis designs specific courses to match daily teaching activities by way of collecting culture teaching materials, designing culture teaching content and relevant teaching strategies. When designing specific courses, I take advice from experts and teachers on the front, develop three teaching cases and use courseware for teaching practice.

Research methods of the experiment are classroom observation, interview and questionnaire, etc. At first, middle school students have a strong demand for learning culture and the school where the experiment was carried out shows its support for English culture teaching. Then the results of the practical teaching show: firstly, the research helps students broaden their cultural horizon and improve their ability of understanding different cultures; secondly, the teaching design, to some degree, arouses
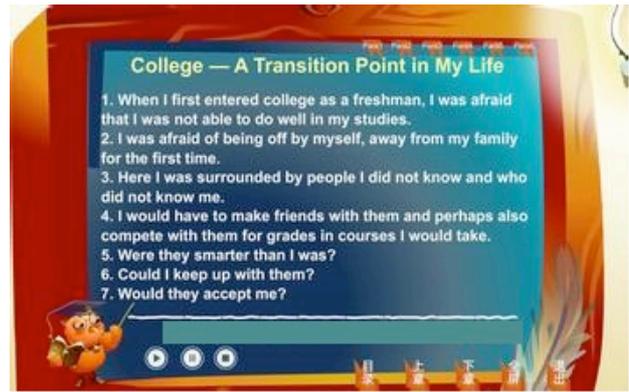

Figure 6. The application of class discussion teaching strategy

students' learning interest, enhances their learning motivation and trains their ability of cooperation; thirdly, the teaching methods used in the experiment, to some degree, have improved teaching efficiency; fourthly, the teaching design, in the long run, contributes to various thinking modes and tolerant attitudes of students.

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