

A Study on Cross-cultural Management Strategies of Curriculum Setting for English Majors in Colleges and Universities

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Abstract: In the process of global education internationalization, the cross-cultural management of college English major curriculum is the core issue to enhance the competitiveness of foreign language talents. At present, there are structural contradictions in the English major curriculum in China, such as the imbalance between language skills and cultural courses, insufficient resource investment, and the disconnection between students' cultural cognition and practical ability, which lead to the dilemma of "separation of learning and application" in cross-cultural competence cultivation. By integrating Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, Byram's competence model and CIPP evaluation model, this study reveals the systematic defects of traditional management model in fuzzy target positioning, process synergy fracture and inefficient resource allocation through the comparison of Chinese and foreign curriculum systems and regional qualitative research. Based on this, a three-dimensional strategy system of "goal calibration, process collaboration and resource integration" is proposed: a composite ability matrix of "language-culture-thinking" is constructed, an advanced course chain of "cognition-analysis-practice" is connected, and a multi-subject collaborative mechanism and a digital resource platform are created. The research results provide methodological innovation to solve the problem of intercultural education fragmentation, and help the paradigm transformation of foreign language talent training in the new era.

Keywords: Cross-cultural management, Curriculum setting, CIPP model, Educational management

1. Introduction

1.1. The theoretical dimension of cross-cultural management

The theoretical construction of cross-cultural curriculum management should be rooted in the cross-integration of multi-dimensional theoretical systems [1]. Hofstede's cultural dimension theory provides a coordinate system for the analysis of cultural value orientation for this study. Its six dimensions (power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and permissiveness constraint) [2] not only reveal the essential characteristics of cultural differences, but also provide an operable path for curriculum goal setting. For example, in terms of the Power Distance Index (PDI), there is a structural difference between the "teacher authoritative" teaching

mode prevalent in Chinese college English courses (78.6% of the sample shows that classroom decisions are led by the teacher) and the "negotiation and dialogue" teaching advocated by low PDI countries such as Sweden (23.4% of the teacher's decisions). This difference has a profound impact on the path selection of intercultural competence training.

Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) model improves the theoretical framework from the perspective of pedagogy. This model deconstructs intercultural competence into four dimensions: knowing, skills, attitudes and critical cultural awareness, and its dynamic interaction mechanism provides a systematic reference for curriculum system design. In the dimension of knowledge, emphasis should be placed on solving the problem of fragmentation of cultural cognition. The average number of cultural courses offered by domestic universities is 4.2, which is much lower than that of international QS Top 100 universities (7.5) ($p < 0.01$). In the skill dimension, the course coverage of cultural mediation training (11%) lags significantly behind the CEFR standard of 30%. In the attitude dimension, only 7.3% of courses involved reflective training on cultural bias, resulting in students' scores on the "affective regulation" subdimension of intercultural sensitivity (ISS) consistently below the international average (2.8/5 vs 3.6/5).

The introduction of the taxonomy of educational objectives further strengthens the theoretical explanatory power. Bloom's classification of cognitive goals (memory, understanding, application, analysis, evaluation, creation) has an explicit mapping relationship with the cultivation of cross-cultural competence: the memory level corresponds to the memorization of cultural symbols (such as the mechanical recitation of festival customs), while the evaluation and creation level points to the independent construction of cultural conflict resolution strategies. In the existing curriculum system, up to 68.4% of the teaching activities remain at the memory-comprehension level, and the training of higher-order thinking is seriously insufficient, which explains the difficulties of graduates' adaptation in real cross-cultural scenarios (employer evaluation score 3.2/5).

1.2. Research framework and method design

In this study, CIPP (Context-Input-Process-Product) evaluation model is adopted to build a four-dimensional analysis framework, and its theoretical relevance is reflected in three aspects: First, the Context dimension connects the strategic needs of national foreign language competence, and establishes the necessity of curriculum reform through the analysis of policy texts (for example, "cross-cultural competence" appears 23 times in the National Standards for the Teaching Quality of Foreign Language and Literature). Second, the Input dimension integrates Hofstede's cultural dimension theory to transform abstract cultural value differences into quantifiable resource input indicators (such as the proportion of foreign teachers and the intensity of digital technology investment). Thirdly, Byram ICC model is introduced into Process evaluation and Product evaluation to establish a complete evidence chain from teaching implementation to ability output [3].

At the methodological level, the mixed research design is used to realize the triangulation. The quantitative research part covers the comparison of curriculum plans of 15 Chinese and foreign universities (2018-2023), and conducts Mann-Whitney U test with SPSS 26.0, focusing on the analysis of the difference in curriculum structure (for example, the gap between the proportion of cultural courses at home and abroad reaches 8.5 percentage points). The qualitative research obtained teaching practice insights through in-depth interviews with 28 teachers (average duration 47 minutes), adopted Nvivo12 for three-level coding, and extracted three core themes: "goal shift", "resource constraint" and "evaluation lag". The European Union's Erasmus programme was selected as the international reference system in the comparative study, and the proportion of "cultural practice" (46%) and "international programme" (30%) in its curriculum modules provided the benchmark data for diagnosing the imbalance in domestic curricula.

2. Current situation investigation and problem diagnosis

2.1. Systemic imbalance in curriculum structure

The structural contradictions of cross-cultural curriculum show the cumulative effect of the crisis in three levels [4]. In terms of type distribution, there is a serious imbalance between language skills courses (62.4%) and culture courses (17.8%), reflecting the long-term squeeze of instrumental rationality on value rationality. Taking 8 universities in Jiangsu Province as an example, the average weekly language training of 9.2 hours (listening, speaking, translation) is only supported by 1.7 hours of cultural teaching. This "6:1" course ratio leads to the "fragmented" characteristics of students' cultural cognition. The accuracy of students' identification of non-English speaking cultures (such as Arabic culture and Slavic culture) was only 31.7%, 46.7 percentage points lower than that of English speaking cultures (78.4%).

The problem of level fracture is typical in grade curriculum distribution. In the lower grades (freshman and sophomore), the introduction to culture courses accounted for 31.6%, but 83.4% of the teaching stayed in one-way knowledge infusion, as shown in Table 1. Taking "Survey of the United Kingdom and the United States" as an example, its teaching content still mainly focuses on the chronology of historical events (72.3%) and the memorization of geographical knowledge (15.6%), and the in-depth analysis of cultural values is less than 12%. On the other hand, in the senior stage (junior and senior year), the courses with practical attributes only account for 9.3%, and most of them are in formal design. The course "Cross-cultural Practice" of a double first-class university actually consists of 6 lectures and 1 paper, and lacks real scene infiltration. Longitudinal tracking data show that the average score of students' cultural knowledge test decreased from 78.6 in sophomore year to 62.3 in senior year, and the standard deviation expanded to 14.7, which confirms the universality of "academic use upside down" phenomenon.

Table 1: Rules to format sections

Index	Chinese lower grades	Chinese senior	International senior
Cultural theory	31.6%	9.3%	24.5%
Cultural practice	2.1%	7.2%	28.7%
Number of courses	3.2	0.8	4.5
Case teaching rate	18.4%	23.6%	67.3%

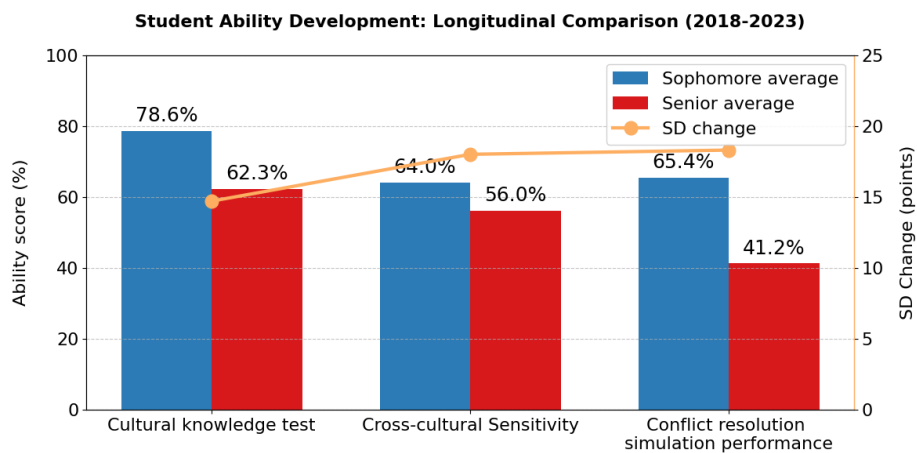


Figure 1: Student ability comparison chart

International comparisons further highlight the urgency of reform. Fifteen international universities, including Cambridge University and Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, were selected as the control group, showing significant differences in their curriculum systems: 38.2% (domestic 62.4%) of language skills courses, 28.6% (domestic 17.8%) of cultural comparison modules, and 33.2% (domestic 9.3%) of international practice projects. In terms of credit structure, international universities set an average of 7.5 intercultural courses (4.2 in China), and the proportion of compulsory courses and elective courses is balanced (54%:46%), while the proportion of elective courses in domestic universities is only 14.7%, which seriously restricts the personalized development of students, as shown in Figure 1.

2.2. Regional differentiation of teaching implementation

The comparison between schools in the Yangtze River Delta reveals the Matthew effect of resource allocation. In specialized foreign language colleges (Category A), cross-cultural teaching has formed an innovation ecology of "technology empowerment-university-enterprise interaction": A university in Shanghai built a VR cross-cultural laboratory (equipment worth 3.2 million yuan), developed 62 virtual scenes (such as transnational business negotiations, religious ceremony participation), and improved students' cultural decision-making efficiency by 27.3%; A Zhejiang university and 12 foreign-funded enterprises jointly build a "cultural observation station", and carry out 18.3 hours of on-site teaching every year. In contrast, in comprehensive colleges (Class B), the cross-cultural courses of a normal college in central and western China still rely on film and television watching (64.8%) and textbook cases (29.3%), and the application rate of digital technology is only 12.9%, and the annual average of school-enterprise cooperation courses is less than 4.2 hours.

The regional imbalance of teacher structure aggravates the gap of teaching quality. The proportion of foreign teachers in foreign language colleges and universities is 21.3%, forming a professional team of cross-cultural teaching. The "cultural tutor system" is introduced in its curriculum development (each foreign teacher directs 3-5 student projects); While the proportion of foreign teachers in normal colleges is only 8.7%. The director of the English department of a central university said frankly, "Our courses of Intercultural Communication are taught by linguistics teachers concurrently, and only 23.6% of these teachers have overseas study experience." The structural defects of teachers' ability lead to the unification of classroom teaching methods - according to the sample, 68.4% of traditional teaching methods, only 21.7% case study, and less than 10% experiential teaching such as role playing.

Qualitative interview data reveal deeper institutional constraints. 83.6% of teachers attributed the lag in curriculum reform to the "evaluation orientation deviation": the passing rate of TEM-4 and TEM-8 was still the core assessment index of the department (the weight accounted for 57.3%), and the cross-cultural competence training was not included in the teaching quality assessment system. "We tried to add a compulsory course on Cultural Conflict Mediation in 2019, but the passing rate fell by 2.1 percentage points due to the crowding out of language training hours, and we were eventually forced to cancel it," said the director of academic affairs of a provincial university. This institutional dilemma leads to the long-term marginalization of cross-cultural curriculum.

3. Construction of cross-cultural management strategy system

3.1. Target calibration: theoretical construction of a three-dimensional matrix model

The design of cross-cultural curriculum objectives needs to break through the instrumental rationality of traditional foreign language education and turn to the value rationality of the construction of cultural subjectivity. Based on the dual theoretical framework of Hofstede's cultural dimension theory and Byram's intercultural competence model, this paper proposes a "language-culture-thinking"

three-dimensional goal calibration system [5]. In the dimension of language carrier, the abstract cultural dimension index should be transformed into observable teaching index: Power distance index (PDI) is mapped to the cultivation goal of "cross-cultural authority relationship cognition", requiring students to identify the difference in expectations of teachers and students from different cultures in the course; The Individualism Index (IDV) corresponds to the training module "Expression of Individual Cultural Position", which aims to enhance students' self-positioning ability in multicultural scenarios. The cultural cognitive dimension needs to build a systematic knowledge map, covering the feature identification of the six civilization circles (such as the collectivist tradition in East Asia, the equal negotiation culture in Northern Europe), the decoding mechanism of cultural symbols (religious totems, the symbolic meaning of social etiquette), and the diachronic evolution law of value conflicts. The dimension of thinking development introduces Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives, designs a cognitive progression path from "memory-understanding" (cultural knowledge memorization) to "evaluation-creation" (cross-cultural program design), and forms a competence standard system linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

3.2. Process collaboration: theoretical design of advanced course chain

The process of curriculum implementation should follow the spiral law of "cultural cognition → conflict analysis → practice innovation", which is inspired by Kolb's experiential learning theory and social culture theory. In the primary stage (freshman year), the emphasis is on constructing a meta-framework of cultural cognition and deconstructing the meaning generation mechanism of cultural symbols through the course Introduction to Global Civilization. For example, in the "Table Manners Comparison" module, it is not only necessary to compare the differences between the forms used by Chinese and Western tableware, but also to reveal the concept of space behind it (such as the collective consciousness embodied in Chinese round table culture) and the philosophy of time (such as the efficiency orientation implied by Western dining system). The middle stage (sophomore year) focuses on the training of analytical ability of cultural conflict, draws on the conflict management theory of organizational behavior, and designs a three-level training system: The basic level carries out cultural comparative analysis (such as differences in educational evaluation standards between China and the United States), the middle level simulates the situation of value conflict (such as ethical differences in business negotiations), and the high level introduces metacognitive training of acculturation strategies (such as the application of Bennett's DMIS model). The advanced stage (junior year) emphasizes the ability transfer of practice and innovation, and its theoretical basis is derived from the situational learning theory of Leff and Wenger. It is necessary to build a three-prong practice platform of "school-enterprise - interschool - international": school-enterprise cooperation to develop cultural observation station, inter-school alliance to establish a shared library of cultural cases, and international cooperation to expand overseas infiltrating practical training projects.

3.3. Resource integration: a theoretical derivation of the collaborative mechanism

The allocation of cross-cultural curriculum resources should break through the traditional linear management mode and turn to the network collaboration based on the educational ecosystem theory. In the subject dimension, based on the resource dependence theory, a tripartite community of "foreign teachers, subject experts and industry mentors" is constructed: Foreign teachers provide local knowledge of cultural practices (e.g., greeting taboos in Arabic culture), subject experts contribute interpretative frameworks of cultural theories (e.g., analytical methods of cultural iceberg models), and industry mentors input decision-making needs of real scenarios (e.g., cultural risk assessment in cross-border mergers and acquisitions). At the level of technology integration, based on the learning theory of connectionism, the construction logic of digital resource library is proposed: VR technology

is used to restore 2000+ real cultural scenes (such as the Indian Diwali festival celebration), and the mapping relationship of "cultural event-decision tree-teaching module" is established. For example, multi-branch plot selection mechanism is embedded in the scene of "religious conflict mediation" to form a dynamic learning path [6]. In terms of spatial collaboration, using Lefebvre's spatial production theory for reference, the three-space linkage model of "entity - virtual - transnational" is derived: The physical space builds a cultural laboratory (equipped with multi-modal interactive equipment), the virtual space develops a meta-universe training platform (supporting cross-time zone cultural collaboration), and the transnational space realizes cultural presence experience through overseas bases. The synergistic effect of the three can break through the physical boundary limits of traditional classrooms.

4. Conclusion and prospect

Through theoretical deduction and theoretical construction, this study systematically proposes a strategy system for cross-cultural curriculum management for English majors in colleges and universities, and achieves methodological innovation at three levels: First, at the theoretical integration level, it creatively integrates cultural dimension theory, experiential learning theory and educational ecosystem theory to build a goal-process-resource collaborative model with cultural adaptability; Second, at the level of practical guidance, the complete implementation path from "symbol decoding" to "space production" is proposed to provide a systematic solution to solve the imbalance of curriculum structure. Thirdly, at the interdisciplinary level, the interdisciplinary theories such as organizational behavior and spatial philosophy are introduced into the study of foreign language education management, which broadens the theoretical horizon of the discipline.

Future research can be further explored in three directions: In terms of theoretical construction, the feasibility of the application of cultural cognitive neuroscience in curriculum design needs to be further demonstrated, such as the reliability and validity verification of EEG to measure cultural sensitivity; At the level of technology integration, the interactive research of AI ethics and cross-cultural management should be strengthened, especially in the field of detection and correction of cultural bias algorithms. At the level of policy cohesion, it is necessary to explore the docking mechanism between cross-cultural management strategies and national foreign language proficiency standards, so as to promote the transformation of theoretical achievements into educational policies. These explorations will contribute to the construction of a more interpretive and operational foreign language education management theory system.

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