

## **Cultivation of cultural empathy in intercultural communication under the background of One Belt and One Road**

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**Abstract:** Since the One Belt and One Road strategy was proposed, China's intercultural communication competence training has faced great challenges, but also ushered in new opportunities. Cultural empathy is a very important factor in intercultural communication. The acquisition of information and the removal of obstacles play an important role in cultural empathy. This paper takes One Belt and One Road as the background, describes the importance of enhancing cultural awareness from the perspective of education, analyzes the influence of cultivating cultural empathy on cross-cultural communication ability, and explores methods and strategies to improve cross-cultural communication ability

Under the background of economic globalization, One Belt and One Road is an important development strategy proposed by all countries for mutual benefit and win-win results in order to conform to the domestic and international economic development trend. It refers to the Silk Road economic belt and the 21st century maritime Silk Road. If China wants to build a community of shared future on One Belt and One Road and tell the story of China in the new era, it must break through the barriers between cultures. Countries along the One Belt and One Road route involve southeast Asia, South Asia, central Asia, west Asia, north Africa and other regions, and each country has different beliefs, customs and languages, which lead to cultural conflicts in the communication with these countries. This requires experts and scholars to analyze the specific problems according to the actual situation, so as to improve the intercultural communication ability of professionals for one country or even several countries. In the context of globalization, cross-cultural communication has become a hot topic for scholars at home and abroad. With the deepening of research, cultural empathy has been highly concerned. "it has become a turning point and an important sign for cross-cultural communication from surface research to deep research. The ability of cultural empathy is the most important content in the intercultural communication competence system, and is the key factor affecting the quality, effect and process of intercultural communication.

### **1. Cultural empathy in the context of "One Belt and One Road"**

The world economic integration trend is unstoppable. The "One Belt and One Road" policy indicates that China has close economic cooperation with many countries. There are huge ideological differences between countries along the "One Belt and One Road" and China, which requires people to recognize cultural differences and face up to these differences in the communication between countries. When encountering problems caused by cultural differences, we should take active measures and deal with them actively. First of all, sufficient theory is needed as a guide, and the source of theoretical basis depends on education. Therefore, education plays an important role in the cultivation of intercultural communication ability. However, according to the current situation of China's education, foreign language teaching only attaches importance to language knowledge, but ignores the cultural aspect. Language teaching is mainly based on language knowledge, with a large proportion of grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing, and few culture-related contents. However, the main cause of the conflict in cross-cultural communication is not language knowledge, but language and culture, both of which are interdependent and indispensable.

For language learners, language is the means of communication and communication is the

purpose. Cross-cultural communication is not only verbal communication, but also the communication between different cultures. Therefore, in order to communicate smoothly, people with different cultural backgrounds need both sides to consciously carry out cultural empathy. Cultural empathy refers to the mutual understanding and mutual adaptation between the subject and the object in cross-cultural communication in order to achieve the goal of accurate communication.

In addition, we should adhere to the principle of appropriate cultural empathy in intercultural communication, that is, we should neither completely stubbornly adhere to the national culture, nor completely give up the local culture. We must try to seek the mechanism and tension of mutual adaptation and dynamic balance with other cultures. Therefore, to successfully complete the two-way communication, the cultivation of appropriate cultural empathy ability is an important prerequisite.

## **2. The connotation of cultural empathy**

Cultural transference in intercultural communication is manifested in two aspects: one is cognitive transference, which refers to the ability to objectively recognize the other's sentiment and emotional state. The second is communicative empathy, which means that on the basis of cognitive empathy, emotional resonance can be generated to consider the feelings and emotions of others, adjust cultural differences, shorten psychological distance and achieve effective communication. The main content of cultural empathy is based on the basic content of intercultural communication, and the connotation of cognitive empathy and communicative empathy can be analyzed from the basic connotation of intercultural communication. Cross-cultural communication covers two aspects: first, verbal communication and non-verbal communication, which are explicit representations of communicative behaviors and can be directly observed. Verbal communication refers to the communication through speech in daily communication, which is divided into oral language and written language, including address, greeting, thanks, compliment, negotiation, taboo, etc. Non-verbal communication, including posture, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, touch, dressing, silence, paralanguage, etc. Second, the deep-seated cultural factors, which are the factors of verbal communication and non-verbal communication. It restricts the differences between verbal communication and non-verbal communication, and is the invisible representations of communicative behaviors, usually including thinking mode, value concept, spatial concept, time concept and social norms.

In the process of cognitive transference, since the two sides of communication come from different cultural patterns and do not understand each other, the subject needs to interpret the information from the perspective of the object through perceiving the verbal and non-verbal information of the object to obtain the correct information. In the process of perception, in order to avoid misunderstanding due to incomplete information, the subject should listen carefully and be emotionally involved. In addition to verbal information, we should also pay attention to the interpretation of non-verbal information, because the object's posture, dress, volume, tone, etc., can reflect its emotional information. After entering into communicative empathy, on the basis of learning the object's emotional information, the subject should respect the object's mood of thinking, values, social norms and other cultural patterns. At the same time, the subject must make a correct response to the object's emotion, grasp the appropriateness of cultural adjustment, and maintain equality. It is necessary to make the object fully recognize itself and then accept itself, and also to think from the perspective of the object, so that both sides can identify with each other and achieve effective communication. Cultural empathy does not mean "falling in love" with others' culture by abandoning one's own native cultural model. It means maintaining one's own native culture while experiencing others' culture from the standpoint of others, so as to promote a harmonious coexistence between them. The moderate deficiency of cultural transference is that it has not completely jumped out of its own cultural mode, or that it has no real transference. However, the excessive adaptation of cultural empathy is basically breaking away from the local culture, only regarding other cultures as superior to others, which is actually a sign of forgetting one's roots. In both cases, the communicative effect is weakened, not effective communication. Therefore,

moderation is a key point in the process of cultural empathy.

### **3. Cultivation of cultural empathy in cross-cultural communication**

In cross-cultural communication, empathy makes us realize that human beings are both common and independent. Empathy is a unique ability that enables us to gain a deep understanding of the culture of the target language. The ability to put oneself in others' shoes is important for developing and maintaining interpersonal relationships between cultures, because people tend to associate with people who resonate with them. Therefore, it is very necessary to cultivate the ability of cultural empathy.

#### **3.1 Set the right learning goals and correct learning motivation**

In the process of learning, students should combine language learning, professional learning and cultural learning and give them equal status. It should be clearly recognized that global economic integration puts forward higher requirements for talents. Only language knowledge and professional knowledge and skills can not meet the needs of integrated economic development, but also they must have the ability of cross-cultural communication, be familiar with the cultural mode contained in international business communication, and take the road of international development. The cultivation of intercultural communicative competence is based on cultural learning. The important content of the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence is the cultivation of cultural empathy. The consensus in foreign language education circles is that the ultimate goal of foreign language learning is to cultivate intercultural communicative competence. Therefore, students should correct their English learning motivation and avoid utilitarian foreign language learning. If they become a certificate machine, they will rely more on instrumental motivation and their learning will be short of persistence. We should pay attention to the cultivation of students' integrative motivation, make them have continuous learning initiative and enthusiasm, cultivate the ability of cultural empathy in learning, and constantly strengthen the ability of cross-cultural communication. Hu Wenzhong once pointed out: "language is a form of culture, if you do not understand British and American culture, it is impossible to learn English well.

Nowadays, with the rapid development of society and the increasing communication between people, the superficial language and professional skills can no longer meet the needs of the development of global economic integration, and students also need to be equipped with certain cross-cultural communication skills. Among them, cultural learning is the basis of cultivating intercultural communicative competence, and its important content is the cultivation of cultural empathy. First of all, students should correct the motivation of learning, not utilitarian foreign language learning. This learning is lack of initiative, enthusiasm and permanence, so they will feel confused or lack of confidence in communication. Because in the process of communication, the language expressed by both sides often contains the cultural value of a country and a nation, and due to the individual cultural background and cultural literacy, there will be great differences in language expression, therefore, cultural learning is essential for smooth communication. Secondly, teachers should try their best to cultivate students' integration motivation, so that they can actively and enthusiastically accept what they have learned, and let them know more about the culture of the target language to enhance their cultural sensitivity.

#### **3.2 Transcend the fetters of local culture and consciously carry out cultural empathy**

Cultural consciousness is a national cultural awareness and awakening, and is the ideological basis and premise of promoting cultural prosperity and development. It contains not only a profound understanding of the role of culture in the historical process, but also a correct grasp of the law of cultural development [5]. Only by consciously engaging in cultural empathy and becoming a multicultural person, can we break free from our national cultural stereotypes in various aspects in cross-cultural communication, so as to reduce cultural friction and live in harmony with others. In the process of cultural empathy, while listening to the words of others, we should also pay attention to their non-verbal hints and objectively judge the actual emotional state of others from the

perspective of others, rather than make subjective assumptions from our own perspective. With the attitude of caring for others, make others equal to yourself, try to imagine their own feelings and reactions in the same situation. And blend scenarios and empathy into reason. There are many ways to enhance cultural sensitivity, and the most effective way is to practice and experience cultural empathy. First, the classroom is utilized to reform the teaching mode, construct a simulated workplace context, and experience cultural empathy by completing a series of foreign workplace tasks. Teachers should have the ability of cultural empathy in order to control the cross-cultural classroom teaching, at the same time, teachers' words and deeds can help inspire students to develop the ability of cultural empathy. Second, using foreign teachers platform. Through the observation of foreign teachers teaching, perception of cultural differences, students should actively communicate with foreign teachers and access to cultural information. Thirdly, the off-campus internship platform is used to provide opportunities for cultural empathy in the real business environment by participating in foreign business and tourism work.

### **3.3 Enhance the understanding of the culture of the target language and reduce the barriers of cultural empathy**

Barriers to cultural empathy are mainly caused by cultural differences, especially different customs, values and ways of thinking. Therefore, in order to reduce students' cultural transference barriers in cross-cultural communication, in addition to teaching students language knowledge, teachers should also guide students to effectively learn the culture, customs and other necessary background knowledge of different countries. For example, in vocabulary teaching, teachers need to provide targeted explanations for cultural factors contained in vocabulary, so that students can understand the cultural connotation and strengthen their sensitivity to cultural differences. Teachers can also use pictures, video and other multimedia means to provide students with more intuitive situation experience, which has a positive role in promoting the reduction of cultural empathy barriers. Teachers can assign students to read more foreign literary works and newspapers and magazines, analyze and guide them in this process, and help students accumulate materials of cultural background, local customs. To cultivate students' ability of cultural empathy from various aspects, teachers should guide students to carry out appropriate empathy and correct the phenomenon of students' transference bias in time, so that students can better understand appropriate cultural empathy.

## **4. Conclusion**

Learning a foreign language is not only a process of mastering a language, but also a process of contacting and understanding another culture. Therefore, it is necessary to consciously impart the knowledge of the target language and culture to the students in combination with language teaching, and at the same time to enhance the sensitivity of the students to the differences between the two cultures, so that they can gradually acquire the ability of cultural comparison, so as to improve the cultural quality and conduct appropriate language communication. However, the ability of cultural empathy is not innate, which needs to be cultivated through continuous accumulation in cross-cultural communication practice. Therefore, in the process of intercultural communication, both parties should not only adhere to their own native culture, but also understand and respect each other's culture, carry out appropriate empathy for each other's culture, improve intercultural communication ability while exercising language ability, and ensure the feasibility and effectiveness of intercultural communication. "One Belt and One Road" is a great innovation of China's economic development in the new era, with epoch-making significance. In this context, experts and teachers of intercultural communication should broaden their horizons, make innovations and deepen their studies, so as to lay a solid foundation for future intercultural communicators in China.

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