

# Research on Cultivation Strategies of Intercultural Communication Competence in College English Teaching

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## Abstract

Cross-cultural communication competence serves as a core competency for vocational students to engage in international exchanges within future professional contexts. Vocational undergraduate education provides a crucial platform for cultural cognition and language practice. Through diverse thematic approaches, vocational education integrates Chinese and Western cultural elements with language skill training, offering natural teaching resources for cultivating cross-cultural communication abilities. This study explores pathways for developing such competencies in vocational education from three perspectives: discourse culture interpretation, contextual task design, and practical activity expansion. The aim is to embed cultural understanding throughout language learning processes, foster students' inclusive and open-minded cultural attitudes, equip them with cross-cultural communication skills adaptable to various scenarios, and ultimately empower their professional development.

## Keywords

College English teaching; Intercultural communication competence; Training strategies.

## 1. Introduction

The accelerated internationalization of vocational education has made intercultural communication competence a key indicator in secondary vocational talent development. The educational value of vocational undergraduate programs has shifted from a singular focus on language tools to dual cultivation of linguistic application and cultural literacy [1]. By leveraging student-centric themes like travel, gastronomy, and festivals, vocational undergraduate teaching incorporates extensive comparative materials between Chinese and Western cultures, providing concrete content support for cross-cultural instruction. However, some current vocational undergraduate programs still prioritize explicit knowledge such as vocabulary and grammar while inadequately exploring underlying cultural dimensions, leading to cognitive biases and communication barriers in real-world intercultural interactions. Exploring intercultural communication strategies through curriculum design enables cultural education to naturally integrate into language classrooms, allowing students to enhance cultural literacy alongside language acquisition – aligning with the educational objectives of secondary vocational education.

## 2. Interpreting Discourse Culture to Strengthen Cognitive Foundations

By focusing on the textual content of vocational undergraduate textbooks and conducting in-depth analyses of the cultural contexts, value systems, and communicative norms underlying these texts, educators can establish a solid cognitive foundation for cultivating students' intercultural communication competence. In discourse instruction, teachers should seamlessly integrate linguistic knowledge with cultural interpretation, guiding students to identify cultural symbols and differences within texts. This approach enables learners to grasp textual meanings

while developing objective cultural awareness and an inclusive mindset [2]. Through systematic discourse-cultural analysis, students gradually develop intercultural communication awareness, comprehend the intrinsic connection between language use and cultural backgrounds, and ultimately transform language learning into a vital pathway for cultural understanding.

Taking the teaching of Unit 5 Ancient Civilization from the Higher Education Press Vocational Undergraduate Basic Module 1 as an example, the teacher focuses on cultural interpretation centered around the unit text, highlighting the cultural connotations and exchange values of ancient civilizations in China and the West. The core text of this unit revolves around the Silk Road, introducing its historical context, trade activities, and cultural exchanges, accompanied by related reading and writing tasks. The teacher first guides students to learn key vocabulary, sentence patterns, and text structures in the text, mastering the usage of expressions such as "ancient civilization," "Silk Road," and "cultural exchange." Then, the teacher conducts in-depth cultural interpretation of the text, emphasizing the details of cultural integration along the Silk Road routes, enabling students to perceive the diversity of cultural exchanges. The teacher analyzes the historical significance of the Silk Road as an ancient cross-cultural communication channel, explaining the bidirectional dissemination of goods, technologies, and cultures between China and the West through the Silk Road, and comparing the developmental characteristics and cultural traits of ancient civilizations in China and the West. The teacher also guides students to identify cultural exchange concepts reflected in the text, such as China's ancient peaceful interactions and the spirit of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, contrasting them with the expansionist exchange of ancient Western civilizations, and analyzing their underlying cultural roots. Throughout the teaching process, the teacher integrates cultural interpretation of texts into language instruction, allowing students to systematically understand the cultural connotations and exchange values of ancient civilizations in China and the West while mastering unit language knowledge, thereby laying a solid cognitive foundation for cultivating intercultural communication skills.

### 3. Design Situational Tasks To Enhance Communicative Experience

By integrating the teaching themes from vocational undergraduate textbooks, educators can design targeted intercultural communication scenario tasks that enhance students' cultural immersion through classroom interactions, progressively improving their language application and cultural adaptation skills. Teachers should leverage cultural materials and linguistic knowledge points from textbooks to create interactive activities such as role-playing, situational dialogues, and topic explorations. These participatory approaches enable students to engage in authentic cross-cultural communication scenarios, allowing them to learn how to adjust communication strategies based on cultural contexts through real-life language exchanges. Through scenario-based tasks, students gain firsthand experience of intercultural communication requirements, compensating for the limitations of theoretical instruction while practicing and refining intercultural communication skills through practical application.

Taking Unit 6 "Food and Drinks" from the Higher Education Press Vocational Undergraduate Basic Module 1 as an example, teachers design a series of situational tasks centered around the theme of "Chinese and Western Culinary Cultures" to enhance students' intercultural communication skills through classroom interactions. The unit's functional objective focuses on "Out就餐" (out dining), with listening and speaking components emphasizing restaurant ordering scenarios and menu introductions. Core sentence patterns include "May I take your order?" and "What would you recommend?" while textual content covers comparative aspects of Chinese and Western culinary cultures. Based on this framework, teachers develop three key tasks: Chinese-Western restaurant ordering dialogues, cross-cultural dining etiquette

simulations, and exploration of culinary cultural differences. In the ordering dialogue task, students role-play as Chinese and Western diners alongside servers, applying textbook-ordering phrases while adhering to distinct dining etiquette norms. During the etiquette simulation exercise, students recreate international dining scenarios to compare utensil usage, seating sequences, and conversation protocols between cultures. They utilize textbook expressions like "I prefer..." and "I'm allergic to..." to articulate dietary preferences and taboos, effectively meeting real-world communication needs. During student simulations, teachers provide real-time guidance, promptly correcting cultural expression misconceptions and explaining contextual cultural nuances. For instance, they highlight Western dining etiquette against noise pollution and Chinese dining table arrangements emphasizing host-guest seating hierarchy, enabling students to perceive cultural connotations through language application. Through immersive scenario-based tasks, students not only master unit-specific language knowledge but also acquire cross-cultural dining etiquette norms in practice, making intercultural communication experiences more tangible and concrete.

#### **4. Expanding Practical Activities to Enhance Application Competence**

By leveraging the cultural themes in vocational undergraduate textbooks, students can engage in diversified cross-cultural communication practices that transform classroom cultural understanding and situational experiences into practical application skills, thereby enhancing intercultural competence [3]. Teachers utilize textbook content as a foundation to integrate extracurricular resources, designing offline activities, online exchanges, and cultural performances. This approach enables students to apply cross-cultural communication knowledge in authentic real-world scenarios beyond textbooks, allowing them to continuously summarize experiences and flexibly adjust communication strategies through practice. Through diverse practical activities, students develop greater initiative and adaptability in cross-cultural communication, gradually cultivating communication skills tailored to different cultural contexts and achieving genuine integration of linguistic knowledge with cultural application.

Taking the teaching of Unit 5 Celebrations from the Higher Education Edition of Vocational Undergraduate Basic Modules 1 as an example, teachers expand a series of intercultural communication practice activities around the theme of "Chinese and Western Festival Celebrations," enabling students to enhance their cultural application skills through practice. The functional objective of this unit is "Hold a Celebration," with listening and speaking sections focusing on communication scenarios such as event invitations and celebration planning, while the discourse section covers content related to traditional Chinese and Western festivals and celebratory activities. Based on this, teachers design two major practical activities: "Intercultural Festival Sharing Sessions" and "Festival Communication Simulations." In the Intercultural Festival Sharing Sessions, students work in groups to select Chinese and Western festivals introduced in the textbook, such as China's Spring Festival and Western Christmas, and create English presentation slides incorporating cultural knowledge from the textbook. They then introduce the origin, celebration customs, and cultural symbolism of the festivals to the entire class in English. During the presentation, other students can engage in English questioning and interaction, thereby honing students' English expression and intercultural communication skills. In the Festival Communication Simulation activities, teachers set up scenarios like "Mutual Greetings Between Chinese and Foreign Friends During Festivals" and "Invitations for Intercultural Celebration Activities," requiring students to apply festival communication sentence patterns from the textbook and integrate cultural customs of different festivals to complete communication tasks. For instance, they might explain the New Year's greetings etiquette for foreign friends or describe the blessing methods of Western Christmas

to China classmates. Through these practical activities, students fully apply festival cultural knowledge and language expression from the textbook to real communication, effectively enhancing their intercultural communication application skills.

## 5. Conclusion

Cultivating intercultural communication competence represents a crucial direction for vocational undergraduate education to meet contemporary demands and demonstrate educational value, while serving as the core competency foundation for vocational students' career development. The rich cultural themes and discourse content in vocational undergraduate teaching provide diverse platforms for intercultural competence cultivation. Through analyzing textual cultures, designing contextual tasks, and expanding practical activities, educators can create a closed-loop system integrating cultural awareness, communicative experiences, and practical applications. Teachers should prioritize students' career development needs, break down barriers between language and cultural instruction, and employ dynamic teaching methods to make cultural understanding tangible. This approach enables students to develop intercultural literacy through language learning, fostering new-era professionals with both linguistic proficiency and cultural perspective. Ultimately, this approach allows vocational students to showcase their capabilities on the global professional stage.

## References

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