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Research article

Cross-Cultural Communication in English Interpretation Teaching of Higher Education: Challenges and Strategies

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Abstract: As globalization continues to advance, the importance of cross-cultural communication has become increasingly evident in various fields. In the context of college-level English major interpretation teaching, the cross-cultural perspective not only influences the quality of instruction but also plays a pivotal role in nurturing competent interpreters. This article aims to explore the significance of the cross-cultural perspective in college-level English major interpretation education, examine the challenges that arise, and propose corresponding teaching strategies.

Keywords: cultural perspective, college English major interpretation education, challenges, strategies, cross-cultural adaptability

1. Introduction

With the globalization and strengthening of international communication, the significance of English interpretation in various fields has increased. Interpreting education for college English majors plays an essential role in cultivating students' intercultural communication abilities and training English interpreters (Mazzei & Jay-Rayon Ibrahim Aibo, 2022). However, teaching English interpretation in a cross-cultural context faces challenges. Therefore, it is important to study interpreting teaching for English majors in colleges and universities from a cross-cultural perspective. Firstly, the cross-cultural perspective helps to understand the differences in English interpretation education across various cultural backgrounds. In a cross-cultural setting, cultural discrepancies between teachers and students can lead to misunderstandings, communication barriers, and ineffective teaching outcomes. By examining interpretation teaching from a cross-cultural perspective, we can comprehend these differences and provide valuable insights to enhance teaching effectiveness. Secondly, the cross-cultural perspective improves the adaptability of English interpretation teaching. Studying the teaching of English interpretation for college English majors from a cross-cultural perspective helps teachers better understand and meet the needs of students with different cultural backgrounds, enhancing the adaptability of teaching. Lastly, the cross-cultural perspective promotes the internationalization of English interpretation teaching. In the context of globalization, English interpreters need to demonstrate their skills on the international stage. By studying interpreting teaching for English majors from a cross-cultural perspective, teachers can train students to develop cross-cultural communication skills and a global vision (Corbett, 2003), enabling them to better adapt to the international English interpreting work environment. In conclusion, the cross-cultural perspective is essential for understanding and addressing the challenges associated with English interpretation education at the college level. By adopting this perspective, teachers can create a more effective and adaptable teaching environment, ultimately promoting the internationalization of English interpretation teaching and better preparing students for the global stage.

This article aims to investigate the challenges and strategies of teaching English interpretation at the college level from a cross-cultural perspective. The research objectives and content are as follows:

- Analyze the cross-cultural challenges in college-level English interpretation education, including the impact of cultural differences on interpretation teaching,

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the cultural adaptation issues faced by teachers and students, and the obstacles in classroom management and communication.

- Discuss strategies for college-level English interpretation teaching from a cross-cultural perspective, such as enhancing teachers' cross-cultural awareness and abilities, incorporating cultural elements into interpretation course design, utilizing diverse teaching methods, and creating inclusive learning environments.

- Analyze the practical effects of college-level English interpretation teaching from a cross-cultural perspective based on real-life case studies, aiming to provide valuable references and insights for college-level English interpretation education.

This research employs a combination of literature review and empirical research methods. Firstly, a literature review is conducted to identify the cross-cultural challenges and strategies in college-level English interpretation education, providing a theoretical foundation for subsequent empirical research. Secondly, empirical research methods are employed to analyze a specific example of college-level English interpretation teaching practice, examining the practical outcomes of teaching from a cross-cultural perspective. The goal is to offer effective references and insights for college-level English interpretation education.

2. Cross-Cultural Challenges in College-Level English Interpretation Education

2.1 Impact of Cultural Differences on Interpretation Teaching

Cultural differences play a significant role in cross-cultural communication and have a profound impact on college-level English interpretation teaching. These differences are primarily observed in language, non-verbal behavior, values, and thinking styles (Mazzei & Jay-Rayon Ibrahim Aibo, 2022). The impact of cultural differences on interpretation teaching can be observed in several aspects as fellows:

- Language differences: There are significant variations in language expression and habits across different cultural backgrounds, posing challenges for interpretation instruction. For instance, when translating between English and Chinese, interpreters need to understand the grammar, vocabulary, and expression habits of both languages to avoid mistakes or improper translations.

- Nonverbal behavior differences: People from different cultural backgrounds exhibit variations in body language, facial expressions, posture, and other nonverbal behaviors. These nonverbal cues often have a significant impact on the interpretation effect. Therefore, interpretation teachers need to help students understand nonverbal behaviors in different cultural contexts to enhance cross-cultural communication.

- Differences in values and ways of thinking: Individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds hold distinct values and thinking patterns, which can create communication barriers. In the process of interpreting, interpreters must grasp the values and ways of thinking in different cultural contexts to accurately convey information during translation. Overall, recognizing and addressing these cross-cultural challenges in college-level English interpretation education is crucial for fostering effective communication and improving the quality of interpretation teaching.

2.2 Cultural Adaptation Issues for Teachers and Students

In college-level English interpretation teaching, both teachers and students encounter the task of overcoming cultural differences and achieving cultural adaptation (Edmund, 2008). The following paragraphs discuss the challenges faced by teachers and students in cultural adaptation. Teachers in interpretation education must first understand the needs and learning habits of students from diverse cultural backgrounds. This understanding is crucial for adjusting teaching methods and strategies accordingly (Jackson, 2018). Additionally, teachers need to enhance their own intercultural communication skills to effectively navigate cultural differences in their teaching. On the other hand, English major students must adapt to the cultural background and communication methods of English-speaking countries while also improving their cross-cultural communication skills. This includes understanding the etiquette, customs, and communication norms of English-speaking countries to effectively convey information during the interpretation process. To tackle these cultural adaptation

challenges, it is important for both teachers and students to acknowledge and address them. By doing so, they can enhance their understanding and appreciation of different cultures, ultimately leading to more effective and successful English interpretation teaching in universities.

2.3 Classroom Management and Communication Barriers

In English interpretation teaching at universities, there are significant cross-cultural challenges related to classroom management and communication barriers. The following aspects highlight some of these challenges, with a particular focus on the differences in classroom management (Dai & Chen, 2017). Teachers and students from diverse cultural backgrounds have varying approaches to classroom management. For instance, in Western cultures, the teacher-student relationship is more egalitarian, whereas in Asian cultures, teachers hold more authority. As a result, interpretation teachers must understand and adapt to different cultural classroom management methods to effectively manage their classes. Additionally, communication barriers play an essential role in the teaching process. Language and cultural differences can pose obstacles to effective communication in interpretation teaching (Holliday, 2011). For example, in English-Chinese translation, interpreters must grasp the language expressions and customs of different cultures to avoid translation errors or inappropriate expressions. Moreover, differences in nonverbal behavior and values can also create communication barriers.

To address these challenges, interpretation teachers need to help students enhance their cross-cultural communication skills and develop an understanding of language, nonverbal behavior, values, and thinking patterns in various cultural contexts (Baraldi, 2009). Cultural differences may present challenges in various ways, such as language and expression, learning styles and teaching methods, values and belief systems, social etiquette and behavioral norms, and context and case selection. Students from different cultural backgrounds may have varying understandings and habits regarding language and expression. Therefore, teachers must adapt to students' language proficiency and expression styles to ensure comprehension of the teaching content and active participation in discussions. Additionally, cultures may differ in learning styles and teaching methods, with some prioritizing collective cooperation and interaction, while others emphasize individual independent learning. Teachers must understand students' learning styles and preferences and employ suitable teaching methods to optimize learning outcomes.

Cultural variations in values and belief systems can impact students' acceptance and understanding of certain teaching content (Xu, 2022). Hence, teachers must respect students' diverse perspectives and beliefs, creating an inclusive and respectful learning environment. Furthermore, cultural disparities in social etiquette and behavioral norms require teachers to guide students in adapting to local social norms, enabling them to integrate into the local culture and learning environment. The cultural backgrounds and assumptions embedded in textbooks and cases used for teaching may also vary. Therefore, teachers must ensure that the selected materials align with students' cultural backgrounds and experiences, facilitating their understanding and application of acquired knowledge. These challenges may vary depending on the teaching environment and student population. As a result, teachers should continuously learn and adapt, enhancing their cross-cultural teaching abilities to better meet students' learning needs. In conclusion, cultural differences significantly impact English interpretation teaching in universities. Teachers and students must overcome these challenges, achieve cultural adaptation, and improve their cross-cultural communication skills to effectively respond to the demands of globalization.

3. Teaching Strategies for English Interpretation in Higher Education from a Cross-Cultural Perspective

With the rise of globalization and increased international communication, the importance of cross-cultural communication has grown in both personal and professional settings. In the field of English interpretation teaching at universities, the development of cross-cultural communication skills has become a crucial aspect of the curriculum (Dollerup, 2002). This article aims to explore effective teaching strategies for English interpretation in universities, focusing on four key areas, such as enhancing teachers' cross-cultural awareness and abilities, incorporating cultural elements into interpretation course design, utilizing diverse teaching methods, and creating a diverse learning environment.

Teachers play a central role in interpretation teaching, and their level of cross-cultural awareness and abilities significantly impact the quality of instruction (Chen, 2021). Therefore, it is imperative for interpretation teachers to continuously improve their cross-cultural awareness and abilities in order to effectively guide their students. Specifically, interpretation teachers should focus on the following:

- Understanding the characteristics of different cultures: Interpretation teachers need to familiarize themselves with the specific characteristics of various cultures, including language, customs, values, and ways of thinking. This understanding enables teachers to better appreciate and respect cultural differences, thereby avoiding misunderstandings and conflicts.
- Enhancing cross-cultural communication skills: Interpretation teachers should strive to develop strong cross-cultural communication skills, encompassing language expression, non-verbal communication, and comprehension abilities. This will enable teachers to effectively communicate with their students and help them overcome barriers in cross-cultural communication.
- Integrating cross-cultural elements into teaching: Interpretation teachers should integrate cross-cultural elements into their teaching methods. This can be achieved by incorporating cultural backgrounds, customs, and etiquette from different countries into the curriculum. By doing so, students' cross-cultural awareness and abilities will be enhanced.

It is important for interpretation teachers to continually improve their teaching strategies and adapt to the ever-changing demands of cross-cultural communication. By doing so, they can ensure the success of their students in an increasingly globalized world.

3.1 Incorporating Cultural Elements into Interpretation Course Design

Designing interpretation courses is a crucial factor that impacts teaching effectiveness. From a cross-cultural perspective, interpretation course design should fully consider cultural elements to better cultivate students' cross-cultural communication abilities (Richards. 2001). The following points should be achieved in interpretation course design:

- Introduce cross-cultural communication courses. Incorporate cross-cultural communication courses within interpretation courses to help students understand the characteristics and differences of different cultures. This will enhance their cross-cultural awareness and abilities.
- Incorporate cultural elements into interpretation exercises. Integrate cultural elements into interpretation exercises by selecting topics related to different countries' politics, economy, culture, etc. This allows students to better understand information within different cultural contexts during practice.
- Foster students' cross-cultural analysis abilities. Cultivate students' cross-cultural analysis abilities to help them better comprehend and analyze communication phenomena within different cultural backgrounds. This will enhance their cross-cultural communication abilities.

Integrating cultural elements into interpretation courses is crucial for cultivating students' cross-cultural communication abilities (Griffin, 2017). Here are some strategies for designing interpretation courses: First, incorporate learning tasks with cultural elements. Design interpretation tasks that involve different cultural backgrounds. For instance, students can practice interpretation while considering the cultural characteristics, customs, and historical backgrounds of a specific country. This approach helps students better understand and convey information across cultures. Second, introduce language materials with cultural backgrounds. Select language materials that provide cultural background information for interpretation practice. These materials can include news reports, social media content, TV programs, and more. Students should understand and accurately convey the cultural information embedded in these materials. Third, promote cross-cultural comparative analysis. Introduce language materials from diverse cultures and encourage students to conduct comparative analysis. They should compare language expressions, etiquette habits, and other aspects between different cultures while practicing interpretation. Fourth, simulate cross-cultural

communication. Design simulated scenarios of cross-cultural communication to help students learn how to effectively communicate in different cultural contexts while interpreting (Rudvin & Tomassini, 2011). For instance, students can simulate interpretation scenarios at foreign business meetings to experience the challenges and develop skills in cross-cultural communication. Finally, encourage students to participate in cross-cultural activities. Motivate them to actively engage in cross-cultural exchange activities, such as international student exchange programs or visits to foreign embassies or cultural institutions (Beerkens et al., 2020). These experiences allow students to personally immerse themselves in different cultures and integrate their knowledge into interpretation practice.

By implementing these design strategies, interpretation courses can effectively cultivate students' cross-cultural communication abilities. This, in turn, will enable students to better understand and convey information in various cultural contexts during their actual interpretation work.

3.2 Diversification of Teaching Methods in Interpretation Education

To meet the diverse learning needs of students, it is essential for interpretation teaching to adopt a variety of methods. From a cross-cultural perspective, the following points should be emphasized:

- Utilize flexible teaching methods: Interpretation teaching can employ various approaches such as lectures, discussions, case analysis, and role-playing to cultivate students' cross-cultural communication abilities effectively.
- Incorporate modern educational technology: The use of multimedia and the internet can provide abundant learning resources and convenient environments for interpretation teaching, ultimately enhancing students' learning outcomes.
- Emphasize practical teaching: Practical application should be a focal point of interpretation teaching. Field visits, internships, and other hands-on experiences enable students to better understand cross-cultural communication and improve their abilities in this area.
- Create a diverse learning environment: The learning environment plays a significant role in interpretation teaching outcomes. It is crucial to create an inclusive and diverse environment that fosters cultural understanding and communication skills.

By incorporating these strategies, interpretation teaching can better cater to the diverse needs of students and equip them with the necessary skills for effective cross-cultural communication.

Table 1. Diversification of teaching methods and impact on interpretation teaching outcomes

Teaching methods	Impact on Interpretation Teaching Outcomes
Flexible methods	Cultivate students' cross-cultural communication abilities; Enhance students' engagement and understanding; Encourage active participation and critical thinking.
Modern technology	Provide rich learning resources; Facilitate convenient learning environments; Enhance students' access to information and knowledge.
Practical teaching	Improve students' practical application of cross-cultural communication; Enhance students' abilities through real-life experiences; Foster hands-on learning and skill development.
Diverse environment	Enhance cross-cultural communication abilities; Promote understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures; Provide opportunities for cultural exchange and collaboration.

From a cross-cultural perspective, it is necessary to create a diverse learning environment to cultivate students' cross-cultural communication abilities (Gonçalves & Carpenter, 2017). To achieve this, the following points should be considered:

- *Diverse student groups:* By forming student groups with members from different countries and diverse cultural backgrounds, students are provided with more opportunities for cross-cultural communication. This enhances their abilities in this area.
- *Organize cross-cultural exchange activities:* Students should be encouraged to participate in activities such as international academic conferences and cultural salons. These activities allow students to better understand the characteristics and differences of different cultures through actual communication, thereby improving their cross-cultural communication abilities.
- *Foster an open and inclusive learning atmosphere:* It is important to create an open and inclusive learning atmosphere in the classroom. This atmosphere should encourage students to express their opinions and ideas while respecting cultural differences. Such an environment helps improve students' cross-cultural communication abilities.

In summary, strategies for interpretation teaching in English majors from a cross-cultural perspective include enhancing teachers' cross-cultural awareness and abilities, integrating cultural elements into interpretation course design, using diverse teaching methods, and creating a diverse learning environment. These strategies contribute to improving students' cross-cultural communication abilities and their adaptability to the trend of globalization.

4. Analysis of Case Studies on Interpretation Teaching in Higher Education from a Cross-Cultural Perspective

4.1 Case Background and Context Description

The case study focuses on an English major interpreting course in a university, which course primarily consists of local Chinese students and the teacher with extensive experience in teaching interpretation. The objective of this course is to develop students' interpreting skills and cross-cultural communication abilities to adapt to the trend of globalization. The specific context of this case is an interpreting practice session, where the teacher assigns students the role of interpreters for an international conference. The theme of conference is "Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development", and it features government officials, scholars, and representatives from non-governmental organizations from different countries. The students are required to provide real-time interpretation based on the speakers' speeches.

To assist students in successfully completing the interpreting task, the teacher has implemented the following teaching methods and strategies: Firstly, cultural introduction, which means before the course commences, the teacher familiarizes students with the cultural backgrounds, etiquette, and communication styles of different countries. This enables students to better comprehend the content and emotions conveyed in the speakers' speeches, while also enhancing their cross-cultural awareness. Secondly, skills training, which means the teacher provides students with training in interpreting skills, encompassing listening practice, oral expression, and translation techniques. Additionally, practical tips are shared, such as handling speakers' accents and controlling speech pace. Thirdly, practice sessions, multiple practice sessions are organized by the teacher to help students acclimate to the interpreting process and the on-site environment before the conference commences. This also enhances their adaptability. Finally, real-time evaluation, which means throughout the interpreting process, the teacher offers real-time evaluation of students' performance, identifying their weaknesses promptly and providing guidance and suggestions for continuous improvement of their interpreting skills.

4.2 Case Analysis and Reflection

Through the analysis of this classroom practice case, several strengths and weaknesses can be identified. Strengths can be included as cultural introductions have enhanced students' cross-cultural awareness by familiarizing them with the cultural backgrounds and communication styles of different countries. Skills training and practical exercises have improved students' interpreting abilities and adaptability. Real-time evaluation has been beneficial in identifying students' problems and providing guidance for improvement. While the weaknesses can be identified as the difficulty of the interpreting task in this classroom practice is relatively high, which places high demands on students' interpreting skills and adaptability, which may lead to feelings of frustration for some students. The lack of introduction of local cultural elements in the classroom practice may result in insufficient understanding of local culture by students, affecting the development of their cross-cultural communication abilities. There may be some shortcomings in the organization and management of the classroom practice, such as time scheduling and equipment debugging, which may affect students' performance and the quality of interpreting.

Based on the analysis of the above case descriptions and the related advantages and disadvantages, it can be seen that in future interpreting teaching, the difficulty and complexity of interpreting tasks should be adjusted appropriately according to students' actual situations and levels, to avoid feelings of frustration and excessive pressure (Yang, 2020). Additionally, when introducing cultural elements, attention should be paid to maintaining a balance between local culture and foreign culture, helping students better understand and adapt to different cultural communication styles. In terms of the organization and management of classroom practice, attention should be paid to details and efficiency, ensuring the smooth progress of interpreting practice and improving students' interpreting skills and cross-cultural communication abilities.

5. Conclusions

This study explores the teaching of English interpreting in college from a cross-cultural perspective, aiming to provide valuable insights and strategies for interpreting teaching. The research findings indicate that the teaching of English interpreting in college faces many challenges from a cross-cultural perspective, including cultural differences, language proficiency, teaching methods, and insufficient resources. To address these challenges, the study proposes the following strategies which can be included as strengthening cross-cultural awareness. Teachers should guide students to develop correct cross-cultural awareness, respect cultural differences, and cultivate students' ability in cross-cultural communication (Leonardi, 2022). And then, improving language proficiency which means teachers should focus on cultivating students' language proficiency, especially in oral expression and listening skills, to lay a solid foundation for interpreting teaching. Furthermore, adopt diversified teaching methods which means the teacher should use diversified teaching methods according to students' actual situations and the requirements of interpreting tasks, such as cultural introduction, skills training, practice exercises, and real-time evaluation. Besides these above, how to enrich teaching resources also plays an essential part in the whole process. Teachers should continuously enrich teaching resources, including textbooks, faculty, venues, equipment, etc., to provide students with more learning opportunities and practice platforms.

Through this study, the author believes that future research can be expanded in the following areas, including in-depth research on the cultural differences in interpreting teaching, further exploring the differences and challenges of interpreting teaching in different cultural backgrounds, and providing more targeted strategies for cross-cultural interpreting teaching. In addition, it is necessary to explore language proficiency development in interpreting teaching, conduct in-depth research on the role and cultivation methods of oral expression and listening skills in interpreting teaching, and provide effective ways to improve the quality of interpreting teaching. In the process of practical teaching, it is also necessary to improve interpreting teaching strategies, combine various teaching methods based on actual situations, and provide more diverse and comprehensive teaching strategies for interpreting teaching. If conditions permit, the research scope can be expanded from interpreting teaching in English

majors in universities to other fields, such as business interpreting, political interpreting, etc., in order to test the universality of the research conclusions. In addition, it is necessary to increase empirical research, that is, to conduct in-depth exploration of the challenges and strategies in interpreting teaching through case studies, action research, and other methods, in order to improve the credibility and validity of the research. Introduce theories from other disciplines, combine theories from education, linguistics, intercultural communication, and other relevant disciplines, and explore the problems and challenges in interpreting teaching in depth, in order to provide more theoretical support for interpreting teaching. Strengthen international cooperation and communication, promote the development of interpreting teaching in China by learning from advanced ideas and experiences in international interpreting teaching through international academic exchanges and cooperative research. In the era of rapid development of intelligent technology, pay attention to the application of technology in interpreting teaching, explore the application of technology in interpreting teaching, such as online teaching platforms, virtual reality, augmented reality, etc., and provide new approaches and means for interpreting teaching.

6. Acknowledgements

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