Innovation and Practice of English Culture Learning in Foreign Language Education

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Abstract: This paper explores the effectiveness and strategies for implementing an English culture learning teaching mode via practical application. By utilizing questionnaire surveys, interviews, and empirical research, we conducted a thorough analysis of the prevailing English culture teaching approach. Building on this analysis, we devised and executed a novel teaching method for English culture acquisition. Our findings reveal that this new approach effectively boosts students' learning enthusiasm, enhances their cross-cultural communication skills, and fosters their overall development. This insight offers valuable guidance for reforming foreign language education. Consequently, we deduce that this innovative teaching model is worthy of widespread adoption, as it not only elevates students' learning outcomes but also nurtures their intercultural proficiency, paving the way for their future global interactions. In essence, our study affirms the efficacy and viability of this teaching model, bolstering the reform and progression of foreign language instruction with empirical evidence.

1. Introduction

With the intensifying globalization, English, being an international tongue, has gained increasing significance [1]. In foreign language instruction, English proficiency goes beyond mere language accumulation; it encompasses a profound comprehension and utilization of English culture [2]. Acquiring English culture aids students in better integrating into the global community, bolstering their cross-cultural communication skills, and fostering comprehensive development [3]. Hence, deliberating on the importance of English culture acquisition in foreign language education holds immense value for enhancing the quality of language education and nurturing globally minded individuals [4].

The conventional foreign language teaching approach often prioritizes linguistic knowledge and exam skills, neglecting the guidance required for students to learn English culture [5]. Such an approach leads to a lack of interest and understanding of English culture among students, making it challenging to grasp the language's true essence [6]. Consequently, innovating teaching methods has emerged as a crucial aspect of reforming foreign language education. Introducing fresh teaching paradigms and techniques is imperative to kindle students' interest in English culture and elevate their autonomous learning and cross-cultural communication abilities [7].

Scholarly research on English cultural learning has expanded considerably in recent years,

spanning content, methodologies, and assessments. A review of these findings reveals a growing emphasis on English cultural learning in foreign language education, accompanied by deepening related studies [8]. Nevertheless, existing research still faces limitations, such as ambiguous definitions of English cultural learning's connotations and extensions, and a lack of diversified research approaches [9]. Therefore, it becomes essential to further explore English culture to provide substantial theoretical backing for reforms in foreign language education.

Innovating foreign language teaching methods plays a pivotal role in educational reforms. Recently, scholars have proposed numerous groundbreaking theories and practical insights into foreign language teaching models. These novel approaches focus on student subjectivity and practicality, emphasizing cross-cultural communication skills, and have yielded notable teaching outcomes [10]. Examining these innovative models' theoretical frameworks and practical applications offers valuable insights and inspiration for advancing the teaching methodology of English cultural learning.

The purpose of this study is to construct a new teaching mode of English culture learning through practical exploration, so as to improve students' interest in learning, cross-cultural communication ability and promote their all-round development. Specifically, the purposes of this study include:

① Analyze the current situation and shortcomings of English culture teaching mode, and make clear the direction and goal of improvement.

② Through practical exploration, a new teaching mode of English culture learning is constructed, and its effectiveness and feasibility are verified.

③ Explore the influence of new teaching mode on students' interest in learning and intercultural communication ability, and provide empirical support for teaching improvement.

④ Summarize the research results, put forward targeted teaching suggestions and improvement measures, and contribute wisdom and strength to the development of foreign language education.

2. The theoretical basis of English cultural learning in foreign language education

2.1. The relationship between culture and language

Culture has a profound impact on language acquisition, serving as a medium through language. Cultural differences lead to different language usages, including vocabulary, grammar and pragmatics [11]. Hence, to comprehend and utilize English proficiently, learners must acquaint themselves with the cultural backdrop and societal norms of English-speaking nations. Additionally, cultural influences shape learners' attitudes and habits in language acquisition, emphasizing the importance of fostering cross-cultural awareness in foreign language instruction.

Culture holds significant importance in the realm of language learning. It not only offers valuable context and knowledge that aids in the comprehension and retention of linguistic elements [12] but also serves as a driving force and objective of language mastery. Exploring English culture enables learners to gain deeper insights into the history, culture, and society of English-speaking regions, thereby sparking their interest and passion for English learning.

2.2. English culture learning content and objectives

The content of English culture learning is very extensive, including the history, geography, literature, art and social customs of English-speaking countries (see Table 1). In specific learning, students need to know the basic situation and cultural background of English-speaking countries, and master the language habits and social norms of English-speaking countries in order to better

adapt to the environment and culture of English-speaking countries.

Table 1: Overview of English cultural learning content

Category	Specific content
History	Major historical events, historical periods, historical figures and their influences in English-speaking countries.
Geography	Geographical location, topography, climate characteristics and natural resources of English-speaking countries
Literature	An analysis of classic literary works, literary schools, literary representatives and their works in English-speaking countries
Art	Music, painting, sculpture, architecture, drama, movies and other art forms in English-speaking countries.
Social usage	Daily life habits, etiquette norms, festivals and celebrations, weddings and funerals in English-speaking countries, etc.
Codes of language	Oral expressions, slang, idioms, proverbs, language styles, etc. in English-speaking countries.
Social norm	English-speaking countries' laws and regulations, ethics, social values, professional norms, etc.

The goals of English culture learning include improving students' intercultural communication ability, enhancing students' understanding and recognition of English-speaking countries, and cultivating students' global vision and international awareness. These goals help to promote students' all-round development and improve their comprehensive quality and competitiveness.

2.3. The theoretical framework of foreign language teaching model

The teaching mode represents a steady framework and program for teaching activities, shaped by specific educational ideologies or theories [13]. Depending on various criteria, these modes come in diverse forms, including teacher-led, student-centered, and collaborative approaches. Each mode bears unique traits tailored to different teaching contexts and goals.

When it comes to exploring English culture, a range of teaching methods can be employed to meet educational objectives [14]. For instance, collaborative learning fosters a deeper comprehension and application of English culture via group discussions and joint efforts. Project-based learning immerses students in the cultural and societal milieu of English-speaking nations through hands-on projects. The immersive mode places learners in an all-English setting, enhancing their language proficiency and cross-cultural communication skills. Each of these modes offers distinct benefits and is applicable in specific scenarios, allowing educators to choose the most suitable approach based on students' needs and teaching goals.

3. English culture learning teaching mode innovation

3.1. Ideas and principles of teaching mode innovation

The idea of teaching mode innovation aims at breaking the shackles of traditional foreign language teaching to meet the needs of English cultural learning under the background of globalization. It emphasizes student-centered and pays attention to students' all-round development, especially the cultivation of cross-cultural communication ability. At the same time, the innovative idea of teaching mode also advocates the change of teachers' role, from the transmitter of knowledge to the guide and promoter of learning. This concept encourages the integration of more cultural elements in the teaching process, so that students can deeply understand English culture in

their experience and study, and improve their interest and motivation in English learning.

The innovation of teaching mode should follow several principles in Figure 1:
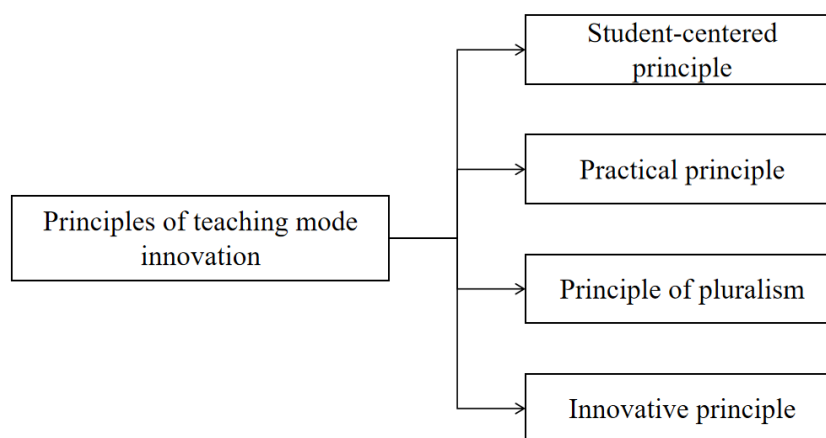

Figure 1: Principles of teaching mode innovation

Here's the adjusted version of the paragraph, ensuring that each sentence has a subject, verb, and object:

Student-centered principle: Teachers should take students as the center, pay attention to students' needs and interests, respect students' personality differences, and allow students to learn English culture in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere.

Practical principle: Teachers must pay attention to practical teaching, enabling students to experience English culture in practice and improve their intercultural communication ability. Through role-playing and simulated scenes, teachers should let students learn and apply English in practical settings.

Diversification principle: Teachers should respect the differences among students from various cultural backgrounds and adopt diversified teaching methods and means to cater to the learning needs of different students. Simultaneously, teachers should encourage students to engage with and understand diverse cultures, fostering their global vision and cross-cultural awareness.

Innovative principle: Teachers are encouraged to explore and innovate in the teaching process, experimenting with new teaching methods and means to enhance teaching effectiveness and quality. Simultaneously, they should motivate students to exercise their initiative and creativity, actively participate in teaching activities, and cultivate their innovative spirit and practical abilities.

3.2. Strategies and methods of teaching mode innovation

In English teaching, in order to improve students' language use ability and cross-cultural communication ability more effectively, relevant personnel can adopt a series of innovative teaching strategies. First of all, cultural infiltration strategy is a very effective method, which requires teachers to pay attention to integrating relevant cultural elements while teaching language knowledge. For example, when explaining a word, teachers can introduce the background knowledge of the word in English culture, so that students can understand and appreciate the charm of English culture while learning vocabulary. Secondly, cultural contrast strategy is also an indispensable part. By comparing the differences between Chinese and western cultures, we can help students understand English culture more deeply, especially the differences in values and ways of thinking. This contrast can not only enhance students' cross-cultural awareness, but also cultivate their adaptability and adaptability in cross-cultural communication. Finally, cultural experience strategy is an important way to improve students' English cultural literacy. Teachers can let students

feel the charm of English culture in practice by organizing various cultural activities and cultural experiences. For example, teachers can organize students to visit museums, art galleries, and other cultural places in English-speaking countries. Alternatively, schools can invite foreign teachers and students from English-speaking countries to come to the school for exchanges. By doing so, students will have the opportunity to communicate face-to-face with people from English-speaking countries and experience the collision and integration of different cultural atmospheres. This teaching strategy can not only stimulate students' interest in learning, but also improve their intercultural communication ability in practice, laying a solid foundation for future international exchanges.

In order to improve students' intercultural communication ability, the teaching methods in Table 2 can be adopted:

Table 2: Teaching methods to improve students' intercultural communicative competence

Teaching method	Describe	Example
Role-playing	By simulating cross-cultural communication situations in real scenes, students can experience and learn cross-cultural communication skills in role-playing.	1. Simulate business negotiation, and ask students to act as business representatives from different countries to practice cross-cultural negotiation. 2. Simulate tourism consulting, let students play tourists and tour guides, and simulate cross-cultural tourism consulting services.
Group discussion method	Divide the students into groups and discuss around a cross-cultural theme. Through group discussion, let students share their own views and opinions in communication, and listen to others' opinions at the same time, so as to cultivate their cross-cultural awareness and communication skills.	1. Discuss the differences of table manners in different cultural backgrounds. 2. Analyze the influence of a country's culture on people's social ways, and discuss how to adapt.
Case analysis method	By analyzing real cross-cultural communication cases, let students understand the challenges and coping strategies in cross-cultural communication. Through case analysis, students can learn and grow in reflection and improve their intercultural communication ability.	1. Analyze the marketing strategy of an international company in different countries and discuss the influence of cultural factors on marketing strategy. 2. Analyze a successful cross-cultural business cooperation project, and discuss the successful factors and cross-cultural communication skills.

3.3. Case analysis of teaching mode innovation

In foreign language instruction, numerous notable instances of innovative teaching methods exist, offering valuable insights. These cases span various educational levels—from primary to university—and specialized fields like business or tourism English. A common thread among these cases is an emphasis on hands-on learning, the integration of cultural elements, and the utilization of a range of teaching techniques, all geared towards enhancing students' cross-cultural communication skills.

By examining and drawing from these exemplary cases, several key insights emerge:

① Emphasize Practical Learning: Hands-on activities are crucial for elevating students' English proficiency and cross-cultural communication abilities. Instructors should focus on designing and executing practical learning exercises that allow students to apply their English skills in real-world contexts.

② Infuse Cultural Elements: Incorporating cultural aspects into English lessons boosts students' engagement and motivation. Teachers should aim to seamlessly blend cultural content into language instruction, enabling students to explore English culture alongside linguistic concepts.

③ Utilize Diverse Teaching Strategies: A variety of teaching methods cater to different learning styles, enhancing the overall effectiveness of instruction. Educators should tailor their teaching approaches—such as role-playing, group discussions, or case studies—to align with students' needs and learning objectives.

④ Foster Intercultural Communication Skills: In today's globalized world, cross-cultural communication skills are paramount. Teachers should prioritize cultivating students' cross-cultural awareness and communication abilities to ensure they can navigate diverse cultural backgrounds effectively.

4. English culture learning teaching mode of practical exploration

4.1. Background and process methods of practical exploration

Under the background of globalization, the study of English culture is very important for cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence. The environment of practice and exploration covers all kinds of English teaching resources and facilities inside and outside the campus, such as multimedia classrooms, language laboratories and international exchange centers. At the same time, rich network resources, books and foreign teachers' resources also provide strong support for practical exploration.
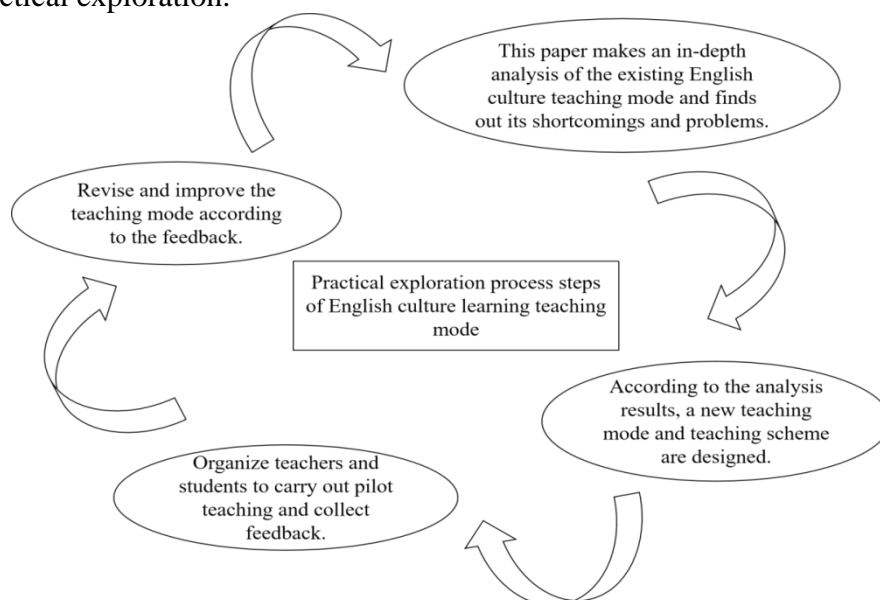

Figure 2: Process steps of practical exploration

Participants in practical exploration include English teachers, students and teaching administrators. Together, they formed a diversified team, each of which played an irreplaceable role in the exploration process. English teachers are responsible for designing teaching plans and

organizing teaching activities; Students are the main body of practical exploration, and their active participation and feedback are the important basis for teaching improvement; Teaching administrators are responsible for coordinating resources and supervising the teaching process to ensure the smooth progress of practical exploration. The process steps of practical exploration are shown in Figure 2.

First of all, the existing English culture teaching model is deeply analyzed to find out its shortcomings and problems; Secondly, according to the analysis results, design a new teaching mode and teaching scheme; Then, organize teachers and students to carry out pilot teaching and collect feedback; Finally, according to the feedback, the teaching mode is revised and improved.

In practical exploration, this paper adopts a variety of methods and tools. This includes understanding students' needs and interests through questionnaires and interviews; Using case analysis and classroom observation to analyze the problems and difficulties in the teaching process; Enrich teaching contents and forms with the help of multimedia teaching tools and internet resources; At the same time, project-based learning and cooperative learning are introduced to stimulate students' interest and initiative in learning.

4.2. Effectiveness and evaluation of practical exploration

After practical exploration, this paper has achieved remarkable results. When evaluating the effectiveness of practical exploration, this paper adopts a variety of evaluation methods, including student evaluation, teacher self-evaluation and expert evaluation. The result are shown in tables 3, 4 and 5.

Table 3: Student evaluation form

Evaluating indicator	Average score (out of 10)
Interest in English culture learning	8.7
English culture learning gains	9.1
Improving cross-cultural communication ability	8.9
Satisfaction with the new teaching mode	9.3

Table 4: Teacher self-evaluation form

Evaluating indicator	Self-rating (1-5)
Innovation of teaching methods	5
Classroom atmosphere building	4
Students' participation is improved.	5
Improvement of teaching level	5

Note: The table uses a five-level scoring system, where 5 means "very agree/excellent", 4 means "agree/good", 3 means "neutral/medium", 2 means "disagree/average" and 1 means "very disagree/poor".

Table 5: Expert evaluation form

Evaluating indicator	Scoring (out of 10)
Rationality of teaching mode (enhancing interest and achievement)	9.5
Effect of Cultivating Intercultural Communicative Competence	9.2
Teachers' professional quality improvement	9.0
Suggestions on the promotion of new teaching mode (open answer)	"It is recommended to promote it within the school."

It can be seen that the new teaching mode has effectively improved students' interest and achievements in English culture learning; Students' intercultural communication ability has been significantly improved; Teachers' teaching level and professionalism have also been improved. At the same time, this paper also makes a deep reflection on practical exploration. We find that although the new teaching mode has achieved remarkable results, there are still some problems and shortcomings. For example, some students have different learning progress; The distribution of teaching resources is not balanced enough. In view of these problems and deficiencies, we will continue to improve the teaching mode and teaching plan.

4.3. Problems and challenges in practical exploration

In the process of practical exploration, we have encountered some problems. First of all, due to the differences in students' English level and cultural background, it is difficult to take into account the needs of all students in the teaching process; Secondly, some students are not interested in English culture learning and lack initiative and enthusiasm; Finally, due to the limited teaching resources, some teaching activities are difficult to carry out.

In view of these problems and challenges, this paper puts forward the following strategies and suggestions. ① Teachers should strengthen their understanding and analysis of students' English level and cultural background, and design more personalized and differentiated teaching programs. ② Educators should stimulate students' learning interest and initiative by introducing more diversified teaching contents and forms. ③ Schools should actively strive for more support from teaching resources to ensure the smooth development of teaching activities. At the same time, we also call on relevant departments and all sectors of society to pay more attention and support to jointly promote the innovation and development of English culture learning teaching mode.

5. Conclusion and prospect

5.1. Research conclusion

Through the practical exploration of English culture learning teaching mode, this study draws the following main conclusions:

① The new teaching mode of English culture learning designed and implemented in this paper can effectively enhance students' interest and achievements in English culture learning. This model pays attention to students' participation and initiative. Through project-based learning, cooperative learning and other ways, students can learn and master English cultural knowledge in practice, which improves the learning efficiency and effect.

② This teaching model has also significantly improved students' intercultural communication ability. Through simulating real scenes, role-playing and other activities, students can experience communication methods in different cultural backgrounds in practice, cultivate their cross-cultural awareness and ability, and lay a solid foundation for their future international communication.

③ This study also verified the necessity of teaching mode innovation. The traditional teaching mode of English culture often pays attention to the inculcation of knowledge and the cultivation of test-taking ability, but ignores the cultivation of students' actual needs and practical ability. Through practical exploration, this study proves that the new teaching mode can better meet the needs of students and improve their comprehensive quality.

5.2. Research significance and value

This study has important theoretical significance and practical value.

Theoretically, this study enriches the theoretical system of English culture learning teaching mode and provides new perspectives and ideas for the research in related fields. Through the innovation and practical exploration of teaching mode, we have revealed the internal relationship between teaching mode and students' development, and made contributions to the development of foreign language education theory.

In practice, this study offers tailored guidance and assistance for learning and instructing English culture. The introduction and execution of the novel teaching methodology furnish English educators with a practical teaching plan. This plan aids in the efficient organization of teaching endeavors and the enhancement of teaching outcomes. Simultaneously, the model elevates the learning experience for students, providing a more enriched and varied educational journey that ignites their academic curiosity and drive.

Furthermore, this study makes a valuable addition to the realm of foreign language pedagogy. Through hands-on exploration of teaching methods for English culture acquisition, fresh perspectives and directions for the advancement and transformation of foreign language instruction have been uncovered. This research stands to elevate not just the quality and standard of foreign language education, but also to foster a greater number of individuals possessed with an international perspective and cross-cultural communication proficiency.

5.3. Research deficiency and future research direction

Although some achievements have been made in this study, there are still some shortcomings: due to the limitation of research time and resources, the sample size of this study is relatively small, which may not fully reflect the learning situation of all students; This study mainly focuses on the practical exploration of English culture learning teaching mode, and the theoretical basis and research methods of teaching mode are not deep enough.

Based on the above shortcomings, this paper puts forward the following future research directions and suggestions:

① Researchers should deepen the theoretical research on teaching modes and explore more scientific and reasonable principles and methods for teaching mode design.

② Educators should expand the research scope, taking into account the English culture learning needs of students from different ages and backgrounds, and provide them with more personalized and differentiated teaching support.

③ Institutions should strengthen international cooperation and exchanges, learn from advanced teaching concepts and methods, and promote the reform and development of foreign language education in China.

④ Educators and technology providers should focus on technological innovation and application, utilizing advanced technologies like big data and artificial intelligence to offer more intelligent and personalized support for English culture learning and teaching.

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