On the Influence of Native Language Cultural Aphasia on the Intercultural Communication Competence of Foreign Language Majors

Zheng REN¹,a

Department of Economic Management, Beijing Information Technology College, Beijing, China

at renz@bitc.edu.cn

Keywords: Cultural Aphasia, Cultural Self-Consciousness, Cross-Cultural Communication, Two-Way Communication

Abstract. Intercultural communication is a process of cultural interaction, in which the culture of the target language and the culture of the native language are equally important. In the learning process of foreign language majors, the lack of native culture often becomes a key factor that hinders the improvement of their intercultural communication competence. To effectively solve the problem of cultural aphasia of native language in the process of intercultural communication competence cultivation is not only related to the establishment of cultural consciousness and cultural confidence, but also related to the inheritance, dissemination and development of excellent native culture.

1. Introduction

Under the background of the increasingly frequent international exchanges and the further acceleration of the process of global economic integration, culture has gradually become a factor to measure a country's comprehensive national strength and international competitiveness. Improving cultural soft power is an important aspect of realizing national development, which is of great significance to spreading a country's values, displaying its unique charm of culture and enhancing its voice in the international arena. To realize the effective export of native language culture, it is an important guarantee to have good intercultural communication competence.

Intercultural communicative competence refers to the competence required when members from different cultures conduct appropriate communication and effective communication in a specific environment. Specific environment means that the judgment of communicative competence should be carried out in a specific environment. Different environments have different identification criteria for communicative competence. Appropriate communication refers to the reasonable and appropriate communicative behavior, which conforms to the expectation of communication in specific culture, specific communicative context and specific relationship between communicators. Effective communication means that communicative actions get the desired results.

Experts and scholars engaged in foreign language teaching and research are increasingly aware of the important role of language competence and cultural knowledge in the development of intercultural communication competence. Although more attention has been paid to the cultivation of students' intercultural communication competence through the introduction of target language culture in foreign language teaching later on, insufficient attention has been paid to the imparting of native language cultural knowledge. One-sided introduction of cultural knowledge leads to unidirectional cultural transmission and cultural aphasia, thus hindering the overall improvement of students' intercultural communication ability and affecting the effective development of cultural communication activities.
2. The Concept of Cultural Aphasia of Native Language

Aphasia was originally a medical term for the loss of some or all of the ability to express thoughts and understand spoken and written languages due to brain damage caused by injury or disease. The term "cultural aphasia" first appeared in the 1990s. Literary critics represented by Professor Xu Dai of Zhejiang University used the term to criticize the invasion of Western literary thoughts and the loss of ancient Chinese literary thoughts. In 2000, Professor Cong Cong of Nanjing University formally put forward the concept of "Chinese cultural aphasia".

In cultural aphasia, the cultural content that the language cannot express includes two aspects, namely the culture of native language and the culture of target language. In the process of intercultural communication, equal attention should be paid to the native language culture and the target language culture. Cultural communication is a process of mutual communication and information sharing between both sides, and maintains mutual influence and interaction. In fact, cultural aphasia is the manifestation of the broken chain of fusion between two cultures. The main reason for this situation is often not the lack of language ability of the information transmitter, but the lack of understanding of the information transmitter's own nationality and national culture. Therefore, many scholars equate "cultural aphasia" with "native language cultural aphasia" or "national cultural aphasia", that is, in the process of cross-cultural communication, one party is unable to introduce its own national culture to the other party in the language.

3. The Causes of Cultural Aphasia in Foreign Language Teaching

3.1. The Inequality of Cultural Cognition

Any successful cross-cultural communication takes place on the basis of equality between the two sides (especially in psychology). Only with sufficient understanding and cultivation of the excellent traditional culture of the country, can the diversity of culture be displayed with a kind of grand and inclusive cross-cultural personality. With the continuous integration with the world, people are more and more exposed to heterogeneous cultures, which, because of their different styles, are emitting unique charm. Gordon Matvis believes that the era of globalization for human beings is in a large "cultural supermarket", from which people can freely choose the cultural products they like. For students majoring in foreign languages, the strangeness, novelty and difference of heterogeneous cultures are often more attractive. However, because we are too familiar with the cultural environment around us and take the existence of cultural content for granted, we have lost the strong desire to deeply understand the culture of our native language. In intercultural communication, when the culture of the target language and the culture of native language collide with each other, the characteristics of the culture of the target language will often bring great spiritual and emotional impact to the other party in the communication. While stimulating communicators' desire to know the culture of the target language, they further cover up their lack of knowledge of the culture of their native language.

3.2. Unidirectional Cultural Introduction

The unidirectional cultural introduction leads to the lack of native culture among foreign language majors, which is caused by both social environment and educational factors.

The invasion of alien culture. With the progress of transportation, the development of information technology, the transformation of communication methods and the popularization of the Internet, the speed of cultural transmission has been accelerated. Some countries with strong comprehensive strength realize that cultural output is an effective means to enhance international political influence and obtain economic benefits. The one-way transmission of culture from stronger countries to weaker countries eventually leads to the weak countries' undifferentiated absorption of heterogeneous cultures, thus further deepening the phenomenon of aphasia of native language culture.
One-sided course content setting. With the increasing popularity of intercultural communication education and research, more and more foreign language teachers realize the close relationship between language and culture, and the proportion of cultural education in language teaching is also increasing. However, for a period of time, the focus of cultural teaching in foreign language majors has been on the introduction of target language culture, and the introduction of native language culture is often put in a secondary position, or even neglected. The lack of teachers' understanding of the cultivation of students' ability of cultural transmission of their native language in foreign language teaching leads to the serious one-sided tendency of cultural teaching in foreign language teaching, which leads to the imbalance of cultural input in foreign language teaching. At the same time, in the process of introducing and compiling foreign language textbooks, it is also common to focus on the cultural knowledge, customs, values, moral concepts and other aspects of the target country, while the relevant culture of native country is missing. [4]The lack of cultural factors in mother tongue is not conducive to the improvement of cross-cultural communication ability and the spread of native language culture.

3.3. The Exaggeration of Negative Pragmatic Transfer

In the process of foreign language acquisition, the process of decoding and recombination is often influenced by the native language, that is to say, learners are prone to borrow some usages of native culture directly into the use of the target language due to the influence of their native language. This phenomenon is often referred to as pragmatic transfer. Pragmatic transfer can be divided into positive pragmatic transfer and negative pragmatic transfer from the perspective of utility and orientation. In the process of foreign language learning, learners tend to pay more attention to the pragmatic negative transfer, namely: in the process of foreign language learning, the part will be in the native language behavior of pragmatic knowledge to borrow in the target language to illustrate and interpretations of the same language behavior, but due to the differences between two kinds of language behavior, often causing pragmatic knowledge of the target language learning and cross-cultural communication. Because of this kind of interference, a large number of foreign language students only see the negative impact of pragmatic transfer in the process of language learning, actively screen out the deep cognition of native language culture, cut off the promotion effect of native language culture on foreign language acquisition, and thus cause the loss of native language culture output ability in the process of cross-cultural communication.

4. Strategies to Eliminate Cultural Aphasia among Foreign Language Majors

Enhance cultural self-consciousness. In January 1997, Mr. Fei Xiaotong put forward the concept of "cultural self-consciousness" for the first time in the second advanced seminar of social and cultural anthropology. Cultural self-consciousness means that people living in a certain culture have self-knowledge about its culture and fully understand its formation, development process and trend. The key to realizing cultural self-consciousness lies in the confidence in native language culture, which is conducive to the establishment of a sense of pride in one's own culture. In the process of cultural transformation, we should keep our own consciousness, calmly deal with the collision of different cultures, and ensure the survival, inheritance, innovation and development of native language culture.[3] Students majoring in foreign languages should have a deep understanding of their native culture. Through active cognition of the essence and great vitality of their native culture, they can generate strong feelings for the culture of their own country, consciously export their native culture, and voluntarily carry out two-way cultural exchanges.

Deepen the introduction of native language cultural education. The cultural aphasia of the native language of foreign language majors is closely related to the lack of cultural knowledge of the native language, which is caused by the insufficient share and popularity of native cultural background knowledge and common knowledge in the current education system, whether in the stage of basic education or in the stage of higher education. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct native language culture education in the process of intercultural communication competence
training. The native language cultural education of foreign language majors should be carried out in
the following three aspects: first, the content of the native language culture should be increased in
the target language textbooks, and the cultural education of the native language and the target
language should be given equal importance. Second, to improve language educators' understanding
and quality of native language culture, so that learners can acquire more knowledge of native
language culture in the classroom, so as to cultivate learners' strong sense of native language culture
and national identity. Thirdly, emphasize the bidirectional nature of cross-cultural communication,
strengthen the cultivation of foreign language majors' ability to use the target language to spread the
culture of their native language, and realize the interactivity in the process of cross-cultural
communication.

Give play to the role of pragmatic positive transfer. Pragmatic positive transfer refers to the
process in which language learners borrow some of the pragmatic knowledge of language behaviors
from their native language to interpret and interpret the same language behaviors in the process of
foreign language learning. In other words, positive pragmatic transfer means that language learners
can make use of the existing pragmatic knowledge of their native language to help them master the
pragmatic knowledge of the new language in the process of learning the target language and play a
positive role in practical intercultural language communication activities. If foreign language majors
can fully realize that the positive pragmatic transfer of native language plays a positive role in
foreign language learning or heterogeneous culture learning, it will promote their enthusiasm in
learning native language culture.

5. The effect of improving the native culture level of foreign language majors on the
cultivation of intercultural communication competence

According to the theory of Alvino E. Fantini, intercultural communication competence should cover
four aspects, namely, awareness, knowledge, attitude and skills. The process of intercultural
communication is a two-way process of information transmission, which includes both input and
output of information. The improvement of native culture provides communication motivation for
the two-way communication of information. When foreign language majors realize the richness and
excellence of native culture, they will have the awareness of introducing native culture to
heterogeneous cultures. The improvement of native language culture provides a knowledge
foundation for the two-way communication of information. Only when they have a solid and rich
knowledge of native language culture can they have the content of cultural output. The
improvement of native language culture level provides a correct position for the two-way
communication of information, and the profound reserve of native language culture is conducive to
the establishment of cultural confidence, so that they will not lose their way in the process of
cross-cultural communication. The improvement of native culture provides abundant means for the
two-way communication of information. There are ways conducive to cultural communication in
different cultures, and exploring unique communication ways from native culture provides
diversified means to improve the effect of cross-cultural communication.

6. Conclusion

Intercultural communication is the communication between different cultures and an interactive
process in which the culture of the target language and the culture of the native language are
indispensable, and the cultures of both parties in communication are equal in status. To cultivate
foreign language majors' consciousness of intercultural communication and effectively solve the
influence of cultural aphasia of native language on the improvement of intercultural communication
competence is not only related to the realization of effective two-way cultural communication, but
also related to the preservation, inheritance and development of one's own national cultural
independence in this communication process.
References


