

A Review of Research on College Students' International Communication Competence

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ABSTRACT

This literature review examines the evolving landscape of international communication competence among college students, emphasizing the significance of cultural storytelling, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in language education, and interdisciplinary approaches to talent cultivation. The findings indicate that effective communication transcends mere language proficiency, necessitating a deep understanding of cultural contexts and audience awareness. Recent studies highlight the role of personal narratives in conveying cultural values, while the acceptance of AI tools presents both opportunities and challenges for enhancing communication skills. The review underscores the need for educational reforms that foster critical thinking and cultural sensitivity, ultimately preparing students to navigate the complexities of global communication.

KEYWORDS

International Communication Competence; Cultural storytelling; Artificial intelligence; Foreign language education; Interdisciplinary approaches

1 Introduction

In recent years, the importance of international communication competence among college students has gained significant attention, particularly in the context of globalization and the rapid advancement of technology. The ability to effectively communicate across cultures is not only essential for personal development but also for enhancing a nation's soft power and cultural influence on the global stage. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in education has introduced new dynamics in the training of foreign language professionals, particularly their international communication competence. As highlighted by Cui et al. (2024) ^[1], the shift towards a more research-oriented and humanistic approach in foreign language education is necessary to adapt to the challenges posed by AI. These elements are essential for preparing students to navigate the complexities of global communication effectively.

2 Domestic research

2.1 Cultural communication competence development

The development of college students' ability to communicate Chinese culture, particularly through personal storytelling in English, has garnered increasing attention in recent years. Research indicates that utilizing personal narratives is an effective method for students to convey cultural values and experiences to international audiences. For instance, Yang and Li's (2023) findings revealed significant improvements in students' capacity to articulate personal stories that reflect Chinese cultural elements, thus fostering a deeper understanding of their cultural identity while engaging with global audiences ^[2].

Cui (2023) emphasizes the importance of audience awareness in the development of cultural communication skills. By implementing targeted teaching strategies, the study demonstrated that students' awareness of their audience significantly improved, which in turn enhanced their ability to effectively communicate Chinese culture through personal narratives ^[3]. Furthermore, the integration of personal storytelling into the curriculum has been identified as a crucial pathway for enhancing students' cultural communication competence. For example, Sun (2023) outlines a structured approach to teaching students how to narrate their personal experiences in a way that highlights Chinese cultural narratives ^[5].

The necessity of enhancing international communication capabilities among students has been highlighted by Cai (2023), who argues that the ability to narrate personal stories in a culturally relevant manner is essential for effective international communication. This perspective underscores the importance of integrating cultural education into language learning, as it prepares students to articulate their cultural narratives in a way that is accessible and engaging to global audiences ^[6]. The cultivation of students' international communication abilities is not solely about language proficiency; it also involves a deep understanding of cultural contexts ^[7]. Additionally, the importance of fostering international communication skills among students has been further supported by Yang and Wang (2023), who argue that in the context of a rapidly changing global landscape, the ability to tell compelling stories that reflect Chinese culture

is vital for enhancing China's international communication capabilities^[8].

2.2 Interdisciplinary approaches to talent cultivation

The necessity of interdisciplinary education in foreign language majors has become increasingly evident in the context of cultivating culturally-aware and globally-minded talents. Liu et al. (2022) argue that as globalization progresses, the demand for students who can effectively communicate and navigate complex international landscapes is paramount. They highlight the role of foreign language education in fostering students' understanding of cultural nuances and enhancing their ability to engage in cross-cultural communication^[9].

In a similar vein, Yang et al. (2025) propose an innovative platform for interdisciplinary talent cultivation within foreign language programs. This platform aims to integrate resources across different disciplines and institutions, thereby enriching students' learning experiences and equipping them with a diverse skill set that includes not only language proficiency but also cultural literacy and critical thinking abilities^[10].

Moreover, the integration of interdisciplinary methods in foreign language education is essential for addressing the existing gaps in talent cultivation. Wang (2024) discusses the challenges faced by foreign language institutions in balancing national identity with global perspectives^[11]. This is echoed by Wu and Jiang (2023), who stress that the cultivation of international communication talents requires a comprehensive understanding of both domestic and global contexts, highlighting the need for a curriculum that fosters both linguistic and cultural competencies^[12].

In addition, Li and Zhang (2022) argue that understanding the cultural context behind legal texts is crucial for effective translation and international communication, thus reinforcing the need for interdisciplinary approaches that combine language skills with legal and cultural insights^[13]. This perspective is further supported by Gao and Wang (2024), who emphasize the necessity of developing a curriculum that not only enhances language skills but also incorporates cultural and legal dimensions to prepare students for the complexities of international communication^[14].

2.3 Integration of AI in language learning and challenges faced by universities

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in language learning has emerged as a significant trend, presenting both opportunities and challenges for universities. Research by Wang et al. (2024) indicates that Chinese college students exhibit a high level of acceptance towards the use of AI tools in foreign language education^[4].

However, the adoption of AI technologies in language education is not without its challenges. Feng and Zhang (2024) highlight the potential risks associated with over-reliance on AI, such as the erosion of traditional language learning methods and the neglect of cultural diversity in language instruction. And it is essential to maintain a balanced approach that values human interaction and cultural context in language education^[15]. This concern is further supported by Liu and Qiao (2024), who emphasize the need for educational reforms that incorporate AI while preserving the core values of language education^[16].

Additionally, the challenges posed by AI integration are compounded by the need for universities to adapt their curricula to include AI literacy. As highlighted by Wang (2023), the shift towards AI in language learning necessitates a reevaluation of teaching methodologies and the incorporation of new skills that align with the demands of the AI era^[17].

Moreover, the necessity of cultivating humanistic research-oriented talents in foreign language education has been emphasized by Cui et al. (2024). This aligns with the findings of Hong and Li (2011), who discuss the importance of balancing technological advancements with cultural sensitivity in language education, highlighting the need for a comprehensive approach that integrates both aspects^[18].

3 International research

3.1 Cross-Cultural communication and competence

Cross-cultural communication competencies are increasingly recognized as essential for students in a globalized world. These competencies enable individuals to navigate diverse cultural landscapes, fostering effective interactions and understanding among people from different backgrounds. The importance of context in cross-cultural communication cannot be overstated; it shapes how messages are conveyed and interpreted. For instance, Liu (2023) emphasizes that international communication capabilities extend beyond merely telling a story in a foreign language; they also encompass the ability to articulate one's academic and research achievements effectively in a global context^[19].

Moreover, understanding cultural narratives is crucial for effective communication. Yang and Wang (2023) argue that the ability to tell compelling stories about one's culture is vital for enhancing international communication capabilities, particularly in the context of foreign language education^[8]. In this regard, Wang (2023) highlights the responsibility of foreign language education to enhance international communication capabilities, emphasizing the need for a new

approach to foster cultural exchange and mutual understanding among civilizations^[20].

Engagement in cross-cultural contexts also plays a significant role in developing communication competencies. The integration of cultural awareness and communication skills is fundamental to fostering a deeper understanding of and appreciation for diverse cultures. Furthermore, the work of Wu and Jiang (2022) underscores the interdisciplinary nature of foreign translation as a critical component of international communication^[12].

3.2 Role of technology in international communication education

The advent of technology, particularly new media and communication platforms, has significantly transformed the landscape of communication education. For instance, Feng and Zhang (2024) highlight the capabilities of artificial intelligence in language services, which can assist in foreign language teaching and research, thereby improving educational outcomes^[15]. Furthermore, the adaptation of traditional teaching methods to modern contexts is crucial in leveraging technology effectively. While technological advancements can enhance educational practices, they should complement rather than replace traditional pedagogical approaches. This balance ensures that the essence of language learning—cultural immersion and interpersonal interaction—is preserved while benefiting from the efficiencies offered by technology.

4 Research limitations

The exploration of college students' international communication competence has revealed several limitations in the existing research landscape. One significant limitation is the narrow focus on specific aspects of communication competence, often overlooking the broader context of cultural and linguistic diversity. Moreover, the reliance on traditional teaching methodologies in foreign language education can hinder the development of students' international communication skills. Another limitation is the insufficient empirical data on the effectiveness of various instructional strategies aimed at improving international communication competence. Furthermore, the existing literature often fails to consider the role of technology in shaping communication practices among college students. Lastly, the intersectionality of factors influencing communication competence, such as socio-economic background, personal experiences, and institutional support, is often underexplored. This oversight limits the understanding of how diverse student populations navigate the complexities of international communication.

5 Future prospects

The future of college students' international communication competence is poised for significant transformation, driven by the rapid advancements in technology and the evolving global landscape. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into foreign language education presents both challenges and opportunities. The focus should remain on developing critical thinking and intercultural competence, which are vital for effective communication in an increasingly interconnected world. Moreover, the emphasis on storytelling as a means of cultural communication is gaining traction. As the landscape of international communication evolves, it is imperative for educational institutions to foster interdisciplinary collaboration. This collaborative approach will not only enhance students' communication abilities but also prepare them to contribute meaningfully to international discourse.

6 Conclusion

The development of international communication competence among college students is increasingly recognized as a vital aspect of higher education, particularly in the context of globalization and cultural exchange. This competence encompasses not only language skills but also an understanding of cultural nuances and the ability to convey one's own cultural narratives effectively. The integration of storytelling in English language education can significantly enhance students' ability to communicate Chinese culture internationally. Moreover, the advent of artificial intelligence (AI) in language learning presents both opportunities and challenges for developing international communication skills. The role of higher education institutions is pivotal in this transformation. They must adapt their curricula to include interdisciplinary approaches that emphasize cultural understanding and communication skills. The cultivation of such competencies is not merely an academic exercise but a strategic necessity for enhancing China's cultural soft power on the global stage.

In conclusion, the enhancement of college students' international communication competence requires a multifaceted approach that integrates language education, cultural storytelling, and the strategic use of technology. By doing so,

higher education can equip students with the necessary skills to effectively share their cultural narratives and engage in meaningful cross-cultural exchanges.

Funding

China Vocational Education Association Planning Project, 2024 Heilongjiang Province General Project: Exploration of a Talent Cultivation Model for International Communication Language Services Based on the Integration of "Post-Curriculum-Competition-Certificate", Project Number: HZJS2024YB06; 2023 Heilongjiang Province Education Science 14th Five-Year Planning Key Project: Research on the Development of a Virtual Teaching and Research Section for Ideological and Political Education in Foreign Language Curriculum Integrating "Three Integrations" of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China under the Context of Educational Informatization, Project Number: GJB1423401

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