

International Comparison and Integrated Development Strategy of Intercultural Teaching in British and American Countries

Siyu An

*College of Foreign Languages, North China University of Science and Technology, Tangshan, China
anke66981@gmail.com*

Abstract. Cross-cultural teaching has garnered widespread attention in English-speaking countries such as the UK and the US, gradually becoming a key issue in educational reform and curriculum development. However, a gap persists between the concept and implementation of cross-cultural teaching in practical teaching practices. Through literature analysis and comparative research, this paper systematically examines the primary measures taken by English-speaking countries in cross-cultural teaching and the real-world challenges they face. The study finds that both the UK and the US have made varying degrees of effort in advancing cross-cultural education, including strengthening teachers' cross-cultural awareness, integrating cross-cultural concepts into curricula, and developing culturally responsive teaching resources. However, shortcomings such as insufficient cultural content exploration and uneven professional support for teachers remain. Based on these findings, the paper proposes that cross-cultural education should further prioritize the systematic cultivation of teachers' cultural sensitivity, deeply present cultural core values in curriculum design, and promote the sustainable development and continuous improvement of cross-cultural teaching by establishing a platform for sharing diverse cultural resources.

Keywords: Intercultural Teaching, British, American

1. Introduction

With the continuous development of globalization, economic and cultural exchanges in various countries and regions are getting closer and closer, and people from different countries are communicating more and more frequently. Therefore, cross-cultural education is essential in the process of education. In the field of pedagogy, cross-cultural teaching has been marginalized and has not been paid enough attention. Especially in recent years, people have increasingly realized the importance of cross-cultural teaching. In view of the changes in population structure, cross-cultural teaching is also crucial for understanding the learning experience of more and more students. At present, there are still obvious deficiencies in British and American cross-cultural teaching research. On the one hand, it relies too much on the static national cultural model, which is easy to fall into cultural essentialism and stereotype [1]. On the other hand, multicultural education is often superficial and fails to deal with structural inequality and cultural power in depth [2]. The role of

teachers in balancing socialization and subjectivity, teaching objectives and guiding students' critical thinking has not been fully explored, especially the lack of systematic research on students' response to the "negative identity" of mainstream narrative [3]. Future research needs to turn to a dynamic cross-cultural perspective, focusing on the practical path of transformative knowledge in teaching, the development of teachers' cross-cultural ability, and the construction of students' multiple identities in the digital age.

2. The core of intercultural education

2.1. Definition of intercultural education

In 2001, UNESCO adopted the Universal Declaration on cultural diversity, which comprehensively defined culture as "the sum of the different characteristics of a society or a social group in terms of spirit and material, intelligence and emotion". The declaration emphasizes that culture includes not only literature and art, but also lifestyles, ways of coexistence, value systems, traditions and beliefs. This view further expands the cognition of the concept of culture and highlights the rich diversity of culture in different times and places.

On the path of cross-cultural ability training, UNESCO emphasizes the role of Humanities and Social Sciences, arts and extracurricular space, and advocates the use of the entire education system and a variety of learning environments to promote inclusiveness, so that schools, parents and communities can participate in cross-cultural education in a variety of ways to enhance the cross-cultural ability of the educated.

Intercultural competence is deeply rooted in the understanding of cultural diversity. This value concept is essentially the respect, understanding and appreciation of different cultural backgrounds, and is an important cornerstone to ensure that individuals can calmly deal with the multicultural environment in cross-cultural communication.

2.2. The focus of intercultural education

The core focus of cross-cultural education is to change the way students observe the world. Let students see the differences and understand the rationality of the differences, and let students realize the values, belief systems and social norms of different cultures. Understand how different cultures affect the formation of different time concepts, communication methods and other ways of behavior. Help students establish multicultural awareness in the context of globalization, break the single cultural centralism, and avoid criticizing others with local cultural standards in the process of communication.

Secondly, cultivate students' ability of cultural interpretation. The core is to enable students to understand the deep logic behind different cultures from the perspective of history, religion and social structure, analyze the causes of cultural conflicts, and learn to think about the observed problems from the perspective of other cultures, so as to enhance cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness.

Finally, cultivate students' intercultural communication ability, and train students to interact effectively with people from different cultures. For example, pragmatic appropriateness at the linguistic level, avoiding cultural failures, understanding the connotation of body movements, expressions and silence in nonverbal communication, and enhancing the ability of communication strategies, conflict resolution and cultural negotiation in cross-cultural situations.

In short, cross-cultural education should realize the paradigm transformation from "soft" to "critical" [4]. It must go beyond the teaching of superficial cultural knowledge and charity empathy based on common humanity, and turn to cultivate learners' ability to analyze historical and structural injustice, identify their position in asymmetric power relations and their collusive responsibilities. This means that education should guide students to question the universality assumption of Western centrism, deconstruct elitism and colonial inertia in the discourse of "global citizenship", and ultimately enable students to make responsible and reflexive judgments and actions by developing critical literacy, that is, learning from others in ethical relations rather than teaching others, so as to avoid unconsciously copying the oppressive system that they intend to challenge [4].

3. Comparative analysis of the two models from a global perspective

3.1. The measures of intercultural education in the British education system

In Britain, with the increasing diversification of society and the advancement of globalization, intercultural education has become an indispensable part of its education system. In general, the British education system systematically promotes cross-cultural education by formulating multicultural policies, building a theoretical framework and paying attention to teacher training, and is committed to cultivating a new generation of citizens with cross-cultural understanding and respect.

Specifically, the implementation of Intercultural Education in Britain is mainly reflected in the following three aspects. First, multicultural education policies are implemented at the national level to promote social integration and cultural identity [5]. The education policy clearly regards cultural diversity as a resource rather than a problem, and encourages the integration of a multicultural perspective into the school curriculum. For example, history education has gradually broken through the Eurocentric narrative and incorporated multiple perspectives of indigenous history and colonial history to help students fully understand history and values in different cultural backgrounds [2]. Secondly, British education pays attention to the use of the national cultural model and the cross-cultural education theoretical framework to guide teaching practice. The school emphasizes the integration of cultural resources in the curriculum design, and promotes students to learn from multiculturalism and form values that respect differences. Moreover, the UK attaches great importance to teachers' cross-cultural training as a key link in the implementation of education. Cross-cultural awareness training is gradually added to teacher education courses to encourage teachers to pay attention to students' cultural backgrounds and diversified needs. In classroom practice, some teachers use Holliday's "small culture" concept and Berry's cultural adaptation model for reference to promote students' participation and adaptation through formative feedback, which is regarded as "dialogue" and "discourse social practice", and has become an important part of the new academic culture. However, this field still faces challenges in the implementation, especially in the improvement of teachers' cultural sensitivity and the effective teaching of cross-cultural understanding, which still needs further exploration and improvement.

In short, through the trinity of policy guidance, theoretical support, and teacher training, Britain has actively built a cross-cultural education system, which not only strengthens the value orientation of cultural diversity in education but also lays an important foundation for promoting inclusive education in the context of globalization and a pluralistic society. Although there are still challenges in teacher training and practice, its systematic promotion path has provided a clear framework and practical enlightenment for the in-depth development of cross-cultural education.

3.2. The measures of intercultural education in the American education system

In the United States, promoting global education has become an important direction of school development, and its core is to systematically integrate cross-cultural experiential learning into teacher education projects to cultivate future teachers' multicultural teaching ability. In general, the United States actively promotes the implementation of cross-cultural education through diversified paths such as decolonial history education and cross-cultural literacy courses, and is committed to cultivating teachers and students with a global vision and cross-cultural understanding [6].

Specifically, the implementation of cross-cultural education in the United States mainly focuses on the following two aspects. On the one hand, the school gradually carried out the de colonization history education, faced up to and reflected on the structural inequality in history. Similar to the United Kingdom, American history education increasingly pays attention to the integration of the history of indigenous peoples and the history of African Americans, inherits the historical facts of colonial oppression and racial exclusion, and attempts to carry out critical reflection through education. This self-critical teaching turn aims to break the single historical narrative framework and guide students to form a multi-dimensional and critical historical cognition. On the other hand, the American education system emphasizes the cultivation of cross-cultural literacy and regards it as a necessary ability for students in the context of globalization. The school not only offers multicultural courses to impart relevant background knowledge, but also organizes cross-cultural exchange projects to interact with international practice, so that students can improve their cultural understanding and communication skills in real situations.

In this process, teacher education plays a key role. Cross-cultural experiential learning aims to enable teachers to master classroom management strategies in real or simulated situations, establish a classroom environment that supports in-depth learning, and enhance students' participation. Therefore, teachers are trained as sharp curriculum planners who can flexibly design multi-level teaching activities and continuously promote meaningful learning in complex educational scenes. Although the U.S. educational community has formed a relevant consensus and carried out local practice, the systematic implementation of the training mode nationwide is still an important challenge and reform direction.

In short, the United States has gradually built its global education system through the critical reconstruction of history education and the systematic cultivation of cross-cultural literacy based on the cultivation of teachers' cross-cultural ability. Although there are still challenges in the full implementation, its diversified practice path has provided an important framework for cross-cultural education, reflecting the clear orientation of the United States to continue to promote cultural reflection and teaching innovation in the process of educational globalization.

3.3. Deficiencies in cross-cultural teaching in Britain and America

3.3.1. Teachers

Although Britain and the United States have made a lot of efforts in cross-cultural education, there are still some shortcomings in practice. At present, the British and American education system is facing a core structural contradiction: the widening gap between the composition of teachers and the population structure of students. In the United States and England, the teacher group is still dominated by middle-class white women, and the cultural perspective is too narrow to reflect the growing cultural and class diversity of the student group [7]. This imbalance in representation easily leads to teachers' lack of in-depth understanding of the cultural background of minority students [8].

In the implementation of teaching content, many schools still focus on the traditional Eurocentric perspective and fail to fully incorporate multicultural history. This will lead to implicit prejudice in the teaching process, which may affect the teaching fairness.

At the same time, although both Britain and the United States emphasize that teachers must have the ability of cross-cultural teaching, there are still deficiencies in the depth and breadth of teacher training, especially in how to specifically deal with cultural differences and how to effectively integrate cross-cultural content. Teachers' pre-service education fails to systematically respond to this challenge. Cross-cultural or multicultural education often exists only as an isolated subject in the curriculum, and is not effectively integrated into the core training links, such as subject teaching method, classroom management, and educational psychology. As a result, graduates generally feel inadequate preparation and a weak response when facing the real and complex multicultural classroom. Some teachers may feel that they lack sufficient theoretical support and practical skills when they encounter cultural conflicts in the classroom, which limits the effect of cross-cultural education

3.3.2. National education planning level

Furthermore, the educational policy and curriculum system have also virtually weakened the practice space of cross-cultural teaching. In Britain and the United States, standardized testing is highly emphasized. The focus of teaching will be pushed to "teaching for examination", forcing teachers to compress or even abandon the exploration of integrating into students' cultural background and carrying out relevant teaching, and return to the "one size fits all" examination-oriented mode. Despite the relevant policies and initiatives in the two countries, there are still great differences in the implementation of intercultural education. In some parts of Britain and some states of the United States, the implementation of intercultural education is relatively low, especially in rural schools and schools with more minority students. Due to the lack of sufficient resources and teacher training, the effect of intercultural education is poor. This problem is particularly prominent in the United States because the diverse ethnic groups in the United States make the popularization and implementation of cross-cultural education more complicated.

3.3.3. Textbooks

In addition, the national curriculum and mainstream teaching materials still have significant deficiencies in presenting the history, contributions, and knowledge system of ethnic minorities. Many students feel alienated because they can not see the reflection of their own culture in the teaching content, and their learning motivation is also affected. Although some efforts have been made to promote the in-depth implementation of cross-cultural education, in practice, cross-cultural education is often superficial. For example, in some schools, the practice of cross-cultural education is only realized through superficial cultural activities or festival celebrations, but does not really go deep into the adjustment of educational content and teaching methods. This kind of superficial educational measure can not change the students' inherent concept of cultural differences, and can not really cultivate students' cross-cultural understanding and respect.

4. The suggestions and prospects of carrying out cross-cultural teaching

Against the background of globalization and multiculturalism, the importance of cross-cultural teaching in the education system has become increasingly prominent. In view of the practical

experience and shortcomings of cross-cultural teaching in the British and American countries, the following suggestions are made

4.1. Teachers

First, teachers' training and cross-cultural literacy can be strengthened. Teachers are the core of cross-cultural education practice. It is essential to ensure that teachers have sufficient cross-cultural understanding and teaching ability. In the future, Britain and the United States should further strengthen the training of cross-cultural education teachers, not only diversifying the curriculum content, but also paying attention to the training of teachers' cultural sensitivity. This kind of training should help teachers deeply understand the needs of students in different cultural backgrounds and effectively deal with the challenges brought by cultural differences in teaching. In addition, teachers need to have the ability to think critically and reflect, and be able to guide students to analyze and transcend the traditional cultural framework in history, literature and other courses to form a multicultural perspective [9,10].

4.2. School curriculum

In terms of curriculum setting, cross-cultural education should not only pay attention to cultural festivals, languages and other contents on the surface, but also go deep into the core content of culture, such as history education, literature teaching, social subjects and other fields. For example, the history curriculum should decolonize, actively include multiple perspectives such as indigenous history, immigration history and colonial history, and avoid a single Eurocentric narrative. At the same time, teaching methods should pay more attention to interactive learning, and enhance students' understanding and respect for cultural differences through cross-cultural discussions, field visits, international exchange projects and other forms.

4.3. Combination of teaching and technology

Finally, it is suggested to establish a multicultural resource sharing platform. In order to promote the development of cross-cultural education, Britain and the United States should consider establishing a multicultural resource sharing platform for educators, students and parents, which can share teaching materials, academic research, successful cases, expert lectures and other resources on cross-cultural education. Through these platforms, teachers can exchange teaching experience with each other and learn from the successful practice of cross-cultural education in other regions, so as to improve the quality of education worldwide. Technology and cross-cultural communication can be combined. With the development of information technology, cross-cultural education will have more technical support in the future. The use of new technologies such as virtual classrooms, online cultural exchange projects, and AI-assisted education will enable cross-cultural education to transcend national boundaries, time and space constraints, and bring a richer interactive learning experience. Students can interact with their peers around the world through the virtual communication platform to experience the real life and values of different cultures, so as to enhance their global vision.

4.4. National policy

In the future, the British and American countries need to further integrate cross-cultural education content at the level of education policy. Educational policies should clarify the importance of cross-

cultural education and provide specific guidance for the practice of cross-cultural education in schools at all levels. Policy support should include capital investment, teacher training, curriculum, and other aspects to ensure that the implementation of cross-cultural education is not restricted by regional, economic, and other factors.

5. Conclusion

This paper studies the measures taken and the problems encountered in the implementation of cross-cultural teaching in Britain and the United States. According to this, the author puts forward some suggestions. Future research can start from the latest cross-cultural education policies in Britain and the United States, the adaptation of teaching materials, and the improvement of teachers' cross-cultural quality.

In the future, cross-cultural education is not only an understanding of cultural differences, but also should become the core of the global education culture and promote a more inclusive and diversified education culture. The British and American education systems should pay more attention to the cultivation of students' global citizenship through cross-cultural education, so that students can not only have a sense of cultural identity, but also have a more open and inclusive attitude, to deal with the cultural exchanges and collisions in the future globalized society.

References

- [1] Skrefsrud, T.-A. (2021). A transcultural approach to cross-cultural studies: Towards an alternative to a national culture model. *Transcultural Studies*, 12(1), 81–100.
- [2] Smets, W. (2024). The purposes of historical canons in multicultural history education. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 56(3), 297–308.
- [3] Nigar, N. (2025). Rethinking diverse academic cultures in Australian higher education: An intercultural experiential-ontological topography. *English in Education*, 59(2), 145–161.
- [4] Elias, A., & Mansouri, F. (2023). Towards a critical transformative approach to inclusive intercultural education. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 18(1), 4–21.
- [5] Hannigan, A., Faas, D., & Darmody, M. (2024). Ethno-cultural diversity in initial teacher education courses: The case of Ireland. *Irish Educational Studies*, 43(1), 125–140.
- [6] Afolabi, T. (2023). The fear of cultural appropriation is the beginning of wokeness in learning? Reflections from teaching in Canada. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 28(3), 481–491.
- [7] Branch, A. J. (2021). Ethnic identity pedagogy and intercultural education. *Profesorado: Revista de Currículum y Formación del Profesorado*, 25(3), 69–89.
- [8] Davies, T. (2023). 'But we're not a multicultural school!': Locating intercultural relations and reimagining intercultural education. *Australian Educational Researcher*, 50(3), 991–1005.
- [9] Rowinski, J., & Sears, A. (2021). Unsettled histories: Transgressing history education practice in New Brunswick, Canada. *Historical Encounters*, 8(2), 107–123.
- [10] Capper, K. (2022). Culturally relevant pedagogy in the English curriculum. *Journal of Education*, 202(4), 397–405.