

Exploring the Talent Cultivation of University Applied English Majors in Cross-cultural Perspective

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Abstract: In the reform of university applied English teaching, creating a new model of university applied English teaching based on cross-cultural background is the main direction. At present, schools and teachers need to have an in-depth understanding of English cross-cultural teaching requirements at each stage while effectively understanding how English teaching is affected by cross-cultural development. Based on this, the value of university applied English teaching in the cross-cultural perspective is elaborated, the status quo of university applied English professional cultivation in the cross-cultural perspective is analyzed through a questionnaire survey, the dilemmas of university applied English teaching in the cross-cultural perspective are summarized, and relevant teaching strategies are proposed for reference.

Keywords: Cross-Culture; Applied English; Talent Cultivation

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's society, where globalization is rapidly developing, the importance of intercultural education is becoming increasingly prominent. The concept was first proposed in the second half of the 20th century, coinciding with the rise of the wave of global integration (Guo, 2023; I, 2023; Xiong, 2023). It refers to an educational model that aims to help college students gradually shape and consolidate those character and spiritual traits that will have a positive impact on their future by continuously broadening their horizons and deepening their thinking in their daily campus learning and living practices (Kang, 2022; Li & Dong, 2023; Yajun & Li, 2023). These traits and character traits are regarded as the internalized outcomes of the spiritual dimension, laying the cornerstone for students' long-term development. The core of intercultural education is to promote mutual understanding, communication and progress among students, which in turn fosters a pioneering spirit in the process of self-development and self-awareness. Compared with traditional multicultural education, intercultural education emphasizes interaction and active participation, and encourages students to step out of their comfort zones and actively explore and integrate into different cultural environments in order to enrich their own experiences and enhance their personal abilities. This mode of education not only provides a broad platform for the

comprehensive development of individuals, but also contributes to the building of a harmonious and pluralistic global society (Xiao, 2022). In the educational field of Applied English majors, in addition to the requirements for students in terms of language knowledge mastery, more attention is paid to the cultivation of their cultural cognitive ability (Ming & Zhao, 2022). In order to improve students' English proficiency in a comprehensive way, teachers must adopt a teaching strategy that focuses on culture and is supplemented by knowledge teaching. This approach not only optimizes the teaching process, but also considers learners' needs more comprehensively (Jin, 2022). Especially in the teaching of intercultural communication, teachers need to focus on its uniqueness and continuity, and persist in educating students about cultural backgrounds and communication styles over time. Obviously, language learning is closely connected with culture, and English teaching that lacks cultural background cannot effectively improve students' language comprehension and application (Xiao & Yang, 2018). Intercultural education covers a wide range of contents, including not only cultivating students' sense of openness and teamwork in the English perspective, but also realizing the mutually beneficial sharing of different English educational resources. The students cultivated by this kind of education not only possess a strong sense of responsibility, but also are extremely beneficial to their overall development in the future. Therefore, the importance of intercultural education in Applied English majors is self-evident, and it is the key to cultivating students' overall abilities.

2. THE IMPACT OF INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ON APPLIED ENGLISH TEACHING IN UNIVERSITIES

In the current field of English education, culture has become an important carrier of language communication and a key component of English teaching. Especially in applied English majors, the advancement of intercultural development has a significant impact on teaching and learning (Jiyan, 2022). Specifically, intercultural education provides a new path for teaching English at university level, making education more interest-oriented and competence-oriented, thus achieving a steady improvement in the quality of teaching in a short period of time (Yusupova, 2022). However, this process is not without challenges, and factors such as cultural differences, cultural ideas and the development of history and culture pose certain obstacles to the advancement of intercultural

education (Yue, 2022). Therefore, the key to effective and systematic teaching of university applied English lies in unifying the concepts of cultural education and language concepts to ensure consistency in teaching methods and maximize the effect. In contemporary education for English majors, students' future career paths are likely to involve English translation work, a field of work that is heavily influenced by the significant cultural differences between East and West. Translation is not only the conversion of language, but also the transmission of cultural meaning (Huang, 2022). Therefore, it is crucial to consider the differences between Chinese and Western cultural contexts in the translation process, which requires that translation work should not be limited to literal direct translation, but should flexibly adapt to different cultural contexts. In order to cope with this challenge, the cultivation of talents under the cross-cultural perspective is particularly crucial.

Strengthening cross-cultural education can make students familiar with Chinese and Western cultures, improve their cross-cultural communication and communication skills, and thus promote their professional development and enhance their professional competitiveness. However, the current English teaching in colleges and universities often pays too much attention to the cultivation of language skills and neglects the practical application ability, which results in teaching methods and concepts that do not meet the current teaching needs. For this reason, teaching reform has become an urgent need, emphasizing the transformation of teaching concepts, emphasizing cultural education while infiltrating the contents of Chinese and Western cultures, so that teaching is not only confined to teaching materials but becomes richer and more vivid (Liang, 2021). This kind of reform, despite the fact that it may bring about an increase in the consumption of educational resources and a slowing down of teaching progress, is of great significance in avoiding the situation of students' mechanical translation in the future, as well as in cultivating talents who are able to flexibly apply the Chinese and Western cultural contexts to translation (Li, 2018).

3. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF TALENT CULTIVATION OF UNIVERSITY APPLIED ENGLISH MAJORS IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

This paper selects Hebei Normal University as the research object, taking Applied English major as an example, and mainly adopts the way of

questionnaire survey, the survey object is the senior current and graduated students majoring in Applied English (the reason for not choosing the freshmen to the junior students is that their courses have not been completed, and it is impossible to give a comprehensive evaluation). A total of 78 questionnaires were recovered from this survey, 49 from senior students, accounting for 62.82%, and 29 from graduates, accounting for 37.18%. There were 44 female students (62.82%) and 34 male students (37.18%).

3.1 Talent Training Objectives and Curriculum

The Applied English Program of Hebei Normal University cultivates applied English professionals who have all-round development in morality, intellect, physique and aesthetics, have good comprehensive quality and professional ethics, and are able to apply their knowledge of English to front-line tasks such as teaching and teaching management of children's English.

The core competencies are to master the practical application skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating in English, to develop basic listening skills, to learn to judge and analyze simple linguistic information, to develop the ability of reasoning and judging, to be able to understand relatively simple film and television clips and broadcast news on various topics, to be able to familiarize themselves with conversations in business scenes, and to understand information on business activities. Apply reading skills to comprehend a variety of textual abilities, such as business documents and business reports. Promote students' cross-cultural cognition, cultivate students' sensitivity and tolerance of cultural differences, and develop cultural self-confidence. Cultivate students' ability to work as a team through project-based teaching and enhance students' qualities of friendly, tolerant, and discursive thinking. Master English oral communication skills, critical thinking skills, daily life language and special scene conversation skills, vocational English oral communication skills, clearer English pronunciation, confident and comfortable reading aloud and communication of ideas, a certain degree of vocational judgment, improve vocational literacy, and the ability to make public speeches in English. Mastery of basic English grammar, mastery of English writing skills, ability to write articles of different genres, such as ordinary official documents, business documents and reports.

Familiarize with the application of commonly used translation software, master the basic knowledge and skills of English interpretation and translation, and have the ability to translate orally and in writing from and

to living language, basic foreign affairs language and business English. Proficiency in modern educational technology and its application to English teaching, with good practical, employability and entrepreneurial ability (Li, 2023). Statistics on the curriculum of the Applied English major in Hebei Normal University are summarized into four main courses: English major courses, basic computer courses, humanistic quality courses (including second foreign language, culture and art, law and economy), and practical courses (Table 1). In terms of curriculum, there are problems of imperfect curriculum system and uncoordinated proportion of English and practical courses.

Table 1: Percentage of various types of courses in the Applied English program

| Name of the school | English Specialized Courses | Basic computer courses | Humanities Program | Practical course |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Hebei Normal University | 63.3% | 5.29% | 31.41% | 0% |

3.2 Applied English Majors' Satisfaction with the Cultivation of Knowledge

The cultivation of students' ability mainly includes computer use ability, English professional ability, communication ability, organization ability, innovation ability, cross-cultural communication ability cultivation and so on. The survey found that through four years of study, generally cultivated a strong English professional ability, the highest satisfaction (>85%), but the computer use ability is poor, the lowest satisfaction (<15%), this cultivation results than the conventional English majors do not have a competitive advantage, but also reflects the problem of the current curriculum system is not reasonable.

Secondly, the satisfaction of organizational ability (>51%) and communication ability (>65%) shows that through the current training method, there is a big improvement in students' organizational and communication ability, especially the rich second classroom activities, such as the English Drama Festival, which greatly promotes the cultivation of their organizational and communication ability. Again, the satisfaction of innovation ability (<35%) and intercultural communication (<15%) is related to the lack of practical courses in the program, which is insufficient to cultivate students' intercultural communication ability and innovation ability, and the practical ability has been improved, and the trends of men and women are more or less the same, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Students' satisfaction with competency development

| Gender | Category of competence | Satisfaction | Gender | Category of competence | Satisfaction |
|----------------|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Female (44) | English | 87.85% | Male (34) | English | 86.20% |
| | Professional Competence | | | Professional Competence | |
| | Ability to use computers | 12.14% | | Ability to use computers | 11.34% |
| | Communication skills | 72.43% | | Communication skills | 68.97% |
| | Organizational skills | 51.02% | | Organizational skills | 58.28% |
| | Creative capacity | 30.81% | | Creative capacity | 34.37% |
| | Intercultural communication skills | 10.20% | | Intercultural communication skills | 13.77% |

3.3 Current Situation of Cultural Awareness of Applied English Majors

According to the New Curriculum, this questionnaire investigates the cultivation of cultural awareness in English teaching based on four dimensions: understanding of Chinese and foreign cultures, identification with outstanding cultures, cross-cultural awareness in the context of globalization, and implementation of cultural self-confidence. Through the data, the author can clearly observe that students' level of understanding of Chinese and foreign cultures focuses on the three options of "not too much", "not sure" and "more understanding". In questions 1-5, less than 10% of the students chose "very well". The results show that students' knowledge of the two major traditional festivals in Britain and the United States, mainstream sportsmanship, famous writers, scientists, politicians and their outstanding achievements, as well as English idioms and proverbs is "half-understood", which reflects that students' knowledge of English-speaking cultures is very limited.

The sixth question asks students to give some basic knowledge about traditional Chinese festivals in English, as well as the expressions and meanings of traditional Chinese festivals. As an ancient civilization with a long history of 5,000 years, China has a vast and profound Chinese culture, which contains a long history of excellent traditional culture and has formed a lot of traditional festivals. Such as: Spring Festival, Lantern Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival and so on. There are also many expressions of traditional Chinese culture, such as: ancient poems, calligraphy, Chinese painting, food and so on. The results of the

survey show that 7.77% of the students chose "completely", nearly half of the students chose "basically", 35.23% chose "not sure", and 11.92% of the students chose "not sure". 11.92% of the students chose "No", and 4.15% chose "Not at all", which shows that many students do not have a deep enough understanding of their Chinese culture and lack confidence in their English expression. However, in Question 7, "Do you understand the positive influence of China's foreign economy, politics and culture", "Comparatively understand" and "Very much understand" accounted for 45.08% and 32.12% respectively, indicating that students' understanding of China's foreign economy, politics and culture is very low, and that they have no confidence in their English expression. 32.12%, indicating that students have a high sense of identity with the excellent culture. 1-7 questions are about the knowledge of Chinese and foreign cultures, and from the data of the survey results, it can be seen that students' understanding of Chinese and foreign cultures needs to be further improved, and many of them lack confidence in the cultural knowledge they have acquired. The details are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: (a) Students' knowledge of Chinese and foreign cultures

| | Understand Completely | Not Really | Inconc lusive | Relatively Knowledge eable | Realis e |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| I am aware of the main traditional festivals and their historical and practical significance in countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America. | 9.84% | 44.04% | 20.21% | 22.28% | 3.63% |
| I know about mainstream sports and their sportsmanship in countries such as the UK and the US | 10.36% | 33.16% | 20.73% | 28.50% | 7.25% |
| I am aware of the major literary figures, artists, scientists, politicians and their major contributions in countries such as the UK and the US | 6.22% | 27.46% | 25.39% | 36.79% | 4.15% |
| I can understand the cultural connotations of common English idioms and sayings. | 6.74% | 29.02% | 29.02% | 28.5% | 5.18% |

Table 3: (b) Students' knowledge of Chinese and foreign cultures

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| I understand the differences and similarities between people in the UK and the US and the Chinese in terms of their behavior and the way they treat others. | 3.11% | 18.13% | 13.99% | 51.3% | 13.47% |
| I can use English to briefly describe basic knowledge of Chinese culture, including traditional festivals, expressions and connotations of excellent traditional Chinese culture | 7.77 | 40.93% | 35.23% | 11.92% | 4.15% |
| I understand China's positive impact on foreign economy, politics and culture | 1.04 | 6.22% | 15.54% | 45.08% | 32.12% |

4. PROBLEMS EXISTING IN TALENT CULTIVATION OF UNIVERSITY APPLIED ENGLISH MAJORS IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Based on the above findings, the current problems in the cultivation of university applied English majors in the cross-cultural perspective are summarized.

4.1 Inadequate Curriculum

In the current higher education environment, the curriculum of Applied English majors faces a series of challenges. First of all, these curricula are deficient in systematic and scientific aspects, and often do not fully take into account the needs of the market and the actual situation of students. This problem is particularly obvious at the stage of basic education for English majors. Although the current syllabus emphasizes the imparting of basic knowledge and basic skills training, aiming at cultivating students' ability to use the language practically, this approach may not be able to meet the needs of comprehensive reform and quality improvement of foreign language majors in the future. In this critical reform period, it is particularly

important to find ways to combine specialized knowledge with practical teaching, to improve teaching efficiency, and to develop students' basic language skills. In addition, the teaching of intercultural communication is still in its infancy in economically underdeveloped regions, a situation that not only limits students' awareness of the importance of intercultural communication, but also increases their difficulty in adapting to work practice after graduation. At the same time, the contents of intercultural communication teaching materials used in many universities show obvious deficiencies, such as the lack of systematic arrangement, too many scientific and technical articles and the neglect of the contents of the excellent traditional Chinese culture, which not only affects the students' awareness of cultural equality and the enhancement of their ability of cultural discrimination, but also hinders the dissemination of Chinese culture to the world. Therefore, it has become urgent and necessary to update the teaching materials of intercultural communication courses in colleges and universities. To summarize, in the face of these challenges, English education in colleges and universities needs to carry out in-depth reforms and innovations to better meet the development needs of future education.

4.2 Inappropriate Teaching Methods

In the field of education, teachers' teaching methods and teaching objectives play a crucial role in students' language development and comprehensive ability cultivation. However, we notice that many teachers have some teaching biases. Teachers do not have sufficient understanding of intercultural teaching, do not fully recognize the importance of cultural differences in teaching, or do not have enough respect and sensitivity to different cultures, which may lead to the adoption of traditional teaching methods and the neglect of the introduction and comparison of cultural backgrounds. The lack of teaching materials and teaching resources applicable to intercultural teaching may make it difficult for teachers to teach intercultural effectively, and they may have to rely on their own knowledge base and experience, which may not be sufficient or appropriate. In addition, some teachers may not have received training in cross-cultural teaching or have not mastered appropriate teaching methods, which may lead them to adopt inappropriate approaches in the teaching process, such as overemphasizing linguistic knowledge at the expense of cultural knowledge, or failing to guide students to engage in effective cross-cultural exchanges and practices. Inadequate assessment and feedback mechanisms. There are no effective assessment and feedback mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of teachers' intercultural teaching, or the

assessment and feedback mechanisms are unreasonable, which may fail to identify and correct problems with teachers' teaching methods in a timely manner.

4.3 Insufficient intercultural knowledge reserve of university students

There are obvious deficiencies in the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence in university English education, and one of the most prominent problems is the lack of sufficient intercultural practice opportunities. Practice is the key link in the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence. Only through personal participation in intercultural communication activities and personal experience of the differences between different cultures can students really improve their intercultural communicative competence. However, in the existing university English education system, students have fewer chances to participate in intercultural communication activities and lack of actual exercise and practice. This makes it difficult for students to be comfortable in intercultural communication and unable to really experience and understand intercultural communication skills and rules. Even in activities such as English Corner and International Cultural Festival, students often only play the role of spectators and lack real interaction and communication. Taking colleges and universities as an example, although schools have international exchange centers and regularly hold activities such as international cultural festivals, the number of participating students is limited, and most of the activities are mainly for display and viewing, with fewer opportunities for students to actually participate in cross-cultural communication. In addition, there are relatively few practical activities in the English classroom, and teachers tend to focus more on the teaching of language knowledge and test-taking skills than on the cultivation of actual communicative competence. This situation not only restricts the development of students' intercultural communicative competence, but also contradicts the development needs of the era of globalization. In today's deepening globalization, intercultural communication ability has become a necessary skill. Therefore, colleges and universities should strengthen the practical teaching links of college English and provide students with more intercultural practice opportunities.

4.4 Biased Understanding of Intercultural Education

In applied English education, the role of teachers is crucial. However, we must realize that there is an obvious problem in the teaching process of

some teachers, who pay too much attention to the education of English cultural knowledge, but neglect the importance of traditional cultural education. This bias leads to students' insufficient knowledge of the cultures of Western countries and traditional Chinese culture, which seriously hinders the improvement of their skills in applying English. Language translation is a complex transformation process, and translators need to be familiar with not only mastering two languages, but also understanding the cultural knowledge behind these two languages, especially the differences between languages and cultures. However, the current situation shows that many English teachers do not fully realize the importance of traditional cultural education although they understand the need to penetrate Western culture. In the classroom, they may keep digging and penetrating the knowledge of western culture, but traditional cultural education is often missing. This leads to a translation process in which the translator has insufficient reserves of cultural knowledge of one of the languages, which affects the final translation.

Therefore, applied English education needs to pay more attention to intercultural education, including the teaching and promotion of traditional culture. Only by cultivating students' knowledge and understanding of traditional culture can they grasp cultural differences more comprehensively in language translation and improve the completeness and accuracy of translation. This is crucial to the cultivation of applied English professionals with comprehensive cultural literacy, and it also helps to improve their level of applied skills so that they can better cope with the challenges of cross-cultural communication and work.

4.5 Less Practical Courses Setting

The curriculum of Applied English majors has some problems in the current education system, the most notable of which is the lack of practical courses. This situation may be partly attributed to the relatively loose structure and management of the school, which leads to the lack of effective communication and collaboration between the school and the enterprise, and then easily leads to the waste of resources. However, practical courses are crucial for students majoring in Applied English. First of all, increasing the number of English listening and speaking practical courses is crucial for students to improve their English listening and speaking skills and enhance their ability to use the language practically. These courses can provide students with more opportunities to practically apply what they have learned in English, and by conversing with others and listening to different accents of English, they can be more confident in

dealing with actual language communication situations. Secondly, offering practical English writing courses helps students to improve their English writing skills and expression. Writing is crucial in both academic and professional careers, so these practical courses can help students develop clear thinking and effective expression skills so that they can better write and express themselves in English. In addition, additional practical courses in English translation can help students master translation skills and methods and improve their English translation skills. In the context of globalization, translation has become an important profession, and these practical courses can provide students with practical translation experience and lay a solid foundation for their future career development. Overall, these practical courses are of great significance to students majoring in Applied English. They not only help to improve students' English language skills and cultural knowledge, but also enhance their practical application ability and competitiveness. In order to better meet students' needs, schools and educational institutions should recognize the value of practice-based courses and pay more attention to and support them in their curriculum.

5. COUNTERMEASURES FOR CULTIVATING TALENTS OF UNIVERSITY APPLIED ENGLISH MAJORS IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

5.1 Change the concept and strengthen the awareness of intercultural education

In order to better meet the needs of modern society, colleges and universities should fully recognize the importance of intercultural education and change their concepts in time (Wang, 2020). Teachers' educational concepts have a direct impact on the quality of talent cultivation. Therefore, it is crucial for frontline educators to strengthen their own awareness of intercultural education. In order to cultivate talents with a global perspective, teachers must bear in mind the principle of cultural equality and ensure that traditional and Western cultures are given equal attention and treatment. In the process of cultural infiltration, they should avoid overly favoring Western culture education, but rather guide students to understand the differences between Chinese and Western cultures in a balanced way. At the same time, intercultural education needs to follow the principle of relevance. Teachers should select cultural education content in a targeted way and integrate it naturally into classroom

teaching instead of introducing it randomly. Such teaching methods can help improve students' learning, enhance their intercultural communication skills and prepare them for their future careers. By following these principles, educators can make a positive contribution to the development of people with an international outlook and intercultural communication skills. This requires teachers to possess deep cultural understanding and educational skills. In addition, the principle of fun teaching is also an important part of intercultural education. Through intercultural education, the fun of English teaching can be enhanced, the teaching content can be enriched and the learning process can be made more attractive. This can not only improve students' enthusiasm and enthusiasm for learning, but also cultivate their cross-cultural communicative competence and applied English skills. To summarize, intercultural education is of great significance in the cultivation of applied English talents. Colleges and universities should take intercultural education seriously, and teachers should have the corresponding intercultural education awareness and education principles to ensure the cultivation of Applied English majors with intercultural perspectives and provide a solid foundation for their future career development.

5.2 Reform the Applied English Curriculum System and Increase the Content of Intercultural Education

In the modern education system, the curriculum and course system construction of Applied English majors is one of the key foundations of talent cultivation. However, a perfect Applied English curriculum system must pay attention to intercultural education to meet the needs of globalization (Zhang, 2019). Previous teaching has the problem of cross-cultural knowledge penetration, with fragmented content and lack of depth. Colleges and universities need to incorporate cross-cultural education into the curriculum in a planned way, and teachers can make use of the Internet and book resources to develop a systematic English culture curriculum to enrich classroom cultural education. Resources are pushed through the Internet to increase students' exposure to cross-cultural knowledge. In addition, the Applied English program should also strengthen traditional cultural education and cultivate students' cultural awareness. Intercultural teaching materials should be introduced in writing and translation training to improve students' intercultural communication skills. Colleges and universities need to integrate Chinese and Western cultures into their curricula in a systematic way to cultivate cross-cultural perspectives and lay the foundation for students' future career

development (Li & Li, 2021).

5.3 Changes in teaching tools and methods

In enhancing intercultural education, the innovation of teaching means and the change of education mode are crucial. The traditional teaching methods of duck-filling and indoctrination need to be rethought, and more attention should be paid to stimulating students' active learning motivation (Yun et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2020). In the process of teaching, teachers should actively create authentic contexts, so as to help students improve their English ability in authentic contexts. And thus help students to recognize the cultural differences between China and the West more deeply (Zeng, 2020). This interesting and vivid teaching method can enhance students' learning motivation. In addition, teachers can flexibly utilize the mode of flipped classroom, so as to enhance students' motivation to learn English, and enhance students' subjectivity through classroom interaction with students. This method can improve the effectiveness of cultural education and stimulate students' motivation (Yang & Yang, 2020; Zhao & Lv, 2021).

6. CONCLUSION

In university applied English teaching, in order to enhance the teaching effect and help students realize the learning goal of intercultural communication, teachers need to actively integrate the intercultural context into their teaching. It is necessary to standardize the teaching standards so as to ensure the consistency of teaching quality and effect. At the same time, teachers should make reasonable use of the advantages of intercultural teaching, which can not only enrich the content of writing teaching practice, but also help students better understand and master the basic knowledge. In addition, teachers should actively absorb the advanced educational experiences of foreign schools and combine them with the actual situation in China to construct a teaching model with Chinese characteristics. This model should be able to effectively enhance the teaching effect of college applied English, so as to help students better realize their own learning goals in cross-cultural communication. Through such a teaching strategy, students will not only be able to improve their English application skills, but also be able to develop an understanding of and respect for different cultures, laying a solid foundation for future international communication and cooperation.

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