

# **An Inquiry into the Integration of Teaching and Communicative Competence Cultivation of Korean Language Majors in Colleges and Universities Based on Intercultural Perspective**

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**Abstract:** Since the reform and opening up, China's foreign economic and cultural exchanges have been expanding, which has put forward new requirements for the intercultural communication skills of nationals. Entering the 21st century, the trend of global integration has become more obvious, especially with the progress of transportation and the massive application of online social media software, which provides communication tools for people of different cultures, intercultural communication has become an important feature of the new era. Therefore, facing the needs of national strategic development in the new era, cultivating high-quality college students with international thinking, global vision and intercultural communication skills has become an urgent task for teaching Korean language majors in colleges and universities. Based on the theory of cultivation and teaching of intercultural communicative competence, this study conducted a questionnaire survey on 20 teachers and 169 students majoring in Korean at Xi'an International Studies University (XISU) to analyze the status quo of teaching and cultivation of intercultural communicative competence of Korean majors in colleges and universities, and to put forward the strategy of cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence. **Keywords:** Colleges and Universities, Korean Language, Intercultural Communicative Competence

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Intercultural perspective refers to the intersection, interaction and influence between different cultural systems and concepts in the context of globalization (Liu, 2023; Shi, 2023; Zhou, 2023). This concept involves a variety of fields such as culture, history, society, politics and economy. In the cross-cultural perspective, various cultural forms and values come into contact, collision, exchange and integration, thus forming a multicultural environment (C. Wang, 2023). In the context of accelerating globalization, the exchange and collision of different cultural systems and concepts have become the norm, which in turn produce new cultural phenomena and achievements. In order to cope with this phenomenon, intercultural communicative competence (ICC), as a competence paradigm proposed in

the 1990s, has gradually received widespread attention (Chen & Pan, 2023; Huang, 2023; Ma & Liu, 2023). The competency not only reflects personal characteristics, but also serves as a behavioral skill and thus is also dynamic. Intercultural communicative competence can be measured by effectiveness and appropriateness, which requires individuals to not only excel in the achievement of communicative goals, but also to ensure the appropriateness of communication styles and behavior (Cui, 2022; J. Wang, 2023; Yusupova et al., 2022).

In today's era of globalization, foreign language learners' competence in intercultural communication is particularly important. Foreign language teaching is no longer limited to the teaching of language knowledge, but focuses more on the cultivation of students' intercultural communication skills (Cao, 2022; Guo, 2023; Qin, 2023). Intercultural education, as a new educational concept, emphasizes the understanding and respect of cultural differences and the cultivation of intercultural communication skills. Cultivating learners' intercultural communication skills has become an important task in foreign language teaching, which not only requires learners to master the linguistic knowledge of the target language, but also to be able to do it "appropriately" in practical use (Deng, 2020). As a major tool for social activities, language is indispensable for any form of communication.

In cross-cultural communication, students' lack of cross-cultural awareness may lead to communication barriers, affecting the accurate transmission and understanding of information (Kang, 2022; Sun, 2021; Zhang, 2019). Therefore, in the teaching of Korean language majors in colleges and universities, it is particularly important to cultivate students' cross-cultural awareness and improve their cross-cultural communication skills. This not only helps to improve students' language application ability, but also lays a solid foundation for their future career and international communication.

The cultivation of intercultural communicative competence is the key to enhance students' interest in learning. When students realize that language is not only knowledge, but also a carrier of culture and a tool for communication, they will participate in learning more actively and try to improve their intercultural communicative competence. Therefore, this paper will study the current situation of teaching and communicative competence cultivation of Korean language majors in colleges and universities under the cross-cultural perspective, with a view to improving the cross-cultural communication ability of college students.

## 2. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF KOREAN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

In this paper, Xi'an International Studies University is selected as the research object, taking the Korean language major as an example, and mainly adopting the way of questionnaire survey, the survey object is the teachers and students of Korean language major. The survey recovered a total of 189 questionnaires, 20 teachers, accounting for 10.58%, and 169 students, accounting for 89.42%. There were 90 female students, accounting for 47.62%, and 99 male students, accounting for 52.38%. The "Syllabus" and curriculum of the Korean language program of Xi'an International Studies University were analyzed.

### 2.1 Students' and Teachers' Satisfaction with the Course Curriculum

Through analyzing the results of the questionnaire, it is found that most of the interviewed teachers believe that it is very important to cultivate intercultural competence and that the current curriculum needs to be further improved. 82% of the teachers said that students can positively influence their future work and life through learning intercultural communication courses. 77% of the teachers said that the course can improve Chinese language performance, and both teachers and students think that the number of courses related to intercultural communication should be increased. Both teachers and students were more than 70% willing to increase the number of courses related to intercultural communication. Most of the teachers and students think that the teaching materials need to be further updated, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Student and Faculty Satisfaction with Course Offerings

	<b>Teacher Satisfaction</b>	<b>Student Satisfaction</b>
Do You Think that Intercultural Communication can Positively Influence Students' Work and Life?	82%	78%
Do You Think Cross-Cultural Communication can Positively Affect Korean Language Performance?	77%	73%
Do You Think there Should be More Elective Courses in Intercultural Communication?	73%	71%
Do You Think the Textbooks Need to be Updated?	75%	75%

## 2.2 Teachers' Knowledge of Intercultural Communication

Among the teachers in the universities in Xi'an area surveyed by the author, there are 3 teachers with doctoral degrees, accounting for 15% of the total; 10 teachers with master's degrees, accounting for 50% of the total; and 7 teachers with bachelor's degrees, accounting for 35% of the total. In terms of titles, there are 4 professors, or 20% of the total, 9 associate professors, or 45% of the total; and 7 lecturers, or 35% of the total. The data in Table 2 show that as many as 66% of the teachers had no experience in enhancing intercultural communicative competence in an intercultural environment, while 34% of the teachers had experience in studying or training abroad. This phenomenon implies that the lack of intercultural communicative experience may affect teachers' intercultural communicative awareness and teaching focus, thus affecting the development of students' intercultural communicative competence.

Table 2: Teachers' knowledge of intercultural communication

	Yes	No
Have You Ever Studied or Trained Abroad?	34%	66%
Do You Have Experience in Enhancing Intercultural Communication Skills in a Cross-Cultural Environment	34%	66%
Have You Studied Intercultural Communication Theory?	46%	54%

## 2.3 Students' Understanding of Intercultural Communication

According to the author's research, there is still some room for improvement in the intercultural communicative competence of the interviewed students, which is mainly reflected in the following three aspects (see Table 3): The first aspect is that students' basic ability of intercultural communication needs to be improved. Nearly half of the students lacked awareness of intercultural communication. Most of the students thought they lacked understanding of the differences between Chinese and foreign cultures. In the second aspect, when using the skills taught in the course, 30.43% thought that there were some difficulties, and a small number of students said that they had not been in contact with foreigners. In the third aspect, students' motivation for intercultural communication was not high. Most of the students indicated that they had no willingness to communicate across cultures. And most of the students said that the degree of understanding of foreign culture is positively proportional to the smoothness of intercultural communication.

Table 3: Students' knowledge of intercultural communication

	Completely understand	Not very understand	Inconclusive	Relatively understand	Not understand
Do You Understand Intercultural Communication Theory?	14.67%	46.65%	5.37%	14.61%	18.70%
Do You Think That You Have Grasped the Differences Between Chinese and Foreign Cultures?	11.54%	59.7%	3.08%	18.57%	7.11%
Have You Ever Been in Contact With a Foreigner?	72.61%	0%	0%	0%	27.39%
Have You Ever Experienced Poor and Unpleasant Contact and Communication With Foreigners?	30.43%	0%	0%	0%	69.57%
Do You Often Look for Opportunities to Interact with People From Other Cultures?	45.19%	0%	2.21%	0%	52.61%
Do You Think That Different Communication Styles Should Be Used to Communicate with the Target Audience?	69.13%	2.61%	0.69%	3.39%	24.18%
Do You Think the Basic Condition for Communicating Well with Foreigners is to Understand the Background of Foreign Cultures and the Differences Between Chinese and Foreign Cultures?	66.09%	7.1%	2.4%	5.14%	19.27%

#### 2.4 Students' Motivation to Learn Intercultural Communication

Table 4 shows that no more than 10% of students have experienced intercultural activities. In recent years, the frequency of organizing intercultural activities has declined significantly due to both funding and the degree of importance attached to them. Activities such as Korean language competitions and Korean-type scenarios, which are less costly to organize, are beneficial to improving students' interests and abilities, but the fact that they require a great deal of time and effort and are not linked to the evaluation of prizes and grades has resulted in the low level of importance attached by teachers to these activities.

Table 4: Students' motivation to learn intercultural communication

	Yes	No
Does Your School Regularly Organize Intercultural Activities Such as Summer Camps and Student Exchanges?	34.5%	65.5%
Have You Participated in Intercultural Activities Such as Summer Camps, Exchange Students, Etc.?	6.8%	93.2%

### 3. PROBLEMS OF KOREAN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

#### 3.1 Lack of In-Depth Study on The Systematic and Targeted Nature of The Syllabus

Against the background of accelerating globalization, Korean language teaching in colleges and universities is facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities. First of all, we need to clarify the importance of intercultural communication skills in today's society. Globalization has made international exchanges and cooperation the norm, and talents with intercultural communication skills are highly sought after in various fields. However, the current Syllabus is not clear about the requirements of the competence standard. This undoubtedly brings a lot of inconvenience to the actual teaching work and needs to be solved urgently. Korean language teaching has a relatively short history of development in Chinese colleges and universities, so it is inevitable that there are some deficiencies in teaching concepts and methods.

Especially in the Korean language majors of higher vocational colleges and universities, the lagging phenomenon of teaching concepts and methods is more obvious. Many higher vocational colleges and universities still adopt the traditional duck-type teaching, which pays too much attention to the explanation of vocabulary and grammar and neglects the practical use of language and the cultivation of communicative ability. This kind of teaching method leads to the lack of independent learning ability and practical application ability of students, which can't meet the social demand for intercultural communication talents. Students can only mechanically memorize grammar and vocabulary, but can hardly apply what they have learned in actual communication. This not only affects the students' language learning effect, but also restricts their future career development.

### 3.2 Irrational Curriculum and Outdated Textbook Content

Although some colleges and universities offer intercultural communication courses, the teaching materials used are outdated and need to be updated. Some colleges and universities may pay too much attention to the learning of theoretical knowledge and neglect the cultivation of practical application ability in the curriculum of Korean language majors. For example, in the core curriculum of Korean language majors in some colleges and universities, Korean grammar, vocabulary, reading and other aspects take up a large proportion of the content, while there are relatively few courses on Korean oral expression, listening comprehension, writing, etc. In addition, some colleges and universities use outdated textbooks in Korean language majors. In addition, some colleges and universities pay too much attention to the learning of language knowledge and neglect the teaching of cultural background and communication skills in the curriculum of Korean language majors. For example, some colleges and universities lack the knowledge and understanding of Korean history, culture and society in the core curriculum of Korean language majors, which also affects the improvement of students' understanding and application of the Korean language and leads to the low practical ability of students.

### 3.3 Limited Teaching Staff and Teachers' Competence to be Improved

With the acceleration of globalization, cross-cultural communication skills are becoming more and more prominent in the field of education. The insufficiency of Korean language teachers' own intercultural communicative competence is a problem that cannot be ignored. Most teachers lack learning experiences related to intercultural communication, which makes it difficult for them to effectively impart relevant knowledge and skills in teaching. At the same time, some teachers do not pay enough attention to the theoretical study of intercultural communication and participate in related training less frequently, which further limits their teaching ability in this area. With the increasing scale of Korean language courses offered by colleges and universities and the increase in the number of Korean language students, the demand for teachers specializing in Korean language is also increasing. However, most of our Korean language graduates are engaged in China-Korea trade-related occupations, and the percentage of graduates who can teach Korean is very small. Moreover, the training of Korean language students in China mostly stays at the bachelor's degree, and there are only a few graduates of postgraduate and doctoral Korean language majors, which can't deliver highly-educated Korean

language talents to the society, thus leading to the overall level of Korean language teachers in colleges and universities is average, which can't satisfy the learning needs of the students and lowers the quality of the overall teaching of the Korean language. In addition, there is less systematic training for Korean language teachers in colleges and universities, which leads to heavy teaching tasks for teachers and makes it difficult for them to find time to study Korean language teaching methods and approaches. All these factors affect the quality of Korean language teaching in colleges and universities and the long-term development of students.

### 3.4 Students' Relatively Weak Foundation Makes it Difficult to Achieve the Expected Teaching Effect

Students' Korean vocabulary is insufficient. Vocabulary is the basic unit that constitutes language, and if the vocabulary is insufficient, it will directly lead to students' limitations in various aspects such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Although many students have a short-term interest in learning Korean, as the difficulty of learning increases, they often lack the enthusiasm and perseverance to continue learning, and are easily discouraged when they encounter difficult problems. Especially when the knowledge structure of Korean is completely different from that of English, it is necessary to be familiar with the Korean marking system and to read and write according to the Korean language norms; to be familiar with the Korean pronunciation system and to pronounce the words correctly; and to be familiar with the basic sentence structure of the Korean language and to express them correctly.

### 3.5 Few Related Activities are Carried out and Students are not Highly Motivated

The lack of intercultural communication platforms in China not only affects the students' opportunities to get in touch with and learn about diverse cultures, but also makes it more difficult for them to learn English. The lack of practical communication platforms and diversified learning environments makes students face many challenges in the actual use of English, which in turn limits the improvement of their intercultural communication skills. At the same time, the communication and cooperation between higher vocational colleges and enterprises are also deficient. This is mainly reflected in the lack of effective cooperation mechanisms and information sharing mechanisms. Due to the insufficiency of both sides in the integration of industry and education, the

resources cannot be reasonably allocated and effectively utilized. Enterprises and schools work separately and do not form a close cooperative relationship, so they are unable to form a synergy and realize resource sharing and complementary advantages. This situation not only affects the quality and efficiency of talent training, but also restricts the development space of both sides.

#### 4. INTEGRATION STRATEGIES OF TEACHING AND CULTIVATION OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE FOR KOREAN LANGUAGE MAJORS IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

##### 4.1 Transformation of Teaching Mode

Higher vocational colleges and universities still commonly adopt the traditional teaching mode of listening, speaking, reading and writing in Korean language teaching, focusing on the learning of Korean words and grammar (Li, 2020; Zhang, 2020). This teaching method neglects the important influence of Korean culture explanation on improving students' intercultural communication skills. The lack of students' understanding of Korean native knowledge in teaching Korean in higher education leads to frequent basic errors in practical application. In order to solve this problem, teachers need to change the traditional concept of education, take the actual situation of students as the starting point, and innovate their own teaching mode. By deeply integrating the content of the textbook with Korean local culture, students can not only better master the language knowledge, but also have a deeper understanding of the cultural and social background of Korea. The improvement of this teaching mode can help to improve students' intercultural communication ability and cultivate Korean language talents with an international perspective. Teachers should pay attention to practical application teaching in the teaching process, and let students exercise and improve their intercultural communication skills in practical application through simulating real scenes, role playing and other forms. At the same time, teachers can organize relevant practical activities, such as exchanges and cooperation with Korean enterprises, Korean language corner, etc., to provide students with more practical communication opportunities. Colleges and universities need to base themselves and actively promote teaching reform to meet the diversified needs of students. Among them, the flipped classroom, as a subversion of the traditional teaching mode, has attracted widespread attention. This

mode has completely changed the traditional mode of "teachers teach in class and students complete homework after class", providing students with more opportunities for active learning and interaction. In the classroom, teachers can guide students to explore the practical problems of intercultural communication through group discussions and role plays. This teaching mode not only enhances students' learning initiative, but also promotes cooperation and communication among students and improves their intercultural communication skills.

#### 4.2 Facing up to the Differences Between Chinese and Korean Cultures and Emphasizing the Contexts of Different Cultures

As an international language, the teaching of Korean especially needs to emphasize the cultivation of students' cross-cultural awareness. Since the development history and background of each country are different, there are also significant differences in traditions and customs. This diversity brings challenges to cross-cultural communication, but also provides rich resources for language and culture learning. In order to cultivate cross-cultural awareness among Korean language students, teachers need to adopt effective teaching methods. Among them, comparative analysis is an effective method. Teachers can take Chinese as the starting point and compare and analyze Chinese and Korean. Chinese mother tongue is Chinese, and the learning of any language needs to be transformed by Chinese, and this commonality provides a possibility for language comparison. By comparing the vocabulary, grammar and expressions of the two languages, teachers can help students understand the similarities and differences between the two cultures more deeply. Such a teaching method not only helps students to better master Korean language knowledge, but also enhances their understanding of and respect for the differences between Chinese and Korean cultures. This awareness and ability is especially important in cross-cultural communication and can facilitate deeper and more effective communication. For example, there are significant differences between China and Korea in terms of vocabulary meaning and language expression habits. Through actual language comparisons, students can more intuitively feel the uniqueness and differences of the two cultures, and thus improve their cross-cultural awareness (Nan, 2021; A. Yang, 2023). In recent years, the Korean language has gradually gained importance in the professional programs of Chinese universities and colleges. As one of the global languages, Korean has a wider range of applicability. This difference in the scope of

application directly affects the learning and practicing opportunities for Korean learners. In order to improve the effectiveness of Korean language teaching, teachers can appropriately introduce Korean cultural explanations in the teaching process. By analyzing the Korean cultural context in depth, students will have a deeper understanding of Korean words and sentence patterns. Teaching Korean in a cultural context will not only help students understand the language knowledge better, but also stimulate their interest in learning and improve the learning effect.

#### 4.3 Cultivating Students' Cross-Cultural Perspectives

For students in the lower grades, teachers should explain the history, culture, religious beliefs and thinking patterns of Korean-speaking countries in depth. Emphasis is placed on students' mastery of basic knowledge to lay a solid foundation for the subsequent cultivation of intercultural communication skills. As students' knowledge improves, they enter the stage of cultural awareness development (L. Yang, 2023). This stage is mainly for senior students and focuses on cultivating students' intercultural communicative awareness and sensitivity. In teaching Korean in colleges and universities, teachers can raise students' attention to intercultural communication by teaching the theory of intercultural communication and the theory of intercultural communication competence. Help students understand the cultural differences between China and the West, and through these teaching methods, students can better adapt to the cross-cultural environment and improve their cross-cultural communicative competence (Cai, 2023). At the stage of developing skills, teachers should adopt a variety of teaching methods and means to comprehensively improve students' intercultural communicative competence. Among them, the creation of authentic situations, task-based teaching methods or project-based teaching methods are all effective means. This stage of teaching should be carried out throughout the entire university process to ensure that students continue to practice, exercise and improve their intercultural communicative competence throughout the learning process. In the teaching of Korean in colleges and universities, teachers should pay attention to creating real situations, helping students to practice in real situations, and actively applying the task-based teaching method to design a variety of intercultural communication practice tasks. Help students to continuously improve their intercultural communication skills in practical application. Through actual practice and experience,

students can better understand the cultural and social background of Korea and thus better adapt to the cross-cultural environment. At the same time, students can also improve their independent learning and teamwork ability in the process of completing the tasks, which further promotes the development of their comprehensive quality. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to the design of practical links in teaching, so that students can learn and grow in practice.

#### 4.4 Strengthening the Stock of Chinese Native Culture

Chinese local culture provides a deep foundation for Korean language learning. Language and culture are inseparable, and language expression and utilization are often influenced by cultural background. When learning Korean, students may have difficulty in understanding the deeper meanings of certain words and expressions, and may even misunderstand them if they lack knowledge of the local Chinese culture. Therefore, students need to strengthen their understanding and mastery of the local Chinese culture while learning Korean. In cross-cultural communication, students can try to combine the two cultures and communicate with the attitude of seeking common ground while reserving differences. This kind of cross-cultural communication helps students to better understand Korean culture and at the same time promotes the knowledge of Chinese culture. By comparing the two cultures, students can discover their commonalities and differences and further deepen their understanding and application of the Korean language (Deng, 2023). However, students may encounter some challenges during intercultural communication. Due to the lack of local cultural knowledge, sometimes students may not be able to accurately express the meaning of Korean language in their own language. This not only affects the effectiveness of communication, but also may cause misunderstanding and conflict. Therefore, strengthening the reserve of local culture and improving language expression skills are an indispensable part of cross-cultural communication. Despite the large demand for foreign languages in society, students cannot neglect their own native culture. In the process of learning Korean, students should maintain their attention to and understanding of Chinese culture, and constantly strengthen and improve their native cultural literacy. Only in this way can students better understand and learn Korean and play a positive role in cross-cultural communication.

#### 4.5 Improve Teachers' Personal Quality

As an important base for cultivating high-quality talents, colleges and universities should pay attention to strengthening the cultivation of teachers' intercultural communication skills. Schools should provide targeted training for students to help them better utilize their skills in practice. Regular teaching seminars are organized in the form of demonstration teaching and on-site observation to improve teachers' participation and ability. These activities aim to strengthen teachers' sense of effectiveness, stimulate teachers' autonomy and creativity, promote communication and cooperation among teachers, and jointly improve teaching standards (Liu, 2021). Teachers are encouraged to upgrade their academic level and actively participate in academic exchange activities at home and abroad. By communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds, teachers can expand their horizons, enhance their cross-cultural awareness and improve their own cross-cultural communication skills. This not only helps to improve the quality of teaching, but also promotes the internationalization of academic research. Strengthen external ties with foreign universities and actively carry out inter-school cooperation and exchanges. Through mutual visits and exchange of teachers, colleges and universities can strengthen the sharing of information and the integration of resources, provide teachers with more practice opportunities, and cultivate their cross-cultural communication skills. This mode of cooperation helps to improve the comprehensive quality of teachers and at the same time lays a solid foundation for the cultivation of high-quality talents with an international outlook.

#### 4.6 Build a Communication Platform to Improve Students' Intercultural Communication Ability

As an important base for talent cultivation, colleges and universities should provide more opportunities for students. The Korean language corner can provide a practical language environment for students to improve their oral expression skills in communication with teachers or foreign students. Therefore, colleges and universities can open Korean language corners for cross-cultural communication. In addition, Korean language corners can stimulate students' interest and participation by organizing a variety of interactive activities, such as role-playing and topic discussions, to further promote students' oral practice and the cultivation of intercultural communication skills. Colleges and universities can carry

out thematic cultural week activities to create an intercultural atmosphere for students and provide them with immersive cultural experiences through these activities. This kind of immersive cultural experience can help students better understand the values and lifestyles of different cultures and develop their intercultural awareness and sensitivity. At the same time, the theme culture week can also take various forms, such as Korean song contests, Korean skit contests, and Korean movie showings, to enrich the students' after-school life and provide more opportunities for cross-cultural practice. Colleges and universities can make use of their existing affiliations to provide students with a wider range of cross-cultural communication opportunities by exchanging students or organizing summer camp activities. Student exchange programs allow students to experience different cultural environments and interact with people from different countries and backgrounds, thus enhancing their intercultural communication skills. Summer camps provide an intensive intercultural platform for students to improve their intercultural communication skills through team building, cultural experiences and hands-on activities.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The teaching of Korean language majors in colleges and universities should pay more attention to students' motivation to learn intercultural communication and cultivate students' interest in learning, so as to cultivate students' intercultural communicative competence. In the face of the problems existing in the teaching process of Korean language majors in colleges and universities, colleges and universities can improve the intercultural communicative competence of Korean language majors by changing the teaching method, facing the cultural differences between China and Korea, emphasizing the cultural context, and cultivating students' cross-cultural perspectives.

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