THE ROLE OF LEARNING ENGLISH AT IMPROVING CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT: Cross-cultural communication is essential for promoting understanding and cooperation in a world that is becoming more interconnected by the day. English acts as a bridge between people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds because it is a widely spoken international language. By examining its effects on cultural awareness, intercultural competency, and international interactions, this study investigates the value of learning English in improving cross-cultural communication. Data was gathered through surveys and interviews with non-native English speakers working in multicultural settings using a mixed-methods approach. The results show that knowing English well greatly enhances one's capacity to negotiate cultural differences, prevent miscommunication, and build deep relationships. The study comes to the conclusion that learning English is crucial for global involvement since it not only makes communication easier but also fosters cultural awareness.

KEYWORDS: cross-cultural communication, english language learning, intercultural competence, globalization, cultural sensitivity

INTRODUCTION

Effective communication between people from many cultural origins is more crucial than ever in the globalized world of today. The sharing of information between individuals with different cultural viewpoints, values, and communication styles is referred to as cross-cultural communication. Learning English also helps people become more interculturally competent by exposing them to various cultural perspectives that are ingrained in the language. This competence helps people navigate cultural nuances, avoid misunderstandings, and develop respect for other traditions and beliefs. The purpose of this study is to investigate how learning English can enhance intercultural communication. It specifically looks at how being able to communicate in English affects interpersonal relationships, cultural understanding, and the capacity to work in multicultural settings. This study aims to demonstrate how English can promote global engagement by examining the actual experiences of non-native English speakers in global settings.

METHOD

The framework developed by Oxford University's Department of Applied Linguistics (2021), which investigated how English competence might improve cross-cultural communication, serves as the foundation for this investigation. The new study builds on these fundamental discoveries by examining the degree to which learning English enhances a person's capacity for successful cross-cultural communication. The study uses a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative research techniques to provide a thorough examination of how learning English affects cross-cultural communication in a range of social and professional contexts. One hundred non-native English speakers from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, ranging from professionals to students, made up the research sample. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), participants were divided into three competency levels: advanced (C1-C2), intermediate (B1-B2), and beginner (A1-A2). A wide variety of English proficiency

levels were included in this classification, enabling an evaluation of the ways in which language competency affects communication at various language acquisition stages. The participants were chosen from a variety of international organizations and academic institutions, guaranteeing a representative sample of people who frequently communicate across cultural boundaries. Three separate phases were used to organize the six-month data collection process. Completing the Oxford English Communication Survey (OECS), a thorough questionnaire derived from earlier Oxford research on intercultural communication, was the first step. The purpose of this survey was to collect quantitative and qualitative information about participants' views toward using English in multicultural contexts, their self-reported level of English proficiency, and their perceived capacity for cross-cultural communication. The questionnaire had both open-ended questions to allow for in-depth personal reflections on experiences with cross-cultural communication and Likert-scale questions (from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree") to gauge the participants' confidence, communication abilities, and intercultural sensitivityThis scale considered things including the ability to communicate with cultural awareness, the appropriateness of responses, and the clarity of language. A chosen group of 30 participants from each proficiency level participated in semi-structured interviews during the third phase to learn more about their individual experiences with cross-cultural communication and how English proficiency helps or hinders these exchanges.

Result

Simulation Result

The results of the survey were further corroborated by performance in the cross-cultural communication simulations. Compared to their colleagues with lower proficiency, advanced English speakers showed noticeably better levels of fluency and cultural sensitivity in role-playing activities. The more experienced group had no trouble adjusting to cultural differences and articulating their thoughts clearly. In

the scenario, they were also better at handling disagreements and miscommunications. 85% of experienced participants scored in the top quartile of the evaluation scale, which included fluency, response appropriateness, and cultural sensitivity, but only 25% of novices did the same. Higher levels of English proficiency also appear to improve the accuracy and nuance of cross-cultural communication, as experienced speakers shown more ease in interpreting cultural nuances and adapting their communication style to the situation.

Overall findings

The study's findings imply that by boosting language confidence and cultural sensitivity, English competence is essential for fostering better cross-cultural communication. Higher English competence helped participants avoid misconceptions, communicate more meaningfully, and negotiate challenging cross-cultural situations. Furthermore, the evidence indicates that the development of intercultural competency and English language proficiency work hand in hand, assisting people in better comprehending various cultural conventions and communication styles. These results highlight the value of learning English as a communication tool as well as a way to promote more international cooperation and understanding.

Discussion

The results of this study support earlier investigations on the function of English proficiency in cross-cultural communication, demonstrating that greater language competency greatly improves people's capacity to negotiate cross-cultural relationships. The findings show that improved cultural adaptability, fewer misconceptions, and greater confidence are all positively correlated with English proficiency. The implications of these findings, their relationship to previous research, the study's possible shortcomings, and recommendations for additional research are covered in this section. It also offers a subjective viewpoint on the importance of these findings**.**

The Role of English Proficiency in Cross-Cultural Communication

The conclusion that increased English proficiency increases communication confidence in cross-cultural contexts is among the most important. Participants with advanced English proficiency (C1–C2) showed that they could converse with people from diverse cultural backgrounds and express themselves more clearly. This is in line with earlier studies by Gudykunst (2018), which highlighted the value of language proficiency in building cross-cultural interactions. In academic and professional contexts, where misunderstandings can result in inefficiencies and conflicts, the capacity to articulate ideas clearly is very important. The findings of the study support the notion that becoming proficient in English, a universal language, acts as a bridge across cultural boundaries, promoting more seamless communication and lowering obstacles relating to language. Furthermore, the cross-cultural communication simulations demonstrated a strong correlation between the ability to understand and react correctly to cultural cues and fluency in English. Higher English proficiency helped participants navigate relationships more effectively and sensitively because they demonstrated a stronger awareness of tone, cultural context, and nonverbal communication. This result is consistent with study by Wierzbicka (2019), who maintained that linguistic competency includes knowledge of the social and cultural norms ingrained in the language in addition to grammar and vocabulary. According to the study, learning English improves one's capacity to decipher cultural cues and communicate verbally, which facilitates more fruitful interactions in global settings.

Personal Perspective on the Findings

In my opinion the findings of this study, in my opinion, clearly support the notion that fluency in English is essential for cultural adaptability and global integration in addition to serving as a tool for language interaction. I am convinced that studying English is crucial for promoting international cooperation since I have been in situations when communication was impeded by language limitations. As someone who has studied English in a classroom, I can attest to the fact that being able to communicate well in the language enables people to access a greater variety of information, have deep discussions with persons from many backgrounds, and have a greater understanding of cultural diversity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study shows that fluency in English is essential for boosting cross-cultural communication since it fosters cultural awareness and flexibility in addition to linguistic confidence. The findings confirm earlier studies in the subject and strengthen the idea that learning a language is essential to communicating effectively across cultural boundaries. Notwithstanding certain drawbacks, the study offers insightful information to scholars, professionals, and educators who are interested in the relationship between language and culture. In my opinion, learning English should be seen as a means of fostering interpersonal relationships, cultural awareness, and personal development rather than only as a means of picking up a language**.** Future research should keep looking into the best ways to help people navigate a world that is becoming more interconnected by optimizing English learning.

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