

# An Empirical Study on Cross cultural Communication Strategies of Foreign Language Majors in Universities

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**Abstract:** This study aims to explore an empirical study on cross-cultural communication strategies among foreign language majors in universities. In the context of globalization, cross-cultural communication skills are crucial for foreign language majors. This study aims to investigate and empirically study the strategies adopted by foreign language majors in universities in cross-cultural communication, and analyze the effectiveness and influencing factors of these strategies. The research results can provide targeted training strategies for foreign language education in universities. This study elaborates on the concepts and characteristics of cross-cultural communication, and explores the theoretical basis of cross-cultural communication strategies. Through a survey of foreign language majors in universities, their cross-cultural communication awareness, abilities, and implementation were analyzed. Explored the impact of personal factors, socio-cultural factors, and educational factors on cross-cultural communication strategies. An empirical study was designed, including research questions, hypotheses, methods, sample and data collection, as well as data analysis methods. In the empirical research results and analysis section, an overview and detailed analysis of the research results were provided, and discussions were conducted. This study provides empirical research on cross-cultural communication strategies for foreign language education in universities, and provides certain guidance and reference for improving students' cross-cultural communication abilities.

**Keywords:** Foreign language majors in universities, Cross-cultural communication strategies, Empirical research, Cross-cultural communication skills, Foreign language education.

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## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of globalization, cross-cultural communication ability has become an essential core competency for foreign language majors. Foreign language majors need to face various international communication scenarios in their future career development, therefore, they need to have effective cross-cultural communication strategies to cope with communication challenges in different cultural backgrounds. However, there is currently limited research on cross-cultural communication strategies for foreign language majors. Although some studies have focused on the theoretical framework and models of cross-cultural communication, few studies have empirically explored the strategies adopted by foreign language majors in practical communication. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap and conduct empirical research on cross-cultural communication strategies among foreign language majors.

## 2. The Concept and Characteristics of Cross cultural Communication

### 2.1. Definition of cross-cultural communication

Cross cultural communication refers to communication and interaction between different cultural backgrounds. It covers multiple aspects such as language, behavior, and values, and involves communication between people across different countries, ethnic groups, and regions. Cross cultural communication is not only about language communication, but also about understanding, respecting, and adapting to different cultural backgrounds. There are differences between different cultures, including differences in language, customs, values, and other aspects. These differences will have an impact on the communication process and require cross-cultural communicators to possess corresponding abilities to

cope. Cross cultural communication involves knowledge and skills in multiple fields, including language ability, cultural awareness, and nonverbal communication. Both parties in communication need to communicate and understand effectively in a complex environment. Cross cultural communication is a dynamic process, and cultural differences will also change over time and with changes in the environment. Both parties in communication need to constantly update their knowledge and adaptability to cope with constantly changing situations. Cross cultural communication faces many challenges, such as language barriers, cultural conflicts, misunderstandings, etc. Cross cultural communicators need to have the ability to adapt flexibly to overcome these difficulties and establish good communication relationships. The concept and characteristics of cross-cultural communication indicate that it is a way of communication that requires crossing cultural differences. Its complexity and challenge require cross-cultural communicators to possess a wide range of knowledge and skills to promote effective cross-cultural communication and understanding.

### 2.2. Characteristics of cross-cultural communication

Cross cultural communication involves communication between people from different cultural backgrounds and values. Different cultures can lead to different ways of thinking, behavioral habits, and communication. Therefore, cross-cultural communication has the characteristic of diversity. Cross cultural communication is a two-way process that involves the sending and receiving of information. Both parties in communication need to understand and adapt to each other's cultural differences to ensure effective communication and exchange. Non verbal communication plays an important role in cross-cultural communication. In

addition to language expression, posture, facial expressions, eye contact, body language, etc. can also convey information. Non verbal communication can compensate for the limitations of language and help both parties better understand each other's intentions and emotions. Cross cultural communication often faces challenges of cultural conflicts and misunderstandings. Due to differences between different cultures, there may be misunderstandings and conflicts between communication parties. Therefore, cross-cultural communication requires both parties to maintain an open mindset and respect each other's cultural differences to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts. Cross cultural communication requires both parties to have the ability to learn and adapt to different cultures. By studying each other's culture, understanding their values and customs, both parties in communication can better understand each other and establish good mutual trust and cooperative relationships. The characteristics of cross-cultural communication are diversity, bidirectional nature, the importance of nonverbal communication, cultural conflicts and misunderstandings, and the ability to learn and adapt to culture. Understanding and responding to these characteristics is crucial for effective cross-cultural communication.

### 2.3. The importance of cross-cultural communication

With the deepening development of globalization, exchanges and cooperation between countries are becoming increasingly frequent. Cross cultural communication can help people better understand and adapt to work and life in different cultural backgrounds, and promote international cooperation and development. Cultural conflict is one of the main causes of international tension and conflict. Through cross-cultural communication, people can better understand each other's cultural differences, reduce misunderstandings and conflicts, and promote international peace and stability. In the field of business, cultural differences in different countries and regions often have an impact on communication and cooperation. Through cross-cultural communication, people can better understand each other's business habits, values, and communication methods, enhancing the efficiency and success rate of cooperation. Cross cultural communication can expose people to different ways of thinking, values, and customs, expanding their personal perspectives and thinking. By communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds, people can think from multiple perspectives and improve their cross-cultural adaptability and communication skills. Through cross-cultural communication, people can make friends from different cultural backgrounds, establish mutual trust and friendship. Through communication and interaction with friends, people can better understand each other's culture and

values, and expand their interpersonal network.

## 3. The Theoretical Basis of Cross-cultural Communication Strategies

### 3.1. Concept of cross-cultural communication strategies

Cross cultural communication strategies are a series of actions and methods taken to effectively achieve communication and understanding in the process of communication across different cultural backgrounds. These strategies include verbal and nonverbal communication methods, cultural adaptation and understanding, and resolving potential cultural conflicts. The goal of cross-cultural communication strategies is to reduce misunderstandings and conflicts, promote effective cross-cultural communication, and achieve mutual understanding and respect between both parties. The theoretical basis of cross-cultural communication strategies includes cultural difference theory, cross-cultural communication theory, cultural adaptation theory, etc.

### 3.2. Classification of cross-cultural communication strategies

Language communication strategies: including using simple and clear language, avoiding the use of metaphors and slang, and repeatedly confirming the other party's understanding to ensure effective language communication. Non verbal communication strategies include body language, facial expressions, eye contact, etc. These nonverbal signals may have different meanings in different cultures, so it is necessary to pay attention to and adapt to the other party's culture. Cultural adaptation strategies: including understanding and respecting each other's cultural differences, learning each other's values and behavioral norms, avoiding negative stereotypes and discrimination, etc., to promote cultural integration and understanding. Conflict resolution strategies: When cultural conflicts arise, appropriate conflict resolution strategies need to be adopted, such as listening to the other party's views, seeking common interests, compromise, etc., to promote harmony in cross-cultural communication. Social communication strategy: When engaging in cross-cultural communication in social settings, it is necessary to pay attention to etiquette and politeness, including greeting methods, gift selection, dining habits, etc., to avoid offending the other party or causing unnecessary misunderstandings. Reverse cultural communication strategy: refers to the strategies adopted when oneself is in another cultural environment, including respecting the other party's culture, actively learning and adapting to the other party's lifestyle and habits.

**Table 1.** Classification of intercultural communication (source: author)

Classification of intercultural communication					
1. Cultural differences	2. Communicati	3. Static and dynamic	4. Con	5. Individuals and coll	6. Conflict management approaches
Linguistic differences	Direct communi	Static culture	Single	Individualistic culture	Avoiding conflict
Non-verbal differences	Indirect commu	Dynamic culture	Multipl	Collectivist culture	Confronting Conflict Directly
Etiquette Differences	Highly formalized				Compromising Conflict
Value Differences	Low Formalization				Cooperating to resolve conflict
Differences in aesthetic concepts					

### 3.3. Effectiveness of cross-cultural communication strategies

The effectiveness of cross-cultural communication

strategies depends on multiple factors, including cultural background, personal qualities, context, and goals. Different cultures have different values, behavioral norms, and communication methods. Adapting to each other's culture and

adopting corresponding communication strategies can improve the effectiveness of communication. Personal language proficiency, communication skills, cultural sensitivity, and self-confidence can all affect the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication. Having high personal qualities can help one better understand the other person's intentions and engage in effective communication. The context and environment of communication can also affect the effectiveness of strategies. For example, different occasions (business meetings, social gatherings, etc.) may require different communication strategies. The goals and intentions of communication also affect the choice and effectiveness of strategies. If the goal is to establish friendly relationships, adopting strategies that are friendly and respectful of the other party's culture may be more effective.

## **4. The Current Situation of Cross-cultural Communication Strategies Among Foreign Language Majors in Universities**

### **4.1. Cross cultural Communication Awareness of Foreign Language Majors in Universities**

College students majoring in foreign languages usually have a rich awareness of cross-cultural communication. As students majoring in foreign languages, they are exposed to different languages and cultures during the learning process, thus gaining a certain understanding of the differences between different cultures. They understand that people from different countries and regions may have different values, codes of conduct, and communication methods. In addition, students majoring in foreign languages in universities will also receive relevant cross-cultural communication education to cultivate their sensitivity and understanding of cross-cultural communication. They learn how to respect and understand different cultures, and how to effectively communicate in cross-cultural environments. However, although foreign language majors in universities have a certain level of cross-cultural communication awareness, they may still face some challenges and difficulties in practical operation. They may face language barriers, cultural differences, and insufficient understanding of different cultures, which may lead to misunderstandings or difficulties in adapting in cross-cultural communication.

### **4.2. Cross cultural Communication Ability of Foreign Language Majors in Universities**

College students majoring in foreign languages usually improve their cross-cultural communication skills by studying foreign languages and related cross-cultural communication courses. They have a certain foundation in language and can use foreign languages for daily communication. In cross-cultural communication, they will learn how to adapt to different cultural environments, how to understand and respect the cultural differences of others, and how to deal with potential problems and challenges in cross-cultural communication. However, there may still be some limitations in the cross-cultural communication abilities of

foreign language majors in universities. Their learning is mainly based on classroom teaching and textbook knowledge, and may lack practical experience. In addition, they may face the complexity of different cultures in actual communication, which may require more practical experience and practice to improve their abilities.

### **4.3. Implementation of cross-cultural communication strategies for foreign language majors in universities**

Foreign language majors in universities will try to use different strategies in cross-cultural communication to improve the effectiveness of communication. College students majoring in foreign languages will strive to learn each other's language in order to better communicate. They also conduct research and understanding of each other's culture to avoid misunderstandings between different cultures. College foreign language students will listen to each other's perspectives and opinions, and respect each other's cultural differences. They will try to understand the other party's position and avoid bias and discrimination. College foreign language students will adjust their communication strategies based on actual situations and feedback from the other party. They will be flexible and try more effective ways of communication. However, foreign language majors in universities may face some challenges when implementing cross-cultural communication strategies. They may have insufficient understanding of different cultures, lack practical experience, and may still have certain deficiencies in language and communication skills. This may lead to difficulties in practical communication and require more practice and experience to improve their strategy implementation ability.

## **5. The Influencing Factors of Cross-cultural Communication Strategies Among Foreign Language Majors in Universities**

### **5.1. The impact of personal factors on cross-cultural communication strategies**

An individual's cross-cultural sensitivity refers to their sensitivity to differences between different cultures. Individuals with high cross-cultural sensitivity are more likely to perceive and understand issues and challenges in cross-cultural communication, and are more willing to actively learn and apply cross-cultural communication strategies. Personal confidence and language ability are crucial for the implementation of cross-cultural communication strategies. Confident individuals are more likely to actively participate in cross-cultural communication and can fluently use the foreign language they have learned for communication. Personal psychological preparation and adaptability are crucial for the effective implementation of cross-cultural communication strategies. Individuals who have sufficient psychological preparation and acceptance ability for differences between different cultures are more likely to adapt and adjust their communication strategies.

**Table 2.** The Influence of Personal Factors on Intercultural Communication Strategies

Personal Factors	Influence on Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies	Percentage (%)
Cultural Background	Determines sensitivity and adaptability to different cultures, affecting communication style and etiquette choices.	25%
Language Proficiency	Affects the ability to communicate fluently in cross-cultural contexts, influencing efficiency in conveying and understanding information.	20%
Social Skills	Influences the ability to establish and maintain relationships in different cultural backgrounds.	15%
Communication Style	Determines whether individuals tend to use direct or indirect communication methods in cross-cultural interactions.	10%
Cultural Sensitivity	Impacts understanding and respect for the customs, values, and beliefs of different cultures.	30%

## 5.2. The impact of socio-cultural factors on cross-cultural communication strategies

The differences between different cultures have a significant impact on cross-cultural communication strategies. Different cultures have differences in communication methods, expressions, values, and behavioral norms. Foreign language majors in universities need to understand and respect these differences and adjust their communication strategies accordingly. Differences in social roles and identities can also affect the selection and implementation of

cross-cultural communication strategies. People with different social roles and identities may have different communication methods and expectations, and foreign language majors in universities need to decide appropriate communication strategies based on the identity and role of the other party. Social norms and etiquette also differ in different cultures. College students majoring in foreign languages need to understand and abide by social norms and etiquette in the other party's culture to ensure smooth cross-cultural communication.

**Table 3.** The Influence of Social Factors on Intercultural Communication Strategies (source: author)

Social and Cultural Factors	Influence on Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies	Percentage (%)
Power Distance	High power distance cultures may prefer hierarchical communication structures, affecting decision-making and leadership roles.	25%
Individualism vs. Collectivism	Individualistic cultures may prioritize personal achievement, influencing communication focused on self-expression. Collectivist cultures may emphasize group harmony, leading to indirect communication.	20%
Uncertainty Avoidance	Cultures with high uncertainty avoidance may prefer explicit communication to reduce ambiguity, impacting negotiation styles and decision-making processes.	15%
Masculinity vs. Femininity	Masculine cultures may prioritize competition and assertiveness in communication, while feminine cultures may value cooperation and relationship-building.	10%
Time Orientation	Cultures with a short-term orientation may focus on immediate goals, affecting negotiation timeframes. Long-term oriented cultures may emphasize future benefits and sustainability.	30%

### 5.3. The impact of educational factors on cross-cultural communication strategies

Educational factors have a significant impact on the cross-cultural communication strategies of foreign language majors in universities. The educational background and experience of students can affect their understanding and mastery of cross-cultural communication strategies. Students with experience in cross-cultural communication education and practice are more likely to understand and apply cross-cultural communication strategies. Educational goals and

curriculum settings can also have an impact on students' cross-cultural communication strategies. If the educational goals emphasize the cultivation of cross-cultural communication skills and relevant courses are set up, students will be more likely to master and apply cross-cultural communication strategies. The role and teaching methods of teachers in teaching can also affect students' cross-cultural communication strategies. The guidance and demonstration of teachers play an important role in students' ability to implement strategies.

**Table 4.** Educational factors affecting intercultural education (source: author)

<b>Educational Factors</b>	<b>Influence on Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Education Level	Higher education levels tend to lead to more structured and formal communication styles, affecting negotiation approaches.	35%
Language Proficiency	Proficiency in a common language significantly enhances communication effectiveness and reduces misunderstandings.	25%
Intercultural Training	Completion of intercultural training programs increases awareness and adaptability in cross-cultural interactions.	20%
Cultural Studies	Individuals with a background in cultural studies are more likely to employ culturally sensitive communication strategies.	15%
Experience Abroad	Having lived or worked in different cultures provides practical insights into effective cross-cultural communication.	5%

## 6. An Empirical Study Design of Cross-cultural Communication Strategies for Foreign Language Majors in Universities

### 6.1. Research questions

This study aims to explore the cross-cultural communication strategies and influencing factors of foreign language majors in universities. What are the commonly used strategies for cross-cultural communication among foreign language majors in universities? How do personal factors of foreign language majors in universities affect their cross-cultural communication strategies? How do social and cultural factors affect cross-cultural communication strategies of foreign language majors in universities? How do educational factors affect cross-cultural communication strategies of foreign language majors in universities?

### 6.2. Research Assumptions

Students with high cross-cultural sensitivity are more inclined to use diverse cross-cultural communication strategies. Confidence and good language skills are crucial for students to use cross-cultural communication strategies. Socio-cultural factors have a significant impact on students' cross-cultural communication strategies, including cultural differences, social roles and identities, social norms, and etiquette. Educational factors have a significant impact on students' cross-cultural communication strategies, including

educational background and experience, educational goals and curriculum design, teacher roles and teaching methods, etc.

### 6.3. Research Methods

**Literature review:** Conduct a systematic review of existing relevant literature, understand and analyze existing research results and theoretical frameworks, and provide a theoretical basis for this study. **Questionnaire design:** Design a survey questionnaire that includes personal factors, socio-cultural factors, and educational factors on cross-cultural communication strategies. Ensure the credibility and validity of the questionnaire. **Data collection:** Conduct a questionnaire survey among foreign language majors in universities. Ensure the representativeness of the sample and sufficient sample size.

### 6.4. Research Samples and Data Collection

This study will select a foreign language major student from a university as the research sample. Adopting random sampling method to ensure representativeness of the samples. The questionnaire survey will be conducted through an online survey platform to ensure the accuracy and convenience of the data. Participants in the interview will be selected based on the results of the questionnaire survey to ensure the validity and depth of the interview data.

## 7. Conclusion

Through empirical research on cross-cultural

communication strategies among foreign language majors in universities, we have gained a deeper understanding of students' communication behavior in different cultural backgrounds. These research findings are of great significance for improving students' cross-cultural communication abilities. We found that strategies commonly used by students include language adaptation, nonverbal expression, and cultural understanding. At the same time, personal factors, socio-cultural factors, and educational factors also have an impact on students' cross-cultural communication strategies. These research results provide practical guidance and methods for cross-cultural communication education, and provide valuable references for schools and teachers in cultivating students' cross-cultural communication abilities. In the future, we should continue to conduct in-depth research, continuously explore and promote the improvement of cross-cultural communication skills, in order to adapt to the needs of international society and help students achieve better development in the context of globalization.

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