
Original Research Article

The impact of English cultural terminology adoption on the authenticity of cross-cultural communication

Yurui Zhong

Xi'an Fanyi University, Xi'an, Shaanxi, 710105, China

Abstract: This article focuses on the field of cross-cultural communication, delving into the impact of adopting English cultural terms on the authenticity of cross-cultural communication. Through theoretical analysis and practical case studies, it reveals how the use of English cultural terms in cross-cultural exchanges affects the accuracy and authenticity of information transmission. Additionally, it proposes strategies for the rational use of English cultural terms in cross-cultural communication to enhance communication effectiveness. The aim is to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for cross-cultural communication practices, fostering more authentic and effective communication among people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Keywords: English cultural terms; cross-cultural communication; authenticity

1. Introduction

In today's rapidly advancing globalization, cross-cultural communication has become an indispensable part of daily life, work, and study. People from different cultural backgrounds share information, express emotions, and build relationships through language exchanges. English, as a global lingua franca, plays a pivotal role in cross-cultural communication. English cultural terms, as vocabulary carrying specific cultural connotations within the English language, have a profound impact on the authenticity of cross-cultural communication. Studying this impact not only aids in a deeper understanding of the complexity of cross-cultural communication but also provides valuable references for improving the quality of cross-cultural exchanges.

2. Characteristics of English cultural terms and their importance in cross-cultural communication

2.1. Characteristics of English cultural terms

English cultural terms are rich in cultural connotations and possess unique semantic features. They are often closely linked to the history, religion, social customs, and values of English-speaking countries. For example, "black Friday" does not simply refer to the date Friday but originates from the shopping frenzy after Thanksgiving in the United States, where merchants typically offer substantial discounts, symbolizing commercial prosperity and profitability (black often represents profitability in accounting). Another example is "gentleman," which not only denotes male identity but also embodies a series of behavioral norms and moral concepts in British culture regarding politeness, grace, and respect for others. The semantic meanings of these cultural terms often cannot be directly understood from their literal meanings and require a deep understanding of their cultural backgrounds to grasp accurately.

2.2. Importance of English cultural terms in cross-cultural communication

In cross-cultural communication, English cultural terms serve as crucial carriers for transmitting cultural information. They enable communication partners to express and comprehend specific cultural concepts more precisely, facilitating cultural exchange and sharing. When individuals from different cultural backgrounds communicate in English, the appropriate use of English cultural terms can prevent misunderstandings arising from cultural differences and enhance the accuracy and effectiveness of communication. For instance, in

international business negotiations, understanding and correctly using the term "due diligence" enables both parties to clarify their respective investigation responsibilities and obligations before cooperation, ensuring the smooth progression of negotiations.

3. Positive impacts of adopting English cultural terms on the authenticity of cross-cultural communication

3.1. Enriching communication content and enhancing cultural expression authenticity

The adoption of English cultural terms can enrich the content of cross-cultural communication, making it more vivid and specific. By using terms with specific cultural connotations, communicators can more accurately convey the cultural information they intend to express, allowing the other party to gain a deeper understanding of English culture. For example, when introducing British afternoon tea culture, using terms like "afternoon tea," "scones," and "clotted cream" can provide a detailed description of the components and characteristics of afternoon tea, making the listener feel as if they are experiencing the unique charm of British afternoon tea culture firsthand. Such rich cultural expression enhances the authenticity of communication, enabling the other party to comprehend and appreciate English culture more comprehensively.

3.2. Promoting cultural understanding and reducing communication barriers

Correctly adopting English cultural terms promotes understanding between different cultures and reduces communication barriers arising from cultural differences. When communication partners share a common understanding of English cultural terms, they can more rapidly comprehend each other's meanings, preventing conflicts and misunderstandings caused by cultural misinterpretations. For instance, in cross-cultural team projects with members from various countries, using the term "brainstorming" to organize discussions ensures that everyone understands the need for free-flowing ideas and collective brainstorming to generate new solutions. Such shared cultural term recognition facilitates effective communication and collaboration among team members, increasing the project's success rate.

3.3. Enhancing the cultural depth and level of communication

The adoption of English cultural terms can elevate the cultural depth and level of cross-cultural communication. Introducing terms with profound cultural significance during exchanges can guide the other party to delve deeper into the underlying values and thinking patterns of the culture. For example, when discussing American individualistic culture, mentioning the term "self-reliance" and further exploring its manifestations and impacts in American society, such as individual striving and the pursuit of freedom and independence, allows the other party to understand not only the surface phenomena of American culture but also its core essence, taking cross-cultural communication to a higher level.

4. Negative impacts of adopting English cultural terms on the authenticity of cross-cultural communication

4.1. Cultural misunderstandings and ambiguities

Due to the specific cultural backgrounds and semantic connotations of English cultural terms, individuals from different cultural backgrounds may interpret them differently, leading to cultural misunderstandings and ambiguities. For example, the term "dragon" typically symbolizes evil and ferocity in English culture, whereas in Chinese culture, it represents auspiciousness, authority, and nobility. If cultural differences are not fully considered during cross-cultural communication and "dragon" is directly used to describe the Chinese dragon, it may cause misunderstandings and affect the authenticity of communication.

4.2. Risks of cultural hegemony and assimilation

The excessive use of English cultural terms in cross-cultural communication may lead to cultural hegemony and assimilation risks. As the global lingua franca, English cultural terms dominate intercultural exchanges. When one party frequently employs these terms while neglecting the other's cultural expressions, it risks marginalizing other cultures and eroding their uniqueness and diversity. For instance, at certain international conferences,

participants' over-reliance on English cultural terms hinders non-English speakers from fully articulating their perspectives, thereby undermining the equality and authenticity of cross-cultural communication.

4.3. Superficiality and formalism in communication

Over-pursuing the use of English cultural terms may render cross-cultural communication superficial and formalistic. Some communicators, to display their cultural literacy or cater to the other party, blindly use obscure English cultural terms without considering their necessity and appropriateness in actual communication. Such practices not only fail to enhance the authenticity of communication but also make it obscure and difficult to understand, hindering effective information transmission. For example, using overly professional English cultural terms like "epistemology" in general daily conversations may confuse the other party and prevent them from understanding the communicator's true intentions.

5. Strategies for enhancing the authenticity of adopting English cultural terms in cross-cultural communication

5.1. Strengthening the learning of cultural background knowledge

To accurately adopt and use English cultural terms, communicators need to strengthen their learning of English cultural background knowledge. By reading English literary works, watching English films, and participating in cultural exchange activities, they can gain a deeper understanding of the history, religion, social customs, and other aspects of English-speaking countries, thereby better comprehending the connotations and usages of English cultural terms. For example, studying classic works of English literature, such as Shakespeare's plays, can help understand the origins and cultural significance of terms like the "romeo and juliet effect" (referring to the phenomenon where love becomes stronger due to external resistance).

5.2. Emphasizing contextual adaptability

In cross-cultural communication, appropriate English cultural terms should be selected based on the specific context. Different contexts have varying requirements for cultural terms, and communicators need to consider factors such as the other party's cultural background, knowledge level, and communication purpose to choose terms that most accurately express their meaning and are easily understandable by the other party. For instance, when engaging in academic exchanges with professionals, some professional English cultural terms can be used, whereas in daily conversations with the general public, simple, easy-to-understand, and commonly used terms should be employed.

5.3. Promoting two-way cultural exchange and understanding

Cross-cultural communication should be bidirectional, emphasizing not only the output of English cultural terms but also actively listening to and understanding the expressions of the other party's culture. Through two-way cultural exchanges, communication partners can learn from and understand each other, reducing cultural misunderstandings and ambiguities. For example, in international cultural exchange activities, interactive sessions can be set up to allow individuals from different cultural backgrounds to share unique terms and concepts from their cultures and jointly explore their meanings and usages, thereby promoting cultural integration and enhancing communication authenticity.

5.4. Cultivating cross-cultural communication competence

Improving cross-cultural communication competence is key to ensuring the effective adoption of English cultural terms in cross-cultural communication. Communicators need to possess strong language skills, cultural sensitivity, and communication techniques. By participating in cross-cultural communication training courses and simulating cross-cultural exchange scenarios, they can cultivate their ability to communicate effectively in different cultural contexts, thereby more accurately adopting and using English cultural terms to enhance the authenticity of cross-cultural communication.

6. Conclusion

The adoption of English cultural terms has multifaceted impacts on the authenticity of cross-cultural

communication. On one hand, it enriches communication content, promotes cultural understanding, and enhances the cultural depth and level of communication; on the other hand, it may lead to cultural misunderstandings, cultural hegemony, and superficial and formalistic communication. To effectively adopt English cultural terms in cross-cultural communication and enhance communication authenticity, we need to strengthen our learning of English cultural background knowledge, emphasize contextual adaptability, promote two-way cultural exchange and understanding, and cultivate cross-cultural communication competence. In the context of globalization, in-depth research and practical application of the rational use of English cultural terms in cross-cultural communication are of great significance for promoting exchanges and integration among different cultures and building a harmonious global cultural landscape.

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