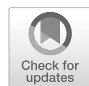

Promoting Intercultural Competence in English Language Teaching: A Productive Bilingualism Perspective

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Xuan Zheng and Yihong Gao

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Abstract
Over the past 50 years, scholars studying intercultural competence generally agree on the complexity and fluidity of this construct, but tensions still remain regarding what it is, how to develop it, and especially the role English language teaching plays in its development. While the goal of English language teaching has undergone changes from imitating "native speakers" to becoming an intercultural communicator, pedagogical implementations have not been fully realized in classrooms, especially the ones that enable students to communicate globally while at the same time help them maintaining their native/traditional languages and cultures. This chapter first reviews some major approaches to promoting intercultural competence in English language teaching. These

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X. Gao (ed.), *Second Handbook of English Language Teaching*, Springer International Handbooks of Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02899-2_11

approaches have been proposed from different theoretical perspectives, situated in different contexts, and thus have different emphases in promoting "intercultural competence." However, we feel that the dominant models of intercultural competence from Western contexts are inadequate to guide students in contexts such as China, where a firm identification with one's "home cultures" is particularly important while becoming global. Therefore, we advocate for an updated model of "productive bilingualism," which is particularly concerned with simultaneous and mutual enrichment of "native" and "additional" linguistic and cultural identities. Then, we describe a four-step pedagogy that cultivates the "productiveness" of intercultural competence and their effects. The four steps are (1) learning about cultural differences, (2) deconstructing cultural differences, (3) reconstructing knowledge and attitudes, and (4) seeking creative solutions to communication problems. In the end, we provide suggestions for English language teachers to utilize their own expertise and interests to develop courses that promote intercultural competence.

Keywords
Intercultural competence · English language teaching · Productive bilingualism · Four-step pedagogy

Introduction

For half a century, the concept of intercultural (communicative) competence has been studied widely in different fields where interacting with other cultures is a central concern. Although more than 20 definitions and models of intercultural competence have been developed, these models generally agree that intercultural competence refers to "the appropriate and effective management of interaction between people who, to some degree or another, represent different or divergent affective, cognitive, and behavioral orientations to the world" (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009: 7). Although some scholars differentiate "intercultural communicative competence" and "intercultural competence," this distinction is not relevant to this chapter. Thus we used the terms interchangeably.

To construct the earlier models, scholars drew on research in anthropology, sociology, and cultural and political studies to propose a long list of concepts, such as cognitive complexity, openness, awareness, creativity, and communication effectiveness (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009: 36–43). However, in these models language proficiency or linguistic competence was not always emphasized or even included (Byram 2012: 89). Only in recent empirical studies were the relationship between intercultural competence and linguistic competence investigated. The findings suggested a reciprocal relationship between the two (e.g., Jackson 2014; Taguchi et al. 2016).

Meanwhile, in the field of English language teaching, the cultural dimension of language teaching has always been a concern for teachers and scholars. However, for several decades "culture" in the English language classroom remained the cultural

facts of "native English speakers." With joint efforts from scholars in TESOL, applied linguistics and intercultural communication research, the myth of "native speaker" was deconstructed. The proposal of "intercultural competence" has shifted the goal of English language teaching from imitating the communicative competence of a native speaker to negotiating the differences between different linguistic and cultural communities. Various models of intercultural competence have been proposed for language teaching, especially in Western contexts, and are then spread and adopted in other parts of the world such as China. Some of the models, however, may not be adequate to address the most urgent needs of non-Western contexts.

In this chapter, we first review several well-known approaches to promoting intercultural competence in English language teaching developed in North America and the Europe. In light of the changes in promoting intercultural competence in English language teaching in mainland China for the past 40 years, we propose an updated model of "productive bilingualism" and discuss its particular contextual pertinence. We then describe a four-step pedagogy that cultivates the "productiveness" of intercultural competence. Based on empirical data, we finally examine the effects of the pedagogy and provide suggestions for English language teachers.

Intercultural Competence in English Language Teaching

Since the 1980s, in the field of English language teaching, researchers and practitioners have been engaged with discussions on the cultural dimension of language teaching, drawing on language and language learning theories from Hymes, Gumperz, Fairclough, Scollon and Scollon, Kasper, Lakoff, Vygotsky, Wertsch, and Lier (for a comprehensive review, see Risager 2011).

The explicit theorization of intercultural communicative competence can be traced to Michael Byram's publication of his monograph *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence* in 1997. Building on an earlier proposal related to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* of the Council of Europe (Byram and Zarate 1996), Byram (1997) developed an intercultural communicative competence model that consists of five *savoirs* for language teaching and assessment. The five *savoirs* are knowledge of self and other (*savoirs*), skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*), attitudes (*savoir etre*) of curiosity and openness, skills of discovery and interaction (*savoir apprendre/faire*), and critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*) (Byram 1997: 48). Byram's model was also built on the "communicative approach" that had been accepted in theory but not necessarily applied in classroom practice in the mid-1990s (Byram 2009: 322). He coined the phrase *intercultural speaker*, in a deliberate attempt to distance intercultural competence away from the cultural competence of a native speaker that had often dominated the field of language teaching. An "intercultural speaker" is a foreign language speaker who possesses "some or all of the five savoirs of intercultural competence to some degree" (Byram 2009: 327). He or she is neither an imitation of a native speaker who only identifies with one language/group nor simply a bilingual/multilingual speaker who often keep their

languages and identification with two groups separate. He/she is someone who is able to "see the relationships between the learner's and the native-speaker's languages and cultures, to perceive and cope with difference" (Byram and Risager 1999: 2), and to mediate between languages and cultures (Byram 2012: 86).

In his model, Byram (2009: 323) emphasized the central role critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*) played, that is, "an ability to evaluate critically and, on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries." The recent developments of this critical cultural awareness are linked to the concept of intercultural citizenship (Byram 2012: 92), which includes both the competences of citizenship and competences of intercultural communication. That is to say, intercultural citizenship is not confined to dialogue and action with other groups within a state, but also includes "competences which would enable an individual to engage in political activity – 'community involvement and service'...with people of another state and a different language from their own" (Byram 2011). The political dimension of his model with promotion of an active citizenship is situated in the European context, and is important to bring changes to Western democratic societies, but may have contextual constraints in other parts of the world.

In North America, culture has always been an issue of concern in English language teaching. The interest in culture had inspired research areas such as Contrastive Rhetoric in Second Language Writing studies (Kaplan 1966; Connor 2002). However, many studies addressing the cultural dimension of language teaching have been criticized for essentializing national cultures and reinforcing stereotypes since 2000 (e.g., Kubota and Lehner 2004). In response to the criticism, culture has almost been replaced by other concepts such as identity and power in the mainstream TESOL literature (e.g., Norton 2000, 2013). Because of globalization and intercultural flows, linguistic and cultural diversity has created more challenges than ever before for language educators to respond to. Standards of communicative competence in English were questioned, as in the movement of English as an international language (Smith 1976), World Englishes (Kachru 1982), and English as a Lingua Franca (Jenkins 2006, 2015). In these discussions, cultural and linguistic boundaries become blurred. In the last 5 years, in theorizing a post-modern "translingual" competence (Canagarajah 2013) or "translanguaging" competence (Li 2017), language learners are encouraged to use all of their multimodal semiotic resources such as different languages, styles, pictures, emojis, and colors strategically to meet the needs of diverse contexts. Such efforts in re-theorizing the linguistic competence of minority speakers in English-dominant societies help challenge linguistic, ethnic, and racial stereotypes. However, whether and how such competence manifests itself outside of Europe and North America is not yet clear. Moreover, the theoretical discussions remain largely ideological, whereas classroom teachers are still confused about what to teach in language classes (Kramsch 2015).

Perhaps partly due to its grounding in the European context, Byram's concept of intercultural competence has not been incorporated in the central concern for applied linguistics and TESOL in North America until fairly recently. It was during the international convention of TESOL in 2015 that Michael Byram was invited on a

keynote panel to discuss under the topic of "Redefining Communicative Competence and Redesigning English Language Teaching in the 21st Century" that intercultural competence had come to the spotlight. In the teaching of foreign languages and the larger field of applied linguistics, however, the cultural dimension had been addressed long before and discussed more fully. For instance, Kramsch (1993, 1998), drawing on her experience working in language classrooms in the USA where students came from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, took a non-essentialist approach to culture. Addressing the experiences and needs of her students who may not share the same "mother tongue," she described a "broker between cultures" (1998) who resided in a "third place" or "third culture, made of a common memory beyond time and place among people with similar experiences" (Kramsch 1993: 34). The third place is not confined within clear boundaries; it is a new and dynamic space created through intercultural interactions. More recently, based on ecological analyses of multilingual interactions in the USA, Kramsch and Whiteside (2008: 664) described a "symbolic competence" of multilingual immigrants. The symbolic competence is a competence that enables speakers to choose the language or language varieties that give them power or advantages in intercultural transactions. The fluid, dynamic view of culture and the emphasis on power inequalities implied in intercultural communication is particularly empowering to minority speakers who move constantly between multiple boundaries. However, ignoring boundaries also runs the risk of dissolving the shared values, beliefs, and behaviors of groups that are still prevalent in less heterogeneous, more traditional societies.

To sum up, the models of intercultural competence developed in the contexts of Europe and North America serve the needs of their acknowledgedly democratic, heterogeneous, and developed societies. Nevertheless, the political, ethical dimension of an intercultural speaker which sees beyond national boundaries to emphasize the commonality of humankind may be problematic for less heterogeneous, less developed societies whose most urgent needs are different. A great portion of intercultural communication events not only happen between cultures or in "third places" but also in specific cultural contexts. Many people still spend most of their lives in societies where traditional values remain very powerful, including holding up to a unified national, regional, or ethnic identity, whether real or imagined. For people who live in these cultural contexts, it can be dangerous for them to directly transcend cultural boundaries when they have not yet developed a strong confidence in their "native culture" and local identities – national, ethnic, regional, religious, etc.

The danger lies in two aspects. First, overemphasis on deconstruction of cultural boundaries may lead to the opposite side of stereotyping where cultural sensitivity is erased altogether. Fear of making stereotypes may result in superficial openness where students resist recognizing the shared cultural features of a group, thus missing the chance of reaching a more complex understanding of a culture. Stereotyping to some extent is inevitable in the process of developing intercultural competence. For example, in China, many university students are still at the early stages of developing intercultural competence. In an action research on language attitudes we conducted in a content-based College English course, we found that some of the

students were not able to distinguish different English varieties and had not formed "stereotypes" of speakers of these varieties or "stereotypes" of themselves who speak "China English" (Zheng and Gao 2017). Although they easily supported the idea of respecting different Englishes, they may believe so because they were afraid of being politically incorrect. As a result, they may be well satisfied with their "openness" while still ignorant of what the different English varieties and the characteristic of the people who speak the language were actually like.

Second, members of a less dominant culture in the world such as "Chinese culture" often have a reversed form of ethnocentrism (Byram et al. 2009); that is, students judge their own culture from the standards of others and see themselves as inferior to the "English-speaking cultures." Weakening cultural boundaries seems to help members of minority cultures to identify with a global identity; however, paradoxically it also erases the identification with one's "home cultures," be it a national culture, a regional culture, a school culture, or a family culture. Maintenance of less powerful cultures is actually essential to keep the diversity of cultures in the world. To this end, describing and reviving the traditions of such cultures is actually necessary to help the cultural members to strengthen their local identities. For them, such local identities need to be affirmed before acquiring a global identity.

Lastly, other than Byram's model (1997), most of the discussions on intercultural competence and the cultural dimension of language teaching remain theoretical. Practical guidance on how classroom teachers should do in the classroom to cultivate students' intercultural competence through language teaching is urgently needed.

Intercultural Competence in English Language Teaching in China

In the field of English language teaching in China, the integration of English language teaching and intercultural competence (sometimes under different names, but with similar meaning) went through three stages in the last three decades. The first is the *beginning* stage. From the end of the 1980s to the 1990s, intercultural communication as a field of research and practice emerged, prominently among English language educators. Classical intercultural competence works were introduced to Chinese readers (Hu 1990), and monographs and articles regarding intercultural competence and English language teaching (e.g., Hu and Gao 1997; Hu 1999; Jia 1997; Lin 1996) appeared, proceeded by and together with works introducing English-speaking cultures and comparing them with Chinese culture (e.g., Deng and Liu 1989). In 1995, the establishment of the China Association for Intercultural Communication (CAFIC), an academic association comprised of mostly English language teachers around China, marked the official beginning of the field. Universities started to offer courses of intercultural communication, but rather sporadically.

This stage was characterized by the centrality and imitation of "native English speakers." Although English language teachers began to pay attention to "culture" in their teaching, "culture" meant primarily that of the UK or the USA where "native English speakers" are. The purpose of teaching and learning was to adopt linguistic

and extralinguistic behaviors that were appropriate in the given "target cultures" of native English speakers, i.e., "going across" (Gao 2002) cultural boundaries to meet the native English speaker communities.

The second is the *broadening* stage. Since the beginning of the new millennium, there was a gradual loosening of the bound between English language teaching and "native English speaker" cultures. The focus on using "native English speakers" as linguistic and cultural models of imitation has shifted to "going beyond" specific languages and cultures, aiming at general cultivation of humanistic qualities (Gao 2002). In the construction of intercultural English language teaching models, theoretical resources became varied and interdisciplinary. "Intercultural competence" or "intercultural communicative competence" was increasingly used as an explicit term of conceptualization (e.g., Zhang 2007). In practice, English language teaching was less tied with cultures of native English speakers and increasingly associated with a broader objective of intercultural awareness raising. Moreover, critical attention was paid to "Chinese cultural aphasia" (Xiao et al. 2010), and pedagogical attempts were made to integrate Chinese culture teaching into English language teaching.

The third is the *institutionalizing* stage. In the recent 5 years, there has been a further move toward conceptualizing intercultural competence and adding it to China's foreign language education curriculum. Scholars have discussed explicitly, at least in theory, to disassociate English language teaching with American and British cultures and associate it with globalization (Xu and Sun 2013) and English as a Lingua Franca (Wen 2016). Wen (2012, 2016) encouraged English language learners to become familiar with different cultures, including but not limited to the cultures of the English-speaking countries, and addressed the importance of learning how to introduce Chinese culture to people of other countries.

More recently, there was a call of shift at the national policy level from skill-oriented language teaching to "intercultural language teaching," that is, to cultivate intercultural communicative competence through language teaching (Sun 2016, 2017). In the new National Standards of Teaching Quality for Undergraduate English Majors (《英语类专业本科教学质量国家标准》, Ministry of Education 2018) and the new Guidelines for College English Teaching (《大学英语教学指南》, Ministry of Education 2017) promoted by the Ministry of Education of China, intercultural competence was included as one of the core competencies, thus a clear pedagogical objective. This move highlighted the intercultural dimension of language teaching and the nature of "liberal English education" (Sun 2017) that tended to be neglected in previous skill-oriented teaching approach.

The new national policy of language teaching stated clearly a shift from the assimilation model, that is, simply imitating the communicative competence of "native speakers" as the learning target, to becoming an intercultural communicator. Citing Byram (2014) and Liddicoat et al. (1999), Sun defined an intercultural communicator in China as someone who has a global vision and a confidence in the Chinese culture, a "bridge between English (including English as a Lingua Franca) language-and-culture and Chinese language-and-culture" (2017: 860) (for a more theory-focused literature review on the development of intercultural competence in China, see Fu and Kulich 2015). The advocation on intercultural language

teaching has also led to an emerging interest in developing new assessment tools. A nationwide English test for assessing international communication competence "English Test for International Communication (ETIC)" was developed by China Language Assessment. Since its first launch in 2016, the test results have already been used by almost a hundred companies and organizations in China for hiring purposes (Luo and Han 2018), and the numbers of the test-takers are growing fast. The washback effects of such large-scale tests on language teaching in China in the future cannot be underestimated.

While cultivating intercultural competence in English language teaching is already formally included in the national curriculum, language teachers interpret and practice the policy in different ways. A review of studies on intercultural competence in foreign language classrooms in China revealed that most pedagogical practices still focused on knowledge and skill-oriented training (Wang and Kulich 2015: 41). Furthermore, the "knowledge and skills" were still centered on English "native speakers." Surveying 1000 English teachers from 39 universities in China on their intercultural competence perceptions and practices, Gu (2016: 264) found that although most teachers were willing to assess intercultural competence in their English classes, they still perceived it as "merely specific knowledge and socio-pragmatic norms of mainstream English-speaking countries, which are seen as the standard to conform to and the means to facilitate the development of language skills and interactive abilities."

Practices that assumed the link between English and cultures of "English-speaking" countries, without problematizing the values and worldviews transmitted through, may lead to the reversed form of ethnocentrism (Byram et al. 2009); that is, members of a group of lower social status often hold positive attitudes toward members of a group of higher social status than toward their own. This highlights again the need of maintenance and strengthening of one's own "frame of references" or native language/culture for cultural contexts that enjoy less power. On the other hand, classes with the aim of exporting supposedly superior, but simplified and stereotypical, "cultural" practices, products, and values run the risk of a narrow-minded nationalism. On the whole, classroom innovations that go beyond either imitating cultures of the target language or exporting one's home cultural values still need to be fully realized in English language teaching.

Productive Bilingualism

Among the new language learning and education models that promote the development of intercultural competence, the proposed "productive bilingualism" is grounded in the Chinese context, highlighting the mutual enhancement between one's native language/culture and the ones acquired later. It is distinct from earlier models of "subtractive bilingualism" and "addictive bilingualism" (e.g., Lambert 1974). Gao (2001, 2002) illustrated this concept by discussing the pattern of interaction between one's native language (L1) and native culture (C1) and one's target language (L2) and target culture (C2), by drawing on Fromm's (1948) theory

of "productive orientation" and interview data from 52 recognized "best foreign language learners" in the mainland Chinese foreign language teaching circle. Different from "subtractive bilingualism" in which one's L1/C1 is replaced by L2/C2 (symbolized as $1-1 = 1$) or "additive bilingualism" where one's L2/C2 is simply added to one's L1/C1 which share separate communicative functions ($1 + 1 = ½ + ½$), in "productive bilingualism," L1/C1 and L2/C2 benefit and enhance each other ($1 + 1 > 2$). For a productive bilingual (Gao 2002: 159), "the command of the target language and that of the native language positively reinforce each other; deeper understanding and appreciation of the target culture goes hand in hand with deeper understanding and appreciation of the native culture. In the process of learning another language and related culture, the learner's personality becomes more open and integrated at the same time."

On the basis of acknowledging the existence of "C1" and "C2" cultures, productive bilingualism is characterized by the following characteristics: (1) openness, an increased open attitude toward both L2/C2 and L1/C1; (2) criticalness, being able to critically appreciate and reflect on aspects of both C1 and C2; and (3) incorporation, integrating or relating L1/C1 and L2/C2 in meaningful ways, often with creative outcome (e.g., translation of ancient Chinese poems into foreign languages, with a distinct style). Moreover, productive bilingualism is a concept capturing that may refer to a stable orientation, a state, a moment, or an experience (Gao 2002). In Gao's original empirical data for the model, the "best foreign language learners" in China were mostly born during the period of the 1930s–1950s, their "C1" primarily "Chinese culture" and "C2" in most cases cultures of "native English speakers."

Taking into consideration of accelerated globalization, increased transcultural flow (Pennycook 2007), and mobility of languages (Blommaert 2010), especially the continuing spread of English and its deterritorialization from "native speaking" countries, Gao (2014) made some revision of the model: the "C2" is explicitly conceptualized as the learners' chosen L2 "communities of practice" (Wenger 1998), which included cultures of "native English speakers" and other possibilities, such as an international professional community. Drawing upon Bakhtinian dialogism, the new "productive bilingual" in the context of intercultural communication, in the form of a "dialogical communicator" (Gao 2014: 68), is one who "has transcended various dichotomies such as listening vs. speaking, native culture vs. C2, and instrumental vs. integrative motivation" and who "enjoys mutual enhancement of L1/C1 on the one hand, and competence in the chosen L2 target discourse and identification with the chosen imagined community on the other." The expanded version of productive bilingualism is in line with existing social constructivist approaches to L2 identities that stress individual agency in selecting learning "targets" (e.g., Norton 2013) or "C2."

The model of productive bilingualism acknowledges the existence of bounded cultures, while it also recognizes that cultures are dynamic, mixed, multi-leveled, and multi-dimensional. It highlights the desirability of the L2 learners' rootedness in their native culture. Such a seemingly "essentialist" view might be explained or justified by the following reasons. First, there is a greater disparity between English and Chinese languages and cultures than the differences among European languages

and cultures. The linguistic and culture boundaries appear to be more prominent and cannot be easily ignored. Second, due to a traumatic history of foreign power invasion and semi-colonization, learning a foreign language (especially of the powerful) often brings identity threat to Chinese learners, though such threats might not be necessarily obvious for language learners situated in other types of sociohistorical contexts. The rootedness in the native language and culture in the process of L2 learning is a good way to cope with this barrier. Another characteristic of the model is it highlights the equal, reciprocal, and dialogical relation between the two languages/cultures. In agreement with the Chinese tradition of Yin-Yang and Tao-Qi dialectic (Gao 2000), such dialogicality deepens rather than dilutes cultural identification, which serves to anchor learners' selves.

Empirical evidence showed that productive bilingualism was not limited to a small group of elites. A 4-year longitudinal study on about 1300 Chinese undergraduate students showed that with the learning of English, productive change ranked the third highest among 6 types of identity changes, the first and second being self-confidence increase and additive change and the lower 3 being self-confidence decrease, split change, and subtractive change (Gao et al. 2015). Qualitative data revealed specifically how some individual students developed their productiveness in their English learning process (Gao et al. 2016). Productive change was found particularly evident among a group of student volunteers for the Olympic Games, around the change of a slogan on the wall of their office (Gao 2010). These volunteers started their service primarily with the identity of a "patriotic speaker" marked by the slogan "We speak and the world will listen," but they ended up with productive interaction between national and global identities, marked by signs of multiple languages and nations. However, it remains to be examined how such productive attitude change might be facilitated in daily classrooms.

Pedagogy of Productive Bilingualism

Taking an action research approach (Burns 2011), we explored pedagogical practices that cultivate productive bilingualism in one of our content-based English language class "Language, Culture and Communication" (LCC) at a comprehensive university in Beijing during 2014–2016. The class belongs to the C-level courses in the College English curriculum, which means the students have passed the highest level of English proficiency test designed and administered by the university. The teacher/primary researcher is a female foreign returnee in her early 30s, with a PhD degree in English applied linguistics from a US university. At the time of this research, she had taught LCC five times for five consecutive semesters. Every semester she teaches 2 classes with a total of around 60 non-English major students, aged between 18 and 23. We observed and evaluated the effects of the pedagogy of productive bilingualism and further developed methods and techniques that prompted criticalness in order to achieve openness (for a detailed report, see Zheng and Gao 2017).

Similar to what many scholars described on the development of intercultural competence (e.g., Bennett et al. 2003), we identified a key stage in the process of becoming a productive bilingual: a frame-of-reference shift from ethnocentric to ethnorelative worldviews. When one is able to change from a self-only or other-only perspective to an integration of multiple perspectives, he or she will become more open and at the same time integrated rather than split as he/she learns another language. How does this change happen? Some scholars pointed out certain crises in our lives such as moving into a new country have the potential to place people out of their comfort zones. Through reflection on these often difficult, unpleasant experiences, one may be able to question their habitual ways of thinking and doing and start to change from an ethnocentric orientation to an ethnorelative orientation (Mezirow 1994, 2000; Taylor 2008). This process has the potential to lead to identity expansion in some individuals (Jackson 2014).

In order to facilitate this change, the authors of this chapter believe the key to transformation is first to create a crisis in a learner's mind, that is, to problematize students' current beliefs and attitudes. Then the teacher needs to guide learners to reflect and come out of the crisis. Guided by the theory and reflection explained above, we designed four teaching steps in the second round of our action research, applied them, and have achieved some success in cultivating productive bilingualism, especially the "problematizing" move (Zheng and Gao 2017). These four steps are as follows:

1. **Learning about cultural differences**

In this step, like in the current practice in most language classes, the teacher lectures or guides students to discover cultural knowledge behind the language being taught. The teacher also introduces theories and taxonomies that describe and categorize the "typical" patterns of linguistic and cultural groups (e.g., high and low context cultures). The teacher guides students to compare and contrast cultures of the target language with students' native cultures.

2. **Deconstructing cultural "differences"**

After students have learned the comfortable knowledge of cultural patterns and differences, the teacher needs to deconstruct this knowledge, that is, to remind students that cultural "differences" are cultural constructs instead of facts. That is to say, a seemingly objective description of cultural "differences" can be a reflection of people's ethnocentric bias. This step involves several components:

(a) **Problematizing**

The first component is to reveal that the seemly objective cultural "facts" are actually subjective observations, thus problematizing the comfortable knowledge about cultural differences learned previously. For example, the teacher asks students to observe an "unfamiliar" group, takes some observation notes, and discusses those in class. Often students' descriptions of the group imply their attitudes toward them.

For example, some of them will write "unlike the Chinese students, the European students often used too much body language and exaggerated facial impressions while talking" and "I found it quite strange that they touched each other very often, which was different from us Chinese students." The teacher directs students' attention to the implied attitudes by underlining the words such as "too much," "unlike," "different," and "strange."

(b) **Examining frame of references**

When students realize descriptions of cultural differences are often not as neutral as they thought, the teacher asks: are those "descriptions" often positive or negative? If often negative, why? In this way the students can start to think about their ethnocentrism tendency: that is, people tend to judge others based on their own familiar cultural framework. Then the teacher gives them more explanations on how people make quick judgments on others from academic research (e.g., Snow 2015).

(c) **Tracing sources of stereotypes**

The teacher guides students to trace the sources of their previous values, beliefs and worldviews, and the consequences of stereotypes. Students can become aware of the long-lasting influences their parents, peers, teachers, and public media had on them.

3. **Reconstructing knowledge and attitudes**

In this step, the teacher asks students to think about alternative interpretations of "cultural differences" and to cultivate open attitudes. For example, instead of simply interpreting silence in the classroom as Chinese students being passive learners, asking questions such as "Are all Chinese students quiet in class? Are they quiet in all classes? What are the possible reasons that they don't speak up? Is silence always bad in this cultural context? Can it be good?" can lead to alternative answers.

4. **Seeking creative solutions to communication problems**

After students have learned to postpone judgments and start to seek alternative answers, the teacher gives them scenarios of conflicts in which they need to come up with creative solutions.

Effects of the Pedagogy of Productive Bilingualism

Through three cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, we found that the most obvious effect of the course was an opener attitude. The openness was two-sided: students became opener to both themselves and others. They became more aware of their own prejudice and biases. Lastly, they also improved significantly in providing creative solutions to conflict situations, a sign of incorporating different cultures and perspectives.

Criticalness

The teaching steps of deconstructing and reconstructing, that is, revealing the ethnocentric tendency of ourselves and guided reflections on real-life examples, had helped the students become aware and critical of their own frame of references. Many students experienced an awakening moment in the class where they recognized their own prejudice and examined the sources of their prejudice. For example, out of 81 reflection papers on what they have learned of the language attitudes class collected in Fall semester 2015 and Spring semester 2017, 72 (89%) have described how the class had challenged their previous stereotype. A student wrote:

> I was surprised that we had quite different opinions on these people. Some of these opinions, which I also had, are obviously prejudice [sic]. I have to admit that I don't like it when I heard the Indian accent. It makes me laugh though because it's funny, but if I am asked whether I want him/her to be my teacher, I wouldn't prefer that. I think the main reason is that I've seen too much news on rape in India, and from movies I also learn that Indian people are overactive and like to sing and dance. All these help me form the stereotype that Indians are not trustworthy. When I check others' answers, I found my classmates rate Indians much higher than I expected. This indeed gave me a lesson. Indians are not that bad in reality, and not even in others' impression. It is only my prejudice. (Student zz, after-class reflection paper, fall semester, 2015)

The student was describing his reactions to a "verbal guise test" (Garrett 2010) the teacher used in a class. In the test, students listened to audio recordings (10 seconds each) of five different varieties of Englishes. They were asked to identify the varieties and wrote judgments of the speakers, responding to questions such as "What kind of job do you think this person does?" This student was made aware of his original attitudes toward the Indian English ("don't like it," "makes me laugh," "funny," "wouldn't prefer") and was able to trace where this attitude came from ("news" and "movies"). What's surprising to him was that when comparing his reactions to other students, he found that people actually held quite different attitudes. Most preciously, he realized his previous opinions about Indian people were "prejudiced." Just as theorized in previous literature on transformative learning (Mezirow 1994, 2000; Taylor 2008), this student was an example of someone who started to question his habitual thinking, prompted by a "crisis" experience – in this case, realizing his attitude toward the Indian people was a prejudice. To resolve this cognitive dissonance – that is, he should not have prejudice on others – it's very likely that he will question his judgment in the future in similar situations.

The teaching steps that prompted critical reflection left deep impression on the students. For example, a student said in the final reflection paper:

> What impressed me most is that before our judgment, we need to do self-questioning again and again, to think whether the judgments are reasonable to some extent, and to put ourselves into others' shoes so that 'we' and 'they' can understand each other. After this, do reinterpret from a brand-new level. (Student grh, final reflection paper, spring semester, 2015)

Just as pointed out in the previous literature (Snow 2015), the student realized that the interpretation process was important in intercultural communication, which

without questioning can be problematic and one-sided. She learned to become more empathetic ("put ourselves into others' shoes") and was able to postpone judgment on others. She knew by self-questioning and gaining more information she could interpret others at a deeper level and thus was more likely to change from an ethnocentric mindset to an ethnorelative one (Bennett et al. 2003).

Compared to the definition of "criticalness" as theorized in "productive bilingualism," that is, "being able to critically appreciate and reflect on aspects of both L1/C1 and L2/C2" (Gao 2002, 2014), the criticalness the students learned in the class was mostly an ability to question their habitual ways of thinking toward languages and people. The criticalness served as the first step toward openness.

Openness

The data revealed that through being critical, most students experienced a change from an ethnocentric perspective to an ethnorelative perspective and thus an increased open attitude. Just as in the definition of "openness" in productive bilingualism (Gao 2002, 2014), the openness identified among the students was also a two-way openness for both themselves and others. They not only learned to tolerate, understand, and accept others; some also mentioned they learned to accept their own uniqueness.

For example, in the final reflection papers, students described in detail their changes in attitudes toward differences: from negative or passive reactions such as complaining or hiding to trying to understand each other's cultures. A student wrote:

> In my hometown, I hardly had chances to communicate with people from diversity [sic] culture. When I came to college, I have been considered as minority [sic] (Korean) and I had the tendency of exclusion [sic] at the very start. I even did not try to understand others. At that time, it felt like if you accept other's culture, you will lose yours. But as time goes by, I realized how silly I was. Culture does not disappear so easily, because culture changes and develops, and this usually happens during the interaction with another culture. The principle is well-applied to personal communication. As I learn more about various aspects of differences I feel like I am being more opening. I am trying to understand others instead of judging others by standard of my culture. I find life is more joyous with the attitude of 'understanding'. (Student jql, final reflection paper, spring semester, 2015)

The student was made aware of her Korean minority identity upon entering college and had been avoiding communicating with others due to the fear that "if you accept other's culture, you will lose yours." The fear was similar to the idea of "subtractive bilingualism" (Lambert 1974) where learning a new language/culture will replace the old ones. Fortunately, after the semester, the student learned culture "does not disappear so easily," but "changes and develops" when "interacting with another culture." This first implied that the student had gained some confidence in her own culture before she started to open up to others' cultures. She also pointed out that it was through learning more about various aspects of differences that she became more open. The realization again

resonated with previous literature that when people have a deeper understanding and awareness of cultural differences, they may change their attitudes and perspectives (Bennett et al. 2003). Openness and understanding thus formed a reciprocal relationship: openness will lead to more opportunities of understanding, while more understanding will lead to further openness.

The finding that students not only gained an increased open attitude toward others but also themselves was important. In the literature reviewed previously, minority cultures or groups of lower social status are likely to develop an "outgroup favoritism" (Byram et al. 2009) where they prefer others' cultures to their own. In China, a manifestation of this may be "Chinese culture aphasia" (Xiao et al. 2010) in English education. However, teaching practices that can alleviate this problem were rarely documented. This study addressed this gap: students learned an important lesson that their own difference was not a deficiency, and this led to an increased confidence in themselves, which prompted them to change from a passive, fearful, and submissive interlocutor to an active explainer of themselves. For example, a student wrote in the final reflection paper:

> As I have said in mid-term cultural identity paper, I am a little introvert [sic] person. I always feel a kind of inferiority when l sense that I can't talk with others freely. At this class, I can participate in a lots [sic] of funny games and lively discussions. I think the class atmosphere is pretty good. It helps me overcome my weakness in a way. Besides that, I can accept myself confidently. Cultural diversity told me there are many different kind [sic] of people, some people tend to be outgoing, and others tend to be opposite. It's unnecessary for excessive self-blame. Just be myself. (Student dft, final reflection paper, spring semester, 2015)

This student was very shy in the beginning of the semester, but gradually became more and more outspoken in class discussions, despite his red face and nervousness. His reflections showed an increased acceptance of himself as who he was, and he further explained that it was the various class activities and relaxed class atmosphere that helped him to participate more confidently in English. The class helped him perhaps because it had created a new imagined identity for him: an introverted person like him can also be a successful intercultural communicator. Such confidence in one's self is essential in developing intercultural competence because arguably, only after fully accepting one's self can one truly opens up to others (Zheng and Lee 2016).

Incorporation

When the first few teaching steps were enacted more successfully, the last teaching step "seeking creative solutions" also facilitated incorporation of needs from different parties. Students' creative solutions to simulated conflict situations can be seen as a sign of incorporation (Gao 2002, 2014). They no longer withdrew or avoided problems but actively sought help from different parties. They were willing to consider multiple parties involved and potential in solving conflicts in a win-win manner.

In their final reflection papers, some students described an incorporation tendency of different cultures, be it cultures of a nation, an ethnicity, or a regional group. For example, a student reflected on her experience growing up in a family with mixed Han and Hui ethnicity. In the mid-term paper, she described a conflict with her mother's family who were Muslims when she and her Han friend secretly had a pork hamburger for lunch. At a young age, she could not understand why she couldn't eat pork while her friends could, and her attitudes had made her mother angry. In the final paper, she seemed to have a deepened understanding of her multicultural family. She wrote:

> Recalling some conflicts and confusion again, I don't feel angry or sad anymore, but have deeper understanding of the influence of this cross-ethnicity family culture on me. . .Some unhappy experience taught me a lesson that although you don't belong to a specific cultural group, when you are in this specific situation, it's better not to do things going against its rules. Everyone has his right to keep his own belief but it is also our responsibility to respect others' and try not to bother them. . .I now understand this cultural difference between ethnicities more and have found the proper way to handle this. The transition from one culture to another is not easy, but I believe I am doing better and better. (Student lyc, final reflection paper, spring semester, 2015)

By understanding and respecting others' beliefs, she knew how to handle conflict properly and was "doing better" transitioning from one culture to another. Instead of feeling torn between two cultures, she now self-identified as a mixed Han and Hui person, showing that she was better at integrating her multicultural identities, a sign of incorporation (Gao 2002, 2014).

Another example of incorporation is an integration of different personalities. A student who was rather introspective in the beginning of the course seemed to become more well-rounded after a semester. He wrote in the final reflection paper:

> I have become a more complete person, and I regard this word to be more beautiful and graceful than any other word in this world. Through this course, I become a better extrovert: I learn to observe, respect, communicate, and love different people around me, I learn to maintain an open heart always ready to connect, listen and share. Through this course, I also become a better introvert: understanding and handling the difference taking places every day and everywhere through the means of self-reflection...When difference and similarity are one, when conflict and unity are one, then grace is within us. (Student yf, final reflection paper, spring semester, 2015)

This student seemed to have developed a productive orientation by transcending polarities and integrating the strengths of "extroverts" and "introverts," thus a "more complete person." He further attributed this change to both the course content and the diversity of his classmates who were from different departments and were of different gender and personal values. Although compared with the "best foreign language learners" in Gao's study (2001, 2002), the students' "incorporation" still lacked depth, their progress during a single semester was still remarkable given the short-term nature of the teaching intervention.

Conclusion and Implications

In this chapter, we review different approaches to intercultural communication in English language teaching in Europe, North America, and China before we present a theoretical model of "productive bilingualism" and discuss related pedagogy with empirical data from the classroom. The recent non-essentialist trend in studying culture and language has addressed the fluidity and complexity of people's identities in intercultural communication. By complicating the concept of "culture," it has revealed the power inequalities between the majority and minority groups. The new trend is empowering to those who move constantly between multiple boundaries and are otherwise stereotyped by the essentialist approaches. However, these intercultural competence models developed in the Western contexts are not sufficient in societies where boundaries are still relevant and rooting in the native, home, and/or traditional identities is important. To address particularly needs of the latter contexts, "productive bilingualism" is concerned with simultaneous and mutual enrichment of "native" and "additional" linguistic and cultural identities. Assuming existence of cultural and identity boundaries, the model identifies features of productive bilinguals, i.e., *criticalness* and *openness* toward both L1/C1 and the chosen L2 discourse and imagined L2 community at the same time and *incorporation* of the two in a creative manner. Pedagogy for cultivating productive bilinguals in the classroom is proposed, with four steps: (1) *learning* about cultural differences, (2) *deconstructing* cultural "differences," (3) *reconstructing* knowledge and attitudes, and (4) seeking *creative solutions* to communication problems. Effects of the pedagogy are presented, based on empirical studies in an English language classroom in China. To extend from the Chinese context where our empirical study was carried out, the model of productive bilingualism may have implications for contexts where the "native" or "local" linguistic and cultural identity is of important concern. These might include other "English as a foreign language" contexts, "English as a second language" contexts, and "heritage language" contexts.

To develop effective teaching strategies to cultivate intercultural competence in English language teaching requires a great deal of time and efforts from the teachers, especially if the teachers are used to skill-oriented language teaching. To help them change, it is important to first inform them the differences between native-speaker-oriented communicative competence and intercultural competence and then convince them the importance of intercultural competence in English language teaching today (Sun 2017). Then, it is also necessary for them to identify the key components of intercultural competence for their language teaching, especially the ones that fit their local contexts.

The chapter provides an example of developing a content-based English language course that promotes productive bilingualism. It intends to provide inspiration for English teachers whose academic training or interests include but are not limited to applied linguistics/intercultural communication. For example, teachers who study literature can also develop teaching materials and methods that draw on their expertise: literature written by authors from different cultures can serve as

a great way to provide an unfamiliar frame of reference, thus problematizing students' cultural assumptions. Comparing translated literature with its original version can also serve as an excellent discussion topic on intercultural communication. As language and culture cannot be separated, teachers should be aware that integrating "culture" was not an extra burden adding to their current workload in teaching English language. Still, teachers need to learn to reflect on their experiences and expertise and use their creativity to transform these into resources for teaching.

Future theoretical and pedagogical adaptations and innovations are expected for better integrating intercultural competence in English language teaching. First, what counts as one's "native culture" or "tradition" in specific contexts remains to be explored. Second, further research is needed to develop practices that enable students to reach a deeper level of productiveness. Lastly, the current research reported in this chapter has not specifically addressed the language goals, relying on the assumption that students will automatically develop their language competence through a content-based curriculum. In the future, some scaffolding with the forms of the English language is still needed. To truly integrate the cultivation of intercultural competence within a language curriculum requires creativity and reflections from teachers and/as researchers. As the development of intercultural competence is a lifelong process (Deardorff 2009), a reflective practitioner will also be able to grow along with her students. As the Chinese phrase shēn tǐ lì xíng (身体力行) summarizes nicely, to truly implement the change of goals in language teaching, one must practice what one preaches.

Cross-References

▶ English Language Teaching in China: Developing Language Proficiency Frameworks
▶ Problematizing the Linguistic Goal in English Language Curricula
▶ Shifting from Teaching the Subject to Developing Core Competencies Through the Subject: The Revised Senior Middle School English Curriculum Standards (2017 Edition) in China

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