Proceedings of ICEIPI 2026 Symposium: School Psychology, Trauma-Informed Practice and Sustainable Learning Environments
DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.PE37098

A Survey and Research on the Current Status of Integrating Multilingual Education and Cross-Cultural Communication in English Teaching

Yixin Wang

School of Educational Science, Xianyang Normal University, Xianyang, China
1934570071@qq.com

Abstract. With the continuous advancement of globalization, multilingual skills and cross-cultural communication literacy have become the core goals of foreign language talent cultivation in the new era. This study takes English teaching as the entry point and makes a survey of 509 English learners and educators of various identities through questionnaire methods. It systematically examines the current integration situation, cognitive attitudes, implementation paths, and existing problems of multilingual education and cross-cultural communication in English teaching. The study finds that respondents generally recognize the importance of multilingual education, but there are still vital problems in actual teaching, such as shallow content, monotonous forms, and insufficient professional competence of teachers. At the same time, most learners desire to contact with multicultural materials, but lack systematic teaching design and supporting teaching resources at the classroom level. Based on the survey results, this study will provide empirical evidence and practical references for promoting the transformation of English teaching towards a multilingual and cross-cultural integration direction.

Keywords: Multilingual Education, Intercultural Communication, English Teaching, Teaching Integration

1. Introduction

In the context of economic globalization and cultural diversity, language learning is undergoing profound changes. Multilingual education, as a new form of educational concept, emphasizes integrating various language resources in language teaching and cultivating learners' multilingual literacy and multicultural awareness. The research on multilingual education in the foreign academic community started earlier and has formed a relatively mature theoretical system. Lee and Fradd established a cultural adaptation teaching framework based on classroom discourse analysis, confirming that interactive patterns that conform to cultural habits can significantly enhance classroom participation [1]. In multilingual classrooms, interactive teaching methods such as scenario simulation and project-based learning can effectively enhance students' multilingual application skills and cultural sensitivity [2], but current cross-cultural teaching mostly remains at the level of cultural symbols such as festivals and cuisine, with insufficient understanding of deep-

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level cultures such as thinking patterns and value concepts [3]. Although the teaching community generally agrees with the concept of multilingual education, it is limited by professional capabilities and teaching resources, resulting in problems in students' multilingual learning [4]. Overall, the existing research lacks systematic empirical investigations and is relatively weak in comparative analysis of different identity groups. This study aims to combine multilingual acquisition theory and cultural integration theory with local English teaching practice, and verify the applicability of relevant theories in domestic teaching scenarios through empirical data, providing a data basis for subsequent research.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. The essence of multilingual education

Multilingual Education refers to the educational approach that employs two or more languages during the learning process, aiming to enhance the language proficiency of learners. Unlike traditional bilingual education, multilingual education places greater emphasis on the integration of language resources and the autonomy of learners. The languages mastered by learners are interconnected rather than independent language skills [2].

At the language proficiency level, multilingual education helps learners acquire the communicative skills of multiple languages. At the cognitive development level, multilingual education improves learners' flexibility and problem-solving abilities through multilingual training [5]. At the cultural identity level, multilingual education guides learners to understand and respect diverse cultures [2]. In the context of English teaching, multilingual education is mainly manifested through the contrastive teaching of mother tongue, English, and a third language, helping learners build a more complete language system.

2.2. Definition of intercultural communication

Intercultural communication is the process by which individuals from different cultural backgrounds come to understand and learn from each other. The ability to engage in cross-cultural communication requires not only the improvement of language skills, but also an increase in understanding of various aspects such as cultural knowledge, communication awareness, emotional attitudes, and behavioral skills [6]. In the context of language teaching, integrating cross-cultural communication means incorporating cultural elements into the language teaching process, enabling learners to understand the cultural connotations behind the language while mastering it, and cultivating cross-cultural communication skills [7].

Cross-cultural teaching can be divided into two levels: surface culture and deep culture. Surface culture includes cultural symbols such as festivals, food, clothing, and customs that are easy to observe; deep culture refers to the understanding of elements such as values, thinking patterns, and communication models between different cultures [3]. Effective cross-cultural education should progress from the surface to the deep level, helping learners understand cultural differences while further adapting to different cultural communication scenarios [7].

2.3. Multilingual acquisition theory and cross-cultural communication theory

The research on multilingual acquisition suggests that there are fundamental differences between the acquisition of a third language (L3) and that of a second language (L2). The learners' existing

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multilingual experience can be helpful for the learning of a new language, which is known as the "multilingual advantage effect" [5]. Multilingual learners usually possess stronger metalinguistic awareness, learning transfer ability, and language analogy ability.

The theory of Culturally Responsive Teaching holds that teaching should be in line with the learners' cultural background and design teaching activities based on respecting their cultural differences [1]. When the teaching content is connected with the learners' cultural experiences, their learning motivation and effectiveness will significantly improve, and their confidence and expression ability in local culture will also be enhanced.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

This study employed the questionnaire survey method as the main research approach. Given that multilingual education and cross-cultural communication integration in English teaching involve multiple dimensions and require data from both learners and instructors, the questionnaire survey method can more efficiently collect multi-dimensional data, providing reliable methodological support for a comprehensive assessment of the integration status and core issues.

The questionnaire design consists of six modules: (1) Respondent basic information, including age, identity, educational background, language background, etc.; (2) Multilingual education cognition, using multiple-choice questions to assess the respondents' understanding and value recognition of multilingual integrated education; (3) Teaching implementation status survey, examining the actual implementation situation from dimensions such as classroom teaching, curriculum design, teacher training, assessment and evaluation; (4) Problems and learning difficulties investigation, using multiple-choice questions to identify core issues; (5) Self-capability assessment scale, using the Likert five-point scale to measure the respondents' self-assessment of multilingual and cross-cultural abilities; (6) Suggestions for improvement and expectations, collecting open-ended opinions from respondents on teaching optimization.

In terms of questionnaire reliability, based on Feng Xiaotian's understanding of it, questionnaire verification was conducted to measure reliability, which represents the stability and consistency of the measurement results [8]. This study used internal consistency reliability testing, adjusting the questionnaire to fit the local English teaching scenarios, ensuring that the questions were relevant to the research dimensions and covered the assessment content. Based on the comprehensive test results, the reliability of this questionnaire is reliable, and the 157 survey data collected are authentic and valid, which can support subsequent empirical analysis.

3.2. Determination of data and sources

The data for this study were collected from June to July 2026 through online questionnaires. The questionnaire was distributed to English learners and education practitioners of different age groups and identities, aiming to obtain a diverse and representative sample. A total of 509 original questionnaires were collected. Invalid questionnaires with a filling time shorter than 150 seconds and all answers being the same option were excluded. Finally, 157 valid samples were obtained.

The samples cover English learners and education practitioners of different age groups and identities, and have good representativeness. The specific statistics are as follows (see Figure 1):

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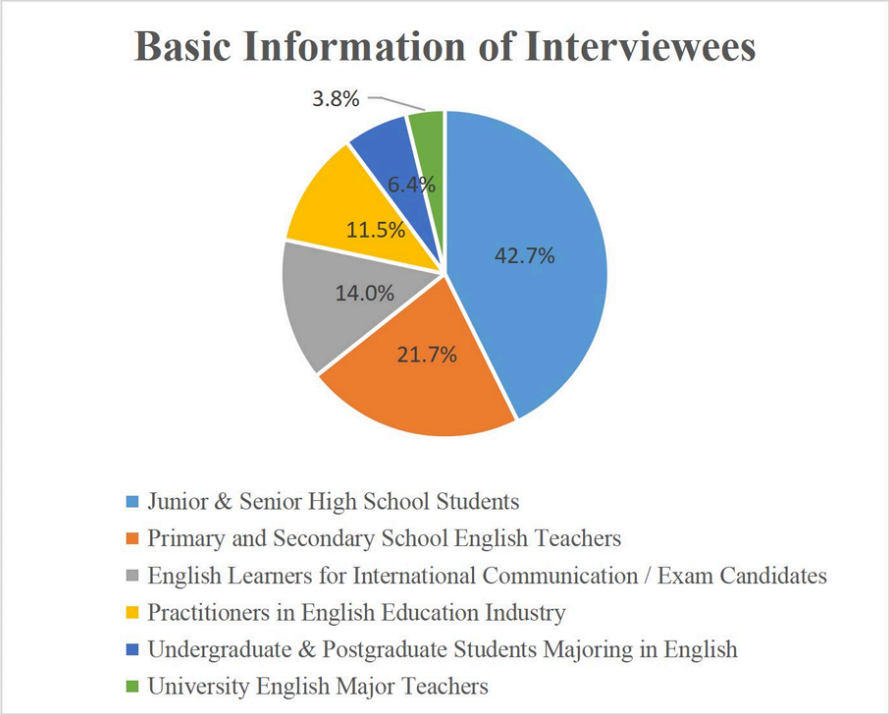


Figure 1. Statistical information of respondents (n = 157)

From the perspective of the sample structure, both the student group and the teacher group were covered. The proficiency in a third language indicated that more than half of the respondents had a certain foundation in multiple languages, providing suitable sample conditions for the study of multilingual education.

4. Questionnaire survey results and data analysis

The majority of respondents still have a superficial understanding of the concept of multilingual integrated education, lacking in-depth theoretical knowledge. Although their grasp of the concept is not yet sufficient, they highly recognize the importance of integrating multilingual education into English teaching, generally acknowledging its value in enhancing comprehensive language application skills. This is consistent with the findings in the research on multilingual teaching practices of foreign language teachers in Norway and Russia [9]. However, at the level of active application of multilingual knowledge, their initiative in daily learning or teaching behavior is insufficient. The specific statistics are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Statistical data on the perceptions and attitudes of respondents towards multilingual education and cross-cultural communication (n = 157)

Dimensions/ Proportion	Very Familiar / Extremely Important / Fully Agree / Frequently Applied (%)	Moderately Familiar / Quite Important / Partially Agree / Occasionally Applied (%)	Slightly Familiar / Average / Neutral / Rarely Applied (%)	Totally Unfamiliar / Unimportant / Disagree / Never Applied (%)
Familiarity with Concepts	10.83%	28.03%	46.50%	14.65%
Perceived Importance	42.04%	42.04%	14.01%	1.91%

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Table 1. (continued)

Degree of Agreement	45.22%	41.40%	11.46%	1.91%
Active Application	36.31%	33.76%	21.66%	8.28%

From the current situation of teaching implementation, multilingual contrast teaching is only occasionally carried out in specific knowledge points in most English classes. This situation is in line with the findings in the research on multilingual teaching practices of foreign language teachers in Norway and Russia, which state that "English subject teachers implement multilingual teaching the least frequently" [9]. This reflects the predicament faced by English as the mainstream in multilingual teaching. Moreover, most classes merely reach the level of cultural popularization such as festival customs, and there is a lack of truly in-depth teaching on thinking patterns, values, and cultural conflicts at a deeper level [3]. In terms of teacher training, the coverage of specialized training is limited, the content is too scattered, and there is a lack of improvement in teachers' professional capabilities [10]. The specific implementation situation is shown in Figure 2:

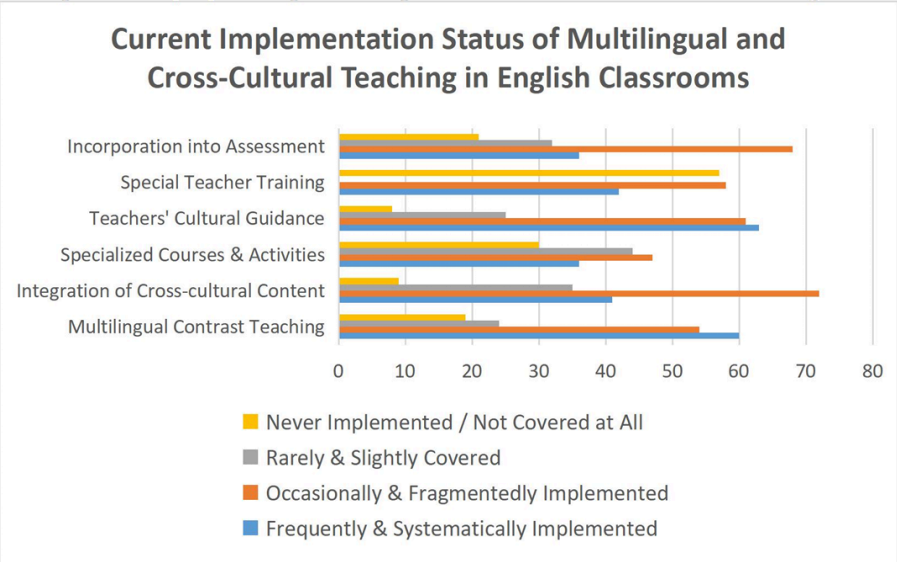


Figure 2. Summary of the current implementation situation of multilingual and cross-cultural teaching in English classrooms (n = 157)

Through the investigation, it was found that the current multi-language and cross-cultural integration teaching in English classes still has shortcomings. The teaching content lacks the cultivation of Chinese and foreign thinking, value conflicts, etc. At the same time, the teaching methods are monotonous, mainly consisting of theoretical lectures, and there is a lack of practical training [11]. Moreover, most teachers have little systematic multi-language teaching training and insufficient professional capabilities, and there are also insufficient corresponding teaching resources [10]. From the perspective of learners, the lack of real communication scenarios is the primary learning difficulty. Students can master basic theoretical knowledge but have difficulty applying it in practice [7].

Based on the results of the investigation, students' learning needs tend to be more inclined towards practical contents such as multi-language comparison and analysis, cross-cultural conflict discussions, and situational dialogues. Overall, the teaching reform needs to weaken cultural

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indoctrination, build real multi-language communication scenarios, improve teaching staff support, and promote the comprehensive development of multi-language and cross-cultural literacy.

5. Discussion

This survey shows that the interviewed teachers and students generally recognize the educational value of multilingual and cross-cultural teaching, but classroom multilingual comparison and cross-cultural teaching mostly remain at the superficial level of cultural education, with students lacking real communication scenarios, which leads to the predicament of "understanding theories but struggling with practical operations" [7]. At the same time, most schools lack systematic professional training for teachers, and corresponding teaching resources and case studies are also insufficient [10]. The root cause is that the traditional single-language teaching concept cannot meet the needs of today's diverse classrooms; the lack of multilingual teaching training for teachers has led to their lack of practical ability even if they recognize this concept [11].

To address these issues, the following aspects can be optimized.

We can refer to the mature foreign language teacher training models in regions such as Norway and Russia to establish a teacher training system [9, 10], and enhance teachers' execution ability in multilingual classrooms through case discussions and practical implementation, while re-constructing the content of English textbooks and integrating cultural elements in a progressive logic from surface to middle to deep levels [3]. Classroom teaching can strengthen students' cross-cultural practical abilities through activities such as role-playing and scenario simulation [11]. Most importantly, we can add multilingual elective courses and multi-language cultural festivals as special activities in the school to enhance students' interest and create an immersive extracurricular learning atmosphere [12].

6. Conclusion

This questionnaire survey reflects the overall situation of multilingual and cross-cultural teaching in domestic English classrooms. The respondents highly recognize the value of multilingual education, but current teaching is generally limited to superficial cultural knowledge such as festivals, and there is a lack of systematic teacher training and teaching resources. Students encounter a learning dilemma where theory and practice are disconnected due to the lack of real communication scenarios. This study was conducted based on a limited online sample, and the sample coverage and geographical scope were limited, making it difficult to fully capture the changes in teaching. Future related research can expand the research area and sample size, conduct analyses in different teaching scenarios in primary and secondary schools and universities, and also combine classroom observations and in-depth interviews with learners and educators for mixed research. This will further explore the implementation of multilingual teaching, and through more comprehensive empirical data, improve the implementation path of localized multilingual and cross-cultural English teaching.

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