

Teaching Application and Challenges of BTL Model in Cross-Cultural Courses

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Abstract: This paper explores the application, theoretical basis and challenges of BTL (Blended Teaching and Learning) model in cross-cultural courses, focusing on its role in improving students' cross-cultural communication ability and cultural sensitivity. Through a literature review, the advantages of BTL model combining traditional classroom and online learning are explained, and its application status and teaching effectiveness in cross-cultural education are demonstrated. However, due to the diversity of students' cultural backgrounds, the BTL model faces communication barriers caused by cultural differences and technical and resource limitations in implementation. Therefore, in order to better achieve its teaching goals, targeted optimization strategies are proposed, such as improving teachers' technical application ability and strengthening cultural sensitivity training, in order to enhance the practicality and adaptability of this model in cross-cultural education. Studies have shown that the BTL model has brought innovative teaching methods to cross-cultural education and is of great significance to the cultivation of students' global literacy.

Keywords: Btl Model; Cross-Cultural Courses; Blended Teaching; Cultural Differences, Teaching Strategies

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Importance

Driven by globalization, cross-cultural education has gradually become an important part of the modern education system. As exchanges between different cultures increase, educational content also needs to adapt to the trend of cultural diversity in order to enhance students' cross-cultural communication skills and global awareness [1]. Especially in the field of English education, cross-cultural courses are designed to

help students understand and adapt to different cultural backgrounds, cultivate students' cross-cultural communication skills and cultural sensitivity, and thus lay the foundation for their future international careers [2].

BTL is a modern teaching method that melds online and offline learning, which has recently widely been used during cross-cultural education. The BTL model in this paper can enhance not only the students' sense of participation but also meet personalized needs since learners can learn flexibly with diverse learning resources [3]. It merges a traditional classroom with an online platform in which the students can get multi-level cultural education and more clearly understand knowledge content within the different cultural context [4]. For instance, in the practice of the course "Introducing Chinese Culture in English", online resources such as MOOCs and SPOCs are combined to substantially enrich the cross-cultural learning resources of students [5]. Therefore, research on the BTL model in cross-cultural courses and challenges will not only optimize the current teaching model but also inform educators for further development of cross-cultural competence.

1.2 Research Objectives

The concrete application and implementation process of the BTL model in cross-cultural courses will be explored in this study. Secondly, it will analyze the effectiveness of this model in enhancing students' cross-cultural communication skills and deeply explore the various challenges it faces. This study intends to systematically review the existing literature on the teaching effect and cultural adaptability, as well as practical application problems of the BTL model. Eventually, the strategy that can be applied to optimize the use of the BTL model in cross-cultural courses will be advanced in the study; hence, it will give the real teaching reference and theoretical support for educators.

2. Theoretical Basis of the BTL Model and Its Applicability in Cross-Cultural Courses

2.1 Definition and Core Theory of the BTL Model

The BTL (Blended Teaching and Learning) model combines traditional classroom teaching with online learning and is an important innovation in the current education field. In terms of definition, BTL is usually regarded as a teaching strategy, the core of which is to balance the advantages of face-to-face teaching and online teaching to support a more flexible and personalized learning method [6]. Cronje (2020)

proposed that the definition of blended learning should be based on learning theory, rather than simply combining different teaching methods. It should incorporate behaviorist and constructivist learning theories to promote the combination of direct teaching and hands-on practice in the teaching process [6]. In addition, the definition and practice of BL are constantly evolving, and educational institutions have gradually realized that it is not only a change in teaching methods, but also a deep transformation of educational concepts, which requires the comprehensive integration of knowledge management in teaching design [7].

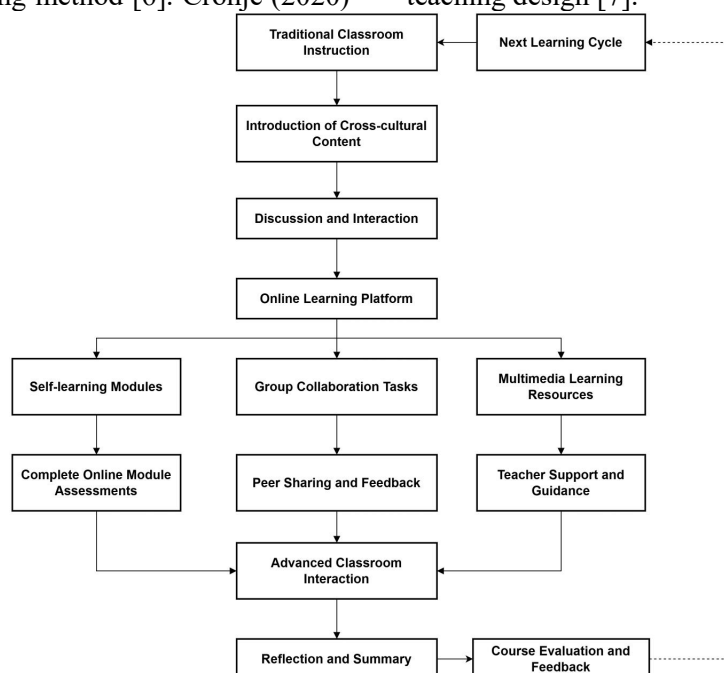


Figure 1. BTL Model in Cross-Cultural Courses

Figure1 illustrates the workflow of the Blended Teaching and Learning (BTL) model within cross-cultural courses. The process begins with traditional classroom instruction, where foundational cross-cultural content is introduced. Integration into an online learning environment where students engage in self-directed learning modules, participate in discussion forums, and access multimedia resources to further illustrate key concepts takes place next. The BTL model then becomes supportive and possessive with feedback: teacher support is always present in online and on-campus activities. Students are engaged in sophisticated classroom interactions, reflection of learning, and course evaluation, which again feeds into the next learning cycle. This iterative approach, therefore, will help in the building up of cross-cultural awareness and the establishment of communication

competencies through an adaptive, blended teaching framework.

Theoretically, the BL model is based on various educational theories such as constructivism or instructional design theory. Huang et al. (2008) have advanced a design theory that looks upon BL as a course design model in learning activities which focuses on the progress of the process and the effectiveness of activity design. It insists that course design is not only the integration of teaching content but also, in an integrated seamless way with the teaching process and technology, forming systematic and coherent knowledge within the classroom environment [8]. The introduction of this design model provides a theoretical framework for the BL model and enables it to carry out flexible and targeted teaching design according to different course needs, so as to better improve students'

learning effects and experience.

2.2 Applicability and Advantages of the BTL Model in Cross-Cultural Courses

In cross-cultural courses, the applicability of the BTL model is reflected in its ability to provide adaptive learning support for students from different cultural backgrounds (Figure 2). In particular, in cross-cultural communication courses, the BL model provides students with a comprehensive cultural learning platform by integrating online resources and classroom activities, which helps students understand foreign cultures in a local environment and improve their cross-cultural communication skills [9]. Anthony's (2021) research shows that the BL model can significantly enhance students' sense of participation and learning motivation, especially in language and cross-cultural learning. Its diverse learning methods help students better cope with cultural differences and improve classroom learning outcomes [10].

Meanwhile, the BL model has its advantage in meeting students' personalized learning demand. Wang showed in his research that the BTL model incorporates information technology and educational theory, allows students to switch between online and classroom learning flexibly, and promotes the development of students' autonomous learning ability. But with the help of the online learning platform, this model can enable students to access course resources anytime, reconsolidating in class what they have learned and greatly improve the teaching effect of cross-culture courses [11]. This cross-time and space learning model enables the students to get in touch with foreign cultural content more deeply, broaden their global vision, and lay a solid foundation for their future work in an international environment.

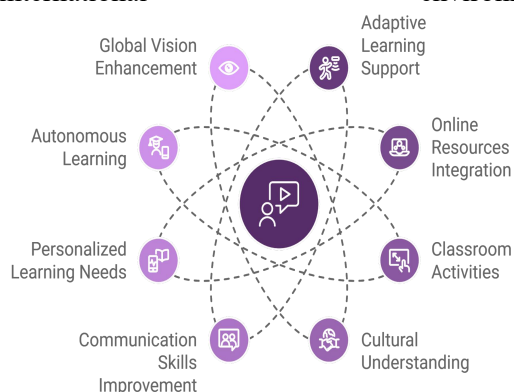


Figure 2. Advantages of the BTL Model in Cross-Cultural Courses

3. Current Application Status of the BTL Model in Cross-Cultural Courses

3.1 Specific Application Methods of the BTL Model in Cross-Cultural Courses

Currently, the BTL model finds its widest application in language learning, cultural sensitivity training, and enhancement of communication skills within various cross-cultural courses. Using this model, educators build on the benefits from conventional classroom teaching and interactive learning online, thus enabling learners to receive knowledge flexibly and participate in multicultural interactions. For example, Seeberg and Minick (2012) used the Web 2.0 technology in designing a hybrid teaching approach that combined online and face-to-face modes to improve the cross-cultural communication ability of students in studying multicultural teacher education. This teaching model not only enhanced the understanding of other cultures by students but also developed their confidence and adaptability in communicating in a multicultural environment [11]. In addition, Saputra et al. (2021) applied the BTL model in a course study for Islamic religious education. Through the integration of online and classroom activities, students could put into practice their learning during the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, therefore enhancing the results of learning and the level of student satisfaction considerably [12].

It also makes extensive use of digital environments and methods of virtual collaboration in cross-cultural education. Shonfeld et al. (2021) proposed a specific crossover alignment model using digital learning environments in cross-cultural education to develop students' cross-cultural collaboration skills with a sense of social justice. This model strengthens the cooperation of students from different cultural backgrounds in the global society by putting an online platform that enables them to master digital capabilities and lifelong learning skills while contributing to cross-cultural projects [13]. These methods of application show that the BTL model provides a full-bodied learning form for cross-cultural courses and helps students get adapted to multicultural communication in the context of globalization.

3.2 Effects and Case Analysis of the BTL Model in Cross-Cultural Teaching

The BTL model has been applied to cross-cultural teaching and has produced remarkable teaching effects. It integrates online and offline hybrid learning methods, which contribute to the academic improvement of the students while at the same time improving their cross-cultural communication skills. Dichev et al. (2021) while researching the methods of cross-cultural teaching applied in modern schools, measured the students' competence of cross-culture with a comprehensive curriculum model. The results reflect that the improvement in CCC of students participating in the BTL model course almost equaled four times the improvement in the control group's result (+17.8% vs. +4.3%), which proves, from a cross-cultural perspective, this model can be effective in improving the cultural sensitivity and communicational skills of students [14].

Moreover, Guo's study also confirmed the efficiency of the BTL model in the process of cross-cultural language teaching. He mentioned that the BL model not only improves students' language ability but also enhances their cultural cognition and develops communication skills with the help of diversified teaching methods. The results of this study prove that teaching methods like task-based teaching and communication strategies provide an opportunity for students to gain experience on the depth of classroom activities and cultural backgrounds for better understanding and adjusting to different cultures [15]. These successful cases demonstrate the practical effectiveness of the BTL model in cross-cultural courses, indicating that it can effectively promote the all-round development of students and lay the foundation for their application in a multicultural environment.

4. Challenges and Improvement Directions of the Application of the BTL Model

4.1 Challenges Brought by Cultural Differences

One of the main difficulties of applying the BTL model in cross-cultural courses is that given by cultural obstacles. Clearly, students come from different cultural backgrounds, which presupposes their possible problems with insufficient understanding of cultures of other countries and unfamiliarity with communication

methods during the learning process. Such cultural differences not only influence classroom interaction but also may restrain students from comprehensively understanding course content, which might result in their less participation in classrooms. Moreover, language differences will further aggravate the obstacles brought by cultural differences, especially in some cross-cultural learning activities which require students to interact with or work in groups. Students may employ different approaches toward learning and communicating due to their cultural background. This, in turn, affects the efficiency and quality of collaboration. To this end, educators have to take into consideration the multicultural needs within curriculum design and apply flexible teaching strategies to enable students to adapt better and integrate themselves across a cross-cultural learning environment.

4.2 Limitations of Technology and Resources

Excessive use of technology and resources in the BTL model means that there are many practical barriers to applying it. First, some students may not get access to a stable Internet connection or efficient equipment for learning, which in turn affects their learning process online. Operationalizing of the teaching platform, diversity in the use of interactive tools, and technical proficiency of teachers go hand-in-hand in making a difference in this model's effectiveness. It's hard for those schools or regions with a tremendous shortage of resources to invest in the required technology to implement the model. Furthermore, it is difficult to guarantee that the teaching effect of the BTL model has the same consistency because the proficiency of teachers in the use of technology is inconsistent. This limitation of technology and resources is affecting students' experience of learning and making more workload for teachers. Therefore, it is urgent to solve how to optimize the BTL model effectively with limited resources.

4.3 Future Optimization Strategies and Research Directions

In the future, to cope better with the challenges brought by cultural differences and resource limitations to the BTL model, developing more adaptive and inclusive teaching strategies will be a key point. For example, students can be better adapted to the multi-cultural learning environment by offering some cultural

sensitivity training in combination with relevant cross-cultural communication activities. In addition, optimizing technological resources will also be a key direction in the future. Schools can implement only low-cost and high-efficiency digital tools and online platforms to engage students more in learning. Further research may be conducted to identify the best practices in teacher technology training that would enhance their professional competencies in blended teaching. Additionally, interdisciplinary collaborative research could provide new reflections on the application of the BTL model in a different educational scenario, thereby providing more innovative ideas within the teaching model of cross-cultural courses.

5. Conclusion

In summary, the BTL model, as a new teaching method that combines traditional classroom teaching with online learning, shows significant application value in cross-cultural courses. Through theoretical analysis and practical cases, we can see that the BTL model not only provides students with diverse learning channels in cross-cultural education, but also effectively improves their cross-cultural communication skills and cultural sensitivity. However, there are also some challenges in the application process, including barriers to understanding and communication caused by cultural differences, as well as limitations in technology and resources. Although these challenges have affected the implementation effect of the BTL model to a certain extent, the teaching effect of this model can be optimized to a great extent through reasonable curriculum design and targeted strategies, such as improving teachers' technology application capabilities and enhancing students' cultural adaptability training.

In the future, with the further development of globalization and informatization, the potential of the BTL model in cross-cultural education will be more prominent. In order to cope with the obstacles brought by cultural differences and technical resource limitations, educators can explore more flexible and inclusive teaching methods to meet the needs of students in a multicultural background. At the same time, with the enhancement of technological support, schools can use low-cost digital platforms more widely to achieve a more efficient learning environment and cross-cultural interaction. In

general, the application of the BTL model in cross-cultural courses has brought new possibilities for global education and pointed out the direction for future education reform. Through continuous optimization and research, the BTL model is expected to play a more active role in the field of cross-cultural education and provide students with a better learning experience for their global development.

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