

# Research on the Application Model of Drama-based Teaching in College English

Qi Liu

Xiamen University Tan Kah Kee College, China

---

**Abstract:** From the perspective of constructivism, this research project takes the English Drama Competition at Xiamen University Tan Kah Kee College as its practical platform, focusing on semi-finalist students as the research subjects. It employs a series of event-oriented tutorial activities as input methods, including pronunciation correction, voice imitation, character analysis, script recitation, and drama performance, among other routine training sessions and specialized lectures. The goal is to produce excellent dramatic entries for the competition. Through participant training records, teacher interviews, oral and written assessments, and tracking records of College English exam scores, this study observes changes in students' English knowledge, intercultural awareness, and critical thinking skills. It aims to understand how holding English drama competitions can better cultivate students' intercultural communication abilities, improve their oral proficiency, and enhance their creativity and critical thinking skills. Additionally, it explores the effective application of drama-based teaching methodology in second-class English activities at the college level and summarizes specific implementation methods.

**Keywords:** College English, drama-based teaching, intercultural communication, Constructivist theory.

---

## 1. Research Background

### 1.1. Problem Statement

Students at independent colleges have mixed feelings about English learning. While they aspire to master English, their weak foundation often makes the learning process challenging, leading to a gradual loss of interest. Currently, the primary issue faced by most English learners is the lack of practical experience. College English classrooms are still characterized by large class sizes, with teacher-centered instruction supplemented by limited interaction, or none at all. As a result, not every student can fully utilize the foreign language they are learning in the classroom. They can only gain more language practice opportunities by participating in second-class English activities.

The English Drama Competition at Xiamen University Tan Kah Kee College, with a decade-long history, is a popular second-class English activity among students. It is also a long-standing academic competition organized by the school and a platform showcasing contemporary college students' English communication skills and talents. Each year, nearly 300 students register for the competition, forming over 40 teams for the initial audition round, where half of the teams are eliminated. After a gap of 2 to 3 weeks, the semi-finals are held, from which 6 to 8 teams are selected to proceed to the finals. To enhance the English proficiency of participating students and improve the quality of their entries, the college organizes systematic event tutorials for them every year.

During the tutorial process, researchers have observed positive changes in students, such as improvements in pronunciation, oral expression, script comprehension, adaptation, and creation. Drama-based teaching methodology in college English, which utilizes English scripts and stage performance techniques to assist classroom instruction, can stimulate students' interest in English learning and enhance their intercultural communication awareness. Through drama performances, students can intimately experience the roles of cultural identity and social relationships, filling gaps in

language and culture that are not fully addressed in textbook learning. If drama-based teaching methodology can be applied in classroom instruction, then in the context of second-class English activities at the college level, can teachers also utilize this method, and how should they apply it to make it effective in better cultivating students' intercultural communication abilities, improving their oral English proficiency, and enhancing their creativity and critical thinking skills? These are the questions posed by the researchers and the issues that this research project aims to address.

### 1.2. Definition of the Research Topic and Theoretical Basis

Constructivist theory emphasizes students' subjectivity and subjective initiative, viewing teachers as facilitators in education. Teaching should be based on learners' existing learning and cognitive experiences to promote the acquisition of new knowledge, rather than using a cramming approach. The situated learning proposed by Constructivist theory refers to the acquisition of knowledge by learners within specific contexts with the help of external forces. These external forces include cooperation, communication, and the utilization of necessary information among individuals. The situations in the learning environment must be conducive to the meaning construction of the content being learned. An ideal learning environment should comprise four components: situation, collaboration, communication, and meaning construction.

Drama-based teaching, which integrates the approaches and concepts of drama and performance techniques, is an interactive teaching method that integrates knowledge into performances, reflecting the knowledge, interest, and practicality of English. In English drama performances, teachers are facilitators, and students are the main actors. Each student undertakes an independent and complete role task, exerting their learning initiative and independence. Simultaneously, drama performances typically require the participation of a student team, integrating collaboration and

communication into the learning process. In addition, dramas have ups and downs in plot, vivid performances, and strong storytelling elements, providing an engaging situation and language environment for English learning. They can effectively promote learners' enthusiasm for meaning construction in language learning and improve students' comprehensive language skills.

### 1.3. Research Value of the Topic

Based on training records, teacher interviews, College English exam scores, tests of innovative thinking, critical thinking, and intercultural communication abilities, as well as oral English tests, combined with formative and summative evaluations, this system helps teachers better assess changes in students' language, cultural awareness, and critical thinking skills. It also cultivates students' intercultural communication abilities, improves their oral English proficiency, and enhances their creativity and critical thinking skills.

Focusing on summarizing application methods from the four aspects of effective situation creation, effective collaboration, effective communication, and effective meaning construction, this research aims to draw the attention of researchers to the importance of drama-based teaching methodology influenced by Constructivist theory and the design and teaching of second-class English activities at the college level.

## 2. Research Plan

### 2.1. Research Objectives

To enable teachers to utilize the English drama teaching method in college to design high-quality and efficient second-classroom activities. While respecting students, texts, and English drama competitions, teachers should reasonably develop drama scripts, creatively use them, and carefully design each teaching and evaluation session. By adopting teaching and evaluation methods that are most easily accepted and understood by students, the aim is to motivate students to participate, achieve teacher-student and student-student interactions, enhance the effectiveness of teaching and evaluation, and promote the improvement of students' English language proficiency and cultural literacy.

### 2.2. Research Content

#### 2.2.1. English Drama Competition and Coaching Program

The English drama competition is an opportunity for cultural exchange and collision between China and the West, a test of participants' learning ability and language proficiency, and a platform for creators to showcase their works and self-expression. Drawing on the experiences of previous competitions, the competition has retained some old rules while making adjustments based on local conditions and adding some new regulations. It is divided into preliminary rounds, semifinals, and finals. Considering the large number of participating teams in the preliminary rounds, it would take five to six hours if each team only performed the most exciting excerpts. However, dividing the teams into smaller venues could lead to uneven program quality, different aesthetic standards among judges and guests, and inconsistent evaluation criteria. Therefore, the preliminary rounds adopt an online evaluation format. Participating teams record a 5-minute excerpt of their performance and upload the video to

a designated email address. The organizers then invite judges to score online and select the winning teams to advance to the semifinals.

Participants who advance to the semifinals, as the research subjects of this project, receive targeted coaching. The specific implementation plan for this training is as follows: One instructor is responsible for one participating team, formulating a coaching plan based on students' different English levels and the characteristics of the entries. Regular training is conducted once a week for 6-8 weeks. During the teaching process, English language and culture, as well as drama performance techniques, are integrated to help students learn as much rich and interesting English knowledge as possible from rehearsals, inspiring them to continuously explore and produce excellent drama entries. The training content includes pronunciation correction, voice imitation, character analysis, script recitation, and drama performance. Among these, pronunciation correction refers to teachers correcting students' basic phonetic symbols, stress, linking and sentence breaking issues. Voice imitation refers to teachers identifying problems in students' imitation of British or American accents. Character analysis refers to teachers assisting students in understanding the cultural background of the script and the characteristics of the characters. Script recitation refers to teachers guiding students to become more familiar with the script. Drama performance refers to teachers helping students overcome challenges in portraying character traits, image design, body language, and scene transitions. After coaching students, teachers will record the existing issues in the aforementioned aspects and provide comments on pronunciation accuracy, fluency of lines, whether the performance embodies distinct character traits, whether the script has linguistic beauty, logic, and innovation. Students will also write about their gains and insights during the training, as well as their awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in English learning.

In addition to regular training, the competition also includes several special lectures on the following topics: *Preparation for English Drama Competition*, *English Pronunciation and Intonation*, *Imitation of British and American Accents*, *Drama and Stage Performance*, *Role Shaping and Dramatic Tension*, *The Differences between Chinese and English Culture and Way of Thinking*, *Chinese and Western Social Etiquettes*, and *An Introduction to Text Analysis Theory of Drama*. After these lectures on drama competitions, English drama, phonetic knowledge, and Chinese and Western cultures, researchers obtain positive feedback through interviews with on-site audience members. For example, some students state that the lectures inspire them, addressing blind spots in their oral English learning, answering questions, and clarifying possible changes in pronunciation and semantics of the same word in different sentences. Some students also said that the lectures touched them and leave a deep impression, such as the unique and novel perspective of observing the sense of time within a sense of space, providing them with a different way of looking at the world. Many students also express their liking for the format of these special lectures, which are relaxing and unrestrictive, and attended by people who were genuinely interested in, listening attentively without distractions from those playing with their phones.

### **2.2.2. Investigation and Evaluation System for Participants' Language, Culture, and Thinking Levels**

Firstly, questionnaire items are designed around the research content of whether English drama competitions and event coaching improve students' English proficiency. The questions are mainly divided into four categories: the difficulties encountered by students during the preparation process, the assistance provided by instructors, the gains from participating in the competition and receiving training, and whether English drama culture has been promoted. The questionnaire is released on the day of the semifinals, and 115 valid questionnaires are ultimately collected. An analysis of the questionnaire results reveal that students face difficulties such as inaccurate pronunciation and intonation, unskilled stage performance, and difficulty in coordinating rehearsal times. Instructors provide considerable assistance in pronunciation correction, line understanding, script adaptation, and stage performance. English drama competitions significantly promote students' English learning. More than half of the students report improvements in their English pronunciation and intonation, enhanced English language application and comprehension abilities, the courage to speak English, and a greater liking for English.

Secondly, during the coaching activities, instructors are asked to provide formative evaluations of students' performances in a timely manner, observing changes in students' language, culture, and thinking levels through verbal explanations, written feedback, and research interviews.

Finally, before and after the training, students receiving event coaching complete an innovative thinking and intercultural communication skills test and an English speaking test as a form of summative evaluation. Combined with the aforementioned formative evaluation, this approach more effectively assesses changes in students' language, culture, and thinking levels. The innovative thinking and intercultural communication skills test is used to examine changes in students' innovative thinking and intercultural communication abilities. The questions are selected from works such as *A Study on the Current Situation of Chinese Foreign Language Major Students' Critical Thinking Ability*, *500 Questions for Innovative Thinking Training*, *600 Questions for Logical Thinking Test*, *A Feast of Logic - Famous Questions from Renowned Authors*, *Western Social Etiquette and Culture - Oriental Cambridge Applied English Series*, *Basic Course on British and American Culture*, and *Introduction to English-Speaking Countries' Society and Culture*. The English speaking test is used to assess changes in students' oral English proficiency, with questions modeled after the CET-4 speaking test format and a difficulty level close to CET-4. An analysis of the evaluation results shows that, compared to a control group of students who do not participate in the English drama competition and have the same initial language ability as the research subjects, the research subjects exhibit significant improvements in innovative thinking, intercultural communication, and English speaking proficiency.

### **2.2.3. Application Methods and Effects of the English Drama Teaching in College English Drama Competitions**

#### **2.2.3.1 English Drama Competitions and Event Coaching Improve Students' Speaking Proficiency**

During drama rehearsals and performances, students may

forget their lines. If an actor forgets their lines and has no strategy to cope with it, and the other actors are unsure how to continue, this will certainly affect the fluency of the drama performance. To avoid the disruption caused by forgetting lines, students need to possess a certain level of English improvisation skills. Therefore, event coaching should focus on cultivating students' ability to understand original lines and flexibly use their own words to explain them. Students should not rely solely on rote memorization to remember lines but should delve deeper into the meaning and role of lines within the plot in conjunction with the drama's storyline. When students engage in the dynamic interpersonal interactions of drama, they can adapt to different characters and scenarios, making authentic reactions. Drama performances provide opportunities for English learning and oral practice, not only mobilizing all their senses and expressive means but also allowing them to personally experience and directly engage in language use situations, which is positive for attracting students' interest in oral expression.

Therefore, English drama competitions and event coaching offer the following benefits for improving students' English speaking proficiency: Firstly, this second-classroom activity and practical teaching mode can combine education with entertainment, encouraging students to speak up and shifting from a task-oriented, teacher-centered model to a proactive, student-centered one. Secondly, it helps students learn more about history, culture, literature, and other knowledge areas, broadening their knowledge base. Finally, it effectively and cleverly integrates various courses (such as phonetics, listening, speaking, intensive reading, extensive reading, literature, and an overview of Britain and the United States) to expand students' comprehensive English knowledge and improve their listening and speaking abilities.

#### **2.2.3.2 English Drama Competitions and Event Coaching Enhance Students' Innovation and Critical Thinking Abilities**

Script adaptation or creation, drama performance, and other aspects contribute to cultivating students' innovative and critical thinking abilities. To better interpret classic repertoires, students need to consult scripts and their backgrounds, cultures, and other materials. Based on preserving the charm and characteristics of the original play, they imitate or adapt existing Chinese and foreign dramas or create new scripts. Students then self-direct and perform these, endowing them with new era characteristics and rich stage effects. In this process, students apply their learned linguistic and cultural knowledge in practical situations, simultaneously appreciating cultural differences between China and the West, cultivating sensitivity, tolerance, and flexibility in dealing with cultural differences, and enhancing their critical thinking skills. During performances, students fully release their rich imagination and innovative spirit. Through adaptations or recreations of lines and physical movements, some repertoires are imparted with new era characteristics and a campus atmosphere, fully highlighting the individuality and style of dramatic performances.

#### **2.2.3.3 English Drama Competitions and Event Coaching Cultivate Students' Intercultural Communication Skills**

In the process of preparing works for competition, English drama scripts help students consolidate their memory and reinforce memory effects, while rehearsals create a strong language practice atmosphere for them. As dramas contain numerous scenes simulating real life, students are inspired to communicate and apply their language knowledge.

English drama competitions and event coaching help cultivate students' intercultural communication skills. Firstly, English drama showcases a vivid English cultural world, broadening students' horizons and deepening their cultural understanding. While appreciating plays and rehearsing performances, students can feel the charm of the historical yet fresh and vibrant culture. Secondly, by performing and appreciating English dramas, students' cultural appreciation and artistic enjoyment are enhanced, and their practical application of language knowledge in various scenes is strengthened. To fully and accurately express the dramatic effect, students must immerse themselves in understanding and experiencing the cultural depth behind the drama, creating sparks in communication and thereby improving their intercultural communication skills in practice. Finally, English drama competitions provide students with an excellent stage, and event coaching gives them direction and support in language learning. At the same time, numerous competitions and rehearsal activities not only exercise students' courage but also help them build confidence, so they are no longer intimidated when communicating with others in English and can express their thoughts more fluently and naturally.

### **3. Research Methods**

#### **3.1. Sampling**

Among the 125 contestants who make it to the semifinals, 14 students are selected from those who score above 80, 14 from those who score between 70 and 79, 14 from those who score between 60 and 69, and 14 from those who score below 60 on the midterm exam of College English I, to serve as research subjects.

#### **3.2. Interview**

Interviews are conducted with guiding teachers and instructors of the participating teams to understand the positive changes in students before and after participating in the competition, both in and out of class.

#### **3.3. Questionnaire Survey**

A questionnaire survey is designed to understand students' purposes for participating, their feelings about the entire competition process, and their gains in English learning. The survey results are analyzed to summarize the advantages and disadvantages of the current competition and event coaching, providing valuable and referential lessons for the organization of the competition and the implementation of event coaching.

#### **3.4. Statistical Analysis**

Through the analysis and research of the quantitative relationships such as the scale, scope, and level of the research subjects, the interrelationships, patterns of change, and development trends between things are recognized and revealed, proving the correct interpretation and prediction of this topic on improving students' English proficiency through English drama competitions and event coaching.

#### **3.5. Literature Review**

Information is obtained through investigating literature, thereby comprehensively and correctly understanding and grasping the research content of this topic.

### **3.6. Descriptive Research**

The changes, patterns, and theories observed in students' language, culture, and thinking levels before and after participating in English drama competitions are narrated and explained through the researcher's understanding and verification.

### **3.7. Empirical Research**

Based on the definition, theoretical basis, and practical needs of this topic, a research design is proposed. Utilizing survey websites and data analysis software, under natural conditions, by purposefully and systematically manipulating the implementation process of English drama competitions and event coaching, and based on observations, records, and measurements of the accompanying changes in students' language, culture, and thinking levels, the relationship between English drama competitions and event coaching and changes in students' language, culture, and thinking levels is determined.

### **3.8. Experience Summarization**

Through summarizing and analyzing the specific situations during English drama competitions and event coaching, it is systematized and theorized, elevating it into a method of experience.

## **4. Research Process**

Firstly, collect and organize Chinese and foreign papers, monographs, research reports, and other materials such as second-class English courses in universities, Constructivist theory, drama pedagogy, drama competitions, intercultural communication, English speaking, innovation and critical thinking, and evaluation systems.

Secondly, formulate the experimental plan for the research project and assign personnel responsibilities. Liu Qi formulates and implements the research plan, and writes the research report; Zeng Fenghuang organizes competitions, collects and organizes materials; Zhou Yidan is responsible for regular training and special lectures; Steven is responsible for regular training and special lectures.

Thirdly, design questionnaires and English proficiency tests specifically for competitions and coaching activities, as well as evaluation plans for student performance during the coaching process.

Fourthly, determine the competition date, location, organizer, competition process, organization method, budget for materials and funds, contingency plans, etc. Write a planning proposal, complete the approval process, and gradually carry out publicity, registration, auditions, semifinals, finals, and coaching activities.

Fifthly, after the auditions, the teams that enter the semifinals are the research subjects of this project. Then, select some students from the same grade with the same English proficiency as the research subjects to serve as reference subjects. Through the evaluation system, understand the promotive effect and impact of English drama competitions and drama teaching on students' English learning.

Sixthly, the coaching content includes pronunciation correction, voice imitation, character analysis, script recitation, and drama performance, once a week, for 6-8 weeks. The goal is to help students produce excellent drama entries. During the teaching process, integrate English

knowledge, culture, and drama performance skills. After the auditions, each team that enters the semifinals is assigned a coaching teacher. Based on students' different English proficiency levels and the characteristics of their competition entries, a coaching plan is formulated, with weekly training sessions. The training content includes pronunciation correction, voice imitation, character analysis, script recitation, and drama performance, helping students learn as much rich and interesting English knowledge and culture as possible from rehearsals.

Seventhly, design questionnaire questions, publish them on an online survey platform, and use the platform's data statistics to analyze results, identify issues, and explore reasons. Design comprehensive English proficiency test papers, combining oral and written tests, to understand changes in students' comprehensive English proficiency and analyze the test results.

Lastly, based on the research from the previous stages, summarize the results of theoretical and practical research into a research report. Systematically elaborate on the research background, purpose, and significance, organization and division of labor, methods and steps, staged achievements, unique value, reflections, and future prospects of this project, aiming to explore the application mode of drama pedagogy in the second-class English courses in universities in a more detailed, objective, and rational manner.

## **5. Preliminary Results**

### **5.1. Effective Situation Creation**

Constructivist theory believes that real learning occurs in certain situations, not only because real learning tasks are conducive to stimulating learners' initiative but also because objective activities are the source of individual knowledge construction. (Li Zhihou, 2010:12) For English learners, situations refer to scenarios and environments where English is used for communication. However, on the one hand, domestic students generally do not have a pure English communication environment during their free time. On the other hand, university English classrooms cannot fully simulate real-life scenarios, allowing every student to participate in language practice. Therefore, rich and diverse second-class English drama activities are a supplement and extension of classroom language teaching and the most likely practical platform to achieve effective situation creation. During drama performances, with students as the center, teachers need to create a real situation in combination with the Western culture contained in the works, allowing students to immerse themselves and experience the joys and sorrows of the characters, appreciate the exquisite beauty of language, and continuously engage in interesting practices such as line imitation, interactive scenes, improvisation after forgetting lines, and role portrayal, creating characters and showcasing themselves.

One week before coaching, instructors require students to read the original work, understand the writing background, story outline, and character traits, as well as the position, role, and importance of the selected excerpt in the entire book. At the same time, students are required to read the script fluently, look up the pronunciation and meaning of some new words, watch the movie with the same name, and imitate the pronunciation and intonation. The first training aims to help students understand the historical background of the original work's creation, the purpose of the script writing, the central

idea, and the character traits, focusing on creating situations, leading students into their roles, and experiencing the charm of time and space different from reality in the story. They should view events through the eyes of the characters, understand events with the characters' thinking, and feel events with the characters' hearts. Firstly, the teacher prepares some questions about the story plot to help students review their understanding of the work from different perspectives and then enter the situation. Next, the teacher guides students to analyze character traits through questions.

### **5.2. Effective Collaboration**

Constructivist theory believes that learning is a meaning construction process realized through interpersonal collaboration with the help of others in a certain situation, a socio-cultural background. In a positive and trusting situation created by the teacher, students achieve common understanding and knowledge through collaboration with teachers and classmates. They acquire new knowledge from the learned content through their existing cognitive structures, retain it in long-term memory, and maintain an open state for further processing or reorganization. (Li Zhihou, 2010:52) The concept of drama pedagogy is to make students the leaders of activity execution, with teachers as organizers and assistants, allowing students to practice language through practical activities such as role-playing and scenario simulation conversations in the second-class English drama courses, learn to collaborate effectively with teachers and classmates, and improve their comprehensive English proficiency and team collaboration skills.

The second and third trainings aim to assist students in deeply exploring different scenes and character portrayal in the script, focusing on collaboration between teachers and students, and among students, to choose the best stage performance form. Firstly, the instructor asks students to propose details that they find difficult to understand or grasp, and everyone discusses and expresses their opinions. Secondly, from the perspectives of basic pronunciation and intonation, dialect accents, body language, emotional expression, spacetime restoration, imagination, and creation of blank spaces in the script, discuss the stage performance method for each scene. Then, the teacher requires students to take turns reading the script with emotion, role-playing, trying to make the audience feel that the character's voice and tone will vary according to the development of events and changes in emotions, experiencing the unique stage tension and expressiveness of drama. After discussion and reading, students will think about the best way to present this character in this plot, as well as the appropriate dialogue form, eye contact, and body language between characters. After the reading, the teacher will comment on each student's performance, reminding them to learn from each other and complement each other's strengths. Next, students are divided into several groups to perform different segments of each scene in the script, and the group with the best voice, platform, image, and performance is selected. During the preparation for the performance, students discuss, negotiate, remind each other, and share their insights within the group, incorporating new knowledge and experience into their cognitive systems and promoting meaning construction.

### **5.3. Effective Communication**

Constructivist theory believes that knowledge is actively constructed by the cognitive subject, and each person

interprets the meaning of knowledge based on their own experience. Knowledge has different meanings for different individuals. (Gao Wen, 2008:223) Through effective dialogue and negotiation, different learners' views and experiences of the same phenomenon and connotation can collide, complement each other, innovate, narrow the blind spots of cognition, and expand their horizons. However, when learners are forced to learn or are under high pressure, the learning effect is poor, and learning efficiency is low. Therefore, teachers need to create a good atmosphere, allowing students to relax and fully release themselves in learning, engaging in effective dialogue and interaction from multiple perspectives between teachers and students, among students, and between teachers, students, and texts, so that students can form understanding, digestion, and absorption of knowledge and viewpoints through continuous practice. In the second-class drama pedagogy courses, students have no academic pressure, only the motivation to produce excellent stage works to participate in English drama competitions and compete for awards. In a relaxed atmosphere and through effective communication, they learn new language knowledge and culture, master the skills of flexible English use, boldly create or adapt scripts, courageously express their views on characters and plots, deepen their understanding of valuable knowledge in drama literature, strengthen their grasp of social factual knowledge on similar topics, establish correct outlooks on life, values, and the world, and improve their innovative and critical thinking skills and intercultural communication skills.

The fourth and fifth training sessions are designed to help students interpret complex sentences and expressions with obscure meanings, emphasizing dialogue and exchange between teachers and students, among students, and between teachers, students, and the text. The goal is to enhance their language aesthetic level and strengthen their literary appreciation skills. Firstly, the instructor organizes students to audition for roles. If multiple actors are competing for the same role, they will each perform a trial, and the final selection will be determined by a vote from those present. Secondly, after roles are assigned, students are grouped according to the different parts their roles belong to, and they discuss each character's image, personality, stance, emotions, and dialogue. After the discussion, the teacher guides students to summarize the results and analyzes and explains key and difficult lines or highlights from the aspects of pronunciation, word choice, grammar, syntax, textual rules, and rhetoric. At the same time, teachers encourage students to explain the lines in their own words. After all, if an actor forgets their lines during a performance, being able to flexibly adapt the script based on the general meaning not only makes the performance more natural but also helps improve the student's spoken English. Next, teachers ask students to boldly adapt or innovate the original lines, storyline, and stage presentation methods, providing timely assistance and working together to refine the details of the script. Finally, the teacher provides the same movie clips and asks students to record their finalized lines into the video, replacing the original soundtrack to create audio-visual materials.

#### **5.4. Effective Meaning Construction**

Constructivist theory holds that learning is a process of constructing internal mental representations. Learners do not simply transfer knowledge from the outside world into their memory but construct understanding based on their existing

experiences through interaction with the external world. (Gao Wen, 2008:202) Meaning construction is not only the construction of the meaning of new knowledge and experiences but also the reconstruction of past knowledge and experiences. It is the result of the interaction between old and new knowledge and experiences. Effective meaning construction requires teachers to stimulate students' interest in autonomous learning, guide them to connect old and new knowledge and experiences in collaborative learning and practical exploration at various levels, continuously test, adjust, and revise cognitive content and processes, and complete the meaning construction of knowledge and experiences.

The sixth to eighth training sessions aim to enable students to apply accumulated language knowledge to drama performance practice, focusing on the construction of knowledge meaning, so that students can more deeply understand the cultural conflicts and thinking differences reflected in language knowledge. Students participating in English drama competitions have a strong interest in English performances, and the works are also something they love and are eager to showcase on stage. Therefore, during the preparation and training process, they will be more proactive in mastering their lines, adapting to different cultures and ways of thinking, and not shrinking back from difficult-to-understand parts of the script. The instructor exerts students' intrinsic motivation by posing questions related to the script's language, culture, and performance, guiding students to dissect problems, exchange viewpoints in group discussions, deeply understand the content and discover new problems in text analysis, and correct mistakes and solve problems in repeated rehearsals. This process enables the integration of old and new knowledge and experiences and achieves effective meaning construction of knowledge and experiences through the simulation of story scenarios one after another.

Overall, throughout the competition and coaching process, instructors should carefully design questions, guide students to study the script, fully immerse themselves in the learning situation, and allow students to experience the charm of dramatic language and culture. This subtle approach helps students correctly master the language, understand cultural differences between China and the West, enhances their interest in English learning, improves their comprehensive English learning abilities and intercultural communication skills, and encourages collaborative learning among teachers and students and among students through Q&A sessions, brainstorming, script reading, and group performances. This approach helps students further consolidate their knowledge, improve learning efficiency, practice speaking, and stimulate innovative thinking. By organizing students to audition for roles, requiring them to discuss in role-based groups, and analyzing lines together, teachers can inspire students' enthusiasm for adapting or innovating scripts and recording movie dubbing, maximizing dialogue and exchange. This approach helps cultivate students' innovative consciousness, enlightens their wisdom, broadens their horizons, encourages them to view problems dialectically, and establishes correct worldviews, values, and outlooks on life. Through repeated rehearsals and performances, students' multifaceted potential is unleashed, promoting the effective construction of knowledge meaning. After implementing a series of research and evaluation methods on the research and reference subjects, it is concluded that the application mode of the English drama teaching in the second classroom has been proven effective

through practice. It can cultivate students' intercultural communication skills, improve their spoken English proficiency, and enhance their innovation and critical thinking abilities.

### 5.5. Effective Evaluation

Constructivist theory believes that evaluating learners' learning effects should not rely solely on summative evaluation methods such as closed-book exams. Instead, it should combine formative evaluation and adopt multiple evaluation methods, including knowledge-based evaluation, technical evaluation, performance-based evaluation, and authentic evaluation. Unlike classroom teaching, the quality and level of second classroom activities, as well as teaching and learning effects, cannot be measured solely through paper-and-pencil tests. Especially for practical performance like English drama competitions, if we want to improve the quality of participating works and enhance students' English proficiency, researchers must conduct periodic tracking records of students' English learning. Therefore, in the second-classroom drama teaching, evaluation methods should include formative evaluations primarily based on questionnaires, training records, teacher interviews, and comparisons of midterm and final English exam scores, as well as summative evaluations primarily based on English speaking tests, innovative critical thinking, and intercultural communication skills tests.

## 6. Reflection and Future Prospects

A more scientific and systematic method is not employed for data analysis. The pre-validation test for the innovative critical thinking and intercultural communication competence test is not conducted, and the evaluation criteria for the English speaking test need improvement. The sample size of the research subjects and control group is too small, and no distinction is made based on academic background. The analysis of the results of the innovative critical thinking and intercultural communication competence test is too general, without separate analyses of changes in innovative critical thinking ability and intercultural communication competence. These are the current shortcomings of this research topic, and it is hoped that solutions can be explored through future teaching practice and theoretical research.

This study aims to explore the application mode of drama teaching methodology in the second classroom of college English. By organizing English drama competitions and providing language and performance coaching to

participating students, changes in students before and after the competition are compared, and the collected data is analyzed. The effectiveness of this application mode is examined in terms of improving English speaking ability, intercultural communication competence, and innovative critical thinking ability. It is hoped that this study will arouse the attention and bold attempts of English educators towards the drama teaching methodology, and jointly explore the possibility of its widespread application in the process of college English teaching.

## Acknowledgments

This paper is the phased result of a research project of Xiamen University Tan Kah Kee College, called A Study on College English Teaching Reform to Improve the Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence from the Perspective of Ideological and Political Education in Curriculum (2021J04).

## References

- [1] Wen Qiufang. A Study on the Current Situation of Critical Thinking Ability of Chinese Foreign Language Majors [M]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Publishing House, 2012.
- [2] Wang Zhe. 500 Problems for Innovative Thinking Training [M]. Beijing: China Yan Shi Publishing House, 2009.
- [3] Lu Jun. 600 Problems for Logical Thinking Test [M]. Beijing: Enterprise Management Publishing House, 2009.
- [4] Yu Shihou. A Feast of Logic - Famous Problems from Renowned Experts [M]. Beijing: Peking University Press, 2012.
- [5] Fan Bing. Western Social Etiquette and Culture - Oriental Cambridge Applied English Series [M]. Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press, 2014.
- [6] Wang Enming. Basic Course on British and American Culture [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Publishing House, 2013.
- [7] Zhu Yongtao. An Introduction to Society and Culture in English-speaking Countries [M]. Beijing: Higher Education Publishing House, 1997.
- [8] Li Zhihou. Transforming Classroom Teaching Methods - Constructivist Learning Theory and Its Application in Teaching [M]. Guangdong: Guangdong Education Publishing House, 2010.
- [9] Gao Wen, Xu Binyan, Wu Gang. Research on Constructivist Education [M]. Beijing: Education Science Publishing House, 2008.