

# A Study on the Integration of “Sitcom-Based” Teaching Methodology into Junior High School English Classroom from the Perspective of Cross-Cultural Thinking Education

Chong Liu<sup>1</sup>, Ting Huang<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Languages and Linguistics, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia

<sup>2</sup>School of English Studies, Zhejiang Yuexiu University, Shaoxing, China

Email: chong.liu.1@student.unimelb.edu.au, \*20102018@zyufl.edu.cn

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## Abstract

Cross-cultural thinking competence is defined as a multi-competency based on cross-cultural competence and critical thinking, which assists students in making cultural choices in cross-cultural situations by utilizing critical thinking skills. The application of this competency to English teaching aligns with the requirements set forth by the integration of ideological and political education. In light of this, the thesis used cross-cultural thinking education as the theoretical guidance and the “sitcom-based” teaching method as the bridge, investigating the current level and application situation of 126 Grade eight students’ cross-cultural thinking competence and “sitcom-based” teaching acceptance through descriptive analysis while giving several suggestions. The results indicate that the critical thinking of the target students is currently in a wavering state in terms of cross-cultural thinking competence, with the academic dimension performing better than the social dimension; their overall cross-cultural competence is at a mid-to-high level, but the understanding of cross-cultural knowledge has a lot of room for improvement. For the “sitcom-based” teaching method, on the one hand, its function in cultivating students’ cross-cultural thinking competence is well-acknowledged and teachers prefer to implement it in the practical class. On the other hand, several deficiencies, such as single application form and limited resources for reference, remain. In light of this, the paper makes several recommendations, including increasing the proportion of sitcom scripts in textbooks, creating teacher support groups to develop interdisciplinary and cross-cultural curricula that use English sitcoms as integrated tools, and creating a comprehensive evaluation system for sitcom performances.

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## Keywords

Cross-Cultural Thinking Education, “Sitcom-Based” Teaching Method, Junior High School English Classroom

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

In 2024, Chinese president Xi proposed the initiative of integrating the political education curriculum across all levels, giving a modern-era interpretation of establishing morality and cultivating talents while emphasizing its significance at an earlier stage. Thus, in the field of cultural awareness, it is shared by all levels to nurture modern-day youth who shoulder the responsibilities of the nation. Of all the institutions, junior high school has been of more importance in this respect than can be imagined, since those pupils, the children at the formal operational stage, are in the prime of their years for shaping and sharpening their minds.

Furthermore, the new English curriculum (*Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2022*) has further stressed the significance of thinking capacity and cultural awareness, especially including the necessity of its combination and integration since each aspect in core competencies are not entirely opposed, but interconnected. For example, the general objective states that students are highly required to understand the excellent civilizational achievements of different countries, comparing similarities and discrepancies between Chinese and foreign cultures; deepen the understanding and recognition of Chinese culture, establish an international vision, and strengthen cultural confidence. Guided by these demands, cross-cultural thinking, the production of a combination of cross-cultural competence and critical thinking, is gradually emerging as a prominent topic for research and inquiry.

“Curriculum ideological and political education plays a crucial role in shaping students’ values and fostering their character development, whereas humanistic education can subtly and effectively facilitate the attainment of these objectives (*Sun & Wang, 2021: p. 5*).” Professor Sun’s research is fundamentally in line with the transfer of the new English curriculum. He identified the cross-cultural thinking education approach to point out the combination of cross-cultural and critical thinking competence. In his perspective, “cross-cultural” in this approach requires a profound comprehension in different nations’ civilizations and conventions, which is far beyond the level in daily communication. And teachers are highly expected to play the role of facilitators, guiding students to unearth cultural values and ideologies hidden in textbooks and helping students internalize them. Under the guidance of this principle, foreign language teaching and research presses are now innovatively using it in the compilation and revision of teaching materials, including English textbooks for secondary schools.

Nonetheless, due to the novelty of this theory, there is currently a small body of research focusing on junior high school English curricula grounded in this theoretical framework. Even the theory's presenter, Professor Sun, has yet to provide a detailed template of viable teaching activities that could be used to investigate and enhance students' cross-cultural thinking competence.

Actually, the "double reduction" policy and the new English curriculum pave the way for the further development of cross-cultural thinking education. The "double reduction" policy published by the General Office of CPC Central Committee and State Council in 2021 demands to effectively reduce both the heavy homework burden and after-school training burden of students in the stage of elementary education, identifying that subject acquisition should become a natural and fun process. The requirement of new English curriculum firmly advocates that teaching should be student-centered and aimed at a well-rounded education, suggesting for the integration of sitcoms and other subjects, advocating to cultivate students' comprehensive ability of complementing interdisciplinary learning and practice through the "sitcom-based" teaching methodology.

## 1.2. Research Purpose and Significance

In light of all these backgrounds, this paper aims to progressively construct a student-centered teaching model through theoretical, qualitative, and quantitative analysis, using English sitcoms as a bridge to achieve the integration of critical thinking and cross-cultural competencies of junior high school students. The significance of this research can be divided into the following two parts:

### 1) Theoretical Significance

The interpretations of cross-cultural competence by scholars, domestic or overseas, have both similarities and discrepancies since nowadays there is no complete and unified definition in the academic circle (Wen, 2022), especially for middle school students. Guided by cross-cultural thinking theory and combined with the requirements in the new English curriculum, this study is highly anticipated to theoretically design an assessment scale for Chinese EFL learners in secondary schools.

Furthermore, previous research on developing students' cultural awareness and thinking skills has focused on detailed passages in textbooks or specific language skills, such as reading or writing. In addition, few studies have directly used cross-cultural education theory, instead tying together the links between these two competencies themselves. This paper, enlightened on the current educational policies, innovatively applied cross-cultural thinking education as the guide theory and integrate English sitcoms as the approach to construct a mutual-interactive and students-centered English teaching methodology aims to enhance students' relevant abilities since English sitcoms, by embedding language usage within a theatrical environment and integrating diverse cultural materials, affords learners the opportunity to immerse themselves in contextualized communication scenarios, thereby augmenting their confidence in thinking dialectically while shaping cultural attitudes beyond the confines of the classroom.

## 2) Practical Significance

This study focuses on identifying the attitudes of junior high school students towards the integration of English sitcoms in practical English classroom activities, the specific teaching procedures during implementation, and the teaching effects after application, which have two practical implications.

First and foremost, it could objectively and accurately reflect the current state of the use of the “sitcom-based” English teaching methodology in middle school class. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods including questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, this study explores the obstacles faced in the implementation of English sitcoms in middle school classrooms, which are highly expected to stimulate reflection and learning awareness among both students and teachers while enhancing the attention of schools and society towards this teaching methodology.

Moreover, it could offer targeted and practical recommendations for sitcom implementation. Building on a thorough review of existing literature, this study will draw conclusions about successful teaching experiences through teacher interviews and classroom observations to develop actionable teaching guidelines that will enlighten novices in simulating this model to collaboratively foster core competencies of students and their rounded personalities.

### 1.3. Structure of the Thesis

The main content of the thesis is to integrate sitcoms into junior high school English classes under the guidance of cross-cultural thinking education. The thesis consists of five chapters.

Chapter 1 is devoted to the introduction. This chapter begins by presenting the relevant background for conducting this study, clarifying its purpose and significance. Chapter 2 is the literature review. Cross-cultural competence and “sitcom-based” teaching method are highly expected to be explained in detail in the structure of definition, classification, and evaluation. Chapter 3 is the research methodology. First, two questionnaires for core concepts are constructed. Based on this, a semi-structured interview profile was subsequently formulated for further investigation. Lesson plans based on specific texts from the PEP curriculum will also be implemented to illustrate the detailed teaching process. Chapter 4 is the results and discussion. Following a description of the overall conditions and specific circumstances of the secondary and tertiary dimension indicators in each aspect, an in-depth analysis is conducted on the current status of three dimensions: “application situation,” “teaching effectiveness” and “implementation suggestions”, using transcribed interview texts. Chapter 5 is the conclusion. This chapter presents the major findings of the study based on the data processing and analysis findings discussed in Chapter 4, along with implications to guide middle school English teachers in practice and further refine instructional models. Finally, a reflection on the limitations and shortcomings of this study is provided, along with a discussion of potential directions for future research.

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## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Overview of the Cross-Cultural Thinking Education

#### 1) Definition of Cross-Cultural Competence and Critical Thinking

The systematic exploration of cross-cultural competence has its roots in the 1980s, and its application to language teaching has its origins a decade later (Wen, 2022). In terms of pedagogy, this competence is defined as developing a student's ability to acquire concepts of cultural specificity and universality in cross-cultural contexts, as well as the ability to perform specific tasks through appropriate and effective negotiation between the home culture and the target culture (Guilherme & Sawyer, 2021). Due to English's responsibility as a lingua franca in today's fast-changing and multicultural world, recent research on this field has focused on assessing and interpreting the multidimensional relations between cross-cultural competence and critical thinking (Yang, 2020; Cheng, 2020; Xu, 2021). For instance, Shen and Gao (2015) thinks that critical thinking and cross-cultural competence are interconnected by integrating various models that predecessors have summarized for these two concepts. Moreover, using data (including several times participant observation and 13 in depth interviews in two different stages) from 114 students in a Norway middle school, Sjøen (2021) investigated that while students have attained notable results in intercultural communication, there exists a propensity to overestimate their intercultural competence. This finding reveals the vital importance of critical thinking in self-assessment and promoting the growth of cross-cultural competence. Following Sjøen's approach, Li (2023) further considered the impact of critical thinking in cross-cultural competence, advocating that high school English teachers are highly expected to implement critical thinking activities in daily teaching through the integration of diverse cultures and interdisciplinary teaching methods.

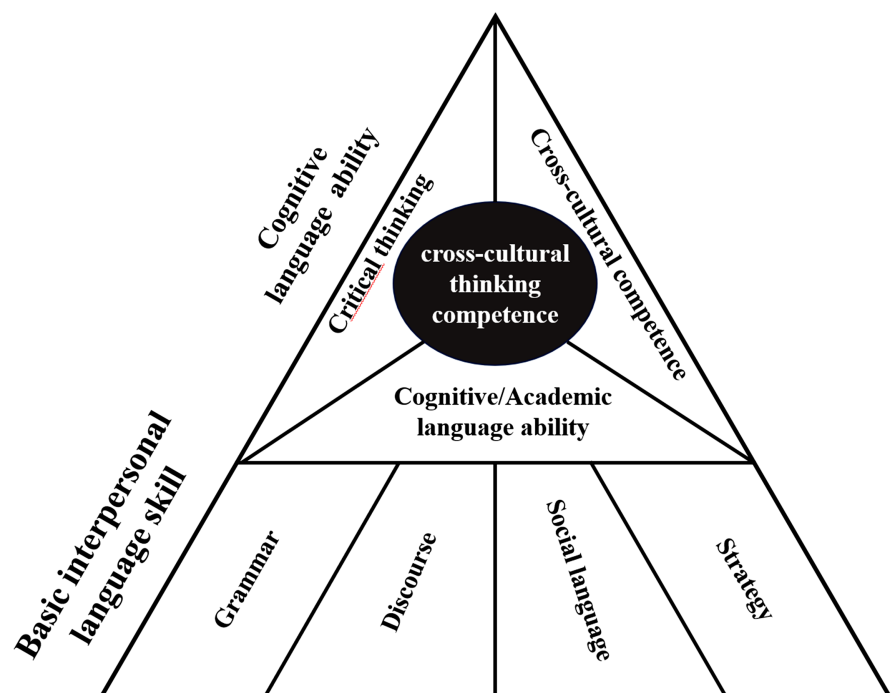
John Dewey's work *How We Think* gives birth to the concept of critical thinking, defining it as thinking actively, continuously and meticulously about any belief or assumed knowledge form, having insight into the reasons for supporting it and the conclusions it further points to (Yang, 2021). In light of this, scholars have further divided the concept into several dimensions. For example, researchers in the Delphi project used a qualitative approach to construct a two-dimensional model that includes cognitive competencies and emotional traits (Kasumagić-Kafedžić, 2023). This is a simple but useful model for assessing critical capacity. By implementing this model in language education, Richard Paul and Linda Elder expanded a more complex model into three dimensions, including thinking elements, scoring criteria, and intellectual characteristics, followed by several subdimensions. Following Richard's approach, Zembylas (2022), under the guidance of affect theory, reconstructs the concept of critical thinking, pointing out that it is not merely a cognitive process but also encompasses emotional and physical aspects since affect offers new theoretical insights into critical thinking and reflexivity that deepen scholarly understandings of the entanglement between "thinking-feeling" in higher education pedagogies. This innovative interpretation in the

senses further demonstrates the backwash effect of cross-cultural competence in enhancing critical thinking.

## 2) Classification of Cross-Cultural Thinking Competence

The aforementioned literature gradually explores the intricate interplay between critical thinking and cross-cultural competence, providing rich resources for both student learning and teacher instruction. However, those researches are not without their limitations. According to the new English curriculum, the significance of composition and integration in the core competencies of junior high school students is emphasized, since language ability, cultural awareness, thinking capacity and learning ability are not antagonistic but interrelated. Therefore, the scope of the discussion cannot be limited within the two parties. Luckily, the empirical evidence of professor Sun's cross-cultural thinking competence mostly agrees with those requirements.

**Figure 1** illustrates the conceptual framework of cross-cultural thinking competence, which can be divided into two parts. On the one hand, basic language skills are fundamental to promoting advanced levels of cognitive language ability, aligning with the fact that learning strategies are fundamental to memorizing new words, developing habits of thought, and shaping attitudes. On the other hand, cross-cultural thinking competence is a core concept consisting of critical thinking, cross-cultural competence, and cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP).



**Figure 1.** Cross-cultural thinking competence (Sun et al., 2021).

The definition of the first two concepts has been nicely introduced in the definition part and CALP here can be defined as advanced language proficiency that

encompasses critical thinking skills. It not only includes knowledge of grammar, discourse, and pragmatics required in cognitive contexts, but also critical thinking skills and dispositions to understand the hidden meaning in contexts or discourses (Sun, 2021). Therefore, it can be included that the true language ability must include critical thinking and cross-cultural competence and foreign language teaching will eventually be upgraded to a pattern in which the acquired language is employed to interpret, analyze, evaluate and recreate various types of texts from different cultural perspectives.

### 3) Evaluation of Cross-Cultural Thinking Education

In light of all these circumstances, it is clear that cross-cultural thinking education is a cutting-edge approach to English language teaching that has received much attention in recent years, in line with the principles of the new Curriculum Standards. This pedagogical framework effectively fosters the cultural literacy and core competencies of students. However, it is a pity that the initiators themselves have not yet developed a corresponding set of measuring implements or provided a complete instruction plan for reference.

Nonetheless, combined with Sun's teaching principles, various scholars in China have used several former questionnaires for their research. Among them, Wen et al.'s (2011) systemic questionnaire in critical thinking disposition and the Intercultural communicative competence in China (ICCCA) developed by Wu et al. (2013) has been widely appreciated for its qualified validity and reliability through large-scale testing (Ling, 2022; Zhao, 2023). In light of this, the cross-cultural thinking competence questionnaire used in this paper will be adapted based on these two realizations, selecting items that align with the cognitive abilities of the middle school students while retaining the majority of the dimensions for testing.

## 2.2. Overview of the "Sitcom-Based" Teaching Method

### 1) Definition of the "Sitcom-Based" Teaching Method

Sitcoms are seen as a more fragmented and life-oriented form of drama. It can vividly construct an interactive and contextualized circumstance for actors to acquire knowledge and present opinions through natural performance since both verbal and non-verbal behavior inside conveys a great deal of local culture (Gerkens, Sallis, & O'Brien, 2023). Moreover, Henry et al. (2023) even named it as a "queer pedagogical form". Therefore, in the scope of this paper, "sitcom-based" teaching methodology refers to the approach that appropriately applying sitcoms into in-class activities, no matter in students' first-class or second-class.

### 2) Classification of the "Sitcom-Based" Teaching Method

#### a) Studies Abroad: Drama-in-education

After carefully browsing the literature review overseas, the author finds that since sitcoms are always regarded as the hyponymy of drama, there is basically no discrepancies between the definition of sitcom-based teaching method and drama-in-education (DIE) in Western countries (Liu et al., 2024).

Two concepts “learning by doing” and “learning by dramatic doing” proposed by French philosopher Rousseau from his educational work *Emile* published in the 18th century started the beginning of using drama as pedagogical approaches (Sanchez et al., 2022). From then on, Western educators and scholars gradually began to embrace the educational philosophy “educational practice should be closely connected with students’ social life experiences” and they gradually incorporated drama (including sitcoms) as an educational form into their teaching practices, leading to the formal establishment of the DIE (Luo et al., 2024).

Recent studies of DIE have set their sights on the realm of thinking capacity and cultural awareness. Collecting data from a large grant-funded English integration program implemented at four large Grades 6-8 middle schools and one small 7-12 charter school (total 21 class periods) in America, Katz-Buonincontro et al. (2020) illustrated DIE’s functions as an effective way to enhance students’ creative participation through autonomous performance while investigating its significance in cultivating students’ comprehension and expression of their cultural identity. Moreover, Zakaria et al. (2021) classified process drama as a critical teaching approach and bear out its significance in strengthening students’ own ambitions through the positive transfer in drama performing by using the theory of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs). Following Zakaria’s approach, Gerkens et al. (2023) further considered DIE’s impact of cultural awareness and critical thinking, directly defined DIE as an embodied pedagogy tool and conducted their research focused on the significance of role-based and embodied drama experiences in students’ language ability by conducting empirical research at Acacia Primary School. This innovation further comprehensively explains the relationship between DIE and cross-cultural thinking competence, laying a theoretical foundation for the subsequent research of this thesis.

However, the dramatic texts utilized in scholarly research are predominantly adaptations derived from Western literary sources or portrayals of Western daily life. For instance, Moses and Torrejon Capurro (2024) leveraged sociodramatic play based on scenarios in Western restaurants to teach targeted vocabulary and sentence patterns, while Murray and Stacey (2024) employed *The Tempest* as a tool to facilitate students’ deeper exploration of Shakespeare and related English literature. Although such adaptations may provide EFL students with more authentic exposure to foreign contexts, their focus frequently departs from the cultural awareness and critical thinking frameworks integral to students’ domestic educational systems. Distinctively, the approach adopted by Yilmaz, Hart, and Sönmez (2024) involves adapting three picture books that challenge social biases—*Paper Bag Princess*, *William’s Doll*, and *Amazing Grace*—into dramatic texts. Employing a qualitative case study methodology with 13 EFL learners (aged 12-14) from a public middle school in Northeastern Turkey, their research investigated the feasibility and effectiveness of using dramatized children’s literature to promote Social Justice Language Education (SJLE). Consequently, this work not only aligns with the national educational evaluation framework but also addresses a significant gap in drama-based pedagogy research within non-Western contexts.

### **b) Studies at Home: “Sitcom-based” Teaching Method**

Domestic scholars nowadays have been deeply researching the localization of “sitcom-based” teaching methods, integrating their classroom experiences to fully leverage its unique advantages in language instruction. In the area of humanistic education, Yan and Tuo (2021) point out sitcom’s significance in enhancing students’ spiritual fulfillment, holistic harmony, and integrated personality, pointing out the learning benefits in the combination of embodied life experiences and humanistic insights. Designed for junior high schools, Ning (2023) and Zhao (2021) both conducted action research to illustrate and demonstrate the feasibility of sitcom integration in English classes and its crucial role for student enhancement, pointing out the current problems in implementing this approach into daily teaching, and offer recommendations for integrating curriculum content and improving assessment systems based on these findings. Another respect which has received a great deal of attention from domestic scholars in subsequent years is the principles and models of sitcom acting which could be used in language teaching. For example, Gu et al. (2004) presents the theoretical possibilities of using “sitcom-based” teaching methods to fill the gap of insufficient communicative practice in oral English teaching and classified four forms of performing: exemplary conversation practice, supportive conversation practice, improvisation, and minor-size dramatic performance.

In light of this, Yang et al. (2022) concluded several practical methods of language teaching in sitcoms, including reader’s theater, role-play, hot seating, mantle of the expert, and teacher in role, emphasizing its effects in promoting students’ cultural experience and improving their ability of language construction and application.

### **3) Evaluation of the “Sitcom-Based” Teaching Method**

In a nutshell, “sitcom-based” teaching methodology have gained significant attention in ELT in recent years. Academics from both national and international backgrounds engaged in in-depth discussions from multiple layers and perspectives, grounded in diverse theoretical frameworks, teaching priorities, and current student learning conditions, resulting in the development of a rich array of theoretical resources. However, there are still some deficiencies in the methods and contents of the existing studies. For one thing, it is clear that research on sitcom-based teaching methods in the domestic context often fails to suffuse the concepts of cross-cultural competence and critical thinking skills together. For another, although foreign research integrates intercultural competence with critical thinking, the different ideological backgrounds result in some variations in the focal points of their intercultural considerations. Consequently, there is a need for corresponding localized studies.

In light of this, the thesis aims to progressively construct a student-centered teaching model that uses English sitcoms as a bridge to achieve the integration of critical thinking and cross-cultural competencies through theoretical, qualitative, and quantitative analysis.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Questions

This study investigated the implementation of the “sitcom-based” teaching model in F junior high school in N city, evaluating junior students’ current cross-cultural thinking competence level, finding out the teaching effects, and formulating targeted countermeasures for the existing issues. Specifically, this study is aimed to address the following research questions:

- 1) What is the current level of junior high school students’ cross-cultural thinking competence? And what attitude do they hold towards “sitcom-based” English teaching?
- 2) What methods do junior high school English teachers use to implement “sitcom-based” English teaching under the guidance of cross-cultural thinking education?
- 3) What effects does the implementation of this teaching model have on students’ critical thinking and cross-cultural competence?

#### 3.2. Research Participants

In order to investigate the application of sitcom-based teaching methods in practical junior high school English classrooms, the authors conducted a prior survey of School F, City N, and found that the school adapted PEP English books. After a careful review of the textbook, the author found that there is a large amount of role-play material in each unit, and that Section B, Part 4, always provides a realistic communication context for dramatizing diverse sitcoms to develop students’ cross-cultural thinking skills. Moreover, there were two reasons for selecting students from F school as target students. For one thing, School F is a typical junior high school that is directly under the authority of the city’s Bureau of Education, meaning teachers at the school may be more sensitive to changes in the educational syllabus and teaching orientation. For another, the quality of teaching at this school and the admission rates to prestigious secondary schools are average within the district, and therefore the collection and analysis of its data render the findings of the study applicable across the local province.

Thus, the participants in this experiment were 128 eighth-grade high school students (plus two English teachers) from three parallel classes with approximately the same range of English proficiency based on their final eighth-grade English Semester1 exam. From **Table 1**, it can be clearly seen that the mean score, proportion of the excellent grade (>90), and proportion of the good grade (>80) were similar. Eighth-graders were selected for their relatively low learning pressure and high language output, allowing teachers ample time to implement a variety of rich sitcom role-playing activities in the classroom. Moreover, thanks to China’s local junior high school admissions policy, the targets embrace essentially similar backgrounds and relatively identical experiences of social interaction. As a result, the study was able to avoid as much bias as possible caused by large discrepancies in living backgrounds and social experiences.

**Table 1.** Exam score distribution.

Grade	Class 4 (43ss)	Proportion	Class 6 (41ss)	Proportion	Class 7 (42ss)	Proportion
100 - 90	8	18.60%	7	17.07%	7	16.67%
90 - 80	14	32.56%	13	31.71%	15	35.71%
<60	3	6.9%	2	4.9%	2	4.8%
Mean	82.47		83.04		82.76	

### 3.3. Research Instruments

In order to answer the research questions, questionnaires and interviews were used in this study. Between them, the questionnaire was the primary instrument in this study, and the interview was designed to complement the statistical results of the questionnaire.

#### 1) Questionnaire

To answer the first research question, two questionnaires were applied in this study. They were both 5-Likert scale, ranging from 1 as strongly disagree to 5 as strongly agree. The first was the questionnaire of cross-cultural thinking competence (CCTC), consisting of Wen Qiufang's Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI) for Chinese College Students (2009 edition) and Wu Weiping's Intercultural Competence Assessment Scale (ICCAS) for Chinese College Students (2013 edition). For the former, the author adapted and removed several items based on the cognitive status of the target participants, while retaining all the dimensions of the original study. For the latter, after discussions with English teachers and a random survey of 4 students from each class, the author found that the students had no interpersonal experience talking to foreigners. Therefore, the dimension of cross-cultural skills has been removed. The final version of this questionnaire was developed after multiple revisions based on the recommendations of various experts in this area and after being submitted for review by frontline English teachers. The item of each question can be seen in Appendix 1.

**Table 2** clearly illustrated the construction and hierarchy of CCTC. A total of 26 items were divided into two categories adapted from Wen Qiufang's CCTDI and Wu Weiping's ICCAS. Among CCTDI, there were 16 items divided into four sub-dimensions (Wen, 2012) including intelligence (item 1, 2, 3, 4), emotion (item 5, 6, 7, 8), reason (item 9, 10, 11, 12), and morality (item 13, 14, 15, 16), with the former two consists of the academic dimension and the latter counterpart consists of social dimension. It was also worth mentioning that several of the sub-dimensions analyzed by Wen as being subordinate to these sub-dimensions, including analyticity, inquisitiveness, systematization, self-confidence, truth-seeking, cognitive maturity, open-mindedness, and justice-orientedness, were not discussed and analyzed in the paper in terms of finite term scaling and participant size. For ICCAS, there were fully 10 items divided into three dimensions, including cross-cultural knowledge (item 17, 18, 19, 20), cross-cultural attitude (item 21, 22, 23), and cross-cultural awareness (item 24, 25, 26).

**Table 2.** Structure of CCTC questionnaire.

Name	Item	Category	Item	Dimension	Sub-dimension	Item	Item Number	
CCTC	26	CCTDI	16	Academic	Intelligence	4	1, 2, 3, 4	
					Emotion	4	5, 6, 7, 8	
				Social	Reason	4	9, 10, 11, 12	
					Morality	4	13, 14, 15, 16	
		ICCAS	10		CC knowledge	/	4	17, 18, 19, 20
					CC attitude	/	3	21, 22, 23
				CC awareness	/	3	24, 25, 26	

The second was the questionnaire of “Sitcom-based” English teaching method (SBTM) adapted by Peng (2021). As mentioned in Chapter 2 that there had been limited research domestically on the “sitcom-based” English teaching method in relation to critical thinking and cross-cultural competence. Consequently, the author incorporated several relevant questions into the survey, positioning them within the dimension of evaluating effectiveness. The final version of this questionnaire was also developed after multiple revisions based on the recommendations of various experts in this area and after being submitted for review by front-line teachers.

**Table 3** comprehensively introduced the whole questionnaire. According to **Table 3**, the 12 items were divided into three dimensions: applying situation (including teaching frequency, teaching form, activity difficulty, application attitude), evaluation effectiveness (including classroom atmosphere, learning interest, ability enhancement), influence factor (including personality, English proficiency, interpersonal relationship, activity form).

**Table 3.** Structure of SBTM questionnaire.

Name	Dimension	Survey Content	Item Number
SBTM	Application Situation	Teaching frequency, Teaching form, Activity difficulty, Application attitude	1, 2, 3, 4
	Evaluation Effectiveness	Classroom atmosphere, Learning interest, Ability enhancement	5, 6, 7, 8
	Influence Factor	Personality, English proficiency, Interpersonal relationship, Activity form	9, 10, 11, 12

In light of **Table 4** and **Table 5**, It can be seen that the reliability of the two questionnaires as well as each dimension was above 0.7 and when the Bartlett  $p < 0.05$ , the validity of the whole questionnaire and each dimension was above 0.7. In a nutshell, based on the SPSS test results, the two questionnaires adapted and

employed in this study exhibit good reliability and validity. The item formulation had been validated by educators, demonstrating its relevance and suitability for subsequent educational research.

**Table 4.** Reliability and validity analysis of CCTC questionnaire.

Name	Cronbach $\alpha$	KMO	Category	Cronbach $\alpha$	KMO	Dimension	Cronbach $\alpha$	KMO	Bartlett p
CCTC	0.920	0.870	CCTDI	0.834	0.767	Academic	0.825	0.788	0.00
						Social	0.749	0.745	0.00
			CC knowledge	0.854	0.805	0.00			
			ICCAS	0.912	0.885	CC attitude	0.847	0.720	0.00
			CC awareness	0.844	0.704	0.00			

**Table 5.** Reliability and validity analysis of SBTM questionnaire.

Name	Cronbach $\alpha$	KMO	Dimension	Item	Cronbach $\alpha$	KMO	Bartlett p
SBTM	0.861	0.837	Application Situation	4	0.786	0.727	0.00
			Evaluation Effectiveness	4	0.833	0.804	0.00
			Influence Factor	4	0.754	0.746	0.00

## 2) Interview

In addition to the two questionnaires, interviews were conducted to augment the data collected. The questions asked in this interview were derived from the findings of the questionnaire. This qualitative approach was intended to furnish a more comprehensive data set for this study, thereby addressing the limitations of quantitative data.

According to the results of the two questionnaires, the mean scores of social dimension in critical thinking, cross-cultural knowledge in cross-cultural competence, and the influence factor in the “sitcom-based” teaching method were relatively low and had much room to be improved. Therefore, the authors decided to conduct interviews with both students and teachers to further investigate the competencies and levels of acceptance of this pedagogical approach by the target students. After careful consideration, one student from each class (a total of three respondents) and their English teacher (a total of two respondents) were selected for that semi-structured interview. Both parties had different interview questions, which can be seen in Appendix 2.

In addition, all interviews were conducted on campus. To protect participants' privacy, the authors recorded only audio during the interview and created a detailed written record afterwards. Prior to the start of the interviews, participants were informed of the purpose of the study and the scope of the use of the data. All participants consented to audio recording.

### 3.4. Research Implementation

#### 1) Implementation Preparation

In order to make the designed “sitcom-based” teaching activities conform to the standards of the new English curriculum, the context was based on Unit 7-“What’s the highest mountain in the world?”, PEP English textbook Grade 8, Volume 2. And before starting sitcom activities, the target students had learned the passage (3a) in section A, that is Qomolangma-the Most Dangerous Mountain in the World?

From February 24 to 25, 2025, the author conducted a research investigation at F School in N City. Due to the school’s instructional regulations, specific “sitcom-based” teaching activities were implemented by the English teachers of each class during the lessons. Before teaching implementation, the lesson plans for these teaching activities were designed by the author himself and were revised to the final version after several discussions with the two subject teachers, which means that two teachers were familiar with the key teaching points. The author also entered those three parallel classes as a classroom observer to carry out the investigation and keep the course roughly on schedule as originally planned. The complete lesson plan can be found in the Appendix 3.

#### 2) Teaching Procedure

##### ➤ Step 1. Lead-in (5 minutes)

a) The teacher asks students questions to recall their memory of Mount Qomolangma, letting them answer its features of the highest (most dangerous) and its location between China and Nepal while retelling the three achievements in chronological order (including the nation of the climbers).

b) The teacher presents the news of the Chinese and Nepalese mountaineers who climbed Mount Qomolangma together and achieved success in 1988.

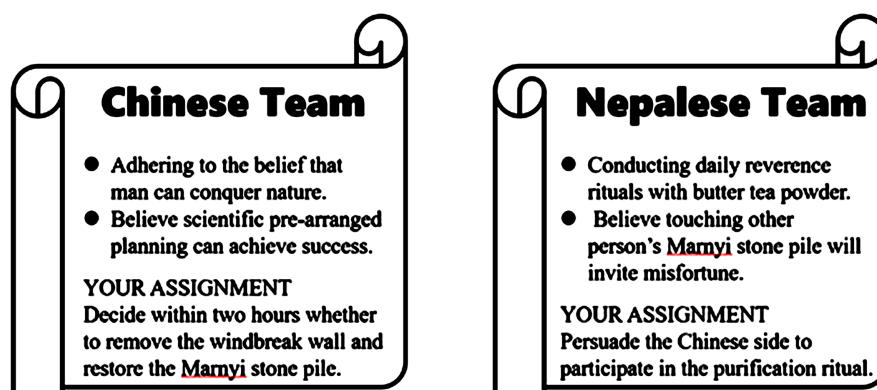
(Justification: During warm-ups, the teacher’s effective interaction with her students not only facilitates their rapid immersion into the theatrical learning environment, but also allows the teacher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the student’s learning conditions through communication, thereby enabling timely adjustments to subsequent teaching activities.)

##### ➤ Step 2. Pre-dramatizing (10 minutes)

a) The teacher presents the stratified map of Mount Qomolangma’s altitude in the slides, asking one student to find out and circle the base camp at an altitude of 5200 m and the forward camp at 6500 m. Then the teacher plays the audio of the sound for comparison (the laughter of people and the sound of bells for 5200 m; the sound of fierce howling wind for 6500 m).

b) The teacher divides the class into four large groups of approximately ten students each, according to the four rows of seats in the classroom. Then each large group will be evenly divided into two small groups, acting the camp of Chinese mountain climbers and Nepalese mountain climbers.

c) The teacher distributes cards representing the camp and introduced several cultural practices and knowledge, such as the Marnyi Stone. The cards can be seen in **Figure 2**.



**Figure 2.** Assignment cards.

(Justification: By dividing into groups and engaging in a first-person experience through reading cards, coupled with teacher explanations, students can gain a deeper understanding of Chinese and Nepalese culture. This laid a solid foundation for subsequent cross-cultural thinking.)

➤ **Step 3. While-dramatizing (20 minutes)**

a) The teacher plays the sound of the howling wind again at 6,500m and then presented the situation: As the snowstorm intensified, climbers from China and Nepal discovered a forward camp established by previous adventurers at 6,500m at this critical moment. The Chinese team used scattered stones to construct a temporary windbreak; However, the Nepalese team identified parts of the stone as the Marnyi stone, inscribed with sacred texts, and demanded the immediate removal of the windbreak and the performance of a ritual dedicated to the mountain deities to re-establish links with the gods of Qomolangma Mountain.

b) Each small group discuss their decisions and write down the reasons behind them. Five minutes later, every large group analyze the reasons together, negotiating a suitable solution, and get ready to perform. (Teacher will show several solutions on slides to guide and help students if she notices several groups keep silent).

(Justification: Let students immersed in cross-cultural scenarios that enhance their ability to make informed choices through a contextual scaffold created by images and sounds, thereby improving their cross-cultural thinking competence. Let students underscore the power of teamwork, cultural awareness conveyed in the unit's text, because whether in the training camp or in the classroom, they successfully resolved problems through collaborative efforts. Enhance students' speaking and writing abilities through group discussions and sitcom performance.)

➤ **Step 4. Post-dramatizing (7 minutes)**

a) The teacher shows a Sitcom Performance Evaluation Scale (**Table 6**) and invites several students to express their opinions. With enough time, performers can talk about the reasons behind their designs.

(Justification: Facilitating formative assessment further deepens students' understanding of the spirit of collaboration.)

**Table 6.** Sitcom performance evaluation scale.

Dimensions	Grading
Language Expression	☆☆☆
Performance Difficulty	☆☆☆
Team Collaboration	☆☆☆
Cultural Speculation	☆☆☆

➤ **Step 5. Summary and Homework (3 minutes)**

**Summary**

a) Based on the blackboard and sitcoms, the teacher will summarize the geographical knowledge of Mount Qomolangma and the importance of cross-cultural negotiation.

b) The proverb “Agree to disagree” will be used to end today’s class.

**Homework**

a) Must-do: Write a “Summit Diary” (about 100 words) from the perspective of the mountain climber you have performed, reflecting the noy well-considered part of your group’s final decision, giving appropriate reason and try to polish it.

b) Optional: Search more information about the similarities and discrepancies between China and Nepal online and introduce to us in the next class.

(Justification: To enhance the learning contents and develop students’ self-learning.)

### 3.5. Data Collection

One workday after the completion of the teaching activity, the teacher distributed paper questionnaires and made rounds in the classroom to ensure that students diligently complete them. Each participant was asked to fill two questionnaires, namely the questionnaire of cross-cultural thinking competence (CCTC) and the questionnaire of “Sitcom-based” English teaching method (SBTM) as mentioned in Section 3.1. Prior to the start of the questionnaire, students were informed, through the introductory instructions included within the questionnaire and the accompanying announcement by the teacher, that the survey was conducted anonymously. They were made aware that the data they provided would be used solely for academic research purposes, that the results of the survey would be kept strictly confidential, and that their responses would not affect their academic performance or personal lives. This could effectively alleviate student filling anxiety and encourage them to answer questions on a realistic basis. Also, the instruction of filling in Likert Scale and the title of each questionnaire were presented to the students to assist them in properly filling in and avoid confusion. According to the pre-investigation results that the students were not familiar with the term “Sitcom-based” teaching method, there was a concise definition provided at the beginning of SBTM. As a result, the entire questionnaire took approximately 15

minutes to complete, a total of 128 questionnaires were sent out, and 126 valid responses were received, for a valid response rate of 98.43%. The reasons for invalidation and not being counted as statistical results were not complete for all items.

After statistical analysis in SPSS based on the results of the two questionnaires, one student from each parallel class (a total of three interviewees) and their English teachers (a total of two interviewees) were selected for the interview. With the consent of the respondents, the entire interview was recorded in audio format. The authors then transcribed the responses of the respondents for further analysis. The findings from the interview analysis complemented those derived from the questionnaire and thus provided a more comprehensive understanding of the research question.

## 4. Results and Discussion

This section points out the results of the questionnaires and interviews collected in Chapter 3 in detail, which aims to present the target students' current level of cross-cultural thinking competence as well as the application status of the "sit-com-based" teaching method in junior high school. Each part will be given the overall situation first, followed by sub-dimensions.

### 4.1. Results of the CCTC Questionnaire

#### 1) Critical Thinking Disposition

**Table 7** is a download of the results from SPSS, which gives a clear picture of the current CTD level of the target students in the F school. After the conversion from the six-level scale to the five-level scale with the research results conducted by [Wen \(2012\)](#), the score of 2.5 or less indicates a negative disposition, 2.5 - 3.33 indicates a waving disposition, and 3.34 or above indicates a positive disposition. As can be seen from **Table 7**, the mean of the students of School F is 3.038, which is firmly in the waving phase and has a lot of room to be improved. The standard deviation is 0.624, indicating that the average numerical difference among students is relatively low.

**Table 7.** Descriptive statistics of overall CTD of all students.

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
126	1.438	4.375	3.038	0.624

**Table 8** and **Table 9** present the CTD levels of the testees in a more detailed manner, with dimensions and sub-dimensions, respectively. From **Table 8**, it can be clearly seen that there is a huge discrepancy between the academic dimension ( $M = 3.342$ ) and social dimension ( $M = 2.735$ ) on students' CTD level, with the former one at a medium to high level and the latter one at a relatively wavering level. Furthermore, among all the sub-dimensions shown in **Table 9**, students'

current level of intelligence ( $M = 3.526$ ) is much better than other sub-dimensions, especially for reasoning ( $M = 2.639$ ). Otherwise, the sequence of standard deviation from largest to smallest are: reasoning (0.892), intelligence (0.824), emotion (0.822), and morality (0.787). This reveals the fact that there are certain differences between students in terms of their perceptions and abilities in these areas, and that the differences in reasoning ability are particularly significant.

**Table 8.** Descriptive statistics of overall CTD dimensions of all students.

Dimensions of CTD	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Academic	1.500	4.750	3.342	0.741
Social	1.250	4.250	2.735	0.737

**Table 9.** Descriptive statistics of overall CTD dimensions of all students.

Sub-dimensions of CTD	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intelligence	1.500	5.000	3.526	0.824
Emotion	1.000	4.750	3.158	0.822
Reasoning	1.000	4.250	2.639	0.892
Morality	1.250	4.750	2.831	0.787

## 2) Cross-cultural Competence

Similar to the scale of CCTDI, ICCCA is also a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 5 indicating strong agreement. Consistent with the scaling construction, the result above 3 can be concluded to be positive (Wu, Pan, & Peng, 2013). From **Table 10**, we can see the overall situation of cross-cultural competence to those students who participate in the questionnaire is at a decent level ( $M = 3.526$ ).

**Table 10.** Descriptive statistics of overall CC competence of all students.

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
126	1.400	5.000	3.568	0.887

**Table 11** further elaborates on the dimensions of cross-cultural competence. According to it, the highest assessment is cross-cultural attitude (3.828), then cross-cultural awareness (3.794), and cross-cultural knowledge is the lowest (3.204). The results embrace the same rank of Feng (2022), whose research participants are junior high school students; and is slightly different from Elias and Mansouri (2023) as they found university students' cross-cultural awareness is the highest. However, the standard deviation in this part is comparatively high and therefore this will be constructed as an item for semi-structured interview in order to question the reasons behind. In any case, this questionnaire gives us an indica-

tor that the cross-cultural competence of junior high school students is at a medium to high level, but the knowledge dimension needs to be enhanced.

**Table 11.** Descriptive statistics of overall CC competence dimensions of all students.

Dimensions of CC	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowledge	1.000	5.000	3.204	0.991
Attitude	1.333	5.000	3.828	1.056
Awareness	1.600	5.000	3.794	1.019

To more clearly identify the causes and contribute to further improvements in Chapter 5, the authors list **Table 12** to show the results for each item in the cross-cultural knowledge dimension.

**Table 12.** Statistic analysis of the knowledge.

Item Number	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
17	126	2.000	5.000	3.960	0.596
18	126	1.000	5.000	2.929	1.126
19	126	1.000	5.000	3.056	1.209
20	126	1.000	5.000	2.873	1.220

Cross-cultural knowledge consists of three parts, including Chinese cultural (item 17), foreign cultural (item 18), and cross-cultural knowledge (items 19, 20). As shown in **Table 12**, the mean of the score of Chinese culture is 3.960, while the mean of the score of foreign culture is only 2.929 and the mean of the score of cross-culture is about 2.9, revealing the obvious distance between Chinese culture and other cultures. Furthermore, the gap is also demonstrated by the standard deviation, with item 17 scoring only 0.596 and the other items reaching above 1.1. Moreover, the reason for the lack of the latter two parts, together with the underlying relationship between them, is highly expected to be constructed as several items in the interview later.

## 4.2. Results of the SBTM Questionnaire

### 1) Overall Situation of SBTM

The results of this section are of vital importance in answering the first research question entitled “What attitude do junior high school students hold towards” sitcom-based “English teaching?”. First and foremost, **Table 13** provides a comprehensive situation to this question. It can be seen that the mean value of the entire questionnaire completed by the 126 students of Junior High School F is 3.437 with an acceptable standard deviation of 0.784. In accordance with the data interpretation criteria built by the constructor Peng (2021), the score above 3

shows a positive attitude. Therefore, the majority of students exhibit a favorable acceptance of the “sitcom-based” teaching method.

**Table 13.** Descriptive statistics of overall “Sitcom-based” teaching method of all students.

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
126	1.417	4.667	3.437	0.784

As we have already mentioned in Chapter 3, the entire SBTM questionnaire consists of three dimensions, namely, application situation, evaluation effectiveness, and influence factor. Therefore, the results of these dimensions have been listed in **Table 14** for further discussion. According to the database, the score of evaluation effectiveness is the highest ( $M = 3.839$ ), followed by application situation ( $M = 3.536$ ). Based on the standard deviations of 0.786 and 0.774, it can be seen from the results that the students generally welcomed and enjoyed this teaching approach, although they had some differences of opinion about its application and effectiveness. The relatively low mean score and high standard deviation of the influence factors suggest that the predictors in the questionnaire may not be the strongest for students. Based on these circumstances, each item in this questionnaire will be presented according to a dimension classification in order to present the results in detail.

**Table 14.** Descriptive statistics of overall SBTM dimensions of all students.

Dimensions of SBTM	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Application Situation	1.500	5.000	3.536	0.774
Evaluation Effectiveness	1.000	5.000	3.839	0.786
Influence Factor	1.000	5.000	2.935	0.875

## 2) Situation of SBTM Dimensions

The first dimension of SBTM is the applying situation, which contains 4 items. From **Table 15**, it could be seen that students’ acceptance of three parts are at a high level, with the mean score in application attitude (item 27) rank the top (3.738), followed by activity difficulty (item 30) in 3.690 and teaching form (item 28) in 3.556. The stem of the teaching frequency (item 29) is “my English teacher always uses ‘sitcom-based’ teaching method three to five per month”. Since there are two English teachers and they have their own style of teaching, this item will be saved for the teacher’s semi-interview. In addition, the distribution of standard deviations is also similar to that of mean scores, revealing that students do not have too many large discrepancies in the three high mean score items.

The second dimension of SBTM is the evaluation effectiveness. Consistent with **Table 16**, all items show strong agreement among students in this pedagogical approach. Among all of the effectiveness, sitcom’s function of activating the classroom atmosphere (item 5) rank the first, with a mean score of 4.048, followed by

the function of enhancing creative and critical thinking competence (item 8) in 3.873, improve the ability of knowledge retention (item 7) in 3.746, and promoting English learning interest (item 6) in 3.690.

**Table 15.** Statistic analysis of the application situation.

Item Number	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	126	1.000	5.000	3.738	0.708
2	126	2.000	5.000	3.556	0.725
3	126	1.000	5.000	3.159	0.878
4	126	2.000	5.000	3.690	0.706

**Table 16.** Statistic analysis of the evaluation effectiveness.

Item Number	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
5	126	2.000	5.000	4.048	0.761
6	126	1.000	5.000	3.690	0.776
7	126	1.000	5.000	3.746	0.785
8	126	2.000	5.000	3.873	0.762

The third dimension of SBTM is the influence factor, and this part of the survey is mainly used to make recommendations, both in terms of student self-regulation and teacher feedback. As we can notice from **Table 17**, the strongest factor for the targets is their own personalities (item 9), with a mean score of 3.286, followed by the activity form (item 12) in 3.087. Student's interpersonal relationship with classmates and teachers (item 11) and their test scores (item 10) have limited effects, according to the mean score of 2.817 and 2.548, respectively. In addition, the standard deviation of the four terms is relatively high, since this dimension is more directly related to the students themselves. This part will be investigated again in a student interview.

**Table 17.** Statistic analysis of the influence factor.

Item Number	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
9	126	1.000	5.000	3.286	1.295
10	126	1.000	5.000	2.548	0.969
11	126	1.000	5.000	2.817	1.017
12	126	1.000	5.000	3.087	1.059

### 4.3. Results of the Students' Semi-Structured Interview

As introduced in Chapter 3, one student from each class has been selected as the



Here are the specific items of the student's semi-structured interview arranged by the author in written form for detailed investigation and results analyzing.

**Q1:** When assuming the roles of both the Chinese and Nepalese mountaineering teams during a conflict, did you quickly gain a clear direction on how to proceed?

**Student A:** Actually not. Our team performed as the Nepal team at that time. On my own, I think the Chinese team's solution is right, but I have just learnt how holy and pure the god of mountains is to Nepalese culture. So, I am in a wavering situation because it's extremely hard for me to tradeoff life and belief, which one weights more at that time.

**Student B:** We have a clear direction for the first time. Our group represented the Chinese team at that time and I am the interim captain. In the first second, I have chosen to refuse the requirements of taking down the windbreak wall because life is the most important thing at any time. But we don't know how to persuade the Nepal team and the situation is like being frozen until the teacher reminds us that there may be some compromise proposal.

**Student C:** Our team's situation is a bit similar to B, but we are the Nepal team. When the Chinese team firmly refuse our requirement, we instantly realize it's immoral behavior to let them take risks. Therefore, after having a clear direction, we finally become wavering.

From the answers of the three respondents, it is clear that most of them are finally in a wavering thinking disposition during the dilemma created in the sitcom. The phrases "hard to trade off" and "frozen situation" referred by student A and B respectively is the specification of the sub-dimension of reasoning and C's answer obviously involves the sub-dimension of morality. After listening to the response, the author asked a true or false question named "Compared with making a decision in your study, which one is more difficult to decide?", all the students choose this sitcom dilemma, proving the questionnaire results that their academic thinking disposition is at a higher level.

**Q2:** Do you usually take the initiative to learn about foreign cultures? How well do you think you know foreign cultures?

**Student A:** I love foreign music and am willing to learn knowledge about popular singers like Taylor Swift, lyrics, melody and I have the confidence to share these with others. But that is just a small part of foreign culture. For the other area that I am not interested in, I nearly learn nothing.

**Student B:** I am not taking the initiative to learn foreign culture because at that time it was not my interest. The usual way I acquire foreign culture is from reading English articles in the textbook and test paper, or occasionally learning some foreign news. The former is usually outdated and the latter is just fragmented knowledge.

**Student C:** I have a general idea of foreign culture (especially Australian culture) and I am willing to acquire more knowledge through self-learning. An exchange student from Perth came to stay with my family for six months a year ago.

We're still keeping in touch through our phones! She taught me so much about different cultures, like how they describe dates and addresses.

Question 2 is about foreign knowledge in cross-cultural knowledge. The students A and C choose the same point 3 in the questionnaire, so the author realized that students may have different ratings on foreign knowledge levels. After further investigation, student C's requirements on this area are a bit stricter than A and B. This also points out the improvement direction for future research. In addition, from the answer, it can be seen that students' personal experience is highly expected to shape their opinions in cross-cultural competence, which is an interpretation of the high standard deviation in this part.

**Q3:** I have predicted certain influence factors for taking participant in the "sit-com-based" teaching method, including personalities, activity form, interpersonal relationship with classmates and teachers, and English test scores. But the outcome is unexpected. Could you tell me the least and most influenced factors (can include or besides these four factors) and give me the reason?

**Student A:** I am a bit outcome-oriented and willing to participate in every activity that can improve my English proficiency. After that class, I think it is an interesting way to cultivate my oral fluency, critical thinking, and vocabulary expansion, so the most effective factor is my desire to learn English well and there is nothing stopping me from attending this activity.

**Student B:** Relationship with others is the least because we are a united class that seldom has conflicts. For me, activity content may be the most important because interest is always my first energy. I am fully interested in Mount Qomolangma because travelling around China is my dream, so I immersed myself in performing. In addition, teaching forms can also be vital since it may aspire to my interest.

**Student C:** Personality may influence me the most. I am an extroverted person who always wants to share my ideas with others. Therefore, the features of this sitcom in discussing with my team members and negotiating with another team perfectly suit me. My latest English test score may influence me the slightest because there are too many tests in a semester and everyone may have some unlucky days. It is impossible to stop learning because of the low score.

The answer vividly illustrates students' opinion about the influence factor and it aligns with the result of the questionnaire. Personality and activity forms are still the effective factor while the English test score is replaced by the desire for better English proficiency.

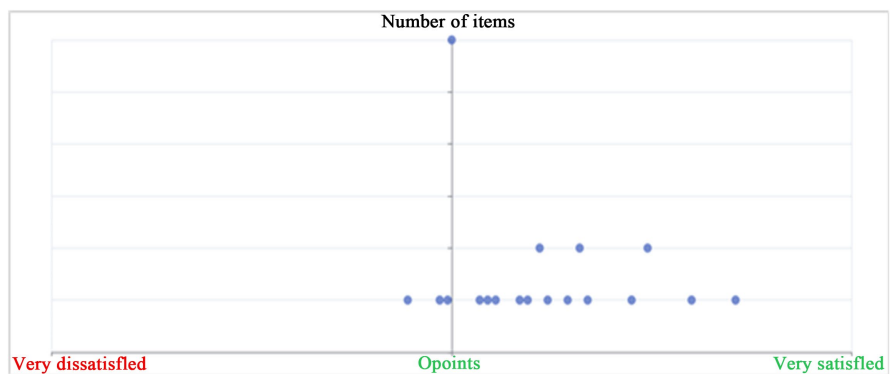
#### **4.4. Results of the Teachers' Semi-Structured Interview**

As introduced in Chapter 3, two English teachers have been selected as the interviewee to explain the hidden reasons of some unexpected phenomenon while confirm the existing conclusions at the same time. Therefore, the interview contents are mainly based on teacher's teaching observation and their perspectives about the pros and cons for this teaching approach.

The phrase “my students” at the central of **Figure 5** clearly shows teacher’s cognitive appraisal of this student-centered teaching approach, completed by several patterns as “a good way” “an innovative lesson”, and “a stimulus”, especially in cultivating student’s cultural awareness. Nevertheless, just as the **Figure 6** presented, there are still some negative parts of this teaching method, hiding in the phrases such as “a problem” or “unexpected phenomenon”.



**Figure 5.** Word cloud map for teacher’s interview.



**Figure 6.** Distribution of emotional values and quantity for teacher’s Interview.

Here are the specific items of the teacher’s semi-structured interview arranged by the author in written form for detailed investigation and results analyzing.

**Q1:** Are you familiar with the “sitcom-based” teaching method?

**Teacher W:** I saw an innovative lesson presented by English teachers from other schools at a teaching and research event organized by the province, so I am a bit familiar with that, but not too much. What I was impressed with was the inclusion of role play in this approach.

**Teacher F:** I am not familiar with that teaching method. Sometimes I use role play for 2 - 4 students in my class, but it feels more geared to dialogue, not acting. Based on the answers given by the two English teachers, it is clear that they are

not entirely familiar with pedagogical methods. It also reveals that although the “sitcom-based” teaching method has been proposed in the last century and has been utilized in English teaching in many foreign countries and Hong Kong, the teachers in the mainland are not totally familiar with its related conceptions and detailed application forms.

In order to make the interview move more smoothly, the author introduced the definition and its application methods including group chanting, reader’s theater, role-play, hot seating, mantle of the expert, and teacher in role concluded by Yang et al. (2022).

**Q2:** How often do you use this teaching method? What types of application forms do you usually use?

**Teacher W:** Group chanting is often used in my classroom because it helps my students focus on understanding the text. Besides, we have used the PEP book and there is a role-play part (section A, 2d) in each unit, so I will mainly use these two forms, especially in teaching a new unit. That is, actually, 4-5 per month.

**Teacher F:** I used this method mainly based on the textbook design. For example, I will use role play when there is a given dialogue like 2d, or some special form of content like messages and letters. The Reader Theatre will be used at most 1 or 2 times per semester depending on the topic of the unit, as there are some good resources such as Monkey King. In fact, I probably use this method of teaching 6 times a month.

Although the teachers are not totally familiar with the “sitcom-based” teaching method, from their answers it can be seen that they will use some application forms in the practical class. Group chanting and role play are the most popular forms used by teachers, while sitcoms, reader theatre and other forms are rarely used. Besides, in accordance with the investigation, a class in F school usually has 5 - 6 English lessons per week, which means that almost each week the English teacher will use the “sitcom-based” teaching method.

**Q3:** Has the use of sitcoms in teaching made a difference in your classroom?

**Teacher W:** It is clear that the students have become more active. And I think it’s also a good way for me to get timely and adequate feedback, because impromptu sitcom performances can work as a stimulus to get students to express as many words and phrases as they have acquired. Some of the students really surprised me with their performances. They definitely memorize and understand the knowledge hidden in sitcoms faster than just recite the dialogue.

**Teacher F:** In addition to the positive learning atmosphere, I think it’s a fun way to teach and encourage introverted students to voice their opinions. Some students who had never been willing to voluntarily answer questions would be driven by the team members around her to discuss countermeasures under this approach to teaching. And I think it had a much stronger effect in shaping her personality than inviting her to answer questions.

In a nutshell, the “sitcom-based” teaching method can bring various positive effects to both the students and English teachers. For one thing, it can create an

active atmosphere that improves students' motivation to learn, assisting them to practice and output the knowledge and schemas they learn. On the other hand, it is a good way for teachers to monitor a student's learning process in order to adjust for subsequent learning.

**Q4:** What kinds of questions did you face in this class?

**Teacher W:** Classroom discipline is a problem. Some students become too active to communicate with team members after a performance, and thus miss out on some crucial knowledge of language skills, such as how to make your case and clearly persuade others. Another problem was that there were only 45 minutes, so it was a dilemma for all the students to experience performing on stage.

**Teacher F:** It is a problem how to properly allocate the time for each sitcom teaching activity, as there is only very little material for us to refer to. Creating an appropriate situation based on the unit's theme, such as the conflict between Chinese and Nepalese mountaineers, would also be time-consuming. Moreover, good instruction in this method requires pedagogical tact on the part of the teacher. Some of the students in my class were so determined to assert the case on behalf of their team, arguing all the time, that no solution was given, and it was crucial for the teacher to properly remind them that there was a compromise proposal, even though the lesson plan did not mention it.

By examining the initial implementation experiences of teachers, it is evident that while the "sitcom-based" teaching method possesses certain advantages, it also has several drawbacks: firstly, there is difficulty in managing classroom dynamics and appropriately allocating time across various teaching segments; Second, the availability of reference material for different forms of "sitcom-based" instruction is limited; Third, this approach places a high demand on the pedagogical expertise of teachers, requiring not only professional skills but also educational acumen. Conclusions on these issues are crucial in avoiding such problems or in coming up with good optimization proposals in the future.

**Q5:** Do you think "sitcom-based" teaching method can improve students' cross-cultural thinking competence?

**Teacher W:** From the lesson plan you gave us, I have learned that cross-cultural thinking competency aligns with the core competencies of cultural awareness and thinking capacity of students. After the lesson, the students were still talking about the Marni Stone, so I thought this format could impress the students with some foreign cultures they were not previously familiar with. And, a boy in my class, who had once aspired to be an explorer, now associated mountaineers with climbing events from previous Olympics, fostering a new dream: to become a professional rock climber. Therefore, I think the effect of this approach in fostering cultural awareness is also demonstrated.

**Teacher F:** If sitcoms were well crafted in cross-cultural situations where students can make decisions like this one, I think student cross-cultural competence could be greatly improved. In addition, some instructional activities, such as group discussions in which students write down the reasons for their decisions,

can train them in logical thinking and critical thinking. Many students usually only learn some foreign cultural knowledge from textbooks, but some of the cultures in the textbooks are already outdated, so the sitcom is an innovative way for them to acquire more fresh foreign culture.

From the two English teachers' answers, it can be vividly seen that the functions of "sitcom-based" teaching method in cultivating and improving students' cross-cultural thinking competence is admitted, which is also in line with the results of student's questionnaire. Also, some effective in-class activities can be saved and polished for use in subsequent classes.

**Q6:** What are your suggestions for the implementation of "sitcom-based" teaching method in junior high school?

**Teacher W:** Teachers like us should have a detailed understanding of this teaching approach, including its functions, application forms, and evaluation system. In fact, I found myself relatively unfamiliar with other procedural aspects of the sitcom-based teaching approach, aside from coaching students in role-playing. Whenever students struggle to think and perform quickly in response to a predetermined scenario, I often feel a sense of anxiety about the limited classroom time and the overall pace of the curriculum. Also, it is essential to cover the existing reading materials from the textbook; Therefore, the development of sitcom themes under the constraints of limited teaching time can only be achieved through a thorough exploration of textbook content. However, this is a collaborative effort that cannot be accomplished by individual teachers alone. Therefore, the promotion of practical guidelines, examples and training is of paramount importance.

**Teacher F:** Students face significant exam pressure, and within the constraints of limited instructional time, the development of language skills is also of paramount importance. Consequently, while sitcom-based teaching approaches enhance students' ability to analyze across cultures, it should also emphasize mastery of vocabulary and grammatical points. After all, the primary focus of current English assessments remains the written exam. In addition, I believe that the successful implementation of sitcom-based teaching methods relies heavily on the individual efforts of teachers, as it may be challenging to introduce new learning resources at the institutional level. However, collaboration between teachers, particularly across different subject areas, should be actively encouraged, as sitcoms themselves represent an interdisciplinary approach to teaching.

As can be seen from the interviews, the answers are mainly in the areas of teaching applications and the teachers themselves. For sitcom applications, the content is highly expected to originate from textbook passages and the performance should focus on the main difficult knowledge. Hence, students' language skills can be improved along with their thinking qualities, cultural awareness and learning ability. In addition, teacher F suggested that costumes and props might also be an integral part of the show, but that such elements would require support from the school or parents. In contrast, Teacher W argues that the primary purpose of employing the episodic drama teaching method lies in its performance format, which en-

hances the enjoyment of learning English and provides students with the opportunity for verbal expression; Costumes and props, therefore, are not essential. Considering the difficulties associated with the implementation of funding subsidies, the author is more inclined to agree with Teacher W's perspective, in light of Jerzy Grotowski's concept of poor theater and Richard Schechner's theories of environmental theater (Hradsky & Forgasz, 2023). In that case, the mere presence of two fundamental elements: performers and audience, suffices to establish a dramatic production. This implies that even within the constraints of resource-limited classroom settings in rural secondary schools, this pedagogical approach can be feasibly implemented without being compromised by material constraints.

#### 4.5. Discussion of the Cross-Cultural Thinking Competence

Based on the investigation of the first questionnaire and the semi-structured interview, it can be included that the current cross-cultural thinking competency of the target students in School F is generally at a moderate level, with their critical thinking at a moderate low level and their cross-cultural thinking at a moderate high level. In other words, students generally have a significant awareness of the conflicts between their own culture and that of other countries in cross-cultural contexts, and are able to base their choices on relatively comprehensive considerations. However, the rationale underlying these choices is often tenuous and susceptible to external influences, which can exacerbate conflicts or lead to awkward moments of silence. This can be seen from the first question in 4.3. and the fourth question in 4.4. Combined with the scores of the CCDTI and ICCAS questionnaires, the authors argue that this problem is mainly due to the lack of critical thinking ability of the students, the reasons behind which will be analyzed in detail below.

**Table 18.** Rank of the three studies.

Dimension	Three studies		Sub-dimension	This Study	Wen et al. (2009)	Study in America
	Rank			Rank	Rank	Rank
Academic	1		Intelligence	1	1	1
			Emotion	2	2	3
Social	2		Reasoning	4	4	4
			Morality	3	3	2

First and foremost, analysis and discussion are highly expected to begin with the student's critical thinking disposition. After the average score of each dimension has been presented in 4.1., the author ranks the conclusions of this study and compares them with those of Wen et al. (2009) and American scholars, finding that all the results show student's level of the academic dimension is higher than its social counterparts. Moreover, **Table 18** clearly illustrates that

the rank of the sub-dimensions in this study is totally the same as that of Wen's, with "intelligence occupied the first place, followed by emotion, morality, and reasoning" (Wen, 2012: p. 64). The American study's rankings embrace a slight difference, with morality coming in second and emotion third. In Wen's interpretation, this could be due to differences in social circumstances and policies. On the one hand, this reveals that in China, whether it is a junior high school student or a university student, their academic disposition is always weighted more than their social disposition, and thus each sub-dimension. This can be explained from two aspects. On the one hand, both are still in their learning stages, where relatively homogeneous social circles and harmonious interpersonal environments predispose them to employ critical thinking primarily in addressing complex academic challenges rather than broader social issues. On the other hand, this reflects their distinctive characteristics: while demonstrating strong motivation to acquire new knowledge and awareness of the necessity of lifelong learning in the information age, they exhibit deficiencies in cognitive maturity and the ability to take multiple perspectives when approaching problems. Fortunately, sitcoms, carefully dramatized, are highly expected to provide the performers with conflict or negotiation in their social content to enhance their critical thinking on a social level.

Moreover, while the results of Wen and the American researchers exhibit almost the same rank of dimensions and sub-dimensions, the average score of each sub-dimension is at a different level of thinking disposition compared to the results of the present study presented in 4.1. In accordance with results concluded by the two researchers, all the sub-dimensions, though in order of precedence, are roughly at the reluctant support level (3.34 - 3.56) or general support level (3.57 - 3.80). However, in this study, only the intelligence dimension achieves the reluctant support level, with the other sub-dimensions at the wavering disposition. This phenomenon can be attributed to the incomplete cognitive maturity of junior high school students. According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, they remain in the critical period of cognitive growth-the formal operational phase. From another perspective, a mean comparison of critical thinking ability between college and junior high school students empirically validates that such abilities are temporally cumulative. Synthesizing student questionnaire responses (SBTM questionnaire, item 8) with teacher interview (Question 4) accounts regarding the effectiveness of sitcom-based teaching method, the researchers suggested that sitcom-based teaching methods may expedite the developmental trajectory of critical thinking through structured activity engagement.

For cross-cultural competence, the mean score of ICCAS shows the fact that there is a lot of room for students to enhance their cross-cultural knowledge. The student's answer in the interview (Question 2) clarifies the result that they can't contact with plenty of foreign culture in their daily lives and most of them don't have a relatively comprehensive understanding of the foreign culture, which not only hinders their ability to accurately assess their comprehension of foreign cul-

tures but also indirectly undermines their confidence in cross-cultural competencies. The answer of the teacher proved it. In question 4, respondent F mentioned that large numbers of students usually learn only some knowledge of foreign cultures from textbooks, but some of the cultures in textbooks are outdated. Apart from this, the ability of students in other dimensions is at a relatively high level. For example, in Question 1, all respondents admitted that it is never easy to make a decision in the sitcom-based situation because both parties have their own beliefs, as evidenced by their high mean scores on a question in the cross-cultural dimension.: I am aware of the need to examine cross-cultural exchange situations from different cultural perspectives.

#### 4.6. Discussion of the “Sitcom-Based” Teaching Method

In line with the structure of the semi-structured interview, the discussion of the “sitcom-based” teaching method is also explained in application situation, evaluation effectiveness, and promotion suggestion.

First and foremost, the mean scores of the second and third items of the SBTM questionnaire, 3.556 and 3.159 respectively, definitely indicate that the frequency of application of this pedagogical approach is respectable. It was also clear from the interview results that while some teachers did not have a thorough understanding of the method, they subconsciously used it more than four times a month, with at least one sitcom performance in a semester. Besides, 86.3% of students admit their preference (above 3) in taking participate in sitcom-based in class activities and 80.2% of the students think they can handle its difficulty. All of this reveals a student’s high level of acceptance in the “sitcom-based” teaching method.

And, after further analysis of the questionnaire and interview results, **Table 19**, which comprehensively presents the advantages of this pedagogical approach, has been created. Consistent with this, the advantage can be divided into three parts: cognitive development, capacity development and efficiency development. For the cognitive development section, the teacher respondents acknowledged that the cross-cultural knowledge of the students was enhanced through their introduction of Nepalese culture and the assignment cards during the pre-dramatic phase. While the student respondents told the author that it was difficult to break the windbreak wall because they had learned how cold it was outside, which revealed that they had acquired geographical knowledge. For the ability development, the result of the questionnaire item 8 ( $M = 3.873$ ) shows that students think sitcoms can improve their logical thinking and critical thinking competence, and teacher F also thinks that some instructional activities, such as group discussions in which students write down the reasons for their decisions, can train them in logical thinking and critical thinking. For the efficiency development, both students (item 5,  $M = 4.048$ ) and teachers (Question 3) have proved the efficiency of the sitcoms in creating an atmosphere as the incentive for student’s better performance.

**Table 19.** Advantages of the “Sitcom-based” teaching method.

Main Heading	Sub Heading	Supporting
Cognitive Development	CC Knowledge Enhancement	Learn Nepalese culture like the Marnyi Stone and the ceremony to worship the god of the mount Qomolangma
		Understand belief’s importance to make decisions
	Geographic Concept Formation	Point out the location of the base and forward camp Listen to the sounds of different altitudes
Ability Development	English Pragmatic Competence	Speak English to negotiate with the opposite team Perform the sitcom on stage
		Draw the reason tree to analyze reasons before making decisions
	Critical Thinking Skills	Evaluate classmate’s performance through an evaluation scale Think about a compromise decision
Efficiency Development	Learning Motivation	The classroom atmosphere is lively Introverted students are encouraged to perform by their team

Last but not the least, based on teacher’s interview results, **Figure 7** has been created to point out the current-level shortcomings of the “sitcom-based” teaching method. Among all the words, it will be seen that the insufficiency of time is likely to excite the highest concern. Teacher W mentioned that it is challenging to manage classroom discipline and control classroom segments when implementing drama-based teaching methods; And teacher F mentioned her struggle to manage her timing accurately. If activities are prolonged, they may encroach on time allocated for other teaching components. Conversely, if the event is too short, there is a risk that the sitcom performance become mere formalities devoid of meaningful engagement. In addition, resource limitations in both sitcom scripts related to textbook unit topics and detailed lesson plans are another problem, since it is challenging to develop a substantial number of high-quality sitcom scripts and diverse teaching activities with a limited number of faculty. Teachers’ experiences with sitcoms should also be highlighted, as this is a relatively modern approach to teaching for most English teachers, based on the results of interviews.

#### 4.7. Suggestions

In light of the discussions about the questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and class observation above, several implications for the future English teaching in “sitcom-based” teaching method have been concluded.

Firstly, the teaching contents of the textbook are highly recommended to be polished by increasing the proportion of sitcom scripts. In 2022, the new English

curriculum has explicitly proposed the instruct that the content of English courses should not only include narrative, expository, practical writing, news reports, but also cover the drama (sitcom) types. However, the results of the interviews showed that only one unit of the five books in the PEP English textbook for grades seven to nine contained a ready-made English drama script. Moreover, many of the themes and material presented in these texts are relatively old-fashioned and out of touch with the realities of modern life, leading to a scarcity of passages or dialogues that can be adapted into scripts, often necessitating significant additional effort on the part of the teacher in sourcing material for adaptation.



**Figure 7.** Word cloud map for current shortcomings.

The Curriculum is the seminal guide for teaching English, and the textbooks are its foundation. With enough sitcom-related content in there, teachers will no longer be overly anxious about issues such as delays in teaching progress and a lack of instructional materials. Furthermore, based on the findings of this study, the cross-cultural role play in “sitcom-based” teaching will effectively enhance students’ core competencies across various domains. The diverse activities involved, such as negotiation, performance and presentation, will effectively develop the critical thinking skills of students in the social dimension. Cross-cultural scenarios designed by teachers will continuously deepen students’ understanding of foreign cultures, thus encouraging them to make cross-cultural choices in English that are grounded in an understanding of their own culture. Therefore, the selection of teaching content for sitcoms should not only encompass key linguistic knowledge, but also prioritize the cultivation of students’ reasoning, moral and cultural knowledge.

Second, teacher support groups are highly expected to collaborate to develop interdisciplinary curricula that use English sitcoms as an integrated tool. The Art curriculum (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2022) advocates using educational drama as a medium to facilitate the integration of aesthetic

education with subject teaching, encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration between arts educators and teachers from relevant subjects, such as foreign languages, to foster students' preliminary ability to utilize dramatic techniques for cross-disciplinary learning. This guidance paves the way for English teachers in the further implementation of the "sitcom-based" teaching method: with mutual assistance among peers, English teachers can exchange various issues encountered during teaching, such as classroom management, time allocation, and the progression of activities, facilitating continuous feedback and improvement in their teaching practices, gradually leading to the development of a usable sitcom teaching framework; with the mutual collaboration of faculty from the arts departments, English teachers could draw on art theory to conceive a more diverse range of sitcoms with a wider range of perspectives, enabling targeted instruction; with the mutual assistance of teachers from other disciplines, English teachers can complement the myriad of knowledge required in sitcom narratives that may not directly pertain to English, thereby enhancing the authenticity of scripted scenarios and better achieving the thematic objectives of each unit.

Last but not least, a comprehensive evaluation system should be in place for sitcom performances. After careful investigation, the authors found that formative assessments would be made by teachers and students, but not robust enough to be conclusive as an assessment system. Therefore, based on the guidance of the teacher respondents, the author adapted [Ning's \(2023\)](#) system for cross-cultural role play in sitcoms by adding a new dimension of cultural speculation.

As can be seen in [Table 6](#), the overall system has four dimensions, each of which can be rated at three stars based on a gradient evaluation of a student's specific performance.

In the dimension of linguistic expression, 1 star indicates accuracy in pronunciation and intonation with minimal grammatical errors; 2 stars indicate fluency in addition to correctness, while maintaining accuracy and fluency; 3 stars indicate vivid emotional expression.

For performance difficulty, one star indicates basic script-based imitation without creativity; 2 stars recognize the ability to independently design a dialogue using keywords or sentence patterns, with appropriate body language and facial expressions; 3 stars for high-level improvisation and character development without additional linguistic support beyond the subject.

In terms of group collaboration, 1 star reflects a reasonable distribution of tasks within the group, with basic participation from the actors; 2 stars recognized the clear roles and active involvement of all group members; and 3 stars emphasize efficient, orderly teamwork with well-defined responsibilities.

Finally, in the area of cultural speculation, 1 star indicates a decision based on cultural knowledge learned during the lesson; 2 stars reflect the ability to articulate the reasons behind these decisions and convince others through performance; 3 stars for demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of cross-cultural dynamics in situational comedy, enabling innovative resolutions.

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1. Major Findings

Based on the cross-cultural thinking education theory and “sitcom-based” teaching principles, this thesis figured out the current level of junior high school students’ cross-cultural thinking competence, as well as the application situation of the “sitcom-based” teaching method. The main findings are as follows.

First and foremost, there is still a lot of room for improvement in the current cross-cultural thinking competency of junior high school students, with a wavering level of critical thinking disposition revealed by a mean score of 3.038 and a reluctant level of support for cross-cultural competency revealed by a mean score of 3.568. On the one hand, of the 4 sub-dimensions of CTD, only intelligence is at the level of reluctant support, while the other three, including reasoning, morality, and emotion, remain at the level of wavering. On the other hand, of the 3 dimensions of cross-cultural competence, only cross-cultural knowledge is at the level of reluctant support, and cross-cultural awareness and attitude are at the level of general support.

In addition, the current application of the “sitcom-based” teaching method is decent in junior high school. From the interview results, although the two teacher respondents did not have a detailed understanding of this teaching method, they unconsciously used it at least once a week in their practical classes. This was also proved by student’s SBTM questionnaire result in the dimension of application situation ( $M = 3.536$ ). Furthermore, the functions of the sitcoms have been admitted from both students and teachers in cultivating students’ cognitive development (including cross-cultural knowledge), ability development (including critical thinking) and efficiency development (including learning motivation). Just as teacher F said in the interview: if sitcoms were well crafted in cross-cultural situations where students can make decisions, students are highly expected to put the cross-cultural knowledge they have just learnt into practice, greatly utilizing it to train their logical thinking and critical thinking through some instructional activities such as group discussions or drawing the logical tree.

Last but not least, since it is a relatively innovative approach to teaching in junior high schools, its application encounters some problems. For one thing, the implementation of this pedagogical approach requires the total understanding of the teacher of its definitions and forms of application. In the current stage, teachers are familiar with the teaching procedures to a part of its forms like making dialogues, but when it comes to sitcom performance or reader’s theatre, time insufficiency, uneven participation, and progress pressure may cause anxiety. For another, the shortage of sitcom-based materials in the PEP textbook seldom causes high-quality English lessons to use “sitcom-based” teaching method, leading to a strong resource limitation which, combined with the exam pressure, resisting English teachers using this approach freely.

## 5.2. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Nowadays, there is limited research of the “sitcom-based” teaching method in junior high schools putting an eye on the integration of cross-cultural thinking education, neither did research in critical thinking or cross-cultural competence use sitcoms as a pedagogical approach. In light of this, this paper tentatively attempts to construct a research framework to investigate its current application to English education in junior high schools by conducting comprehensive questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. However, this study still suffers from the following deficiencies due to the limited teaching experience of the authors and other objective conditions.

First and foremost, due to time constraints and related school regulations, this study is primarily applied rather than empirical. The effectiveness of the “sitcom-based” teaching method can only be inferred through self-assessment questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations, which inevitably limits the availability of visualizable conclusions. In addition, both the questionnaire survey and the interview involved relatively small sample sizes, both from a single secondary school. As such, the findings only reflect the participants’ perspective on the “sitcom-based” teaching approach and its implementation status in that specific context; They may not accurately represent the broader landscape of English education in junior high schools across the country. However, given that the topic and sitcom-based materials are primarily adapted from the PEP textbook, the sole English textbook officially designated by the Chinese Ministry of Education for the provincial high school entrance examination, this pedagogical model demonstrates broad applicability. In lower-performing schools, teachers are expected to prioritize foundational knowledge within the textbook materials, whereas in higher-performing schools, they should pursue extended instructional objectives.

Despite these limitations, this study contributes meaningful data to both “sitcom-based” teaching and English language teaching, while also identifying directions for future research. First and foremost, additional cross-sectional studies involving empirical studies should be carried out under more favorable conditions regarding time and other external factors. This could include assessing learning outcomes through examination results, scriptwriting exercises, performance evaluations, and other measurable metrics to better visualize the effectiveness of “sitcom-based” teaching approaches. In addition, future studies are recommended to expand their sample sizes in order to enhance the credibility of the findings while making them applicable to a wider population. Such a step would create a more robust evidence base for informing curriculum-based pedagogical practices.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire

各位同学们好：

感谢参与本次问卷调查。本调查不记名，所填内容只用于学术研究范围，调查结果严格保密，任课教师作为填写时的监督者，**不参与数据分析**，你的回答不会对您的学习和生活造成任何影响。请您如实填写，不必有任何顾虑。

序号	题目	1	2	3	4	5
1	我喜欢英语，认为英语学习是有趣的					
2	我认为口语和听力是英语学习中较难的模块					

1——非常不同意，2——不同意，3——不确定/一般，4——同意，5——非常同意。

**请在每一题(5个方框内)写下一个数字答案，举例如下：**

**现在正式开始问卷**

**性别** 男 女

问卷一：跨文化思辨能力问卷

维度	序号	题目	1	2	3	4	5
思辨倾向维度	1	我们如果不同意他人的观点，就需要拿出理由。					
	2	我常常不由自主地分析评价别人的论证过程。					
	3	了解他人对事物的看法对我来说非常重要。					
	4	我尽量多学东西，尽管我不知道何时能派上用场。					
	5	一旦我决定做某事，就不会轻易放弃。					
	6	我的决定不易受外界干扰。					
	7	面对问题时，因为我能做出客观的分析，所以同伴们会找我做决定。					
	8	我能提出有创造性的解决方案。					
	9	我不愿意在有多种争议的观点中做出选择。					
	10	某件事如果多数人赞同，少数人反对，我会支持多数人。					
	11	论证一种观点的最佳依据是你当时的感受。					
	12	事物的本质与其表象是一致的。					
	13	如果某人的见解明显错误，他便没有表达自己权力的看法。					
	14	对问题的多种解决方法，我不愿意去分析哪个更好。					
	15	遇到对别人处置不公时，我愤愤不平。					
	16	人们处理问题总是从自己的利益出发。					

维度	序号	题目	1	2	3	4	5
跨文化能力维度	17	我了解中国的价值观知识。					
	18	我了解外国的价值观知识。					
	19	我了解跨文化交流与传播等概念的基本知识。					
	20	我了解一些成功进行跨文化交流的策略和技巧。					
	21	我愿意和来自不同文化的外国人进行交流和學習。					
	22	我愿意尊重外国人的生活方式和习俗。					
	23	我愿意学好外国语言和文化。					
	24	我能够意识到与外国人交流时彼此存在文化相似性和差异性。					
	25	我能够意识到与外国人交流时文化身份的差异性。					
	26	我能够意识到要基于不同文化视角审视跨文化交流情景。					

### 问卷二：情景剧教学法接受度调查问卷

#### 请先阅读本定义：

情景剧教学法是一种将与现实生活贴近的情景(剧)融入课堂教学的教学方法。在课堂中，教师让学生集体/分角色朗读对话、进行表演、给定情境前提进行小组讨论等，都属于运用该教学方法。

序号	题目	1	2	3	4	5
1	我喜欢参与课堂中的情景剧教学活动。					
2	教师会在课堂中使用角色扮演、分角色朗读对话的教学方法。					
3	我所在的班级教师每个月会使用 3~5 次情景剧教学法。					
4	我可以接受该类情景剧课堂教学活动，认为其难度不大。					
5	我认为情景剧教学活动能活跃课堂氛围。					
6	我认为情景剧教学活动能提高我对英语的兴趣。					
7	我认为情景剧教学活动能让加深我对知识的记忆。					
8	我认为情景剧教学法能提升我的创新和思辨能力。					
9	我自身的性格因素会影响我是否参与情景剧教学活动。					
10	我的英语成绩会影响我是否参与情景剧教学活动。					
11	我与老师同学的人际关系会影响我是否参与情景剧教学活动。					
12	情景剧教学活动的形式会影响我是否参与情景剧教学活动。					

## Appendix 2: Interview Questions

### 访谈问题(学生部分)

- 1) 当你了解到尼泊尔和中国登山队角色中存在的冲突时，你是否很快就找到了一个明确的决定方向？
- 2) 你会主动学习外国文化吗？你认为你对外国文化的了解程度是多少？
- 3) 我预测了一些参与情景剧教学法的影响因素，包括性格活动形式与同学和老师的人际关系英语考试成绩，但结果出人意料，能告诉我影响你参与情景剧教学最小和最大的因素，并给我原因吗？

### 访谈问题(教师部分)

- 1) 您熟悉情景剧教学法吗？
- 2) 您使用情景剧教学法的频率如何？通常使用什么样的形式？
- 3) 情景剧教学法给您的课堂带来了什么改变？
- 4) 在实施情景剧教学法的过程中，您遇到了哪些问题？
- 5) 您认为情景剧教学法可以有效提升学生的跨文化思辨能力吗？
- 6) 您对在初中英语课堂实施情景剧教学法有什么建议？

## Appendix 3: Teaching Plan

### I) Background Information

Junior high school students, Grade 8 (42 students)

### II) Textbook

PEP English book Grade 8, Unit 7

### III) Period

45 minutes

### IV) Lesson Type

Unit expansion lesson (a sitcom-based role playing lesson based on the theme of this unit)

### V) Teaching Material

Audio of laughter, bells, and violent wind; News of the China and Nepal mountain climbers; Video of the custom of the Sherpas, including their ritual for sacrificing to the God, and Marnyi stone; Team cards.

### VI) Teaching Aims

#### 1) Language Ability

a) Students are highly expected to speak English appropriately in communicative situations (such as making requests, suggestions, and explanations) through role-play and cross-cultural negotiations.

b) Students can acquire some new words related to mountaineering and cultural differences (such as windbreak, ritual, and sacred) during performances.

#### 2) Learning Ability

a) Students are highly recommended to enhance their abilities for autonomous inquiry and problem-solving through collaborative group work and improvisational decision-making.

b) Students will develop interdisciplinary integration skills encompassing geography, culture, and language by leveraging the “scaffolding” of dramatic contexts.

**3) Thinking Capacity**

a) Students will improve their critical thinking skills by analyzing the roots of cross-cultural conflicts (such as the cultural symbolic significance of Marnyi stones) and propose logically coherent solutions.

b) Students are expected to enhance their creative thinking competence through designing body language and dialogue that align with the characters' perspectives in performances.

**4) Cultural Awareness**

a) Students can have a comparatively comprehensive understanding of the deep-seated values underlying cultural differences between China and Nepal (such as views on nature and expressions of belief) and practice a cross-cultural attitude of "harmony in diversity".

b) Students are required to think about the relationship between cultural conflict and win-win cooperation after engaging in reflection through sitcom performing, thereby enhancing cultural confidence and international understanding.

**VII) Main Points**

1) Achieve cross-cultural negotiation in the given conflict, utilizing language and logic to address and resolve discrepancies.

2) Internalize the core values of cultural respect and teamwork spirit through performance and reflection.

**VIII) Difficult Points**

1) Balance language expression and cultural sensitivity in improvisational performances.

2) Demonstrate critical thinking depth in conflict resolution (such as distinguishing between cultural differences and common goals).

**IX) Teaching Methods & Learning Strategies****Teaching Methods**

- 1) "Sitcom-based" teaching method
- 2) Language and intercultural critical thinking integrated approach
- 3) Communicative language teaching

**Learning Strategies**

- 1) Individual Work, Pair Work, Group Work
- 2) Observation-Imagination-Practice
- 3) Communication and critical thinking

**X) Teaching Aids**

Chalk, blackboard, transparency, projector, pictures

**XI) Teaching Procedures****Step 1. Lead-in (5 minutes)**

1) The teacher asks students questions to recall their memory of Mount Qomolangma, letting them answer its features of the highest (most dangerous) and its location between China and Nepal while retelling the three achievements in chronological order (including the nation of the climbers).

2) The teacher presents the news of the Chinese and Nepalese mountaineers who climbed Mount Qomolangma together and achieved success in 1988.

(Justification: During warm-ups, the teacher's effective interaction with her students not only facilitates their rapid immersion into the theatrical learning environment, but also allows the teacher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the student's learning conditions through communication, thereby enabling timely adjustments to subsequent teaching activities.)

**Step 2. Pre-dramatizing (10 minutes)**

1) The teacher presents the stratified map of Mount Qomolangma's altitude in the slides, asking one student to find out and circle the base camp at an altitude of 5200 m and the forward camp at 6,500m. Then the teacher plays the audio of the sound for comparison (the laughter of people and the sound of bells for 5200 m; the sound of fierce howling wind for 6500m).

2) The teacher divides the class into four large groups of approximately ten students each, according to the four rows of seats in the classroom. Then each large group will be evenly divided into two small groups, acting the camp of Chinese mountain climbers and Nepalese mountain climbers.

3) The teacher distributes cards representing the camp and introduced several cultural practices and knowledge, such as the Marnyi Stone. The cards can be seen in Figure.

(Justification: By dividing into groups and engaging in a first-person experience through reading cards, coupled with teacher explanations, students can gain a deeper understanding of Chinese and Nepalese culture. This laid a solid foundation for subsequent cross-cultural thinking.)

**Step 3. While-dramatizing (20 minutes)**

1) The teacher plays the sound of the howling wind again at 6500 m and then presented the situation: As the snowstorm intensified, climbers from China and Nepal discovered a forward camp established by previous adventurers at 6,500m at this critical moment. The Chinese team used scattered stones to construct a temporary windbreak; However, the Nepalese team identified parts of the stone as the Marnyi stone, inscribed with sacred texts, and demanded the immediate removal of the windbreak and the performance of a ritual dedicated to the mountain deities to re-establish links with the gods of Qomolangma Mountain.

2) Each small group discuss their decisions and write down the reasons behind them. Five minutes later, every large group analyze the reasons together, negotiating a suitable solution, and get ready to perform. (Teacher will show several solutions on slides to guide and help students if she notices several groups keep silent).

(Justification: Let students immersed in cross-cultural scenarios that enhance their ability to make informed choices through a contextual scaffold created by images and sounds, thereby improving their cross-cultural thinking competence. Let students underscore the power of teamwork, cultural awareness conveyed in the unit's text, because whether in the training camp or in the classroom, they successfully resolved problems through collaborative efforts. Enhance students' speaking and writing abilities through group discussions and sitcom performance.)

**Step 4. Post-dramatizing (7 minutes)**

1) The teacher shows a Sitcom Performance Evaluation Scale and invites several students to express their opinions. With enough time, performers can talk about the reasons behind their designs.

(Justification: Facilitating formative assessment further deepens students' understanding of the spirit of collaboration.)

**Step 5. Summary and Homework (3 minutes)**

**Summary**

1) Based on the blackboard and sitcoms, the teacher will summarize the geographical knowledge of Mount Qomolangma and the importance of cross-cultural negotiation.

2) The proverb "Agree to disagree" will be used to end today's class.

**Homework**

1) Must-do: Write a "Summit Diary" (about 100 words) from the perspective of the mountain climber you have performed, reflecting the noy well-considered part of your group's final decision, giving appropriate reason and try to polish it.

2) Optional: Search more information about the similarities and discrepancies between China and Nepal online and introduce to us in the next class.

(Justification: To enhance the learning contents and develop students' self-learning.)

**XII) Reflection**

(to be written immediately after the lesson)