

Research on Closed-Loop Communication Path of Rizhao Intangible Cultural Heritage Integrated into Foreign Language Education Under the Background of Rural Revitalization

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Abstract: This paper systematically sorts out the practical dilemmas of integrating Rizhao Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) into foreign language education for international communication, and analyzes the underlying root causes of these problems. Based on the potential of international communication and the integration degree of foreign language education, 8 representative Rizhao ICH items are selected to construct a closed-loop communication path adapted to local realities. The research aims to provide implementable practical references for the living inheritance of Rizhao ICH, the connotation construction of foreign language teaching in local universities, and the overseas communication of rural culture, as well as offer ideas for similar cities to integrate ICH with foreign language education and boost rural cultural revitalization.

Keywords: Rural revitalization; Rizhao intangible cultural heritage; Foreign language education; Closed-loop communication

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1. Introduction

1.1. Research background

The comprehensive advancement of the rural revitalization strategy is no longer limited to material construction such as industrial development and living environment improvement, but places greater emphasis on the spiritual dimension of cultural shaping and cultural continuity^[1]. Rooted in rural production and living scenarios, intangible cultural heritage records regional folk traditions, craftsmanship and humanistic aesthetics, serving as an indispensable core resource for rural cultural revitalization and the value origin of the living protection and inheritance of ICH^[2]. Rizhao boasts 34 provincial-level and above ICH items, laying a solid foundation for international communication. As an important bridge and medium for cross-

cultural exchange, foreign language education undertakes multiple tasks including language knowledge teaching, cultural cognition cultivation and international discourse expression. Foreign language classrooms in local universities ought to be an important position for the external output of local culture. Nevertheless, foreign language teaching has long tended to the input of Western culture, with a conspicuous absence of local traditional culture, especially local ICH. The separation between ICH resources and foreign language courses wastes high-quality rural cultural resources and weakens the cultural education and external communication functions of foreign language education.

Against the dual context of rural revitalization and the “Going Global” of ICH culture, it is necessary to systematically integrate Rizhao ICH into the whole process of foreign language education, link classroom teaching, resource transformation, rural implementation and overseas communication, and form a complete closed loop to explore a replicable and promotable new path for the international communication of ICH suitable for local conditions.

1.2. Research significance

Existing studies mostly focus on macro-level ICH protection, ideological and political education in university foreign language courses, and the application of cross-cultural communication theories, while special research on the in-depth integration of Rizhao municipal ICH and the construction of closed-loop communication models is relatively scarce. Based on eight representative Rizhao ICH projects, combined with practical work such as pilot teaching of E-commerce English in universities, the implementation of rural ICH communication scenarios and the sorting of ICH English translations, this paper sorts out practical bottlenecks and constructs a closed-loop implementation path. On the one hand, it can promote the transformation of Rizhao ICH from static protection to living communication and expand its international visibility via foreign language carriers. On the other hand, it can enrich local cultural content in university foreign language teaching, perfect embedded teaching modes, and fulfill the educational goals of curriculum ideological and political education. Meanwhile, the practical practices formed by the research can be directly applied to local cultural tourism promotion, rural cultural construction and campus foreign language activities, possessing both application and promotion value.

1.3. Domestic and foreign research status

Foreign research mainly focuses on the collaborative relationship between cross-cultural communication of ICH, foreign language education, and cultural inheritance, accumulating rich practical experience in English-Chinese translation and bilingual communication of ICH. However, most studies center on world-famous cultural symbols, with insufficient targeted research on coastal rural ICH in China. There is a particular lack of special exploration integrating rural revitalization scenarios with local ICH and foreign language, and most relevant studies only touch upon talent cultivation at the surface without close connection to the core research direction of this paper^[3].

In recent years, domestic research has carried out multi-dimensional exploration on the intersection of rural revitalization, ICH communication and foreign language education, yielding a batch of valuable achievements. Wang Ning systematically analyzed the overall path of cross-cultural communication of regional ICH without involving the integrating role of foreign language education^[4]; Zhang Min focused on Shandong regional ICH and provided regional references for the English translation and communication of Rizhao ICH^[5]; Cheng Yuanhui’s research on new media communication echoes the innovative “ICH + Foreign

Language + Live Streaming” direction of this paper^[6]; the Nanjing ICH communication system constructed by Lin Shiyuan et al. and the Five-Dimensional Linkage Model proposed by Guishan offer references for the construction of closed-loop paths and coordination mechanisms in this paper^[7,8].

In the research field of integrating ICH into foreign language education, Li Li analyzed the dilemmas and countermeasures of embedding ICH into university foreign language teaching^[9]; Xu Juan focused on compound talent cultivation^[10]; Liu Fang expanded the practical scenarios of integration in primary and secondary schools^[11]; Yang Wei’s monograph laid a theoretical foundation for the research^[12]; Zhou Hao’s ICH foreign translation strategies provide methodological guidance for the standardized English translation of Rizhao ICH^[13]; the ICH protection report issued by Rizhao Bureau of Culture and Tourism offers authoritative support for the research^[14]. Generally speaking, domestic research still has deficiencies: lack of pertinence to the Rizhao region, failure to form a complete closed loop of “university teaching – rural implementation – overseas communication”, and insufficient in-depth exploration of innovative communication forms via new media, which serves as the entry point of this paper^[15].

2. Practical dilemmas of integrating Rizhao ICH into foreign language education for international communication

2.1. Fragmented resource integration and lack of systematic planning

Rizhao boasts a wide variety of ICH resources, yet a systematic resource bank adapted to foreign language teaching and external communication has not been established. Existing ICH materials are mostly recorded in Chinese texts and local archives, lacking standardized English interpretations, popular cultural explanations and concise narrative texts. Foreign language teachers in universities can only select individual ICH contents as scattered extended classroom materials, without unified teaching syllabi, special thematic modules or school-based resources. The utilization of resources is random and fragmented, making it hard to form a stable teaching integration system.

2.2. Non-standard terminology translation and deviations in cultural transference

Rizhao ICH contains a large number of culturally specific expressions such as folk titles, craft procedures and folk implied meanings, which cannot be simply translated literally. At present, there is no unified standard for ICH terminology translation. Different teachers and promotional materials adopt inconsistent translation versions, easily leading to conceptual confusion and loss of cultural connotations. Some English translations only stay at literal conversion, ignoring folk implied meanings and regional cultural backgrounds, resulting stiff narratives that are hard for overseas audiences to understand and recognize.

2.3. Superficial classroom integration without systematic embedded teaching

The integration of ICH into foreign language teaching in most universities only adopts shallow forms such as classroom examples, extracurricular reading and festival-themed activities, without constructing a progressive teaching process of “basic cognition – situational simulation – project practice”. Curriculum design still centers on language exam preparation, lacking practical tasks such as English commentary of ICH and creation of external communication manuscripts. Students can only superficially know the names of ICH items without the ability to introduce and promote Rizhao ICH to foreign audiences independently.

2.4. Single communication carriers without diversified media matrix

The external communication of Rizhao ICH still relies on traditional methods such as offline performances and official cultural exchanges. New media communication carried out by foreign language teachers and students is insufficient. Digital communication tools, including short videos and overseas social platforms, as well as bilingual graphic materials, are underutilized. The outputs of campus teaching are disconnected from rural communication scenarios, limiting the coverage and influence of communication.

2.5. Shortage of compound talents and mismatch between supply and demand

The integration of ICH and foreign language communication requires compound talents who master Rizhao folk customs, possess solid foreign language proficiency and understand cross-cultural expression. In reality, foreign language teachers lack in-depth knowledge of local folk customs and systematic research and training opportunities. ICH inheritors are proficient in craftsmanship and folk customs but have no foreign language expression and external narrative capabilities. Young students have language foundations yet lack accumulation of ICH and communication planning abilities. The talent shortage has become a key factor restricting the implementation of closed-loop communication.

2.6. Insufficient multi-party coordination and absence of long-term safeguard mechanisms

Cultural and tourism departments, ICH protection institutions, local universities and rural cultural and tourism sites operate independently without regular communication and cooperation channels. There is no special policy guidance or financial support, and linkage models for joint resource construction, teacher training, and activity organization have not been established. Meanwhile, a communication effect evaluation mechanism is missing. There is no feedback summary and dynamic optimization after practice, making it difficult to form a sustainable closed-loop operation mode.

3. Construction of closed-loop communication path for integrating Rizhao ICH into foreign language education under rural revitalization

Based on the above dilemmas, this paper constructs a complete closed-loop communication system from six dimensions: resources, teaching, translation, communication, talents and mechanisms, realizing linkage and cyclic optimization of all links.

3.1. Integrate ICH resources and build a standardized bilingual resource bank

Relying on the Rizhao ICH Protection Center, focus on eight representative ICH items and systematically sort out basic information including item origins, craft procedures, folk implied meanings and cultural values. Organize foreign language teachers and ICH inheritors to compile glossaries of core ICH terms and concise English-Chinese practical guides, and unify the translation paradigms of proper nouns, craft procedures and folk titles. On this basis, build a bilingual resource bank combining texts, pictures and short videos, which can be applied to university classroom teaching, campus activities and rural external promotion, laying a solid resource foundation for closed-loop communication.

3.2. Promote embedded teaching and construct a hierarchical classroom integration system

Based on E-commerce major and general English courses in universities, adopt lightweight embedded integration without changing the existing curriculum framework. ICH contents are organically embedded into listening, reading, speaking and writing modules. The classroom sets special tasks including ICH cultural cognition and simulated English commentary as well as ICH promotion manuscript writing, and builds a progressive teaching mode of “basic cognition – situational simulation – project practice. Regularly carry out practical activities such as bilingual ICH speeches, English short video production and simulated ICH commentary, guiding students to shift from passive listening to active expression and convert classroom knowledge into external communication capabilities.

3.3. Standardize translation strategies and optimize cross-cultural narration

Adopt the combination of domestication and foreignization to handle culturally specific ICH items, and apply the mode of “literal translation + supplementary notes + brief cultural background introduction” to retain cultural authenticity while lowering comprehension barriers for overseas audiences. Set up a translation review group composed of foreign language teachers, translators and ICH inheritors to unify the expression styles of external promotion manuscripts, commentary scripts and short video subtitles of ICH. Reduce administrative and formulaic expressions, and adopt story-based and life-oriented narratives. Take folk stories and inheritance stories as entry points to make Rizhao ICH narratives warmer and more suitable for cross-cultural communication.

3.4. Expand diversified carriers and link dual scenarios of campus and rural areas

On the one hand, sort out and archive English commentary videos and bilingual graphic works created by students, and release them on overseas social platforms to build a youth folk communication position. On the other hand, based on rural revitalization scenarios, select rural cultural tourism sites and ICH workshops as pilot practice locations, place bilingual promotional materials and QR code resources, and organize teachers and students to carry out on-site bilingual explanation and foreign language live streaming of ICH. Link classroom teaching outputs with real rural communication, forming a diversified communication pattern complemented by online new media and offline on-site promotion.

3.5. Cultivate compound talents and build a stable talent echelon

Regularly organize foreign language teachers to conduct research and training in ICH workshops and inheritance bases, and invite ICH inheritors to deliver special lectures on campus to make up teachers’ deficiencies in folk culture knowledge. Offer optional courses on ICH culture and cross-cultural communication for university students, and set up ICH foreign language volunteer teams to participate in bilingual interpretation, manuscript translation and short video production. Establish a collaborative team of “foreign language teachers + ICH inheritors + young students”, with clear division of labor in teaching integration, content review and communication planning, so as to build a sustainable talent support team.

3.6. Improve multi-party coordination mechanisms and perfect closed-loop operation safeguards

Establish a multi-party coordination mechanism covering government cultural and tourism departments, ICH

protection centers, local universities and rural cultural tourism sites, and clarify the cooperation mode of joint resource construction, curriculum research, activity organization and result sharing. Strive for policy and financial support to guarantee the orderly development of bilingual resource compilation, teacher training, practical activities and new media communication. Build a communication effect evaluation mechanism to track and assess classroom teaching effects, student practical outputs, online feedback and rural audience evaluations. Continuously optimize resource contents, teaching designs and communication modes according to feedback, realizing a true closed-loop operation of “construction – practice – evaluation – optimization”.

4. Conclusion and prospect

4.1. Research conclusion

Rural revitalization involves not only economic and ecological construction, but also the inheritance and external communication of regional ICH culture. Rizhao boasts profound and distinctive ICH resources with favorable conditions for integration into foreign language education and international communication. However, multiple dilemmas, including fragmented resource integration, non-standard English translation, superficial classroom integration, single communication carriers, insufficient compound talents, and weak coordination mechanisms, still exist.

Following the logical thread of “resource integration – English translation development – dual-scenario practice – evaluation and optimization”, the closed-loop communication path for integrating Rizhao ICH into foreign language education under rural revitalization can break the barriers among ICH inheritance, foreign language education and international communication by building a bilingual resource bank, perfecting embedded classroom teaching, standardizing cross-cultural narration, expanding diversified communication carriers, cultivating compound talents and improving multi-party coordination safeguards. It can achieve win-win results of inheriting rural cultural context, improving university teaching quality and empowering rural cultural external communication.

4.2. Research limitations

This research is carried out based on the actual conditions of Rizhao’s ICH and local universities, with limited survey scope and practical pilot sites. Some communication modes are still in the initial exploration stage, and long-term communication effects need to be verified through longer tracking cycles. Meanwhile, dimensions such as multilingual translation of ICH and cross-border cultural tourism communication have not been deeply explored, leaving room for further expansion.

4.3. Research prospect

Subsequent research can further expand the scope of rural pilot sites and perfect the bilingual ICH resource system, continuously optimize embedded teaching contents and cross-cultural narration strategies. Rely on university professional advantages to deepen the integrated modes of “ICH + Foreign Language + Cross-Border E-commerce” and “ICH + Foreign Language + New Media Live Streaming”, and build characteristic external communication brands for Rizhao ICH. Meanwhile, continuously strengthen multi-party linkage, perfect long-term operation and evaluation mechanisms, and make the closed-loop communication mode of integrating ICH into foreign language education more mature and stable, so as to continuously contribute to rural cultural revitalization and overseas dissemination of Shandong regional culture.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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