HiLL PUBLISHING

The Educational Review, USA, 2025, 9(12), 952-957
https://www.hillpublisher.com/Journals/er/
ISSN Online: 2575-7946
ISSN Print: 2575-7938

Research on the Industry-Education Integration Mechanism for Cultivating "Foreign Language + Intangible Cultural Heritage" Interdisciplinary Talents

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How to cite this paper: Jianjun Qi. (2025). Research on the Industry-Education Integration Mechanism for Cultivating "Foreign Language + Intangible Cultural Heritage" Interdisciplinary Talents. *The Educational Review, USA*, 9(12), 952-957.
DOI: 10.26855/er.2025.12.002

Received: November 4, 2025
Accepted: December 1, 2025
Published: December 22, 2025

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Abstract

Amidst globalization and China's cultural "going global" strategy, the international dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) encounters a bottleneck in linguistic and cultural translation. This study explores the industry-education integration mechanism for cultivating "Foreign Language +ICH" interdisciplinary talents, aiming to overcome this bottleneck through combining linguistic theory with practice. It first outlines the core competencies of such talents as cross-cultural "translators" and "communicators". Through case studies—such as Sichuan Opera's internationalization, Tianjin Foreign Studies University's ICH Communication Center, local ICH in vocational curricula, and the Shang Dynasty culture project-based teaching—the paper reveals diverse practices in collaborative education, curriculum restructuring, and platform development. From a linguistic perspective, it further identifies key challenges, including terminology standardization, contextual adaptation, discourse construction, and corpus resource shortage. Finally, an innovative, spiraling mechanism is proposed, centering on quintuple collaboration (Government–University–Enterprise–Research Institution–ICH Practitioner) and operating through a "Cultural Decoding–Linguistic Recoding–Industrial Application" closed loop. Implementation pathways are suggested to offer theoretical and practical insights for foreign language education reform and international cultural communication.

Keywords

Foreign Language +Intangible Cultural Heritage; Interdisciplinary Talents; Industry-Education Integration; Mechanism Research

1. Introduction

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) constitutes the "living genes" of national culture, and its preservation and international dissemination are vital for cultural diversity and soft power. However, in cross-cultural communication, ICH faces a core contradiction: its deeply contextual "local knowledge" often conflicts with the "universal cognitive frameworks" of international audiences. Language acts as both a bridge and a barrier in this process. Traditional foreign-language education, focused on general skills and target-culture knowledge, tends to produce "cultural aphasia" and a disconnect from real-world communication needs.

Meanwhile, industrial upgrading and the cultural "going global" (Chen, 2024) strategy demand professionals who are not only fluent in foreign languages and deeply knowledgeable about ICH but also skilled in digital and cross-cultural communication. This has spurred the emerging "Foreign Language +ICH" interdisciplinary field, which aims to cultivate talents capable of interpreting, translating, disseminating, and commercially operating ICH resources.

Industry-education integration, linking education with industry, provides a key platform for such talent cultivation. It emphasizes embedding real projects and communication needs into teaching. Yet current integration often remains superficial, lacking a stable, deep, and sustainable mechanism. Thus, from a linguistic perspective, this study explores the logic, models, and mechanisms of this integration. It addresses three questions: What are the core competencies of "Foreign Language + ICH" talents? What are the main practical models and their linguistic features? What challenges and pathways exist for building a sustainable integration mechanism?

2. The Core Competencies of "Foreign Language + ICH" Interdisciplinary Talents and the Theoretical Coupling with Industry-Education Integration

The cultivation of "Foreign Language +ICH" talent focuses on training specialists in the "cross-contextual translation of cultural symbols". This process requires three core competencies.

First, cultural decoding and interpretive competence. Learners must move beyond surface forms to understand the historical, social, and aesthetic systems behind ICH. This shifts foreign language teaching from "linguistic instrumentalism" to "cultural cognitivism".

Second, linguistic recoding and multimodal narrative competence. This involves reconstructing cultural meanings into compelling target-language output, encompassing strategic terminology and rhetoric choices. In the digital era, it extends to creating scripts, museum commentaries, and social media content.

Third, cross-cultural communication and project operation competence. Talents must navigate audience psychology and collaborate within real projects involving diverse stakeholders like practitioners and marketers (Deng & Duan, 2024).

Industry-education integration naturally supports these competencies. It connects the "education chain" with the "industrial chain" by introducing real-world resources and scenarios into learning. For "Foreign Language+ ICH", the industry provides authentic communication demands, while education provides linguistic and methodological training (Chen, 2025). Their integration creates a closed-loop environment from "cultural decoding" to "communication practice", effectively bridging theory and application.

3. Diverse Practical Models of Industry-Education Integration for Cultivating "Foreign Language + ICH" Talents: Case Studies and Linguistic Analysis

Currently, various institutions across China have undertaken diverse explorations in "Foreign Language + ICH" industry-education integration, initially forming distinctive practical models. The following analyzes several typical cases from the dimension of linguistic application.

3.1 Model One: Curriculum Restructuring and Digital Empowerment—The Case of Sichuan Private Universities Empowering Sichuan Opera Internationalization

Some private universities in Sichuan have restructured their English curricula to meet Sichuan Opera's overseas and digital needs, a practice termed "curriculum projectification, project digitalization, and digital internationalization".

Specialized courses like English Translation of Sichuan Opera Art focus on translating its unique terminology, movements, and plots, moving beyond traditional translation to offer vertical domain practice. For digital empowerment, students collaborate with the "Sichuan Opera Digital Museum", using 3D modeling and VR to recreate scenes and produce English commentary, integrating language learning with technology to build multimodal production skills.

Further integration occurs through real projects. Students assist in preparations for Sichuan Opera's "2024 Americas Tour", creating promotional copy, subtitles, and managing overseas social media. This requires researching international online discourse to produce short-form content, moving directly from the classroom to a global

platform. The model's key insight is shifting language teaching from static "text translation" to dynamic "communication practice", enhancing output's contextual adaptability and effectiveness.

3.2 Model Two: Platform Co-construction and Collaborative Innovation–The Case of the ICH Communication Center at Tianjin Foreign Studies University

Through ministry-university co-construction, Tianjin Foreign Studies University established an "ICH Communication Center", building a high-level collaborative platform integrating government, industry, academia, research, and media resources. This model emphasizes resource aggregation through the platform for high-level ICH communication research and interdisciplinary talent cultivation.

Its linguistic characteristic is "research-led practice". The center's faculty team undertakes multiple national and provincial-level ICH-related research projects and has published landmark works like An Overview of China's World-Class Intangible Cultural Heritage (multilingual edition). Such academic research provides profound theoretical support and authoritative corpus resources for talent cultivation. At the practical level, the center explores interdisciplinary models like "literature + ICH", "journalism + ICH", and "digital media technology + ICH". For instance, under the guidance of teachers and media experts, student teams have created a series of multilingual audio-video works, such as "Make Hay While the Sun Shines" – ICH Practitioner Zhai Yin Teaches You How to Make a Kite, released on platforms like the "Fengya Tianwai" public account. These works are no longer simple cultural introductions but professional communication products integrating comprehensive language skills like news interviewing, documentary narration, and new media copywriting.

This model constructs a cyclical system of "academic research – content production – international communication". The platform attracts various forces, including government, media, and enterprises, providing students with a complete chain experience from participating in national-level projects to content distribution on mainstream media, cultivating their comprehensive language application and project management capabilities for high-end international communication platforms.

3.3 Model Three: Deep-rooted Regional Culture and Local Narrative—The Case of Vocational Colleges Integrating Local ICH

Unlike undergraduate institutions focusing on international communication, many vocational colleges closely integrate "Foreign Language + ICH" with serving the regional economy and aiding rural revitalization, forming a distinctive "localized" integration model (Zhu & Wu, 2024). The core of its linguistic practice is "local narrative" and "practical translation".

For example, some institutions systematically compile specialized foreign language textbooks incorporating local ICH (Du, 2023). Colleges in Shaanxi focus on Qinling ecological culture and Guanzhong shadow puppetry; those in Yunnan extract elements from the Ancient Tea-Horse Road culture and Bai tie-dye techniques. Textbook content includes not only translated selections from local chronicles but also incorporates vivid linguistic materials like folk proverbs and nursery rhymes, designing exercises for new text types such as short video scripts, international exhibition commentary, and cross-border e-commerce copy. This directly links language learning to the practical needs of local cultural tourism promotion and product export.

In practical sessions, students conduct in-depth fieldwork in local communities. Students from Shanxi visit Pingyao Ancient City to research Jin merchant culture, writing interview outlines and research reports in English; students from Guizhou use both Miao language and English to present Miao silver jewelry forging techniques, producing micro-documentaries. In this process, the greatest linguistic challenge students face is the creative translation of local knowledge highly dependent on native context, even concepts without direct equivalents in the target language (e.g., specific folk rituals, details of farming techniques) (Li & Jiang, 2024). They need to act as "cultural interpreters", employing strategies like metaphor, analogy, and scenario description to reconstruct these cultural images in the target language. This model cultivates "down-to-earth" interdisciplinary talents capable of using a global language to tell local stories and directly serve local development.

3.4 Model Four: Project-based System and Cross-border Linkage—The Case of the Shang Dynasty Culture Foreign Language Practice Teaching Project

The School of Foreign Languages at Anyang Institute of Technology in Henan Province has developed a project-

based model integrating "research-based learning – digital creation – cross-border live streaming" for Shang Dynasty culture. This creates a closed loop from research to market, characterized by "academic and commercial integration".

The process begins with academic research, where students decode Shang Dynasty culture through textual study and field visits, building a foundation for translation (Li, 2024). They then produce promotional short videos based on their findings.

The core innovative practice is cross-border live streaming, conducted with an industry partner. Students select cultural products, write English live streaming scripts, and practice promoting them in simulated live environments. This task forces the real-time translation of specialized terms into compelling marketing language for international consumers. The model demonstrates the integration of cultural, linguistic, digital, and professional competencies, serving as a paradigm for applied talent cultivation.

4. Deep-Seated Linguistic Challenges Facing the Current Industry-Education Integration Mechanism

Despite flourishing practical explorations, moving towards deepened and institutionalized "Foreign Language + ICH" industry-education integration still faces a series of deep-seated challenges rooted in linguistics itself.

First, the lack of standardized ICH terminology and multilingual reference databases. ICH involves a vast number of unique nouns, craft procedures, and ritual segments, whose translation currently lacks authoritative, unified standards. The same item (e.g., "paper-cutting") might be translated as "paper-cutting", "Chinese paper-cut art", "jianzhi", etc., in different contexts, causing cognitive confusion. Although scholars have called for "terminology first" and undertaken standardization practices like those in Reading China's World-Class Intangible Cultural Heritage, the development of national-level multilingual ICH terminology databases and knowledge ontologies remains lagging, unable to provide systematic and reliable references for teaching, translation, and practice.

Second, the dilemma of cultural context adaptation and "over-domestication/foreignization". In the translation process, cultural adaptation is often necessary for target audience comprehension. However, the degree of adaptation is difficult to balance: excessive "domestication" (e.g., simplistically analogizing "Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai" to "China's Romeo and Juliet") erases cultural uniqueness; excessive "foreignization" (retaining numerous culture-loaded terms without explanation) leads to comprehension barriers. Cultivating students' ability to grasp this subtle balance in teaching is a major challenge. This requires students not only to be bilingual but also to possess deep comparative cultural literacy and flexible discursive strategy selection skills.

Third, insufficient capacity for constructing cross-cultural discourse systems. Many current practices remain at the level of "introducing Chinese ICH in a foreign language", failing to proactively construct a new discourse system that connects Chinese and foreign contexts and can be understood and accepted by the international community. For example, narrating ICH from the perspective of universal human values (e.g., harmony, craftsmanship, community cohesion) rather than merely from a "Chinese characteristics" angle requires deeper training in cross-cultural rhetoric and discourse strategies. This demands that industry-education integration projects not merely satisfy translation tasks but also guide students in discourse analysis and innovation.

Fourth, scarcity of authentic, high-quality multimodal linguistic resources. Effective teaching and practice require a large amount of authentic bilingual/multilingual ICH corpora, including texts, audio, video, and their corresponding translations. Currently, such corpora are scattered and of uneven quality, limiting corpus-based language teaching, machine translation training, and effectiveness evaluation. Although some universities and research institutions have begun building specialized corpora, they are small in scale and difficult to share, failing to form foundational resources supporting industry-wide development.

Fifth, structural shortage of "dual-qualified" teaching faculty. The ideal instructor should possess deep foreign language proficiency, solid ICH academic knowledge, and certain industrial practical experience. In reality, foreign language teachers generally lack specialized ICH knowledge, while ICH practitioners are usually not adept at foreign language teaching and cross-cultural theory. This gap in knowledge structure is one of the biggest bottlenecks for deep industry-education integration. Despite attempts like the "resident practitioner system", systematic and institutionalized mechanisms for cross-boundary faculty cultivation and mobility are not yet widely established.

5. Constructing a "Quintuple Collaborative, Spiraling" Long-term Industry-Education Integration Mechanism: Pathways and Strategies

To address the aforementioned challenges and promote "Foreign Language +ICH" talent cultivation from sporadic practice to a systemic mechanism, this paper constructs an innovative "quintuple collaborative, spiraling" industry-education integration model and proposes the following implementation pathways.

5.1 Mechanism Core: Quintuple Collaboration of Government-University-Enterprise-Research Institution -ICH Practitioner

Government (Gov.): Plays a guiding and safeguarding role, formulating incentive policies, establishing special funds, and leading the construction of public platforms like multilingual ICH terminology databases and corpora.
University (Uni.): As the main body of talent cultivation, responsible for systematic curriculum system design, teaching of linguistic theories and research methods, and organization of project-based teaching.
Enterprise/Industrial End (Ent.): Includes cultural tourism groups, cross-border e-commerce, media companies, etc., providing real project demands, practical scenarios, technological tools, and market feedback.
Research Institution (Res.): Includes social science research institutes, linguistics and cultural studies institutions, providing academic support and participating in standard-setting and textbook development.
ICH Practitioner/Community (Prac.): As the holders of cultural sources, providing the most authentic cultural knowledge and skills, participating in teaching and practical guidance.

These five parties establish long-term strategic agreements, form physical or virtual collaborative organizations (e.g., industry colleges, communication centers), clarify rights, responsibilities and benefits and achieve resource complementarity and benefit sharing.

5.2 Operational Closed Loop: The Spiraling Ascent of Cultural Decoding–Linguistic Recoding– Industrial Application

The operation of this mechanism is not a linear process but a continuously iterative, spiraling closed loop:

Cultural Decoding: Guided by "Res." and "Prac.", students gain a deep understanding of ICH connotations through academic research and fieldwork.

Linguistic Recoding: Guided by "Uni." and "Res.", students use linguistic tools to creatively translate the decoded culture into multilingual, multimodal forms, forming prototypes of communication products.

Industrial Application: Supported by "Ent." and "Gov.", the recoded products are tested, applied, and promoted in real markets (e.g., overseas performances, e-commerce live streaming, digital museum exhibitions) (Deng & Duan, 2024).

Feedback and Enhancement: Market feedback, audience reactions, technological iterations and other information return as new "problems" and "demands" to the "Decoding" stage, initiating a new, deeper cycle of integration and innovation. For example, discovering an unclear cultural point during live streaming prompts the team to revisit more in-depth academic research and seek better linguistic expressions.

5.3 Key Implementation Strategies

Modular Restructuring of Curriculum Systems: Construct a curriculum system comprising "Linguistic Foundation Module + ICH Specialized Module + Technology Application Module + Project Practice Module". Specialized modules can be set according to ICH categories (performing arts, traditional crafts, folklore, etc.) or communication scenarios (academic translation, cultural tourism interpretation, e-commerce copywriting, etc.), incorporating localized achievements like The Theory and Practice of English Translation of Shaanxi Intangible Cultural Heritage Projects (Du, 2023).
Co-construction and Sharing of Resource Platforms: The five parties collaboratively build a "Digital Resource Platform for ICH Cross-cultural Communication", integrating multilingual terminology databases, bilingual parallel corpora, excellent case libraries, digital teaching tools, and virtual simulation training systems, drawing on the "terminology first" and multimodal compilation experience of series like Reading China's World-Class Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Innovating the "Dual-Tutor" and "Residency System": Equip each project with a "University Linguistics Tutor" + "Enterprise/Practitioner Practice Tutor". Establish a two-way "residency" mechanism for teachers and practitioners, where language teachers regularly study in ICH communities, and practitioners regularly participate in campus teaching. Its institutional design can refer to relevant suggestions in Research on the Integration Mechanism of 'Eight Unique Yanjing Crafts' Inheritance and Vocational Education.

Reforming the Evaluation System: Establish a formative evaluation system centered on "works (communication products), projects (practical outcomes), impact (communication effects)", replacing the traditional summative evaluation based on written exams. The evaluation criteria must closely align with the competency components for ICH external translation and communication (Deng & Duan, 2024).

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that cultivating "Foreign Language + ICH" interdisciplinary talents is crucial for overcoming the linguistic bottleneck in ICH's international communication. Industry-education integration is the indispensable path, validated by diverse practical models. However, persistent challenges in terminology, discourse, resources, and faculty require institutionalized solutions.

The proposed "Quintuple Collaborative, Spiraling" mechanism aims to build an ecosystem for resource sharing and continuous improvement, linking academic research with market practice through a "Cultural Decoding – Recoding – Application" loop.

For this mechanism to succeed, sustained investment in standards, interdisciplinary faculty, and shared platforms is essential. Only through deep institutionalized integration can this field cultivate talents capable of globalizing China's cultural heritage.

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