

# Exploration of the Spread and Development Path of Shadow Puppetry in the Foreign Language Window

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**Abstract:** As an important carrier of China's intangible cultural heritage, shadow puppetry faces challenges in cultural inheritance and international dissemination, such as audience loss, insufficient translation, and a single form of dissemination. the National College Students' Science and Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program Project "Shulan Shadow Puppetry Communication under the Foreign Language Window" takes Shulan Shadow Puppetry in Jilin Province as the research object, and explores the innovative communication path of shadow puppetry culture from the perspective of foreign language through interdisciplinary research methods. the project combines foreign language translation, multimedia technology, and practical activities in universities, aiming to enhance the international dissemination of shadow puppetry and the cultural identity of young people. the research results indicate that through multilingual translation, digital dissemination, and the establishment of university practice platforms, shadow puppetry culture can effectively break through language barriers, enhance international influence, and provide new ideas for the integration of intangible cultural heritage protection and foreign language education.

**Keywords:** Shadow Puppetry; Foreign Language Communication; Intangible Cultural Heritage; Cross Cultural Communication; Digital Innovation

## 1. Introduction

In the context of globalization, the inheritance and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage face both opportunities and challenges. As a treasure of Chinese folk art, shadow puppetry urgently needs to be revitalized through innovative forms of cultural value. However, there are problems with the international

dissemination of shadow puppetry culture, such as insufficient translation accuracy, single dissemination channels, and low youth participation. This study takes Shulan Shadow Puppetry in Jilin Province as a case study, relying on foreign language education resources in universities, to explore the dissemination path of shadow puppetry under the foreign language window, aiming to promote the creative transformation and international development of intangible cultural heritage through cross-cultural integration and digital technology.

## 2. The Contemporary Challenges and Communication Opportunities of Shadow Puppetry Culture

(1) the inheritance crisis of shadow puppetry culture

Shadow puppetry combines sculpture, music, and drama, with exquisite character designs. the performance is controlled by artists to create vivid stories through the use of light and shadow effects, and has high artistic value. However, the "fast culture" characteristics of the short video era pose serious challenges to shadow puppetry. According to the 2023 China Intangible Cultural Heritage Communication Survey Report, only 12% of young people are familiar with the basic skills of shadow puppetry, and most of them come into contact through passive channels such as museums or documentaries (Yang Yanmin, 2024). In addition, the aging problem of the inheritors of Shulan shadow puppetry is prominent, and the younger generation's interest in traditional skills is gradually diminishing due to the lack of economic incentives and innovation platforms.

(2) the Transformation Opportunity of Foreign Language Communication

Foreign language education is not only about imparting language skills, but also about cultivating cross-cultural communication skills. Through multilingual translation and international dissemination, shadow puppetry culture can break through geographical

limitations and become an important carrier for telling Chinese stories well. For example, South Korean universities have successfully attracted a global audience by promoting the traditional mask dance "탈춤" through Korean translation and online performances (Kim et al., 2023). This case demonstrates that digital dissemination combined with foreign languages can effectively enhance the international visibility of intangible cultural heritage. In addition, as the forefront of cultural dissemination, universities have the resource advantage of interdisciplinary collaboration. By stimulating students' sense of cultural mission through practical projects, we can cultivate compound talents who understand traditional culture and are proficient in foreign language communication (Li Fangzhao, 2024).

### 3. Interdisciplinary Path of Shadow Puppetry Culture Communication

The National College Students' Science and Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program Project "Shulan Shadow Puppetry Communication under the Foreign Language Window" systematically explores the dissemination strategies of shadow puppetry culture from the perspective of foreign languages based on literature analysis, field research, and practical verification. By using literature research method to sort out domestic and foreign shadow puppetry culture and intangible cultural heritage dissemination theories, combined with in-depth interviews with the inheritors of Shulan shadow puppetry, the production process and dissemination pain points are clarified. On this basis, a multilingual translation and localization adaptation plan is proposed, such as integrating the classic play "The Return of British Museum Relics" into bilingual translations in English and Korean, and enhancing narrative appeal through light and shadow effects (Chen Fengzhen et al., 2024). In terms of digital communication, we have utilized platforms such as YouTube and TikTok to release bilingual short videos and production tutorials, reaching over 10000 international viewers. the construction of university practice platforms is centered around the "Foreign Language Shadow Puppetry Workshop", which organizes students to participate in script creation and cross-cultural performances, inspiring young people to innovate and interpret traditional culture.

### 4. The Effectiveness and Challenges of Digital Communication

The implementation results indicate that the shadow puppetry dissemination strategy under the foreign language window significantly enhances cultural influence. the playback volume of bilingual short videos increased by 300% year-on-year, and the interaction rate with overseas audiences increased by 45%, verifying the expanding role of digital communication in audience coverage. In university activities, 87% of participants reported a significant increase in interest in shadow puppetry culture, and 73% believed that their foreign language proficiency had been improved. However, cross-cultural communication still faces the problem of translation loss of deep cultural symbols, which needs to be enhanced through annotations or visual supplements to enhance understanding; the differences in algorithm preferences and content regulation among international platforms also require flexible adjustments to communication strategies (Wang Xiage et al., 2024).

### 5. Collaborative Innovation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritance and Foreign Language Education

This study reveals that the international dissemination of shadow puppetry culture requires "precise translation, technological empowerment, and practical linkage" as the core path. In the future, we should deepen cooperation between universities and inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, and establish a long-term talent training mechanism; Develop shadow puppetry cultural IP and expand the dissemination scene by combining anime, games and other carriers; Build a multilingual terminology database to provide standardized support for international communication. Through the above strategies, shadow puppetry culture can not only break through traditional communication boundaries, but also provide practical examples for the deep integration of intangible cultural heritage protection and foreign language education, and help promote the diverse expression of Chinese culture in the global context.

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