

Cross-cultural Communication of Chinese Cultural

-- Take Chinese Education in Romania as an Example

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Abstract: In the contemporary era of globalization, the significance of cross-cultural communication is escalating. China has a profound cultural heritage and has exerted considerable efforts in cross-cultural communication. Yet, China has not attained the anticipated outcomes. Given the above phenomena, this paper starts with the current situation of Chinese education in Romania. It uses multidisciplinary analysis to address the fundamental issues that China encounters in cross-cultural communication. According to this article, the main reasons for the difficulties that China faces in cross-cultural communication in Romania are aggressive cross-cultural communication strategies, insufficient localization and differentiation, and lack of content suitable for younger demographics. On this basis, countermeasures are proposed, including avoiding ideological conflicts, improving the attractiveness of communication content, expanding communication channels and formats, and developing communication content suitable for younger age groups. It provides innovative ideas and strategies for cross-cultural communication and the advancement of Chinese education, promoting mutual understanding and identification between cultures.

Keywords: Chinese language education, Cross-cultural communication, Cultural soft power, Romania

1. Introduction

In the era of globalization, cultural soft power has become a key force in shaping international relations and promoting mutual understanding among nations. China possesses a rich cultural past and is at the forefront of promoting cultural soft power through various channels, such as language education. However, despite the great efforts invested in international cultural exchanges, cross-cultural communication in Chinese culture still faces many challenges. On the one hand, other countries still have a superficial comprehension of Chinese culture, primarily focused on cultural symbols, but lack insight into its ideological connotation. On the other hand, China has experienced rapid development in recent years, resulting in increased political and economic interactions with the global community. Nevertheless, many countries still lack a proper understanding of today's China and its current level of modernization development, which may hinder the advancement of various kinds of cooperation between countries.

Taking the current development status of international Chinese education in Romania as the starting point, this paper will analyze the current situation of Chinese cultural communication in Romania, along with the challenges faced. It will also attempt to answer two core questions that China encounters in cross-cultural communication: Firstly, why hasn't the cross-cultural communication of Chinese culture attained the anticipated success? Secondly, what are the reasons that lead to the low acceptance level of Chinese culture in other countries and even the opposition to its cross-cultural dissemination? This paper will attempt to reveal the deep-seated reasons behind these phenomena, by using interdisciplinary research methods, document analysis, and other means. Based on the above analysis, corresponding countermeasures and solutions will be put forward.

As one of the target countries of cross-cultural communication, Romania has its particularity and universality. This research aims to serve as a reference for optimizing Chinese education in Romania, Europe, and other regions, facilitate cross-cultural communication of Chinese culture, enhance cultural soft power, and offer novel insights for innovating cross-cultural communication methods. To promote communications among different countries and cultures, and foster societal harmony, wealth, and progress.

This paper is approximately divided into the following four sections: the second section is a literature review; The third section will discuss the current situation of Chinese culture dissemination in Romania, the predicament of Chinese education in Romania, and analyze the underlying reasons. The fourth section will put forward the corresponding countermeasures and optimization strategies according to the above analysis; The fifth section will summarize the article.

2. Literature Review

Cross-cultural communication is the study of communication between different cultures and social groups, or how culture influences communication [1]. In the 1950s, the American anthropologist Edward Hall [2] first put forward the concept of "cross-cultural communication" based on anthropology's theory of high context VS. low context communication in his book *The Silent Language*. In the 1970s, cross-cultural communication became a branch of communication and gradually formed an independent disciplinary system. In recent years, cross-cultural communication theory has been constantly updated and expanded with social progress. Soon Ang [3] proposed the concept of "cultural intelligence (CQ)", whereas Mo Luo [4] analyzed the relationship between cultural rights, national sovereignty, and national interests, providing a new theoretical perspective for cross-cultural communication.

There are only a few researches on the situation of Chinese cultural communication in Romania, and they are all foreign literature. At present, there is still a large gap in the research on this topic in China. Monica Oehler-Şincai [5] pointed out that Chinese culture and cultural soft power have a limited audience and influence in Romania. Despite the extensive use of Chinese products in Romania, the Romanian populace, swayed by mainstream media, exhibits opposition to China. Ties Dams et al pointed out that Romania's interest in Chinese culture is gradually increasing, but its negative attitude towards China-related political issues is constantly intensifying.[6]

In the aspect of Chinese education in Romania, both scholars in China and abroad have reviewed the development of Chinese education in Romania [7]; Based on these researches, Liu Jin and Ma Lina [8] summarized the exchange and cooperation of higher education between China and Romania; while Cao Ruihong [9] investigated foreign language teaching policies in Romania. In the aspect of Chinese education in Romania, Yuqin WANG [10] and Ai Guijin [11] researched the crucial and challenging parts of pronunciation and the phenomenon of language transfer of Romanian students learning Chinese.

To sum up, the volume of studies on Chinese education in Romania has markedly risen in recent years, whereas the investigation of the cross-cultural communication of Chinese culture in Romania

remains notably inadequate. Therefore, this paper will start with Chinese education in Romania, analyze the current situation, challenges, and underlying causes of Chinese cultural communication in Romania from an area studies perspective, integrate the theory and practice of cross-cultural communication, and offer insights for the advancement of Chinese education and the cross-cultural dissemination of Chinese culture based on prior research.

3. Challenges in Chinese Cultural Communication and Education in Romania

3.1. Current Status

On the whole, the cross-cultural communication of Chinese culture in Romania has not reached the expected outcome. However, many achievements have been made at the level of inter-school cooperation and academic exchanges. Chinese was officially fully integrated into the Romanian national education system in 2017. By the end of 2024, five Confucius Institutes have been established, and numerous colleges have introduced Chinese majors. However, the spread of Chinese culture in Romanian society is not optimistic, as the majority of individuals maintain an unfavorable perception of it, particularly with politically related matters. [6,8]

3.2. Key Challenges

3.2.1. Limited Understanding and Acceptance

Despite China's significant endeavors in cross-cultural communication, the Romanian public still has an obvious lack of understanding and acceptance of Chinese culture, and even shows negative emotions towards certain aspects. The concrete manifestation includes the shallow cognition of Chinese traditional culture, the limited understanding of China's modernization development, and the existence of cultural prejudice and misunderstanding. These factors together constitute obstacles to the development of Chinese education and the intercultural communication of Chinese culture.

3.2.2. Monotonous Content and Forms

At present, another dilemma faced by the communication of Chinese culture in Romania is the monotonous content and form of Chinese education and cultural dissemination. The existing cross-cultural communication focuses on traditional cultural fields such as history and philosophy while neglecting contemporary elements such as social transformations and advancements in the science and technology field in modern China. In terms of form, current cross-cultural communication relies on conventional face-to-face Chinese classes and cultural display activities, and fails to make full use of modern communication means such as the Internet and social media to broaden the communication reach, leading to restricted cultural exchange efficacy and challenges in engaging a larger audience.

3.2.3. Limited Appeal to Romanian Youth

Young learners, mainly children and adolescents, play a crucial role in Chinese language teaching and cross-cultural communication. Chinese has been incorporated into the Romanian national education system since 2017, allowing Romanian high school students to select Chinese as a foreign language for the college entrance examination and the university entrance examination. However, the survey data indicates that only a limited number of pupils did so [9]. This kind of situation indicates that international Chinese education and Chinese culture lack appeal to younger demographics in Romania, and the cross-cultural exchange of Chinese culture lacks the impetus for sustained development.

3.3. Analysis of the Contributing Factors

3.3.1. Overly Aggressive Communication

Currently, the cross-cultural communication of Chinese culture is predominantly conducted by the Confucius Institutes, which has an official background. Consequently, Western nations such as Romania may perceive this kind of cultural dissemination as being too aggressive and having the purpose of political propaganda. Tough cultural propaganda indoctrination is likely to provoke a "reverse psychology" impact in Western nations and cause a significant diminish in the efficacy of Chinese cultural transmission [12]. Joseph Nye [13] proposes that cultural soft power is a non-coercive ability to shape the preferences of others through cultural attraction. Therefore, reducing the aggressiveness of Chinese cultural communication and enhancing its cultural attraction is one of the urgent problems to be solved.

3.3.2. Lack of Localization and Differentiation

In the process of cross-cultural communication of Chinese culture in Romania, there frequently arises a scenario where propaganda content from China is directly translated without consideration for the cultural context and aesthetic preferences of the audience, which may finally result in ineffective communication outcomes. In addition, the intercultural communication of Chinese culture lacks differentiated communication strategies for diverse audience segments, resulting in the disconnection between the communication content and the life experience and cultural background of individuals from various regions and social circles. This inadequacy of localization and differentiation hampers the understanding, identification, and resonance of Chinese culture among Romanian nationals, significantly undermining the effectiveness of Chinese cultural communication.

3.3.3. Insufficient Youth-oriented Content

At present, the cross-cultural communication of Chinese culture focuses on traditional culture, philosophy, and related domains, such as the translation and publication of Chinese classics such as *Zhuang Zi* and *A Dream of Red Mansions*. However, these books have a high threshold, and require a foundational comprehension of Chinese culture, which is difficult to arouse the interest of children and teenagers. Although some children or teenagers may be studying Chinese or its culture because of personal interest, their enthusiasm may diminish over time due to a lack of appropriate reading resources. In addition, cross-cultural communication activities that had been held mostly focused on displaying traditional Chinese culture, such as tea culture teaching, Tai chi teaching, etc. These activities may engage certain people, but they lack sufficient appeal for young children and adolescents.

4. Countermeasures to Promote Chinese Culture Communication and Education

4.1. Avoid Ideological Conflicts

Intercultural communication among nations must be founded on mutual respect. Romania has a historical experience with socialism, rendering its populace sensitive to allusions to the ideology. China is a socialist nation, and its cultural propaganda is mostly executed through Confucius Institutes, which have a strong official color and backed by the Chinese government. Therefore, in the process of cross-cultural communication, attention should be paid to diluting ideological colors, to avoid cultural conflicts, and to show the unique charm of Chinese culture more objectively and purely, so as to foster amicable exchanges between civilizations.

4.2. Optimizing Content

Traditional Chinese culture, due to its historical depth and cultural uniqueness, is difficult to arouse the understanding and resonance of people in Western countries, including Romanian nationals. Therefore, it is suggested to optimize the communication content of Chinese culture from the following two aspects.

On the one hand, to select the content that is closer to daily life for cross-cultural communication. Avoiding the uncritical acceptance of overarching and grandiose narratives and reducing the gap with the audience. For example, the documentary film *A Long Cherished Dream* co-produced by Chinese and foreign countries, shows the development picture of China's modernization from the daily work and life of several ordinary Chinese people. The perspective of foreign directors is also more in line with the cultural background and narrative habits of foreign audiences, so that they can cross the boundaries of language and culture and let the audience resonate with the protagonists in the documentary.

On the other hand, traditional culture can be adeptly amalgamated with global issues for modern interpretations. By taking the issues of global concern as the starting point, we can try to discuss the embodiment of these issues in Chinese traditional culture. And by recognizing the shared values of other cultures, we can realize cross-cultural communication and understanding in the true sense, and enhance the attraction and resonance of Chinese culture in international communication.

4.3. Expanding Channels and Innovating Modalities

Multi-dimensional and multi-level communication channels, along with innovative communication forms, are essential for cross-cultural communication in the context of globalization. To enhance communication channels, TikTok, Instagram, and other prominent social media platforms abroad should be effectively utilized to amplify the impact of Chinese culture and engage a broader audience through their compelling communication capabilities. In terms of innovative forms of communication, the development of new cultural products should be encouraged. For instance, in game *Black Myth: Wukong*, Adapted from the Chinese classic *Journey to the West*, the main story and scenes of the game are integrated with a large number of Chinese elements and allows players to gently engage with and experience Chinese culture in the process of playing game [14]; In addition, short videos may also be fully employed for cross-cultural communication, which can fulfill the fragmented viewing needs of audiences and raise their interest in Chinese culture at the same time.

4.4. Increasing Youth-oriented Contents

4.4.1. Localized Teaching Materials and Cultural Experiences Courses

To further the growth of Chinese education in Romania, it is essential to compile localized teaching materials that meet the cognitive characteristics of the younger age group and are relevant to their daily lives so that they can better understand and accept the content. Besides, Chinese culture experience classes can also be set up in local primary and secondary schools, and carry out activities such as paper cutting, calligraphy, and We Chat payment experience. Students may not only comprehend the traditional Chinese culture but also intuitively feel the development achievements of China's modernization and the conveniences of life in China.

4.4.2. Translating and Publishing Chinese Media

Despite cultural barriers, western literary works such as *Harry Potter* and *Game of Thrones* have achieved significant success in China. The fundamental reason is that the localized translation has

crossed the boundaries of language and culture so that readers can sympathize with the story and narratives. Similarly, China also has many excellent literature, film, and television works, with compelling stories and significant ideological meanings, which are excellent carriers for spreading Chinese culture and demonstrating modern Chinese style. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the localization translation and publication of such works. At the same time, a simplified translation tailored for the younger demographic should be created to reduce the reading threshold, thereby enhancing reading enjoyment and fostering interest in Chinese culture among Romanian youth.

5. Conclusion

In the era of globalization, the cross-cultural communication of Chinese culture will encounter increased chances and challenges. Nowadays, the acceptance of Chinese culture in Romania is limited, and the content and form of cross-cultural communication lack sufficient appeal for the younger demographic. To address the aforementioned issues, it is necessary to circumvent ideological disputes in cultural exchanges and improve the quality and attractiveness of communication content. At the same time, innovative forms such as social media and short videos can be effectively utilized, and efforts should be made to create more cross-cultural communication content aimed at younger demographics. However, this paper also has some limitations. Due to the word limit, the discussion of countermeasures and many specific implementation strategies and details have not been discussed in depth.

Future research on the cross-cultural communication of Chinese culture in Romania and other countries can further refine countermeasures, and more specific and effective intercultural communication strategies can be explored through empirical research and case analysis. It is expected to promote the intercultural communication of Chinese culture and the development of Chinese education, to foster intercultural understanding, and to encourage the peaceful progression of global relations.

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