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Research and Practice on a Three-in-One Model for Cultivating Innovation and Entrepreneurship Talents in Foreign Languages through Competition-Driven Innovation, Digital-Intelligent Integration, and International Communication

Deping Zou, Xue Zang

Department of Foreign Languages, Qilu Normal University, Jinan, China
Email: dpangle@126.com, 18724729910@163.com

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Abstract

Under the innovation-driven development strategy, foreign language talent cultivation is facing the urgent requirement of transformation from a single language-skills-oriented type toward compound, innovative and international talents. On the basis of a systematic review of relevant research, this paper proposes a three-in-one model for cultivating foreign language innovation and entrepreneurship talents integrating competition-driven innovation, digital-intelligent development and international communication. It elaborates the connotation, composition, theoretical basis and coupling logic of the three dimensions, and constructs an operable cultivation framework from four aspects: goal and curriculum system, platform and resource system, faculty and evaluation guarantee mechanism, and collaborative implementation path, so as to provide references for the reform of innovation and entrepreneurship education in foreign language majors.

Subject Areas

Education, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education

Keywords

Foreign Language Talent Cultivation, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education, Competition-Driven Innovation, Digital-Intelligent Integration, Internationalization

1. Introduction

The persistent disconnection between innovation and entrepreneurship education and professional education in foreign language majors constitutes a significant obstacle to the reform of talent cultivation in China, a challenge particularly acute in local undergraduate universities. Foreign language education, which has long relied heavily on a single language-skills orientation, renders this divide especially visible. Conventional models of innovation and entrepreneurship education, exemplified by superimposed elective courses and scattered competition activities, frequently fail to deliver sustained, context-sensitive, and integrative support tailored to the needs of the discipline. In parallel, competition-driven innovation, digital-intelligent integration and internationalization have emerged as transformative forces with considerable potential to enable competence transformation, technology-empowered teaching and international communication. This convergence presents a timely opportunity to investigate innovative cultivation strategies aimed at bridging the gap in foreign language innovation and entrepreneurship education [1].

This research is guided by the following primary question: How can competition, digital intelligence and internationalization be integrated effectively within a systematic cultivation model to support the continuous and meaningful growth of foreign language innovation and entrepreneurship talents? Subsidiary inquiries explore the coupling mechanisms of the three dimensions and identify implementation challenges within this specific disciplinary context.

The principal objective is to construct a three-in-one model for cultivating foreign language innovation and entrepreneurship talents through competition-driven innovation, digital-intelligent integration and international communication, and to elaborate its connotation, composition and coupling logic. The study aims to conceptualize the three dimensions as an organically coupled whole within a systematic framework, construct an operable cultivation framework covering goals and curriculum, platforms and resources, faculty and evaluation, and collaborative paths, and propose evidence-informed recommendations for policy and practice. Its significance is two-fold. Theoretically, it enriches the literature on foreign language talent cultivation by integrating competition, digital intelligence and internationalization into a coherent analytical framework. Practically, it outlines a scalable and operable model for improving the quality of innovation and entrepreneurship education in the foreign language majors of local undergraduate universities.

On the basis of a narrative review of relevant literature, this study proposes the three-in-one model, elaborates the theoretical basis and coupling logic of its three dimensions, and constructs an operable cultivation framework from the four aspects of goals and curriculum, platforms and resources, faculty and evaluation, and collaborative paths, together with a three-stage implementation path of pilot exploration, gradual promotion and systematic integration.

Literature Review Methodology

This paper adopts a narrative review approach rather than a formal systematic review. Literature sources include core Chinese-language journals in foreign language education, innovation-entrepreneurship education and educational technology. Literature retrieval mainly covered CNKI database. Search terms included "foreign language talent cultivation", "competition-driven innovation", "digital-intelligent integration", "international communication competence", "innovation and entrepreneurship education for foreign language majors". Literature selection was based on thematic relevance, publication quality and representativeness; no strict quantitative inclusion-exclusion criteria were applied. Selected materials were thematically synthesized to sort out existing research contexts, main viewpoints and research gaps for model construction.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cultivation of Compound and Innovation-Entrepreneurship Talents in Foreign Languages

The cultivation of compound foreign language talents has long been a core issue in China's foreign language education reform, and its connotation has been continuously enriched with the deepening of the country's opening-up and the advancement of national talent cultivation strategies. Since the 1990s, research has advocated breaking through the single language-skills cultivation model and cultivating talents who combine language competence with professional knowledge, in response to the needs of the reform and opening-up and the socialist market economy [2]. With the construction of the new liberal arts, this goal has been further oriented toward both national and global needs, requiring foreign language talents to tell China's stories well, spread Chinese culture and engage in international communication [3]. More recent studies have gone beyond scattered discussions to systematically elaborate the cultivation of compound foreign language talents from the levels of concepts, objectives, principles and practical approaches, forming a more complete analytical framework [4]. These studies jointly reveal a clear direction: foreign language talent cultivation should shift from a single language-skills orientation toward a compound orientation that integrates professional knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurship, international vision and cross-cultural communication competence, laying a theoretical foundation for this research.

2.2. Research on Competition-Driven Innovation

Disciplinary competitions are widely regarded as the "second classroom" and an important platform for students to transform theoretical knowledge into practical ability and to test their innovative competence. Research has constructed a practical education model of learning through competition and creating through competition, which relies on multi-level competitions covering language skills, innovation and entrepreneurship and cross-cultural communication, thereby realizing

the linkage between competitions, courses and the innovation and entrepreneurship curriculum system [5]. It should be noted that this practical teaching case originates from the School of Information Science and Technology. Its practical experience is rooted in the disciplinary context of information technology; direct transplantation to foreign language majors faces limitations such as differences in knowledge system, task type and student competence foundation. It is generally held that, driven by real problem situations, competitions can effectively stimulate students' innovation motivation and improve their teamwork and practical abilities, while the results of competitions provide objective feedback on students' competence and evidence for teaching improvement. However, in foreign language majors, the systematic integration of competition-driven education and talent cultivation still needs to be deepened, and the coupling mechanism between competitions and the curriculum remains to be explored.

2.3. Research on Digital-Intelligent Integration

The digital transformation of education has brought a paradigm change to foreign language education. Research points out that digital transformation generally goes through the three stages of technology introduction, integrated innovation and comprehensive transformation, and that foreign language teaching should be systematically transformed in terms of teaching environment, tools, resources and models [6]. Since 2018, artificial intelligence and virtual simulation have become key words of smart education in foreign language majors, and studies advocate carrying out human-machine coupled smart foreign language education. Meanwhile, related research has analyzed the challenges of digital transformation in terms of resource allocation, teachers' digital literacy and teaching evaluation, emphasizing that digital technology is not only a teaching tool but also an important carrier and support system of innovation and entrepreneurship education [7]. These studies provide solid theoretical and technical support for the dimension of digital-intelligent integration.

2.4. Research on Internationalization and International Communication Competence

Improving international communication competence is an important mission of foreign language talents in the new era. Research has constructed the conceptual and elemental framework of international communication competence, pointing out that target-language discourse competence, national awareness and audience awareness constitute its core working mechanism. Facing the needs of foreign-related affairs and cross-border trade, studies have proposed teaching reforms such as "foreign language plus cross-border e-commerce" for business English majors, emphasizing the integration of industry and education and innovation and entrepreneurship [8]. These studies show that internationalization is not only a goal of talent cultivation but also a real scenario and broad field for the implementation of competition-driven innovation and digital-intelligent integration.

2.5. Research Gaps and the Contribution of This Study

Existing studies have laid a solid foundation for this research in compound talent cultivation, competition-driven innovation, digital-intelligent integration and international communication competence. However, most of them focus on a single dimension or the combination of two dimensions, seldom treating competition, digital intelligence and internationalization as an integrated whole, while operable cultivation frameworks for the foreign language majors of local undergraduate universities remain lacking. To fill these gaps, this study constructs an integrated, coupled and operable three-in-one cultivation model, frames its three dimensions as an organically coupled whole, targets local undergraduate foreign language majors, and provides concrete implementation paths for the reform of innovation and entrepreneurship education.

3. Connotation and Composition of the "Three-in-One" Model

3.1. Concept Definition and Theoretical Basis

The three-in-one cultivation model refers to taking the cultivation of innovation and entrepreneurship talents in foreign languages as the overall goal, treating competition-driven innovation, digital-intelligent integration and internationalization as an interdependent and collaboratively linked whole, and running them through the whole process of talent cultivation objective setting, curriculum system, practical platforms, faculty construction and evaluation guarantee. Its theoretical basis mainly includes the following. Outcomes-based education (OBE) theory emphasizes reconstructing the cultivation system oriented to students' competence achievement, which provides the overall value orientation for the model. Constructivist learning theory emphasizes the construction of knowledge in real situations and task-driven contexts, which provides the theoretical basis for competition-driven innovation. Connectivism and embodied cognition theory emphasize the role of technology in knowledge networks and immersive learning, which provides support for digital-intelligent integration. Cross-cultural communication and international communication theories provide the theoretical framework for the dimension of internationalization. Together, these theories constitute the academic foundation of the three-in-one model and ensure that its design is systematic and well grounded.

3.2. Competition-Driven Innovation: A Competition-Driven Mechanism of Competence Transformation

The core of competition-driven innovation lies in taking disciplinary competitions as the carrier to construct a mechanism of competence transformation characterized by learning through competition, teaching through competition and creating through competition. By deeply integrating competition contents into the curriculum system and introducing the real problems and industrial needs in competitions into the classroom, the two-way transformation between knowledge

and ability and between theory and practice is realized. In the organization of competitions, multi-level competitions covering language skills, innovation and entrepreneurship, and cross-cultural communication should be arranged to form a layered competition education system. Through practicing in competitions and creating after competitions, the chain from participation in competitions to the incubation of entrepreneurial projects is opened up, so that the innovative spirit and entrepreneurial potential of students can be stimulated in the whole process from competition training to project incubation, and the integration of competitions and education can be truly realized.

3.3. Digital-Intelligent Integration: Technology-Empowered Reconstruction of Teaching Forms

The dimension of digital-intelligent integration emphasizes reconstructing the forms and ecology of foreign language teaching with digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data and virtual simulation. In the teaching environment, smart classrooms and multimodal language training platforms are built. In teaching resources, digital and rich-media course resources and intelligent learning tools are developed. In teaching models, online-offline blended teaching and human-machine collaborative teaching are carried out to realize personalized and precise learning support. In evaluation, process-based and formative evaluation is realized relying on learning data. Digital-intelligent integration not only improves teaching efficiency and quality but also provides technical support and platform guarantee for innovation and entrepreneurship education, enabling the sharing of competition resources, the virtualization of international scenarios and the data-driven evaluation of learning outcomes, which are difficult to achieve by traditional means.

3.4. Internationalization: Development of Discourse Competence Oriented to the World

The dimension of internationalization focuses on cultivating foreign language talents with patriotism, international vision, cross-cultural communication and international communication competence. On the one hand, through bilingual or full-English courses, internationalized curriculum modules and cross-cultural practices, students' language application and cross-cultural communication abilities are improved. On the other hand, facing real scenarios such as cross-border e-commerce, foreign-related trade and international communication, the compound competence of language plus profession and the communication competence of telling China's stories well are cultivated. Internationalization is not only the goal orientation of talent cultivation but also a broad field where competition-driven innovation and digital-intelligent integration can be implemented. It is precisely through internationalized real projects that competition topics become more authentic and meaningful, and it is precisely through internationalized scenarios that digital platforms can give full play to their value.

3.5. The Coupling Logic of the Three Dimensions in the "Three-in-One" Model

The three dimensions are not simply parallel but form an interdependent and dynamically coupled whole. Competition-driven innovation provides the carrier for competence transformation, digital-intelligent integration provides technological empowerment for the cultivation process, and internationalization provides the direction and field for competence development. The real problems in internationalized scenarios in turn provide demand traction for competition topic selection and digital platform construction, while digital technologies provide the means for internationalized teaching and cross-cultural practice. Centering on the core goal of cultivating innovation and entrepreneurship talents in foreign languages, the three dimensions form a closed loop that realizes the organic unity of goals, carriers, means and fields, thus avoiding fragmented reforms in which each part operates on its own. This coupling logic is the fundamental feature that distinguishes the three-in-one model from a simple combination of three isolated elements.

4. Construction Framework and Implementation Paths of the Model

4.1. Goals and Curriculum System

Taking compound, innovative and international as the orientation of cultivation objectives, a curriculum system integrating foreign language, innovation and entrepreneurship, digital intelligence and internationalization is constructed. Elements of innovation and entrepreneurship education and digital-intelligence literacy are incorporated into general and professional basic courses. Direction courses such as foreign language plus cross-border e-commerce and foreign language plus international communication are developed. Practical courses such as competition training, entrepreneurship practice and cross-cultural communication practice are offered, forming progressive curriculum modules of theory, practice and innovation. The curriculum system is the basic carrier of the model, and the three dimensions are reflected in the objectives, contents and forms of different types of courses.

4.2. Platforms and Resource System

A collaborative practical education platform of school, enterprise and competition is constructed. Relying on disciplinary competition platforms, cross-border e-commerce training bases, international exchange and internship bases, and innovation and entrepreneurship incubation bases, students are provided with real problem situations and practical opportunities. A digital language training and innovation and entrepreneurship cloud platform is built to realize the co-construction and sharing of resources. Through the integration of industry and education and school-enterprise collaboration, real industrial projects are introduced to promote the connection between teaching and industrial needs. The platform

and resource system provides the material basis for the implementation of the three dimensions and ensures that students can obtain real problems, real scenarios and real support in the process of learning and innovation.

4.3. Faculty and Evaluation Guarantee Mechanism

A double-qualified and dual-competence faculty team is built to promote the collaborative education of foreign language teachers, industry mentors, competition mentors and entrepreneurship mentors. A multi-dimensional evaluation system covering knowledge, ability and literacy is established, incorporating competition achievements, entrepreneurship practice and international exchange results into students' comprehensive evaluation and course assessment. Observable and assessable learning outcome criteria are formulated. For innovation competence, students should be capable of identifying practical problems in cross-cultural contexts, proposing feasible improvement ideas and completing preliminary scheme design. For entrepreneurial competence, students should be capable of sorting out project demands, completing basic market analysis and drafting simple project plans. For digital literacy, students should be capable of selecting appropriate digital tools for multilingual text processing, multimodal content production and online collaborative creation. For cross-cultural and international communication competence, students should be capable of producing target-language content adapted to overseas audiences and completing basic cross-cultural discourse expression. Competition awards reflect students' practical innovation output; participation in international exchange activities demonstrates students' adaptability to cross-cultural scenarios. Both serve as important observational evidence for judging the above four dimensions, rather than sole judgment standards. Organizational guarantee and incentive systems are improved to form a stable and sustainable operating mechanism. The faculty and evaluation guarantee mechanism provides the human and institutional support for the model, ensuring that the reform is not a one-time measure but can be promoted continuously and sustainably.

4.4. Collaborative Implementation Paths of the Three Dimensions

In implementation, the curriculum serves as the bond to integrate the three dimensions: competition-related projects act as cases and tasks for digital-intelligent teaching, real-world internationalized projects provide sources for competition topics, and digital platforms underpin internationalized teaching and cross-cultural practice. To illustrate this mechanism with a hypothetical course example, in the course "International Communication Practice", the practical international-communication challenge of developing short-video works that introduce Chinese intangible cultural heritage for young overseas audiences is adopted as the core task. This real-world requirement is further translated into a corresponding disciplinary competition assignment. Students finish script composition, multilingual subtitle translation and multimodal short video production with the support of AI translation tools, intelligent video-editing platforms and online collaborative workspaces.

Following assessment and scoring by instructors and peer reviewers, feedback concerning discourse logic, cross-cultural appropriateness and digital production quality is fed into course instruction. Such feedback informs instructors to adjust subsequent teaching content, including audience-oriented discourse design for overseas recipients and multimodal production competencies. The entire procedure builds a closed loop that moves from real-world international-communication challenges to competition-oriented assignments, digitally-supported task completion, assessment feedback, and iterative teaching improvement.

Project-oriented teaching, curriculum-competition integration and industry-education collaboration jointly facilitate the coordinated delivery of competition-driven innovation, digital-intelligent integration and internationalization within concrete teaching procedures. Implementation proceeds through three phases: pilot exploration, progressive promotion and systematic integration. Initially, targeted pilots are conducted in well-established specialized courses to accumulate practical experience and refine relevant mechanisms. Next, the model is gradually rolled out across the whole professional curriculum and for all enrolled students. Ultimately, a stable, replicable talent-cultivation model together with its quality-assurance system is established.

It is worth emphasizing that effective integration of the three dimensions hinges on removing barriers between professional discipline instruction, innovation-entrepreneurship education, information-technology application and international exchange, so as to build a collaborative educational mechanism centered on students' competence development. By constructing cross-research-group and cross-department curriculum teams, competition guidance, digital platform construction and international-project operations can be incorporated into a unified talent-cultivation scheme. This guarantees that the three dimensions are organically interconnected instead of merely superimposed at the level of objectives, content and assessment. Only in this way can the three-in-one model be practically enacted in real teaching activities, rather than staying merely at the conceptual level.

5. Discussion

5.1. Possible Effects

Theoretically, the three-in-one model helps to solve the problems in foreign language innovation and entrepreneurship education, such as the disconnection between professional education and entrepreneurship education, the separation of theory and practice, and the mismatch between cultivation objectives and industrial needs, promoting the transformation of talent cultivation from knowledge orientation to competence orientation. Practically, these are anticipated outcomes rather than verified effects. It is expected that the model may improve students' innovative and practical abilities through the integration of competitions and courses, improve the precision and personalization of teaching through digital platforms, and enhance students' international competitiveness through internationalized scenarios, which may further improve the employment quality and the

success rate of innovation and entrepreneurship of foreign language students. At the same time, it is anticipated that the model may also promote the transformation of teachers' roles from knowledge transmitters to learning designers, project mentors and digital practitioners, which may be conducive to the overall improvement of the teaching staff. Empirical data are still needed to verify the above potential benefits.

5.2. Problems and Challenges

The implementation of the model still presents several practical challenges. Universities vary substantially in institutional positioning and available resources, meaning the model must be adapted to local contexts instead of being applied rigidly. There is room for improvement in teachers' digital literacy, industry-relevant experience and competition mentoring capacity, which calls for systematic training and team development. Integrating the three dimensions demands cross-department and cross-college collaboration alongside institutional safeguards, placing higher requirements on university governance. In addition, quantitative indicators and data sources for outcome evaluation remain insufficient, and further exploration is needed to build an evaluation system that can accurately reflect the model's cultivation effects.

In terms of equitable participation, certain students may lack access to high-level disciplinary contests, overseas exchange opportunities or premium digital hardware. Equivalent in-course activities ought to be developed for this group. For example, simulated competition assignments within courses can take the place of off-campus contest participation; virtual international communication projects may serve as substitutes for actual overseas exchange experience; free open-source digital software and campus public cloud platforms can replace high-end commercial digital tools. In this way, all students are able to receive relevant training through regular coursework. Future research should test and refine the model's effectiveness using empirical data obtained from specific universities.

6. Conclusion

Based on a narrative review of relevant literature, this paper proposes a three-in-one model for cultivating foreign language innovation and entrepreneurship talents through competition-driven innovation, digital-intelligent integration and international communication, and constructs an operable framework encompassing goals and curriculum, platforms and resources, faculty and evaluation, and collaborative paths. In this model, competitions serve as the carrier of competence transformation, digital-intelligent technologies empower the cultivation process, and internationalized scenarios lead the cultivation direction, jointly serving the goal of cultivating compound, innovative and international talents. The study provides theoretical and practical references for the reform of innovation and entrepreneurship education in foreign language majors, while future empirical research is needed to test and refine the model in specific universities.

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Author Contributions

Conceptualization, Deping Zou and Xue Zang; methodology, Deping Zou; software, Xue Zang; validation, Deping Zou and Xue Zang; formal analysis, Xue Zang; investigation, Xue Zang; resources, Deping Zou; data curation, Xue Zang; writing—original draft preparation, Xue Zang; writing—review and editing, Deping Zou and Xue Zang; visualization, Xue Zang; supervision, Deping Zou; project administration, Deping Zou; funding acquisition, Deping Zou. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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