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Empowering Jingdezhen's Ceramic Cultural Industry: Foreign Language Education in Vocational Universities in the Age of Digital Intelligence

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Abstract: Amid the convergence of digital transformation, platformized cultural production, and generative AI, foreign language education in vocational universities must be reimagined not as a peripheral pursuit of general proficiency, but as strategic infrastructure for cultural-industrial upgrading. It should cultivate hybrid professionals capable of intercultural mediation, multilingual branding, digital storytelling, and cross-sector collaboration across cultural, technological, and commercial domains. Jingdezhen, a historic ceramic center and UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art, offers an especially illuminating case. Its ceramic industry now reaches far beyond artisanal production to encompass tourism, museum communication, digital platforms, creative entrepreneurship, cross-border marketing, and the global circulation of cultural narratives. Drawing on interdisciplinary scholarship, this article argues that foreign language education should become industry-embedded, multimodal, AI-assisted, and culturally grounded. It identifies five principal pathways of value creation: knowledge translation, intercultural mediation, digital storytelling, trade and tourism communication, and platform-enabled creative collaboration. It also proposes a curriculum focused on ceramic heritage interpretation, exhibition discourse, workshop explanation, e-commerce communication, and multilingual digital branding. Ultimately, foreign language education in Jingdezhen is most consequential when it mediates between ceramic heritage, digital communication, and global cultural-economic participation.

1. Introduction

The contemporary transformation of education is inseparable from the wider reorganization of production, communication, and labor in the digital-intelligence era. Across national contexts,

digitalization, artificial intelligence, platform economies, and intensified global mobility have reshaped not only how knowledge is produced, accessed, and circulated, but also which forms of human capability are increasingly valued. In this shifting landscape, particularly within sectors grounded in symbolic production, cultural interpretation, service interaction, and digital visibility, language, communication, and intercultural mediation can no longer be dismissed as merely auxiliary competencies. They have become constitutive dimensions of value creation itself. [1]

These structural shifts are especially consequential for cultural and creative industries. In the twenty-first century, cultural production is rarely confined to the fabrication of objects alone; it is deeply embedded in narrative construction, audience engagement, multimodal representation, platform circulation, and transnational intelligibility. The vitality of a cultural industry therefore depends not only on material craftsmanship, but also on its capacity to render localized meanings communicable, persuasive, and globally legible. Cultural value is now generated as much through discourse, mediation, and digital visibility as through production in the conventional sense.

Jingdezhen offers a particularly illuminating case. Historically celebrated as China's "porcelain capital," the city embodies a profound legacy of ceramic production, artisanal knowledge, and aesthetic experimentation. Yet its contemporary significance extends far beyond the preservation of heritage. As a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art, Jingdezhen now functions simultaneously as a site of cultural memory, a center of creative production, a tourism destination, and a platform for international cultural exchange. Its ceramic economy is increasingly shaped by museum communication, cultural tourism, digital dissemination, entrepreneurial communities, cross-border commerce, and the global circulation of cultural narratives. In this sense, Jingdezhen's ceramic cultural industry is sustained not merely by the production of ceramic objects, but by the interpretation, translation, and circulation of meaning surrounding them.[2]

Under such conditions, foreign language education in vocational universities requires substantive theoretical and pedagogical repositioning. It can no longer remain confined to a residual paradigm centered on decontextualized linguistic proficiency, examination performance, or generalized communicative competence. Where vocational institutions are expected to contribute to regional development, language education must be embedded within the cultural and industrial ecologies of place. In Jingdezhen, this entails supporting ceramic heritage interpretation, exhibition discourse, museum education, tourist reception, workshop explanation, digital content production, e-commerce communication, and multilingual branding. Foreign language education should therefore be understood not as an auxiliary subject, but as a form of cultural-industrial infrastructure and a mediating interface between local heritage and global participation.

The rise of generative AI and multimodal large language models makes this issue more urgent rather than less. Recent reviews suggest that generative AI has rapidly expanded within language education, offering new possibilities for feedback, personalized tutoring, simulation, drafting, and multimodal interpretation. At the same time, scholars have warned that educational applications of LLMs may intensify bias, flatten cultural nuance, encourage over-reliance, or privilege fluency over accuracy and judgment. In a context like Jingdezhen, where the communication of ceramic heritage depends on interpretive precision and cultural sensitivity, such tensions are especially important. The question, therefore, is not simply whether AI can improve language instruction, but how AI-assisted foreign language education can be educationally governed so that it serves cultural-industrial empowerment rather than technological superficiality.

Against this backdrop, the article explores how foreign language education in vocational universities can empower Jingdezhen's ceramic cultural industry in the digital-intelligence era. It constructs a conceptual framework linking language education, cultural and creative industries, multimodal AI, and curriculum reform, then examines relevant literature, reframes language education as industrial-cultural infrastructure, identifies value-generating mechanisms, translates

them into educational practice, and reflects on broader implications for vocational universities advancing regional cultural-industrial transformation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Jingdezhen's ceramic cultural industry as a changing regional ecosystem

Jingdezhen's ceramic significance has historically been discussed through the lens of craft tradition, artistic inheritance, and material culture. Contemporary scholarship, however, increasingly reconceptualizes the city as a dynamic regional ecosystem shaped by the interaction of heritage, tourism, urban restructuring, creative labor, and digital mediation. In this context, UNESCO's inclusion of Jingdezhen in the Creative Cities Network is significant not only symbolically but also analytically, as it positions the city within a broader discourse of creativity, cultural exchange, and urban-cultural development rather than a narrowly preservationist framework.

Recent empirical studies reinforce this view. Research on Jingdezhen's art tourism identifies persistent constraints on sustainable development, including limitations in infrastructure, human resources, promotion, and institutional coordination, suggesting that industrial upgrading depends not only on product innovation but also on service quality, cultural communication, and the organization of visitor experience. Studies of "Jing drifters" likewise reveal a ceramic ecology marked by mobility, experimentation, and social diversity rather than by a stable craft community, thereby heightening the importance of communication across varied audiences and professional roles. More broadly, cultural and creative industries research suggests that value emerges through the convergence of creative input, digital capability, and relational competence.[3]

2.2 Foreign language education beyond general competence

Scholarship on foreign language learning in vocational contexts has increasingly questioned the adequacy of generic language teaching models. Research in ESP has long maintained that effective language education should be grounded in the discourse practices, communicative tasks, and knowledge structures of specific professional or disciplinary domains. Yet the transition from general English to genuinely context-sensitive vocational language education remains uneven. In many institutions, "vocationalization" still amounts to little more than the addition of occupational terminology to otherwise unchanged pedagogical frameworks [4]

Recent studies help explain why this approach is insufficient. Itani, Järlström, and Leppänen demonstrate that language competence functions as a form of career capital, shaping mobility, employability, and access to professional opportunities. Their findings indicate that language skills cannot be treated as peripheral in labor markets increasingly defined by internationalization and individualized career trajectories. Similarly, Skarpaas shows that in vocational education, students' engagement in L2 English is strongly influenced by perceived relevance: when language learning appears disconnected from actual vocational pathways, motivation declines, whereas meaningful occupational relevance enhances persistence and investment.

This insight is particularly important for vocational universities. If language education is to support career readiness in culturally and digitally mediated sectors, relevance must be constructed not only through task alignment but through a deeper relationship among language, professional identity, and social participation. Wildeman and colleagues further show that integrated language teaching requires deliberate pedagogical development, teacher support, and institutional coordination. This is especially pertinent to Jingdezhen, where ceramic culture encompasses not only economic production but also heritage interpretation, urban identity, and symbolic value.

Accordingly, foreign language education in this context must extend beyond trade discourse to include storytelling, museum discourse, digital communication, and cross-cultural framing.

2.3 Technology-enhanced learning, generative AI, and multimodality

The recent educational turn toward generative AI has produced both enthusiasm and caution. On the one hand, studies and reviews suggest that generative AI can support writing assistance, personalized tutoring, feedback provision, conversational practice, and rapid content generation. Li et al.'s systematic review of empirical generative AI research in language learning and teaching confirms the rapid expansion of this field and identifies a growing interest in learner support, writing development, and classroom experimentation. On the other hand, the same body of literature points to persistent concerns involving hallucinations, uneven reliability, academic integrity, pedagogical overdependence, and shallow task design. [5]

A key issue here is that the educational value of AI cannot be inferred from technical capability alone. Sailer et al.'s second-order meta-analysis on technology-enhanced learning in higher education demonstrates that the effects of digital technologies are mediated by the kinds of learning activities they enable. Technologies are most effective when they support active, constructive, or interactive engagement rather than passive exposure. This finding is highly relevant to language education in vocational universities, where authentic tasks, situated practice, and dialogic feedback are central to sustained learning. AI does not improve education automatically; it becomes educationally meaningful only when embedded in thoughtfully designed activities.

MLLMs further expand the horizon of what language education may involve. Yin et al.'s survey on multimodal large language models describes systems capable of processing and generating across text, image, layout, and other modalities. For material-culture education, this is especially significant. Ceramic communication is inherently multimodal: it involves form, image, glaze, process, touch, history, and narrative. A model that can support image description, compare design alternatives, interpret exhibit layouts, or help draft bilingual captions introduces new pedagogical possibilities for teaching language around artifacts and scenes rather than around isolated verbal prompts.

Nevertheless, educational governance remains crucial. Lee et al.'s framework on the life cycle of large language models in education highlights how bias can arise at different stages of model development and deployment. In heritage-related and cross-cultural contexts, an overreliance on generic AI outputs may reproduce oversimplified or culturally inaccurate narratives. For a place like Jingdezhen, this is not a minor issue. If foreign language education is partly tasked with helping students represent ceramic culture to international audiences, then critical AI literacy, source verification, and culturally informed revision become essential parts of the curriculum.

3. Theoretical Framework: Language as Cultural-Industrial Infrastructure

This article proposes a conceptual shift from understanding foreign language education as a stand-alone academic subject to understanding it as cultural-industrial infrastructure. This formulation does not imply that language loses its educational autonomy or becomes instrumentally subordinated to market logic. Rather, it recognizes that, in sectors where value depends on communication, symbolism, and transnational mediation, language is one of the infrastructures through which industrial value is generated, circulated, and recognized.

Three propositions underpin this framework. First, language in cultural industries is constitutive rather than merely supportive. Ceramic products do not enter broader markets and publics as self-explanatory objects. Their value is shaped through labels, exhibition texts, catalogue entries, digital captions, sales descriptions, livestream scripts, museum tours, brand stories, and educatio18nal

explanation. When ceramic culture carries historical depth and place-based identity, as in Jingdezhen, language helps transform local knowledge into legible cultural value for diverse audiences. In this sense, language does not merely accompany the industry; it participates in the industry's value chain. [6]

Second, this linguistic work is increasingly multimodal and platformed. The digital-intelligence era has not replaced material culture with immaterial communication; instead, it has intensified the need to communicate material culture across image-rich, interface-dependent, and algorithmically mediated environments. Ceramic objects now circulate through short video, e-commerce galleries, social media storytelling, subtitles, virtual exhibitions, and multilingual online communities. Communication in these spaces requires more than verbal accuracy. It requires the ability to relate images, artifacts, narratives, and audience expectations across formats. This is precisely why multimodal AI tools may be relevant, provided they are pedagogically framed and critically used.

Third, vocational education is uniquely positioned to mediate between education and regional industrial ecosystems. Unlike general higher education models that may prioritize disciplinary abstraction, vocational universities are expected to cultivate applied capabilities within concrete occupational and industrial settings. In Jingdezhen, this creates a powerful rationale for integrating ceramic culture, tourism communication, museum discourse, digital storytelling, and intercultural service into foreign language education. The objective is not simply to improve students' English for generic employability; it is to cultivate professionals who can help articulate the city's ceramic heritage and industrial vitality to diverse publics.

This framework is summarized in Figure 1, which presents foreign language education as a mediating structure between regional industrial ecology, digital-intelligence enablers, pedagogical transformation, student capability formation, and industry-level outcomes.

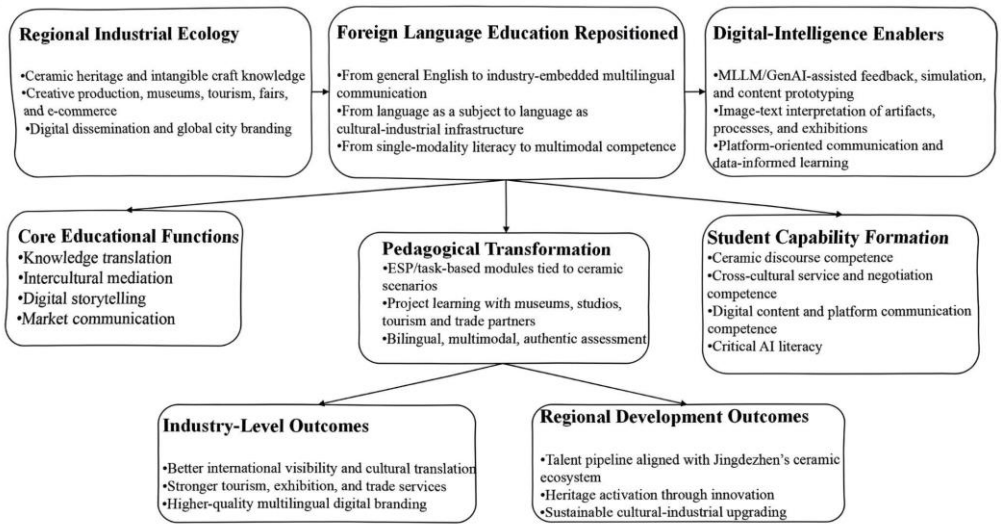

Figure 1. Mechanism through which vocational university foreign language education empowers Jingdezhen's ceramic cultural industry in the digital-intelligence era

4. Mechanisms of Empowerment

4.1 Knowledge translation and ceramic discourse competence

The first mechanism through which foreign language education can empower Jingdezhen's ceramic cultural industry is knowledge translation. Ceramic culture contains dense layers of process

knowledge, craft terminology, historical reference, aesthetic symbolism, and region-specific practices. Such knowledge cannot be effectively conveyed through literal translation or generic descriptive English. It requires the development of what may be called ceramic discourse competence: the ability to describe objects, explain techniques, narrate histories, interpret motifs, and adapt explanations to different audiences and purposes. [7]

In vocational terms, this means that students should learn to move between specialist and public discourse. They may need to explain underglaze blue patterns to tourists in one context, draft concise bilingual descriptions for online product listings in another, and discuss workshop processes with international visitors in yet another. These are not merely different language levels; they are different communicative situations governed by distinct genre expectations. A curriculum that develops ceramic discourse competence would therefore integrate material knowledge with genre awareness, translation strategy, register control, and audience adaptation.

This mechanism is central because cultural industries often suffer not from a lack of cultural depth but from a lack of effective mediation. Local actors may possess rich tacit knowledge while lacking the linguistic resources to communicate it persuasively to external audiences. Foreign language education can bridge this gap. When language learning is organized around ceramic interpretation, students become potential translators not only of words but of cultural systems. This is especially important in a city where the meaning of ceramics extends beyond function to encompass artistry, heritage, and place identity.

4.2 Intercultural mediation and audience-sensitive communication

A second mechanism is intercultural mediation. Cultural communication is rarely a matter of one-way transmission from source to target language. It involves audience expectations, assumptions about authenticity, differing rhetorical norms, and the negotiation of symbolic meaning. Ceramic culture may be framed domestically through discourses of lineage, craftsmanship, and civilizational continuity, whereas international audiences may respond more strongly to design innovation, everyday usability, sustainability, artistic labor, or experiential tourism. Effective communication requires the ability to reposition the same cultural object within different interpretive horizons. [8]

Foreign language education is uniquely suited to cultivating this competence when it moves beyond lexical equivalence toward intercultural framing. In practice, this means training students to compare audience profiles, adjust narrative emphasis, and anticipate misunderstanding. It also means developing sensitivity to what gets lost, exaggerated, or distorted when cultural products are translated into global consumer and tourism contexts. Such skills are crucial in exhibitions, museums, retail settings, livestreaming, and cultural events where communication is immediate, embodied, and audience-dependent.

In Jingdezhen, intercultural mediation also has a local-development dimension. The city's ceramic industry increasingly engages domestic and international tourists, artists, students, and consumers. These audiences do not arrive with identical knowledge or motivations. If vocational universities can train students to mediate across these differences, foreign language education becomes a force for enhancing service quality, cultural understanding, and regional reputation simultaneously. This expands the meaning of "employability" from personal job readiness to participation in a broader system of place-based cultural communication.

4.3 Digital storytelling and platform communication

The third mechanism is digital storytelling. The expansion of platform culture has changed not only how products are sold but how cultural value is recognized. Ceramics are now encountered

through image feeds, livestream interfaces, short videos, promotional reels, subtitled demonstrations, and transmedia narratives. Under these conditions, communicative success depends on whether cultural content can be adapted to platform-specific forms without losing depth or accuracy.

Foreign language education can make a distinctive contribution here by combining linguistic training with multimodal composition. Students can be taught to write bilingual captions for ceramic images, script short museum explainers, prepare subtitles for workshop videos, compare the rhetoric of long-form and short-form product descriptions, and analyze how different platforms privilege different ways of presenting authenticity and craft. Such tasks are especially well suited to MLLM-supported pedagogy because the input and output are not exclusively verbal; they involve the interplay of image, object, sequence, and text.[9]

Yet digital storytelling should not be collapsed into promotional writing. In cultural industries, storytelling is also an ethical and interpretive practice. It shapes whose voices are amplified, how traditions are framed, and whether complexity is preserved or flattened. Therefore, digital storytelling modules should include critical analysis as well as production work. Students should learn to examine how ceramic culture is represented online, how algorithms may privilege certain aesthetic styles, and how multilingual narratives can either broaden understanding or commodify heritage. This critical dimension allows digital storytelling to function as a form of reflective professional preparation rather than as mere branding technique.

4.4 Trade, tourism, and service communication

A fourth mechanism is the support of trade, tourism, and service communication. Jingdezhen's ceramic economy extends across exhibition sales, tourist experiences, studio visits, museum education, fair participation, workshop courses, hospitality encounters, and cross-border e-commerce. These activities involve repeated communicative tasks: welcoming visitors, explaining processes, answering questions, handling inquiries, negotiating preferences, responding to complaints, drafting after-sales messages, and maintaining professional relationships. In each of these situations, foreign language competence directly affects the quality of industrial interaction.[10]

Vocational foreign language education can empower the industry by turning such tasks into central objects of learning. Rather than treating them as peripheral conversation practice, programs can build modules around ceramic trade English, tourism interpretation, exhibition interaction, and multilingual customer communication. Role-play, case analysis, project work, and workplace observation can then be used to connect classroom learning with actual industrial scenes. This is where the literature on relevance in vocational L2 learning becomes especially important: students are more likely to engage deeply when they perceive that the language they are learning is immediately connected to realistic futures.

AI can support this mechanism by offering scalable simulation and feedback. For example, students can practice buyer-seller negotiations, tourist-guide dialogues, or customer service responses with AI-assisted role-play systems. However, such use should remain subordinate to pedagogical judgment. Teachers must determine whether the simulation reflects plausible cultural scenarios, whether the feedback is accurate, and whether students are developing communicative reasoning rather than memorizing formulaic outputs. Used carefully, AI can increase the frequency and diversity of practice; used carelessly, it can produce genericity and false confidence.

4.5 Platform-enabled collaboration and hybrid professional identities

The fifth mechanism concerns the formation of hybrid professional identities. The contemporary ceramic field in Jingdezhen includes not only craftsmen and traders but also designer-makers,

bilingual museum mediators, cultural-tourism interpreters, ceramic content creators, exhibition coordinators, and entrepreneurial actors who move between online and offline spaces. This suggests that the workforce of the digital-intelligence era is increasingly characterized by boundary-crossing roles rather than fixed occupational silos[11].

Foreign language education can participate in the cultivation of such hybrid identities by exposing students to collaborative, interdisciplinary, and project-based work. A language course might involve co-developing bilingual content with ceramic-design students, producing interpretive materials with museum partners, or creating multilingual digital campaigns for local studios. Through such activities, students do not merely apply language to an external domain; they learn to inhabit professional roles in which language itself is part of the work. This represents a profound shift from language as supplementary competence to language as mode of professional participation.

5. Curriculum Translation: From General English to Industry-Embedded Multimodal ESP

If the above framework is to have practical value, it must be translated into curriculum architecture. The central curricular shift is from a generalized skill-sequencing model to an industry-embedded multimodal ESP model aligned with Jingdezhen's ceramic ecosystem. In such a model, the organizing logic of the curriculum is not "reading-writing-speaking-listening" in abstraction, nor "general English plus technical vocabulary," but a sequence of communicative domains derived from actual industrial, cultural, and digital scenarios.

A first design principle is authenticity. Curriculum units should emerge from recognizable scenes of practice, such as museum interpretation, ceramic workshop explanation, international exhibition support, product-page writing, tourist reception, and social-media communication. These scenarios allow language learning to be anchored in purpose, audience, and genre. They also make it possible to integrate background knowledge, visual material, and ethical reflection into a coherent pedagogical whole.

A second principle is multimodality. Ceramic communication is object-centered; therefore, teaching materials should include images of wares, process diagrams, exhibition panels, floor plans, product listings, subtitles, video clips, and platform screenshots. Students should learn not only to produce sentences but to coordinate verbal and visual information. Tasks can involve generating captions from artifact images, comparing multilingual product descriptions across platforms, or revising AI-generated explanatory text in light of visual evidence.

A third principle is progression through increasingly complex mediation. Early-stage modules may focus on describing ceramic forms, functions, colors, motifs, and simple production steps. Intermediate modules may emphasize cultural explanation, guided tours, and genre-specific writing. Advanced modules can engage students in negotiation, project collaboration, platform strategy, and AI-assisted multimodal communication. This progression allows linguistic and cultural complexity to develop together.

A fourth principle is evaluative authenticity. Assessment should not rely exclusively on decontextualized written tests. Instead, it should include bilingual exhibit labels, recorded guide commentaries, simulated customer-service exchanges, trade-email writing, portfolio-based digital storytelling, and reflective critique of AI-assisted outputs. Such assessment is more aligned with both vocational pedagogy and the demands of cultural-industry participation[12].

6. Teacher Development and Institutional Conditions

Curriculum reform of this sort cannot succeed without corresponding teacher development and institutional support. Many foreign language teachers in vocational universities have strong disciplinary training in linguistics, literature, or general language pedagogy, but limited exposure to

ceramic production, museum interpretation, tourism discourse, or AI-assisted multimodal learning design. This is not an individual deficit; it reflects the historical separation between language departments and regional industries.

To overcome this gap, teacher development should proceed along at least three dimensions. The first is industry literacy. Teachers need opportunities to learn about ceramic history, material processes, aesthetic terminology, workshop organization, exhibition practice, tourism experience design, and the communicative norms of trade and service contexts. Such literacy does not require full technical mastery, but it does require sustained exposure sufficient to redesign tasks and evaluate student performance meaningfully.

The second dimension is multimodal pedagogical design. Teachers need to know how to select and sequence visual, textual, and interactive materials; how to build task chains around authentic scenarios; and how to assess products that combine text, speech, and image. This differs from merely "using multimedia" in class. It involves a shift toward communication around artifacts, spaces, and events rather than around textbook passages alone.

The third dimension is critical AI literacy. Teachers should understand both the affordances and the limitations of LLMs and MLLMs. They need to know when AI-generated language is useful, when it is misleading, and how to guide students in verification, revision, and ethical use. Given the importance of cultural accuracy in representing Jingdezhen's ceramic heritage, teachers must be able to detect oversimplification, subtle mistranslation, or culturally inappropriate generalization in AI outputs[13].

Institutionally, vocational universities should establish durable collaborations with ceramic museums, workshops, tourism bodies, creative parks, and trade actors. Such partnerships should be substantive rather than ceremonial. They can support joint module design, curated case banks, internship tasks, guest sessions, bilingual corpus development, and authentic assessment opportunities. Where such partnerships are strong, the boundaries between classroom learning and regional industrial participation become more permeable and productive.

7. Discussion

The argument developed in this paper has several wider implications. First, it suggests that foreign language education should be reconsidered within vocational education not as an auxiliary subject but as a strategic interface linking local industry, digital culture, and public communication. This is particularly important in regional development contexts where universities are expected to contribute directly to place-based transformation. In Jingdezhen, the relevance of foreign language education lies in its capacity to help translate ceramic heritage into internationally legible, digitally mobile, and service-ready forms.

Second, the paper contributes to emerging debates on AI in education by foregrounding regional and sectoral specificity. Much current discussion about LLMs in language education remains generic, centered on writing correction, tutoring efficiency, or student productivity. The Jingdezhen case reveals a richer possibility: AI can support language learning around images, objects, processes, exhibitions, and audience adaptation. In other words, the significance of MLLMs lies not simply in automated fluency but in enabling new pedagogical relationships between language and material culture. At the same time, because heritage communication is interpretively delicate, the case also underscores why critical oversight remains indispensable.

Third, the article expands the conversation on cultural and creative industries by emphasizing the role of vocational education in constructing communicative infrastructure. Discussions of creative-industry development often focus on design, policy, entrepreneurship, and digital platforms, but less attention is paid to the educational cultivation of multilingual, intercultural, and multimodal

communicators who can work within those systems. By repositioning foreign language education in this way, the paper points toward a broader understanding of talent development for the creative economy.

The paper also has limitations. It is conceptual and synthetic rather than empirically interventionist. It does not report classroom experiments, learner data, or enterprise feedback from implemented curriculum reforms. Future research should therefore test the proposed framework through design-based research, curriculum pilots, quasi-experimental comparisons of AI-assisted and non-AI-assisted tasks, and qualitative studies of student identity formation in ceramic-industry communication contexts. Longitudinal work would be especially valuable in examining whether such programs improve not only language performance but also industry participation and career trajectories.

8. Conclusion

The digital-intelligence era is transforming both the ceramic cultural industry and the educational institutions expected to support regional development. In Jingdezhen, where ceramic heritage, creative production, tourism, and digital dissemination are increasingly interwoven, foreign language education in vocational universities can no longer remain a generic or peripheral field. It should be understood as a crucial mediating infrastructure through which ceramic knowledge is translated, cultural meanings are negotiated, digital stories are produced, and economic participation is expanded.

This article has argued that such empowerment becomes possible when foreign language education is redesigned as industry-embedded, multimodal, AI-assisted, and culturally grounded. Through knowledge translation, intercultural mediation, digital storytelling, trade and service communication, and platform-enabled collaboration, vocational language education can contribute directly to the vitality of Jingdezhen's ceramic cultural industry. This requires corresponding changes in curriculum, assessment, teacher development, and institutional partnership-building. It also requires a critical rather than celebratory approach to AI: multimodal tools should augment situated learning and cultural interpretation, not replace them.

More broadly, the Jingdezhen case suggests a wider principle for vocational higher education. In regions where culture itself is a productive force, language education becomes most powerful when it is designed not simply to produce fluent speakers, but to cultivate professionals capable of connecting local heritage, digital media, and global publics. That is how foreign language education can move from general competence to genuine industrial empowerment.

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