The Educational Attention to Protect and Inherit Yi language: Revising Yi Language Textbooks by "Returning to The Local"

Ping Lan[1,a,*], Weiping Zhang[2,b]

[1] School of Education, Hunan University of Science and Technology, Xiangtan, Hunan, China

[2] School of Education, Hunan University of Science and Technology, Xiangtan, Hunan, China

[a] 1871235652@qq.com, [b] 441329552@qq.com

*Corresponding author

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Abstract: With the development of globalization, the protection and inheritance of Yi language in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province are facing unprecedented challenges. Yi language textbooks have become an important part of protecting and inheriting Yi language. Analyzing Yi Language textbooks, observing classroom teaching and interviewing with teachers and students, I have found that current Yi Language textbooks are not conducive to truly protect and inherit Yi language, because they have many problems, such as no supporting teaching materials, unreasonable structure, and insignificant local characteristics. The main reasons are that the educational information technology is not fully utilized, students' psychological development and language ability are not well understood, and Yi Language textbooks are lack of "secondary development". In the future, we can take these following strategies to solve problems that I have mentioned. Firstly, we are able to strengthen the training of information technology application ability of rural Yi language teachers and prepare digital teaching materials. Secondly, we should deeply understand the psychological development and language ability of students, and adjust the structure of Yi Language textbooks. Thirdly, we need to properly develop the local curriculum resources in the county and improve the local adaptability of Yi Language textbooks.

1. Introduction

With the victory of China's fight against poverty, Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture (here in after referred to as Liangshan Prefecture) has embarked on a new journey of "rural revitalization". "educational revitalization" is an important part of "rural revitalization[1]. Yi language education is the key to realizing educational revitalization of Liangshan Prefecture. In the context of the national policy of three-level curriculum management, Liangshan Prefecture has developed Yi language textbooks for primary and secondary schools(here in after referred to as Yi language textbooks) to protect and inherit Yi language. In a broad sense, textbooks include all materials and means used by teachers in their teaching activities, while in a narrow sense, textbooks mainly refer to books used for classroom teaching[2]. Yi language textbooks referred to here are in a narrow sense. On August 30, 2021, the Ministry of Education promulgated the Measures for the Administration of Textbooks for Ethnic Minorities in Primary and Secondary Schools (here in after referred to as the Measures), proposing to strengthen the management of textbooks for ethnic minorities in primary and secondary schools and effectively improve the level of textbook construction[3]. Since the promulgation of the Measures, Liangshan Prefecture Education Bureau has organized experts and scholars in the field of Yi language to revise Yi language textbooks. Summing up these problems of Yi language textbooks by means of text analysis and investigation of the use of textbooks, and proposing concrete solutions will conduce to the revision of Yi language textbooks, helping play the role of Yi language textbooks in protecting and inheriting Yi language.

2. Raising of problems

The construction of textbooks is a major event to establish morality and cultivate people[4]. Previous researches about textbooks can be divided into the following topics: the connotation and function of textbooks, the evaluation and revision of textbooks, and the content and compilation of textbooks.

Firstly, the connotation and function of textbooks. "The so-called textbook are the facts observed, recalled, read and talked about in the development of a purposeful situation, as well as the ideas put forward"[5]. In the new media era, textbooks need to change from "main teaching materials" to "main learning materials"[6]. Although researchers have not yet formed a unified understanding of the connotation and function of textbooks, it can be found from relevant researches that the connotation and function of textbooks have gradually shifted from focusing on teaching to emphasizing learning, and there is a trend to give consideration to both. Secondly, the evaluation and revision of textbooks. Textbooks' evaluation model can be constructed based on knowledge, writing skills and technical level[7]. The revision of textbooks needs to clarify students' core quality of the discipline[8]. Researchers often discuss how to evaluate textbooks and how to revise them, but rarely carry out evaluation and revision of textbooks in practice. Thirdly, the content and compilation of textbooks. Researchers have analyzed the values contained in the content of textbooks through the demographic statistics of textbooks, advocating the values that textbooks should convey[9]. Compiling interactive electronic textbooks to collect data for classroom teaching can help teachers deeply understand students' learning process[10]. The research on the content and compilation of textbooks is more and more inclined to case study.

Researches about textbooks has been carried out so far, with a wide range of research topics. Nevertheless, few studies have found problems based on the investigation of the use of textbooks and proposed strategies for textbook revision. At the same time, there is almost no research about Yi language textbooks. Therefore, in this article, I focus on Yi language textbooks through text analysis of textbooks, classroom teaching observation, and individual interviews, in order to study these questions: What is the current situation of the use of Yi language textbooks? What are the problems of Yi language textbooks? What are the main reasons for these problems? What strategies can be taken to revise Yi language textbooks? With a view to helping to build high-quality Yi language textbooks that are conducive to truly protecting and inheriting Yi language.

3. The use, problems and causes of Yi language textbooks

Through analyzing the text of Yi language textbooks, observing the actual teaching situation of Yi language in two primary and secondary schools in Yanyuan County, Liangshan Prefecture, and interviewing with three Yi language teachers and a class of 47 students, I have summarized the use, problems and causes of Yi language textbooks.

3.1. The use of Yi language textbooks

In March 1937, Tusiling Optoelectronics donated money to establish Sibu Primary School for border people in Tianba, Ganluo, Liangshan Prefecture, and developed the first Yi language textbook. With the implementation of the Trial Implementation Plan for the Standardization of Yi Language in 1975, and the support of the Decision of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Deepening Educational Reform and Comprehensively Promoting Quality Education in 1999 for ethnic language courses in ethnic areas, Yi language textbooks have been published successively. The users of Yi language textbooks are usually students from grade 3 to grade 9 and Yi language teachers. There are about 18 Yi Language textbooks for grades 3 to 9, and Yi Language textbooks for each grade are divided into two volumes. After interviewing with Yi language teachers, I learned that they almost never taught Yi language according to Yi language textbooks. Many students also mentioned that they had "put the Yi language textbook on the table and never opened it" during the Yi language class. Both teachers' and students' answers indicate that the use rate of Yi language textbooks is low. In addition, a researcher once conducted a survey on

learning results of Yi language in Liangshan Prefecture, and found that 30% students can fluently speak Yi language, but cannot write a Yi language character. 67% students can fluently speak Yi language, and can write a few Yi characters. Only 3% students have the ability of listening, speaking, reading and writing in Yi language[11]. This research, to some extent, shows that the use of Yi language textbooks is not satisfactory.

3.2. Problems and causes of Yi language textbooks

3.2.1. Problems

First of all, Yi language textbooks do not have supporting teaching materials. Under the construction of "three connections and two platforms", the education informatization level of Liangshan Prefecture has been significantly improved. Almost every primary and secondary school has a campus network and is equipped with electronic whiteboards and multimedia classrooms. The hardware facilities required for the informatization teaching of Yi language are complete, but there are only paper textbooks, without teaching courseware, audio-visual materials, and other teaching materials suitable for the informatization teaching environment. Secondly, the structure of Yi language textbooks is unreasonable. Asked about the reason why they seldom use Yi language textbooks, Yi language teachers responded that the units in Yi language textbooks were not closely linked, and the content was far beyond the students' knowledge of Yi language, making it difficult to carry out coherent teaching of Yi language. What's more, the local characteristics of Yi language textbooks are not significant. Historical revolutionary culture, geographical features and cultural customs, which can better reflect local characteristics, are rarely seen in Yi language textbooks.

3.2.2. Causes

Firstly, educational information technology is not fully utilized. It is the era of deep integration of information technology and education. As an important part of the field of education, textbook compilation should also actively and appropriately use information technology to prepare digital teaching materials. The compilation group of Yi language textbooks did not make full use of educational information technology. They only compiled the paper version of Yi language textbooks, and did not prepare other digital teaching materials matching Yi language textbooks. Moreover, students' psychological development and language ability are not well understood. Members of the compilation group of Yi language textbooks are experts and scholars from the field of Yi language. Although Yi language experts have mastered rich knowledge of Yi language, they may be relatively short in knowledge of pedagogy and psychology. Therefore, it is inevitable for them to neglect students' psychological development and language ability, which will easily lead to the unreasonable structure of Yi language textbooks. Furthermore, Yi Language textbooks are lack of "secondary development". Talking with Yi language teachers, I learned that they did not carry out the "secondary development" of Yi Language textbooks. Without "secondary development", Yi language textbooks will not be able to connect with the current living conditions of students, and can not really achieve the integration of Yi language and the life of Yi people.

4. Strategies of revising Yi language textbooks

"Local" is not only a word to express space, but also a kind of meaning spiritual sustenance, giving a sense of responsibility to the individual's behavior in the countryside[12]. In the context of rural revitalization, the revision of Yi language textbooks should "returning to the local", which means pay enough attention to the "local" people - teachers and students, and the "local" things - local curriculum resources.

4.1. Strengthening the training of information technology application ability of rural Yi language teachers and preparing digital teaching materials

In 2019, the Ministry of Education issued the Opinions on the Implementation of the National Project 2.0 to Improve the Application Ability of Information Technology for Primary and Secondary School Teachers, emphasizing that the informatization teaching training for rural

teachers in poverty-stricken areas should be carried out mainly in "three districts and three prefectures"[13]. Liangshan Prefecture has carried out the training of teachers' informatization teaching ability for many times. However, most rural Yi language teachers have been ignored during the training of teachers' information technology application ability. When observing the classroom teaching of Yi language, it is found that teachers still teach students in the way of "blackboard+chalk", turning the electronic whiteboard and multimedia teaching equipment beside the blackboard to be useless.

In the era of education informatization 2.0, the revision group of Yi language textbooks should make full use of education information technology and work with Yi language teachers to develop digital teaching materials based on traditional textbooks. In view of the current weak information technology application ability of rural Yi language teachers, it is necessary to carry out information technology application ability training for rural Yi language teachers before preparing Yi Language digital teaching materials. The training of information technology application ability of Yi language teachers can neither engage in low-end repetition, nor can it be divorced from their reality and blindly pursue high and new features[14]. In order to carry out "accurate" training, before the formal training, the textbook revision group can prepare a questionnaire according to the "Standards for Information Technology Application Competence of Primary and Secondary School Teachers" to know the information technology application ability and training needs of rural Yi language teachers. The training should be suitable for the actual environment of Yi language teaching. After a period of training, the revision group of Yi language textbooks and Yi language teachers need to work together to prepare digital teaching materials of Yi language, forming teaching courseware, extended learning materials, and audio-visual materials and so on.

The decisive factor to achieve effective application of information technology is teachers' sense of self-efficacy on technology[15]. When it comes to whether you are willing to apply information technology in teaching, rural Yi language teachers often answer "Yes, but I think it is difficult", which shows that their self-efficacy on technology is low. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance the self-efficacy of rural Yi language teachers in the application of information technology.

4.2. Deeply understanding the psychological development and language ability of students, and adjusting the structure of Yi Language textbooks

A reasonable structure of teaching materials should not only conform to the logic of knowledge, but also conform to students' psychological development[16]. In the past, the psychological development and language ability of students were ignored, which caused the structure of Yi Language textbooks to deviate from the reasonable knowledge logic.

In the future, the revision group of Yi Language textbooks can adopt the following strategies to adjust the structure of Yi Language textbooks. First of all, the textbook revision team needs to increase experts and scholars from the field of pedagogy and psychology. If the revision of Yi language textbooks is still only completed by scholars in the field of Yi language, the final revision may just delete or supplement the knowledge content, not changing the structure of Yi Language textbooks. Secondly, the textbook revision team should carry out an investigation on students' psychological development and language ability in Liangshan Prefecture. By issuing the measurement scale, the textbook revision group can learn about students' psychological development and language ability , and form a complete survey report as an important reference for adjusting the structure of Yi Language textbooks.

The ultimate goal of Yi language teaching is to spread Yi language knowledge to local primary and secondary school students, and promote the protection and inheritance of Yi language. When revising Yi language textbooks, we should not neglect students' psychological development and language ability.

4.3. Properly developing the local curriculum resources in the county and improving the local adaptability of Yi Language textbooks

What kind of textbooks should be built is essentially the embodiment of the national will[17]. In 2015, the Decision of the State Council on Accelerating the Development of Ethnic Education

proposed to expand the content of ethnic language curriculum to the whole range of ethnic culture. The content of Yi language textbooks should be appropriately extended to the scope of excellent Yi culture. There are 17 counties in Liangshan Prefecture. Each county has its own excellent local culture. The unified Yi language textbooks in Liangshan Prefecture cannot take into account the excellent culture of each county. The local adaptability of Yi language textbooks needs to be improved.

The "secondary development" may be an effective way to enhance the local adaptability of Yi language textbooks. The "secondary development" of textbooks refers to the appropriate addition, deletion, adjustment and processing of the established textbook content according to the curriculum standards, the reasonable selection and development of other teaching materials, so that the textbooks can better adapt to the specific teaching situations and students' learning needs[18]. During the interview, students were asked to choose "the content you want to learn in Yi language classes". Many students chose the content closely related to their living environment, such as festival customs, geographical features, and historical revolutionary culture, which can be used as the local curriculum resources for revising Yi language textbooks. For the purpose of developing local curriculum resources, the "secondary development" of Yi language textbooks can be implemented in tow steps. The first step is organizing Yi language teachers in each county to form a research group. Second, each group can collect their local curriculum resources and use these resources to supplement Yi language textbooks. Textbooks are not the accumulation of static knowledge. The collection of local curriculum resources should include factual knowledge, abilities and skills, value orientation and other spiritual contents[19].

The "secondary development" of Yi language textbooks can form local curriculum resources, enhance the local adaptability of the Yi language curriculum, help students master Yi language, and cultivate students' positive feelings, attitudes and values. At the same time, the "secondary development" of textbooks can also promote teachers' professional growth to a certain extent, helping promote the educational revitalization of Liangshan Prefecture.

5. Conclusion

Protecting and inheriting Yi language is the responsibility of Yi language education in Liangshan Prefecture. Textbooks are the concentration of national will, cultural thought and discipline level, reflecting the needs of the times for national talent training[20]. Under the background of rural revitalization, the revision of Yi language textbooks should be guided by national policies and adopt the strategy of "returning to the local" to truly protect and inherit Yi language.

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