



# Significance of Improving Rural Bilingual Education in Out-of-Poverty Areas from the Perspective of Promoting Rural Revitalization on All Fronts

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**Abstract.** Since the process of rural revitalization has witnessed comprehensive promotion in mainland China, the link between areas which have already been lifted out of poverty and markets from home and abroad has also been enhanced, significantly increasing the demand for external publicity and communication in those areas. Based on that, it is of vital importance to foster the bilingual ability of agricultural population, enabling them to master another mainstream language represented by English, on the basis of the proficiency of the standard spoken and written Chinese. To achieve this, out-of-poverty areas ought to broaden their development channels of rural bilingual education from diverse facets including national policy, social demands, as well as laborers themselves, endeavoring to boost rural revitalization on all fronts under the context of bilingual capabilities in rural areas.

**Keywords:** Rural revitalization · External publicity and communication · Bilingual Ability · Rural bilingual education

## 1 Introduction

On February 22, 2022, China has unveiled its “No. One central document” for rural revitalization”, outlining key tasks to encourage local governments to expand the multiple functions of agriculture, and to explore the diverse values of rural areas, considering agricultural products processing, rural leisure tourism, rural e-commerce and other industries as key industries. This document manifests the higher-level expectation from the Chinese government, which aims at developing different patterns of tertiary industries, realizing effective external publicity and communication of local culture, establishing the reputation of rural brands, and increasing farmers’ incomes.

Meanwhile, Theodore W. Schultz (1980), holds a view that language is not only a tool for communication, but also an integral part of human resources [1]. Therefore, in order to achieve external publicity and communication in rural areas, the promotion

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of local people's language capabilities is indispensable. It is because languages can be regarded as the major carriers of cultural exchange, with their multiple attributes which would form self-identities of specific communities and promote themselves on the global stage.

Firstly, from the perspective of realistic demand, abundant natural and cultural resources have been contained in the vast rural areas, where the agricultural products are featured with local characteristics and communication value. However, due to the deficient method of publicity, they have not become the key factor to assist rural revitalization in some areas.

Moreover, from the perspective of rural laborers, owing to the relative substandard language teaching ability in some out-of-poverty areas, local residents do not cultivate an in-depth understanding of the win-win relationship between language education and economic development, which leads to a lack of awareness and publicity ability for featured products in their hometown. In addition, from the perspective of external exchange, the emerging media technology, represented by online live-streaming, has provided rural areas with the possibility to globalize themselves. Under that circumstance, bolstering rural bilingual education is particularly critical at the duration of fostering globalization and revitalization of out-of-poverty rural areas.

## 2 Background Information and Literature Review

In April, 2019, the Chinese Ministry of Education pointed out that it is necessary to boost poverty alleviation via languages, which marked the beginning of "language-based poverty alleviation" and "language competence" in the process of revitalizing and developing agriculture and rural areas. Since then, Chinese domestic scholars have discussed the significance of language competence in improving the quality of rural development, the capability of laborers, and the livelihood of agricultural population from different aspects.

Rao Gaoqi and Wei Hui (2020) believe that the comparative advantages of language resources can be utilized to acquire individual and regional language abilities [2], thus increasing income of individual laborers and fostering regional economic development simultaneously. Xiang Deping and Zhang Kun (2020) focus on how the language abilities can be a facilitator in wisdom-and-ambition promotion of local residents [3], cutting down the inter-generational transmission of poverty, and improving farmers' livelihood fundamentally. Feng Zhiwen (2020) [4] and other scholars emphasize rural multilingualism development on the basis of the mastery of Mandarin.

The review of the past research demonstrates that there exist two major periods of exploring the correlation of language capabilities and rural revitalization. From 2020 to 2021, in the period of gaining complete victory in the fight against poverty, Chinese scholars mainly focus on the role of language ability in promoting poverty alleviation at various theoretical levels. Thereafter, since 2022, China has entered a stage of consolidating the fruitful achievement of rural revitalization. Based on that, it is urgent to refine and implement the previous theoretical research as well as form a feasible methodology so as to provide reference for the development of agriculture and rural areas in the new era.

Education is a process of teaching, training and learning, with the aim of improving knowledge and developing skills, making it be viewed as the key to unleashing the potential of rural areas. Thus, it is vital to refine the pattern of “multilingual competence” into the mode of “Mandarin + another mainstream foreign language” through rural language education, encouraging rural population to adapt to the modernization process comprehensively, and also promoting the revitalization of rural talents.

### **3 Importance of Bilingual Education in Out-of-Poverty Areas**

#### **3.1 The Improvement of Rural Bilingual Education is Conducive to the Dissemination of Local Culture**

Cultural development and tourism are inextricably linked with each other. And it can be said that culture is not only the internal driving force of local economic development, but also an essential element in shaping the brand of tourism enterprises. Additionally, whatever form the culture manifests, it ought to have a carrier to achieve the transmission. In sight of this, language, as the most commonly-used tool for human communication, can be seen as the optimal carrier for local cultural dissemination [5].

The promotion relationship between bilingual education and a rural cultural communication is mainly shown in:

- (1) Mandarin education can form a bridge to establishing rural cultural image. As the national language, it is useful to broaden the range of cultural transmission.
- (2) Foreign language education is the key to maintaining the smooth channel of external publicity and communication, especially under the background of economic globalization as well as the Belt and Road Initiative.

Therefore, developing rural bilingual education would make this carrier into full use, promoting Mandarin and foreign languages playing their roles altogether, and laying a language foundation to arouse local feelings.

#### **3.2 The Improvement of Rural Bilingual Education is Conducive to Promoting Laborers' Quality**

Language skills are the facilitator to motivate the wisdom of agricultural population in out-of-poverty areas. In particular, bilingual abilities are also an important channel to assist rural laborers optimize themselves both theoretically and realistically.

- (1) Language skills are inseparable to boost the personal quality of rural laborers. The core components of human beings include speech ability, calculation ability and reasoning ability, and the latter two are on the basis of language. In view of this, improving the language abilities of rural population can help promote the quality of rural laborers fundamentally, making them prepare for engaging in various economic and social activities.
- (2) Practical demand calls for the rural population to actively improve their bilingual skills. With the in-depth development of regional trade and cultural exchanges, the characteristics of rural laborers' external publicity and communication has witnessed

dynamic changes [6]. For the purpose of responding to the higher expectation in current era, this phenomenon requires rural population not only to bolster their Mandarin acquisition ability continuously, but also to master the international mainstream language represented by English.

### **3.3 The Improvement of National Bilingual Education is Conducive to Strengthen the Fusion of Information Among Agricultural Participants**

Agricultural participants refer to any individuals or organizations engage in the production [7], processing, marketing and service of agricultural products directly or indirectly, including farmers, agricultural associations, community service organizations, etc.

In the process of agricultural efficiency improvement, language abilities have the particular function of interaction, which can integrate related information of agricultural production, so as to maintain harmonious communication and exchange among various subjects of agricultural operation in rural areas. In that case, prompting bilingual capabilities of rural population would not only help to maintain internal exchanges to realize the goal of forming an unimpeded market, but also absorb and learn from advanced agricultural achievements from foreign countries and expand the international market at the same time.

## **4 Methods of Improving Bilingual Ability from the Perspective of Rural Revitalization**

In the context of the unbalanced relationship between the need for external publicity in out-of-poverty rural areas and the status quo, the power of language policy and language planning should be utilized. Thus, the combination of scientific educational strategy and rural education infrastructure ought to be achieved [8]. Meanwhile, children's language improvement programs should be carried out in accordance with the characteristics of children's language acquisition.

### **4.1 Fostering Bilingual Capabilities with Scientific Educational Methods**

In order to cultivate bilingual talents in rural areas, it is meaningful to have a clear understanding of the criteria for identifying bilingual talents, meaning that these talents should not only speak two languages, but also possess these capabilities as follows:

(1) Sufficient cross-cultural communication abilities. (2) Critical thinking skills. (3) International views. (4) Fine quality and morality.

Therefore, scientific approaches ought to be utilized under the purpose of guiding the development of bilingual education in rural revitalization areas, meaning that not only should the academic performances be highlighted, the real connotation of grasping two languages is also vital. Based on the demands of internal and external exchanges and cooperation to disseminate brands and identities in these areas, rural bilingual education should gradually transition from the traditional model, which concentrates on teachers, textbooks and courses, to the new pattern which emphasizes students' independent choices and critical thinking abilities.

## 4.2 Providing Students with Favorable Learning Environment Infrastructure

School is the main place for students to learn languages, and infrastructure is the guarantee of carrying out teaching tasks smoothly. Current years have seen the development of the national economy, as well as the increase of national investment in rural educational infrastructure [9]. However, the bilingual-learning-based equipment in out-of-poverty areas still needs to be optimized. A vivid example is in Lingbi county, Anhui province. Within Linbi county, although in some middle and elementary schools, there exist newly-built classrooms and dormitories, the modern audio-visual teaching equipment is still not widely used.

In this regard, the government needs to increase political and financial support, improving the informatization level of bilingual teaching, and providing facilities for local students to carry out multiple bilingual practices.

## 4.3 Adapting “Children Language Ability Improvement” Project so as to Promote Children’s Bilingual Capabilities

China’s “Children Language Ability Improvement” project (Tong Yu Tong Yin) is aiming at grasping the golden node of children’s mother tongue learning and carrying out systematic foreign language teaching simultaneously [10]. It will assist out-of-poverty rural areas to acquire more reserved talents.

To achieve this, the distribution of preschool teachers in rural areas should be more reasonable. The status quo is that some rural areas do not have full-time preschool foreign language teachers, and qualified teachers are often concentrated in eastern developed areas. In sight of this, a “kindergarten-to-kindergarten” pattern should be formed in response to the higher demands of rural external publicity and communication. During this process, some pilot kindergartens should be established to provide an acceptable mode for others, forming radiating and exemplary roles by themselves.

## 5 Conclusions

From the early stage of the victory of poverty alleviation to the new era of promoting rural revitalization on all fronts, both international and domestic markets call for higher requirements for the development of out-of-poverty rural areas. Hence, it is necessary to encourage bilingual education in light of local conditions, transforming the economic mode in rural areas, ensuring these regions to establish a better image, and empowering rural development fundamentally.

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