Original Research Article

A Case Study in Integrating China's Stories into College English Curriculum—Take North China Electric Power University (Baoding) as an Example

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of national policies advocating for the integration of ideological and political education into college courses and the strengthening of Chinese cultural dissemination globally, this paper aims to explore effective strategies for incorporating the narration of China's stories into the College English curriculum. Focusing on North China Electric Power University (Baoding), the study employs a combination of teaching practice and a questionnaire to investigate the current status, pathways, and methods of integrating China's stories in College English instruction. The research findings reveal that the integration of China's stories in class teaching enhances students' cross-cultural communication abilities and deepens their understanding of Chinese culture. The study highlights the feasibility of merging language learning with cultural narrative and calls for expanded extracurricular practice and long-term impact research. These findings offer practical insights for college English curriculum innovation and cultural soft power enhancement.

Keywords: Ideological and political education; China's stories; teaching effect; College English.

1. INTRODUCTION

Stories serve as vital tools for preserving and disseminating social and cultural traditions, as well as the values that shape collective identities, guiding the cultivation of societal character. China's stories, deeply interwoven with the experiences and ethos of the Chinese people and nation, carry unique cultural and historical significance. Presenting an authentic, multi-dimensional, and comprehensive narrative of China not only strengthens the nation's international communication capabilities but also constitutes a crucial component of moral education within school curricula.

As emphasized in the *Guidelines for Ideological and Political Construction of University Courses* (2020), college English, as a core compulsory course, serves as a critical channel for cultivating students' ability to "tell China's stories" in global contexts. Unlike specialized courses, it uniquely combines language proficiency training with cross-cultural communication, making it an ideal platform for integrating ideological education and cultural dissemination. Therefore, integrating narrative objective into College English curriculum contributes to enhancing national cultural soft power and expanding

China's international discourse influence, fostering cross-cultural understanding and mutual respect. Practically, such integration responds to the evolving challenges of educational reform and aligns with the globalized trend of higher education, equipping students with the linguistic and cultural competencies needed to engage in an interconnected world.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In Chinese academic context, scholarly inquiry into "Telling China's Story Well" in English-language communication can be traced back to some scholars, such as Wang Aju *et al*. (2019), Zhao Yingji (2019b), and Zhao Dongxu (2020) who have laid conceptual foundations for integrating Chinese narratives into English-language education; Zhang Guangming (2018) has focused on pedagogical design, examining classroom activities that facilitate story-telling practices; while empirical studies by Zhao Yingji (2019a) have surveyed the current status of such educational implementations. Additionally, translation studies by Zhang Jie (2019) have delved into linguistic strategies for cross-cultural narrative transmission, addressing challenges in semantic equivalence and cultural adaptation. In recent years, scholars have increasingly

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focused on integrating "curriculum ideology and politics" into foreign language teaching. For example, Wen Yingqian (2022) discusses the theoretical logic of merging cultural narratives with language pedagogy, while Yang Hua (2021) explores digital narrative capabilities in English courses as a form of implicit moral education. These studies lay groundwork for understanding how language classrooms can serve as both linguistic training grounds and cultural transmission hubs.

At abroad, research on "Telling China's stories well" mainly focused on building an international discourse system: Chu (2015) emphasized that language and methods should be direct, specific, and equal through "international means" ; Clark (2016) conducted an in-depth analysis of the unique historical and cultural characteristics of the national discourse system and suggested that Chinese discourse should be applicable to any "non Western' region"; Ye (2016) pointed out that in order to China must tell its story effectively to make the dream of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation accepted and understood worldwide; Dadabaev (2018) believed that as a foreign policy discourse, the silk road will change according to the environment; Liu(2018) analyzed The New York Times' stories about China and explores how a certain discourse pattern or discourse strategy affected its target audience.

While overseas research primarily focuses on constructing international discourse systems for China's stories, domestic studies tend to emphasize class implementation. However, existing literature lacks empirical research on how specific teaching designs in college English classes affect students' dual competencies in language and cultural narrative, especially in technology-intensive universities.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This questionnaire study aims to examine the specific impacts of integrating Chinese narrative education into college English curriculum. Released between January 13 and 30, 2024, the survey targeted 525 undergraduate students at North China Electric Power University (Baoding). Employing a 5-point Likert scale and multiple-choice format, the instrument collected quantitative data on students' perceptions and experiences. All 525 distributed questionnaires were successfully retrieved, yielding a 100% response rate.

Demographic analysis revealed a gender distribution of 73.9% male and 26.1% female respondents, reflecting a male-dominated sample consistent with the university's disciplinary composition. Psychometric testing demonstrated strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.891 for the entire instrument—well above the 0.70 threshold for reliability—indicating robust data quality suitable for statistical analysis.

3.1 Students' basic understanding of China's stories

The questionnaire consisted of three aspects: students' understanding of China's stories, the integration effect of English class and China's stories, and the benefits of integrating China's stories to English Class.

Question 1: The sources of students' understanding about Chinese stories

Choice	Calculation	Percentage
A. In Class teaching	451	85.9%
B. family education	232	44.2%
C. sharing from friends	320	61%
D. online searches	430	81.9%
E. newspaper	182	34.7%
F. television	292	55.6%
Total	**525**	

Analysis:

The analysis of the data reveals that class teaching (85.9%) and online searches (81.9%) are the main avenues through which students gain access to China's stories. This finding underscore two complementary knowledge acquisition paradigms. College English courses play a crucial role by integrating systematic accounts of Chinese culture and society, offering a structured mode of knowledge dissemination that lays the groundwork for students' understanding of pivotal Chinese narratives.

On the other hand, Generation Z students show a marked preference for using internet platforms to retrieve information. The high proportion of 81.9% for

online searches vividly demonstrates their proactive utilization of digital media to explore and expand on the content learned in class. It also showcases how the new media landscape empowers students to engage in self-directed learning of Chinese stories.

This dual dependence on formal education and digital resources vividly illustrates the synergy between institutionalized knowledge transfer and students' self-driven information-seeking behavior. Together, they shape students' comprehension of China's cultural narratives, highlighting the combined influence of traditional teaching and digital exploration in cultural learning.

Question 2: Students' preferences about China's story

Choice	Calculation	Percentage
A. China's excellent traditional stories	490	93.3%
B. China's Communist Party story	327	62.3%
C. China's traditional history stories	397	75.6%
D.Stories about China's reform and opening up	295	56.2%
E. Advanced social culture	267	50.9%
F. stories of advanced people, pioneers of the times, and people who moved China	373	71.1%
G. Others	10	1.9%
Total	**525**	

Analysis: The data shows that China's excellent traditional culture stories (93.3%), China's traditional history stories (75.6%), and stories of advanced figures, contemporary pioneers, and "People Who Moved China" (71.1%) are all highly recognized as excellent narratives rich in Chinese contexts. Notably, however, fewer students selected stories related to advanced socialist culture and the reform and opening-up era. This phenomenon may stem from limited narrative resources in these domains, which could reduce students' familiarity and engagement.

Question 3: What aspects of China's stories attract you?

Choice	Calculation	Percentage
A. story event	467	89%
B. story spirit	408	77.7%
C. story characters	412	78.5%
D. your addition	33	6.3%
Total	**525**	

Analysis: The content, characters, and spirit of China's stories are the most important components that attract audiences.

3.2 Understanding the integration effect of English class and China's stories.

To investigate the integration effect of China's stories in teaching, two scaled questions are designed in this dimension. These questions aim to:

a. Evaluate the overall integration effect of China's stories in the teaching process;
b. Assess students' foreign language proficiency in storytelling by incorporating Chinese narratives;
c. Reference students' self-reported competencies to measure the actual teaching outcomes.

Question 4: China's stories can be well integrated with class teaching

Choice	Calculation	Percentage
A. very satisfied	346	65.9%
B. satisfied	137	26.1%
C. quite satisfied	36	6.9%
D. unsatisfied	2	0.4%
E. very unsatisfied	4	0.8%
Total	**525**	

Analysis: Data shows that over 90% of students hold the view that China's stories can be effectively integrated into class teaching. In general, people are satisfied with the integration of China's stories and class teaching, indicating that the two can be combined.

3.3 The benefits of integrating China's stories to English Class

Question 5: Evaluation on the relevant abilities improved in the practical process of telling China's stories well

Choice	Calculation	Percentage
A. Extremely satisfied	346	65.9%
B. Somewhat satisfied	137	26.1%
C.Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	36	6.9%
D.Dissatisfied somewhat	2	0.4%
E. Extremely dissatisfied	4	0.8%
Total	**525**	

Analysis: Data indicates that over 90% of students recognize the potential for Chinese stories to integrate seamlessly with in-class teaching. The majority of respondents express satisfaction or high satisfaction with the integration of China's stories into the educational process, underscoring its effectiveness and acceptability in class settings.

Question 6: Please evaluate the relevant abilities improved in the practical part of telling Chinese stories well (scale question)

Items	Extremely dissatisfied	Dissatisfied somewhat	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Extremely satisfied	Average score
You have improved your ability of telling Chinese stories	2(0.4%)	3 (0.6%)	75(14.3%)	167(31.8%)	278(53%)	4.36
You have improved your ability of translation	2(0.4%)	3 (0.6%)	72(13.7%)	163(31.1%)	285(54.3%)	4.38
You have improved your ability of reading	1(0.2%)	2(0.4%)	65(12.4%)	170(32.4%)	287(54.7%)	4.41
You have improved your ability of writing	0(0%)	4(0.8%)	76(14.5%)	164(31.2%)	281(53.5%)	4.38
total	5(0.2%)	12(0.6%)	288(13.7%)	664(31.6%)	1131(53.9%)	4.38

Analysis: The survey reveals that participants generally exhibit a positive inclination toward enhancing their capabilities in the practical application of effectively telling China's stories. Specifically:

- **Storytelling Skills:** Over 85% of participants acknowledge that class practice has significantly improved their storytelling proficiency.
- **Translation Proficiency:** A total of 86.4% agree that their translation skills have advanced notably through training.
- **Reading Competence:** The most pronounced progress is observed in reading ability, with over 87% strongly affirming that their English proficiency has increased substantially during the teaching process.

In summary, class teaching centered on telling China's stories effectively facilitates participants' English proficiency development through structured practice. Meanwhile, their overall storytelling capabilities demonstrate a corresponding upward trend, highlighting the mutually reinforcing effects of language learning and cultural narrative competence.

Question 7: Factors influencing college students to tell China's stories well in English

Items	Extremely dissatisfied	Dissatisfied somewhat	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Extremely satisfied	Average score
limited class hours, extensive textbook content, teachers' inability to fully explore	64(6.5%)	56 (10.7%)	119(22.8%)	154(29.3%)	162(30.9%)	3.67
difficulty in exploring Chinese elements	49(9.3%)	85 (16.2%)	146(27.8%)	115(21.9%)	130(24.8%)	3.37
difficulty in the organic integration effect in teaching	67(12.8%)	125(23.8%)	132(12.4%)	68(13%)	133(25.3%)	3.14
Students' being not proficient in English	33(6.3%)	52(9.9%)	136(25.9%)	140(26.7%)	164(31.2%)	3.67
The Chinese cultural literacy of teachers and students cannot meet the needs of storytelling	89(17%)	111(21.1%)	133(25.3%)	71(13.5%)	121(23.1%)	3.05
total	272(10.4%)	429(16.3%)	666(25.4%)	548(20.9%)	710(27.1%)	3.38

When exploring the factors that influence the ability to tell China's stories effectively in English during class instruction, students identify several key limitations:

• Class Constraints:
  a. Limited class hours and extensive textbook content pose challenges, as teachers often struggle to fully delve into thematic depth, while students face time pressures to absorb materials thoroughly.
  b. Students' insufficient English proficiency acts as a fundamental barrier, hindering their ability to articulate complex Chinese narratives accurately and fluently.

• Teaching Design Challenges:
  Students highlight the difficulty of identifying and integrating authentic Chinese cultural elements into

teaching, as well as the challenge of achieving organic cohesion between language learning and narrative skills. This imbalance weakens the effectiveness of storytelling practice.

• **Supplementary Feedback:**

In open-ended responses, students further note that monotonous teaching formats, low student engagement, and high academic pressure have created additional obstacles. These factors dampen motivation and reduce the focus on cultivating cultural storytelling competence.

The constraints stem from a mix of structural limitations (time, curriculum, language proficiency), pedagogical gaps (cultural integration, teaching methods), and affective factors (interest, pressure). Addressing these requires a holistic approach to optimize teaching design, enhance language proficiency training, and foster a dynamic, engaging learning environment for effective China's story-telling in English.

Question 8: Telling China's stories well helps to enhance cultural confidence, promote cultural security, and facilitate the inheritance and development of national spirit

Choice	Calculation	Percentage
A. Strongly agree	412	78.5%
B. Somewhat agree	84	16%
C.Neither agree nor disagree	27	5.1%
D. Somewhat disagree	2	0.4%
E. Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	**525**	

Question 9: Telling China's stories well helps cultivate patriotism

Choice	Calculation	Percentage
A. Strongly agree	418	79.6%
B. Somewhat agree	80	15.2%
C.Neither agree nor disagree	27	5.1%
D. Somewhat disagree	0	0
E. Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	**525**	

Question 10: Telling China's stories well can help broaden international horizons and consolidate a sense of pride in spreading Chinese culture to the outside world

Choice	Calculation	Percentage
A. Strongly agree	424	80.8%
B. Agree somewhat	73	13.9%
C.Neither agree nor disagree	26	5%
D.Disagree somewhat	1	0.2%
E. Strongly disagree	1	0.2%
Total	**525**	

Analysis:
a. Enhance willingness to spread China's stories among students

The survey, utilizing a rating scale, revealed that 74.48% of respondents expressed an increased willingness to spread China's stories. Cross - analysis further corroborated this finding. Notably, male participants demonstrated a relatively higher willingness, which might be attributed to the smaller sample size of female respondents. This outcome underscores the fact that the majority of students have indeed become more enthusiastic about sharing China's stories, suggesting that the course has effectively ignited their passion for storytelling and cultural dissemination.

b. The role of general English course in deepening understanding of China's stories

The General English course has proven to be highly instrumental in deepening students' comprehension of China's stories. As evidenced by the data, an overwhelming 94.86% of students affirmed the course's positive impact, with 79.62% strongly agreeing and 15.24% agreeing that it facilitates a more profound understanding of Chinese narratives. In contrast, only a negligible number of students held a contrary view. This resounding endorsement from the students attests to the course's educational efficacy and its wide-ranging acceptance among the students.

Question 11: Suggestions on improving class activities

Choice	Calculation	Percentage
A. Teacher tells China's story in English	398	75.8%
B. Watch relevant micro videos concerning the course content	454	86.5%
C. Design the course and interact with students	382	72.8%
D. Group presentation	293	55.8%
E. Lectures given by authorities	271	51.6%
F. Create a WeChat official account to share materials collected by students	223	42.5%
G. Participate in extra-curriculum activities	259	49.3%
Total	**525**	

The suggestions with relatively high support rates include watching micro-lesson videos (86.48%), designing interesting classes related to teaching content, and teacher-student interaction (72.76%), as well as teachers telling China's stories in English (75.81%). This indicates that students consider improving course design, fully absorbing knowledge in class, and subtly learning how to tell Chinese stories well as important ways to enhance classroom efficiency.

However, the proportions of students participating in group presentations, sharing and collecting China's story materials, and engaging in extracurricular practices are relatively low. This may be due to the fact that students are accustomed to the traditional learning mode where teachers impart knowledge and lead practice. Although self-directed exploration is less emphasized in this mode, students still recognize that extracurricular activities represent a crucially important learning channel for mastering the art of telling China's stories effectively.

4. CONCLUSION

This survey collected 525 valid online questionnaires, revealing that students generally agree with the integration of China's stories into college English in-class teaching, as it significantly enhances their willingness to spread Chinese culture globally. While acknowledging limitations—such as restricted class hours and students' insufficient storytelling proficiency—most respondents strongly endorsed that college English learning improves their abilities in reading, writing, and translating Chinese stories, as well as cultivating cultural value awareness through implicit educational influence. Feedback on in-class effectiveness provides empirical support for systematically incorporating China's stories into English teaching frameworks.

However, there are some limitations. First, the study focuses solely on in-class teaching scenarios, neglecting out-of-class learning activities (e.g., extracurricular cultural projects). Second, qualitative insights into students' storytelling challenges (e.g., linguistic barriers, cultural interpretation difficulties) remain underdeveloped. Third, the research does not assess the sustained effects of the teaching model on students' long-term cultural communication behaviors.

To address these challenges, three strategies are proposed: First, develop themed modules (e.g., "Traditional Culture," "Modern China") for flexible integration into limited class hours, supported by pre-class online videos and post-class discussion forums. Second, collaborate with Chinese literature and history faculty to design story-telling activities to ensure cultural accuracy and depth. Third, incorporate real-world texts from China Daily, CGTN, and international media reports to expose students to diverse narrative styles.

In summary, this study validates the feasibility and educational value of merging Chinese stories with college English teaching, though it calls for expanded research on teaching duration, storytelling skill training, and long-term impact. By bridging language learning with cultural dissemination, the approach paves the way for innovative, culturally rooted foreign language education that prepares students to become proactive ambassadors of Chinese culture.

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