

Integrating Curriculum-Based Ideological and Political Education into College English Textbooks: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1*

Yanyu Huang^{1*}

¹ Guangzhou Institute of Science and Technology, School of Foreign Languages, Guangzhou, China

*Correspondence: Yanyu Huang

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Abstract:

Against the backdrop of growing interdisciplinarity in higher education, college English textbooks in China have increasingly been expected to serve not only as vehicles for language instruction but also as important carriers of curriculum-based ideological and political education (CIPE). Taking *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1* as a case study, this article examines the textbook's interdisciplinary characteristics, the distribution of ideological and political elements, and the pedagogical framework through which these elements may be effectively enacted in classroom practice. Drawing on content analysis, the study identifies how value-oriented content is embedded across national, social, and individual levels and how such elements intersect with disciplinary knowledge and language-skill development. On this basis, the article proposes a three-dimensional pedagogical framework for integrating CIPE into college English instruction. The study argues that the pedagogical effectiveness of textbook-based CIPE depends not merely on the presence of ideological content, but on its principled alignment with linguistic objectives, interdisciplinary themes, and task design. The findings offer practical implications for textbook analysis, curriculum design, and pedagogical innovation in college English education.

Keywords:

Curriculum-based Ideological And Political Education, Interdisciplinarity, College English, Textbook Analysis, Pedagogical Design

1. Introduction

Interdisciplinarity has become an increasingly salient feature of contemporary higher education, driven by the complexity of real-world problems and the growing demand for graduates capable of crossing disciplinary boundaries [8]. In China, this trend has been further reinforced by recent educational initiatives such as the development of New Engineering, New Medical Sciences, New Agricultural Sciences, and New Liberal Arts, all of which emphasize the cultivation of interdisciplinary and

application-oriented talent [1]. Within this broader reform agenda, curriculum-based ideological and political education (CIPE) has emerged as a central educational priority, aiming to integrate value cultivation into all disciplines rather than confining it to dedicated ideological and political theory courses [2].

Against this policy and pedagogical backdrop, college English occupies a particularly important position. As a compulsory general education course with strong humanistic, communicative, and cross-cultural dimensions, college English is uniquely situated to combine language development with value-oriented content within the CIPE framework. Policy documents such as the College English Teaching Guide and the National Standards for Teaching Quality in Foreign Language and Literature Majors explicitly call for college English teaching to move beyond language training alone and to incorporate broader educational goals, including moral cultivation, cultural confidence, and social responsibility [4,9]. This expectation places college English textbooks at the center of pedagogical implementation, as they function not merely as repositories of linguistic input but as curated pedagogical texts through which disciplinary knowledge, cultural narratives, and ideological meanings are mediated.

Among widely used textbook series in China, *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course* is particularly representative for its thematic breadth and interdisciplinary orientation. Its units engage with issues such as science and technology, cultural heritage, social development, environmental sustainability, and digital life, thereby offering fertile ground for both language learning and value-oriented teaching. However, while a growing body of scholarship has explored CIPE in college English education, existing studies have tended to focus either on macro-level pedagogical principles or on fragmented analyses of isolated textbook units. Relatively little attention has been paid to how interdisciplinary content and ideological elements are systematically co-constructed within a single textbook and how such co-construction can inform pedagogical design.

To address this gap, the present study takes *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1* as a case study and investigates three research questions:

- (1) What interdisciplinary characteristics are manifested in the textbook?
- (2) How are ideological and political elements distributed across the textbook?
- (3) How can pedagogical practices be designed to integrate CIPE based on these textbook features?

By answering these questions, the study seeks to contribute to ongoing discussions on textbook-mediated CIPE in college English and to offer a pedagogically grounded framework for integrating value education with language teaching in interdisciplinary contexts.

2. Interdisciplinarity in *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1*

Before examining the specific features of the textbook, it is necessary to clarify the conceptual underpinnings of interdisciplinarity in college English teaching. Interdisciplinarity requires college English teaching to balance the characteristics of both English as a language subject and the integrated disciplines. Jacobs [5] proposed a continuum of curriculum integration ranging from multidisciplinary approaches to

interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches. Within this typology, college English textbooks often operate between the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary levels, using English as a medium to engage with content from diverse fields while maintaining systematic language instruction.

Drawing on this framework, this study analyzes the *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1* [6] to examine its interdisciplinary features.

2.1. Manifestations of interdisciplinarity

New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1 consists of six units. Each unit is organized around a central theme and includes one main text and two extended readings, totaling 18 reading passages. This study employed content analysis and quantitative analysis methods, based on the interdisciplinary nature, to analyze and statistically summarize the specific manifestations of interdisciplinarity in 18 reading texts of the teaching materials. Among them, the representative manifestations of interdisciplinarity are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Representative Interdisciplinary Features in *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1*.

Unit	Text Title	Integrated Disciplines	Points of Integration
Unit 1	<i>Deaf DJ</i>	English + Music Technology + Neuroscience	The text introduces Visualized software converts sound into color to compensate for hearing impairment, demonstrating technology-enabled accessibility.
Unit 3	<i>Saved in Shanghai — A Young Girl's Story Highlights a Rare WWII Place of Refuge</i>	English + History + Cross-cultural Studies	The text depicts Jewish refugee life in Shanghai during WWII and intercultural interaction with local Chinese residents.
Unit 4	<i>Guardians of Dunhuang</i>	English + Archaeology + Cultural Heritage Conservation	The text introduces preservation efforts of Dunhuang murals and conservation strategies based on deterioration mechanisms.
Unit 5	<i>Global Water Scarcity</i>	English + Environmental Science + Public Health	The text explains how water scarcity leads to waterborne diseases and inadequate sanitation, posing health risks.
Unit 6	<i>14 Days with (Almost) No Internet: Did My Digital Detox Pay Off?</i>	English + Psychology + Communication Studies	The text introduces the author conducted a self-experiment on digital detox and observed psychological and behavioral changes.

Content analysis of Table 1 shows that the textbook demonstrates a clear interdisciplinary orientation, combining linguistic learning with insights from music technology, history, environmental science, public policy, psychology, sociology, and cultural studies.

Three distinctive features characterize the interdisciplinarity in the textbook. First, it foregrounds real-world issues to develop students' complex problem-solving abilities. Second, it bridges Chinese and global perspectives, thereby fostering cultural understanding and identity construction. Third, it integrates personal narratives with

broader historical and social contexts, cultivating empathy, social awareness, and historical consciousness.

2.2. Combination of Language Skills and Disciplinary Knowledge

The pedagogical design of *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1* emphasizes the organic integration of language skills and disciplinary knowledge. Each reading passage is accompanied by vocabulary annotations and cultural notes to support comprehension. A range of language exercises—including main idea tasks, comprehension questions, true/false judgments, and sentence translation—reinforces textual understanding while enhancing language application. In addition, each unit incorporates listening materials, speaking tasks, and writing exercises aligned with the unit theme, further promoting students' engagement with disciplinary content.

For instance, in Unit 4's Text *Guardians of Dunhuang*, the textbook provides annotations for terms such as "heritage," "preserve," "statue," "fresco," and "dynasty," along with background information on "The Digital Dunhuang Project" and "UNESCO World Heritage Site" facilitating comprehension of the interdisciplinary theme of cultural heritage conservation. Comprehension exercises—including fill-in-the-blank, question-and-answer, and multiple-choice items—target text structure, main ideas, details, and complex sentences. Vocabulary tasks such as cloze exercises, word formation activities, and sentence pattern drills further consolidate language proficiency. Through this design, disciplinary knowledge acquisition and language skills development are mutually reinforcing, achieving synergistic instructional outcomes.

3. Ideological and Political Elements in *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1*

Analyzing ideological and political elements not only clarifies the educational function of *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1* but also provides explicit direction for instructional practice. A systematic review of the textbook content reveals rich ideological and political resources that are organically integrated with disciplinary knowledge.

3.1. Classification Criteria for Ideological and Political Elements

The classification of ideological and political elements requires a theoretically grounded framework. Gong [3] argues that the Core Socialist Values should serve as the conceptual basis for such classification. This position aligns with the *College English Teaching Guide*'s articulation of talent development objectives, which aim to "meet the needs of the nation, society, institution, and individual development" [7]. Based on the Core Socialist Values as the framework, this study argues that ideological and political elements can be divided into national, social and individual levels, and has established the following classification standard for analyzing ideological and political elements in the textbook.

Table 2. Classification Standard for Analyzing Ideological and Political Elements in *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1*.

Level	Ideological and Political Elements	Associated Competencies
National Level	Patriotism	Patriotism; national identity; sense of mission...
	Cultural Confidence	Cultural inheritance; cultural identity; international communication...

Social Level	Dedication and Professional Commitment	Social responsibility; craftsmanship spirit; public service...
	Integrity and Friendliness	Fairness and justice; mutual support and empathy; ecological awareness...
Individual Level	Self-reliance and Self-improvement	Self-management; responsibility; lifelong learning...
	Perseverance and Striving Spirit	Resilience in adversity; innovative mindset; healthy lifestyle...

3.2. Manifestations of Ideological and Political Elements

Applying this classification standard, the study systematically analyzed the distribution of ideological and political elements across the six units of the textbook. Among them, the most representative ones are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Representative Ideological and Political Elements in New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1.

Unit	Text Title	Ideological and Political Elements			Associated Competencies
		National Level	Social Level	Individual Level	
Unit 1	<i>Janitor Filipaj, the Dream Pursuer</i>	—	Dedication (educational equity)	Self-reliance (lifelong learning)	Pursuit of excellence; dignity of labor; social responsibility
	<i>The Man in Pursuit of the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation</i>	Patriotism (national rejuvenation)	—	Self-reliance (striving spirit)	Sense of mission; cultural confidence; perseverance
Unit 2	<i>All Grown Up and Still in Tow</i>	—	Integrity and friendliness (family ethics)	Self-reliance (independent spirit)	Responsibility awareness; intergenerational communication; self-management
	<i>Learning to Make a Difference</i>	—	Dedication (social responsibility)	Self-reliance (practical competence)	Collective awareness; social responsibility; personal growth
	<i>Universities Encourage New Students to Go It Alone</i>	—	Dedication (practical education)	Self-reliance (independent spirit)	Perseverance; self-management; collective awareness
Unit 4	<i>Zhan Tianyou, Father of China's Railroad</i>	Patriotism (serving the nation through science and technology)	Dedication (independent innovation)	Self-reliance (determination)	National pride; craftsmanship spirit; national resilience
Unit 5	<i>What's the World to Do about Water?</i>	Patriotism (global governance)	Integrity and friendliness (sustainable development)	Self-reliance (public health awareness)	Ecological civilization; global responsibility; scientific spirit

As illustrated in Table 3, ideological and political elements in the textbook span the national, social, and individual levels, forming a multi-layered and coherent value framework. Instead of relying on explicit didactic statements, the textbook integrates these elements through authentic cases and diverse narrative structures, enabling implicit value transmission.

At the national level, the textbook foregrounds themes such as serving the nation through science and technology, national rejuvenation, cultural heritage protection, and engagement in global governance. At the social level, it highlights educational equity, poverty alleviation, resource fairness, and humanitarian concern. At the individual level, it emphasizes lifelong learning, perseverance in adversity, technological self-discipline, and identity formation.

A representative example can be found in Unit 2, where the three reading passages collectively contribute to the core theme of “cultivating youth independence and social responsibility.” These texts approach the theme from different perspectives—family reflection, educational philosophy, and institutional practice—while avoiding overt moralizing. Instead, values such as self-reliance, dedication, and integrity are embedded within concrete narratives and reflective contexts. This design encourages students to develop an independent sense of self and social responsibility at the beginning of their university experience.

4. Interdisciplinary Approaches to Integrating Ideological and Political Elements in College English Teaching

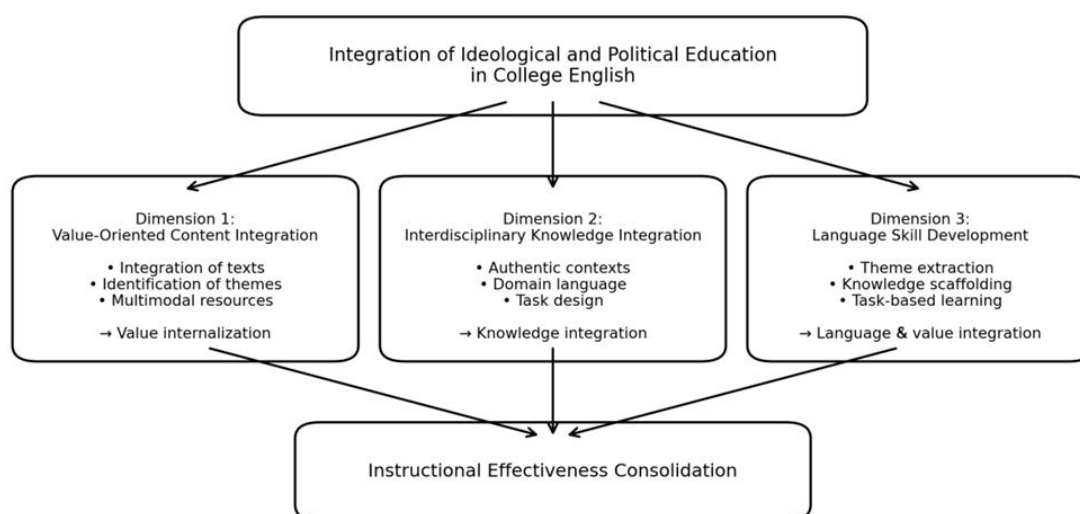


Figure 1. A Three-Dimensional Pedagogical Framework for Integrating Ideological and Political Education in College English.

Building on the analysis of the textbook’s interdisciplinary characteristics and ideological and political element distribution, this section addresses how these two aspects can be effectively translated into classroom practice. Rather than treating ideological and political education and interdisciplinarity as separate instructional concerns, the present study conceptualizes their integration through a three-dimensional framework, as illustrated in Figure 1.

4.1. Dimension 1: Value-Oriented Content Integration

The first dimension focuses on the systematic identification and pedagogical reconstruction of ideological and political elements embedded in textbook materials.

Rather than presenting such elements in an explicit or didactic manner, this approach emphasizes their integration into coherent thematic structures that align with students' cognitive development and learning interests. Based on the distribution patterns identified in Table 2, teachers can reorganize value-oriented content by integrating thematically related texts and highlighting their underlying ideological themes. This process enables students to engage with value-oriented meanings in a contextualized and meaningful way, rather than encountering them as abstract concepts.

In practice, three strategies can be employed. First, thematically related texts can be integrated to construct a structured value framework. Second, supplementary materials—including background information, real-world cases, and multimedia resources—can be incorporated to enrich the instructional context. Third, output-oriented tasks, such as translation, presentations, and debates, can be designed to facilitate students' transformation of conceptual understanding into communicative competence.

The two extended readings in Unit 1 provide a representative example. Reading 1, *Janitor Filipaj, the Dream Pursuer*, presents a narrative of individual struggle and upward mobility associated with the “American Dream.” Reading 2, *The Man in Pursuit of the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation*, illustrates the integration of personal aspirations with national development. By guiding students to compare these narratives in terms of value orientation, realization pathways, and social implications, teachers can encourage critical reflection on the relationship between individual goals and collective responsibility.

4.2. Dimension 2: Interdisciplinary Knowledge Integration

The second dimension highlights the role of interdisciplinarity in expanding pedagogical approaches and enriching students' learning experiences. Drawing on the interdisciplinary characteristics identified in Section 2, this dimension emphasizes the incorporation of authentic contexts, domain-specific knowledge, and cross-disciplinary perspectives into language instruction. Rather than approaching texts solely through traditional comprehension tasks, teachers can introduce authentic materials and real-world scenarios to create meaningful learning contexts. This approach not only enhances student engagement but also facilitates deeper understanding of both content and language.

Taking Unit 1's *Deaf DJ* as an example, teachers may introduce the text through short video clips that present the protagonist's DJ performance. Such multimodal input provides a concrete context for understanding the text while implicitly conveying values such as perseverance and creativity. At the linguistic level, teachers can guide students to analyze domain-specific vocabulary, such as mixer and turntable, and explain their functions within music production. These terms can further serve as entry points for teaching word formation processes, including suffixation and compounding, thereby linking disciplinary knowledge with language learning.

In addition, interdisciplinary activities can be incorporated into classroom practice. For example, students may explore the principles of music technology, investigate sound transmission, or design simple remix projects. These task-based activities promote not only disciplinary understanding but also collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

4.3. Dimension 3: Language Skill Development

The third dimension focuses on the integration of language skill development and value formation through task-based learning. In this dimension, language learning is not treated as an isolated objective but as a means of engaging with meaningful content and developing value-oriented understanding. When students participate in inquiry-based tasks that require information retrieval, synthesis, and communication, they are more likely to engage deeply with both linguistic and conceptual aspects of learning. This integration enhances not only language proficiency but also critical thinking and value awareness.

The Unit 5 water-problem theme provides a representative example. After completing the Text (*What's the World to Do about Water?*) and Reading 1 (*Global Water Scarcity*), teachers can assign Reading 2 (*China's Water Situation*) as a guided independent learning task. During instruction, students can be introduced to key institutional terms—such as Ministry of Environmental Protection, Chinese Academy of Engineering, and Ministry of Water Resources—which are essential for understanding China's environmental governance.

Building on this foundation, students may be required to conduct independent research and produce a 500-word report in English on the development of China's water-resource situation over the past 15 years. This task integrates multiple learning objectives. At the language level, it develops academic writing skills such as information retrieval, synthesis, and argumentation. At the value level, it enhances students' awareness of environmental challenges and their sense of responsibility toward ecological sustainability. Through such task-based design, language learning and value formation are integrated into a unified pedagogical process, thereby reinforcing both linguistic competence and value-oriented understanding.

5. Discussion

The findings presented in Sections 2 and 3 establish the analytical foundation of this study by identifying the interdisciplinary characteristics of the textbook and the distribution of ideological and political elements. Building on this foundation, the present section interprets how these elements are pedagogically operationalized through the three-dimensional framework proposed in Section 4.

5.1. Value-Oriented Content Integration

From the perspective of value-oriented content integration, the findings indicate that ideological and political elements in the textbook are not presented in a directive or prescriptive manner but are embedded within thematic structures and narrative contexts. This mode of integration allows values to be internalized through meaningful engagement rather than direct imposition.

Furthermore, the organization of value-oriented content across national, social, and individual levels suggests the presence of a coherent value framework aligned with students' developmental needs. Themes such as self-reliance, perseverance, responsibility, and cultural confidence are repeatedly reinforced through diverse textual forms, enabling both cognitive understanding and affective identification.

These findings suggest that the effectiveness of curriculum-based ideological and political education depends less on the explicit visibility of ideological elements and more on their contextualized and pedagogically mediated presentation.

5.2. Interdisciplinary Knowledge Integration

From the perspective of interdisciplinary knowledge integration, the study demonstrates that interdisciplinarity serves as a key mechanism for embedding ideological and political elements into language teaching. By situating texts within real-world issues—such as technological innovation, environmental sustainability, and cultural heritage—the textbook creates a context in which value-oriented learning emerges naturally.

This suggests that interdisciplinarity enhances both cognitive engagement and the perceived legitimacy of value integration. When ideological content is grounded in authentic disciplinary contexts, it is more likely to be interpreted as meaningful rather than externally imposed.

Moreover, interdisciplinary integration expands the scope of college English teaching, transforming it from a purely linguistic activity into a multidimensional learning process that incorporates knowledge construction and value development.

5.3. Language Skill Development

From the perspective of language skill development, the findings highlight the role of task-based learning in integrating language acquisition and value formation. When students engage in inquiry-based tasks—such as research, discussion, and writing—they process both linguistic and conceptual content simultaneously.

This dual engagement enables learners to articulate value-oriented ideas in English, thereby deepening both language proficiency and critical awareness. Language learning, in this sense, functions not only as a communicative tool but also as a medium for reflection and meaning-making.

The analysis further suggests that language-skill development is most effective when embedded in authentic and cognitively demanding tasks, which encourage higher-order thinking and deeper engagement with both content and values.

6. Conclusions

This study examined the interdisciplinary characteristics and ideological and political elements of *New Progressive College English: Integrated Course 1* and explored how these features can inform pedagogical practice in college English teaching. The analysis demonstrates that the textbook exhibits a clear interdisciplinary orientation and systematically embeds ideological and political elements across national, social, and individual levels. More importantly, the study proposes a three-dimensional pedagogical framework that integrates value-oriented content, interdisciplinary knowledge, and language skill development, providing a structured approach to implementing curriculum-based ideological and political education in language classrooms.

However, this study has certain limitations. It is based on the analysis of a single textbook volume and does not include empirical classroom data. Therefore, it primarily reveals pedagogical potential rather than actual learning outcomes. Future research could incorporate classroom-based methods, such as learner perception studies and teaching interventions, to further examine how textbook-based integration is enacted in practice.

Overall, the study suggests that effective integration in college English teaching lies not merely in the presence of ideological content, but in its meaningful alignment with interdisciplinary contexts and language-learning practices.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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