

From Language Acquisition to International Communication: Teaching Reform and In-depth Reflection on English News Reporting Course

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Abstract: Against the dual backdrop of the development of New Liberal Arts and the enhancement of international communication capacity building, traditional English news courses can no longer meet the demand for cultivating interdisciplinary international communication talents. Taking the bilingual course *English News Reporting* of a university as the research object, this paper systematically elaborates the construction process of a modular curriculum system centered on “Journalism + English + Cross-cultural Narration”. The paper focuses on analyzing innovative practices in the construction of online curriculum resources, the development of AI-assisted teaching tools and the operation of the practical platform “GO TO LINGANG”. It also profoundly reflects on prominent problems existing in current teaching, including uneven students’ cross-cultural narrative capabilities, immature practical works and disconnected evaluation systems. On this basis, the paper proposes the reform orientation of focusing on “practical training, internationalization, project-based learning and result-oriented output” in the next five years. Through hierarchical and categorized tutoring, the introduction of industrial mentors and the expansion of practical international communication platforms, the paradigm shift from mere cultivation of linguistic competence to the improvement of practical international communication capacity can be realized.

Keywords: English news; Teaching reform; Cross-cultural narration; International communication; AI-assisted teaching

Online publication: August 13, 2026

1 Introduction: Repositioning the course from the perspective of international communication

Profound transformations have taken place in the global communication landscape. Telling Chinese stories well and presenting a true, multi-dimensional and comprehensive China constitutes an important mission of foreign language teaching in higher education in the new era ^[1]. Nevertheless, two common teaching misunderstandings prevail in traditional English news courses. First, such courses are equated with intensive English reading courses, with teaching emphasis laid on vocabulary and grammar explanation while ignoring

the timeliness and communication laws of news ^[2]. Second, writing exercises are limited to paper-based news styles without authentic communication scenarios, making it impossible to obtain real feedback from audiences ^[3].

To break through existing bottlenecks, the curriculum team has carried out in-depth reflection and reconstructive reform. The core positioning of the course is clearly defined as cultivating students' English news reporting capacity, with cross-cultural narration set as the high-level training objective. Clear requirements are put forward for students' acquisition of English linguistic skills, and corresponding competency standards are formulated for the context of international communication. Students are expected to screen information, reconstruct narratives and conduct cultural translation in English, so as to cultivate interdisciplinary talents with a deep sense of national identity and an international vision and add to the national talent pool ^[4].

2. Problem-oriented reconstruction of curriculum content: Modularization, project-based learning and digital-intelligent integration

In the whole process of curriculum construction, the team centers on students' core demands and takes solving practical problems as the primary orientation. It first identifies key obstacles restricting the improvement of students' English news reporting capabilities, then systematically reconstructs teaching contents and supporting resources based on the sorting results ^[5].

2.1. Key problems to be addressed in teaching reform

After carrying out academic situation surveys and teaching diagnoses, the curriculum team sorts out three major bottlenecks to be tackled and puts targeted breakthrough paths forward.

(1) Insufficient English news reading ability

Most students are accustomed to slow, exam-oriented intensive reading training. When confronted with massive real-world English news materials, they generally suffer from slow reading speed and inadequate ability to grasp main ideas and locate details, which cannot support efficient and instant news gathering and editing. To make up for this shortcoming, the course increases the volume of English news reading throughout all teaching sessions and launches special skill training such as timed reading, headline skimming, lead intensive reading and information mapping, so as to systematically boost students' reading speed and in-depth comprehension ^[6].

(2) Weak English news writing capacity

In the transition from general English writing to news style writing, students usually encounter three difficulties: loose structure, Chinglish expressions and inaccurate judgment of news value. Centering on core norms of English news writing, the course systematically explains headline formulation, lead writing, inverted pyramid structure, quotation application and stylistic requirements, matched with progressive writing practices including imitation, revision and independent creation, so as to strengthen students' discourse organization ability and improve the authenticity of their language expressions.

(3) Lack of practical experience in real communication

News courses in the past mostly rely on classroom simulations and paper exercises. Students finish assignments separated from authentic communication scenarios and rarely get tested in real media environments, resulting in works lacking audience awareness and weak communication effects. To expand

practical teaching outward, the course organizes students to conduct bilingual coverage of large campus events and produce campus media news. Leveraging the geographical advantages of Lingang New Area, it cooperates with relevant media, enterprises, and public institutions to carry out on-site interviews and surveys, creating full-process and all-element news practice scenarios and building diverse practical platforms for students. Meanwhile, to provide resource and technical support for solving the above problems, the team has systematically developed supporting curriculum resources, including the construction of an online learning platform to extend learning time and space, and the research and development of AI-assisted English news writing tools to enhance writing efficiency and quality, which lay the necessary foundations for the implementation of modular teaching and practical training.

2.2. Three-stage progressive modular content

The curriculum content system is built based on the above problems, extending from basic knowledge to cutting-edge topics and forming a logically rigorous pyramid structure.

(1) Basic Module: Consolidating Foundations

This stage centers on “What Is News” and “How to Conduct Interviews and Narration”. Its contents include English news reading skills and style identification, basic writing covering headlines, leads and inverted pyramid structures, as well as interview practice involving questioning logic and non-verbal communication. Teachers strictly correct students’ habit of literal translation based on Chinese thinking and help them establish awareness of news writing styles, supplemented by extensive skimming and intensive reading training to consolidate news reading competence.

(2) Practical Skill Module: Strengthening Professional Competence

Project-based learning is adopted. Students are divided into editorial groups to simulate the full process of news production, including topic selection meetings. Tasks fall into two categories: English news writing covering feature stories, commentary and data journalism; interview practice including street interviews and character interviews. Students learn through hands-on practice and break the barriers between reading, writing and interviewing, while perceiving specific difficulties in cross-cultural communication in real interpersonal interaction scenarios.

(3) Frontier Topic Module: Pursuing Innovation

Combined with changes in the media industry, frontier special topics are offered, covering new media news (short video narration, social media communication), cultural tourism news (city image shaping) and international news reporting (emergency coverage, foreign affairs reports). Students are guided to pay attention to non-linear narrative and immersive communication in the digital age, enabling their competency structure to meet the demands of frontline international communication ^[7,8].

2.3. Construction of digitally intelligent integrated curriculum resources

To guarantee the effectiveness of teaching reform, the course has built an all-time online learning platform and vertical intelligent auxiliary system.

(1) All-time Online Learning Platform

The online platform, equipped with micro-lesson resources, supports students in English news listening and memorization, imitation writing and extensive reading, catering to personalized learning and addressing insufficient reading input and limited practical opportunities.

(2) AI-assisted English News Writing Tool

When writing, students commonly suffer from limited vocabulary, single sentence patterns and Chinglish expressions. The curriculum team introduces and independently develops vertical AI writing tools that provide real-time spelling and grammar proofreading, authentic expression references tailored to news styles and Chinglish correction. Such tools can improve students' writing efficiency and linguistic quality, allowing teachers to spare more energy on guiding in-depth topic excavation and narrative logic sorting.

(3) IN-DEPTH REFLECTIONS AND PRACTICAL DILEMMAS OF TEACHING REFORM

After the systematic implementation of teaching reform, students' awareness of international communication has been enhanced. However, a comparison with national strategies for international communication reveals deep-seated contradictions and challenges, which can be categorized into three dimensions.

(a) Competence Gap: Obvious Disparities in Cross-cultural Narrative Ability

This stands out as a prominent difficulty^[9]. Some students with good English fluency tend to make two types of mistakes when dealing with China-specific concepts: rigid literal translation that confuses foreign audiences, or complete abandonment of Chinese discourse subjectivity and over-reliance on Western narrative frameworks. Most students lack decentralized cross-cultural empathy and fail to strike a balance between stating facts and conveying emotions, which greatly reduces the external communication effects of their works.

(b) Quality Bottleneck: Paradox Between Professionalism and Traffic of Practical Works

Classroom exercises mostly feature "blackboard journalism" that only focuses on self-expression and deviates from real communication demands. Although the team operates the Xiaohongshu account "GO TO LINGANG" as a practical platform, a prominent contradiction emerges: students mostly choose campus topics without in-depth exploration of core industries in Lingang New Area, and the visual presentation and copywriting fail to fit social media communication characteristics, making it hard to gain organic traffic in fierce online competition. Disappointing communication influence in turn dampens students' creative motivation and hinders the formation of a positive cycle of content production.

(c) Disconnected Evaluation System: Practical Reconstruction Is Urgently Needed

Current scoring criteria mainly rely on teachers' subjective judgment, focusing on grammatical accuracy and structural integrity without special evaluation indicators for communication effects^[10]. Even high-scoring English news articles may receive minimal views after being posted on social media, failing to deliver valuable international exchanges. How to incorporate objective indicators such as reach rate, interaction rate and secondary dissemination into assessment and build a comprehensive evaluation system aligned with media practices constitutes a core bottleneck to be broken through.

4. Five-year reform path and action plan

After sorting out previous reflections, the curriculum team has formulated a five-year development plan centered on the in-depth transformation from simulated training to real communication, and constructed a closed-loop teaching system integrating journalism, English and cross-cultural narration.

4.1. Continuous deepening of the trinity teaching system

(1) Content Iteration and Localized Exploration

The trinity teaching system of "Journalism + English + Cross-cultural Narration" will be further improved.

In database construction, the proportion of local Lingang-themed materials (high-end manufacturing, offshore finance, Dishui Lake ecological construction) and frontier international communication cases will be greatly increased, and full English narrative scripts with local characteristics will be developed. Stories of foreign entrepreneurs living and starting businesses in Lingang can serve as real training scenarios for cross-cultural narration.

(2) Construction of a Matrix of Practical Platforms

The Xiaohongshu account “GO TO LINGANG” will be continuously operated and upgraded from a simple assignment display window to an influential regional international communication practice platform. Content forms will be expanded beyond pictures and texts to bilingual Vlogs, character micro-documentaries and foreign hosts’ store exploration videos, targeting domestic expats and overseas youth groups. A “Lingang Youth Shooting Crew” mechanism will be explored to form a stable content supply chain.

(3) Normalized Competition-Teaching Integration Mechanism

A long-term stable mechanism of promoting learning through competitions will be established. Students will be organized to participate in short video international communication contests ^[11]. Competition requirements will be incorporated into daily scoring systems, and targeted training will be carried out in line with narrative standards of high-level contests, striving to produce a batch of high-quality representative award-winning works to feed curriculum brand building.

4.2. Targeted teaching reform measures

The reform focuses on four orientations: practicality, internationalization, project-based learning and result output, with the following specific measures to solve existing problems.

(1) Hierarchical and Categorized Targeted Tutoring

Given the large gaps in students’ cross-cultural narrative capacity ^[12], hierarchical teaching and special training will be carried out.

(a) Linguistic Layer: Students with weak foundations use AI tools to correct English expressions and consolidate vocabulary.

(b) Narrative Layer: A cross-cultural narration workshop will be offered for intermediate students, focusing on analyzing pain points of overseas audiences and discourse translation skills.

(c) Communication Layer: Top students will be assigned real communication tasks via the “GO TO LINGANG” platform with KPI assessment on overseas influence.

(2) Dual-Tutor System with Industrial Mentors Introduced

To address the lack of professionalism in students’ work, mature industrial standards will be introduced. Frontline senior journalists, external communication experts and foreign new media editors will be invited to deliver lectures and provide joint guidance under the dual-tutor system. Students can receive direct industrial feedback on topic selection, narrative perspectives and visual language, narrowing the gap between classroom assignments and professional media productions ^[13].

(3) Construction of Communication-Oriented Evaluation System

The traditional one-off final exam assessment will be abandoned, and a dynamic practical evaluation mechanism will be built. The proportion of communication efficiency indicators will be raised in process assessment, including click rate, completion rate and comment text analysis, guiding students to shift from self-expression to audience-oriented creation. Overseas social media and exchange exhibitions with sister universities will be expanded to provide broader international communication practice platforms ^[14,15].

5. Conclusion

The reform of the bilingual course *English News Reporting* essentially constitutes an in-depth response of foreign language education to the call of accelerating the construction of a powerful education and talent country. It is not merely about teaching students to write an English news article, but cultivating core literacy to break cultural barriers, set international agendas and shape national images. In the future, the curriculum team will continue to drive teaching reform through real communication tasks and elevate students' capacity with high-standard international communication indicators, striving to build this course into a high-quality exemplary golden course integrating linguistic teaching, national conditions education and international communication practice, and contribute to the cultivation of new-era international communication talents capable of shouldering the mission of national rejuvenation.

Funding

University-level Key Course “English News Reporting (Bilingual)” of Shanghai Jian Qiao University (Project No.: JXGG202566)

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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