

Cultivating Awareness and Responsibility: Emergency Culture in College English Curricula

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Abstract: In today's risk-prone global society, emergency culture is integral to governance and public safety education. Embedding it into ideological and political education in College English enhances language proficiency, intercultural competence, safety awareness, and social responsibility. Drawing on the framework of curriculum-based ideological and political education, this paper analyzes their alignment in values, content, and objectives, and proposes pathways including scenario-driven teaching, systematic curriculum design, dual-track evaluation, and student-centered engagement. The study highlights how this integration extends the role of emergency culture in higher education and offers innovative strategies for College English under global uncertainties.

Keywords: emergency culture, English learning, Curriculum Ideology and Politics, intercultural communication

1. Introduction

As global risks continue to intensify, the development of a forward-looking and resilient system of social governance, together with the enhancement of citizens' overall safety literacy, has emerged as a defining challenge of our time. Within this context, emergency culture constitutes a critical dimension of both governance and civic competence. It should not be understood merely as a body of knowledge for coping with contingencies; rather, it represents a normative orientation that embeds safety consciousness, social responsibility, and principles of national governance into individual self-discipline and practice[1]. Universities, as pivotal sites for cultivating high-quality talent, are therefore called upon to respond proactively to this societal imperative by assuming responsibility for the cultivation of emergency culture, establishing robust mechanisms for its systematic integration, and embedding it across teaching, research, and campus culture.

College English, as a compulsory subject for all students, is particularly well positioned to serve as a carrier for such integration. Its extended instructional span, cross-grade coverage, broad applicability, and strong connections to professional practice endow it with unique pedagogical potential. Against the backdrop of globalization—and in light of China's urgent need to disseminate and internationalize its emergency culture—the task of College English education in institutions specializing in emergency management extends beyond language acquisition. It increasingly entails the cultivation of interdisciplinary professionals who possess not only knowledge of emergency management, but also cross-cultural emergency communication skills and innovative practical capacities.

2. The Connotation of Emergency Culture in the Context of Higher Education

The connotation of emergency culture in higher education encompasses three interrelated dimensions. First, public safety awareness, which refers to a basic understanding of natural disasters, public health emergencies, and social risks, enabling students to develop proactive prevention and heightened risk sensitivity in their daily study and life. Second, the construction of response capacity, which involves equipping students with composure, scientific reasoning, and effective emergency response skills through knowledge acquisition, practical training, and psychological adjustment. Third, the cultivation of responsibility and commitment, which emphasizes not only self-protection in times of crisis but also a sense of responsibility toward others, the community, and the nation. The multidimensional nature of these values necessitates their realization through educational integration and practice.

The value of emergency culture lies not only in raising awareness of disaster prevention but also in deepening understanding—through practice—of the links between humans and nature, individuals and society, and nations and the world. It fosters responsibility that combines local identity with global vision, aligning with the “all-round education” goal of curriculum-based ideological and political education and offering both theoretical and practical support for College English reform. In this context, the intercultural and communicative nature of English provides unique opportunities: as a medium of global communication, it connects emergency culture with issues like climate change, pandemics, and disaster relief, while task-based teaching transforms abstract ideas into concrete scenarios for discussion and expression. This dual approach

strengthens both value formation and language competence.

3. The Compatibility Between Emergency Culture and Ideological-Political Education in College English

Integrating emergency culture into College English serves as both a vital supplement to talent cultivation and a strategic means to enhance students' literacy and social engagement. It cultivates global risk awareness, fosters interdisciplinary competence, and leverages the course's advantages to strengthen intercultural emergency communication and international outreach.

3.1 Consistency in Value Orientation

English language teaching plays a distinctive role within the educational mission of higher education by integrating language, culture, and values, thereby guiding students in shaping their worldview, outlook on life, and values[2]. Both emergency culture and ideological-political education in College English serve the overarching goal of talent cultivation, namely, shaping a new generation of youth with well-rounded character, professional competence, and a strong sense of social responsibility.

Emergency culture education emphasizes safety awareness, public responsibility, and the translation of knowledge into action, while ideological-political education in College English builds on core socialist values and patriotic consciousness. Both align in stressing the integration of individual growth and social progress, uniting "knowing and doing" as a foundation for practice. Emergency culture enhances resilience and governance capacity, cultivating disaster preparedness, social responsibility, and national identity; College English ideological-political education fosters international understanding and intercultural competence. Together, they aim to nurture a new generation with global vision and national commitment, reflecting the unity of educational missions and national strategies.

3.2 Authenticity of the Teaching Context

The construction of authentic contexts is widely recognized as an effective approach to improving language learning outcomes[3]. In higher education, the effectiveness of curriculum-based ideological and political education largely depends on the authenticity of the teaching context. Authenticity refers not only to the alignment between communicative settings and real-world contexts, but also to the relevance of educational content to students' lived experiences and social realities. Emergency culture, rooted in real-life emergencies and public governance needs, naturally possesses strong practical relevance and social connectivity. This aligns closely with the emphasis of College English ideological-political education on "value guidance within authentic contexts."

Topics like disaster response, pandemic prevention, climate change, and global governance are central to international discourse and intercultural exchange. Integrating emergency culture into College English recreates authentic global communication scenarios, allowing students to practice core values such as safety, responsibility, and cooperation, thereby enhancing classroom authenticity and persuasiveness. Its relevance is reinforced by students' direct experiences with events like the COVID-19 pandemic and climate-related crises. This real-world connection transforms ideological-political teaching from abstract theory into value-driven guidance, strengthening students' identification and agency. By embedding authentic contexts, students develop both communicative competence and a deeper understanding of social responsibility and national mission, achieving synergy between language learning and value cultivation.

3.3 The Necessity of Cross-Cultural Communication

Fischer and Rojek (2019) highlight the curricular trend of integrating emergency education into higher education, particularly in relation to its value within language and intercultural communication[4]. The introduction of emergency culture into College English classrooms not only exposes students to authentic international discourses but also enables them to recognize cross-national differences in emergency philosophies and institutional frameworks, thereby enhancing their intercultural awareness and global competence.

The cross-cultural dissemination of emergency culture emphasizes equal dialogue and joint construction, aligning with the student-centered philosophy of ideological-political education. Through case comparisons, intercultural discussions, and task-driven activities, teachers can guide students to develop critical thinking and value judgment in multicultural dialogue. This approach not only strengthens linguistic expression but also fosters the ability to engage with international audiences with both discernment and cultural confidence.

Moreover, the cross-cultural dissemination of emergency culture expands the international dimension of ideological-political education in College English. Leveraging English as a global lingua franca, students can more effectively

communicate China's emergency governance concepts, sense of social responsibility, and vision of a shared future for humankind to the international community. In this way, the organic integration of "language learning—value identification—cultural dissemination" can be realized.

4. Pathways for Integrating Emergency Culture into Ideological-Political Education in College English

The knowledge-based, practical, and cross-cultural features of emergency culture provide rich content for curriculum design, while the goals of ideological-political education guide instruction. Integrating the two requires systematic planning across context construction, task design, intercultural interaction, case analysis, and evaluation. As a foundational course, College English can, through clear integration principles and concrete strategies, enhance language competence[5] and promote the synergistic development of ideological-political education and emergency literacy in authentic contexts. This fosters a "language learning—value guidance—capacity building" model, offering a pathway to cultivate interdisciplinary talents with global vision and social responsibility.

4.1 Constructing Teaching Contexts: Creating Platforms for Language Learning in Authentic Scenarios

The selection of teaching content is crucial. Topics such as natural disasters, public health emergencies, climate change, and social relief embody strong contemporary relevance, offering abundant English-language materials that resonate with students' lived experiences and enhance their motivation to learn[6]. For instance, teachers may employ international news reports, UN emergency documents, or WHO guidelines as teaching resources, enabling students to improve their vocabulary, grammar, and discourse competence within real-world contexts.

Constructing authentic scenarios is a decisive factor in improving the quality of language learning. Simulated emergency communication tasks not only build students' confidence and competence in language output but also strengthen their intercultural awareness and sense of responsibility. In teaching design, the Production-Oriented Approach (POA) can be applied through its three stages—driving, enabling, and assessing—to implement task-based learning[7]. For example, students might be guided to draft a disaster report for an international audience or design an English-language poster introducing China's emergency management system. Such output-driven tasks not only consolidate language knowledge but also embed understandings of national governance modernization and social governance capacity.

4.2 Building Ideological-Political Teaching Frameworks: Embedding Value Guidance in Language Training

The central task of curriculum-based ideological-political education is the organic integration of knowledge transmission, skill development, and value formation[8]. By designing scenario-based frameworks around emergency culture themes, students are provided not only with opportunities for language practice in authentic contexts but also with pathways for the deep integration of value guidance and skill training. Activities such as interpreting disaster reports, simulating international rescue dialogues, or writing cross-border volunteer communications allow students to gradually cultivate responsibility and value identity through immersive learning.

In practice, value guidance should be embedded throughout input, output, and interaction. For example, in input stages such as reading or listening, the inclusion of news, policy documents, or international statements on emergency issues enables students to grasp not only linguistic information but also underlying value orientations[9]. In output stages such as speaking or writing, tasks like drafting disaster response plans or simulating speeches at international conferences encourage students to develop both responsibility and intercultural competence. In interactive stages, such as group discussions or debates, students refine critical thinking through exchange and cultivate deeper resonance with shared values.

4.3 Balancing Ideological-Political Goals and Language Development: A Dual-Track Evaluation System

The effective implementation of curriculum-based ideological-political education depends not only on teaching design and classroom practice but also on a sound and rational evaluation system. To achieve the dual goals of value education and language development, a dual-track collaborative evaluation system is required—one that maintains focus on language skills while systematically incorporating value guidance and personality formation.

Such an evaluation framework should follow a multidimensional logic of "language competence—value cognition—capacity transfer." First, in language assessment, a combination of formative and summative methods should be employed,

focusing on authentic applications such as translating emergency reports, engaging in intercultural dialogues, or academic writing[10]. Second, in ideological-political evaluation, reflective journals, classroom performance, value-oriented writing, and public speaking can be used to assess students' growth in responsibility, critical thinking, and social identity. In this way, assessment transcends being a mere measurement of skills to become an integral component of holistic student development.

Equally important is the emphasis on formative and self-evaluation to reinforce student agency. For example, tasks such as reflective reports on emergency cases can prompt students to summarize learning outcomes from both linguistic and value perspectives, while peer evaluation can foster mutual inspiration and co-construction. This approach enables continuous monitoring and feedback throughout the learning process, avoids the limitations of result-oriented assessment, and reinforces the intrinsic unity of competence development and value cultivation[11].

4.4 Empowering Students as Active Agents: Expanding Cultural and Linguistic Outputs in Emergency Management Education

In the integration of emergency culture and ideological-political teaching, students are not merely recipients of knowledge but active agents in value construction and cultural dissemination. It is essential to empower students to realize a spiral progression of “autonomous cognition—value internalization—cultural expression” throughout language learning. In alignment with the real-world demands of emergency management talent cultivation, teaching design should be optimized with an output-oriented approach and enriched by diverse platforms for expression.

Inside and outside the classroom, teachers may adopt workshops, vlog assignments, role-playing, and seminar discussions to create immersive emergency culture scenarios. For instance, a “simulated emergency press conference” not only trains academic speaking and intercultural communication skills but also fosters responsibility and public expression; similarly, a “vlog-style disaster response narrative” can encourage students to convey values while practicing linguistic expression. These innovative forms expand opportunities for ideological expression, cultural dissemination, and English output, enabling students to achieve multidimensional growth in both competence and literacy.

5. Conclusion

In summary, integrating emergency culture into ideological-political education in College English not only enhances students' linguistic and intercultural communication abilities but also strengthens their public safety awareness and sense of social responsibility in subtle yet profound ways. This integration provides new theoretical underpinnings and practical exploration for foreign language education, expands the research scope of curriculum-based ideological-political teaching, and offers higher education valuable strategies for talent cultivation in the context of global risk society.

It should be noted, however, that the present discussion remains primarily theoretical and lacks systematic empirical evidence and case-based analysis. Future research could combine case studies and empirical investigations to explore and validate the specific effectiveness of integrating emergency culture into English teaching across multiple dimensions and educational settings. Such efforts will further advance the deep integration of emergency education and foreign language education.

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