Cultural Empowerment and Exploration of Chinese Media Instruction: Telling Chinese Sports Stories in English with the Context of "The Belt and Road"

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Abstract—At all times and in all countries, those who can occupy a place in the world and have a certain say are countries with both soft and hard power. Cultural soft power has long been an essential metric for gauging global influence. The current situation demands that China effectively relay its stories and voice, highlighting the importance of strengthening the country's international communication capacity. Since the beginning of "The Belt and Road" development strategy in 2013, the number of foreign students from countries along the Belt and Road has steadily expanded, which is full of challenges for colleges and universities that shoulder the responsibility of international student training. In this reality, some scholars have proposed that China's higher education should not be "globalized", but should form its own Chinese characteristics, which coincides with our goal of "telling the Chinese story well" and allowing Chinese culture to go global. This task has become a guiding principle for shaping ideological and political curricula in universities. Using the latest research in language teaching and an emphasis on enhancing cultural confidence, this paper establishes a basic model framework for introducing Chinese culture in physical education as part of the ongoing optimization of university curricula.

Keywords—Chinese media instruction, ideological and political curricula, soft power

I. INTRODUCTION

In an era of globalization, where cultural interaction and exchange have attained unprecedented levels, media instruction has emerged as a powerful tool for cultural empowerment and exploration. With the rapid development of China's economy, language, and influence in international affairs, it becomes increasingly important to promote the country's diverse cultural heritage and stories to the globe. In this context, Chinese sports stories, often overlooked and overshadowed by major Western sporting events, present a unique opportunity to showcase Chinese culture, values, and achievements to a wider audience. The Belt and Road Initiative, a comprehensive development strategy proposed by the Chinese government, provides a dynamic backdrop to explore and communicate Chinese sports stories in English, thereby contributing to enhancing cultural understanding and promoting the global recognition of Chinese media.

The Belt and Road Initiative, initially implemented in 2013, aims to enhance connectivity and cooperation across continents and nations through infrastructure projects, trade, and cultural exchanges. As one of the most significant and ambitious projects of the 21st century, it offers an opportunity for China to share its cultural heritage and narratives with countries along the Belt and Road routes. Sports, as a universal language and an integral part of human culture, can serve as a bridge between nations and facilitate cultural education and exchange. By telling Chinese sports stories in English and promoting them to a global audience, Chinese media can play a pivotal role in fostering cultural awareness, understanding, and respect within the Belt and Road framework.

Chinese media instruction, on the other hand, encompasses a range of strategies and techniques employed to communicate effectively with global audiences. It involves using English-language platforms to deliver Chinese narratives, irrespective of the medium, be it television, films, documentaries, or digital media. Telling Chinese sports stories in English, with proper cultural context and adaptation, is a key aspect of media instruction that can significantly contribute to the empowerment of Chinese culture. By utilizing appropriate storytelling techniques, linguistic adaptation, and cultural sensitivity, Chinese media can effectively convey the essence and significance of these sports stories to non-Chinese audiences, thereby encouraging cross-cultural dialogue and fostering mutual understanding [1].

This paper aims to explore the utilization of Chinese media instruction in telling Chinese sports stories in English within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative. Through an analysis of various case studies, including successful examples of Chinese media communication and instruction, as well as challenges faced in practice, this

research seeks to provide insights into the cultural empowerment potential of Chinese media instruction. By highlighting the role of storytelling, linguistic adaptation, and cultural context in the effective communication of Chinese sports stories, this study aims to contribute to the broader discussion on the role of media instruction in cultural exchange and understanding. Ultimately, this research advocates for the recognition and appreciation of Chinese sports stories in the global media landscape, promoting cultural empowerment and nurturing cross-cultural dialogue within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative [2].

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Soft power is a concept in international relations coined by Nye [3] in his 1991 book "Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power". It refers to the ability of a country to influence others through attraction and persuasion instead of coercion, intimidation, or force as that in sharp power [4]. The sources of soft power vary from country to country, but they generally include a positive societal image, strong cultural exports such as music, art, and films, foreign aid and development efforts, the promotion of democracy and human rights, and effective foreign policy initiatives. Countries that have strong soft power often enjoy greater influence and prestige on the international stage, as they are more likely to be trusted and admired by other nations. Soft power is seen as a more sustainable and long-lasting form of power than hard power, as it is less prone to backlash and resistance from other countries.

In China today, the need to enhance cultural self-confidence is so popular a topic that with the 18th CPC National Congress stating that developing high-level cultural awareness and self-confidence is the foundation of building a socialist cultural power. However, despite the rich cultural concepts of Chinese Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, such as the unity of heaven and man and natural harmony, traditional Chinese culture has struggled to compete globally due to a lack of publicity and competitiveness. This calls for a strong promotion of creative transformation and innovative development while upholding the position of Chinese culture, thereby showcasing China's rich traditional culture to the world and exuding a new era style.

As early as the Western Han Dynasty, Zhang Qian's envoy to the Western Regions opened up a Silk Road connecting the East and the West, greatly promoting economic and cultural exchanges between the East and the West. In this context, the Ministry of Education proposed the educational action of jointly building "The Belt and Road" and formulated a scientific and reasonable talent training plan. The countries along "The Belt and Road", as the key countries of cultural communication in China, require our higher education to develop distinctive, scientific and reasonable teaching contents and forms. University disciplines are an important carrier of cultural communication and play an important role in promoting the spread of Chinese culture in the context of "The Belt and Road Initiative". We currently need to enrich the existing material content, integrate and organize resources, diversify communication channels, and fully express the humanistic concepts and values contained in the process of modern economic development.

English Media Instruction (EMI) [5] courses play a significant role in the language planning and development of universities. On one hand, they serve as a crucial factor in enhancing the competitiveness of colleges and universities, while on the other hand, they serve as a powerful tool in increasing income [6]. The introduction of EMI courses is typically driven by internationalization, realized through the creation of international courses or student and staff mobility. EMI courses offer a practical means of accommodating international students or staff and serve as a model for introducing international development to local students.

According to reports [7], 27% of Norwegian undergraduates have taken English Media Instruction (EMI) courses while 28% of teaching programs in Sweden are conducted in English (2014). In 2007, there were 2400 English-taught courses across 400 universities and colleges in Europe, marking a 340% increase from 700 such programs in 2002 (2013).

In 1995, Merryfield [8], an American scholar, proposed that teachers possess international experience, cultural intelligence, and knowledge of global education to avoid educational ossification; furthermore, collaboration between teachers should aim to create a global educational environment [9]. Deardorff [10] suggested that campuses become more international and integrate international education programs into student development. In foreign countries, emphasis is placed on interactive development of cultural self-confidence and cultural communication. Cultural self-confidence is the impetus for cultural communication, while cultural communication is the driving force for cultural self-confidence. To promote Chinese traditional culture, it is essential to first comprehend its connotation and basic attributes, building cultural self-confidence via an appreciation of the culture's extensive history and rich content. Factors such as establishing cultural confidence serve as a solid foundation for cultural communications, which is an interactive process that reinforces cultural confidence.

Following the promulgation of the Outline of the National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010–2020) [11], many domestic Chinese universities began promoting "all English teaching" and "bilingual teaching" models. However, the EMI model has revealed numerous issues including limited language abilities of professional teachers, inadequate bilingual teaching materials, discrepancies in language abilities among non-native English-speaking students, and cultural conflicts [12]. The onset of "The Belt and Road" development strategy in 2013 has brought an increased number of foreign students from countries along the Belt and Road having to face the challenges that universities shoulder concerning international student training. This reality has compelled scholars to propose that China's higher education should not merely globalize, but also embody Chinese characteristics, aligning with the

goal of "telling good Chinese stories" and letting Chinese culture shine on the international stage [13].

III. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

A. Research Subject

This study aims to create a new model of CMI-integrated curriculum culture, driven by the current trend in China's ideology and politics that underscores the telling of Chinese stories and cultural dissemination. To achieve this objective, the Self-Defence Education for Safety course offered by the Department of Physical Education at Northwestern Polytechnic University was selected. The course, primarily intended for foreign students, inherits Chinese traditional virtues such as the "boxing ceremony" and "beginning with courtesy and ending with it" while also teaching the theory and basic practical technology of self-defense. By combining theoretical learning with practical simulations, students can participate and personally experience the course, seamlessly integrating cultural learning and dissemination.

This new model of CMI-integrated curriculum culture, implemented in the Self-Defence Education for Safety course, offers an effective and feasible approach to promoting Chinese stories and culture within university curricula. The findings of this study will be presented at the international conference to encourage fellow educators to contribute to the advancement of cross-cultural exchange and education.

B. Research Objectives

In contrast to the modern competitive sports curriculum commonly used in Western countries, the Chinese sports curriculum has not been as effective in disseminating Chinese culture, and the curriculum content generally lacks the necessary tension for cultural dissemination. Chinese culture is broad and profound, with rich connotations that make it an excellent supplement for modern sports education. The main objective of this research is to optimize the curriculum structure by integrating traditional Chinese culture into professional sports courses. The goal is to establish a new model of curriculum culture integration using the CMI approach. This study will focus on three dimensions: teacher culture training, curriculum culture infiltration, and student culture application.

C. Research Content

This study focuses on the Self-Defence Education for Safety course offered by Northwestern Polytechnic University. The course aims to improve the safety awareness and physical health of college students and plays a significant role in enhancing the teaching quality of physical confrontation sports courses. The participants are international students, mainly from countries along "The Belt and Road" such as Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, and other Asian countries. The course adopts the EMI teaching approach to impart professional knowledge, and utilizes CMI combined with multimedia to teach Chinese culture. Through observation, questionnaires, and data comparison, we verified that the content of traditional Chinese culture presented using the CMI approach, combined with multimedia, resonated more deeply with students, and had a greater impact on the dissemination of cultural understanding.

D. Research Steps

This research can be divided into three stages as shown in Fig. 1: pre-class preparation, in-class analysis, and post-class investigation. Prior to the start of the course, a questionnaire (Q1) is administered to collect students' understanding of Chinese culture and their learning intentions. Teachers use the pre-class analysis of students' learning situation to jointly prepare lessons according to curriculum needs. They actively explore and integrate the excellent traditional Chinese cultural elements with the professional content, and form a rich teaching material to be used in the in-class teaching stage. At this stage, multiple multimedia tools such as MOOCs and live broadcasts are utilized to present excellent cultural elements of Chinese in various ways, such as short videos, audios, and film excerpts. Teaching effectiveness is evaluated by setting language as a variable, with some chapters presented mainly through the teacher's language, while others are primarily conveyed through pictures and videos. After one semester of study, students are expected to have a better grasp of both relevant professional knowledge and Chinese culture. Moreover, feedback from questionnaires (Q2) and interviews will be collected and utilized to guide teachers in adjusting the teaching process.
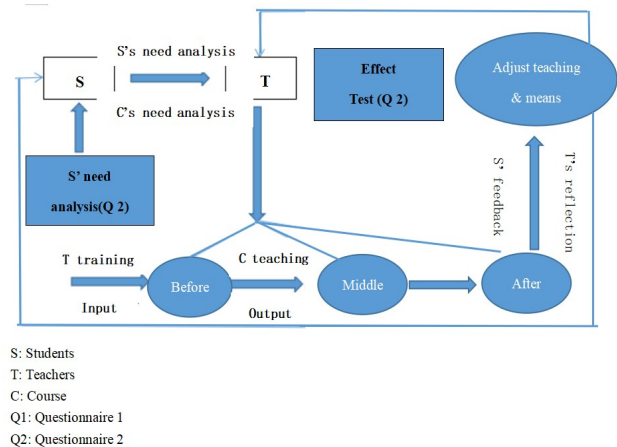

S: Students
T: Teachers
C: Course
Q1: Questionnaire 1
Q2: Questionnaire 2

Fig. 1. Research steps.

E. Research Methods

Research methods are crucial in conducting high-quality research. This study utilized four distinct research methods. Firstly, the method of documentaries was used to collect and sort data from domestic and foreign sources that discussed the history, mode, and reform of cultural output. This laid a theoretical foundation for the subsequent stages of the study. Secondly, the problem-oriented approach was utilized based on teachers' understanding of the course material and the cultural learning intentions of the students, as indicated in their questionnaires. Docking between the course content and cultural elements was carried out via

questions to highlight the benefits of problem-based learning. Thirdly, a questionnaire method was used to obtain international students' opinions and suggestions on their preferences and intentions regarding learning Chinese culture. The results were analyzed and summarized. Additionally, a second questionnaire was administered at the end of the course to evaluate the impact of integrating cultural elements into the curriculum on cultural communication. Lastly, the interview method was employed to learn about teacher's and student's understanding of and perspectives on traditional Chinese culture. We analyzed the interviews to plan the research steps reasonably and to ensure the study runs smoothly.

IV. CONCLUSION

While the research is ongoing, several notable features can be distinguished. Firstly, it demonstrates a departure from traditional EMI approaches by boldly integrating the CMI model into teaching. The Self-Defence Education for Safety course is used uniquely as a special media attribute to instill global competence cultivation, which places emphasis on cultivating students' six core abilities, including creative thinking, critical thinking, learning to learn, communication, cooperation, and social responsibility. The classroom teaching primarily takes the form of small class seminars, using inductive exercises designed to inspire students and promote interaction and compact communication, enhancing the effectiveness of teaching.

Secondly, the traditional assessment system has been optimized, gradually establishing a comprehensive quantitative scale, which encourages a shift in focus from only the learning results to the learning process. Based on the Internet plus platform, Chinese traditional culture elements have been repeatedly introduced step by step to students to encourage flexible learning and usage, thereby activating their expressiveness and participation.

Lastly, this research fully reflects the advantages of the Internet+. From teacher training material selection to classroom teaching output and evaluation, the Internet plus platform plays an all-around, multi-angle role in education. It maximizes participation for students and supervision for teachers, fully leveraging the characteristics of Internet+ to promote active learning and effective teaching.

Despite the efforts made in this research, some limitations and difficulties still exist. The first challenge is to explore the cultural elements contained in the Self-Defence Education for Safety course, which is not a compulsory course in college curriculum, resulting in limited materials being available. For teachers, mining cultural materials is one of the difficulties in preparing for the course. Although teachers have compiled and modified the handouts and updated and upgraded the content, a vast amount of cultural material has not yet been included.

Additionally, international students from diverse backgrounds and majors participate in the course, and their proficiency in the Chinese language differs. Although most international students are from countries along "the Belt and Road," they may not have sufficient knowledge about Chinese culture and related courses on campus due to differences in political, economic, cultural and educational backgrounds. Therefore, integrating culture-related elements into the curriculum may have different effects on various individuals, thereby affecting the research results.

Moreover, communication barriers due to language differences hinder the efficiency of curriculum communication. English is not the native language for both students and teachers, and differences in accent and idioms often create misunderstandings. Ultimately, understanding traditional Chinese culture requires interest and love for the culture, supplemented by a certain level of cultural accumulation, which makes language proficiency a major obstacle to be tackled in this study.

APPENDIX A A QUESTIONNAIRE ON CHINESE CULTURE (PRE-TEST)

Age:_____   Gender:_____
Nationality:_____   Chinese proficiency:_____

Hello! This questionnaire aims to understand your enthusiasm for learning Chinese culture and suggestions for relevant course offered. It does not involve privacy issues. Please answer according to your actual situation. Thank you very much for your support!

1. Are you interested in Chinese culture? (   )
A. Very interested   B. Interested
B. C. Not interested.   D. No idea.

2. Are you interested in learning Chinese culture? (   )
C. Very interested   B. Interested
D. C. Not interested.   D. No idea.

3. How much do you know about Chinese culture? (   )
A. Very much   B. Somewhat familiar
C. A little   D. Nothing

4. Are you willing to learn more about traditional Chinese culture? (   )
A. Yes, I'd love to know more about it.
B. Yes, I want to know, but there is no way.
C. No, I don't want to know, it's outdated.

5. How to learning Chinese culture more effectively? (Multiple choices) (   )
A. To learn some courses online
B. B. To find a Chinese teacher
C. To make some Chinese friends
D. D. To live in China

6. Which of the following are traditional Chinese festivals? (Multiple choices) (   )
A. Spring Festival
B. Lantern Festival
C. Mid-Autumn Festival
D. Bonfire Festival
E. Tomb Sweeping Day
F. Dragon Boat Festival

G. Labor Day
H. Valentine's Day
I. Tree Planting Day

7. Which traditional Chinese culture are you interested in? (Multiple choices) (   )
A. Chinese calligraphy
B. Chinese martial arts
C. Chinese Paper Cuttings
D. Chinese musical instruments
E. Chinese Porcelain
F. Chinese Opera
G. Chinese Poetry
H. Others

8. The main reason why you want to learn Chinese culture is (   )
A. I really like Chinese culture
B. The need to come to China for work, family visits, etc
C. I want to do research on Chinese culture
D. Others

9. Do you think the study of Chinese culture is crucial for learning Chinese characters? (   )
A. It is very helpful and can improve my Chinese proficiency
B. It's a bit helpful, but not very much
C. Almost no help

10. When do you think it would be more appropriate to offer Chinese culture courses? (   )
A. Early stage of Chinese language learning.
B. After having a certain foundation in Chinese language.
C. Advanced Stage of Chinese Language Learning.

Please feel free to give more suggestions and opinions on Chinese culture courses. Thank you!

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_____
_____

APPENDIX B A QUESTIONNAIRE ON CHINESE CULTURE (POST-TEST)

Age:_____   Gender:_____
Nationality:_____ Chinese proficiency:_____

　Hello! This questionnaire aims to understand your enthusiasm for learning Chinese culture and suggestions for relevant course offered. It does not involve privacy issues. Please answer according to your actual situation. Thank you very much for your support!

1. What is your understanding of Chinese culture? (   )
A. Very familiar   B. Somewhat familiar
C. Almost unknown   D. Completely unknown

2. How to learning Chinese culture more effectively? (Multiple choices) (   )
A. To learn some courses online
B. To find a Chinese teacher

C. To make some Chinese friends
D. To live in China

3. Which of the following are traditional Chinese festivals? (Multiple choices) (   )
A. Spring Festival
B. Lantern Festival
C. Mid-Autumn Festival
D. Bonfire Festival
E. Tomb Sweeping Day
F. Dragon Boat Festival
G. Labor Day
H. Valentine's Day
I. Tree Planting Day

4. Do you enjoy listening to traditional Chinese music, like High Mountains and Flowing Water (Guzheng), The Moon over the Mountain (Erhu), etc.? (   )
A. I really like it, I often listen to it, and I can distinguish which instrument is playing, and even hum it.
B. Not much, I listen occasionally.
C. I don't like it, I hardly listen.
D. I've never heard of it, I don't understand.

5. How do you think about Beijing Opera? (   )
A. I really like the unique culture.
B. I have heard some and would like to learn more.
C. No unique features, not pleasant to hear.
D. I haven't heard of it, I don't understand.

6. What is your understanding of Chinese martial arts? (   )
A. Very impressive, most Chinese people can do it.
B. I've seen it in the movie and I want to learn.
C. Similar to boxing.
D. Not interested.

7. When do you think it would be more appropriate to offer Chinese culture courses? (   )
A. Early stage of Chinese language learning.
B. After having a certain foundation in Chinese language.
C. Advanced Stage of Chinese Language Learning.

8. Do you think the study of Chinese culture is crucial for learning Chinese characters? (   )
A. It is very helpful and can improve my Chinese proficiency
B. It's a bit helpful, but not very much
C. Almost no help

9. Do you think it is necessary to offer courses on traditional culture in Chinese universities? (   )
A. Very necessary   B. Necessary   C. Not necessary

10. What methods do you think can be used to help more people understand Chinese culture? (Multiple choices) (   )
A. To promote Chinese culture more online and on television.
B. To carry out more cultural related activities, such as ancestor worship during the Tomb Sweeping Day and moon worship during the Mid Autumn Festival.

C. To add more content to textbooks

D. To export culture in economic form, such as commercial advertising, product packaging, etc.

Please feel free to give more suggestions and opinions on Chinese culture courses. Thank you!

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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