

# From Storytelling to Value Internalization: Practical Paths of Revolutionary Narratives in College Ideological and Political Education

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**Abstract:** Revolutionary discourses serve as vital pragmatic instructional materials to drive the transformation of higher education ideological and political education and achieve the main goal of moral education. Narrative-based instruction can offer strong theoretical support for the deep integration of revolutionary history in the modernization of the curriculum from the perspective of human orientation that integrates cognition, emotion, will and behavior. In light of the demands for innovation in university ideological and political education, this paper firstly expounds the practical value of revolutionary narratives in optimizing classroom teaching and improving curriculum educational effectiveness. It further analyzes the practical necessity of adopting narrative pedagogy to empower ideological and political teaching reform. Based on the teaching practice in higher education, four practical paths for curriculum reform have finally been explored in this paper: screening, refinement and narrative transformation of revolutionary stories, the innovative presentation and situational construction of narrative teaching, the interactive design for in-depth meaning generation, and the after-class extension and practical transformation of narrative education. This study aims to provide feasible operational guidance for promoting practical innovation and high-quality development of college ideological and political courses.

**Keywords:** Storytelling; Value Internalization; Teaching reform; College Education; Narrative pedagogy

## 0. Introduction

President Xi Jinping pointed out that telling stories is to reveal truth, present vivid scenes, convey emotions and expound theories<sup>[9]</sup>. In short, we must effectively disseminate revolutionary cultural resources to advance ideological and political education for college students and inspire new teaching ideas.

## 1. The Significance of Integrating Revolutionary Narratives into Ideological and Political Theory Courses

The fundamental mission of college ideological and political theory courses is to foster virtue and cultivate talents. President Xi Jinping emphasized that “ideological and political education in universities essentially answers the questions of who we cultivate, how we cultivate them, and for whom we cultivate them”<sup>[11]</sup>. Currently, enhancing the attractiveness and influence of ideological and political theory courses has become an urgent priority. Integrating revolutionary history into such courses has emerged as a new direction for teaching reform.

Revolutionary stories were initially introduced into ideological and political teaching to inherit the fighting spirit and pursue national rejuvenation. Revolutionary narratives carry the intangible spiritual wealth created by the CPC leading the people during the periods of revolution, construction and reform. They embody unwavering faith, fearless fighting spirit and deep concern for the people. General Secretary Xi Jinping has repeatedly stressed the importance of “telling the Party’s history, histories of arduous struggles, revolutionary base areas, and stories of heroes and martyrs”. He also advocated “educating young people about revolutionary traditions, patriotism and moral norms, passing on the revolutionary heritage, and ensuring the lasting success of our

revolutionary cause”<sup>[10]</sup>. Revolutionary narratives are the most representative and concentrated embodiment of revolutionary culture. Guiding college students to perceive and reflect on revolutionary stories can enhance the persuasiveness and identity of ideological and political theory courses. It can also stimulate their active learning and moral self-cultivation, as well as their recognition of revolutionary ethics<sup>[12]</sup>. Incorporating revolutionary stories into ideological and political seminars enables young learners to engage in spiritual dialogue with the Party’s pioneers, explore their ideological explorations and path-finding processes, and better understand why the CPC has achieved remarkable accomplishments, why Marxism fits China’s reality, and why socialism with Chinese characteristics represents a sound development path. Through historical learning, college students will voluntarily become inheritors and practitioners of the revolutionary spirit.

Furthermore, revolutionary stories help boost the appeal and attractiveness of ideological and political theory courses. For a long time, some ideological and political classrooms have suffered from low student participation. Abstract theoretical discourse creates a sense of distance from students’ daily lives and dampens their enthusiasm and creativity. To fully mobilize young college students’ learning initiative, teachers can build immersive classroom contexts embedded with ideological and political education to awaken their emotional resonance and sense of belonging<sup>[3]</sup>.

Innovative narrative methods can effectively stimulate learning motivation. Narration, visualization and emotional expression jointly construct an immersive spiritual world that arouses students’ learning interest and sustains their concentration in class.

Revolutionary stories can guide students to elevate emotional perception to value recognition, thereby realizing the core goal of moral education. The primary objective of ideological and political education is to help students recognize internal values and put them into practice. General Secretary Xi Jinping noted that teaching should cultivate students’ patriotism, civic awareness, innovative spirit and practical capabilities while consolidating core socialist values<sup>[11]</sup>. Rooted in historical facts and emotional power, revolutionary stories first stir students’ emotions, leading them from being moved to generating resonance, and ultimately translating inner feelings into practical actions. For example, reviewing the Party’s consistent commitment to strict self-governance helps students understand that fighting corruption and upholding strict Party discipline have long been core pursuits of the CPC. Accordingly, students will pay closer attention to the conduct of Party members, demand stricter self-discipline when drawing closer to the Party, and safeguard the country’s political system in their future careers. When students’ emotions are touched and their minds enlightened, ideological and political theory courses will no longer consist of abstract dogmas, but values and practical choices closely connected to their daily lives. This process realizes the transformation from perceptual intuition to rational cognition and from emotional experience to firm belief, enabling ideological and political education to truly nourish students’ minds, touch their hearts and guide their behaviors.

## 2. Significance and Internal Logic of Adopting Narrative Pedagogy in Revolutionary Story Teaching

Integrating revolutionary stories into ideological and political education has gradually become a key direction of teaching reform, yet its practical implementation still faces many deficiencies. In real teaching practice, revolutionary storytelling often adopts stereotyped, rote and superficial narrative modes lacking emotional resonance and progressive logical thinking, which easily makes students lose interest<sup>[4]</sup>. Scholars have summarized prominent problems in current classroom storytelling: irrelevant narrative materials, weak links between stories and theoretical analysis, rigid outdated narrative techniques incompatible with modern communication trends, insufficient problem awareness, and shallow value guidance<sup>[6]</sup>. These dilemmas prove that the integration of revolutionary history into ideological and political theory courses requires innovative teaching approaches, which highlights the necessity and value of applying narrative pedagogy.

Narrative-based teaching is an educational model integrating knowledge transmission and emotional cultivation. It abandons rigid abstract indoctrination and adopts storytelling as the core carrier. Stories and scenarios are adopted to display theoretical questions and provide supporting materials for teaching. Meanwhile, narratives can inspire students' willingness to participate in learning and problem discussion<sup>[7]</sup>. When applied to ideological and political education, narrative teaching features elaborate plot construction, vivid characters and close connections with real life, transcending temporal barriers and gaining popularity among contemporary college students. Moreover, narrative teaching embeds theoretical education within stories; through sorting out and analyzing revolutionary narratives, teachers can guide students to conduct in-depth reflection and moral cultivation, making stories carriers of wisdom and values<sup>[8]</sup>. Teachers are responsible for systematic design and classroom guidance, while students independently construct their own narrative perceptions and moral cognition. In contrast, the traditional case-based teaching model leaves students in a passive position with little space for independent analysis and collaborative discussion.

Narrative pedagogy has demonstrated remarkable effects in disseminating revolutionary history and has been widely applied in teaching practice. Revolutionary narratives feature complete plots and distinctive characters, which perfectly match the story-centered presentation logic of narrative pedagogy. Enhancing theoretical recognition through narration means embedding theoretical knowledge into story contexts, allowing students to grasp theoretical connotations naturally during reading and appreciation. When revolutionary stories serve as the main teaching thread rather than supplementary materials, theoretical cognition is generated through immersive narrative experience instead of external preaching. Narrative teaching also shapes students' moral cognition. As students trace the life trajectories of revolutionary figures, they achieve historical identity beyond simple factual learning. By constantly comparing the choices of historical figures with their own value judgments, students gradually form clear answers to core questions such as "Who am I?" and "What kind of person should I become?". In this way, revolutionary narratives are not only tools for historical knowledge dissemination but also carriers for identity construction, helping students connect historical understanding with their personal growth.

Contextuality constitutes another major advantage of narrative teaching in attracting students. Detailed depictions of protagonists, historical sites and crucial scenes allow students to empathize with historical figures and break through the barrier of temporal distance. Such intimate emotional experience transforms ideological and political education from distant knowledge indoctrination to sincere moral dialogue. Emotional engagement is the prerequisite for the formation of moral responsibility; moral norms are rarely acquired through pure classroom theories but take shape based on personal emotional experience. Revolutionary stories excel in this aspect. The hardships, struggles and lofty aspirations contained in revolutionary narratives fully reflect the people's unyielding fighting will and narrow the psychological distance between students and historical heroes. As a result, the revolutionary spirit is no longer a mandatory requirement but becomes students' inner spiritual pursuit. Metaphorical expression is another strength of narrative teaching for cultivating abstract thinking. Revolutionary stories contain diverse implicit expressions to convey profound ideological connotations, forming valuable educational resources. Instead of directly explaining the symbolic meanings of narratives, narrative pedagogy guides students to independently perceive moral connotations through metaphors. Figurative language avoids rigid dogmatic expression, leaving space for students to generate personalized value perceptions.

Interactivity enables two-way teacher-student collaboration under narrative pedagogy. The whole process including story planning, presentation, analysis and rethinking requires deep interaction between teachers and students<sup>[8]</sup>. Therefore, innovative narrative presentation is no longer one-way teacher lecturing, but group narrative activities featuring experience, interpretation and joint meaning construction. In this process, students become active builders of historical consciousness, effectively addressing the low participation problem plaguing traditional

revolutionary story teaching. Finally, narrative pedagogy facilitates the transformation of cognition into practice. The fundamental goal of revolutionary narrative teaching is not merely historical knowledge learning, but inspiring students to shoulder social responsibilities in the present era. Classroom debates, independent thinking and interactive participation help students link historical events with personal lives and reflect on their own life choices. When studying the decisions made by revolutionary leaders in harsh environments, students will reflect on their own responsibilities to the nation, society and collective development. Thus, revolutionary history can cultivate public awareness and moral literacy among all college students.

In summary, relying on the narrative, contextual, metaphorical and interactive attributes of revolutionary stories to stimulate students' imagination, narrative teaching can be fully integrated into ideological and political education and form a complete teaching operation system.

### 3. Practical Paths for Integrating Revolutionary Narratives into Teaching

Although narrative pedagogy has formed a complete theoretical framework, its specific practical operation still lacks clear guidelines. Based on the internal logic of narrative teaching, this paper divides its practical application into four progressive stages: screening and interpretive restructuring of story resources; classroom narrative presentation and situational construction; participatory interaction and in-story meaning construction; after-class extension and practical transformation of narratives.

The first step lies in the screening and interpretive restructuring of story resources. Not all revolutionary stories are suitable for ideological and political education, nor can all historical materials be easily transformed into teaching narratives. Teachers must carefully screen raw materials in accordance with correct ideological orientation and educational objectives. Selected stories must be historically authentic, convey correct historical views and moral values, and exclude unsubstantiated online rumors. They should be representative enough to embody the spirit of the times or noble moral ideals of revolutionary predecessors. Meanwhile, stories should be accessible to contemporary college students to bridge the generational gap. Ideal teaching narratives feature complete story frameworks, vivid characters and attractive plot suspense.

Teachers may select appropriate revolutionary stories, simplify their core plots, clarify embedded ideological and moral connotations, set distinctive entry points and plot conflicts, and transform grand historical narratives into life stories centered on individual fates.

The second step covers innovative classroom narrative presentation and situational construction. Narrative teaching relies on immersive contexts; teachers need to build a vivid "imaginary historical world" to draw students into the story<sup>[8]</sup>. This is particularly critical for contemporary college students, who grow up in a stable social environment without experiencing hardships in turbulent times. Teachers can enrich narrative diversity by adjusting narrative perspectives. Traditional omniscient third-person narration often lacks emotional depth. Switching to the perspective of decision-makers, observers or participants allows students to deeply understand historical figures' life experiences and difficult choices. Teachers can also adopt a dilemma-oriented discussion mode: setting up the predicaments faced by historical characters to guide students' independent value formation through classroom exchanges.

The digital era provides rich electronic narrative tools to upgrade situational construction. As native digital users, contemporary college students have completely different modes of information collection, analysis and communication compared with previous generations. To achieve excellent narrative presentation effects, single offline face-to-face narration should be supplemented with online forums and diverse multimedia resources. Teachers can adopt documentary films, audio recordings, online exhibition platforms, picture archives, sound databases and interactive multimedia tools for story teaching. Teachers can integrate images, audio and text to make revolutionary narratives vivid, immersive and accessible to students. For

instance, when teaching major revolutionary events, teachers can use electronic maps to display event timelines, interactive chronologies to sort out historical evolution, and digital exhibition halls to display revolutionary relics and historical scenes. These approaches help students form intuitive historical perceptions and gain a strong sense of immersion in historical contexts.

Digital tools also provide new channels for after-class revolutionary story communication. Students can post learning insights on online forums, create digital narrative works, shoot short films, design multimedia exhibitions, and disseminate local revolutionary culture via social media platforms. In this process, students are not only learners of revolutionary stories but also active disseminators of revolutionary spirits. Participatory digital storytelling deepens students' understanding of Chinese revolutionary history while improving their communication skills, teamwork awareness and creative thinking. Digital innovation is not merely an auxiliary teaching tool, but a new adaptation strategy for ideological and political education to fit modern communication ecology. The integration of revolutionary narratives and digital expression shortens the distance between historical heritage and students' daily lives in the digital age, strengthening their interest and comprehension of ideological and political theory courses.

Sufficient student participation and in-depth thinking are essential to avoid superficial, unemotional story learning. Therefore, teachers should not only ask students about their learning gains at the end of storytelling. Instead, moral dilemma questions should be raised at plot turning points or when protagonists face tough choices to stimulate students' independent value exploration. Educators can guide students to analyze multiple sides of historical conflicts and explore the root causes behind characters' decisions. What choices did historical figures make? Would you make the same decisions if you were in their position? Such questions prevent students from accepting predefined conclusions passively and encourage them to form unique viewpoints through interaction with stories and personal experience. Teachers can arrange students to switch between the roles of audience and narrator, sort out local revolutionary history, and share learning outcomes in seminars to promote interactive exploration.

The fourth stage is after-class consolidation and practical application. The educational effect of narrative teaching cannot terminate when class ends; excellent revolutionary stories should leave lasting spiritual resonance and inspire students' autonomous practical actions.

In teaching practice, teachers can assign extended reading materials matching classroom stories, including biographies, historical records, films and TV series to guide students' independent exploration. For example, the biography column of the open-access CPC history archives records the legendary life journeys of revolutionary predecessors. Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping and other online resources are available for students' after-class independent learning. Teachers can also combine revolutionary narratives with practical ideological and political education: organizing students to collect local revolutionary stories, write letters in the style of revolutionary predecessors, shoot short films with revolutionary themes, arrange field trips to revolutionary historical sites, and carry out on-site teaching at revolutionary cultural relics. This forms a complete teaching chain ranging from knowledge acquisition to practical application and from emotional experience to spiritual identity<sup>[5]</sup>.

It should be noted that the above four paths are not rigid fixed models. Teachers can flexibly adjust them according to teaching materials, student characteristics and on-campus conditions.

#### 4. Conclusion

Revolutionary materials serve as core teaching resources for college ideological and political theory courses to fulfill the task of fostering virtue and cultivating talents. Amid the promotion of reform and innovation for ideological and political theory courses, we need to move beyond simple story transmission and realize value cultivation through systematic, logical narrative teaching design. Featuring narrative, contextual, metaphorical and interactive strengths,

narrative pedagogy can solve prominent drawbacks of traditional revolutionary story teaching such as mechanical indoctrination, weak emotional connection and superficial value guidance. It constructs a complete cognitive chain leading students from theoretical recognition and emotional resonance to practical behavior transformation. In the new era, college ideological and political education should further advance the application of narrative pedagogy, optimize the presentation and communication of revolutionary history, and guide young students to comprehend the original aspiration and mission of the CPC through immersive storytelling. This will consolidate their firm ideals and values, inherit and carry forward the revolutionary fighting spirit, and ultimately convert the inspirational power of revolutionary stories into active dedication to the country and people. In this way, ideological and political theory courses can continuously enrich their theoretical depth, logical rigor and emotional appeal, and provide powerful spiritual support for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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