

Construction of Original Teaching Materials from the Perspective of China's Indigenous Intellectual System: Current Status, Predicaments and Optimizing Paths

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Abstract

Accelerating the development of China's indigenous intellectual system in philosophy and social sciences stands as a major theoretical and practical initiative of the new era. As the core carrier for translating indigenous intellectual systems into classroom teaching and realizing the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, original teaching materials shoulder three strategic missions: cultivating students with correct values, building China's independent academic discourse, and underpinning the construction of a powerful country through education. Taking pedagogy and foreign language pedagogy as core research areas, this paper adopts policy textual analysis, a structured literature review and a case-based analysis of selected university practices. It systematically sorts out policy arrangements and disciplinary practices for developing original teaching materials since the release of *The Outline for Building a Powerful Education Country (2024-2035)*. Drawing on the three-dimensional analytical framework covering disciplinary system, academic system and discourse system, this paper identifies phased achievements and five systematic dilemmas including over-reliance on Western theories, superficial localization, imbalanced system and institutional barriers, lagging digital transformation and weak international discourse capacity. Corresponding full-chain optimizing paths are proposed across six dimensions: consolidating theoretical foundations, reconstructing textbook content, improving institutional guarantees, empowering education with digital technologies, boosting international communication, and cultivating interdisciplinary talent. The research reveals that developing original teaching materials is far more than supplementing localized cases; it represents a systematic transformation covering disciplinary paradigms, educational models and academic ecosystems. Only by adhering to the "two inte-

grations” principle (integrating Marxism with China’s specific realities and fine traditional Chinese culture) and following the three core criteria for textbook compilation, can we form a closed loop spanning practical extraction, theoretical innovation, textbook compilation, classroom assessment and theoretical iteration, thereby developing high-quality teaching materials with distinctive Chinese features, styles and ethos. This study provides solid support for establishing a full-spectrum indigenous textbook system by 2035 and advancing the building of a powerful education country along the path of Chinese modernization.

Keywords

Indigenous Intellectual System, Original Teaching Materials, Three-Dimensional Framework, Foreign Language Pedagogy, Fostering Virtue through Education, Textbook Governance

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background and Policy Logic

The *Outline for Building a Powerful Education Country (2024-2035)*¹ further elevates the development of original teaching materials to a national strategic project, mandating systematic summation of the great practices of the new era and the compilation of a series of “China-themed” textbooks to form a complete indigenous textbook system. According to the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China², in 2025, an overall layout for the development of China’s original textbooks in philosophy and social sciences was completed, covering all 29 first-level disciplines and advancing key textbook development through three major series: the *China Series*, the *New Era Series*, and the *Classic Series*. The long-term objective is to build a comprehensive, multi-level indigenous textbook system by 2030. The Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China³ successively released batches of original textbooks in pedagogy, psychology, law, journalism and communication, demonstrating the continued expansion of original textbook development across disciplinary fields. Textbook development is a state responsibility and the core foundation for fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education. Zhang Li (2026) argues in his research that the indigenous intellectual system serves as the source and fountain of original teaching materials, while original textbooks realize systematic, classroom-oriented presentation of indigenous intellectual systems, forming a mutually reinforcing, bidirectional iterative relationship. Zeng Tianshan et al. (2026) divide the evolution of Chinese textbook development into three phases: blind emulation, partial

¹http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xgk/moe_1777/moe_1778/202501/t20250119_1176193.html

²http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/moe_1485/202605/t20260513_1436415.html

³http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/s5987/202608/t20260803_1445969.html
http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/s5987/202606/t20260609_1439936.html

localization and indigenous innovation, pointing out that current textbook construction is crossing the critical threshold from partial localization to comprehensive indigenous creation. Focusing on foreign language pedagogy, a discipline formally recognized as a secondary discipline under foreign language and literature in 2024, [Wen Qiufang and Zhang Hong \(2026\)](#) construct a three-dimensional analytical framework consisting of disciplinary system, academic system and discourse system, offering a unified analytical tool for evaluating original textbook development across all disciplines. [Yang Lianrui \(2026\)](#), [Liu Zhengguang and Ren Yuan \(2026\)](#) and [Wen Xu \(2026\)](#) further identify pervasive drawbacks in foreign language textbooks, including over-reliance on Western paradigms, instrumentalization and marginalization of indigenous theories, exposing structural deficiencies within foreign language textbook construction.

From a practical perspective, Chinese textbooks have long suffered from path dependence on Western academia. Since modern times, pedagogy has sequentially borrowed theoretical frameworks from Germany, the United States and the Soviet Union, while post-reform and opening-up foreign language education has widely imported Western applied linguistics and second language acquisition theories. Most textbooks adopt Western theories as their core framework, with Chinese practices only appended as supplementary examples, resulting in a dominant narrative logic of “interpreting China through Western theories”. Many textbooks prioritize language skills training while neglecting value guidance, embedding ideological and political content in a superficial, tokenistic manner. Meanwhile, digital textbook development merely digitizes printed content without reconstructing knowledge delivery pathways powered by big data and artificial intelligence. Existing academic studies on original textbooks mostly focus on single-discipline case analysis, lacking integrated research combining national policy and disciplinary practice. Against this backdrop, this paper integrates national policy documents, relevant journal papers and selected universities cases to systematically analyze phased achievements, deep-rooted dilemmas and multi-dimensional optimizing paths of original textbook construction. It aims to enrich theoretical research on indigenous intellectual systems and provide practical references for textbook researchers and educational administrators.

1.2. Definition of Core Concepts

China’s Indigenous Intellectual System: Guided by Marxism adapted to the Chinese context and the needs of our times, this systematic theoretical framework adheres to the “two integrations”, roots itself in China’s century-long practice, extracts indigenous iconic concepts and original theories, and possesses five core attributes: indigeneity, originality, openness and transdisciplinarity. It consists of three mutually supportive, dynamically iterative components: disciplinary system, academic system and discourse system. The disciplinary system defines research boundaries and indigenous knowledge architecture; the academic system provides research paradigms and methodologies tailored to Chinese contexts; the discourse system

undertakes conceptual interpretation and domestic-international communication functions.

Original Teaching Materials: Distinct from overseas imported textbooks and superficially localized adapted textbooks, original teaching materials take the indigenous intellectual system as their core kernel and strictly follow three compilation criteria: fully embodying the innovative theories of the Party, fully reflecting the great practices of the new era, and fully inheriting fine traditional Chinese culture. Breaking reliance on Western theoretical paradigms, they extract original theories based on Chinese-specific issues and balance political orientation, academic rigor and practical applicability across primary, secondary and tertiary education as well as undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Originality does not merely refer to adding Chinese cases into Western frameworks; it denotes systematic reconstruction of underlying theoretical paradigms, knowledge logic and educational objectives.

Three-Dimensional Analytical Framework: Proposed by **Wen Qiufang and Zhang Hong (2026)** for foreign language pedagogy, this framework is generalizable to philosophy and social science disciplines. It answers three core questions for textbook evaluation: what indigenous knowledge architecture the textbook constructs (disciplinary dimension), what localized research methods it adopts for teaching and academic training (academic dimension), and how it designs domestic interpretation and equal international dialogue (discourse dimension). This tripartite model constitutes the core evaluation metric for measuring the originality of teaching materials.

1.3. Research Methodology and Data Sources

This paper adopts a mixed-method research design. First, policy textual analysis is deployed to sort out policy documents, conference communiqués and textbook release bulletins issued by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and the State Textbook Commission between 2016 and 2026, tracing the evolutionary logic of top-level institutional design. Second, a structured literature review was conducted on 11 specialized papers published in relevant journals, such as *Foreign Languages in China*, *Foreign Language World* and *Journal of Foreign Languages*, with a focus on research in pedagogy, foreign language pedagogy and linguistics. The relevant literature was retrieved from China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) database using combinations of the search terms “Original Teaching Materials”, “Indigenous Intellectual System” and “textbook construction”. Studies were selected based on their relevance to original textbook construction and their contribution to the research questions of this study. Following the screening of titles, abstracts, and full texts, 11 articles were retained for analysis and systematically coded according to research themes, research objects, theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches, and major findings. Third, a case-based analysis of selected university practices was conducted. Representative university cases were purposively selected based on their relevance to original text-

book development and the availability of publicly accessible and verifiable evidence. Evidence was primarily drawn from official university policies and notices, textbook development documents, institutional webpages and reports on relevant textbook initiatives and projects, supplemented where appropriate by authoritative media and academic sources. The institutional cases were used to illustrate different practices in original textbook development, including institutional support mechanisms, discipline-specific approaches to content development and textbook application and dissemination. Fourth, industry research integrates digital textbook development plans from leading publishers (Higher Education Press, Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press) and research reports from national textbook research bases to supplement first-hand practical data.

The research logic advances layer by layer: theoretical framework construction sorting phased achievements → identifying structural dilemmas → tracing multi-dimensional root causes → building full-chain optimizing paths. Focus is placed primarily on pedagogy and foreign language pedagogy while covering universal laws of humanities and social sciences, balancing research on printed and digital new-form teaching materials to realize unified analysis of macro policy, meso-disciplinary development and micro-textbook compilation.

2. Phased Achievements of Original Textbook Construction from the Indigenous Intellectual System Perspective

Driven by top-level national coordination, collaborative university research and theoretical support from academia, China's original textbook development has completed a transitional leap from blind Western emulation and partial localization to comprehensive indigenous innovation. Breakthrough progress has been realized in four dimensions: top-level institutional framework, cross-disciplinary original textbook matrix, diversified development models, and dual educational-academic value, laying a solid foundation for establishing a full-spectrum indigenous textbook system by 2030.

2.1. Maturation of Top-Level Institutional Design and Tiered Incentive Mechanisms

Official information released by the General Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China⁴ indicates that the State Textbook Commission was established under the State Council in 2017, with its office located within the Ministry of Education and its administrative work undertaken by the Textbook Bureau. The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China⁵ further institutionalized textbook governance through the *Measures for the Administration of Primary and Secondary School Textbooks* and the *Measures for the Administration of Textbooks in Regular Institutions of Higher Education*, establishing a regulatory framework covering textbook planning, compilation, review, selection

⁴http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xgk/moe_1777/moe_1778/201707/t20170706_308824.html

⁵http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A26/moe_714/202001/t20200107_414578.html

and use, revision, and withdrawal. More recently, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China⁶ reported that, in 2025, an overall framework for the development of China's original textbooks in philosophy and social sciences was established, covering all 29 first-level disciplines and advancing three major textbook series—the *China Series*, the *New Era Series*, and the *Classic Series*.

The China Series focuses on constructing underlying original disciplinary theories. According to the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China⁷, in 2026, 12 original textbooks covering law, Marxist theory and journalism have been published. Among the earlier outputs of the initiative, two textbooks entitled *Socialist Political Economy with Chinese Characteristics*, compiled respectively by Renmin University of China and Nankai University, had been piloted in more than 40 universities nationwide since the spring semester of 2025, as reported by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China⁸. Works including *Political Economy with Chinese Characteristics* and *Theory and Practice of International Communication* systematically extract iconic theories of Chinese governance and Chinese modernization, breaking the monopolistic narrative of Western economic and legal theories.

The New Era Series targets compulsory core courses for undergraduate and postgraduate students. In 2026, five pedagogy textbooks and three psychology textbooks⁹ were released, including *Curriculum and Instruction Theory* and *Educational Administration*. Rooted in China's unique practice of governing a super-large education system, these textbooks build a localized theoretical framework for curriculum and instruction. Meanwhile, foreign language pedagogy has produced landmark original textbooks: *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition: The Science of How Chinese Learn Foreign Languages* and *With A Practical Coursebook on Short Videos Telling Chinese Stories in English as a Case in Point*.

The Classic Series centers on selected excerpts of Marxist-Leninist theoretical works and traditional Chinese academic classics, publishing authoritative readers such as *General Anthology of Marxist-Leninist Excerpts on Philosophy and Social Sciences*, providing theoretical origins for original textbook compilation across all disciplines.

In terms of supporting mechanisms, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China¹⁰ reported that 224 cultivation outputs had been produced through original textbook development initiatives. At the institutional level, incentive mechanisms have also begun to emerge in some universities to encourage faculty participation in original textbook development. As documented by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China¹¹, 25 National Textbook Development Key Research Bases have been established to provide research and

⁶http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/moe_1485/202605/t20260513_1436415.html

⁷http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/s5987/202606/t20260609_1439936.html

⁸http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/s5987/202504/t20250402_1185866.html

⁹http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/s5987/202608/t20260803_1445969.html

¹⁰http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/moe_1485/202605/t20260513_1436415.html

¹¹http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/moe_2082/2024/2024_zl04/202404/t20240409_1124635.html

professional support for textbook development, accompanied by the implementation of a national textbook award system. Meanwhile, a national-level forum organized in 2026 brought together representatives from more than 100 universities and research institutions, creating opportunities for exchange and discussion on original textbook development, as reported by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China¹². Taken together, these developments indicate an emerging multilevel support structure for original textbook development.

2.2. Formation of Cross-Disciplinary Original Textbook Matrix with Representative Landmark Works

2.2.1. Pedagogy: Integrating Four Historical Narratives to Form a Closed Loop of Indigenous Educational Theory

As a pioneer discipline in developing indigenous intellectual systems, pedagogy fully integrates four historical threads: the Party's century-long history, New China's developmental history, the reform and opening-up history and the new era's progress. Centered on indigenous iconic concepts including fostering virtue through education, core literacy, balanced education and the "double reduction" policy, it has built an independent knowledge framework free from over-reliance on single Western paradigms of Kantian and Deweyan pedagogy. Zeng Tianshan et al. (2026) propose that Chinese pedagogical original textbooks follow four closed-loop mechanisms: organic integration of ideological content, timely reflection of new-era practices, classroom-based assessment and theory-driven iterative development, enabling bidirectional construction between indigenous intellectual systems and teaching materials. Newly compiled textbooks including *Sociology of Education* and *Introduction to Inclusive Education* systematically summarize localized reform practices such as rural education and school group governance, addressing unique Chinese educational issues unexplainable by Western pedagogy. During compilation, strict dialectical evaluation of historical figures is implemented, drawing clear distinctions between progressive educators and those aligned with old feudal or imperialist forces, maintaining strict academic and ideological bottom lines. A revision iteration mechanism based on primary and secondary classroom trial data is established to realize a virtuous cycle: extracting theories from grassroots practices → translating theories into textbooks → testing textbooks in classrooms → optimizing theoretical frameworks.

2.2.2. Foreign Language Pedagogy: Implementation of the Three-Dimensional Framework to Develop Three Categories of Original Textbooks

Formally recognized as a secondary discipline under foreign language and literature in 2024, foreign language pedagogy has secured institutional support and developed three parallel textbook categories: theoretical textbooks, practical textbooks and ideological-political landmark textbooks. Drawing on Wen and Zhang's (2026) conceptualization of disciplinary, academic, and discourse sys-

¹²http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/moe_1485/202605/t20260513_1436415.html

tems, this study examines these developments through a three-dimensional analytical lens.

First, [Yang Lianrui \(2026\)](#) identifies *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition: The Science of How Chinese Learn Foreign Languages* as a representative theoretical original textbook. Developed under the Ministry of Education's cultivation project for original philosophy and social sciences textbooks in higher education, the textbook draws on established international second language acquisition frameworks while reconstructing them in light of Chinese learners' foreign language learning practices. It systematically incorporates locally developed theories, including Continuation Theory and the Production-Oriented Approach (POA), and proposes an integrated model of second language acquisition from a systems perspective. The model is intended to address context-specific pedagogical challenges, particularly the disconnection between language learning and use, while contributing to the development of a locally grounded knowledge system for second language acquisition.

Second, [Liu Zhengguang and Ren Yuan \(2026\)](#) present *A Practical Coursebook on Short Videos Telling Chinese Stories in English* as an example of practice-oriented original textbook development. Developed as part of the Ministry of Education's cultivation project for original philosophy and social sciences textbooks in higher education, the textbook emphasizes practice-based education grounded in traditional Chinese educational thought, particularly the unity of knowledge and action. Its short-video creation activities involve experiential learning, problem solving, collaborative discussion, and multimodal communication. Through these practice-oriented activities, the textbook is intended to provide opportunities for students to apply language knowledge in meaningful contexts, deepen their understanding of Chinese culture, and develop communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and innovative thinking skills.

Third, [Sun Youzhong \(2022\)](#) presents the multilingual *Understanding Contemporary China* series as an example of innovative foreign language textbook development. Covering ten foreign languages, including English, French, and Arabic, the series incorporates selected texts from authoritative sources and integrates them into reading and writing, public speaking, and translation courses. The series is intended to integrate language learning, China-focused content, and value-oriented education, supporting students' understanding of contemporary China and their ability to communicate Chinese perspectives in foreign languages.

2.2.3. Linguistics and Other Humanities & Social Sciences: Synchronized Indigenous Development

[Wen Xu \(2026\)](#) argues that the development of original linguistics textbooks should be grounded in Chinese linguistic realities and indigenous academic traditions while critically engaging with relevant international linguistic theories and research methods. Such textbooks draw on distinctive features of Chinese and incorporate traditional scholarship in areas such as philology, phonology, exegesis, and rhetoric. For example, *Linguistics from a Chinese Cultural Perspective* draws

on classical texts, including *Xunzi's Rectification of Names* and *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, as cases for explaining features of Chinese and contributing to the construction of an independent Chinese linguistics knowledge system. The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China¹³ reports the publication of the first batch of the "Classic Series," which includes original textbooks in economics and education, demonstrating that original textbook development has extended beyond linguistics to other humanities and social science disciplines. Together, these developments reflect the broadening disciplinary scope of original textbook construction in China's humanities and social sciences.

2.3. Diversified Innovation in Textbook Development Models: Compilation, Digitization and Discourse Construction in Synergy

First, reformed textbook compilation teams abandon the traditional single-author model, assembling interdisciplinary cohorts combining university theoretical researchers, frontline full-time teachers, industry practitioners and digital R&D specialists across three age brackets. Content compilation adheres to the principle of innovative inheritance, integrating the four major historical narratives when sorting disciplinary development trajectories. Western theories are reviewed dialectically with clear demarcation of their applicable boundaries, avoiding two extreme tendencies: total Westernization and complete rejection of foreign scholarship.

Second, integrated print-digital new-form textbooks are rapidly promoted by Higher Education Press and FLTRP under a unified development model: core printed textbook + dynamic multi-modal resource repository + AI intelligent training platform, equipped with multi-modal corpora and virtual simulation classrooms with real-time writing correction systems. Foreign language original textbooks specifically build bilingual repositories of Chinese cultural concepts, adopting a standardized compound translation norm for indigenous iconic terms (Chinese character + pinyin + in-depth cultural annotation) to eliminate misinterpretation arising from literal translation and remove cross-cultural communication barriers.

Third, discourse system design is embedded into textbook compilation at the initiation stage. From the discourse-system perspective of the three-dimensional framework, textbook development can consider two parallel expression systems: discourse for domestic teaching contexts and discourse for international academic dialogue. Accessible cases and standardized translation may facilitate international academic exchange and help transform Chinese foreign language and educational practices into topics accessible to broader international scholarly.

2.4. Potential Educational and Academic Value

From an educational perspective, original textbooks are designed to promote the

¹³http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/gzdt_gzdt/s5987/202603/t20260316_1431013.html

superficial separation between disciplinary knowledge and ideological-political content prevalent in traditional materials. They seek to incorporate value-oriented content into theoretical analysis, case comparison and project-based tasks. Students of foreign language and pedagogy are expected to transcend single Western theoretical perspectives, mastering indigenous original theories to analyze Chinese cultural and educational realities with significantly enhanced capabilities for cross-cultural critical thinking and international narration of Chinese stories.

From an academic perspective, the development of original textbooks may encourage the systematic review of China's disciplinary and educational practices and the identification of locally grounded concepts and theoretical resources. This process may also provide opportunities to reconsider the predominant reliance on Western theoretical frameworks as reference points for academic evaluation. In principle, feedback from classroom use can inform subsequent academic research and textbook revision, creating a potential iterative relationship among practice, theory, textbook development, and classroom application. Such a process may contribute to the continued development and refinement of China's independent knowledge system.

3. Deep-Rooted Dilemmas of Original Textbook Construction from the Indigenous Intellectual System Perspective

Despite phased breakthroughs in original textbook development against the 2030 target of a complete indigenous textbook system, research integrating cross-disciplinary literature, frontline university teaching feedback and publishing industry surveys identifies five interlocking systematic dilemmas: over-reliance on Western theoretical paradigms, superficial localization of textbook content, structural imbalance between political orientation and academic rigor and incomplete institutional incentive and evaluation mechanisms, formalistic digital transformation and weak international discourse capacity. These mutually reinforcing bottlenecks hinder high-quality, sustainable development of original teaching materials.

3.1. Weak Indigenous Theoretical Foundations and Entrenched Reliance on Western Paradigms

First, pervasive Western-centrism dominates textbook theoretical frameworks. Most foreign language, linguistics and pedagogy textbooks adopt European and American disciplinary architectures as their main structure, with indigenous original theories only appended as supplementary examples, forming an inherent narrative logic of "interpreting China through Western theories". Yang Lianrui (2026) points out that many foreign language textbook compilers received Western academic training from graduate school, instinctively applying Western second language acquisition and applied linguistics theories to Chinese teaching contexts in a forced, ill-fitting manner. Chapter arrangement and research topic selection fully follow the research hotspots of overseas journals, marginalizing uniquely Chinese

core issues such as balanced education in a super-large school system and nationwide universal foreign language education.

Second, limited capacity for extracting indigenous iconic concepts and the prevalent “absence of critical reflection” in academic circles. [Wen Qiufang and Zhang Hong \(2026\)](#) note that domestic foreign language academia lacks conscious initiative to distill distinctive theoretical categories from massive Chinese educational practices, habitually borrowing Western terminology, resulting in a shortage of globally interpretable indigenous conceptual systems. Although pedagogy has formed core concepts including fostering virtue through education, a complete supporting conceptual spectrum across sub-disciplines remains undeveloped, delaying the construction of independent academic discourse to keep pace with textbook compilation demands.

Third, blurred disciplinary boundaries for emerging cross-disciplines and fragmented knowledge architectures. Taking foreign language pedagogy as an example, formalized only in 2024, unified consensus on its disciplinary positioning and core research questions has yet to form. Textbook content overlaps extensively with general pedagogy and applied linguistics, lacking logically self-consistent independent knowledge frameworks, leading to repetitive, disjointed textbook content during compilation. Some cross-disciplinary textbooks fall into an ambiguous niche belonging neither to traditional foreign language studies nor mainstream pedagogy.

3.2. Three Types of Imbalance in Textbook Content and Superficial, Non-Original Localization

First, structural imbalance between political orientation and academic rigor with two extreme tendencies. The first is tokenistic ideological embedding: some textbooks mechanically stack policy excerpts and theoretical expositions only at chapter openings and closings without in-depth theoretical interpretation, leaving teachers and students with an impression of forced value attachment. The second is devaluation of ideological guidance: certain compilers one-sidedly pursue so-called “academic neutrality”, deliberately evading ideological leadership and failing to conduct dialectical refutation of Western erroneous ideological trends, risking the marginalization, disappearance or silence of Marxist positions within textbooks. [Zhang Li's \(2026\)](#) research on pedagogical textbooks repeatedly confirms the prevalence of this phenomenon.

Second, superficial localization rather than genuine theoretical originality. [Wang Mingyu and Yuan Xin \(2023\)](#) argue that foreign language education inherently serves an international communication function. Foreign language textbooks should preserve and transmit the essence of Chinese culture by grounding their content in the Chinese nation's historical traditions, cultural heritage, and national character, while also presenting the spirit and values of the Chinese people and the major achievements of contemporary Chinese practice, thereby contributing to more effective communication of China's stories to the world. The so-

called “originality” of numerous textbooks merely consists of adding a small number of Chinese cases within unmodified Western theoretical frameworks, representing localized adaptation of imported textbooks rather than primitive theoretical innovation. Content updating lags behind social progress, with limited integration of cutting-edge topics including artificial intelligence education, new quality productive forces and global governance; most case materials date back over a decade and fail to respond to contemporary developmental demands.

Third, loose regulation of controversial content and historical figure evaluation with latent ideological risks. Some textbooks incorporate unconsensus minority hypotheses and highly contested frontier theories into core teaching content, easily causing cognitive confusion among students. No unified evaluation standard exists for modern historical figures and overseas theorists; insufficient critical commentary is provided for figures aligned with imperialist and feudal forces, while failure to distinguish historical contributions from later ideological deviations creates vague evaluation criteria and potential ideological hazards.

3.3. Multiple Institutional Barriers and Incomplete Full-Chain Guarantee Systems

Liu Chao and Tan Fangzheng (2024) point out that the transformation of theoretical and disciplinary systems into textbook systems has been less than satisfactory in some cases. The content of some textbooks does not align well with educational objectives or actual teaching practices, resulting in teachers being reluctant to teach with them and students being unwilling to learn from them. Meanwhile, current evaluations of the quality of original textbooks rely largely on expert review prior to publication. Such evaluations depend heavily on experts’ individual academic judgments and are therefore highly subjective, making it difficult to establish broadly accepted and objective evaluation criteria. More importantly, the evaluation process is largely discontinued after publication, with a lack of post-use evaluation mechanisms based on large-scale teaching practice. Consequently, there is insufficient follow-up and assessment of the actual effects of textbooks in real teaching contexts, particularly whether they genuinely improve students’ thinking abilities and core competencies, as noted by Han Yun and Chen Rong (2025).

First, narrow coverage of incentive policies and insufficient internal motivation among teachers. Some universities have introduced institutional incentives for original textbook compilers. For example, Peking University¹⁴ has established “Boya Distinguished Professors for Textbook Development” positions, using personnel-based incentives to encourage faculty participation in high-quality textbook development. Similarly, the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China¹⁵ reports that Nankai University has introduced institutional incentives for original textbook development, including recognition in professional-title evaluation and performance assessment. However, some institutions exclude chief

¹⁴<https://provost.pku.edu.cn/xwdt/f15729efbd614c58abb90a8ff424f645.htm>

¹⁵http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/s6192/s133/s156/202604/t20260422_1434502.html

textbook compilation work from hard indicators for title promotion and annual assessment. Textbook development entails long research cycles, high survey costs and intensive labor input yet yields short-term weak academic outputs, making university faculty far less willing to participate compared with short-cycle journal paper publication. Permanent special research funding and regular textbook development projects are also lacking, leaving compilation teams under-resourced.

Second, fragmented quality evaluation systems without closed-loop iteration mechanisms. Current textbook assessment relies exclusively on offline expert review prior to publication, with strong subjectivity and absence of quantified originality indicators. No long-term tracking system collects student and teacher feedback data after publication, nor a biennial revision and update mechanism. Separate evaluation standards for original, adapted and imported textbooks have not been formulated, making it impossible to accurately differentiate degrees of textbook originality.

Third, loose collaborative compilation mechanisms and structural shortages of interdisciplinary talent. Regular joint research platforms uniting universities, primary and secondary teaching research institutes, publishing houses and digital technology enterprises are absent, with rare cross-disciplinary textbook development projects. Compilation teams face structural deficiencies: there is a shortage of interdisciplinary talents equipped with profound Marxist theoretical literacy, indigenous research capabilities, frontline teaching experience and digital development expertise. Young scholars generally suffer from weak awareness of indigenous research and inadequate critical reflection capacities.

3.4. Formalistic Digital Transformation and Disconnection between Technology and Core Teaching Logic

The vast majority of digital original textbooks merely complete electronic digitization of printed content, attaching two-dimensional code micro-lessons and online exercises without reconstructing knowledge delivery pathways powered by big data and large language models. Digital technologies are reduced to auxiliary appendages of printed textbooks, creating a disconnect between technical form and educational content. Foreign language digital textbooks are equipped with limited corpora yet lack intelligent translation and cross-cultural simulation modules dedicated to Chinese cultural discourse. No unified national development standards exist for digital original textbooks, resulting in incompatible resources across publishers and blocked sharing channels on the National Smart Education Platform. Core digital advantages including AI personalized tutoring, virtual practice and project-based online learning remain underdeveloped; digital transformation falls into a formalistic trap rather than serving the construction of indigenous intellectual systems.

3.5. Lagging Discourse System Construction and Disadvantaged International Academic Position

On the one hand, indigenous iconic concepts lack authoritative, unified bilingual

interpretation norms. Literal translation of terms such as curriculum ideological-political education easily triggers negative misperception among overseas audiences without supporting in-depth cultural annotation packages. On the other hand, Chinese scholars hold limited seats on editorial boards of international journals and organizing committees of global academic conferences, remaining in a passive responsive position rather than setting core research agendas. Channels for overseas translation and publication of original textbooks are narrow without special national support programs, making it difficult to export China's indigenous theories to global academia and resulting in a disadvantaged position in equal international dialogue. Meanwhile, uneven supply persists across textbook categories: abundant original resources exist for mainstream university foreign languages, while severe shortages affect minor languages, basic education and vocational education textbooks, compromising the integrity of the overall indigenous textbook system.

4. Multi-Dimensional Root Causes of Predicaments in Original Textbook Development

The array of bottlenecks hindering original textbook construction do not stem from short-term operational errors but constitute structural contradictions accumulated through long-term overlapping factors spanning historical academic inertia, biased academic evaluation systems, objective disciplinary developmental phases, incomplete supporting institutional rules and distorted perceptions of digitalization. These mutually reinforcing factors slow progress toward a comprehensive indigenous textbook system.

4.1. Long-Term Western Academic Inertia and Entrenched Path Dependence

Since modern times, Chinese pedagogy and foreign language education have sequentially absorbed theoretical systems from Germany, the United States and the Soviet Union. Over a century of textbook compilation and academic training has taken Western theories as the primary evaluation benchmark, fostering an ingrained instinct to interpret Chinese phenomena through foreign paradigms among generations of researchers. Postgraduate curricula widely adopt overseas imported textbooks, nurturing young scholars under Western research frameworks from the early stages of academic growth. This creates a natural lack of indigenous research awareness, requiring long-term systematic educational intervention to cultivate cultural subjectivity and break entrenched Western-centric thought patterns.

4.2. Biased Long-Term Academic Evaluation Systems Prioritizing Journal Papers over Textbooks

For decades, university research evaluation systems have weighted SSCI and CSSCI journal papers far more heavily than textbook research outcomes. Chief

compilation of original textbooks is excluded from core performance indicators for title promotion and annual assessment. Long cycles, high costs and delayed returns place textbook development at a disadvantage under institutional quantitative assessment mechanisms, objectively guiding scholars to prioritize chasing international research hotspots over investigating China's unique grassroots practical issues, weakening investment in textbook research and creating a long-standing value bias favoring journal articles over teaching materials.

4.3. Objective Constraints of Immature Disciplinary Development

Cross-disciplines represented by foreign language pedagogy were only formally established in 2024, leaving disciplinary positioning, core research topics and complete theoretical frameworks in exploratory stages. Without mature indigenous intellectual systems as foundational support for textbook compilation, textbooks inevitably exhibit fragmented content and Western framework reliance. Traditional pedagogy and linguistics possess long research histories yet initiated systematic extraction of indigenous iconic concepts and theoretical frameworks relatively late. The incomplete formation of full-spectrum disciplinary architectures directly restricts systematic, logically consistent original textbook development.

4.4. Insufficient Detailed Supporting Institutional Rules and Defective Full-Chain Governance

Although top-level national planning documents have been issued, specialized compilation guidelines, quantified originality evaluation indicators and digital textbook development manuals for separate disciplines and educational stages remain incomplete. Incentive policies are only piloted in a small number of universities without unified national implementation standards. Supporting mechanisms for collaborative compilation, textbook trial assessment, iterative revision and overseas communication lack dedicated policy support. Inconsistent construction standards and unbalanced resource allocation across regions and schools amplify all types of developmental bottlenecks.

4.5. Distorted Perceptions of Digitalization and Formalistic Construction Misconceptions

The industry generally equates digital transformation with simple electronic digitization, failing to recognize that the core value of digital textbooks lies in reconstructing indigenous knowledge delivery logic. Some publishers and universities prioritize superficial visual forms including short videos and micro-courses while neglecting core content development centered on indigenous original theories and Chinese narratives, falling into a formalistic trap of prioritizing technical shells over substantive knowledge kernels. Digital resources consequently fail to support the construction of China's indigenous intellectual system.

5. Full-Chain Optimizing Paths for Original Textbooks from the Indigenous Intellectual System Perspective

Targeting the achievements, dilemmas and root causes analyzed above, this paper takes constructing China's indigenous intellectual system and fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education as overarching objectives. Using the three-dimensional framework of disciplinary, academic and discourse systems as an exploratory analytical lens, it establishes systematic implementation paths across six dimensions: consolidating theoretical foundations, reconstructing textbook content, improving institutional guarantees, empowering education with digital technologies, boosting international communication and cultivating interdisciplinary talent. These paths form a closed loop covering grassroots practical extraction, indigenous theoretical innovation, textbook compilation, classroom assessment and theoretical iteration.

5.1. Consolidating Indigenous Theoretical Foundations to Eliminate Reliance on Western Paradigms

First, uphold the "two integrations" as fundamental compilation criteria. All disciplines implement a mandatory Western theory critical review mechanism prior to textbook initiation, sorting out the applicable scope and historical limitations of foreign theories to prevent indiscriminate wholesale adoption. Deeply excavate fine traditional Chinese educational and linguistic wisdom, placing indigenous original theories including POA and the educational concept of teaching-learning reciprocity at the core textbook narrative to achieve integration of Marxist theories, Chinese cultural heritage and contemporary Chinese practices.

Second, develop standardized indigenous iconic concept repositories by discipline. Relying on the 25 national textbook research bases, expert teams systematically sort out core indigenous categories across pedagogy, foreign language studies and linguistics, compiling bilingual dictionaries equipped with unified English interpretations, historical origins and practical cases to fundamentally resolve shortages of indigenous discourse and over-reliance on Western terminology.

Third, incorporate consideration of disciplinary, academic and discourse systems into textbook initiation and censorship stages where appropriate. Rather than imposing the three-dimensional framework as a uniform requirement across disciplines, textbook development teams may use it as an analytical reference to examine indigenous knowledge architecture, locally grounded research approaches, and international communication strategies in light of discipline-specific characteristics.

5.2. Reconstructing Textbook Content to Strictly Implement the Three Core Compilation Criteria

First, realize organic integration of political orientation and academic rigor to abandon tokenistic ideological embedding. Embed core socialist values into theoretical deduction, localized case comparison and project-based tasks, achiev-

ing synchronized depth of theoretical interpretation and intensity of value guidance. Set special dialectical commentary modules for Western ideological trends to directly refute erroneous viewpoints and eliminate the misconception of value neutrality.

Second, promote primitive theoretical innovation beyond superficial case localization. All textbook compilation must start from China's unique major social issues including balanced education and nationwide foreign language popularization, extracting original theories from grassroots reform practices rather than supplementing Chinese examples within unmodified Western frameworks. Establish a triennial dynamic content updating mechanism to timely integrate cutting-edge social practices including artificial intelligence education, new quality productive forces and global governance and maintain temporal relevance.

Third, formulate hierarchical regulatory standards for controversial content and historical figure evaluation. Unconsensus hypotheses and contested frontier theories are confined to extended reading rather than core teaching content. Develop unified evaluation norms for Chinese and foreign historical figures, strictly distinguishing progressive contributions from later ideological deviations to uphold political bottom lines and eliminate ideological risks.

Fourth, realize tiered classified supply of textbooks. Universities prioritize original core textbooks for cross-disciplines and specialized majors; basic education focuses on textbooks inheriting Chinese cultural heritage and national conditions; vocational education centers on textbooks serving independent industrial development. Launch special development projects for minor language original textbooks to rectify uneven supply across educational stages and language categories.

5.3. Improving Full-Chain Institutional Guarantees to Stimulate Faculty's Internal Motivation

First, roll out unified national incentive policies nationwide. Tan Fangzheng and Wang Youfu (2025) argue that innovation is needed in the mechanisms for textbook development and research. A systematic approach should be adopted, with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms used to promote the coordination, alignment, and implementation of relevant policies. Local authorities and educational institutions should effectively implement incentive and support mechanisms for high-quality textbook development, providing scholars with the necessary support to participate in textbook compilation and revision and ensuring that textbook developers have sufficient time and energy to undertake such work. The Ministry of Education shall issue guiding documents standardizing recognition of original textbook compilation work for title promotion, annual assessment and talent evaluation, equating chief compiler contributions with major national social science projects. All universities shall allocate special regular funding for textbook development projects and raise the weighting of original textbook awards within the National Textbook Award system to comprehensively enhance faculty willingness to participate.

Second, construct a closed-loop quality evaluation system with quantified originality indicators. Formulate separate assessment standards for original, adapted and imported textbooks by discipline. Build a long-term textbook tracking mechanism based on the National Smart Education Platform to collect big data feedback from teachers and students across all school levels, establishing a biennial cycle of trial implementation, feedback collection and targeted revision to integrate pre-publication expert review with post-publication dynamic optimization.

Third, build multi-stakeholder collaborative compilation communities. Establish regular joint research platforms uniting universities, primary and secondary teaching research institutes, publishing houses and digital technology enterprises to launch cross-disciplinary textbook development projects on a regular basis. Form age-diversified compilation teams integrating theoretical scholars and frontline practitioners. Organize regular national training workshops for original textbook compilers to continuously improve indigenous research awareness and critical reflection capacities among young academics.

5.4. Deepening Digital Empowerment to Build an Indigenous Knowledge Smart Textbook Ecosystem

Adhere to the core principle of content primacy supported by digital technology to eliminate formalistic electronic transformation. Fully implement the integrated new-form textbook model: core printed textbook + dynamic multi-modal resource repository + AI intelligent training platform. Pedagogy and foreign language disciplines shall specifically build bilingual corpora of Chinese cultural concepts and localized educational case banks, developing AI tools for cross-cultural dialogue simulation and Chinese story creation. Restructure knowledge logic through knowledge mapping to enable personalized learning path push. Formulate unified national development specifications for digital original textbooks and open cross-resource sharing channels on the National Smart Education Platform, leveraging digitalization to expand the communication boundary of China's indigenous intellectual system.

5.5. Improving the International Discourse System to Elevate China's Global Academic Voice

First, establish standardized bilingual interpretation norms for indigenous iconic concepts, adopting the compound translation paradigm: Chinese character + pinyin + in-depth cultural annotation to avoid misinterpretation from literal translation and unify global expressions for core indigenous terms including curriculum ideological-political education and Production-Oriented Approach.

Second, launch special national programs for overseas translation and publication of original textbooks. Support Chinese scholars to host international education and foreign language academic conferences, proactively setting global research agendas rooted in Chinese practical experience to seize agenda-setting initiative.

Third, build permanent overseas textbook communication channels relying on Confucius Institutes and international academic journals, jointly compile collaborative textbooks with overseas scholars to export China's indigenous educational and foreign language theories and realize equal civilizational dialogue across the globe.

5.6. Long-Term Cultivation of Interdisciplinary Textbook Compilation Talent Teams

Start talent cultivation at undergraduate and postgraduate levels by setting mandatory core courses on China's indigenous intellectual systems and indigenous original theories across all disciplines to resolve young scholars' widespread absence of indigenous research awareness and critical reflection capacity. Hold regular national training workshops for original textbook compilers featuring demonstration lectures delivered chief compilers of national landmark original textbooks. Dynamically expand the national textbook expert talent pool to absorb theoretical researchers, frontline teachers and young industry practitioners across age brackets, forming tiered sustainable talent supply for long-term original textbook development.

6. Conclusion and Research Prospects

6.1. Core Research Conclusions

Developing China's indigenous intellectual system in philosophy and social sciences constitutes the overarching guiding principle for new-era academic development. As the core carrier translating indigenous intellectual systems into classroom education and realizing the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, original teaching materials bear three strategic missions: nurturing students with correct value orientations, constructing China's independent academic discourse and underpinning the building of a powerful education country. Based on mixed-method research integrating national policy analysis, literature review and cross-university case comparison, this paper verifies that China's original textbook development has established a complete top-level institutional framework over recent years, generating landmark original textbooks in priority disciplines including pedagogy and foreign language pedagogy while innovating tiered compilation, digital transformation and collaborative communication models. Visible educational and academic benefits have been realized in shaping students' value identities and enhancing their capacity to interpret global issues through indigenous Chinese theories.

Nevertheless, original textbook construction continues to face five interlocking structural dilemmas: over-reliance on Western theoretical paradigms, superficial localized content lacking primitive innovation, imbalance between political orientation and academic rigor and incomplete incentive and evaluation institutions, formalistic digital transformation and disadvantaged international discourse ca-

capacity. These bottlenecks arise from overlapping long-term factors including entrenched Western academic inertia, biased journal-weighted evaluation systems, objective immaturity of emerging cross-disciplines, incomplete supporting institutional rules and distorted digitalization perceptions, and cannot be resolved in the short term. Targeting the 2030 objective of establishing a full-spectrum indigenous textbook system, development must adhere to the “two integrations” principle guided by Marxism adapted to Chinese conditions. The three-dimensional perspective of disciplinary, academic, and discourse systems may provide an exploratory reference for such development, with its application adapted to the characteristics of different disciplines. On this basis, systematic improvement can be pursued across six dimensions: consolidating theoretical foundations, reconstructing textbook content, improving institutional guarantees, digital empowerment, international communication and interdisciplinary talent cultivation. This full-chain reform forms a closed loop of practical extraction, theoretical innovation, textbook compilation, classroom assessment and iterative theoretical optimization, realizing systematic transformation of underlying disciplinary paradigms, educational models and academic ecosystems to develop high-quality teaching materials with distinctive Chinese features, styles and ethos. Such textbooks provide solid theoretical and talent support for cultivating successors to the socialist cause and advancing Chinese modernization toward building a powerful education country.

6.2. Research Limitations and Future Prospects

This paper takes pedagogy and foreign language pedagogy as core research objects, with limited survey data covering science, engineering, agriculture and medicine disciplines, leaving space for expanded cross-disciplinary horizontal comparison. No large-scale quantitative questionnaire data from frontline teachers and students are incorporated to measure the educational effectiveness of original textbooks, representing a direction for follow-up empirical research. Future research can extend along three tracks: first, integrated research on vertically aligned original textbook systems spanning primary, secondary and tertiary education; second, quantitative analysis of digitalization’s empowering effect on the communication of indigenous intellectual systems; third, tracking overseas reception of translated original textbooks to optimize international communication paths for China’s academic discourse.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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