



An Exploratory Research on the Strategies of Integrating Chinese Traditional Culture into Middle School English Teaching

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Abstract: With the emphasis on cultural awareness in the Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition), the integration of traditional Chinese culture into junior high school English teaching has become an urgent topic for discussion. This study aims to explore the current status, challenges, and improvement strategies for incorporating traditional Chinese culture into junior high school English instruction. Taking a middle school in Hailar Hulunbuir as a case study, data on cultural integration in English teaching were collected through questionnaires, teacher interviews, and classroom observations. The study identified three major issues: weak cultural awareness among teachers, an overemphasis on grammar at the expense of cultural expansion, and a lack of diversity in integration methods. Based on these findings, the study proposes a strategic framework to enhance teachers' cultural literacy, deeply explore cultural elements in teaching materials, and employ diversified teaching approaches. The study provides a reference for the implementation of cultural education in junior middle school English teaching.

Keywords: middle school English teaching; traditional Chinese culture; strategies

1. Introduction

A Chinese middle school student can fluently describe Thanksgiving turkey and Halloween costumes in English, yet struggles to explain why Chinese people eat moon cakes during the Mid-Autumn Festival. This ironic scenario—termed "Chinese culture aphasia" in the literature (Lu, 2021)—reveals a fundamental imbalance in English language education: the overemphasis on target culture at the expense of native cultural identity.

Recognizing this problem, China's educational authorities have called for integrating traditional Chinese culture into all subjects, including English. The Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition) mandates that students develop cultural awareness and the capacity to "tell Chinese stories well in English" (Ministry of Education, 2022). However, translating this mandate into classroom practice has proven difficult. Research shows that middle school English teachers often lack adequate knowledge of traditional culture (Yang, Liu & Ge, 2019), prioritize grammar instruction over cultural content (Tao, 2020), and possess few models for effective cultural integration (Huang, 2021).

This study addresses the gap between policy aspiration and classroom reality. Using a middle school in Hailar as a case, it investigates how traditional Chinese culture is currently integrated into English teaching, identifies barriers to effective integration, and proposes a set of practical strategies grounded in constructivist pedagogy. By doing so, it aims to equip teachers with the tools needed to nurture both linguistic proficiency and cultural confidence in their students.

2. Literature review

China's fine traditional culture is a cultural system with profound connotations, rich connotations and distinctive features. Constructivism holds that knowledge is acquired through interaction and construction. Chinese traditional culture and English teaching mutually promote and complement each other. Domestic studies focus on the integration of traditional culture into English teaching, and foreign studies focus on the importance of native language culture.

2.1 Definition of Chinese traditional culture and theoretical basis

Traditional Chinese culture refers to the ideas, ethics, customs, and values accumulated over more than 5,000 years of Chinese civilization. It is characterized by historical continuity, dynamic development, and unique national imprints (Li, 2020).

Excellent Chinese traditional culture is a subset of Chinese traditional culture, and understanding it requires first understanding the meaning of Chinese traditional culture, which is closely tied to what we usually refer to as Chinese culture. Chinese culture, sometimes referred to as simply "Chinese culture," is the culture that the people of China have developed over thousands of years. It is ever-evolving and uniquely Chinese. Material culture, institutional culture, and intellectual culture make up this culture, according to the insights of cultural experts on the construction of culture. Put another way, Chinese culture is a deep, rich, organic totality with a lengthy history. Meanwhile, the ideological culture is the essence of Chinese culture, embodying its spirit and weather, and representing its most fundamental aspects.

The theory of construction challenges traditional ideas and advocates that knowledge is the process of learners' active construction. Through interaction with the environment, learners actively explore their own experience and knowledge background to build a personal knowledge system. Theoretical characteristics include: emphasizing the construction of knowledge, believing that learners actively construct knowledge on existing experience; highlighting the initiative of



learners, making them become active explorers; attaching attention to social interaction and situational relevance, and improving problem solving ability through communication, cooperation and practical situational learning. In educational practice, the theory of construction doctrine provides a new perspective, guides educational innovation, improves the quality of education, and promotes the all-round development of students. Future studies should explore more effective implementation strategies.

2.2 Relationship between Chinese traditional culture and English teaching

The significance of English as a universal language across the globe is growing with the acceleration of globalization. Teaching English requires more than just imparting language skills; it also requires considering how culture is passed down and developed. As a result, incorporating traditional Chinese culture into middle school English instruction fosters national pride, advances cultural innovation and inheritance, and helps students become more culturally literate and capable of communicating across cultural boundaries.

Encourage the traditional Chinese culture while building students' cultural self-assurance. Teaching middle school English with a focus on traditional Chinese culture can aid pupils in developing a more thorough understanding and appreciation of their own culture. Students can gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the distinct charm of Chinese culture through the English expression of traditional culture, which in turn helps them to become more culturally literate. In addition, this kind of instruction helps students develop their humanistic spirit and prepares them to become modern, globally-minded, and culturally aware young people. As they study English, let the pupils get a deeper understanding of and affection for their own national culture. This method can help kids feel more confident in their culture and their country. They can only maintain their cultural attitude in cross-border exchanges and propagate the wonderful customs of Chinese culture if they have sufficient faith in their own culture.

The study of traditional culture helps people learn English. English instruction in middle schools can be made more engaging and vibrant by including elements of traditional Chinese culture. Teachers can motivate pupils and pique their interest in studying by offering cultural backgrounds and relatable experiences. Additionally, by fostering students' critical thinking and cross-cultural communication abilities, this teaching approach raises the bar for English instruction.

Bolstering students' ability to communicate across cultural boundaries. In the context of globalization, diverse cultures interact and impact one another. Intercultural communication is becoming a vital aspect of peoples' lives and careers. Through the integration of traditional Chinese culture with middle school English language instruction, students can acquire the skills necessary to not only share and promote Chinese culture in English, but also acquire authentic English expressions. China's cultural soft power is strengthened as a result of students' proficiency in cross-cultural communication, in addition to their improvement as global communicators. Incorporating traditional Chinese culture into middle school English instruction benefits Chinese culture's ongoing innovation and development in addition to aiding in its transmission. Students can enhance and improve their own cultural traditions by learning from the benefits of other cultures while studying English. In addition, fresh perspectives and inspirations can be generated through cross-cultural interactions and collisions, supporting the creative advancement of Chinese culture.

2.3 Literature review

Since the 1990s, Chinese academic circles began to show their importance to local traditional culture in the research of foreign language teaching. As time goes by, they gradually realize that the education methods that overemphasize grammar and vocabulary knowledge are insufficient, and at the same time, the importance of Traditional Chinese traditional culture in language teaching has become increasingly prominent.

Most domestic scholars believe that Chinese traditional culture plays an important role in English teaching, and it is necessary and urgent to integrate it into the teaching. For example, Ludi (2021) stated that there is Chinese cultural aphasia among junior high school students. Jie Tao (2020) pointed out that Chinese traditional culture is the key in college English education, but its development is insufficient. It is necessary to strengthen integration, identify problems, and seek solutions from teaching materials, teacher training, students' ideas and teaching innovation. At the same time, Huang Jinyue (2021) emphasizes that moral education is the core of education, which is rooted in traditional Chinese culture. English teachers should integrate Chinese culture into teaching and explore the cultural elements of teaching materials, so as to cultivate students with complete personality and cultural confidence. Also, Xiao Long-Fu (2001) pointed out that language is the core of culture and is closely linked to culture, and the two are inseparable. In the teaching process, cultural education and language teaching should pay equal attention to.

However, there are few studies abroad, mainly focusing on the importance of culture in language teaching. For example, Mikhaleva and Jean-Claude Regnier believe that students' foreign language culture has a profound impact on their personal development, which is crucial to improving their foreign language ability. (Mikhaleva, Jean-Claude Regnier, qtd. in Lu Di, 2021: 22) At present, the main task of foreign language teaching is to create an environment for students to learn their mother tongue and target language culture, so as to promote their all-round development. Secondly, Kristen Michelson (2019) proposed that teachers need careful and prudent planning for the education of language, culture and discourse. At the same time, Beth Clark-Gareca and Min Gui (2018) indicates that the differences in teachers' ideas about grammar teaching and educational methods may affect their selection of actual teaching means, because these means are considered to be of different degrees of importance in shaping students' language learning effect. In addition, Allison J. Spender (2018) research showed that educators are more willing to choose cultural content when choosing teaching content.

In short, foreign scholars agree that culture plays an important role in language learning. The purpose of cultural education is not limited to understanding foreign cultures, but also emphasizes the interaction and understanding between the two cultures, as well as the expression of respect for cultural differences. Learning and displaying Chinese culture is

now regarded as a core element of cross-cultural communication.

Previous studies focused more on college and high schools, while junior high school. However, the new curriculum standard (2022) emphasizes the need for junior middle school students to deeply understand Chinese culture and be able to demonstrate it in English.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a case study approach combined with a survey design to investigate the integration of traditional Chinese culture into English teaching a middle school in Hailar. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through questionnaires to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current situation from both teachers' and students' perspectives.

3.2 Participants

The study was conducted at a middle school in Hailar Inner Mongolia. Two groups of participants were involved:

Teachers: A total of 12 English teachers from the school participated in the survey, achieving a 100% response rate. The teachers represented various teaching experience levels: 3 years or less (4 teachers), 4-10 years (5 teachers), and 11-20 years (3 teachers). They taught across all three grades, with some teaching multiple grades.

Students: A sample of 240 students was randomly selected from Grades 7 to 9. A total of 233 valid questionnaires were collected, yielding an effective response rate of 97.08%. The sample included 78 students from Grade 7, 80 from Grade 8, and 75 from Grade 9, with a balanced gender distribution (118 males and 115 females).

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Questionnaire for Teachers

A self-designed questionnaire was developed to investigate teachers' perceptions, practices, and challenges regarding the integration of traditional Chinese culture into English teaching (see Appendix A for the full questionnaire). The questionnaire consisted of five sections: Basic Information: teaching experience, grade taught, and prior training in traditional culture. Cognition and Awareness: teachers' perceived necessity of cultural integration, self-assessed understanding of traditional culture, and views on its relevance to English teaching. Teaching Practice Behaviors: content integrated, frequency of integration, depth of textbook exploration, and design of culture-related activities. Teaching Methods and Resources: methods used, availability of resources, and initiative in collecting cultural materials. Teaching Difficulties and Demands: challenges encountered and desired support. The questionnaire included both closed-ended items and open-ended questions to collect quantitative and qualitative data.

3.3.2 Questionnaire for Students

The student questionnaire (see Appendix B) was adapted to assess students' interest in traditional culture, their exposure to cultural content in English classes, and their learning needs. It covered five areas: Basic Information: grade and self-reported English proficiency. Cognition and Interest: interest in traditional culture, self-assessed understanding, and willingness to learn its English expression. Classroom Experience: frequency and content of cultural instruction, depth of explanation, and organization of culture-related activities. Learning Ability and Experience: ability to express traditional culture in English, perceived helpfulness of cultural integration, and evaluation of current teaching methods. Learning Needs and Preferences: preferred content and teaching formats, and desire to introduce Chinese culture to foreigners in English.

3.3.3 Validity

Both questionnaires were reviewed by two experienced English teachers for content validity and revised based on their feedback. The questionnaires were administered in Chinese to ensure accurate understanding, while an English version was prepared for the appendix to accommodate international readers.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected in March 2024 during the regular school term. Questionnaires were distributed during class time. Teachers completed the questionnaires independently in their office. For students, the classroom teachers administered the questionnaires, providing explanations when necessary to ensure understanding of the items. Each questionnaire took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. All responses were anonymous to encourage honesty.

3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the closed-ended questions were entered into Microsoft Excel and analyzed using descriptive statistics. For multiple-choice items, frequencies and percentages were calculated to identify patterns in responses.

Qualitative data from the open-ended questions were translated and analyzed thematically. The researcher read all responses multiple times, identified recurring patterns and themes, and categorized them into major themes related to challenges and suggestions. Representative responses were selected as illustrative examples in the findings section.

4. Findings: Current Situation of Integrating Chinese Traditional Culture into Middle School English Teaching

Currently, the integration of Chinese traditional culture into middle school English education poses numerous challenges. Questionnaire results from 12 teachers and 233 students a middle school in Hailar reveal three major challenges.

4.1 Teachers' Limited Awareness and Knowledge of Chinese Traditional Culture

English teachers in a middle school in Hailar exhibit a deficit in comprehension of traditional culture. Survey data show that no teacher reported having an "in-depth understanding" of traditional culture (able to systematically explain cultural connotations in English). The majority (58.33%, 7 teachers) described their understanding as "slight" (knowing only some cultural symbols), while 41.67% (5 teachers) reported "basic understanding" (familiar with common festivals and

customs). Furthermore, 66.67% of teachers (8 out of 12) had never received any training related to traditional Chinese culture, and only one teacher (8.33%) had received training 3-5 times.

This knowledge gap affects classroom practice. The prevalent education system among English teachers tends to prioritize the instruction of English grammar and western culture, with limited engagement in Chinese traditional culture. Additionally, the evaluation system for teachers' career development often relies heavily on students' English performance, leading them to prioritize exam-related content. When asked about difficulties in integrating traditional culture, 91.67% of teachers (11 out of 12) cited "heavy teaching workload with no extra time for design" as a major challenge, and 75.00% (9 teachers) acknowledged "insufficient personal cultural knowledge" as a barrier.

This conceptual mismatch not only hinders teachers' efforts to disseminate traditional Chinese culture but also limits students' opportunities to fully comprehend their own cultural heritage.

4.2 Emphasizing English Grammar Content While Neglecting Chinese Traditional Culture

Currently, middle school English textbooks encompass an abundance of traditional cultural knowledge materials, including traditional festivals, ancient poems, and historical tales. However, the emphasis on this content in teaching is insufficient. Survey data reveal that only 8.33% of teachers (1 out of 12) reported "in-depth exploration and extended explanation" of cultural elements in textbooks. The majority (58.33%, 7 teachers) admitted to "only explaining the superficial content mentioned in textbooks," while 33.33% (4 teachers) "ignored cultural elements in textbooks" altogether. This superficial treatment directly affects students' learning experience. 48.07% of students (112 out of 233) reported that their teacher "only teaches English words, with no explanation of cultural meaning," and another 14.16% (33 students) said their teacher "never explains" traditional culture. Only 5.58% (13 students) reported that their teacher "often expands on cultural connotations."

Consequently, students' ability to express traditional culture in English is severely limited. The survey shows that only 3.00% of students (7 out of 233) could "fluently and accurately express" traditional culture in English. The vast majority—65.24% (152 students)—could "only recognize individual words, unable to express complete ideas," and 19.74% (46 students) were "completely unable" to express traditional culture in English. This confirms the "Chinese culture aphasia" phenomenon identified in previous research.

4.3 Limited Approaches to Integrating Chinese Traditional Culture

In the endeavor to merge traditional Chinese culture with English education, middle school English instructors encounter significant challenges in teaching methods. The lack of specialized strategies makes many teachers feel unable to integrate traditional culture effectively. Survey data show that 83.33% of teachers (10 out of 12) cited "lack of clear teaching strategies and methods" as a major difficulty, and 83.33% (10 teachers) also reported "lack of standardized English expression materials" as a barrier.

Teaching methods currently used are highly monotonous. All 12 teachers (100%) relied on "oral explanation of English expressions" as their primary method for integrating traditional culture. More interactive methods were rarely used: only 33.33% (4 teachers) used multimedia display, 16.67% (2 teachers) used group discussion, and just 8.33% (1 teacher) used role-playing or writing tasks.

This traditional, teacher-centered approach ignores students' initiative and participation. Students passively receive knowledge with few opportunities to think and explore, which fails to stimulate their interest. Survey data reveal a stark mismatch between teachers' methods and students' preferences: only 15.02% of students (35 out of 233) preferred "teacher's oral explanation," while the vast majority preferred interactive formats—85.84% (200 students) wanted animation/video explanation, 72.10% (168 students) preferred role-playing, and 68.67% (160 students) wanted to make English posters.

Furthermore, students' content preferences point toward everyday, lived culture: 82.40% (192 students) wanted to learn about traditional food and diet culture, and 78.11% (182 students) wanted to learn about traditional festivals and customs. This suggests that current teaching methods fail to address what students actually want to learn.

Therefore, the current approach is not only difficult to stimulate students' interest but also unable to help them truly understand and feel the essence of traditional Chinese culture.

5. Discussion

5.1 Teachers' Limited Cultural Knowledge: A Systemic Gap

The finding that no teacher reported in-depth understanding of traditional culture and 66.67% had never received relevant training reveals a systemic gap in teacher preparation. This finding aligns with Yang, Liu and Ge's (2019) report that nearly 30% of primary and secondary school teachers in China have only basic knowledge of traditional culture. The lack of training opportunities—despite policy emphasis on "cultural confidence"—suggests a disconnect between top-down mandates and bottom-up teacher support.

Several factors may explain this gap. First, teacher education programs historically focused on language proficiency and teaching methods, with minimal attention to cultural content knowledge. Second, in-service professional development rarely addresses traditional culture integration, as evidenced by the 66.67% of teachers who never received such training. Third, the exam-oriented education system prioritizes grammar instruction, giving teachers little incentive to invest time in developing cultural knowledge. This systemic gap has direct consequences for classroom practice. As discussed in the literature review, constructivist theory emphasizes that teachers must first construct their own knowledge before they can facilitate students' learning. Teachers cannot teach what they do not know. As one teacher in this study noted, "I only know basic facts about festivals, but I don't know how to explain cultural meaning in English."

5.2 Superficial Integration: The Grammar-Culture Trade-off

The finding that only 8.33% of teachers deeply explore cultural elements in textbooks while 62.23% of students receive only vocabulary-level cultural instruction points to a superficial approach to integration. This finding echoes Tao's (2020) observation that traditional culture development in English education is "insufficient" despite its recognized importance. It also supports Lu's (2021) documentation of "Chinese culture aphasia" among students, with 84.98% of students in this study unable to express traditional culture in English. The superficiality can be attributed to several factors. First, as Figure 3 shows, 91.67% of teachers cited "heavy workload with no extra time"—suggesting that cultural integration is seen as an add-on rather than an integral part of language teaching. Second, the 83.33% who lacked "standardized English expression materials" indicates that teachers lack ready-to-use resources. Third, the 58.33% who cited "exam-oriented focus" reveals a perceived incompatibility between cultural teaching and test preparation.

From a constructivist perspective, this superficial approach is problematic because it treats culture as isolated vocabulary items rather than as meaningful knowledge to be actively constructed. When students only learn words like "dumpling" and "lantern" without understanding their cultural significance, they miss the opportunity to build connections between language and meaning—a core principle of constructivist learning.

5.3 Method Mismatch: Teacher-Centered vs. Student-Preferred Approaches

The most striking finding is the complete mismatch between teachers' methods (100% oral explanation) and students' preferences (only 15% preferring this approach). As established in the literature review, constructivist theory advocates for learning through social interaction, authentic contexts, and active engagement. Yet current practice remains firmly transmission-oriented: teachers talk, students listen. This contradicts constructivist principles and may explain why students find current methods unengaging. Students' strong preference for video explanation (85.84%) and role-playing (72.10%) aligns with constructivist emphasis on situated learning—knowledge acquired through authentic contexts and active participation. These methods allow students to experience culture rather than just hear about it. The preference for food and festival content (over 78%) also makes pedagogical sense from a constructivist view: everyday, lived culture provides familiar schemas onto which new knowledge can be built.

The mismatch between teachers' methods and students' preferences represents a missed opportunity. Students enter the classroom with high interest (77.25% interested in traditional culture) and strong willingness to learn (82.83% willing to learn English expression). Current teaching methods fail to capitalize on this motivation. As one student commented, "The teacher just tells us the English words. It feels like memorizing vocabulary, not really learning about culture." This finding suggests that improving cultural integration requires not just adding content, but fundamentally rethinking pedagogical approaches to align with how students learn best.

6. Strategies of Integrating Chinese Traditional Culture into Middle School English Teaching

Based on the findings presented above—teachers' limited cultural knowledge, superficial textbook exploration, and monotonous teaching methods—this section proposes three strategies to improve the integration of traditional Chinese culture into middle school English teaching.

6.1 Raising Teachers' Consciousness and Knowledge of Chinese Traditional Culture

The finding that no teacher reported in-depth understanding of traditional culture and 66.67% had never received relevant training highlights an urgent need to enhance teachers' cultural knowledge and awareness.

It is crucial that teachers conduct in-depth research and study traditional Chinese culture. In order to better comprehend the fundamental meanings and values of a culture, educators can gain a greater understanding of its beginnings, development, and key characteristics by reading classic literature. Taking part in academic lectures or seminars is another important approach to improve knowledge. In addition to sharing their own opinions and experiences, teachers can converse with professionals and researchers and hear about their research findings and thoughts. Instructors can also draw comparisons between traditional Chinese culture and other civilizations, noting their parallels and contrasts as well as benefits and drawbacks. They can learn more about the wisdom of ancient Chinese culture, its special worth and significance, the opportunities and difficulties it faces in modern society through comparison.

Culture is a constantly evolving process. To ensure that their understanding of traditional Chinese culture is always at the highest level, teachers must constantly study, pay attention to, and stay up to date on the newest research findings and development trends in the field. Teachers who have a stronger awareness of traditional Chinese culture should work to build their cultural confidence. They possess the ability to assess traditional culture impartially, preserve its positive aspects while enhancing its negative ones, and all the while instill in their students a sense of pride and self-assurance. Combining the best aspects of traditional culture with contemporary living and assisting pupils in discovering its relevance and applicability are vital educational objectives for educators. In addition to improving students' comprehension of and ability to transmit ancient culture, this approach cultivates in them the moral principles, social responsibility, and self-cultivation necessary for them to successfully integrate into contemporary society.

Enhancing educators' understanding of traditional Chinese culture is an arduous and methodical task, requiring teachers' work and methods in many areas. This understanding not only improves teachers' personal attributes but also provides children with better cultural education and promotes their overall development.

6.2 Combining Chinese Traditional Culture and Deeply Expanding Textbooks

The finding that only 8.33% of teachers deeply explore cultural elements in textbooks and 84.98% of students cannot express traditional culture in English indicates an urgent need to move beyond superficial textbook treatment.

Combining students' interests and psychological traits with an understanding of these traits, along with selecting traditional cultural materials that are relevant to them—such as games, stories, music—can help draw students in and enhance their interest in learning while emphasizing the practical application of English. This is done by determining the

students' actual English proficiency and creating instructional activities that have real-world applications, like playing games, telling traditional cultural stories in English, writing English compositions about traditional culture, and so forth. This can enhance students' comprehension and awareness of traditional culture while assisting them in applying what they have learned in English to real-world situations.

Teachers can concentrate on imparting some basic traditional cultural knowledge, such as traditional festivals and customs, to lower-grade students whose English foundation is relatively weak. This will help students comprehend and identify traditional culture while also improving their vocabulary and expression skills in the language. By narrating traditional stories and explaining the English origins of traditional holidays, students can gain an understanding of traditional culture in a casual and covert setting. Senior students have a relatively high English proficiency, so teachers can go further in explaining creative knowledge.

Example: Integrating 24 Solar Terms into Grade 7 Teaching

Taking Unit 7 Volume 2 Grade 7 of Ren'ai version as an example. This unit takes "the birthday party" as the theme and teaches key language structures, such as month vocabulary and sentences describing birth date, so as to enhance students' ability of vocabulary and sentence pattern construction. In the teaching process, emphasize the correct spelling and reading of year, month and ordinal words to improve reading and writing skills and date cognitive ability. At the same time, teachers should combine the twenty-four solar terms of Chinese traditional culture. China's twenty-four solar terms carry rich farming culture and scientific knowledge. Teachers can guide students to learn how to express these solar terms in English, such as "Spring Equinox", "Winter Solstice", and further explain the meaning and traditional customs, such as tomb-sweeping, eating dumplings on Winter Solstice. Such teaching not only enriches the course content but also stimulates students' sense of identity with traditional culture and deepens their understanding of English as a communicative tool.

Example: Integrating Peking Opera into Grade 8 Teaching

Taking Unit 5 Volume 2 Grade 8 of Ren'ai version as an example. This unit takes "feeling excited" as the theme and is designed to help students better understand and express their emotional states. By learning words like excited, upset, happy, the teaching content skillfully integrates elements of traditional Chinese culture and Peking Opera. Teachers need to guide students to explore the role types of Peking Opera and its rich facial makeup, costumes, singing, and figure elements, so that students can understand the basic knowledge and feel the charm of Peking Opera art. Students can not only broaden their cultural vision but also appreciate the melody, rhythm, and form of Peking Opera, deeply understand the profound Chinese traditional culture, inspire their love of Peking Opera art, further enhance their national pride, and make them more cherish and inherit their own cultural roots in the context of globalization.

To integrate and maximize textbooks according to the curriculum and students' real circumstances, teachers must study textbooks thoroughly to understand the traditional Chinese culture in them. To give pupils a more comprehensive understanding of traditional culture's diversity and depth, teachers can integrate more cultural aspects and explore the meanings of traditional culture further during the integration process.

6.3 Using Diverse Teaching Approaches

The finding that 100% of teachers rely on oral explanation while only 15% of students prefer this method reveals a critical need to diversify teaching approaches to align with students' preferences for interactive, visual, and experiential learning.

Using Multimedia and Life-Oriented Approaches. Instructors can showcase traditional Chinese culture with a range of multimedia materials, including films, music, images, and more. Students' cross-cultural communication abilities can be enhanced and their intuitive understanding of Chinese culture can be strengthened with this method. The knowledge and comprehension of traditional Chinese culture among students can be significantly increased in English classrooms by incorporating multimedia and life-oriented teaching strategies.

Example: Spring Festival Teaching with Multimedia

Taking Unit 8 Volume 2 Grade 7 of Ren'ai version as an example. The core theme of this unit is "Season and Weather". In the third part of the unit, "let's celebrate", students will master word spellings related to festivals and food. By learning how to introduce the traditional Chinese festival of the Spring Festival, students can get familiar with the unique customs of expressing the Spring Festival.

When the teacher explains the Chinese Spring Festival, using multimedia technology to show the customs of China can help students have a more intuitive understanding of the diversity of traditional culture. Simultaneously, encouraging students to seek out pertinent videos or films of foreigners celebrating the Chinese New Year in China might pique their curiosity about traditional culture and help them recognize its appeal and importance on a global scale. Considering their own understanding of Chinese New Year, teachers might encourage students to discuss and explain the New Year's customs from their own families. With this method, students can develop their English expression skills while actively participating in class activities. The instructor may also go into additional detail about the Spring Festival's beginnings, origins, and other cultural practices. Students can be made aware of the customs, cuisine, and symbolism associated with the Spring Festival, for instance, which encourages them to reflect carefully on the meanings and principles of traditional culture.

Using Role-Playing and Simulation Activities. Instructors might set up role-playing or simulation exercises to mimic Chinese cultural scenarios, like calligraphy, tea ceremonies, and traditional handicrafts. In the context of teaching English in the classroom, role-playing and simulation exercises are particularly useful for covering topics related to traditional Chinese culture. Students can explore and imitate Chinese cultural scenarios through role-playing, including the tea ceremony, calligraphy, traditional handicrafts, and more.

To help students understand essential cultural background and norms, teachers impart basic concepts and background

information about Chinese culture. Then, students are grouped and assigned responsibilities for simulation exercises. They're encouraged to converse in English during role - playing, which improves English expression and broadens awareness of Chinese culture. For example, in the tea ceremony simulation, students can pretend to be tea masters and guests, using English to describe the process and share tea - tasting experiences. In the calligraphy simulation, they can convey calligraphy fundamentals, admire works in English, create calligraphy on the spot, and display their creations.

7. Conclusion

This study investigated the integration of traditional Chinese culture into middle school English teaching through a survey of 12 teachers and 233 students at Hailar No. 9 Middle School. The findings reveal three major challenges.

First, teachers' cultural knowledge and training are insufficient: no teacher reported in-depth understanding of traditional culture, and 66.67% had never received relevant training. Second, classroom integration remains superficial: only 8.33% of teachers deeply explore cultural elements in textbooks, and 84.98% of students cannot express traditional culture in English. Third, teaching methods are monotonous and misaligned with student preferences: 100% of teachers rely on oral explanation, yet only 15.02% of students prefer this method, while over 70% favor interactive approaches like video explanation and role-playing.

Based on these findings, the study proposed three strategies: (1) enhancing teachers' cultural awareness and knowledge through systematic training and self-study; (2) deeply exploring textbook cultural elements with concrete examples from Ren'ai version textbooks; and (3) diversifying teaching methods to include multimedia, role-playing, and student-centered activities that align with students' learning preferences.

This study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence from a typical middle school context, supporting previous research on "Chinese culture aphasia" (Lu, 2021) and insufficient cultural integration (Tao, 2020). It also demonstrates how constructivist learning theory can inform practical teaching strategies, showing that effective cultural integration requires active knowledge construction rather than passive transmission.

7.1 Practical Contributions

For teachers, this study offers concrete, textbook-based examples of how to integrate traditional culture into everyday lessons. For curriculum developers, it highlights the need for standardized English expression materials and training programs. For policymakers, it underscores the gap between policy mandates (e.g., the 2022 Curriculum Standards) and classroom reality, suggesting that teacher support must accompany curriculum reform.

7.2 Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, the sample size was relatively small, particularly for the teacher survey (N=12), which limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study relied on self-reported questionnaire data rather than classroom observations, which may introduce response bias. Third, the data were collected from a single school, so the findings may not be representative of all middle schools in different regions.

Future research should address these limitations by including larger and more diverse samples across multiple schools and regions. Longitudinal studies could examine the long-term effects of cultural integration strategies on students' cultural confidence and English proficiency. Action research could explore how teachers develop cultural knowledge and pedagogical skills through professional development programs. Finally, intervention studies could test the effectiveness of the strategies proposed in this paper, providing empirical evidence for what works in practice.

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Appendix: Survey Questionnaire and Data Table on the Integration of Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture in Junior High School English Teaching

Appendix A: Teacher Version of the Survey Questionnaire

Respondents: Junior High School English Teachers

Research Purpose: To investigate junior high school English teachers' cognition, behaviors, difficulties and demands in integrating excellent Chinese traditional culture into English teaching, so as to provide data support for proposing targeted integration strategies.

Instructions: This is an anonymous questionnaire and all data are only used for academic research. There are no right or wrong answers. Please fill in the questionnaire according to your actual teaching situation. You can choose a single option or multiple options (marked with multiple choices). Please tick "√" in the corresponding option.

1. Basic Information of Teachers

Your teaching experience: ≤3 years 4-10 years 11-20 years >20 years

Grades you teach: Grade 7 Grade 8 Grade 9 Cross-grade

Have you received training related to Chinese traditional culture? Never 1-2 times 3-5 times >5 times

2. Cognition and Awareness of Traditional Culture

Do you think it is necessary to integrate Chinese traditional culture into junior high school English teaching?

Extremely necessary Necessary Neutral Unnecessary Completely unnecessary

Your understanding of Chinese traditional culture?

In-depth understanding (can systematically explain cultural connotations and express them in English) Basic understanding (familiar with basic content such as common festivals and customs)

Slight understanding (only know some cultural symbols) No understanding

How do you think the correlation between Chinese traditional culture and junior high school English teaching?

Extremely high Relatively high Neutral Relatively low No correlation

What do you think of the effect of integrating traditional culture on improving students' English learning ability?

Extremely significant Relatively significant Neutral Slight No effect

3. Teaching Practice Behaviors (Multiple Choices)

The main traditional cultural content you integrate into English teaching includes:

Traditional festivals (Spring Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, etc.) Traditional art (Peking Opera, calligraphy, tea art, etc.)

Traditional customs (24 Solar Terms, diet culture, etc.) Historical celebrities and allusions Never integrate Others _____

The frequency of integrating traditional culture into your teaching?

In every class 1-2 times a week 1-2 times a month Several times a semester Never integrate

How do you explore the traditional cultural elements in textbooks?

In-depth excavation and extended explanation Only explain the superficial content mentioned in textbooks Ignore the cultural elements in textbooks

Do you design English classroom activities related to traditional culture (such as English introduction, writing, role-playing, etc.)?

Often Occasionally Seldom Never

4. Teaching Methods and Resources

The main teaching methods you adopt when integrating traditional culture (Multiple Choices):

Oral explanation of English expressions Multimedia display (pictures, videos, audio) Group discussion and sharing

Role-playing/Situational simulation Reading and writing task design (composition, poster, etc.) No specific methods

What do you think of the available English teaching resources of traditional culture at present?

Extremely abundant Relatively abundant Neutral Relatively scarce Extremely scarce

Do you take the initiative to collect English expression materials of traditional culture?

Often Occasionally Seldom Never

5. Teaching Difficulties and Demands (Multiple Choices)

The main difficulties you encounter in integrating traditional culture into teaching:

Insufficient reserve of own cultural knowledge Lack of standardized English expression materials of traditional culture

Heavy teaching tasks, no extra time for design Lack of clear teaching strategies and methods

Exam-oriented, thinking cultural integration has no practical significance Low student interest

No relevant support from the school Others _____

The support you hope to obtain:

Training on traditional cultural knowledge English expression material library of traditional culture

Demonstration lessons/lesson plans for integrated teaching Teaching arrangement support at the school level

Interdisciplinary teaching cooperation of traditional culture Others _____

Do you think it is necessary to include traditional cultural literacy in the English teaching evaluation system?

Extremely necessary Necessary Neutral Unnecessary Completely unnecessary

Appendix B Student Version of the Survey Questionnaire

English Version

Respondents: Grade 7-9 Junior High School Students

Research Purpose: To investigate junior high school students' cognition of Chinese traditional culture, experience of contacting traditional culture in English class and learning needs, so as to provide a basis for optimizing integration strategies.

Instructions: This is an anonymous questionnaire and all data are only used for academic research. There are no right or wrong answers. Please fill in the questionnaire according to your actual learning situation. You can choose a single option or multiple options (marked with multiple choices). Please tick "√" in the corresponding option.

1. Basic Information of Students

Your grade: Grade 7 Grade 8 Grade 9

Your English academic performance: Excellent Good Average Poor

2. Cognition and Interest in Traditional Culture

Are you interested in Chinese traditional culture?

Extremely interested Relatively interested Neutral Uninterested Completely uninterested

Your understanding of Chinese traditional culture?

In-depth understanding (can clarify cultural background and connotations) Basic understanding (familiar with common festivals and customs)

Slight understanding (only know a small amount of cultural content) No understanding

Are you willing to learn the English expression of Chinese traditional culture in English class?

Extremely willing Willing Neutral Unwilling Completely unwilling

3. Experience of Cultural Contact in English Class

Does your English teacher explain the English expression of Chinese traditional culture in class?

In every class Often Occasionally Seldom Never

The main traditional cultural content you contact in English class (Multiple Choices):

Traditional festivals Traditional art Traditional customs Historical celebrities and allusions Never contact

Others _____

When your English teacher explains traditional culture, will he/she expand the cultural connotations (such as the origin of festivals, the meaning of customs)?

Often Occasionally Only teach English words, no expansion Never explain

Does your English teacher organize English classroom activities related to traditional culture (such as English introduction, role-playing, writing, etc.)?

Often Occasionally Seldom Never

4. Learning Ability and Experience

Can you accurately express common Chinese traditional cultural content in English (such as Spring Festival customs, Peking Opera, etc.)?

Fluent and accurate expression Simple expression with a few errors Only know individual words, unable to express Completely unable

Do you think integrating traditional culture into English class is helpful for your English learning?

Extremely helpful Relatively helpful Neutral Slightly helpful No help

What do you think of the current teaching form of traditional culture in English class?

Extremely interesting Relatively interesting Neutral Boring and tedious No feeling

5. Learning Needs and Preferences (Multiple Choices)

The traditional cultural content you hope to learn in English class:

Traditional festivals and customs Traditional art (calligraphy, Chinese painting, Peking Opera, tea art, etc.)

Traditional food and diet culture Historical celebrities and classic allusions Traditional crafts (paper-cutting, embroidery, etc.) Others _____

The English teaching form of traditional culture you prefer:

Animation/video explanation Group discussion and English sharing Role-playing/Situational simulation

Making English posters/handwritten newspapers Teacher's oral explanation English writing (such as a short composition introducing traditional culture) Others _____

Do you hope to introduce Chinese traditional culture to foreigners in English through English class?

Extremely hopeful Hopeful Neutral Unhopeful Completely unnecessary

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