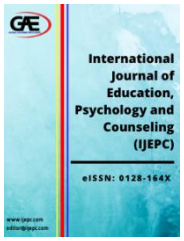
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NEEDS ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPING A TRADITIONAL CHINESE CULTURE INTEGRATED ENGLISH TEACHING MODULE FOR YEAR 1 SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN GANZHOU

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Abstract:

English teaching at the senior high school level in China has traditionally focused on Western culture, while Traditional Chinese Culture (TCC) is often fragmented and superficial. This imbalance may undermine students' cultural confidence and intercultural awareness, despite national curriculum standards calling for the integration of Chinese culture. Existing textbooks and teaching practices fall short of these expectations, with teachers facing challenges such as limited training, scarce resources, and exam-oriented constraints. Students also lack sufficient cultural background and the ability to express TCC concepts in English. This study accordingly conducts a needs analysis to explicitly identify teachers' current practices, pedagogical needs, and barriers for integrating TCC into Year 1 senior high school English teaching in Ganzhou, providing an evidence base for developing a TCC-integrated English teaching module. Six experienced English teachers and three English teaching coordinators (subject leaders) participated in semi-structured interviews. Qualitative and document analyses revealed four key gaps: insufficient teacher training in cultural content knowledge, a scarcity of ready-to-use English-medium TCC teaching resources, examination and timetable pressures that crowd out cultural teaching, and students' limited ability to express TCC in English. Teachers accordingly called for a culturally responsive, flexible module aligned with curriculum themes, lesson pacing and project-based

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learning. The study's principal contribution is this evidence-based needs analysis, which directly informs the design of a structured, engaging English teaching module that effectively integrates TCC and meets local educational needs. By addressing these systemic and instructional barriers, the proposed module may support students' cultural identity and intercultural competence and could contribute to bridging policy and classroom practice in Ganzhou senior high school English education.

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Keyword:

Curriculum Integration; English Language Teaching; Needs Analysis; Pedagogical Challenges; Traditional Chinese Culture (TCC)

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Introduction

Research Background

Against the backdrop of global cultural exchange, integrating Traditional Chinese Culture (TCC) into senior high English teaching has become an essential pedagogical priority. As President Xi (2017) emphasized in the report of the 19th National Congress of China, cultural confidence is a core pillar of China's cultural soft power and international communication capacity. TCC acts as the spiritual lifeblood of the Chinese nation, laying a solid foundation for fostering core socialist values and stabilizing cultural identity amid global cultural collisions (Xi, 2017).

English serves as a vital medium for cross-cultural communication. Instead of merely cultivating students' linguistic proficiency, senior high English education is obligated to help learners comprehend and appreciate their native cultural heritage to build solid cultural confidence (Ye, 2024; Wu et al., 2024). The ancient classical maxim from Wei Zheng (637) states that "He who seeks the growth of a tree must strengthen its root; he who wants to flow far must dredge its source", which illustrates the irreplaceable value of cultural roots for long-term educational and social development.

Even though the General High School English Curriculum Standards (2017 Edition, Revised 2020) require systematic implementation of TCC in lessons, there is still considerable distance from official regulations to actual instruction. Currently, most popular textbook series contain scattered pieces of Chinese culture rather than special topics about China. Therefore, ordinary secondary school teachers in Ganzhou encounter many problems, such as inadequate cultural

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literacy concerning their own subjects, few locally developed learning materials related to TCC, and great examination-oriented teaching pressure (Lestari, 2025; Lu, 2019).

However, existing domestic empirical studies mostly explore nationwide TCC teaching challenges, while localized needs analysis targeting Year 1 senior high teachers in Ganzhou remains scarce. This research gap highlights the necessity of the present study, which carries out systematic needs analysis to investigate teachers' real classroom practices, core difficulties and tailored demands for developing a TCC-integrated English module.

More specifically, previous studies have not addressed three aspects of TCC integration in senior high school English teaching in China. First, existing research has largely concentrated on analysing textbook content at the national level (Shui, 2024; Lu & Zhang, 2024), leaving open the question of how these curricular deficiencies are actually experienced and managed by frontline teachers in their classrooms. Second, much of the available evidence concerns college English or junior high school settings (Ye, 2024; Ding, 2023), whereas Year 1 senior high school – a transitional stage in which students begin to engage with more complex cultural and linguistic content – remains under-examined. Third, few studies have conducted localized needs analyses in inland, comparatively under-resourced cities such as Ganzhou that generate actionable design input for a TCC-integrated teaching module, rather than general descriptions of teaching difficulties. The present study addresses these three under-explored aspects by systematically identifying teachers' current practices, pedagogical needs and barriers in Ganzhou.

Significance of the Study

This research carries out a systematic needs analysis of Year 1 senior high English teachers in Ganzhou, with the core goal of unpacking their daily teaching practices, practical obstacles, and specific instructional demands for embedding TCC into English lessons. The empirical data collected from this study can serve as reliable foundational evidence to develop a context-adapted, operable TCC-integrated teaching module that complies with national curriculum standards and fits local Ganzhou teaching conditions.

The objective of this study is therefore explicitly threefold: to identify (a) English teachers' current practices of integrating TCC in Year 1 senior high classrooms in Ganzhou, (b) their pedagogical needs and suggestions for developing a TCC-integrated English teaching module, and (c) the barriers they face in TCC integration.

The study delivers distinct theoretical and practical contributions. From a theoretical perspective, it enriches two core strands of language education research: Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) model and Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory. Most prior ICC scholarship centers on learners' reception of foreign Western culture, while this research supplements the understudied dimension of native cultural output in EFL classrooms, expanding the theoretical application scope of intercultural frameworks in Chinese local secondary education.

Practically, the research identifies systematic classroom barriers including resource scarcity and exam-oriented constraints, and puts forward flexible, implementable instructional solutions targeted at local Ganzhou teachers. The proposed module design and supporting

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strategies may ease teachers' workload and could contribute to cultivating students' cultural identity and cross-cultural expressive abilities in English.

Furthermore, this study bridges the long-standing disconnect between national cultural education policies and frontline classroom execution. It offers localized pedagogical innovations that balance linguistic skill training and cultural cultivation, equipping senior high students with dual core qualities: solid English proficiency and robust cultural self-awareness required for global communication. The core contribution of the study is an evidence-based needs analysis that directly informs the development of the TCC-integrated English teaching module: each identified need is translated into a corresponding design principle (see Conclusion).

Research Questions

Based on the above considerations, this study focuses on the following research questions (Attachment 1):

1. What are the existing practices and challenges of English teachers in integrating TCC in Year 1 senior high school English classrooms in Ganzhou?
2. What are English teachers' pedagogical needs and suggestions for developing a TCC-integrated English teaching module?

Literature Review

The Role of Culture in Language Teaching

The intrinsic linkage between language and culture has long been recognized in applied linguistics and foreign language pedagogy. Kramsch (1993) posited that language acquisition cannot be complete without a thorough understanding of its embedded cultural context. Culture shapes linguistic expressions, communication norms, personal values and learners' self-identity simultaneously. Integrating both target foreign culture and native local culture into language classes can effectively foster learners' intercultural competence and deepen the significance of language learning (Kramsch, 1993; Brown, 2014).

Traditional English curricula across China have long prioritized British and American cultural content in textbooks and classroom activities due to historical resource limitations and teaching conventions (He, 2019). This biased arrangement risks disconnecting students from their native cultural roots and hinders the cultivation of cultural self-confidence required for domestic and global communication (Chen et al., 2019). Collectively, these studies highlight the imbalance between foreign culture input and indigenous cultural education in mainstream EFL classrooms.

Model Traditional Chinese Culture in English Language Education

Integrating Traditional Chinese Culture (TCC) into senior high English teaching has become an official requirement stipulated in successive national curriculum documents (Ministry of Education of China, 2020, 2022). Such policy orientations aim to strengthen national cultural

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soft power and equip students with the ability to authentically narrate Chinese stories to global audiences (Xi, 2017).

Byram's (1997) intercultural communicative competence (ICC) framework provides a core theoretical foundation for TCC-oriented EFL instruction. The model proposes four developmental dimensions: cultural attitudes, cultural knowledge, interpretative skills and critical cultural awareness, all of which can be cultivated through systematic native-cultural integrated lessons (Byram, 1997; Chen & Starosta, 2000).

Nevertheless, empirical studies reveal a stark gap between policy expectations and classroom practice. Current senior high textbooks only cover superficial TCC content such as traditional festivals, historical landmarks and folk arts, while largely overlooking profound philosophical thoughts, traditional value systems and modern cultural manifestations (Shui, 2024; Wang J., 2020). Such shallow cultural input restricts students' capacity to interpret and express the core connotations of Chinese culture in English (Lu & Zhang, 2024; Seviour, 2024).

Problems Concerning the Introduction of Traditional Chinese Culture in English Instruction

Existing empirical research summarizes four primary barriers to in-depth TCC integration in Chinese senior high English classrooms. First, TCC content in official textbooks is scattered and unstructured, lacking progressive learning sequences for students to absorb cultural knowledge layer by layer (Shui, 2024; Wang J., 2020). Second, most frontline teachers receive insufficient systematic training on cultural pedagogy and lack ready-to-use TCC teaching resources to design in-depth cultural lessons (Cai, 2015; Lu, 2019). Third, exam-centered teaching agendas squeeze out time for cultural activities, placing linguistic accuracy drills far above cultural exploration (Wang Q., 2020). Fourth, curriculum design rarely sets aside tasks for cross-cultural comparison, limiting students' development of critical intercultural thinking (He & Liu, 2024; Ding, 2023).

These four obstacles are more prominent in inland regions like Ganzhou, where educational resource allocation is relatively limited, making it harder for local teachers to balance compulsory textbook tasks and cultural teaching (Zhang, 2023). This regional disparity justifies the localized needs analysis conducted in the present study.

Pedagogical Approaches to Culturally Responsive English Teaching

International educational scholars advocate student-centered, culturally responsive teaching frameworks built on multimodal materials and project-based learning (PBL) to embed cultural education naturally within language training (Gay, 2010; Lestari, 2025). Such flexible instructional designs help teachers combine language skill cultivation and cultural enlightenment without disrupting pre-set teaching schedules.

Design and Development Research (DDR) serves as a suitable methodological framework for developing customized teaching materials. Featuring a cyclical workflow of needs analysis, instructional design, implementation and evaluation, DDR supports the creation of context-specific teaching modules grounded in real classroom demands (Richey & Klein, 2007).

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Domestic Chinese scholars further propose targeted instructional strategies tailored to local secondary education. They argue that TCC teaching should follow progressive cultural sequencing and combine multimodal audio, video and print materials with interactive group projects to sustain student engagement, while aligning all cultural tasks with core socialist values (Fu & Shao, 2024; Wang Q., 2023). Multimodal auxiliary resources and inquiry-based projects can simultaneously boost students' language proficiency and deepen their understanding of native cultural heritage.

Methodology

Research Design

It refers to a kind of qualitative study based on certain procedures of needs analysis. Its purpose is closely related to what some local Year-1 SHSE teachers actually do now concerning TCC in their classrooms, and it is also connected with these teachers' own needs and problems relative to bringing more TCC elements into their future English classes, according to their opinions. Therefore, conducting a qualitative investigation here makes sense, since doing so allows researchers to obtain firsthand information regarding teachers' true feelings about themselves from interviews conducted during this stage.

Two kinds of data collection instruments are used: semi-structured individual interviews (the main dataset) and documentary studies (as ancillary sources of information). Mixed methods work also involves methodological triangulation; therefore, researchers check what teachers say against what is officially stated about curricula in order to improve the reliability and validity of their findings (Bowen, 2009). Interpretivism was chosen because researchers are more concerned with how individuals feel and want to explain things according to specific circumstances.

It occupies the very beginning step called 'needs analysis' of DDR put forward by Richey and Klein (2007). All kinds of findings derived here shall constitute the starting point for designing modules afterwards, followed by the processes of obtaining experts' comments on these modules and trying them out in classes.

Participants

There were altogether six full-time Grade 1 senior high English class teachers and three school-based English teaching coordinators (subject leaders) involved in this study, who worked at schools located in Ganzhou. They were chosen based on purposive sampling and snowball sampling methods together (Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2014); hence everyone concerned had firsthand knowledge about how TCC was actually implemented there. Therefore, they could provide very valuable information regarding what happened during lessons themselves and also when curricula were designed accordingly.

The teachers included here had to satisfy three conditions: they must now teach Senior One High School English; hold some kind of valid teaching certificate, having taught Senior High School classes for more than five years altogether; and have tried on occasion to include TCC elements in what they taught. As coordinators, the other participants needed simply to plan curricula, make schedules, and allocate learning materials connected with first-year secondary school English programs in their own institutions.

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Recruitment referrals came from heads of schools and senior education officials in order to improve their credibility. Recruitment stopped when there was nothing left to learn about these topics from additional individuals (data saturation; Guest et al., 2006).

Classroom teachers gave some concrete lessons they had taught themselves; coordinators talked about curriculum planning and resource distribution in schools. Together they reported what they had experienced. Hence, there is also good field evidence derived from these people concerning certain problems existing locally when bringing TCC into senior high English classes in Ganzhou. Each interviewee was then assigned an anonymous code name during transcription: T1-T6 refer to six teachers; PH1-PH3 refer to three coordinators.

Nine may seem like too few people for anyone's liking, but this is quite normal according to the principles of qualitative research, because here one does not seek great numbers but instead tries to obtain richly informative cases and achieve saturation, rather than representing opinions statistically (Patton, 2014; Guest et al., 2006); hence the decision to include classroom teachers along with coordinators in order to capture what occurs at each level separately.

Data Collection

There were two chief means of obtaining information about what happened: semi-structured interviewing and documentary analysis.

Semi-structured interviews served as the core data source. All interviews were carried out offline in face-to-face meetings or through encrypted online channels based on each teacher's schedule and privacy demands. A standard interview protocol was pre-designed to center on four core themes: real TCC classroom implementation status, practical teaching constraints, accessible cultural teaching resources and teacher training demands, as well as actionable suggestions for developing a TCC-focused English module. Each interview lasted 45 to 60 minutes. After obtaining written informed consent from participants, all conversations were audio-recorded and fully transcribed word-for-word for thematic coding. The semi-structured design allowed researchers to ask follow-up probing questions to dig deeper into teachers' subtle, personal viewpoints (Patton, 2014). All original audio files were permanently deleted once transcription was completed to protect participant confidentiality.

There were four kinds of documents examined: first, the National English Curriculum Standards for General Senior High Schools (2017 edition revised in 2020); second, three volumes of PEP Senior High School English textbooks published in 2019; third, school-based documents provided by each school involved in the present research project (semester schedule of lessons taught, units planned in grade one's English class, weekly plan of lessons given); and lastly, municipal teaching policies related to culture instruction issued locally. With these documents at hand, something may emerge when what is prescribed by officials is contrasted against what instructors say about their own practices in interviews conducted earlier, thus resulting finally perhaps in triangular checks being performed on certain points worthy of attention according to Bowen (2009).

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Results and Finding

Document Analysis Findings

It refers to the statistics obtained from the statistics. Among the fifteen lessons contained therein, eight contain traces relating to TCC concerns, which account for 53.3 percent of the units under examination. Based on that, three features about how culture is arranged inside this set of books can then emerge. First, there will hardly ever appear anything concerning TCC; when present at times, it is scattered everywhere but never constitutes an entire lesson by itself. Second, what is involved here mostly concerns material civilization. Many more cases deal with historical sites, festive celebrations, painting works, etc.; very few involve ideology and thought. Lastly, only twice during their three-year study period need students conduct investigations regarding some issues connected with Chinese culture and present findings afterward in English expression. Another finding worth noting lies in that none of those five secondary schools contacted by researchers has included any goal pertaining to introducing TCC into classroom activities in its official plans concerning Grade One English instruction.

Table 1: Summary Of TCC Content In Pep English Textbook Books 1 – 3 By Category

Volume	No. of Units	No. of Units with TCC Content	TCC Items: Reading Texts	TCC Items: Cultural Notes/Background	TCC Items: Project/ Activity Tasks	TCC Content Type
Book 1	5	3	2	3	1	Material culture: Terracotta Army, traditional festivals, Chinese characters
Book 2	5	2	1	2	0	Material culture: traditional food culture, Silk Road; brief mention of Confucius
Book 3	5	3	2	3	1	Material culture: classical literature excerpt, Mogao Caves, modern technological achievements
Total	15	8	5	8	2	Predominantly material and institutional culture

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Source: Adapted from English Curriculum Standards for Senior High Schools (2020 Revision), Ministry of Education of China, 2020

Interview Findings: Current Practices and Challenges (RQ1)

The study involved six full-time senior high school English teachers (here labelled T1–T6). involved in semi-structured interviews carried out at five local secondary schools. Each interview lasted about 45–60 minutes. After all transcripts had been subjected to coding procedures based on themes raised by Miles and Huberman (1994), four key points concerning Q1 emerged from the data. In other words, according to the teachers' own accounts, four major problems remain regarding how TC is actually taught locally today: teachers have insufficient opportunities to learn more about relevant cultures themselves; few sources suitable for classroom use are available in English; examinations take up too much time; and learners cannot yet say very much on this topic in target-language lessons. These findings are shown in Table 2 and Table 3 respectively.

Initially, teachers gave occasional lessons on TCC connected with what was contained in their textbooks. One teacher explained: "When the textbook mentions the Terracotta Warriors or traditional festivals, I tell the students a bit about it in English and Chinese. But after that, we move on to the grammar or vocabulary focus of the unit. There is no time to go deeper" (IT1, Lines 78–83).

Examination-oriented teaching itself posed yet another structural obstacle. As explained by T6, "My pupils, their parents, and even principals evaluate teachers according to examination scores; hence, if I use two whole periods to carry out some activity related to TCC, then there will certainly remain no possibility whatsoever later of making up lost hours devoted originally to practicing grammar points." Here again one finds something already reported elsewhere concerning exams causing curricula to shrink (Lu, 2019; Ministry of Education of China, 2022).

Three, many teachers themselves did not have enough professional competence or prefabricated teaching materials from which they could explain the very profound implications contained therein. As explained by T2, "I can tell students something about the Terracotta Warriors or the Mid-Autumn Festival because they appear in the textbook. However, suppose someone then asks me about Confucianism or the aesthetics behind ink wash paintings while using English. In this case, one cannot expect me to answer confidently." Then came another remark made by T5: "What teachers need is a readily usable resource involving readings, vocabulary lists, learning tasks, evaluation criteria, etc.; everything relates to Chinese culture, and consideration has been paid to linguistic difficulty levels." Again, this point also echoes some previous findings concerning teachers' inadequate cultural qualities reported elsewhere (Shui, 2024; He & Liu, 2024).

Fourth, fixed weekly class hours restricted the arrangement of extended cultural activities. One participant mentioned: "Our school allocates three English lessons per week to Year 1. That is barely enough to finish the textbook unit… Unless a module can be integrated within the existing time frame without replacing core lesson content, teachers will not use it" (PH1, Lines 80–87).

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Table 2: Examination Pressure as a Structural Barrier to TCC Integration

Theme	Description	Participants
Exam-driven curriculum priorities	Teachers and English teaching coordinators reported that lesson time is dominated by examination preparation content. Cultural activities are perceived as non-examinable and therefore difficult to justify.	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, PH1, PH2, PH3
Difficulty justifying non-exam activities	Several teachers expressed concern about parental and administrative pressure to focus on exam outcomes, leaving little institutional support for cultural activities.	T2, T5, T6, PH3

Source: Own research

Table 3 Challenges: Insufficient TCC Knowledge and Teaching Resources

Theme	Description	Participants
Limited personal knowledge of deep TCC content	Several teachers acknowledged difficulty discussing philosophical, aesthetic, or ideological dimensions of Chinese culture with confidence in English, particularly topics beyond material culture (e.g., Confucianism, classical Chinese aesthetics, Chinese literary traditions).	T2, T3, T5, T6, PH2
Lack of supplementary TCC teaching materials in English	All participants reported the absence of ready-made, pedagogically designed TCC materials that are both culturally authentic and linguistically appropriate for Year 1 senior high school students.	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, PH1, PH2, PH3
No PBL activity designs linking TCC to English output tasks	No teacher had experience designing or using project-based learning (PBL) activities that required students to research a TCC topic and produce an English-language output (e.g., presentation, report, debate).	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6

Source: Own research

Teachers' Suggestions for Module Design (RQ2)

Five core design principles for the TCC-integrated module were extracted from thematic coding of teachers' feedback responding to the second research question.

First, all cultural themes embedded in supplementary module lessons ought to correspond to the inherent thematic frameworks of official textbooks. As T4 elaborated: "The module content must follow the same themes as the textbook units — travel, people and history, technology,

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the environment. If the TCC topics are connected to these themes, teachers can use the module as a supplementary lesson within the same unit, without jumping to a completely different topic" (IT4, Lines 162–168).

They also pointed out that there was "thematic coherence," because attention had been paid to integrating linguistic drill with cultural education at every stage. According to T5, there cannot simply be culture lessons accidentally taught in English; nor may one ignore language development when teaching about Chinese culture. Instead, she claimed that certain kinds of language work need to occur whenever somebody learns something concerning Chinese customs, and both aspects have to advance simultaneously. Once again, she expressed precisely what Byram's (1997) theoretical framework of Intercultural Communicative Competence wanted.

As far as instruction organization is concerned, some participants asked for small-sized projects that could be arranged according to their own very restricted weekly schedule. One respondent explained what she wanted based on her own situation: "I need something that has three obvious parts: Introduction Task, Investigation Task, Presentation Task; then teachers may complete these activities within two or three lessons." This kind of project plan also corresponds well to the cyclic idea behind design-and-development research described above (Richey & Klein, 2007).

Regarding the sequencing of cultural content, respondents recommended a progressive learning trajectory starting from tangible cultural artefacts before advancing to abstract cultural ideologies. T1 offered specific instructional advice: "Start with things students already know — like the Spring Festival or traditional architecture — because they have schema for these topics. Then gradually introduce more complex ideas like Confucian values or the philosophy behind traditional arts. If you start with philosophy, students will be lost" (IT1, Lines 195–202). The strategy of layered cultural scaffolding has also been validated in prior pedagogical research conducted by Lestari (2025) and Fu & Shao (2024).

Finally, all interviewees reached a consensus that module assessment should centre on learners' ability to express cultural ideas in English output tasks, both orally and in writing. T5 clarified the targeted assessment standard: "I want my students to be able to stand up and give a two-minute introduction to a Chinese cultural topic in English — clearly, confidently, with their own understanding. If the module trains them to do that, then the assessment should test exactly that" (IT5, Lines 205–212). This focus on performance-based evaluation coincides with the assessment guidelines laid out in the 2022 National English Curriculum Standards for Senior High Schools.

Table 4 Teachers' Suggestions for the TCC-Integrated English Teaching Module

Theme	Description	Participants
a. TCC content should align with existing curriculum topics	TCC themes in the module should connect organically to the topics and vocabulary already present in the PEP textbook units, avoiding content that requires entirely new background knowledge unfamiliar to students.	T1, T2, T4, T6, PH1, PH3

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b. Activities should develop English language skills alongside cultural knowledge	The module should not sacrifice language learning for cultural content — both objectives must be addressed simultaneously in each activity.	T1, T3, T5, PH1, PH2, PH3
c. PBL activities should be feasible within existing class time	Project tasks should be designed so that they can be completed within two to three consecutive lessons, with clear scaffolding at each stage.	T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, PH2, PH3
d. Cultural content should progress from surface to depth	Module content should be sequenced from familiar, visual material culture (festivals, food, architecture) to deeper institutional and spiritual culture (values, philosophy, literary heritage), so that students build cultural schema progressively.	T1, T4, T5, PH1, PH2
e. Assessment should include culturally grounded English production tasks	Teachers recommended that module assessment go beyond multiple-choice comprehension questions to include performance tasks such as oral presentations, cultural project reports, or bilingual explanatory writing.	T3, T5, T6, PH1, PH2, PH3

Source: Own research

Conclusion and Recommendation

This survey presents certain facts concerning how TCC is actually introduced during English lessons in Senior High Grade One classes throughout Ganzhou City. Document analysis of the textbooks published by the People’ s Education Press (PEP) for use from 2019 revealed many shortcomings. Among the units contained therein, only about half include something related to TCC, and most refer only to physical objects rather than conveying their inner spirit or philosophy. These references cannot form any coherent system because they appear sporadically. Only twice among numerous assignments did teachers ask pupils to say something about Chinese culture themselves. None of the five schools contacted has ever officially stated in its curriculum what should be learned about TCC.

Some complementary evidences are derived from semi-structured interviews. Despite admitting that native Cultural Studies deserve attention in language courses themselves, none of these six instructors has ever arranged systematic lessons on this topic during normal periods because there are four difficult problems waiting to be solved at present: too much time consumed by examination drills left no room for extra activities; few teachers knew enough about the excellent parts contained in the whole treasury yet; hardly any appropriate learning packages could directly serve classroom-based teaching; every teacher had to observe weekly contact-hour regulations issued by school administrators. Therefore, they said, once again the problems reported before emerged.

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Altogether five practicable design guidelines can be derived from the problems mentioned above concerning how to develop the supplement component based on the TCC orientation in response to the second research question. Module themes have to correspond to certain lessons in textbooks according to their respective subjects. Every kind of lesson activity aims at developing language proficiency along with interculturality education. PBL projects will consist of two or three lessons and thus require some scaffolds during implementation. Culture materials included here go from easy-to-understand physical objects gradually to difficult mental matters. Performance assessment is also demanded when checking whether students can explain something about Chinese culture in English. These five principles originate partly from inspirations provided by Byram’ s ICC theory (Byram, 1997). They owe another part of their existence to influences brought about by culturally responsive instruction advocated by Gay (Gay, 2010).

Its main merit lies in carrying out a needs analysis based on actual evidence before starting to develop the teachable package. Every need found points to one particular aspect of how things were later decided about the design: teachers' lack of training determines whether there will later be teacher guidelines and lesson plans included; the absence of adequate learning resources explains why ready-made multimedia materials are provided in this way; time limits set by exams and timetables result in projects lasting two or three lessons rather than more; and finally, if students cannot yet adequately express what they know concerning these topics in English at present, performance tests seem appropriate here instead. Thus, again arises the question raised earlier regarding what was done first during Design and Development work carried out afterward.

A few limitations also exist in this study. First, the study involves only one locality (Ganzhou City) and merely six Grade One English teachers; hence, great caution needs to be taken when generalizing these results beyond what was studied. Nevertheless, there is still considerable value because three kinds of evidence were brought together in mutual corroboration. Thus, on this basis, more work will certainly need to occur before anything like this emerges elsewhere throughout the entire province. Another issue arises at present. As far as the outcomes are concerned, they serve merely as the starting point of the design phase recommended by Richey and Klein’ s (2007) model. The modules have yet to be developed according to the needs identified above; nor have experts reviewed the drafts; finally, no trial run has ever occurred. Ultimately, this research seeks to bridge national cultural education policies and frontline teaching practice, offering feasible solutions that may support the cultivation of students’ cultural self-confidence and could contribute to their cross-cultural communication capacity in the era of globalization.

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APPENDIX

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS

Study: Development of a Traditional Chinese Culture (TCC)-Integrated English Teaching Module for Year 1 Senior High School in Ganzhou
Research Phase: Phase I — Needs Analysis
Research Questions Addressed: Q1 and Q2
Participants: 6 senior high school English teachers + 3 English teaching coordinators (subject leaders), N = 9
Estimated Duration: 45–60 minutes per interview
Interviewer: Li Chunxia

PREAMBLE

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. This interview is part of a doctoral study on developing a Traditional Chinese Culture (TCC)-integrated English teaching module for Year 1 senior high school students in Ganzhou. Your insights will directly inform the design of this module. There are no right or wrong answers; your honest experiences and professional opinions are most valuable.

With your permission, this interview will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes only. All data will remain strictly confidential, and your identity will be anonymized in any publications arising from this research. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without consequence.

SECTION A: PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND

A1. How many years have you been teaching English at the senior high school level?
A2. What grade levels do you currently teach, and what is your typical class size?
A3. What is your educational background and highest academic qualification?
A4. Have you received any formal training related to Chinese traditional culture, cross-cultural communication, or intercultural competence?

SECTION B: CURRENT PRACTICES IN TCC INTEGRATION

(Addressing Q1: What are the existing practices of English teachers in integrating TCC in Year 1 senior high school classrooms in Ganzhou?)

B1. In your current teaching practice, how do you incorporate Chinese traditional culture into your English lessons? Probes: Can you give a specific example from a recent lesson? How often do you include TCC-related content in your lessons? Which cultural domains do you tend to focus on (e.g., festivals, history, philosophy, arts, ethics)?

B2. What materials and resources do you currently use to teach TCC-related content through English? Probes: Do you rely mainly on the prescribed textbook, or do you develop supplementary materials yourself? Do you draw on authentic resources such as videos,

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readings, or multimedia content? How do you evaluate the adequacy of the current textbook for supporting TCC integration?

B3. How do your students typically respond when TCC-related content is introduced in the English classroom? Probes: Are students generally engaged or disinterested? What factors seem to influence their engagement? Have you observed differences in student responses across different cultural topics or activity types?

SECTION C: CHALLENGES IN TCC INTEGRATION

(Addressing Q1 continued: What are the challenges of English teachers in integrating TCC in Year 1 senior high school classrooms in Ganzhou?)

C1. In your experience, to what extent does the current prescribed English textbook support the integration of Chinese traditional culture? What are its limitations? Probes: Are the TCC elements in the textbook presented in a deep and systematic way, or are they superficial and fragmented? Does the textbook provide sufficient authentic cultural content, tasks, and language support for TCC-focused teaching? Have you had to significantly supplement or modify the textbook content to integrate TCC?

C2. How does the emphasis on high-stakes examinations (such as the Gaokao) affect your ability to integrate TCC into your English teaching? Probes: Do examination demands leave you sufficient time and space to teach cultural content? Do you feel pressure from students, parents, or school administration to prioritize exam preparation over cultural education? How do you balance examination demands with culturally enriched English teaching?

C3. What challenges do you personally face regarding your own knowledge of Chinese traditional culture when teaching TCC-integrated content in English? Probes: Do you feel confident in your knowledge of Chinese traditional culture across different domains (e.g., philosophy, arts, history, ethics)? What aspects of TCC do you find most difficult to teach effectively in English? What kind of professional development or training would help you teach TCC content more effectively?

C4. What challenges related to time and curriculum planning do you encounter when attempting to integrate TCC into your English lessons? Probes: Is the allotted class time sufficient to explore TCC content in a meaningful and in-depth way? Do school scheduling and curriculum pacing constraints make TCC integration difficult? How do you manage lesson time when TCC activities require more time than anticipated?

SECTION D: PEDAGOGICAL NEEDS AND SUGGESTIONS

(Addressing Q2: What are English teachers' pedagogical needs and suggestions for developing a TCC-integrated English teaching module?)

D1. If a structured TCC-integrated English teaching module were to be developed for Year 1 senior high school, what overall structure and format would you find most practical and usable? Probes: Should it be organized by cultural themes, language skills, or a combination of both? How many units or thematic sections would be appropriate for Year 1 teaching? Should each unit follow a fixed lesson sequence, or allow teacher flexibility? How important is it that the

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module aligns explicitly with the National English Curriculum Standards and current Gaokao requirements?

D2. What types of Chinese traditional cultural content do you think should be prioritized in a TCC-integrated English teaching module for Year 1 students? Probes: Should the module focus more on material culture (e.g., festivals, traditional crafts), institutional culture (e.g., Confucian ethics, social values), or spiritual culture (e.g., philosophy, aesthetics, identity)? Which cultural topics would be most relevant and engaging for Year 1 students in Ganzhou? How important is it to include local or regional cultural elements (e.g., from Jiangxi or Ganzhou)?

D3. What pedagogical approaches and activity types do you believe would be most effective for a TCC-integrated English teaching module? Probes: Would project-based learning activities (e.g., cultural research projects, presentations, creative tasks) be appropriate for your teaching context? How important are collaborative tasks in which students work together to explore TCC content? What role should scaffold reading and language support play in a TCC-integrated module? Should the module include explicit language teaching (vocabulary, grammar) integrated with cultural content?

D4. What types of assessment do you consider appropriate for evaluating students' intercultural communicative competence and language development within a TCC-integrated module? Probes: Should assessment focus primarily on language accuracy, cultural knowledge, or both? How feasible are performance-based assessments (e.g., oral presentations, cultural projects, written reflections) given your teaching context? How can assessment be designed to reduce the burden on both teachers and students while maintaining meaningful evaluation?

D5. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences, challenges, or suggestions regarding TCC integration in English teaching that we have not yet discussed? Probes: Are there any successful teaching experiences or innovative strategies you have tried that you would like to share? Are there any systemic or institutional changes that you believe would better support TCC-integrated English teaching?

CLOSING

Thank you sincerely for your time and for sharing your professional insights and experiences. Your responses will make an invaluable contribution to this research and to the development of a culturally grounded English teaching module that reflects the real needs and voices of teachers in Ganzhou. If you have any further thoughts after this interview, or if you wish to clarify any of your responses, please do not hesitate to contact me. A summary of the key findings from this research will be shared with all participants upon completion of the study.