

A Survey of College Students' Needs for Integrating Traditional Culture Into College English Class

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Taking 308 college students from a Chinese university as the subjects of the questionnaire, we investigated the respondents' needs for current college English class, and found that the students generally hope to learn more traditional culture in classes. At the same time, the traditional culture covered by college English class is obviously insufficient. Most teachers teach based on textbooks, and the textbook content tends to introduce the culture of English-speaking countries, lacking cross-cultural comparison, and the course examination is also insufficient. Undergraduates' full exposure to traditional culture-related content in English class will help them improve their comprehensive expression skills, strengthen their cultural confidence, and enhance their ability to spread local culture.

Keywords: traditional culture, English teaching, cross-cultural communication

Research Design

Research Object

The questionnaire was conducted from June to August 2021. The number of the survey was 309, of which 138 were males; 171 were females. The average age was 20.5 years old. All are college students, taking foreign language courses at school. All the interviewees answered the questionnaire effectively. Among them, 10% of the interviewees were interviewed. The survey obtained a total of 309 valid questionnaires and 31 interview materials.

Research Content

There are 12 questions in the questionnaire, and each question contains three to five options. The first 11 questions are multiple choice questions, and Question 12 is multiple choice question. The content of the questionnaire mainly involves the current teaching situation of traditional culture in college English class, the interviewee's personal willingness to use English express native culture, the content of English examination, and suggestions for collage English teaching.

Analysis

The Current Teaching Situation of Traditional Culture in College English Class

Integrating traditional culture in the classroom can enable college students to establish cultural identity. The survey shows (Figure 1) that more than 80% of the respondents have little or never been exposed to

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traditional Chinese culture in English class. Among them, nearly 60% of the respondents said that they have never been taught Chinese traditional culture in English class. English class, as the main way to improve college students' English ability, pays little attention to native culture.

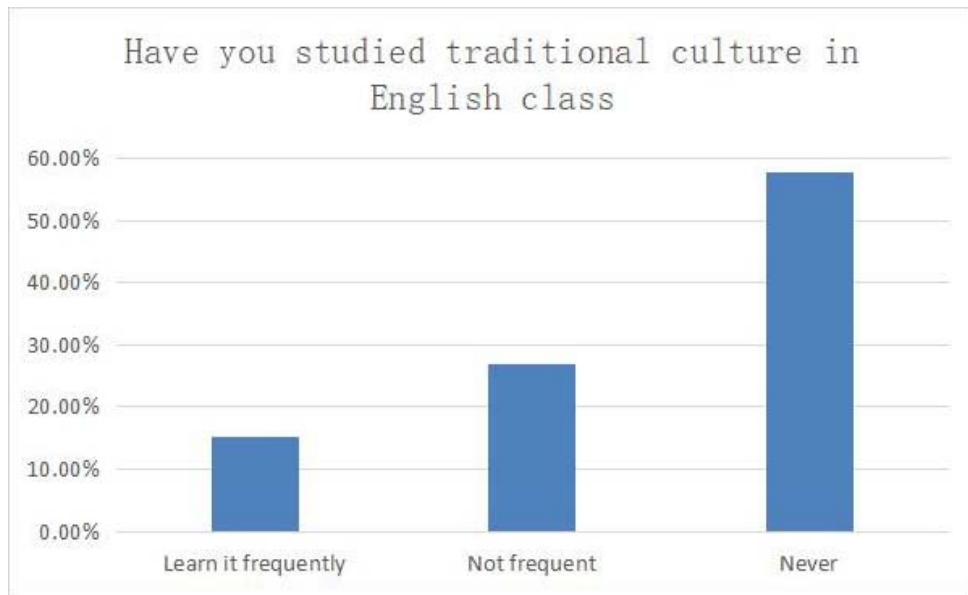


Figure 1. Question 4: Have you studied traditional culture in English class?

This situation is clearly inconsistent with the needs and expectations of college students. The fifth question (Figure 2) shows that 75% of the respondents are more inclined to understand and learn the foreign language expressions of traditional Chinese culture in collage English class, and the current teaching content does not fully meet the learning desires of most students.

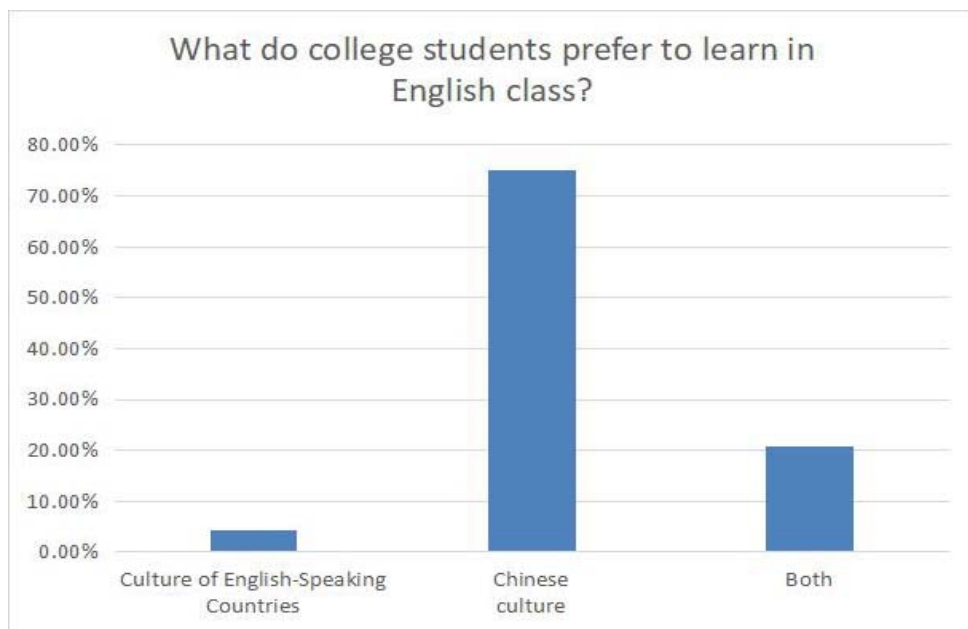


Figure 2. Question 5: What do college students prefer to learn in English class?

Respondents generally believe that they are less involved in interaction in English class, and it is difficult to raise interest. The boring content of classroom lectures is one of the important reasons for the low interest of college students in public foreign language learning. Question 6 (Figure 3) shows that 70.98% of the students prefer to learn Chinese traditional culture in English classes. They think it is easier to stimulate their interest in learning than learning western culture; Question 7 (Figure 4) proves that 64.29% of the respondents think current English class mainly teaches learners English language and English-speaking country culture. The lack of intercultural communication and comparison of cultural similarities and differences are not conducive to college students to improve their ability.

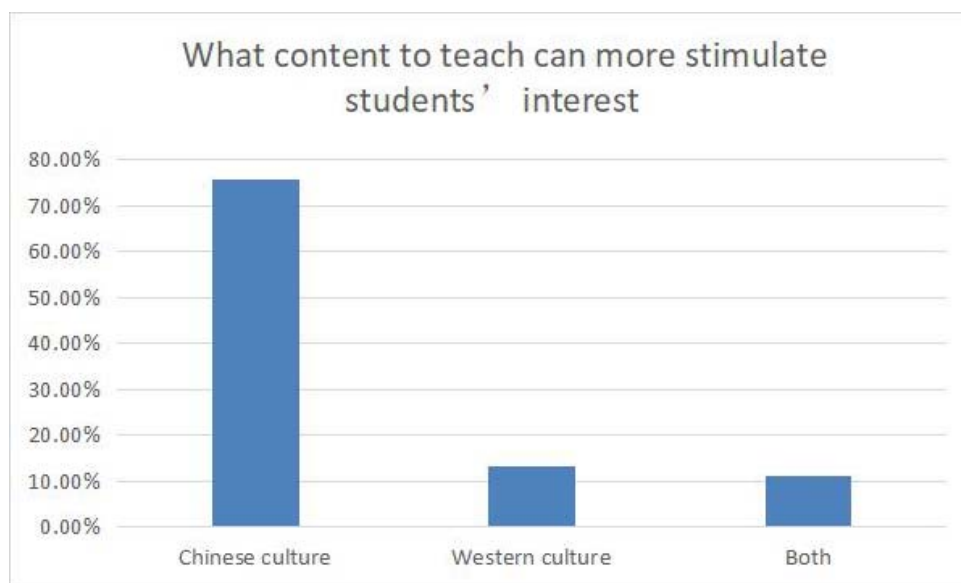


Figure 3. Question 6: What content to teach can more stimulate students' interest?

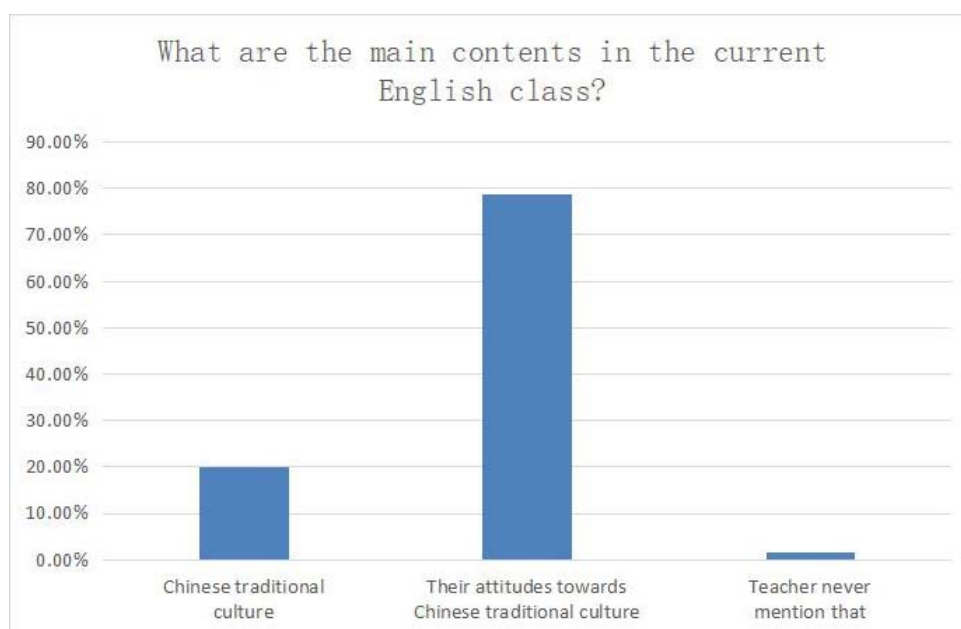


Figure 4. Question 7: What are the main contents in the current English class?

Respondents Hope That English Textbooks Add More Traditional Cultural Content

Question 8 (Figure 5) shows that most teachers mainly teach based on textbooks, and seldom use traditional culture materials related to current affairs and news. Question 9 (Figure 6) shows that college English teachers are less focused on introducing traditional culture in English, and just express their attitudes towards traditional culture. 1.62% of the respondents are reported that their teachers have never talked about contents related to traditional culture.

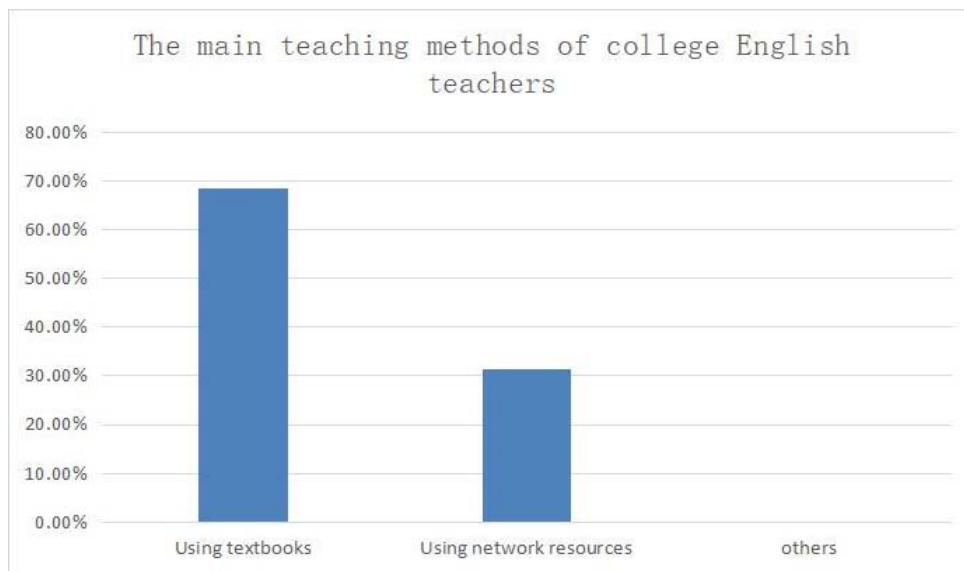


Figure 5. Question 8: The main teaching methods of college English teachers.

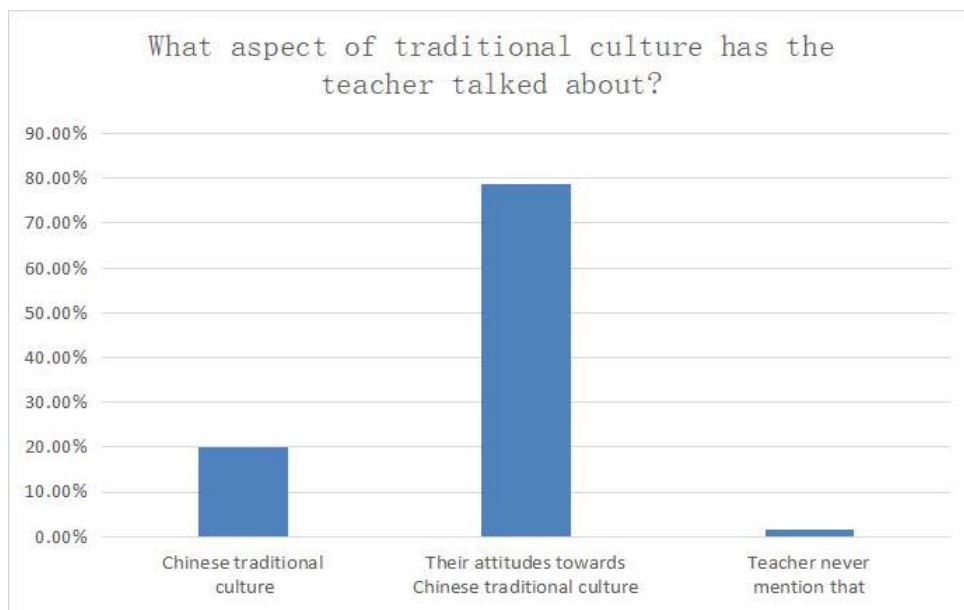


Figure 6. Question 9: What aspect of traditional culture has the teacher talked about?

At present, the mainstream teaching method of college English is still based on teaching materials. The more traditional Chinese cultural content covered in the teaching materials, the more likely it is for teachers to teach more relevant content. The author consulted the 80 texts of the 2016 edition of the *New Standard*

College English. Most of these texts are adapted from the original English works, and there are only nine articles about Chinese culture. The press's 2017 edition of *University English Listening and Speaking Course 4* have 12 listening articles in four units, none of which is related to Chinese culture. There is a big contrast between the existing teaching materials and the actual needs of college students. It can be said that the lack of Chinese culture in collage English class is mainly caused by teaching materials.

The English Examination Emphasizes Language Knowledge

Question 10 (Figure 7) shows that 64.08% of the respondents believe that university teachers prefer to teach English language knowledge; Question 11 (Figure 8) shows that 67.21% of the respondents believe that the English test mainly examines the ability of English language knowledge, and less examines students' use of foreign languages to express native traditions, and their ability of intercultural communication.

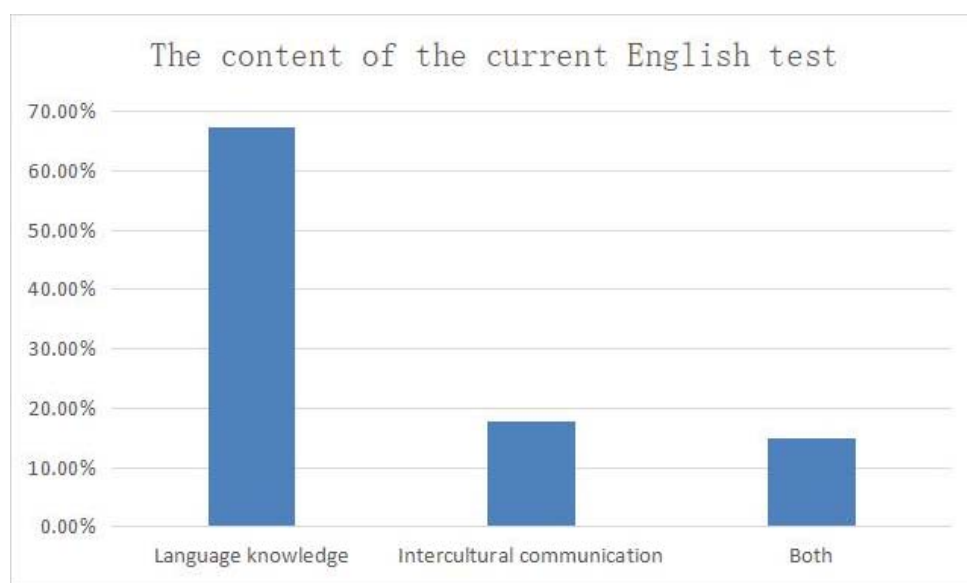


Figure 7. Question 11: The content of the current English test.

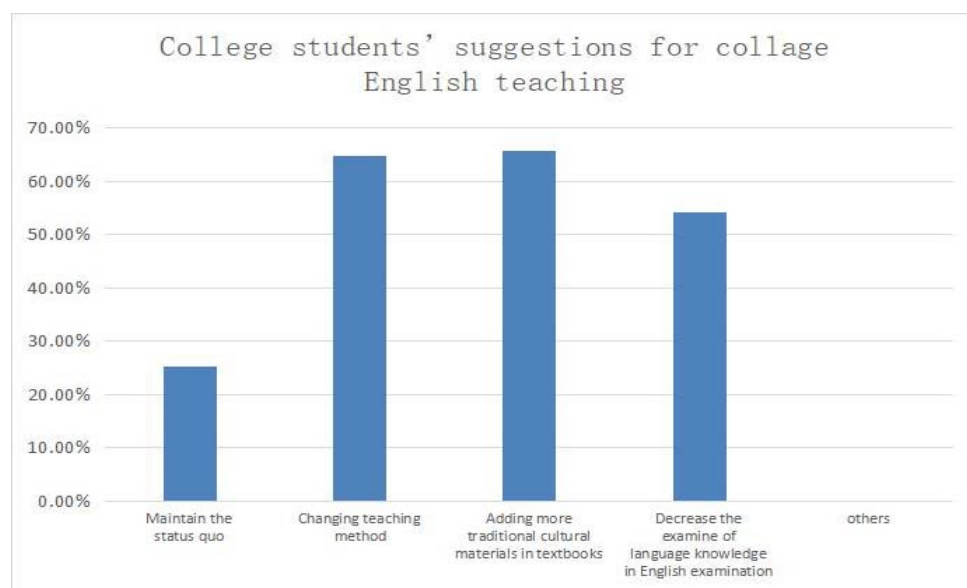


Figure 8. Question 12: College students' suggestions for collage English teaching.

Respondents' Suggestions on the Current College English Teaching

Question 12 shows that 64.61% of the interviewees hope that teachers will change traditional teaching methods, especially not relying solely on textbooks. 65.58% of the respondents hope to add more traditional Chinese culture to textbooks and to class.

Conclusion

From the questionnaire, it can be seen that respondents generally hope that more traditional cultural knowledge can be added to college English teaching. At the same time, the traditional culture in college English class is obviously insufficient. Most teachers teach based on textbooks, and the content of textbooks tends to introduce the culture of English-speaking countries, lacking of awareness to introduce traditional culture, etc. The author believes that innovating the content of teaching materials is an important way to solve the above problems.

The College English Test mainly examines the language knowledge of college students, such as vocabulary and grammar knowledge, and the content related to Chinese traditional culture is relatively less. Among college students, there are more common phenomena such as not paying attention to take classes, and rushing to memorize vocabulary before exams. This situation is not conducive to enhancing college students' foreign language expression ability, stimulating their interest in learning, and improving their cross-cultural communication skills.

In the current teaching method of English in colleges, textbooks play an important role. Teachers spend most of the time explaining the content of the textbook during the class. In order for teachers to integrate the content of traditional Chinese culture into daily teaching, and to better teach the foreign language expressions of traditional culture, they should first provide teachers with a textbook that emphasizes the spread of native culture.

The spread of traditional culture to the outside world requires college students to increase their cultural awareness and cultivate their ability to "tell cultural stories" in foreign languages on an international platform, thereby strengthening college students' cultural self-confidence. College English teaching should actively explore how to incorporate local cultural content into teaching.

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