

Research on the Current Situation and Countermeasures of Cultural Confidence among English Major Students —A Case Study of Panzhihua University

Qin Huang Jian Zhang

Abstract: In the context of increasing globalization and cross-cultural communication, cultivating cultural confidence among English majors, who serve as important bridges for cultural exchange between China and other countries, has become a significant issue in foreign language education in higher education institutions. This study takes English majors from Panzhihua University as the research subjects. Through questionnaire surveys, it investigates the current state of cultural confidence among English majors and proposes strategies to enhance students' awareness of cultural confidence.

Keywords: English Major; Cultural Confidence; Countermeasure Research; Zhihua University

Date of Submission: 02-10-2025

Date of acceptance: 11-10-2025

I. Research Background

1.1. The Importance of Cultural Confidence

Cultural confidence stems from China's fine traditional culture, revolutionary culture, and advanced socialist culture. Firmly uphold confidence in the path, theory, system, and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics. "Firm cultural confidence is a major issue that concerns the rise and fall of the nation, cultural security, and the independence of the national spirit." (2019, Central Politburo) "Cultural confidence" has never been just a noun; it is more a source of inner strength. When we have accumulated a profound cultural heritage and strengthened our cultural confidence, we will have enough assurance to express our own outstanding traditional Chinese culture in intercultural communication. Against the backdrop of globalization, the clash of diverse cultures has intensified. Cultural confidence can help people understand differences between cultures and maintain clear awareness in complex environments. Cultural confidence is the intrinsic driving force for national rejuvenation. Only when a nation holds firm belief in its own culture can it unite national consensus in the course of history, providing strong spiritual guidance and emotional bonds for achieving national prosperity and rejuvenation.

1.2. Current Status of Cultural Confidence among Domestic English Majors

The current state of cultural confidence among English majors in China presents a complex picture of 'high identification but weak expressive ability. Students have a strong emotional identification with the values of Chinese culture, but lack practical ability in expressing and promoting Chinese culture in English. Most English majors exhibit a phenomenon known as 'Chinese cultural aphasia. The student has a rich vocabulary for daily communication and Western culture, but when it comes to core concepts of Chinese culture, they cannot find accurate corresponding English expressions.

1.3. The Correlation Between Cultural Confidence and the Cultivation of English Majors

On July 1, 2016, in his important speech at the conference celebrating the 95th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that cultural confidence "is a more fundamental, more extensive, and deeper confidence." Whether the training objectives for English majors can be achieved depends on whether the students of this major possess firm cultural confidence (Huang Qiusheng, 2017). Compared with students from other majors, English majors are more easily influenced by the values, ideologies, and cultural trends of the English-speaking world. Without firm confidence in their own national culture, they may unintentionally deviate from their original path without realizing it Error! Reference source not found.

Cultural confidence is one of the core competencies for English majors. The training of English majors should meet the demands of the times, focusing on cultivating cross-cultural communicators rather than merely 'language tool users. Taking the talent cultivation objectives of the English major at Panzhihua University as an example: This majorly aims to train versatile English professionals with good overall competence, solid fundamentals in the English language, strong cross-cultural communication skills, extensive professional knowledge in English, and essential related expertise.

With the launch of exchange activities such as the 'Cultural Silk Road,' China's foreign economic and trade interactions, as well as exchanges in science, technology, and culture, have become increasingly frequent. In cross-cultural communication, professional competence in English provides specialized support for the dissemination of cultural confidence, while cultural confidence offers English professionals a spiritual core and value orientation.

II. Current Research Status at Home and Abroad

2.1. Current research status on cultural confidence of college students at home and abroad

In recent years, research on cultural confidence has gradually become a hot topic among scholars. Studies generally agree that cultivating cultural confidence in students is crucial and faces unique challenges. Some researchers have proposed the concept of 'aphasia phenomenon,' indicating that English majors lack proficiency in expressing Chinese culture.

To address this, the university has introduced relevant courses and advocated the 'unity of knowledge and action' philosophy, emphasizing the application of students' practical skills to effectively enhance their expressive abilities. Numerous empirical studies (through questionnaires, interviews, etc.) indicate that a portion of English majors exhibit the 'Chinese culture deficiency phenomenon.' Specifically manifested as a lack of deep and systematic understanding of traditional Chinese culture and contemporary national conditions. Therefore, many universities carry out ideological and political education to help students identify with and firmly believe in their own culture, thus strengthening cultural confidence.

2.2. Currently, there is insufficient research on cultural confidence among college students both domestically and internationally.

Notable differences exist in the level of cultural confidence among college students from various regions and types of higher education institutions, yet comparative research on this topic remains insufficient.

Taking Panzhihua University as an example, students from freshman to senior year are influenced by factors such as family, cultural and social environments, resulting in varying levels of understanding of cultural confidence among individuals. Current domestic research lacks comprehensive, in-depth analysis of specific, practical case studies on fostering cultural confidence among college students, leading to proposed countermeasures that often fall short in terms of feasibility and scalability.

III. Research Significance

Address the phenomenon of 'cultural aphasia' and 'cultural deficiency' among English majors in their study of Chinese culture. The central mission of English majors is to serve as conduits for cross-cultural communication and to act as the vanguard in "telling China's stories well." This study seeks to address the existing gap in both domestic and international research on the cultural confidence of English majors, strengthen their cultural identity and sense of pride, and foster the development of versatile English professionals.

IV. Analysis of the Current Status of Cultural Confidence Among English Major Students at Panzhihua University

4.1 Research Subjects

To understand the current status of cultural confidence cultivation among English majors in universities, this questionnaire survey was conducted at Panzhihua University, with the research subjects being English major students aged 19-22. The male-to-female ratio in the sample is 1:3. In the questionnaire survey, males accounted for 22.6% of respondents, while females accounted for 77.4%. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed, with 562 valid questionnaires returned. The questionnaires covered all academic years from freshman to senior to ensure the representativeness of the research findings.

4.2 Research Tools

This study employs a self-developed \"Questionnaire on the Current Situation of Cultural Confidence among English Majors\" as its primary research instrument. The questionnaire contains a total of 17 questions, including 10 single-choice questions, 5 multiple-choice questions, and 2 fill-in-the-blank questions. It covers various aspects such as gender, level of understanding of Chinese culture, the international influence of Chinese culture, and the responsibilities of English-major students in enhancing confidence in Chinese culture (including what these responsibilities are, how to fulfill them, and their feelings about it).

4.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Survey data shows that among the valid responses, 67.79% of respondents indicated they know something about traditional Chinese culture, 30.6% said they know it very well, 1.42% said they know very little, and only 0.18% said they have no understanding at all; 94.66% of respondents believe that learning English helps

enhance confidence in Chinese culture, of which 39.5% believe it is very helpful, and 55.16% believe it is somewhat helpful; in the process of learning English, 56.23% of respondents said they often come into contact with content related to Chinese culture, while 40.93% said they occasionally encounter such content. 74.91% of respondents stated that it is very necessary to integrate Chinese elements into English learning; in contrast, only 23.84% believed it is somewhat necessary, and just 1.25% felt it is not very necessary, with no one considering it completely unnecessary. Moreover, 80.43% of respondents believed that the cultural and social environment (such as media promotion, cultural activities, etc.) has a significant impact on the formation of cultural confidence among English majors.

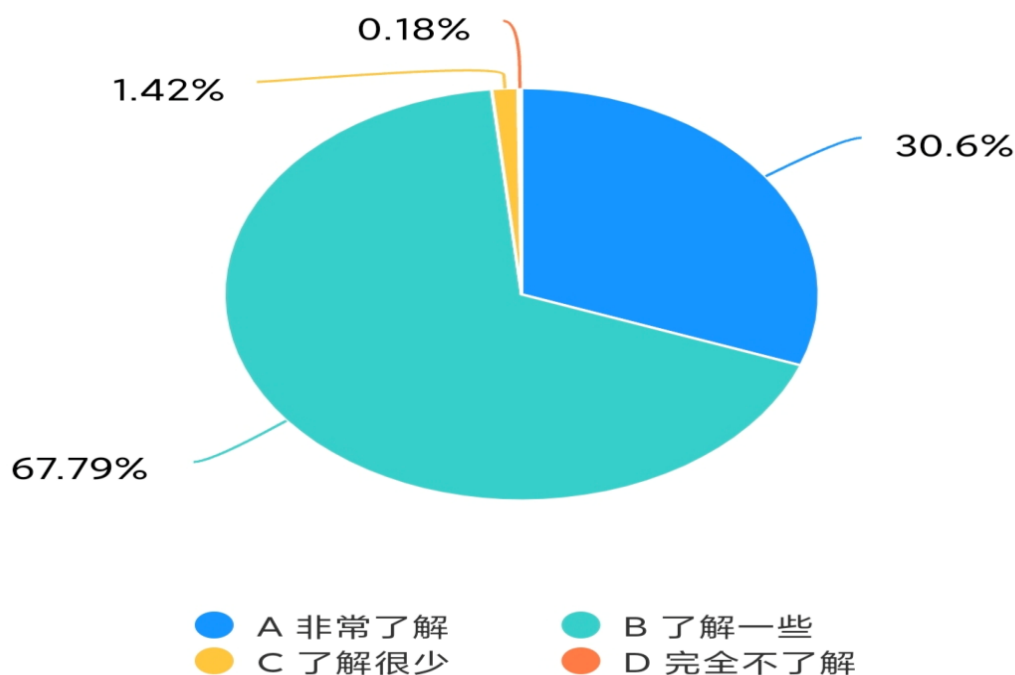


Figure 1, Question 2: How well do you understand traditional Chinese culture?

V. Cause Analysis

5.1. English major students generally demonstrate positive attitudes and a sense of identification in terms of cultural confidence.

Regarding the study of Western culture, there may be a prevailing stereotype in people's minds that equates it with 'worshipping everything foreign'. "Foreign-worship" association refers to the phenomenon where, in the process of learning Western culture, some individuals are influenced by certain extreme cases, leading them to "excessively admire Western culture" and "negate their own indigenous culture," thereby overlooking the essence of cultural learning—"understanding differences" rather than "comparing superiority or inferiority."

In this survey, most English majors expressed affirmative and supportive views on whether learning English can enhance confidence in Chinese culture, and whether Chinese elements should be incorporated into English learning. In the process of learning English, 56.23% of respondents indicated that they frequently encounter content related to Chinese culture, and they believe that exposure to Chinese culture while learning English helps enhance cultural confidence and communication skills. A total of 94.66% of respondents believe that learning English helps strengthen cultural confidence, suggesting that it is widely regarded as an important means of fostering such confidence. 95.27% of respondents express a favorable attitude toward the international influence of Chinese culture, suggesting that they generally maintain an optimistic outlook on its global dissemination and acceptance. Therefore, English major students generally exhibit positive attitudes and a sense of identity in terms of cultural confidence.

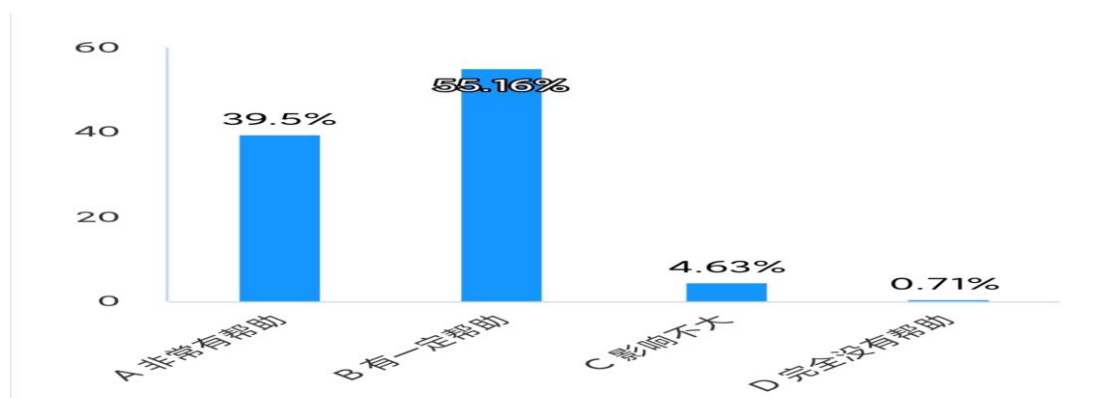


Figure 2 Question 3: Do you think learning English helps enhance cultural confidence in Chinese culture?

5.2. The influence of English learning environmental factors on cultural confidence is significant

The environment has a significant impact on people, and English learning is no exception.

In this survey, 44.02% of respondents believe that the family environment exerts a significant influence on education, whereas 38.65% regard the school's curriculum design and teaching atmosphere as having a considerable effect on English learning. Family environmental factors are intricate and multifaceted. Distinct families employ varying educational approaches to English learning, each potentially exerting a different degree of influence on an individual's cultural confidence. Compared with family settings, the school environment tends to be relatively homogeneous. The scientific rigor, practical relevance, and innovative qualities of school curriculum design exert a profound influence on the learning outcomes of English major students and the strengthening of their cultural confidence.

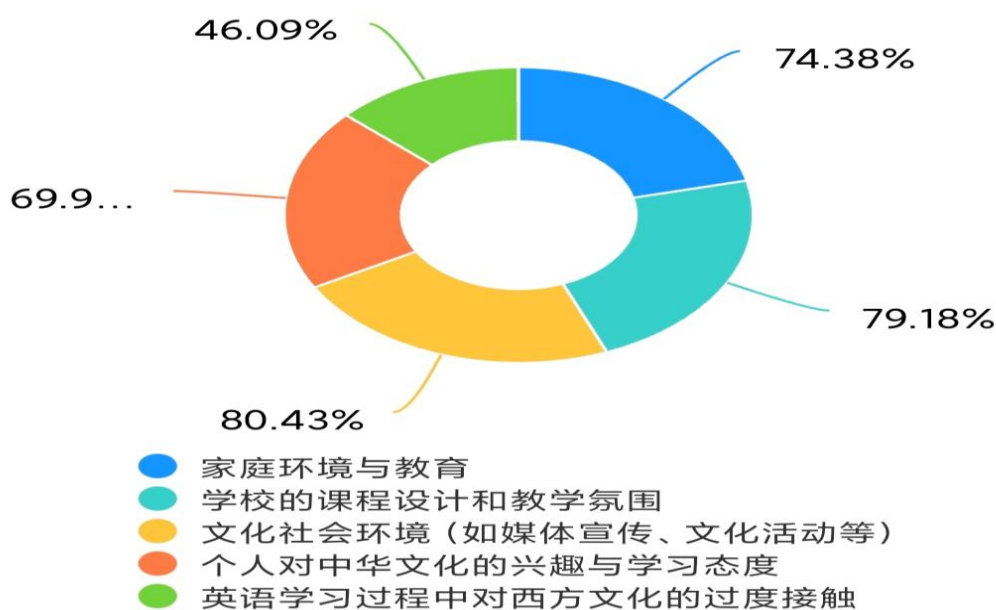


Figure 3 Question 11: Which factors do you believe influence the cultural confidence of English major students?

5.3. English major students demonstrate a singular approach to integrating Chinese culture during their learning process

This survey shows that the respondents hold positive attitudes towards integrating Chinese culture into the learning process. Chinese culture is rich and steeped in history. When students majoring in English integrate Chinese elements into their study of English and Western culture, it not only deepens their understanding of Western thought but also strengthens their cultural confidence. Data shows that 93.71% of respondents chose to incorporate film and television works into the course design. 93.64% of respondents believe that the integration of film and television works helps enhance individuals' interest in and enthusiasm for learning about Chinese culture. Film and television works are presented through multiple elements such as visuals and sounds, making them easy to understand and accept.

However, it also easily leads the audience into a 'watch-drama' inertia, lacking active thinking. In the course of learning English, the singularity in incorporating Chinese cultural approaches should be duly considered. Additional methods of integration may be suitably introduced, such as organizing cultural exchange activities between China and other countries, as well as offering combined language and culture courses.

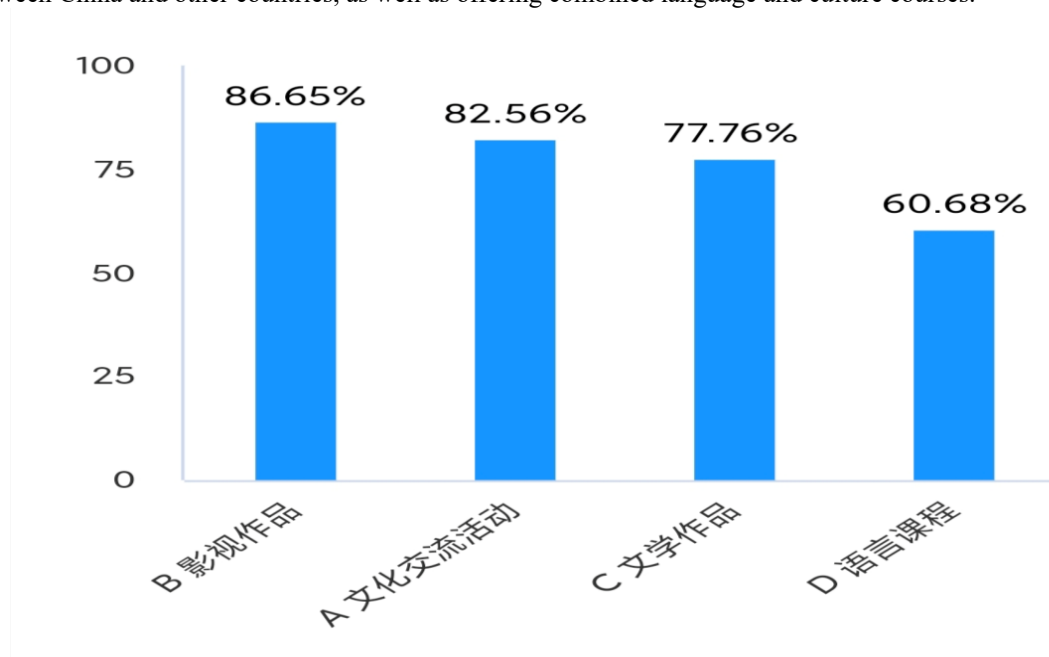


Figure 4 Question 10: What methods do you think can be used to integrate Chinese culture into English learning?

VI. Countermeasures and Suggestions

6.1 School Level

6.1.1 Cross-cultural Comparative Teaching^[3]

Traditional approaches to foreign language instruction can easily lapse into an uncritical admiration and wholesale acceptance of the target culture. By implementing comparative teaching strategies that place local and target cultures on an equal footing, schools enable students to appreciate and respect cultural differences throughout their studies. Foster a rational appreciation of cultural differences and establish a solid foundation for cultural confidence. Cross-cultural comparative teaching directly addresses 'Chinese cultural aphasia'.

In the course I am taking, the instructor has arranged a three-minute pre-class English speech for the students, primarily centered on the comparative differences between Chinese and Western cultures. During the preparation of this speech, students have the opportunity to learn and enrich their vocabulary with expressions pertaining to core Chinese cultural concepts, such as "benevolence" and "local attachment". Through cross-cultural comparative learning, students not only develop a profound understanding of the essence of Chinese culture but also enhance their expressive abilities, thereby progressing from "speechlessness" to "eloquence."

6.1.2. Optimize the curriculum system and integrate ideological and political elements

Integrate the concept of "Ideological and Political Courses" into English major courses^[5], enabling students to develop critical thinking and cultivate qualities while learning English and comprehending the essence of Chinese culture. In the design of the teaching curriculum system, break away from the pattern dominated by Western literary and cultural texts, and introduce English translations of Chinese classic literary works such as "The Analects" and "The Book of Songs". English major students can shift their translation focus from general literary translation to the translation of political, economic, and cultural terms with Chinese characteristics (such as 'moderately prosperous society', 'common prosperity', 'benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trust').

English writing courses can also incorporate Chinese traditional culture and history for creative assignments. The integration of ideological and political courses can not only help students establish a correct worldview, outlook on life, and values, but also strengthen their cultural confidence. The school's ultimate goal is to nurture international talents of the new era, imbued with a Chinese heart, endowed with a global vision, and equipped with professional expertise.

6.1.3. Carry out cultural activities related to Chinese culture and integrate Chinese culture through multiple approaches^[6]

For students majoring in English, the integration of Chinese culture should not depend solely on a single course; rather, it should be supported by a comprehensive, multi-channel, and immersive system. Schools may establish traditional culture clubs—such as those focused on calligraphy, Chinese painting, paper-cutting, and Chinese knotting—to foster English majors' interest in traditional culture. Organize the 'Telling China's Stories in English' competition (debate topics such as: In modern life, what is the influence of traditional culture on people?). Encourage students to participate in national speech and writing competitions such as the 'FLTRP·ETIC Cup'. While collecting materials for the competition, students will unconsciously learn much about Chinese culture. This not only broadens their horizons but also inspires cultural confidence.

6.2. Student Level

When learning is endowed with the mission of 'explaining China to the world,' it is no longer a simple and tedious task, but becomes a necessary means to achieve lofty goals. Students should establish clear objectives for their English studies and cultivate distinctive strengths—namely, "mastery of English coupled with a deep understanding of Chinese culture." Such competencies will equip them to advance to high-level platforms, including government foreign affairs departments, media organizations (e.g., CGTN, China Daily), and international institutions. Gaining an in-depth understanding of Chinese culture enables students to comprehend the subtext behind Western discourse, accurately interpret China's actions and policies, and reduce misunderstandings and biases.

By integrating Chinese culture into their studies, students have mastered standard translations for numerous China-specific terms, avoiding 'Chinglish' and achieving accurate, idiomatic expression of 'China English'. Teachers should actively foster students' intrinsic motivation for learning, strengthen their cultural self-confidence, and promote the inheritance and development of China's outstanding traditional culture. They should guide students to grasp the profound connotations of traditional, revolutionary, and advanced socialist culture, thereby cultivating them as "ambassadors" for preserving and advancing these cultural traditions. In cultural inheritance, understand the principles of English learning, comprehend the principles of life, actively enhance one's cultural connotation, and strengthen one's cultural confidence.

VI. Research Limitations and Prospects

7.1. Limitations of the Study

This study surveyed only English majors at Panzhihua University, which limits its representativeness when generalizing to broader populations. Relying exclusively on English majors to respond to the questionnaire may introduce subjective emotional judgments. Furthermore, the scope of the questionnaire was restricted and did not comprehensively address all relevant aspects, potentially leading to certain biases in the statistical outcomes. As I am still a student, the current level of my research expertise remains limited.

7.2. Future Prospects

"Culture is the soul of a country and a nation." In the context of economic globalization and cultural diversity, strengthening cultural confidence is an inevitable trend. English majors should become promoters of traditional culture, revolutionary culture, and advanced socialist culture. They should establish a strong cultural confidence, stimulate national pride, and ensure the continuous inheritance of excellent Chinese traditional culture amid the tides of the times.

References

- [1]. Ma Rui, Liu Yanru. A Study on the Construction of Cultural Confidence among College Students—Taking English Majors as an Example[J]. *Journal of Hubei Open Vocational College*, 2020, 33(12): 70-71.
- [2]. Cao Yanqin, Yao Zhaozhong. A Theoretical Framework Study on Cultivating Cultural Confidence Ability in English Majors[J]. *Journal of Lanzhou Institute of Education*, 2018, 34(02): 129-130+133.
- [3]. Zhao Lingzhi. Analysis of the Cultivation Path of Cultural Confidence for English Majors in Universities[J]. *English Plaza*, 2022, (28): 73-75.
- [4]. Cui Ling. Cultivating Cultural Confidence to Enhance Cultural Soft Power—Investigation and Analysis Based on Cultural Confidence of Business English Majors[J]. *China Multimedia & Network Teaching Journal (Mid-month Edition)*, 2022, (09): 241-244.
- [5]. Zhang Yao, Zhang Lili. A Study on the Cultivation of Cultural Awareness among English Majors from the Perspective of Cultural Confidence—Taking Xinglin College of Nantong University as an Example [J]. *Modern English*, 2022, (02): 115-118.
- [6]. Liu Haili, Zhu Yuqing, Deng Yao. Research on the Current Situation and Countermeasures of Cultural Awareness Cultivation for English Majors in Universities from the Perspective of Cultural Confidence: Taking Universities in Xuzhou Region as an Example [J]. *English Square*, 2020, (04): 57-58.