

TEACHERS' ACCEPTABILITY OF THE CULTURE-INTEGRATED LESSONS IN THE TEACH TAIWAN PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the level of acceptability of culture-integrated English lessons among Foreign English Teachers (FETs) in selected public elementary schools in Taichung City, Taiwan, and to propose an enhancement program to improve their design and implementation. Guided by the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach and aligned with the Bilingual Nation 2030 initiative, the lessons were evaluated in terms of content, clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was employed. Quantitative data were collected through a survey, followed by semi-structured interviews to further explain the results. Findings revealed that the lessons were highly acceptable across all domains, with an overall mean of 4.72 (Strongly Agree). No significant differences were found when grouped by demographic variables, indicating consistent teacher perceptions. Qualitative findings identified three themes: practical implementation, engaging materials, and implementation challenges. Teachers described the lessons as clear, flexible, and engaging, but noted challenges such as limited class time, preparation of materials, and varying student proficiency. The study concludes that culture-integrated lessons are effective for elementary English instruction, promoting meaningful learning through cultural connections. It is recommended that teachers continue using them with adjustments, while schools provide training and resources. A CLIL-based enhancement program is also proposed to improve lesson design and implementation.

Keywords: *CLIL, culture-integrated instruction, English language teaching, foreign English teachers, Taiwan.*

INTRODUCTION

Bilingual education has become an increasingly recognized approach in English language teaching, particularly in contexts where English is learned as a foreign or second language. Beyond the development of linguistic skills, this approach emphasizes the integration of culture as an essential component of meaningful language learning. Culture provides the context through which language is understood and used, reflecting the values, beliefs, and everyday practices of a community. As noted by Kramsch (2022), language and culture are closely interconnected, as language serves as a medium for expressing cultural meaning. When cultural elements such as local traditions, festivals, and social practices are incorporated into English lessons, learners are given opportunities to develop both communicative competence and intercultural understanding.

The Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach further supports this perspective by combining subject content with language learning. In this approach, English is not taught in isolation but is used as a medium for exploring meaningful topics, including cultural themes. Through this integration, learners are able to engage with content while simultaneously developing their language skills. Studies have shown that students exposed to culturally enriched lessons demonstrate higher levels of motivation, improved vocabulary retention, and increased participation in classroom activities (Cinganotto, 2023; Akkakoson, 2023; Tóth & Medgyes, 2023; Chen, 2024). In addition, culture-based instruction encourages learners to develop empathy and appreciation for diversity, helping them view English not only as an academic subject but also as a tool for communication in a global context.

In Taiwan, bilingual education has been strengthened through the implementation of the Bilingual Nation 2030 policy, which aims to enhance English proficiency while preserving local culture and promoting global competitiveness. Within this framework, English is positioned as a bridge for intercultural communication rather than merely a subject to be mastered. Foreign English Teachers (FETs), particularly those under the Teach Taiwan Program, play a significant role in supporting this goal. They are expected to design and implement lessons that integrate language learning with meaningful cultural experiences for elementary students.

Despite these expectations, several challenges remain in classroom practice. Many FETs encounter difficulties such as limited teaching resources, diverse student proficiency levels, and the absence of structured guides for implementing culture-integrated lessons. While cultural activities are often incorporated into lessons, they are not always systematically designed to support the development of the four macro skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As a result, language learning may become fragmented, with cultural content treated as an add-on rather than an integral part of instruction.

Classroom observations further suggest that students respond positively to culture-based activities such as storytelling, crafts, and festival-related tasks. These activities appear to increase engagement and encourage students to use English in more meaningful ways. However, despite these observed benefits, there remains a lack of well-developed.

Background of the Study

The researcher is currently teaching English to elementary students under the Teach Taiwan Program in collaboration with the Taichung City Bureau of Education. In this setting, several challenges have been observed, particularly in handling multi-grade classes with varying levels of English proficiency. These challenges include addressing diverse learner needs, promoting inclusive classroom practices, and working within limited instructional resources.

In recent years, public elementary schools in Taiwan have increasingly encouraged Foreign English Teachers to design lessons that connect language learning to real-life experiences. Rather than focusing solely on vocabulary and grammar from prescribed textbooks, teachers are expected to create opportunities for students to use English in meaningful and authentic contexts. As a result, the integration of culture into English instruction—whether through English Day activities or regular classroom lessons—has become a common practice.

Based on classroom experience, the researcher observed that when lessons incorporate cultural elements such as festivals, food, songs, and storytelling, students tend to show greater interest and participation. These experiences appear to make language learning more engaging and relevant, as students are not only learning new words but also exploring cultural meanings and practices. In this way, culture serves as a bridge that connects language learning to students' lived experiences.

Despite these positive observations, there remains a lack of structured teaching guides and lesson plans that support the systematic integration of culture in English instruction. While teachers are given flexibility to design their own lessons, many rely on isolated activities that focus primarily on vocabulary development or cultural exposure, rather than on a progressive approach that develops all four macro skills. This often results in lessons that are engaging but not fully aligned with broader language learning objectives.

Furthermore, the selection of English instructional materials in Taiwanese public schools is guided by Ministry of Education (MOE)-approved textbooks, although final decisions are made by school-based committees. Supplementary materials are often chosen based on teacher judgment and contextual needs. With the implementation of the Bilingual Nation 2030 policy, there is increasing emphasis on selecting materials that integrate language, content, and culture. However, existing materials do not always fully meet these expectations.

At the primary level, learners benefit from instruction that connects new knowledge to familiar experiences. Cultural elements such as local traditions and daily practices can make learning more meaningful and accessible. The researcher observed that when cultural content is incorporated into lessons, students become more motivated and curious, and they are more willing to participate in language activities. This suggests that culture plays an important role in supporting both engagement and language development.

Despite these insights, there is still a limited number of studies that provide concrete lesson plans and teaching guides that integrate cultural content into English instruction while addressing the four macro skills. Much of the existing research focuses on theoretical discussions of CLIL or intercultural competence, with less attention given to practical, classroom-based materials. This indicates a need for studies that develop

and evaluate culture-integrated instructional materials that are both pedagogically sound and applicable in real classroom settings, particularly within the context of Taiwan's bilingual education program.

Language Education in Taiwan

Taiwan has continuously strengthened its English language education through various policies and reforms aimed at improving English proficiency, promoting linguistic diversity, and preserving local languages. English has been part of Taiwan's education system since the establishment of the Republic of China and gradually evolved from grammar- and reading-focused instruction toward communicative and oral proficiency approaches under the 9-Year and 12-Year curricula (Rigby, 2021; Eliassen, 2021; Lin, 2022; Coudenys, 2022; Inagaki, 2023). Recent studies highlight that Taiwan's bilingual education reforms are closely linked to globalization, workforce readiness, and international competitiveness. The Bilingual Nation 2030 initiative accelerated curriculum reforms and teacher recruitment programs such as the Taiwan Foreign English Teacher Program (TFETP) (Huang, 2024), while English is increasingly viewed as a tool for international communication rather than merely an academic subject (Wang, 2024). Research also shows Taiwan's shift from a Mandarin-centered policy toward multilingual and globally oriented language education (Tsao et al., 2023; Chang, 2025; Author, 2025).

Introduced in 2018, the Bilingual Nation 2030 policy aims to establish a bilingual education system that enhances English learning, strengthens global competitiveness, and supports economic development (National Development Council, 2018). At present, Taiwan continues implementing bilingual education alongside indigenous and local language policies, such as Taiwanese Southern Min, Hakka, and aboriginal languages. Students now receive more English instruction and begin learning English at earlier grade levels compared to indigenous languages (Lin, 2025; Huang, 2024; Chang, 2008; Mao, 2025).

English Curriculum Guidelines

Taiwan's elementary English curriculum, guided by the 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum and the Bilingual Nation 2030 policy, aims to develop learners' communicative competence, cultural awareness, and independent learning skills through the integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2024). The curriculum also emphasizes competency-based education by developing critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and digital literacy skills (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2023), while aligning with international frameworks that promote communicative ability and real-life language use (Council of Europe, 2022).

A significant development in Taiwan's curriculum is the integration of language and content through Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), where English is used to explore meaningful topics such as culture, daily life, and subject content rather than being taught separately (Coyle et al., 2010). The curriculum highlights cultural integration to strengthen intercultural communicative competence and student engagement (Hsu, 2024). Similar bilingual education practices are also observed in Spain's Auxiliares de Conversación program, which promotes authentic communication and cultural learning (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2024). These practices reflect the

principles of the 4Cs Framework—Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture—proposed by Coyle et al. (2010).

In Taiwan, bilingual education remains flexible, with teachers strategically using both English and Mandarin to support learner comprehension and confidence (Graham & Yeh, 2023). The curriculum further promotes learner-centered instruction, adaptive teaching strategies, and culturally relevant materials to increase motivation, foster global citizenship, and develop socially responsible learners (MOE, 2024; UNESCO, 2023). Overall, Taiwan's English curriculum reflects an evolving approach that combines language proficiency, cultural understanding, and broader competencies to prepare students for participation in a globalized society.

Culture-Integrated Lessons

Culture-integrated English lessons help increase students' motivation, confidence, participation, and intercultural awareness in language learning. Studies show that integrating cultural content within CLIL improves linguistic competence and communication skills (Cinganotto, 2023; Akkakoson, 2023). In bilingual programs such as Spain's *auxiliares de conversación*, the use of cultural themes like holidays, food, and traditions makes lessons more meaningful and engaging for learners (Gómez & Criado, 2023; Serrano & Pérez, 2024). Research further indicates that cultural CLIL helps students retain vocabulary and use grammar more accurately because language is learned in authentic and meaningful contexts (Martínez & Rubio, 2021; Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2024).

In Taiwan, the English curriculum promotes both language proficiency and cultural understanding by encouraging the inclusion of local history, indigenous traditions, and community experiences in classroom instruction. Teachers are also encouraged to develop students' intercultural awareness and critical thinking through activities such as comparing customs and discussing cultural values. These practices support the CLIL framework, which integrates content, communication, cognition, and culture. However, studies reveal a gap between policy goals and classroom implementation. Many textbooks provide limited cultural integration and often focus on foreign contexts that students cannot easily relate to (Chien, Teo, & Gao, 2025). Research also highlights that localized cultural integration increases student engagement and confidence in using English (Hsu, 2024).

Despite the recognized benefits of culture-integrated and CLIL-based instruction, there remains a lack of practical teaching resources, lesson plans, and assessment tools for classroom use. Teachers often struggle to implement these approaches due to limited instructional materials and insufficient guidance (Sato & Ballinger, 2023; Cinganotto, 2023). Studies also show that without proper support, teachers may return to traditional teaching methods, limiting the effectiveness of bilingual education initiatives (Akkakoson, 2023). Although Taiwan's Ministry of Education promotes cultural integration within the CLIL 4Cs framework, there is still a shortage of officially developed teaching materials and intercultural assessment tools (Ministry of Education, 2023; NAER, 2024). Teacher training studies further emphasize the need for more concrete examples and practical resources to help teachers effectively implement culture-integrated English instruction (Lin & Wu, 2022; Hsu, 2023).

Technology Integration in Culture-Based and CLIL Instruction

Technology has become an important component of culture-integrated and CLIL-based instruction by supporting interactive learning, authentic communication, and access to diverse cultural resources. Studies show that technology-enhanced CLIL improves student engagement, communication skills, and learner motivation through multimedia presentations, simulations, collaborative tasks, and immediate feedback (Cinganotto, 2023; OECD, 2023). Research also highlights the effectiveness of virtual reality (VR) in helping students explore cultural environments and engage in meaningful language use, leading to increased confidence and creativity (Lai, 2023). Accessible digital tools such as Wordwall further support vocabulary development, comprehension, formative assessment, and differentiated instruction through interactive and game-based activities. Technology also enables the use of multimedia resources and collaborative learning activities that strengthen both language learning and intercultural awareness. However, challenges such as limited resources, insufficient technical skills, and lack of teacher training may hinder effective implementation. Overall, technology enhances the effectiveness of culture-based and CLIL instruction when integrated meaningfully into the learning process.

Bilingual education in Taiwan has expanded significantly through national efforts to strengthen English proficiency while maintaining learners' cultural identity, with CLIL emerging as a key framework in bilingual education development. CLIL integrates subject content and language learning simultaneously, allowing students to use language as a medium for understanding meaningful concepts (Huang & Tsou, 2022). Research indicates that CLIL promotes critical thinking, communication skills, intercultural awareness, learner autonomy, and deeper engagement with content (Huang & Tsou, 2022; Coyle et al., 2023; Meyer et al., 2022). Teachers generally view CLIL positively because it encourages more interactive and student-centered instruction, although challenges remain in balancing language and content objectives and in delivering lessons through English (Graham & Yeh, 2023). Studies also emphasize the importance of teacher preparation, professional development, and instructional support for successful CLIL implementation (Huang & Tsou, 2022; Graham & Yeh, 2023).

Culture is considered an essential component of CLIL because it makes learning more meaningful and relevant to students. The integration of cultural topics, local traditions, and daily life experiences helps learners connect language learning to real-world contexts and develop intercultural understanding (Ishimori, 2025). In Taiwan, combining local and global cultural perspectives enables students to appreciate their own culture while expanding their global awareness. Overall, the literature suggests that strong policy support, teacher readiness, and culturally relevant content are key factors in the successful development of CLIL in Taiwan. Although CLIL offers a more holistic approach to language education, continuous teacher support, appropriate instructional materials, and stronger connections between policy and classroom practice remain necessary for effective implementation.

Research Evidence on CLIL Practice and Classroom Realities

Research on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in Taiwan generally shows positive outcomes, although several classroom implementation challenges remain. Teachers support bilingual education and recognize the benefits of

CLIL, but they often experience difficulties balancing language and content instruction, maintaining clarity, and preparing effective lessons due to limited time and lack of instructional materials (Graham & Yeh, 2023). Despite these challenges, many teachers remain open to innovative and engaging teaching approaches.

Studies further demonstrate the effectiveness of CLIL in improving students' vocabulary acquisition, communication skills, engagement, and confidence. Hands-on CLIL activities and technology-enhanced instruction, including virtual reality (VR), help learners connect language with meaningful experiences and develop creative outputs (Lai, 2022; Lai, 2023). Research also highlights that digital tools and interactive platforms increase learner motivation and communication through authentic and collaborative learning environments (Cinganotto, 2023; OECD, 2023). In addition, integrating culture into CLIL instruction strengthens student engagement and intercultural understanding, especially when familiar cultural elements and real-life experiences are incorporated into lessons (Ishimori, 2025; Huang & Tsou, 2022). Broader CLIL research also emphasizes the importance of meaningful content, interaction, and culturally relevant materials in improving learner comprehension and participation (Coyle et al., 2010; Meyer et al., 2022).

Despite these positive findings, challenges such as insufficient teacher training, limited guidance in lesson planning and assessment, lack of instructional materials, and time constraints continue to affect CLIL implementation. These factors may lead to partial implementation where either language or content is prioritized over the other. Overall, studies suggest that successful CLIL implementation depends on balanced integration of content, language, and culture, supported by adequate instructional time, teacher preparation, and access to appropriate teaching resources (Graham & Yeh, 2023; Huang & Tsou, 2022).

Acceptability of Instructional Materials

The acceptability of instructional materials refers to how appropriate, useful, practical, and effective the materials are in supporting classroom learning. Research emphasizes that acceptability involves several dimensions, including clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness. Clarity refers to the organization and understandability of instructional materials, which contribute to better student comprehension and engagement (Muthuswamy & Pavithra, 2024). Cultural relevance highlights the importance of connecting materials to learners' real-life experiences and cultural backgrounds, particularly in CLIL and culture-integrated instruction, where culturally responsive materials increase learner participation and confidence (Hsu, 2024; Cinganotto, 2023).

Feasibility focuses on how practical and manageable instructional materials are within actual classroom conditions, including time, resources, and learner readiness. Studies show that teachers prefer materials that are flexible, adaptable, and realistic for classroom implementation (Graham & Yeh, 2023; RAND, 2022). Effectiveness, on the other hand, refers to how well materials support learning outcomes, motivation, participation, and communication skills. Research indicates that effective instructional materials contribute to improved academic performance and support the integration of language and content in CLIL settings (OECD, 2023; Cinganotto, 2023). These

dimensions are interconnected and collectively determine the overall acceptability of instructional materials.

The literature further shows that Taiwan has strengthened English education through bilingual policies and CLIL-based approaches, emphasizing culturally responsive teaching, technology integration, and meaningful language instruction. However, several gaps remain in research and practice. Existing studies mainly focus on student outcomes rather than teachers' evaluations of instructional materials, particularly in terms of clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness. Research involving Foreign English Teachers (FETs) also remains limited, despite their important role in bilingual education. In addition, few studies examine ready-to-use lesson materials and how they function in actual classroom settings. There is also a need for mixed-methods studies that explore not only the level of acceptability but also the reasons behind teachers' evaluations. Given these gaps, the present study seeks to examine the acceptability of culture-integrated instructional materials among Foreign English Teachers in Taichung City using a mixed-methods approach and defined evaluation criteria.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) framework, which provides a foundation for integrating language instruction with meaningful content and cultural understanding. CLIL supports culture-based English instruction by enabling learners to acquire language skills while engaging with authentic and contextually relevant subject matter. Through this approach, language learning becomes purposeful, as students use English in meaningful situations connected to real-life experiences.

The concept of CLIL was first introduced by David Marsh (2002), who defined it as an educational approach in which subject content is taught through a foreign language, with dual-focused objectives: the learning of content and the simultaneous acquisition of language. Marsh emphasized that CLIL promotes not only language proficiency but also cognitive development, intercultural awareness, and communicative competence. Building on this, Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010) developed the 4Cs Framework, which includes Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture. This model highlights that effective language learning occurs when students engage with subject matter (content), use language for communication, develop higher-order thinking skills (cognition), and gain cultural understanding (culture), all within a meaningful learning context.

Within the CLIL framework, culture plays a central role in shaping learning experiences. When culture is used as the core theme of instruction, students learn English through authentic topics such as local traditions, festivals, and everyday practices. This allows learners to connect language with their own experiences while also exploring other cultures, thereby fostering intercultural competence. The integration of the 4Cs ensures that language learning is not isolated but embedded in meaningful interaction, critical thinking, and contextualized content (Coyle et al., 2010, as cited in Kim & Huh, 2025). Empirical studies have shown that CLIL-based instruction enhances learners' receptive language skills, motivation, and engagement, particularly when lessons are culturally relevant and meaningful (Lázaro-Ibarrola et al., 2023; Hidalgo et al., 2024; Gayete Domínguez et al., 2025).

In the context of this study, the CLIL framework serves as the theoretical basis for the development and evaluation of the proposed culture-integrated English lessons. The principles of the 4Cs are reflected in the design of the lessons, where cultural topics provide the content, English serves as the medium of communication, activities promote cognitive engagement, and cultural understanding is emphasized throughout the learning process. Furthermore, the dimensions used to assess the level of acceptability—content, clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness—are aligned with CLIL principles of meaningful, structured, and context-based instruction. Through this alignment, the framework supports the evaluation of how well the proposed lessons meet pedagogical and contextual expectations.

Moreover, the CLIL framework provides a lens for interpreting the teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding the use of culture-integrated lessons. By linking theory to practice, the study examines how CLIL-informed instruction influences teachers' evaluations and classroom implementation. Ultimately, the framework guides the development of a proposed program that aims to enhance the design, content, and delivery of culture-integrated English lessons, making them more responsive to learners' needs and aligned with the goals of bilingual education.

Conceptual Framework

The framework of the study illustrates the relationships among the variables and the flow of the research process using a mixed-methods approach. The framework begins with the independent variables, which include the Foreign English Teachers' (FETs) demographic profile, specifically gender, civil status, nationality, and years of service. These variables describe the characteristics of the respondents and serve as the basis for examining possible differences in their evaluation of the lessons. In addition, the proposed culture-integrated English lessons are included as a primary input, as they are the focus of the evaluation. These independent variables influence the intervening variable, which is the level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons. This variable is measured across five dimensions: content, clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness.

The level of acceptability represents the respondents' assessment of the lessons and functions as a mediating variable that links the respondents' characteristics and the instructional materials to the outcomes of the study. The framework then proceeds to the qualitative phase, where the dependent variables are identified. These include the teachers' experiences, perceptions, and insights regarding the use of culture-integrated English lessons. This phase provides an in-depth understanding of the quantitative results by explaining the reasons behind the respondents' evaluations. A comparison stage is incorporated in the framework to integrate the findings from both quantitative and qualitative data. This process allows the researcher to examine relationships, validate results, and generate comprehensive interpretations of the data. Finally, the framework leads to the development of the proposed program, which serves as the output of the study. The program is based on the combined results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses and aims to enhance the design, content, and implementation of culture-integrated English lessons. The framework suggests that the respondents' demographic profile and the proposed lessons influence the level of acceptability, which is further

explained through qualitative experiences and ultimately contributes to the development of an improved instructional program.

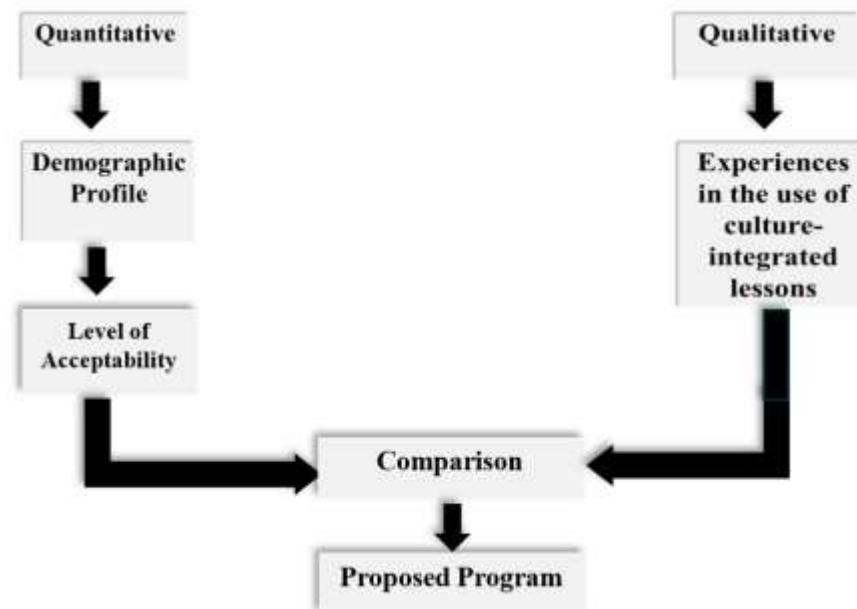


Figure 1
The Conceptual Framework of the Study

Research Questions

This study aims to determine the level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated English lessons among Teach Taiwan English teachers. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 Gender
 - 1.2 Civil status
 - 1.3 Nationality
 - 1.4 Years of service
2. What is the respondents' level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons in teaching English when assessed in terms of:
 - 2.1 Content
 - 2.2 Clarity
 - 2.3 Cultural Relevance
 - 2.4 Feasibility
 - 2.5 Effectiveness
3. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons in teaching English when the respondents are grouped according to their profile?

4. How do Teach Taiwan English teachers describe their perceptions and experiences regarding the use of culture-integrated lessons in teaching English?
5. Based on the findings, what program can be proposed to enhance the design, content, and implementation of the culture-integrated lessons in the English classroom?

Hypothesis:

There is no significant difference in the respondents' level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons in teaching English when the respondents are grouped according to their profile.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on determining the acceptability of culture-integrated English lessons among Foreign English Teachers (FETs) under the Teach Taiwan program in selected public elementary schools in Taichung City, Taiwan. The lessons were evaluated in terms of content, clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness, and differences were examined based on teachers' profile variables such as gender, civil status, nationality, and years of service. The study also explored teachers' perceptions and experiences and used these findings to propose an improvement program.

The participants were limited to FETs with at least two years of experience in integrating cultural content in English teaching. Data were collected through a survey questionnaire and followed by semi-structured interviews with selected participants. The study was limited to selected public elementary schools in Taichung City and did not include private schools or teachers outside the Teach Taiwan program. It focused only on selected culture-based lessons and did not cover other teaching approaches, subject areas, or grade levels. In addition, the study examined teachers' perceptions only and did not measure students' actual performance.

Data were collected during the winter vacation, which may have limited participation and sample size. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

Based on the findings, a program was proposed to improve the lessons in terms of clarity, cultural integration, practicality, and adaptation to students' levels. However, it was not implemented or evaluated in this study.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design to examine the acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated English lessons among Teach Taiwan English Teachers in selected public elementary schools in Taichung City. The study combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The quantitative phase served as the foundation for identifying patterns and levels of acceptability, while the qualitative phase was conducted to explain and deepen the interpretation of the quantitative findings.

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In the quantitative phase, data were gathered from 34 Foreign English Teachers (FETs) through quota and purposive sampling. Participants were required to have at least two years of experience using culture-based activities in teaching English. The proposed culture-integrated lessons, designed for Grades 4 to 6, focused on festivals and holidays and were evaluated using a researcher-made questionnaire administered through Google Forms. The instrument measured lesson acceptability in terms of content, clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness using a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was developed based on TESOL design rubrics, CLIL research, intercultural teaching frameworks, and bilingual teaching evaluation rubrics. It also underwent content validation and reliability testing to ensure accuracy and consistency.

After the quantitative analysis, the qualitative phase was conducted to gain deeper insights into teachers' evaluations and experiences. Eight participants who gave the highest and lowest ratings were purposively selected for semi-structured interviews. The interviews explored teachers' perceptions regarding the implementation of culture-integrated lessons, including their strengths, challenges, and classroom applicability. Interviews lasted approximately 15 to 30 minutes and were conducted either face-to-face or online through Zoom. Audio recordings and field notes were used to ensure accurate data collection. The study utilized Braun and Clarke's Reflexive Thematic Analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns from the interview responses.

The study was anchored in the philosophy of pragmatism, which supports the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods to address complex educational problems and generate practical solutions. Pragmatism emphasizes methodological flexibility and the use of multiple forms of evidence to understand real-world issues. The quantitative phase focused on generating measurable and generalizable findings regarding lesson acceptability, while the qualitative phase explored teachers' lived experiences and contextual interpretations through an interpretivist lens. By combining statistical findings with experiential insights, the study aimed to provide a more meaningful understanding of culture-integrated English instruction within Taiwan's bilingual education context.

Locale of the Study

The study consisted of selected public elementary schools in Taichung City, a major area under the Teach Taiwan program and one of the active sites for bilingual education implementation in Taiwan. Taichung was chosen because of its educational diversity, strong bilingual education initiatives, and large number of Foreign English Teachers deployed across urban, suburban, coastal, and mountainous school settings.

Participants

The participants included 34 FETs assigned to different public elementary schools under the Teach Taiwan program. Teachers with less than one year of teaching experience, teachers outside Taichung City, and those not affiliated with Teach Taiwan were excluded from the study.

Instruments of the Study

A researcher-made questionnaire was developed using topics and content ideas from NAER-approved elementary English textbooks and guided by the APH Quality Handbook (Amsterdam UMC, n.d.) to ensure reliability and validity in instrument development. The instrument measured lesson acceptability in terms of content, clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness, with three statements under each dimension. It was aligned with TESOL design rubrics, intercultural and culture-based CLIL research, bilingual teaching evaluation rubrics, and CLIL effectiveness scales (Kirkpatrick, 1994; Byram, 1997; Coyle et al., 2010; Tsou & Huang, 2022; Graham & Yeh, 2023; Cheng-Ji, 2023; Hsu, 2024; Chien, 2025). The questionnaire evaluated four culture-integrated English lessons—Chinese New Year, Mid-Autumn/Moon Festival, Lantern Festival, and Dragon Boat Festival—designed for Grades 4 to 6 learners.

The questionnaire was administered through Google Forms using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Before administration, the instrument underwent content validation by experts and reliability testing to ensure internal consistency and alignment with the study objectives. The collected responses were used to determine the overall acceptability of the proposed lessons. To further enrich the findings, eight participants were purposively selected for follow-up interviews to gain deeper insights into their evaluations and perceptions of the lessons.

Data Gathering Procedure

The study was conducted in two phases. During the quantitative phase, permission was secured from the Teach Taiwan coordinator before invitations and informed consent forms were distributed through Line, email, and personal invitation. Participants attended an orientation session explaining the purpose, procedures, and ethical considerations of the study before completing the questionnaire. During the qualitative phase, selected participants received interview invitations and consent forms, after which interviews were scheduled at their convenience. The interviews used open-ended questions and follow-up probes to encourage deeper discussion regarding teachers' experiences and evaluations of the proposed lessons.

The researcher played a central role throughout the study. Responsibilities included designing and administering the questionnaire, coordinating with participants, conducting interviews, transcribing data, and analyzing the findings. The researcher also ensured ethical standards such as confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, and secure handling of data. Reflexivity was practiced during qualitative analysis to minimize bias and ensure that interpretations remained grounded in participants' responses.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, frequency and percentage were used to describe respondents' profiles, weighted mean was used to determine the level of lesson acceptability, and Independent Samples t-Test and One-Way ANOVA were utilized to identify significant differences in evaluations based on profile variables. Qualitative data were analyzed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis, which involved familiarization, coding, theme development, review, definition, and report writing. Themes and subthemes were validated through consultation with experts in qualitative research to strengthen credibility and trustworthiness.

To further strengthen the validity and reliability of the study, triangulation was employed. Method triangulation involved the use of surveys and interviews, while data source triangulation included participants from varied school contexts and teaching experiences. Investigator triangulation was achieved through consultation with advisers and peers during data analysis, and theoretical triangulation incorporated perspectives from CLIL, culturally responsive teaching, and bilingual education. These strategies enhanced the rigor, credibility, and trustworthiness of the findings and ensured that the conclusions were grounded in the actual experiences of the participants.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that all ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study. All procedures adhered to established ethical guidelines to safeguard the rights, privacy, and welfare of the participants.

Prior to data collection, each participant was provided with a written informed consent form explaining the purpose of the study, the nature of participation, and the procedures involved. Participation was entirely voluntary, and participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequences (British Educational Research Association, 2024).

Confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously maintained throughout the research process. No personally identifiable information, such as names or specific school affiliations, was included in any part of the study. Participants were assigned codes or pseudonyms to ensure anonymity in data reporting. All collected data were stored securely in password-protected files and were accessible only to the researcher. The data were used solely for academic purposes and were not disclosed to any unauthorized individuals.

For the qualitative phase, interviews were conducted with prior consent, including permission for audio recording. Participants were informed of the purpose of the recording and had the right to decline recording or request that the recording be stopped at any time. All recordings were securely stored and deleted after transcription and analysis to protect participants' identities.

Digital and online tools were used only for language refinement, formatting, and organization of ideas. The researcher ensured that all outputs were reviewed and verified to maintain the authenticity and integrity of the study. No data fabrication, falsification, or manipulation occurred at any stage of the research.

The researcher maintained full accountability for upholding ethical standards and protecting participants' rights. All information gathered was treated with respect and used exclusively to achieve the objectives of the study. The study ensured that no psychological, professional, or social harm would result from participation.

RESULTS

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	30	88.2
Male	4	11.8
Total	34	100.0

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents according to gender. Most of the respondents were female, comprising 30 out of 34 participants (88.2%), while only 4 respondents (11.8%) were male

Table 2
Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Civil Status

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	20	58.8
Married	14	41.2
Total	34	100.0

Table 2 shows that most respondents were single, with 20 (58.8%) participants, while 14 (41.2%) were married, indicating representation from both groups.

Table 3
Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Nationality

Nationality	Frequency	Percentage
Filipino	28	82.4
American	1	2.9
South African	4	11.8
Belizean	1	2.9
Total	34	100.0

Table 3 shows that most respondents were Filipino, with 28 (82.4%) participants, followed by South Africans with 4 (11.8%), while American and Belizean respondents each comprised 1 (2.9%).

Table 4
Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Years of Service

Years of Service	Frequency	Percentage
2-3 years	15	44.1
4-5 years	10	29.4
Above 5 years	9	26.5
Total	34	100.0

Table 4 shows that most respondents had 2–3 years of service, with 15 (44.1%) participants, followed by 10 (29.4%) with 4–5 years, and 9 (26.5%) with more than 5 years of service.

Table 5
Respondents' Level of Acceptability of the Proposed Culture-Integrated Lessons in Teaching English

I. CONTENT	A		B		C		D		Over-all	
	WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. The lesson content is relevant to students' grade level and curriculum standards.	4.71	SA	4.74	SA	4.65	SA	4.82	SA	4.73	SA
2. Instructions and procedures are clearly explained for each activity.	4.74	SA	4.68	SA	4.65	SA	4.74	SA	4.70	SA
3. The materials and visuals are clear, organized, and easy to follow.	4.65	SA	4.76	SA	4.71	SA	4.82	SA	4.74	SA
Composite Mean	4.70	SA	4.73	SA	4.67	SA	4.79	SA	4.72	SA
II. CLARITY										
1. The lesson objectives are clearly stated and easy to understand.	4.71	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.73	SA
2. Instructions and procedures are clearly explained for each activity.	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA
3. The overall structure of the lesson is coherent.	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA
Composite Mean	4.73	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.73	SA
III. CULTURAL RELEVANCE										
1. The lesson content appropriately represents the featured culture or tradition.	4.74	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA
2. Activities allow students to connect English learning with cultural practices.	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.71	SA	4.73	SA
3. The lesson promotes appreciation and respect for cultural diversity.	4.74	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA
Composite Mean	4.74	SA	4.72	SA	4.72	SA	4.71	SA	4.72	SA
IV. FEASIBILITY										

1. The materials required are accessible and affordable.	4.74	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.74	SA	4.72	SA
2. The lesson is adaptable to different class sizes and proficiency levels.	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA
3. The lesson is practical and realistic for actual classroom use.	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.74	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA
Composite Mean	4.73	SA	4.72	SA	4.73	SA	4.73	SA	4.72	SA
V. EFFECTIVENESS										
1. The lesson helps improve students' English communication skills.	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.71	SA
2. The activities promote active student participation and engagement.	4.71	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.73	SA
3. The lesson enhances students' understanding of cultural values and traditions.	4.71	SA	4.71	SA	4.74	SA	4.74	SA	4.72	SA
Composite Mean	4.71	SA	4.72	SA	4.73	SA	4.73	SA	4.72	SA
Overall Mean	4.72	SA	4.72	SA	4.71	SA	4.74	SA	4.72	SA

Legend: 5(4.21-5.00) - Strongly Agree (SA), 4(3.41-4.20) – Agree (A), 3(2.61-3.40)- Neutral (N), 2(1.81-2.60)- Disagree (D), 1(1.00-1.80)-Strongly Disagree (SD)

A = Chinese New Year, B= Lantern Festival, C= Dragon Boat Festival, D= Mid-Autumn/Moon Festival

Table 5 shows that the proposed culture-integrated lessons were highly acceptable across the five dimensions, with composite mean scores ranging from 4.72 to 4.73, all interpreted as Strongly Agree (SA). The overall mean of 4.72 reflects the respondents' consistently positive evaluation of the lessons.

Table 6
Difference in the Respondents' Level of Acceptability of the Proposed Culture-Integrated Lessons in Teaching English When the Respondents are Grouped to Profile

Profile	Mean	Computed Value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Gender					
Female	4.72				

Male	4.72	Computed T-Value = 0.009	0.983	Do not Reject the Hypothesis	Not Significant
Civil Status					
Single	4.74	Computed T-Value = 0.258	0.798	Do not Reject the Hypothesis	Not Significant
Married	4.69				
Nationality					
Filipino	4.74	Computed ANOVA Value = 1.021	0.397	Do not Reject the Hypothesis	Not Significant
American	3.92				
South African	4.76				
Belizean	4.92				
Years of Service					
2-3 years	4.67	Computed ANOVA Value = 0.373	0.773	Do not Reject the Hypothesis	Not Significant
4-5 years	4.63				
Above 5 years	4.66				

Note: p-value ≤ 0.05 – significant, p-value > 0.05 – not significant

Table 6 presents the differences in the respondents' level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons when grouped according to gender, civil status, nationality, and years of service.

Qualitative Part: Experiences of FETs regarding the use of Culture-Integrated Lessons in Teaching English

Table 7. The demographic information of the eight (8) participants

Participant	Gender	Civil status	Nationality	Years of Teaching as FET
T1	Female	Single	Filipino	3.5 years
T2	Female	Single	Filipino	5 years
T3	Female	Married	Filipino	5 years
T4	Female	Married	Filipino	2.5 years

T5	Female	Single	Filipino	5 years
T6	Female	Single	South African	3.5 years
T7	Male	Single	American	3.5 years
T8	Female	Married	Filipino	3.5 years

The participants consisted of seven (7) female teachers and one (1) male teacher, with varying years of experience ranging from 2.5 to 5 years is shown in Table 7. They are assigned to different public elementary schools under the Teach Taiwan Program in Taichung City and are assigned “T” for teachers who actually are the participants.

Table 8: Themes Generated from the Raw Data

Experiences Of The Foreign English Teachers (FETs)
Theme 1: Practical and Manageable Lesson Implementation Sub-theme 1.1: Clear and Organized Instructions Sub-theme 1.2: Simple and available Materials Sub-theme 1.3: Flexible activities
Theme 2: Student-Friendly and Engaging Learning Materials Sub-theme 2.1: Use of Visual and Interactive Materials Sub-theme 2.2: Cultural Familiarity Enhancing Student Understanding Sub-theme 2.3: Need for Adjustment for Student Levels
Theme 3: Challenges in Lesson Implementation Sub-theme 3.1: Limited Class Time Sub-theme 3.2: Preparation of materials Sub-theme 3.3: Institutional and Classroom Constraints

Table 8 presents the themes and sub-themes derived from the qualitative data on FETs’ experiences in using culture-integrated lessons. Three main themes emerged: (1) practical and manageable lesson implementation, which includes clear instructions, simple materials, and flexible activities; (2) student-friendly and engaging materials, which highlight the use of visual and interactive resources, cultural familiarity, and the need for

level adjustment; and (3) challenges in lesson implementation, which involve limited class time, material preparation, and classroom constraints.

DISCUSSION

Research Question 1. Profile of the respondents in terms of 1.1 Gender

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents according to gender. Out of the 34 respondents, the majority are female, with a frequency of 30 (88.2%), while only 4 respondents (11.8%) are male. This indicates that the group of respondents is largely composed of female teachers.

This finding is consistent with global data indicating that the teaching profession, particularly at the primary level, remains predominantly female. Reports from UNESCO (2023) show that women comprise a large proportion of primary school teachers worldwide, while data from the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (2024) similarly indicate that most teachers across participating countries are female.

Additional reports from the Teacher Task Force (2024) and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2024) confirm that this pattern is particularly evident in elementary education, where female teachers make up the majority across most regions. In some education systems, the proportion of female teachers even reaches very high levels, further reflecting the gender imbalance in the profession (World Bank, 2023; Education International, 2024).

These patterns are often linked to long-standing social and structural factors associated with teaching at the basic education level. In relation to the present study, the predominance of female respondents can therefore be considered typical and reflective of the actual composition of the teaching workforce.

1.2 Civil status

The distribution of respondents according to civil status is shown in Table 2. Out of the 34 respondents, 20 (58.8%) are single, while 14 (41.2%) are married. This shows that although most respondents are single, a substantial number are married, indicating a relatively balanced representation of both groups.

Both single and married foreign English teachers are represented in the study, which allows for a more inclusive view of the respondents' backgrounds. Teacher demographic profiles, including personal characteristics, are considered relevant in understanding differences in professional experiences and perspectives, as noted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2024).

Global reports from UNESCO (2023) also emphasize that teachers come from diverse social backgrounds, which may shape their engagement and experiences in the classroom. In research, such variables are often included to account for possible differences in perceptions among participants (Kim & Kim, 2022).

In the context of this study, the presence of both single and married respondents suggests that the evaluation of the culture-integrated lessons reflects perspectives from teachers with varied personal backgrounds, which strengthens the overall representation of the findings.

1.3 Nationality

Table 3 presents the distribution of respondents according to nationality. Out of the 34 respondents, the majority are Filipino, with a frequency of 28 (82.4%). This is followed by South African respondents with 4 (11.8%), while American and Belizean respondents each account for 1 (2.9%).

The predominance of Filipino respondents in the study reflects the composition of the available participants within the research setting. This may be related to current hiring practices in Taiwan and other parts of Asia, where Filipino teachers are commonly employed due to their English proficiency and teaching qualifications. In Taiwan, the Ministry of Education facilitates the recruitment of foreign English teachers through the Taiwan Foreign English Teacher Program (TFETP) and government-supported programs such as Teach Taiwan, which include educators from countries such as the Philippines, South Africa, and the United States.

This recruitment approach promotes a diverse teaching workforce and aligns with broader trends in English language education, where educators from various national backgrounds are increasingly represented. In the local context, such diversity is reflected in the composition of foreign English teachers in public schools.

Although the distribution of respondents across nationalities is uneven, this does not affect the credibility of the study, as the sample reflects the available participants within the research setting. The study does not aim to compare respondents based on nationality but rather to describe their profiles and examine their overall evaluation of the culture-integrated lessons.

1.4 Years of service

A larger proportion of respondents fall within the 2–3 years range, suggesting that many participants are relatively new in their roles as Foreign English Teachers (FETs) in Taiwan. This pattern may be explained by the structure of foreign teacher recruitment in the country. While the Ministry of Education began hiring foreign English teachers as early as 2004, large-scale recruitment increased significantly starting in 2021 under the Bilingual Nation 2030 initiative. As a result, many teachers currently working as FETs have shorter lengths of service.

It is important to note that the years of service reported in this study refer specifically to respondents' experience as FETs in Taiwan teaching culture-integrated English lessons and do not necessarily reflect their total teaching experience in their home countries. Some participants may therefore have prior teaching experience despite having fewer years of service within the FET program.

The presence of respondents with 4–5 years and more than 5 years of service indicates that both newer and more experienced teachers are represented. This range of experience provides a broader perspective in evaluating the proposed culture-integrated lessons and supports the overall representation of the study.

Research Question 2. Respondents' level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons in teaching English when assessed in terms of:

2.1 Content

Table 5 presents the respondents' level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons in teaching English across five dimensions: content, clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness. The composite mean scores range from 4.72 to 4.73, all interpreted as Strongly Agree (SA), indicating a high level of acceptability. The overall mean of 4.72 further reflects the consistently positive evaluation of the proposed lessons.

The level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons in terms of content highlights the importance of well-designed instructional materials in ensuring that lessons are appropriate, organized, and relevant to students' needs. In culture-integrated instruction, content functions not only as a medium for language learning but also as a bridge to meaningful cultural understanding. This supports the view that instructional content should be both linguistically accessible and culturally meaningful to enhance learning outcomes (Coyle et al., 2010; Meyer et al., 2015).

The results reveal an overall weighted mean of 4.72, interpreted as Strongly Agree, indicating a high level of acceptability. This suggests that the lessons are appropriate for the learners' level, aligned with curriculum standards, and supportive of both language development and cultural understanding. The finding reflects key principles of the CLIL framework, which emphasize that well-structured and contextually relevant content promotes both language and subject learning (Coyle et al., 2010; Marsh et al., 2019).

The highest-rated indicator, "The materials and visuals are clear, organized, and easy to follow," obtained a weighted mean of 4.74 (Strongly Agree). This indicates that respondents place strong value on clear and well-organized instructional materials, as these enhance comprehension and improve the effectiveness of lesson delivery. Prior studies have shown that structured materials and visual supports contribute significantly to learners' engagement and understanding in EFL contexts (Martínez & Rubio, 2021; Graham & Yeh, 2023).

On the other hand, the lowest-rated indicator, "Instructions and procedures are clearly explained for each activity," received a weighted mean of 4.70 (Strongly Agree). Although still highly rated, this suggests that there is room to further improve the clarity of instructions to support smoother implementation of activities. Clear procedures help reduce cognitive load and allow learners to focus more effectively on both language and content (Meyer et al., 2015).

Overall, the findings are consistent with previous research indicating that well-structured and culturally integrated materials enhance learners' understanding and retention (Martínez & Rubio, 2021). Similarly, Chien, Teo, and Gao (2025) emphasized that relevant and organized content supports the effective implementation of culture-integrated lessons, particularly in Asian EFL contexts. These results also align with the goals of Taiwan's bilingual education initiatives, which emphasize the use of contextually appropriate and culturally relevant materials in English instruction (Ministry of Education [Taiwan], 2022, 2024).

2.2 Clarity

Respondents' level of acceptability in terms of clarity indicated that the proposed culture-integrated lessons were well-structured and readily comprehensible, enabling both teachers and learners to follow the instructional flow with ease. Clarity in instructional design is particularly important in culture-integrated and bilingual contexts, as it ensures that both language and content objectives are effectively communicated.

The statements pertaining to "*Instructions and procedures are clearly explained for each activity*" and "*The overall structure of the lesson is coherent*" both obtained a weighted mean of 4.74, interpreted as strongly agree. This reflected that the lessons were systematically organized and clearly articulated, which facilitated smoother implementation and enhanced student participation. This finding is supported by OECD (2023), which emphasized that clear lesson structure and organization contribute significantly to effective teaching and improved learner outcomes. In comparison, "*The lesson objectives are clearly stated and easy to understand*" yielded a slightly lower weighted mean of 4.73, also interpreted as strongly agree, suggesting that although the objectives were generally clear, further refinement could strengthen learners' understanding of the intended outcomes. Clear articulation of objectives is essential in guiding both teaching and assessment processes, particularly in integrated learning environments (Meyer et al., 2022).

These findings were congruent with the principles of the CLIL framework, which emphasized that clarity in content organization and communication is fundamental to the effective integration of language and subject matter (Coyle et al., 2010). In a similar vein, Graham and Yeh (2023) underscored that well-structured and clearly delivered lessons enhanced classroom engagement and supported teachers in implementing bilingual instruction effectively.

Furthermore, UNESCO (2023) highlighted that clear instructional design and well-defined learning objectives are essential components of quality education, as they help reduce learner confusion and promote active participation. Likewise, Ministry of Education Taiwan (2022) emphasized that clarity in lesson objectives and procedures is crucial in achieving the goals of bilingual education, particularly under the Bilingual Nation 2030 initiative.

The Clarity domain obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.73, interpreted as strongly agree, indicating a very high level of acceptability. This suggested that the lessons were coherent, well-structured, and easy to follow, which facilitated smoother lesson delivery and minimized potential confusion during instruction. Moreover, the clarity of objectives, procedures, and overall organization supported learners in understanding the flow of activities, thereby enhancing their participation and engagement. In this regard, clear instructional design served as a key factor in enabling both teachers and students to effectively navigate the lesson, ultimately contributing to a more efficient and meaningful teaching and learning process. These findings are further supported by Liddicoat and Scarino (2023), who emphasized that clarity and explicitness in instruction are essential in fostering both language development and intercultural understanding in language classrooms.

2.3 Cultural Relevance

Integrating language lessons with culture enables learners to recognize the practical use of language while developing awareness of traditions and values. This connection enhances engagement and contributes to more meaningful learning experiences. In line with intercultural communicative competence (ICC), language learning is most effective when learners are able to relate linguistic forms to cultural meanings and real-life contexts (Byram, 1997; Coyle et al., 2010).

The results show that the most prominent strength of the lessons is the ability of activities to connect English learning with cultural practices, which obtained a weighted mean of 4.73, interpreted as Strongly Agree. This suggests that the lessons effectively link language use with authentic cultural experiences, enabling learners to use English in meaningful contexts. These findings are consistent with Gómez and Criado (2023), who reported that students demonstrate higher levels of engagement when cultural elements are integrated into instruction. Similarly, Serrano and Pérez (2024) found that incorporating cultural comparisons encourages active participation and increases learners' confidence in using English. These studies support the present findings, indicating that cultural integration enhances both learner engagement and language use.

A slightly lower mean was observed in the indicators related to the representation of culture and the promotion of cultural appreciation, both with a weighted mean of 4.71 (Strongly Agree). Although still highly rated, this suggests that these aspects may benefit from further enhancement to deepen the authenticity and richness of cultural integration. The minimal difference in scores indicates generally consistent perceptions across indicators while pointing to opportunities for refinement.

This finding aligns with Chien, Teo, and Gao (2025), who emphasized that while teachers recognize the importance of cultural context, instructional materials may sometimes present culture at a surface level. Their study highlighted the need for more meaningful, contextualized, and localized cultural content to strengthen learners' connection to the lesson. In addition, Meyer et al. (2015) emphasized that deeper cultural engagement in CLIL supports the development of higher-order thinking and intercultural understanding. These insights support the present findings, suggesting that enhancing cultural representation may further improve learners' appreciation and engagement.

Moreover, the findings are aligned with Taiwan's English education policies under the Bilingual Nation 2030 initiative, which promote the integration of local and global cultural contexts to make learning more relevant and meaningful (Ministry of Education [Taiwan], 2022, 2024). These policies emphasize that language learning should extend beyond grammar and vocabulary to include cultural understanding for effective real-life communication.

The Cultural Relevance domain yielded an overall weighted mean of 4.72, interpreted as Strongly Agree, indicating a high level of acceptability. This demonstrates that cultural integration is effectively incorporated into the lessons, making English learning more engaging, relevant, and meaningful for learners.

2.4 Feasibility

The results on respondents' level of acceptability in terms of feasibility indicate a high level of agreement, with an overall weighted mean of 4.72, interpreted as Strongly

Agree. This suggests that the proposed culture-integrated lessons are practical, adaptable, and suitable for implementation in actual classroom settings.

The aspect “The lesson is adaptable to different class sizes and proficiency levels” obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.74 (Strongly Agree), indicating that respondents perceive the lessons as flexible and responsive to diverse classroom contexts. This implies that the lessons can be effectively implemented across varying learner abilities and instructional conditions. These findings are consistent with recent studies emphasizing that flexibility is a critical factor in successful CLIL and bilingual instruction, particularly in heterogeneous classrooms (Huang & Tsou, 2022; Graham & Yeh, 2023). Similarly, Lin and Wu (2022) highlighted that adaptable instructional materials enable teachers to address diverse learner needs more effectively, while Hsu (2023) emphasized that flexible lesson design supports smoother classroom implementation and teacher confidence.

The accessibility of materials also received a high rating, as “The materials required are accessible and affordable” obtained a weighted mean of 4.72 (Strongly Agree), indicating that the resources needed for the lessons are readily available and cost-effective. In addition, “The lesson is practical and realistic for actual classroom use” obtained a weighted mean of 4.71 (Strongly Agree), suggesting that the lessons are manageable and applicable in real teaching situations. Although slightly lower, the difference is minimal and reflects consistently high feasibility across indicators. These findings align with recent research emphasizing that practical and resource-efficient materials increase the likelihood of successful implementation in everyday classroom contexts (Hsu, 2023; Ministry of Education [Taiwan], 2024).

Overall, the findings indicate that the lessons are adaptable, practical, and resource-efficient. This reflects that the proposed culture-integrated lessons are highly feasible and can be effectively utilized across diverse teaching contexts. The consistently high ratings across indicators further suggest that the lessons are well-suited to the realities of classroom instruction and can support effective teaching and learning processes.

2.5 Effectiveness

The findings on effectiveness indicate a high level of acceptability, highlighting the positive contribution of the proposed culture-integrated lessons to students’ learning outcomes. The aspect “*The activities promote active student participation and engagement*” obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.73, interpreted as Strongly Agree, indicating that the lessons are engaging and interactive. This suggests that integrating cultural elements within instructional activities encourages learners to participate more actively and become more involved in the learning process. These findings are consistent with recent studies showing that culturally responsive instruction enhances student engagement and participation in EFL contexts (Gómez & Criado, 2023; Serrano & Pérez, 2024).

The capacity of the lessons to enhance students’ understanding of cultural values and traditions also received a high rating, with a weighted mean of 4.72 (Strongly Agree), indicating that the lessons effectively support intercultural learning. This suggests that learners are able to develop a deeper appreciation of cultural concepts while using English as a medium of communication. This finding aligns with Ishimori (2025), who

emphasized that culture-based instructional activities promote intercultural understanding alongside language development. Similarly, Huang and Tsou (2022) noted that integrating culture within CLIL-based instruction supports both language learning and cultural awareness among learners. These findings are further supported by Taiwan's bilingual education initiatives, which emphasize the integration of cultural understanding in English instruction to promote meaningful communication (Ministry of Education [Taiwan], 2024).

A slightly lower mean was observed for *"The lesson helps improve students' English communication skills,"* which obtained a weighted mean of 4.71 (Strongly Agree). Although marginally lower, the difference is minimal and indicates consistently high effectiveness across all indicators. This suggests that the lessons contribute positively to the development of students' communication skills. This finding is consistent with Lai (2022), who found that learners exposed to CLIL-based and activity-driven instruction demonstrated improved communication abilities. In addition, recent studies highlight that culturally contextualized instruction enhances meaningful language use by situating communication in authentic and relevant contexts (Graham & Yeh, 2023; Hsu, 2023).

The Effectiveness domain obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.72, interpreted as Strongly Agree, indicating a high level of acceptability. This demonstrates that the proposed lessons are effective in promoting student engagement, enhancing cultural understanding, and supporting the development of communication skills, thereby contributing to meaningful and holistic learning outcomes.

Overall, the weighted mean of 4.72 (Strongly Agree) reflects consistently high evaluations across all dimensions of the proposed culture-integrated lessons, including content, clarity, cultural relevance, feasibility, and effectiveness. The narrow range of composite means (4.71–4.74) suggests consistency in respondents' perceptions, indicating a balanced and well-developed instructional design. Although minor variations were observed, these differences are minimal and do not indicate any significant weakness; rather, they point to areas that may benefit from further refinement. This suggests that the lessons are cohesively designed and aligned with instructional goals, learner needs, and classroom realities.

Research Question 3. Difference in the respondents' level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons in teaching English when the respondents are grouped according to their profile.

3.1 Gender

With regard to gender, both female and male respondents obtained the same mean score of 4.72. The computed t-value of 0.009 with a p-value of 0.983, which is greater than the level of significance (0.05), indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of acceptability when respondents are grouped according to gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

This finding indicates that gender does not significantly influence teachers' perceptions of the acceptability of culture-integrated lessons. Both male and female teachers evaluated the lessons in a similar manner, suggesting a shared professional judgment regarding their quality, relevance, and effectiveness.

This result is supported by existing literature, which emphasizes that teachers' instructional perceptions are shaped more by pedagogical knowledge, teaching experience, and contextual factors than by gender. For instance, Do Coyle et al. (2010) emphasized that in CLIL contexts, teachers evaluate instructional materials based on how effectively content, communication, cognition, and culture are integrated. Similarly, David Marsh (2012) highlighted that teachers in bilingual and CLIL environments tend to develop shared pedagogical frameworks, leading to consistent perceptions of lesson effectiveness across different teacher groups.

Recent research in EFL contexts further supports this finding. Studies in Asian settings (e.g., Hsu, 2024) indicate that teachers' acceptance of culture-integrated lessons is influenced more by perceived usefulness and classroom applicability than by gender. In addition, global education research shows that teachers working within the same curriculum framework tend to demonstrate similar attitudes toward effective teaching practices (OECD, 2024).

Thus, the absence of a significant difference suggests that the proposed culture-integrated lessons are consistently acceptable across both male and female respondents.

3.2 Civil Status

In terms of civil status, single respondents obtained a mean score of 4.74, while married respondents obtained 4.69. The computed t-value of 0.258 with a p-value of 0.798, which is greater than 0.05, indicates that there is no significant difference in the respondents' level of acceptability when grouped according to civil status. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

This finding suggests that civil status does not significantly influence teachers' perceptions of the acceptability of the proposed lessons. Both single and married teachers evaluated the lessons similarly, indicating that professional judgment remains consistent regardless of personal circumstances.

This result aligns with literature indicating that teachers' instructional perceptions are primarily shaped by professional knowledge and teaching context rather than personal demographic characteristics. In CLIL-based instruction, teachers evaluate materials based on how effectively content, communication, cognition, and culture are integrated (Coyle et al., 2010). Likewise, Marsh (2012) noted that teachers in bilingual environments share common pedagogical frameworks, which result in consistent evaluations of lesson effectiveness.

Moreover, studies in EFL contexts show that demographic variables such as civil status have minimal influence on teachers' attitudes toward innovative and culturally responsive teaching approaches. Hsu (2024) found that acceptance of culture-integrated instruction is more strongly associated with lesson clarity, relevance, and applicability. Similarly, global findings indicate that teachers working within the same educational framework tend to demonstrate aligned teaching perspectives (OECD, 2024).

Therefore, the findings indicate that the proposed lessons are acceptable across teachers regardless of civil status.

3.3 Nationality

For nationality, Filipino respondents obtained a mean score of 4.74, South African respondents 4.76, Belizean respondents 4.92, and American respondents 3.92. Despite

these variations, the computed ANOVA value of 1.021 with a p-value of 0.397, which is greater than 0.05, indicates that there is no significant difference in the respondents' level of acceptability when grouped according to nationality. Thus, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

This finding indicates that nationality does not significantly influence teachers' perceptions of lesson acceptability. Although slight variations in mean scores are observed, these differences are not statistically significant and may be attributed to individual differences rather than nationality.

Supporting literature suggests that teachers' evaluations are largely guided by shared pedagogical frameworks and instructional contexts. In CLIL environments, lesson evaluation is based on the integration of content, communication, cognition, and culture (Coyle et al., 2010; Marsh, 2012). Research on teacher cognition further explains that teaching beliefs are shaped more by educational experiences and institutional context than by nationality (Borg, 2015).

Recent studies in multicultural EFL settings support this finding. Hsu (2024) found that teachers' acceptance of culture-integrated instruction is influenced by perceived usefulness and classroom applicability. Nguyen and Nguyen (2022) also reported that teachers in multicultural ESL environments demonstrate similar instructional preferences when working within the same curriculum. Likewise, Richards (2023) emphasized that teachers across different cultural backgrounds adopt comparable teaching practices when guided by shared instructional goals.

In addition, international evidence highlights that standardized curriculum frameworks and professional development contribute to consistent teaching practices across nationalities (OECD, 2024; UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2023). However, it is important to note that the number of respondents across nationality groups is uneven. This limitation should be considered when interpreting the results.

The findings suggest that the proposed lessons are applicable across teachers of different nationalities.

3.4 Years of service

With respect to years of service, respondents with 2–3 years of experience obtained a mean score of 4.67, those with 4–5 years obtained 4.63, and those with more than five years obtained 4.66. The computed ANOVA value of 0.373 with a p-value of 0.773 indicates no significant difference, as the p-value is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

This finding suggests that teaching experience does not significantly influence teachers' perceptions of the acceptability of the proposed lessons. Both less experienced and more experienced teachers evaluated the lessons similarly, indicating that experience alone does not lead to differences in evaluating instructional materials.

This result is supported by literature indicating that teachers' perceptions of instructional innovations are influenced more by pedagogical and contextual factors than by years of service. In CLIL contexts, teachers evaluate lessons based on how effective content, communication, cognition, and culture are integrated (Coyle et al., 2010). Research on teacher cognition also shows that both novice and experienced teachers may develop similar instructional beliefs when exposed to comparable teaching environments (Borg, 2015).

Recent studies further support this finding. Hsu (2024) reported that acceptance of culture-integrated instruction is influenced more by lesson clarity, relevance, and applicability than by years of experience. Likewise, Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) emphasized that effective teaching practices are shaped by professional learning opportunities and institutional support.

Additionally, the relatively recent expansion of foreign teacher deployment programs in Taiwan, particularly under the Bilingual Nation 2030 initiative, may explain the similarity in perceptions. Many teachers share similar professional exposure, which contributes to consistent evaluations across experience levels. International evidence also indicates that teachers across different experience levels tend to demonstrate similar attitudes when working within the same educational system (OECD, 2024).

Thus, the findings indicate that the proposed culture-integrated lessons are acceptable regardless of teachers' years of service.

Research Question 4 Experiences of foreign english teachers regarding the use of culture-integrated lessons in teaching english

This forms part of the mixed-methods design, where qualitative data were used to further explain and support the quantitative results. Eight (8) FETs participated in the interview phase. Their demographic profile is presented in Table 7.

Three main themes emerged from the data, each consisting of three sub-themes. **Theme 1: Practical and Manageable Lesson Implementation** shows that teachers perceived culture-integrated lessons as practical, manageable, and suitable for regular classroom use because the lessons were organized, flexible, and aligned with students' proficiency levels. Teachers appreciated lessons that balanced language learning and cultural understanding through simple discussions, visual aids, relatable examples, and accessible materials, which reduced preparation time and supported classroom productivity.

Sub-theme 1.1: Clear and Organized Instructions emphasizes that well-structured instructions and organized lesson procedures helped teachers understand lesson objectives, activity flow, and expected outcomes more easily. Teachers noted that clear instructions reduced confusion, supported classroom management, and allowed smoother integration of cultural content with language learning activities within limited instructional time.

The findings are supported by the principles of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), particularly the 4Cs Framework—Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture—developed by Do Coyle, Philip Hood, and David Marsh. CLIL supports practical lesson implementation through structured lesson planning, scaffolding, and clear instructional stages that help teachers effectively integrate language and culture while maintaining classroom efficiency.

Sub-theme 1.2: Simple and Available Materials highlights that teachers preferred lessons using simple, familiar, and easily accessible materials such as visuals, worksheets, videos, and culturally familiar objects. Teachers explained that these materials made lessons easier to prepare, more engaging for students, and more adaptable to different proficiency levels and classroom situations. Familiar cultural topics

such as Chinese New Year, Lantern Festival, and Moon Festival also helped students connect language learning to real-life experiences.

The findings support CLIL principles because meaningful and familiar materials improve communication, comprehension, cultural understanding, and classroom practicality. Simple vocabulary and structured activities also supported mixed-ability classrooms and made lesson implementation more feasible and sustainable in real teaching contexts.

Sub-theme 1.3: Flexible Activities reveals that teachers valued activities that could easily be adjusted according to students' proficiency levels, interests, classroom conditions, and time limitations. Teachers preferred simple, interactive, and experience-based activities that encouraged participation, meaningful communication, and connections to students' real-life experiences. Flexible activities allowed teachers to modify vocabulary, pacing, and instructions while maintaining lesson objectives and student engagement.

The analysis further shows that flexibility supports the CLIL framework because it allows teachers to balance language and content instruction while responding to students' needs in real classroom settings. Flexible activities also helped teachers address challenges such as mixed proficiency levels and limited classroom time, making culture-integrated lessons more practical, engaging, and manageable.

Theme 2: Student-Friendly and Engaging Learning Materials shows that teachers viewed lessons as more effective when materials were clear, interactive, visually appealing, and connected to students' experiences. These materials increased student participation, engagement, confidence, and willingness to use English.

Sub-theme 2.1: Use of Visual and Interactive Materials highlights that games, visuals, storytelling, discussions, and interactive activities helped students actively use English while improving vocabulary, speaking, and comprehension. The analysis supports the CLIL framework, which emphasizes meaningful interaction between language and content to promote deeper learning and engagement.

Sub-theme 2.2: Cultural Familiarity Enhancing Student Understanding reveals that students understood lessons more easily when topics were connected to familiar cultural experiences such as festivals, food, and traditions. Familiarity increased confidence, participation, and cultural appreciation. The analysis further explains that meaningful and familiar content supports both language development and cultural understanding, aligning with the goals of Taiwan's Bilingual Nation 2030 policy.

Sub-theme 2.3: Need for Adjustment for Student Levels indicates that activities needed adjustment according to students' English proficiency, classroom conditions, time, and resources. Teachers emphasized modifying vocabulary, instructions, pacing, and tasks to ensure effective participation. The analysis highlights that balancing engagement, learner ability, and language objectives is important for effective and practical culture-integrated instruction in line with the CLIL framework.

Theme 3: Challenges in Lesson Implementation highlights that although culture-integrated lessons were meaningful and engaging, teachers still experienced practical difficulties in classroom implementation. Common challenges included limited class time, preparation of materials, mixed student proficiency levels, and classroom or school-related limitations. Teachers emphasized the need to adjust lessons to make them more practical and manageable in real classroom settings.

Sub-theme 3.1: Limited Class Time shows that some activities were too many or too time-consuming to complete within a regular forty-minute class period. Teachers preferred simpler and well-paced lessons that focused on fewer activities to avoid overwhelming students and to improve lesson management. The analysis explains that effective lesson implementation requires balancing language and content objectives with practical classroom conditions, which aligns with the CLIL framework.

Sub-theme 3.2: Preparation of Materials reveals that lessons requiring too many materials, visuals, or additional preparation became difficult to manage, especially for teachers handling multiple classes. Teachers preferred simple, relevant, and reusable materials that were easier to prepare and implement. The analysis further highlights that practical classroom conditions, such as limited space, school rules, and available resources, significantly affect lesson implementation. In line with the CLIL framework, materials should not only support content and language learning but also remain practical and manageable for teachers.

Sub-theme 3.3: Institutional and Classroom Constraints indicates that some culture-integrated activities were difficult to implement because of curriculum requirements, textbook dependence, limited classroom space, and restrictions on hands-on activities. Teachers often needed to simplify lessons or use videos and extension activities instead. The analysis explains that lessons should not only be creative and engaging but also realistic and adaptable to actual classroom and institutional conditions, reflecting challenges commonly identified in the implementation of Taiwan's Bilingual Nation 2030 policy

Research Question 5 Proposed Program: CLIL-Based Culture-Integrated English Enhancement Program

The proposed program was developed based on the study findings, which showed that the culture-integrated English lessons were highly acceptable and effective. However, teachers identified areas needing improvement, including lesson clarity, cultural integration, practicality, adaptation to students' proficiency levels, and challenges related to time and materials. The program therefore aims to enhance the design and implementation of culture-integrated English lessons among Foreign English Teachers (FETs) through the improvement of lesson organization, cultural integration, accessible materials, interactive teaching strategies, and differentiated instruction.

Guided by the CLIL approach, the program supports teachers in planning and implementing practical and flexible culture-integrated lessons. It will run for one year with 10 monthly sessions, except during February and July, and will include workshops on lesson planning, culture-enhanced content development, materials creation, communicative teaching strategies, differentiated instruction, and lesson adaptation for mixed-level learners. The activities will involve FETs, local English teachers (LETs), coordinators, and trainers, with expected outputs such as improved lesson plans, contextualized instructional materials, increased student engagement, and more inclusive teaching practices.

The program is also expected to strengthen cultural integration in English instruction, improve students' communication skills, and support Taiwan's bilingual education goals. Monitoring and evaluation will be conducted through feedback forms,

lesson plan reviews, teacher reflection discussions, and demonstration lessons. An estimated budget of NTD 32,480.00 was proposed to cover honoraria, materials, refreshments, workshop supplies, certificates, and demonstration lesson resources for approximately 30–32 participants in one district.

Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis of the data collected and results obtained, the following summarizes the key findings of the study:

The Profile of the Respondents

With respect to gender, most of the respondents were female, indicating that female teachers comprise the majority of the Foreign English Teacher (FET) population in this study. In terms of civil status, most of the respondents were single, indicating that a large portion of the Foreign English Teachers (FETs) in this study are unmarried. For nationality, most of the respondents were Filipino, indicating that Filipino teachers comprise the majority of the Foreign English Teachers (FETs) in this study. Most of the respondents had two to three years of teaching experience as Foreign English Teachers (FETs), indicating that a large portion of the participants are relatively early in their teaching careers in Taiwan.

Level of acceptability of the proposed culture-integrated lessons in teaching English

In terms of content, the proposed culture-integrated lessons obtained a high level of acceptability, with an overall mean of 4.72 (Strongly Agree). For clarity, the proposed culture-integrated lessons obtained a high level of acceptability, with an overall mean of 4.73 (Strongly Agree). In terms of cultural relevance, the proposed culture-integrated lessons obtained a high level of acceptability, with an overall mean of 4.72 (Strongly Agree). With regard to feasibility, the proposed culture-integrated lessons obtained a high level of acceptability, with an overall mean of 4.72 (Strongly Agree). In terms of effectiveness, the proposed culture-integrated lessons obtained a high level of acceptability, with an overall mean of 4.72 (Strongly Agree)

In summary, the proposed culture-integrated lessons obtained a high level of acceptability, with an overall mean of 4.72 (Strongly Agree). This indicates that the lessons are well-designed, clear, culturally relevant, feasible, and effective, making them highly suitable for implementation in English classrooms.

Difference in the Respondents' Level of Acceptability of the Proposed Culture-Integrated Lessons in Teaching English When the Respondents are Grouped to Profile

There was no significant difference in the respondents' level of acceptability when grouped according to gender, civil status, nationality, and years of service, indicating that respondents have similar perceptions regardless of profile.

Teach Taiwan English teachers described their perceptions and experiences in using culture-integrated lessons as

Practical and Manageable Lesson Implementation, where teachers perceived the lessons as easy to implement due to clear instructions, simple and accessible materials, and flexible activities. These features allowed teachers to adapt lessons to their classroom context and student needs. Another is student-friendly and engaging learning materials. The lessons were found to be highly engaging and meaningful for students. Also, the use of visual and interactive materials, along with culturally familiar content, helped students better understand the lesson and participate actively. However, teachers noted the need to adjust activities based on students' proficiency levels. Challenges in Lesson Implementation were encountered by the teachers despite the positive feedback, such as limited class time, preparation of materials, and classroom or institutional constraints. These factors sometimes required teachers to modify or simplify the lessons for practical use.

Conclusions

Based on the foregoing findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

The proposed culture-integrated lessons are appropriate and highly acceptable for teaching English at the elementary level, as reflected in the high ratings across all evaluation domains.

There is no significant difference in teachers' perceptions of the lessons when grouped according to their profile, indicating that the lessons are applicable across diverse teaching contexts.

Culture-integrated lessons make English learning more meaningful and Engaging by connecting language instruction with students' cultural experiences.

Although the lessons are generally effective and practical, their successful implementation depends on factors such as time constraints, availability of materials, and students' proficiency levels.

Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions drawn from the study, the following are hereby recommended:

Teachers may continue using culture-integrated lessons to make English learning more engaging and meaningful for students.

Teachers should adjust lesson activities, materials, and pacing based on students' proficiency levels and available time and classroom resources.

Teachers should ensure that cultural content supports the language objectives of the lesson.

School administrators may provide support through instructional materials and opportunities for teacher collaboration.

Education authorities may strengthen professional development programs related to CLIL and culture-integrated teaching.

Schools may organize workshops, demonstration lessons, and sharing sessions to support teachers' continuous development.

A structured culture-integrated instructional program may be implemented to guide teachers in improving lesson design and classroom implementation.

Future researchers may conduct similar studies in different settings with more diverse participants and examine students' performance and learning outcomes when using culture-integrated lessons.

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