

Diversity and Interesting: International Students' Perception of Chinese Video Programs to Supplement Cultural Teaching

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Abstract

The growth of Chinese language education on a global scale has significantly aided the dissemination of Chinese culture. The primary venue for introducing Chinese culture to international students is the classroom. Therefore, when practicing classroom teaching of the Chinese language abroad, it is important to consider and plan how to introduce Chinese culture in a way that will make the recipients happy, simple, and quick to accept it. As media teaching tools, Chinese Video Programs benefit from having a large audience, a significant impact, and a long history of promoting Chinese culture. Through a questionnaire survey and semi-structured follow-up interviews with 140 international students at a university in Tianjin and statistical analysis of the data using SPSS software, it was found that diversity and fun are the greatest expectations of international students for the content of Chinese Video Programs. This study also found that rationalizing the length of supplemental instructional videos in the classroom and providing more incentives for learning are very helpful in promoting international students' Chinese culture learning.

Keywords: Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language in the Classroom, Cultural Teaching, Chinese Video Programs, Learning Motivation, Teaching Effectiveness

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Introduction

Since 2020, Chinese language education has been flourishing all over the world (Lou et al., 2022), and multimedia technology has been rapidly applied in the cultural teaching page of foreign Chinese classrooms (Nie, 2023; Singh and Kaur, 2023). Chinese Video Programs as media teaching resources are very helpful to international students' Chinese learning, and with the increase of international students' learning demand (Chen and Yuan, 2023), it is necessary to find the real demand and future expectation of international students for Chinese Video Programs.

In this paper, we conducted a questionnaire survey and follow-up interviews with 140 international students at a University in Tianjin. 73% of the international students were supportive of the application of Chinese Video Programs into classroom teaching, and they preferred to watch such programs in speaking classes and general classes. In terms of program content preference, international students prefer topics such as daily life and sports, prefer vocabulary and cultural knowledge, and hope to practice listening and speaking skills through Chinese Video Programs. This paper provides feasible suggestions on how to apply Chinese Video Programs into foreign Chinese classroom teaching in terms of topic preference, content selection, teaching principles and format expression.

1 Literature Review

1.1 Studies About Chinese Video Programs

Chinese Video Programs are local TV programs developed in China, mainly for foreigners, with Chinese language and Chinese culture as the main teaching content. In terms of research perspectives, scholars have gradually chosen to study a wide range of perspectives, including various aspects of communication content, communication forms and audiences (Zhang and Tsung, 2021; Han et al., 2023); in terms of research objects, including studies on Chinese language teaching borrowed from domestic Chinese TV variety, entertainment, history and culture programs (Repnikova, 2022), as well as comparative studies on Chinese language teaching in selected foreign and domestic TV programs (Hu, 2022), which all of them greatly promote the progress of Chinese Video Programs production in China and provide many inspirations for teaching Chinese as a foreign language in the classroom.

1.2 The Necessity and Feasibility of Chinese Video Programs to Assist Cultural Teaching in Foreign Chinese Classrooms

There is a two-way borrowing relationship between TV programs and teaching Chinese as a foreign language, and TV programs borrow from classroom teaching to maintain the "classroom feel" of the programs (Lin, 2020). According to the theory of audiovisual teaching, classroom teaching should focus on the overall perception and the combination of language and situation (Nicolaou et al., 2019). The cultural adaptation hypothesis emphasizes the importance of providing learners with a linguistic and cultural environment to help them reduce the "psychological distance" and "social distance" in the process of second language acquisition (Bierwaczzonek and Kunst, 2021). The above theories have laid the theoretical foundation and provided practical guidelines for the introduction of Chinese Video Programs into foreign Chinese classrooms.

2 Method

The present study combined quantitative and qualitative research methods by using both a questionnaire survey and interviews, in the hopes that triangulation of the data would be achieved and fascinating insights into the statistical patterns would be gained (Foster, 2023; Lin et al., 2023).

2.1 Participants

140 questionnaires were collected, 132 of them were valid (8 were invalid), with a recovery rate of 100% and an effective rate of 94%. International students from 44 countries participated in the survey, including 24 countries in Asia, 11 countries in Africa, 3 countries in Europe, 3 countries in America and 3 countries in Oceania (Table 1).

Among Asian countries, Cambodia has the most international students with 17, followed by Malaysian international students with 13, and the third largest international student country in Asia is Pakistan with 11, which is closely related to Chinese big geopolitical and Belt and Road strategic layout. In terms of gender ratio, the data from this questionnaire shows that there are 91 males (68.94%) and 41 females (31.06%), with a male to female ratio of about 7:3. In terms of the native language background of international students, the largest number of students are from Indo-European, South Asian and Sino-Tibetan languages, accounting for 47.73%, 14.39% and 12.12% respectively. The number of students from Semitic and Altaic languages is almost the same, with 15 and 14 students respectively, and the least number of students from Bantu and South Island languages, with 3 and 2 students respectively.

Table 1: International students' native language background

Language System	Number	Percentage
Indo-European Languages	63	47.73%
South Asian languages	19	14.39%
Sino-Tibetan Languages	16	12.12%
Semitic languages	15	11.36%
Altaic languages	14	10.61%
Bantu languages	3	2.27%
South Island Languages	2	1.52%
Total	132	100%

2.2 Design

The design of this study consisted of two parts: a questionnaire and a semi-structured follow-up interview. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first is the basic information of the respondents. The second is the main part of the questionnaire, which consists of multiple-choice and question-and-answer questions about the application of Chinese Video Programs. Semi-structured interviews were conducted after the questionnaire to compensate for any neglect of the open-ended questions at the end of the questionnaire by the participants or to add any incomplete description of their experiences.

2.3 Data Analysis

SPSS and statistical scales were used to obtain the real needs and future expectations of international students at Tianjin University for Chinese Video Programs to supplement classroom cultural teaching.

3 Results

In general, international students have a positive attitude toward the application of Chinese Video Programs into the teaching of culture in Chinese as a foreign language classroom. They want to see 6-10 minutes of Chinese Video Programs in speaking and general classes, and in terms of program topics, they prefer topics such as daily life and sports. The following is an analysis of the specific details of the introduction of Chinese Video Programs into the teaching of culture in the foreign language classroom.

3.1 International Students' Motivation to Learn Chinese

Motivation is an intrinsic drive that motivates an individual to engage in a certain behavior, often expressed as a desire to exert effort to achieve a certain goal (Turkpenova, 2023). In this survey, the corresponding options of integrative motivation, instrumental motivation and achievement motivation were set (Atkinson, 1981; Gardner, 1985). The main motivation for international students to learn Chinese is mainly integration motivation (Table 2), among which 72 students want to learn Chinese culture (54.55%), while life communication is also the main purpose for international students to learn Chinese (50%). In contrast to integration motivation, instrumental motivation is an important trigger for second language learners to improve their language proficiency in the short term, with 73 students (55.3%) and 44 students (33.33%) having a need to learn and work. This reveals that Chinese language teachers should guide students to maintain an appropriate level of motivation for learning in their daily teaching and provide timely encouragement and rewards.

Table 2: International Students' Motivation to Learn Chinese

Purpose of learning Chinese		Number	Percentage
Convergent Motivation	Cultural Interests	72	54.55%
	Life Interaction	66	50%
Tool-based motivation	Learning Needs	73	55.3%
	Work Needs	44	33.33%
Achievement Motivation	Improve language skills	74	56.06%
Others	/	12	9.09%
Total	/	341	/

In terms of the duration of Chinese learning (Table 3), the chi-square test was used to study the difference between the duration of Chinese learning and Chinese proficiency, and it was found that the duration of Chinese learning was closely related to Chinese proficiency. The percentage of international students who have studied Chinese for one to two years is 21.62%, which is significantly higher than the average of 12.88%. The percentage of international students who have been studying Chinese for one to two years who have obtained HSK level 4 is 21.62%, which is significantly higher than the average of 14.39%. The proportion who has studied Chinese for one to two years to get HSK5 is 40.54%, which is s higher than the

average level of 31.06%. The proportion who has studied Chinese for more than two years taking HSK5 is 36.92%, which is significantly higher than the average of 31.06%. The percentage of international students who have studied for more than two years and have taken HSK6 is 40%, which is significantly higher than the average of 21.97%.

Table 3: Chi-square test between Chinese learning duration and proficiency

Title	Level	Learning duration			Total	χ^2	<i>p</i>
		Less than one year	One-two year	More than two years			
Chinese proficiency	HSK1	12(40.00)	1(2.70)	0(0.00)	13(9.85)	84.153	0.000**
	HSK2	9(30.00)	2(5.41)	2(3.08)	13(9.85)		
	HSK3	3(10.00)	8(21.62)	6(9.23)	17(12.88)		
	HSK4	4(13.33)	8(21.62)	7(10.77)	19(14.39)		
	HSK5	2(6.67)	15(40.54)	24(36.92)	41(31.06)		
	HSK6	0(0.00)	3(8.11)	26(40.00)	29(21.97)		
Total		30	37	65	132		

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

It was founded that native language background, age, learning environment and other factors all affect the effectiveness of Chinese language learning for international students, but the length of Chinese language learning is one of the more significant factors. Therefore, if international students want to improve their Chinese language proficiency and pass HSK level 3 or above, they can only do so by learning Chinese for a long time.

3.2 International Students' Preferences for Topics and Content of Chinese Video Programs

In terms of topic preference, topics about daily life were the most popular among international students, with 97 people (73.48%), and topics about work and study were the second most popular choice, with 63 people (47.73%). Topics on hobbies and interests were also popular among students, with 61 people (46.21%), while traditional culture programs were of interest to 58 people (43.94%).

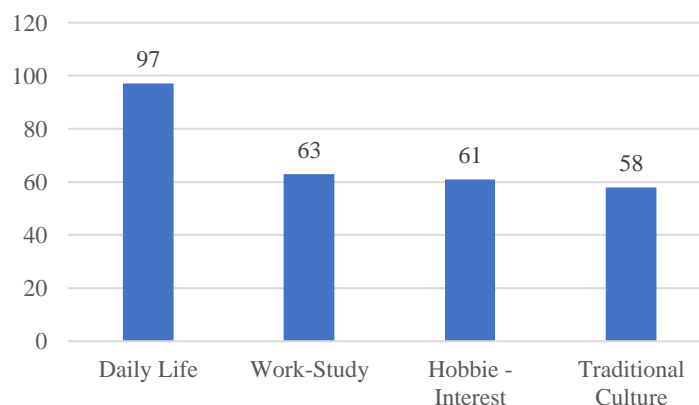


Figure 1: Theme preferences for Chinese Video Programs

When asked what help you would like the Chinese program to bring to you (Figure 1), 97 people wanted to practice listening through watching the Chinese program (73.48%).

Understanding traditional Chinese culture and learning more practical conversations through the program were 86 and 85 respectively, indicating that the cultural needs for watching the program and the practical life application needs are equally important (Figure 2). Language is a tool for human communication, and the goal of language learning is to use the language learned. Therefore, the practice of listening and speaking is a unique advantage of Chinese Video Programs. 17.42% of them hoped that the viewing of Chinese Video Programs would give them more flexibility in their learning time. The large volume and wide coverage of short videos are ideal for expanding students' horizons.

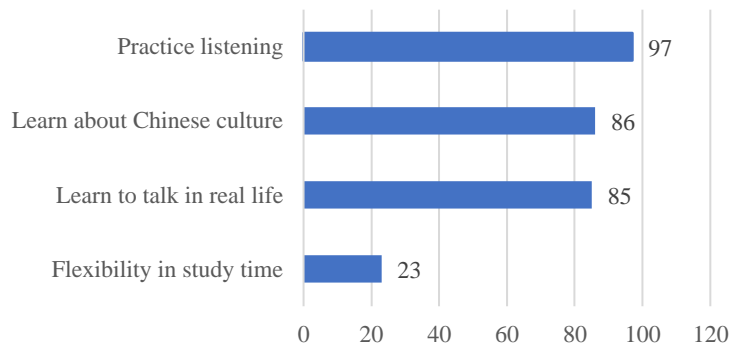


Figure 2: Content Preference of Chinese Video Programs

3.3 International Students' Suggestions on the Use of Chinese Video Programs in Teaching

The use of multimedia and other assistive technologies in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language and culture not only integrates pictures, texts, sounds and images, but also makes the teaching and learning activities more colorful, and can combine knowledge learning and skill training with vivid and lively images, thus stimulating students' enthusiasm and learning efficiency in Chinese language learning (Figure 3). When asked whether the use of Chinese Video Programs in classroom teaching could improve classroom learning efficiency, 98.48% of the international students chose yes, while two chose no and gave reasons: one person could not understand the meaning of the program because the current Chinese learning time was too short, and the other thought the speed of the program was too fast.

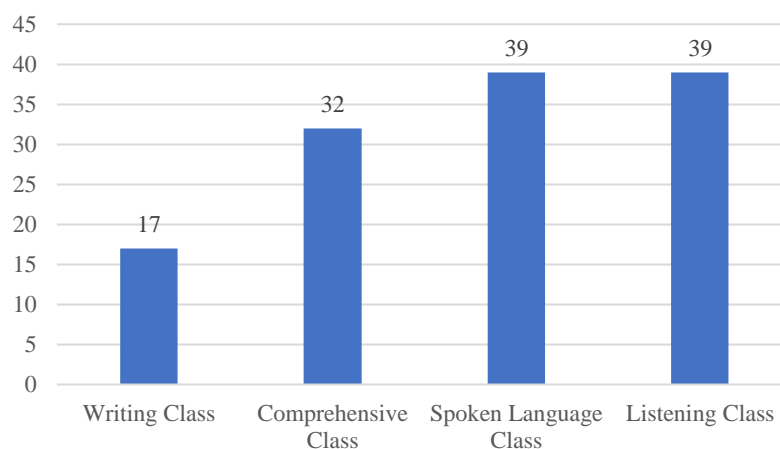


Figure 3: Applicable class types of Chinese Video Programs

In the survey on the pedagogical role of Chinese Video Programs (Figure 4), 74.24% of the international students thought they had an outstanding pedagogical role in teaching culture, and 67.42% thought they had a significant pedagogical role in teaching vocabulary. The number of international students who thought Chinese Video Programs had a pedagogical role in Chinese characters and grammar was 67 and 63. Chinese character learning and grammar learning are inherently difficult for international students, and the teaching aspect should introduce appropriate teaching aids to enhance the teaching of Chinese characters and grammar. Through the survey results, only 37.12% of international students think that Chinese Video Programs are useful in teaching Pinyin, and 12 others chose other options.

When asked how long they thought it was appropriate to watch Chinese Video Programs in class each time, 47 chose 6 to 10 minutes, accounting for 36%, 45 chose 11 to 15 minutes, accounting for 34%, 20% of international students chose to watch Chinese Video Programs of more than 16 minutes, and 13 thought it was appropriate to watch programs of 0 to 5 minutes, accounting for 10%. According to the guidelines for teaching Chinese as a foreign language, classroom teaching can use videos under 10 minutes (Figure 5).

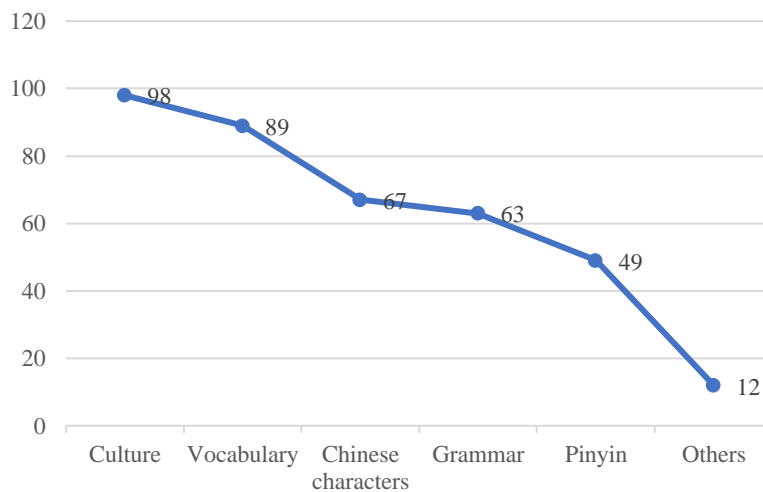


Figure 4: Teaching Expectations for Chinese Video Programs

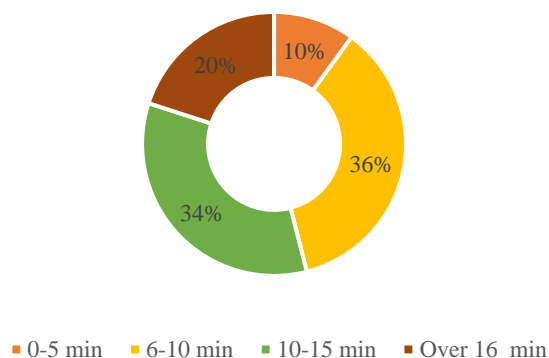


Figure 5: Duration of Chinese Video Programs

4 Discussion

Chinese Video Programs, as traditional TV media, have the characteristics of long development time and good mass base. It has formed a stable and good development model with strong content productivity, very high quality, and special professionalism, a standard production process, and a more obvious one-way and linear trend in communication, but the disadvantage is that the interactivity is relatively low. When asked about the advantages of Chinese Video Programs (Table 4), 65.91% of them think that Chinese Video Programs are more systematic in their knowledge introduction, while 44 feel that compared to short video Chinese introduction, Chinese Video Programs have more stable broadcasting platform and broadcasting time, 31 think that large TV programs and Chinese events have corresponding reward and incentive mechanism, which that short-form video programs cannot do.

Table 4: Comparison of Chinese Video Programs and short video programs

Comparison of Chinese Video Programs and short video programs					
Advantages	Number	Percentage	Disadvantages	Number	Percentage
More systematic knowledge introduction	87	65.91%	Lack of entertainment	53	40.15%
Better program settings	72	54.55%	Too much study time	52	39.39%
More stable broadcast platform and time	44	33.33%	Lack of instant interaction	49	37.12%
Rewards and incentives are available	31	23.48%	Slow update	44	33.33%
Others	1	0.76%	Others	3	2.27%

To obtain more in-depth data, this survey conducted follow-up interviews based on the analysis of the preliminary results of the questionnaire, to facilitate the organization of the results, the five interviewees are indicated by A1 to A5.

Question: Which part of the Chinese program setting interests you the most?

Answer:

- A1: Life and entertainment. Prefer videos that introduce the details of Chinese people's daily life.
- A2: Videos that introduce cultural differences, introduce culture, and are the most updated.
- A3: Introducing daily life.
- A4: Prefer life videos, especially about life in modern China, to help understand the popular culture and trends in China, and to make it easier for international students to adapt to or understand life in China in advance.
- A5: Prefer travel and scenery, prefer daily life, which can be closer to daily life and will help us understand the latest Chinese terms and trends.

According to the interview transcripts of the five interviewees, they tend to prefer video programs on daily life and entertainment topics and are more interested in the contemporary development and introduction of China, including Chinese culture and lifestyle. In terms of video programs, they prefer videos that are updated quickly and have popular elements that

meet the aesthetics and tastes of the public. At the same time, if Chinese Video Programs want to develop better and become more popular, they need to keep up with the contemporary development and changes in China, keep up with the popular trends in time, and meet the learning and aesthetic needs of the younger generation.

5 Conclusions

At the end of the survey, 79 people gave specific suggestions for the introduction of Chinese Video Programs into the cultural teaching of foreign Chinese classes. Twenty-eight of them thought the Chinese Video Programs were helpful to their Chinese learning and encouraged the programs. 14 of them wanted the Chinese Video Programs to be more interesting and to include more laughs to enhance the entertainment of the programs. 7 of them wanted the programs to include more topics about daily life and sports, 6 of them thought the frequency of the Chinese Video Programs should be accelerated and hoped they would be updated continuously. 6 of them suggested 3 people want to learn more Chinese vocabulary and grammar from the program to help their daily Chinese learning. 2 people want the program to be shorter to make it easier to watch in their leisure time. 2 people suggest adding Pinyin and or English to make the program more. They suggested adding pinyin and or English to make the program easier for beginners to understand. Two people wanted to introduce more foreign guests to tell their own stories about learning Chinese, and to show more local cities and people's lives. Two people wanted to introduce Chinese Video Programs as a supplement to classroom teaching, and two people wanted the program to be broadcast on more platforms so that more international students could watch it. One international student from Slovakia said he wanted the program to be more popular in his country. One international student from Slovakia suggested that he would like the program to be more popularized in his country.

From this research, international students' suggestions for Chinese Video Programs include: in terms of content, more daily life and sports themes should be included to enhance the fun of the programs; in terms of promotion, the programs should follow the pace of the times and use more channels to promote the programs to enhance the popularity of the programs; in terms of format, stories and Chinese learning should be told through the perspective of foreigners themselves to enhance the interactivity of the programs. Chinese Video Programs are a good helper for international students to learn Chinese. If we make good use of Chinese Video Programs, Chinese learning will become easier and more accessible.

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