

## ANALYSIS OF CHINESE LANGUAGE LEARNING NEEDS OF THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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### Article History

Received: 23-02-2024; Revised: 09-12-2025; Accepted: 09-12-2025

<https://doi.org/10.14456/jsmt.2025.27>

### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** In recent years, with the increase of Sino-Thai cooperation, Chinese language teaching in Thailand has been developing rapidly, and students' desire to learn Chinese and understand China has become increasingly urgent. **Objective:** 1) To examine the Chinese language learning needs of Thai university students. 2) To provide instructional recommendations derived from the needs analysis findings. **Method:** Literature survey method. By reviewing a large amount of literature on the theory of language learning needs analysis, including journals, dissertations, books and online materials, and drawing on the experience of previous generations, Questionnaire method. The questionnaire for this study is based on the Hutchinson & Waters model of demand analysis and the Dudley-Evans & St. John model of demand analysis, with reference to domestic scholars' research. **Results:** In this regard, the needs of Thai university students are analyzed from different perspectives and in different aspects in terms of individual learners and their Chinese learning situation. Based on the above, this study takes. The results are analyzed, and teaching suggestions and strategies are given from different perspectives to meet the actual learning needs of Chinese language learners, in the hope that helpful suggestions can be made for the improvement of students' Chinese language proficiency and the development of Chinese language teaching.

**Keywords:** Chinese Learning Needs; Thai University Students; Needs Analysis

### 1. INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development Thai university students learning Chinese (Chen & Cai, 2025) the face significant challenges due to linguistic differences, of Chinese language promotion and education, a "Chinese fever"

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of “learning and speaking Chinese” (Zhang, 2025) has arisen all over the world. To better disseminate Chinese culture and tell Chinese stories, Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) was born in the 1950s as a new academic discipline and has gradually developed and expanded through the hard work of countless CFL educators. (Lan, 2023)

Explicit gap analysis articulation Thai university students learning Chinese primarily need enhanced skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing to overcome linguistic differences from Thai, such as tonal variations and character complexity, driven by economic ties and career opportunities with China. Motivations include job prospects, cultural exchange, and government-supported programs like Confucius Institutes, with over one million learners nationwide. (Sun, Yossuck, Panyadee,& Ek-lem, 2020)

Contextualization with Thai educational reality Needs for targeted phonetics, immersion, and anxiety reduction mismatch classroom delivery, where stroke-order drills demotivate; unified platforms and scholarships could leverage growing enrollment. As a close neighbor of China, (Lao-un, & Khampusaen, 2025).Thailand has extremely close economic and cultural ties with China, and the shortage of Chinese language talents has become more prominent. (Wang, 2022) The Thai government attaches great importance to Chinese language teaching, (Ewe, & Min, 2021) the Ministry of Education has set up Chinese language courses at various stages in each school, and the research on Chinese language teaching has also received wide attention and become a hot spot of academic research. As an emerging discipline, Chinese Language Education International (CLEI) provides an in-depth understanding of the current situation of Chinese language teaching in Thailand and puts forward suggestions for optimization. (Mohammed, Bello, & Ayuba, 2025)

## 2. OBJECTIVE

1. To examine the Chinese language learning needs of Thai university students.
2. To provide instructional recommendations derived from the needs analysis findings.

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Structural organization Researchers in China and abroad have conducted relatively few studies on the analysis of Chinese learning needs of overseas secondary school students. Papers related to them began to appear after 2006, and a relatively large amount of literature did not appear until after 2013, and there are still many gaps in the research in the field of Chinese learning needs analysis. (Lin, 2020)

Overview of existing research in China Existing research on foreign language demand analysis in China mainly involves the introduction of basic theories, (Yao, Zhang, & Shen, 2022) The relationship between foreign language demand analysis and curriculum development, and the influence of social demand on foreign language programs. (Guo, Wang, & Guo, 2025) In terms of the introduction of grounded theory, proposed two models, namely, current situation analysis and target situation analysis, and suggested that when carrying out needs analysis, attention should be paid to the definition of foreign language needs in a specific context, the groups involved, (Chan, Woore, Molway, & Mutton, 2022) Cho, Et al ( 2022). the feasibility and appropriateness of

the intervention of implementing needs analysis. Ni Chuanbin and summarized the six characteristics of foreign language needs: core.

#### The Current Status of Research on Chinese Language Teaching to Thai University Students

In a study of Chinese language teaching in Thai higher education institutions, from the perspective of Thai education management and Sino-Thai cooperation, puts forward five problems, including. Swaspitchayaskun, J. (2025) the economic cooperation and cultural exchanges between China and Thailand. the development of Chinese language education in Thai colleges and universities, but in this process. (Yalun, 2019) the while elaborating on the continuous development of Chinese language teaching in Thailand, point out that there are still the following problems. (Wang, & Jitrabiab, 2025)

The conducts multi-dimensional examination of the current situation, characteristics and problems of Chinese language education in Thai universities. The teaching tests and resource support, analyzes the existing problems, and puts forward a comprehensive and systematic solutions: (Xiao & Tian, 2024)

Research designs The target population of this study is mainly college students in major schools in Bangkok, Thailand, including Assumption University, Kasetsart University. Ramkhamhaeng University, etc. 438 valid questionnaires were collected through WeChat group, e-mail, etc.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

1. Literature survey method. By reviewing a large amount of literature on the theory of language learning needs analysis, including journals, dissertations, books and online materials, and drawing on the experience of previous generations,

2. Questionnaire method. The questionnaire for this study is based on the Hutchinson & Waters model of demand analysis and the Dudley-Evans & St. John model of demand analysis, with reference to domestic scholars' research.

#### 3. Research data collection

This questionnaire mainly includes the parts of learning environment demand survey, teaching method demand analysis and learning demand survey analysis, and the results of the questionnaire are analyzed by combining quantitative and qualitative. research data collection

## 5. RESULTS

Students prefer teachers to use a variety of teaching tools in the classroom, which include textbooks, blackboards, videos, pictures, audio, and objects. Students also preferred that teachers use a variety of teaching methods, such as lectures, exercises, bilingual comparisons, and games. Students thought it would be beneficial to increase the number of teaching and cultural activities such as learning to sing Chinese songs, learning to dance Chinese dances, watching Chinese movies and videos, calligraphy lessons, and learning to cook Chinese food; their preferences for Chinese language assessment methods varied, with some support for oral assessment and oral versus traditional paper-based assessment; and they thought that classroom

practice should take up anywhere from 10% to 90% of the time of a lesson. In addition, students had different preferences for the way phonetics, Chinese characters, vocabulary, and grammar were taught.

#### **Learning content requirements**

Students want to improve their listening, reading, speaking, writing and general skills in Chinese; they have different levels of acceptance of the number of words and grammar taught in each lesson; they want the school to offer courses on activities such as exchanges between Chinese and Thai students, organizing the viewing of Chinese films, Chinese language competitions, and field trips to experience the culture of China; and they believe that the textbook can be improved by increasing the interest level, keeping up with the times, making it more practical, and appropriately adjusting the number of practice questions.

#### **Content needs for learning in the classroom**

Students want to learn Chinese by attending tutorial classes/hiring a tutor, volunteering for tutorials, watching free online courses, and studying on their own; the amount of time students spend studying outside of the classroom varies, but many students want to dedicate 1-6 hours a week to their studies.

Based on the analysis of the results of the study, the following points can be concluded: Importance of Learning Environment Needs: Students place a high value on the learning environment. They would like to use Chinese in the classroom for lectures and engage in more communication activities with Chinese people. This suggests that students believe that an authentic language environment is crucial to Chinese language learning.

Importance of cultural experience: Students believed that Chinese language learning could be facilitated through cultural activities (e.g., learning to sing Chinese songs, dancing Chinese dances, watching Chinese movies and TV shows, etc.). This suggests that integrating cultural elements into Chinese language teaching can help increase students' interest and motivation in learning and deepen their understanding of Chinese culture. Create a Chinese learning environment Schools and teachers should actively create authentic Chinese learning environments, conduct lessons in Chinese, and organize communication activities to provide authentic language input and communication opportunities. Diversify teaching methods Teachers should use a variety of teaching methods and approaches, such as textbooks, multimedia resources, and interactive exercises, to meet the learning needs and learning styles of different students. Integrate cultural elements Integrate Chinese culture into Chinese language teaching, increase students' interest in and understanding of Chinese culture through cultural activities, watching movies, taking part in competitions, etc., and enhance learning motivation and learning effects.

#### **Encourage learning outside the classroom**

Schools can provide relevant resources, such as tutoring classes, tutor recommendations, free online courses, etc., to encourage students to engage in additional Chinese language learning outside the classroom. Teachers can give guidance and suggestions to help students make reasonable learning plans. Provide personalized teaching Understand each student's learning needs and interests and provide them with personalized learning support and guidance to meet different students' learning needs. Finally, a student feedback and

assessment mechanism has been established to regularly collect students' opinions and suggestions on teaching content, materials, and methods. Through students' feedback, teaching strategies can be adjusted and improved in time to ensure the quality and adaptability of teaching.

## 6. ORIGINALITY AND BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

This study contributes eight original insights to Chinese language education in Thai higher education contexts, based on 438 valid questionnaires from major Bangkok universities. First, it introduces a comprehensive tri-dimensional framework integrating Hutchinson & Waters and Dudley-Evans & St. John models specifically for Thai Chinese language contexts. Second, it provides empirical quantification of student preferences for multimodal teaching tools, methods, and cultural activities. Third, it demonstrates that cultural immersion is essential, not supplementary to language acquisition. Fourth, it documents autonomous learning behaviors with students dedicating 1-6 hours weekly to self-study. Fifth, it reveals learners' explicit prioritization of authentic Chinese-medium instruction. Sixth, it identifies component-specific pedagogical preferences across phonetics, characters, vocabulary, and grammar requiring differentiated teaching strategies.

Seventh, it specifies four textbook enhancement priorities: increased interest, temporal currency, enhanced practicality, and optimized exercise volume. Eighth, it synthesizes these findings into an original learner-centered ecosystem model requiring holistic integration of multimodal instruction, cultural immersion, authentic environments, personalized pathways, differentiated strategies, adapted materials, and institutional support.

This research advances the field by shifting from teacher-centered prescriptive approaches to evidence-based, learner-voice curriculum design. It provides actionable insights for educators, administrators, and policymakers addressing Chinese language education in contexts of Sino-Thai economic and cultural interdependence, filling critical gaps in needs analysis scholarship for Southeast Asian learners.

## 7. RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

1. Pedagogical Transformation Required: The findings reveal that traditional stroke-order drills and lecture-based approaches are insufficient to meet Thai learners' needs. The strong preference for diverse teaching tools (videos, audio, multimedia) and interactive methods (games, bilingual comparisons, cultural activities) suggests that Chinese language instruction must shift toward more communicative, task-based, and culturally integrated pedagogies. This implies that teacher training programs should emphasize multimodal instruction techniques and technology integration to enhance engagement and address learners' varied preferences for phonetics, characters, vocabulary, and grammar instruction.

2. Cultural Integration as Core Component: Students' emphasis on cultural experiences—learning Chinese songs, dances, watching films, calligraphy, and cooking—indicates that language learning cannot be separated from cultural immersion. This has significant implications for curriculum design: textbooks and course materials should incorporate authentic cultural content that is timely, practical, and interesting rather than purely linguistic.

tic exercises. The finding that cultural activities deepen understanding and motivation suggests that institutions should invest in cultural exchange programs, field trips to China, language competitions, and partnerships with Chinese cultural organizations to create authentic learning contexts beyond the classroom.

## 2. Recommendations for Future Research

1. Longitudinal Tracking of Learning Outcomes: Future research should employ longitudinal designs to track the same cohort of Thai students over multiple semesters or academic years to examine how their Chinese learning needs evolve as proficiency levels increase. Such studies could investigate whether preferences for teaching methods, cultural activities, or assessment formats change from beginner to advanced stages, and whether students who engage in recommended cultural immersion activities demonstrate superior language acquisition outcomes compared to those who follow traditional classroom-only approaches. This would provide evidence-based guidance on optimal sequencing of pedagogical interventions across different proficiency thresholds.

2. Comparative Cross-National Analysis: Given that Chinese language learning is expanding throughout Southeast Asia, comparative studies examining needs analysis across multiple contexts (Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia) would illuminate whether findings from Thai students represent broader regional patterns or are culturally specific. Research could investigate how differences in linguistic backgrounds (tonal vs. non-tonal native languages), educational systems, economic ties with China, and cultural proximity influence learning needs and motivations. Such comparative frameworks would enable development of more nuanced, context-sensitive pedagogical approaches for diverse Southeast Asian learner populations.

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