

Bridging Cultures, Building Fluency: Assessing the Cultural Integration Programme for Mandarin Learners

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ABSTRACT

The increasing integration of cultural aspects in Mandarin teaching requires a detailed study of their impacts on students' learning journey. Studies looking at this area are limited. Thus, this study aims to fill in the gaps by evaluating the influence the Cultural Integration Programme has on Mandarin learners, providing insights into their language learning experiences. This exploratory study utilised a questionnaire which was distributed to 12 participants. Part A of the questionnaire included 16 quantitative questions probing language, culture, and motivation, while Part B consisted of four qualitative questions exploring the participants' program experiences. A mixed-method analysis was conducted accordingly to achieve a nuanced understanding of the participants' experiences. The findings indicate that the participants' interest, communication skills, and cultural understanding of Mandarin language have largely improved when cultural activities are embedded within the programme. This study underscores the impact of cultural integration on Mandarin language competencies among learners, fully aligned with the increasing emphasis on such approaches in language education. The areas for development identified in the study will provide crucial insights to educators and policymakers who aim to enhance the overall efficacy of language instruction in culturally integrated curricula or settings.

Keywords: Chinese Cultural Integration, Mandarin Instruction, Fluency

