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Article

International Chinese Language Teachers' Intercultural Teaching Competence - Based on International Understanding Education Perspective

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Abstract

This study explores the international understanding of educational beliefs among international Chinese language teachers. Using a sample of 338 teachers from 37 countries, the research employs a quantitative approach to evaluate teachers' awareness across four dimensions: 'one of the global', 'one of the national', 'one of the nature', and 'one of the social'. The findings indicate that teachers exhibit a generally high level of international understanding, with the 'global member' dimension receiving the highest scores. Key factors such as gender, age, teaching experience, and institutional affiliation are found to significantly influence teachers' understanding. Female teachers demonstrate higher levels of awareness compared to their male counterparts, particularly in the 'national member' dimension. Teachers with less than one year of experience show the highest initial levels of understanding, while those employed at international schools outperform their peers. The study concludes that enhancing teacher training and the integration of international understanding education into curricula are essential for cultivating a more globally competent workforce.

Keywords

International Chinese Language Teachers, International Understanding Education, Intercultural Teaching, Teachers' Beliefs, Cross-Cultural Communication.

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Teachers' beliefs, which evolve through their teaching practice, play a fundamental role in shaping curriculum implementation, the selection of teaching methodologies, the facilitation of the learning process, and the delineation of teacher-student roles (Breen et al., 2001). These beliefs not only underpin teaching behaviours and practices (Wang & Wu, 2024) but also demonstrate a direct correlation with the quality of student learning outcomes (Gong, Hu, & Lai, 2018). Consequently, exploring and understanding teachers' beliefs is of paramount importance for a comprehensive analysis of the teaching-learning process.

The domain of language teachers' beliefs concerning intercultural teaching has attracted considerable scholarly attention, traditionally conceptualising language and culture as distinct entities. However, evolving research has led to a paradigm shift. Kramersch, Cain and Murphy-Lejeune (1996) argue that culture is a dialogical process of co-constructing meaning, suggesting that foreign language teachers should approach language instruction as inseparable from culture, rather than treating them as isolated components or embedding culture merely within language instruction. This view challenges the essentialist conception of culture, which stresses boundaries, instead adopting a socially constructed perspective aligned with the goals of intercultural teaching: recognising and transcending boundaries, and fostering students' awareness of both dominant socio-cultural narratives and the distinctive individual voices inherent in language (Kramersch et al., 1996). Importantly, integrating cultural learning into language curriculum design not only enhances linguistic proficiency but also cultivates cultural awareness, promoting a more open and inclusive international perspective (Genc & Bada, 2005). This intercultural teaching and learning paradigm has gained widespread acceptance within the academic community.

In recent years, the field of international Chinese language teaching has undergone significant transformations in its disciplinary framework, orientation, teaching environment, and objectives, reflecting broader trends in foreign language pedagogy (Zu, 2023). A central aspect of these changes is the integration of language instruction with cultural understanding and exchange as core missions. The scope of teaching and learning objectives has broadened, extending beyond the acquisition of language skills to encompass the development of students' global competencies, preparing them to serve as bridges for cross-cultural dialogue. This shift requires not only proficiency in the Chinese language but also the ability to convey Chinese narratives and disseminate local cultures through Chinese, thereby promoting diversity and inclusivity within global discourse. This paradigm shift highlights the critical role of intercultural teaching in contemporary practice. Zhou (2010) asserts that effective education aimed at international understanding fosters students' intercultural communicative competence and cultural awareness. Previous research has shown that teachers' intercultural sensitivity and competence significantly influence students' intercultural sensitivities and competencies (Nieto & Zoller Booth, 2010). As such, the level of international understanding possessed by international Chinese teachers is crucial in shaping and enhancing students' intercultural communicative competence.

The concept of education for international understanding was formally introduced in 1946, under the guidance and advocacy of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This educational approach encompasses activities conducted globally under the auspices of international organisations, grounded in the educational philosophy of "international understanding." Its primary aim is to cultivate students' international awareness, cross-cultural communication skills, and sense of global citizenship, empowering them to collaboratively understand and address significant shared challenges within the global society. Chinese language teachers, as the key implementers and instructors of international understanding education in the context of international Chinese language education, exert a profound influence on Chinese language learners, particularly in terms of their awareness and competence in international understanding education.

Therefore, to more effectively promote the development of students' awareness of international understanding, it is essential to first gain a deeper understanding of and enhance the level of teachers' international understanding education. In light of this, the present study employs a mixed research methodology to examine the overall level of international understanding among international Chinese language teachers, as well as the factors contributing to differences in this understanding. Through this study, we aim to uncover the challenges and opportunities faced by international Chinese language teachers in cross-cultural teaching and provide targeted recommendations for improving teachers' cross-cultural teaching competence. These improvements will, in turn, contribute to the sustainable development of international Chinese language education and the cultivation of human resources with a global perspective and cross-cultural communication skills. This approach not only enhances teachers' personal competence but also contributes to the creation of a more harmonious and inclusive global culture.

International Understanding Education and Intercultural Teaching and Learning

The notion that education for international understanding plays a crucial role in advancing the internationalisation of higher education and fostering the development of international talent is strongly endorsed by Yao (2018). Schools, as influential institutions that integrate diverse ethnic, social, and cultural backgrounds, have a significant role to play in promoting the overall integration of society, as highlighted by Kaur, Awang-Hashim and Noman (2017). In this regard, the internationalisation of school curricula has emerged as a prominent trend in educational reform. Teaching staff actively incorporate an ‘international consciousness’ (Huang, Cockayne, & Mittelmeier, 2024) into curriculum design and pedagogical practices, which not only facilitates dialogue with members of the globalised community (Barger, 2020) but also plays a pivotal role in enhancing the inclusivity of schools. This approach significantly contributes to both the inclusion and equity within educational institutions.

The development of international understanding education programmes has been largely driven by the rise of international schools, which serve as the primary framework for intercultural education (Hill, 2012). This form of education is intricately connected to globalisation, social stratification, multiculturalism, identity formation, and the relationship between education and the nation-state, as thoroughly examined by Resnik (2012). From a cultural standpoint, the core tasks of education for international understanding—such as understanding and respecting cultural differences, valuing the heritage of civilisations, embracing diverse lifestyles and perspectives, and learning a foreign language—are fundamentally encompassed within the scope of intercultural education.

Malik et al. (2024), through a survey of 425 prospective teachers, found a positive correlation between awareness of international understanding and intercultural competence, further confirming the strong relationship between the two. On the other hand, Mason Bustos (2015) asserts that case studies of international organisations can be effective in enhancing or building understanding of cultural diversity. Although teachers' understanding of education for international understanding may vary, Merz and Fox (2016) study revealed a general willingness to integrate elements of international education into their curricula and teaching practices.

Education for international understanding is not only closely related to intercultural education but also provides a tangible pathway for its practical application. Through this form of education, students gain the opportunity to explore the cultural, historical, and social contexts of different countries, deepen their understanding of global issues, and, in turn, develop into individuals with a sense of global responsibility and intercultural communication skills. The implementation of this educational concept has undeniably enriched the curriculum of intercultural education, expanded teaching methodologies, and fostered innovation in pedagogy. Corbett (2003) highlights that intercultural teaching competence encompasses both teachers' own intercultural literacy and their ability to design and implement intercultural teaching strategies. This competence is crucial for fostering students' cultural mastery of the target language and their intercultural skills.

Research on teachers' intercultural pedagogical competence, such as Oranje and Smith (2018) survey of high school language teachers in New Zealand, Naidu (2020) study of Indonesian language teachers in Australia, Petosi and Karras (2020) analysis of EFL teachers in Greece, and Han (2014) examination of English language teachers in Chinese colleges and universities, underscores the pivotal role of language teachers in intercultural teaching and learning. While these studies demonstrate broad theoretical agreement on the importance of intercultural competence in foreign language teaching (Barany, 2016; Boumechaal, 2019), the practical implementation of intercultural activities still faces considerable challenges. These challenges include balancing language teaching with cultural education and effectively integrating intercultural themes with target language usage (Biebricher et al., 2019; Hoa & Vien, 2019).

In conclusion, teachers play an essential role in intercultural teaching and learning, acting not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as bridges and guides for cultural exchange. However, despite their deep understanding of the importance of intercultural teaching, teachers still encounter numerous challenges in its practical application. As such, it is crucial to assess the overall level of international understanding among international Chinese language teachers. The aim of this study is to thoroughly examine the current state of intercultural teaching among international Chinese language teachers, analyse the level of their international understanding, and explore the factors that contribute to differences among teachers. The insights gained from this study will offer valuable references for enhancing the quality of intercultural teaching.

Methodology

Research Tools

This study initially employed a quantitative research approach to assess the overall level of international Chinese language teachers' awareness of international understanding. Subsequently, in-depth interviews were conducted with individual teachers to explore internal differences in their awareness. The questionnaire used in this study was developed with reference to the Global Competence Assessment (2018) and the International Understanding Education Curriculum Content Framework (2020). It was adapted to the specific characteristics of international Chinese language teachers through a combination of interviews with selected teachers. The teachers' awareness of international understanding education was categorised into four dimensions: "global member," "national member," "natural member," and "social member." The "global member" dimension encompasses understanding of different cultures, global responsibility awareness, and the promotion of world peace, with a total of 12 questions. The "national member" dimension includes understanding of cultures among peoples, civic responsibility, and immigration, with a total of 7 questions. The "natural member" dimension addresses environmental protection, the symbiosis between humans and nature, and respect for nature, consisting of 2 questions. Finally, the "social member" dimension focuses on the connection between one's hometown and the world, as well as living in harmony with foreigners and outsiders in everyday life, with a total of 7 questions. We developed the questionnaire by reviewing domestic and international research on teachers' education for international understanding and conducting a small-scale survey. Feedback from pilot test interviews led to revisions, resulting in the final questionnaire. It used a five-point Likert scale, consisting of two sections: personal background and self-assessment of international Chinese language teachers' awareness of education for international understanding.

Research Objectives

This study focuses on international Chinese language teachers, both domestically and abroad. A total of 410 electronic questionnaires were distributed via Questionnaire Star, with 338 valid responses after removing duplicates, incomplete answers, and those completed in under 100 seconds. The participants, from 37 countries and regions across 4 continents, represented various teaching settings, including Confucius Institutes, universities, international schools, and private training institutions. Specific information on the research subjects is provided in [Table 1](#).

Table1: Basic Information of Survey Respondents.

form		Number of People	Percentage	Number of People		Percentage
Genders	Male	151	44.7%	Females	187	55.3%
	18-25	43	12.7%	26-30	111	32.8%
Age	31-40	154	45.6%	41-50	17	5.1%
	51-60	13	3.8%			
Teaching Experience	Less than 1 Year	15	4.4%	1-3 Years	73	21.6%
	3-5 Years	159	47%	5-10 Years	65	19.2%
Institutions	More than 10 Years	26	7.8%			
	Universities and Colleges	57	16.9%	Confucius Institute, Organization Established Internationally by the PRC, Promoting Chinese Language and Culture	58	17.2%
	International School	161	47.6%	Private Training Institutions	49	14.4%
	Online Education Platform	7	2.1%	(sth. or sb) Else	6	1.8%
Prefecture	Continent	110	32.5%	Asian	135	40%
	European	36	10.6%	North America	57	16.9%

Questionnaire Reliability Test

In this paper, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess reliability, with values ≥ 0.70 indicating high reliability. The reliability test conducted using SPSS software showed an overall alpha coefficient of 0.857, and each dimension's Cronbach's value exceeded 0.70 (see Table 2), confirming the questionnaire's high reliability.

Table 2: Reliability Coefficients for Each Dimension.

Dimension (math.)	Reliability Coefficient
One of the Global	0.891
One of the National	0.755
One of the Nature	0.761
One of the Social	0.849

Results

General Status of International Chinese Language Teachers' Awareness of International Understanding Education

The results of the survey revealed that among the four dimensions of international Chinese teachers' education for international understanding, the "member of the global community" dimension scored the highest, while the "member of the nation" dimension scored the lowest. A comparison of the scores for the four dimensions—"member of the global," "member of the national," "member of the social," and "member of the natural"—was made against the median value of 3, which represents a neutral stance ("not sure"). The one-sample t-test showed significant differences between the mean values and the median value of 3 in all dimensions. Specifically, the "member of the global" dimension had a t-value of 20.49 ($p < 0.001$), the "member of the national" dimension had a t-value of 17.71 ($p < 0.001$), the "member of the social" dimension had a t-value of 19.91 ($p < 0.001$), and the "member of the natural" dimension had a t-value of 17.26 ($p < 0.001$). These results indicate that the mean values for each dimension were significantly different from the median value of 3, with all differences being statistically significant at the 0.001 level.

Table 3: Overall Status ($n=338$).

Dimension (math.)	Average Value	Standard Deviation
One of the Global	4.085	0.663
One of the National	3.792	0.567
One of the Social	4.074	0.604
One of the Nature	4.052	0.717

Influencing Factors

Age

The participants were divided into five age groups, and their mean scores on the four dimensions of "member of nature," "member of society," "member of the nation," and "member of the global community" are presented in Table 1. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the effect of age on the scores for each dimension. The results indicated that age had a significant effect on all four dimensions. The F-values and p-values for each dimension were as follows: for "member of nature," $F = 4.079$, $p < 0.01$; for "member of society," $F = 2.677$, $p < 0.05$; for "member of the national," $F = 3.702$, $p < 0.01$; and for "global," $F = 5.932$, $p < 0.001$. The differences were particularly significant in the "member of nature," "member of the national," and "global" dimensions. In terms of specific group scores, the 31-40 age group had the highest mean scores for the "member of nature" (4.22), "member of society" (4.18), and "member of the global" (4.25) dimensions. Meanwhile, the 51-60 age group had the highest score on the "member of the national" dimension, with a mean score of 3.91.

Table 4: Influence of Age Factor on the Level of Understanding in International Understanding Education.

Age Groups	One of the Nature	One of the Social	One of the National	One of the Global
18-25 Years (n=43)	3.85	3.93	3.57	3.79
26-30 Years (n=111)	3.94	4.00	3.74	3.98
31-40 Years (n=154)	4.22	4.18	3.89	4.25
41-50 Years (n=17)	3.88	3.96	3.61	3.89
51-60 Years (n=13)	3.88	3.93	3.91	4.17
F	4.079	2.677	3.702	5.932
p	0.003*	0.032*	0.006*	0.000*

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Gender

Using one-way ANOVA, the results presented in Table 5 reveal the following findings: (1) Gender does not show a significant effect ($p > 0.05$) on the dimensions of nature, society, and the global community. This indicates that there is no notable difference or consistency between male and female teachers with regard to these dimensions. (2) Gender does show a significant effect ($p < 0.05$) on the dimension of national membership, suggesting that there is a difference in the scores for national membership between genders. Specifically, the analysis indicates that gender is significant at the 0.05 level ($F = 5.125$, $p = 0.024$) for national membership. Further comparisons reveal that the mean score for male teachers (26.01) is significantly lower than that of female teachers (26.98) in the national membership dimension.

Table 5: Influence of Gender Factor on the Level of Understanding in International Understanding Education.

Genders	One of the Nature	One of the Social	One of the National	One of the Global
Male (n=151)	3.98	4.04	3.72	4.03
Female (n=187)	4.10	4.09	3.85	4.13
F	2.252	0.473	5.125	2.115
P	0.134	0.492	0.024*	0.147

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Teaching Experience

The one-way ANOVA results in the Table 6 show that: (1) Teaching age does not significantly affect the "member of nature" dimension ($p > 0.05$), indicating no differences across age groups. (2) Teaching age significantly influences the "social member," "national member," and "world member" dimensions ($F = 3.372$, $p = 0.010$; $F = 4.130$, $p = 0.003$; $F = 4.454$, $p = 0.002$). In these dimensions, teachers with less than one year of experience had significantly higher scores compared to those with more teaching experience.

Table 6: Influence of Teaching Experience Factor on the Level of Understanding in International Understanding Education.

Length of Teaching Experience	One of the Nature	One of the Social	One of the National	One of the Global
Less than 1 Year (n=15)	4.00	4.23	3.94	4.20
1-3 Years (n=73)	4.02	4.08	3.75	4.06
3-5 Years (n=159)	4.16	4.16	3.88	4.2
5-10 Years (n=65)	3.65	3.89	3.56	3.80
More than 10 Years (n=26)	3.79	3.87	3.81	4.09
F	2.038	3.372	4.130	4.454
P	0.089	0.010*	0.003**	0.002**

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Teaching Institutions

As shown in Table 7, one-way ANOVA indicates that the teaching institution significantly affects the "member of nature," "member of society," "national member," and "world member" dimensions ($p < 0.05$), suggesting differences across institutions ($F = 9.065$, $p = 0.000$; $F = 6.954$, $p = 0.000$; $F = 4.044$, $p = 0.001$; $F =$

4.496, $p = 0.001$). Chinese teachers in international schools scored significantly higher in all four dimensions compared to those in other teaching institutions.

Table 7: *Influence of Teaching Institutions Factor on the Level of Understanding in International Understanding Education.*

Institutions	One of the Nature	One of the Social	One of the National	One of the Global
Higher Education (n=57)	3.86	3.91	3.59	3.84
Confucius Institute (n=58)	3.67	3.80	3.70	3.92
International Schools (n=161)	4.28	4.17	3.87	4.22
Private Training Institutions (n=49)	4.07	4.17	3.96	4.20
Online Platforms (n=7)	4.00	3.94	3.65	3.90
Other (n=6)	3.50	3.69	3.40	3.75
F	9.065	6.954	4.044	4.496
P	0.000**	0.000**	0.001**	0.001**

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Discussion

Based on the analysis of the survey results, the overall level of international understanding education among international Chinese teachers is relatively high, with positive attitudes toward the four dimensions of "one of nature," "one of society," "one of the national," and "one of the global." Specifically, topics such as international conflicts, global health, migration, civic responsibility, cultural understanding among ethnic groups, the relationship between humans and nature, climate change, and the connection between hometown and the world were predominantly understood or well-understood by the majority of respondents. This indicates a strong awareness and concern for these global issues. The paper further explores several key factors influencing the level of international understanding education among international Chinese teachers, including gender, teaching experience, and teaching institution. It offers an in-depth analysis based on relevant research and teacher interviews. Gender differences are identified as a significant individual factor affecting the awareness of international understanding education among Chinese teachers. Additionally, teaching experience is found to exhibit significant differences in the level of international understanding education. Furthermore, the teaching institution plays a crucial role in shaping the level of international understanding education, highlighting its impact on teachers' approaches and knowledge in this area.

Gender is a Significant Influence on Some Dimensions of Education for International Understanding

Gender differences are a significant individual factor influencing Chinese teachers' awareness of international understanding education, with female teachers demonstrating higher levels of awareness compared to their male counterparts. Previous research has found that male Chinese teachers score significantly lower on measures of professional identity than female teachers, indirectly suggesting that female teachers excel in fostering emotional engagement and creating more meaningful teaching experiences (Chen & Wang, 2019). Xu, Hao and Ellen Huennekens (2016) examined the impact of multicultural curriculum content on pre-service teachers' intercultural competence, highlighting gender as an important predictor.

For instance, a male teacher (F) remarked, "I tend to use traditional teaching methods and rarely actively integrate international understanding education content; basically, I teach whatever is in the textbook." Another male teacher (C) noted, "Although I have some overseas study experiences, in the classroom, I focus more on cultivating language skills and lack sufficient interest and investment in deep cultural exchanges." In contrast, female teachers appear more open to integrating international understanding content into their teaching. For example, Teacher A and Teacher B both emphasized incorporating different countries' cultures through storytelling, festival celebrations, and other interactive methods, fostering a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment that enhances students' global awareness. This gender disparity suggests that female teachers are generally more inclined to incorporate international understanding education, demonstrating a higher degree of flexibility and creativity in integrating global perspectives compared to their male counterparts.

There is a Significant Difference in the Age of Teaching Factor on the Level of Education in International Understanding

Teaching experience refers to the total time a teacher has spent in the profession, reflecting both their engagement in education and their accumulated experience and sentiment. Teachers with varying levels of experience show notable differences in educational concepts, self-planning, professional knowledge, and competencies (Yang & Zeng, 2021). Surveys indicate that teachers with less than one year of experience have the highest awareness of international understanding education. Timoštšuk, Uibu and Vanahans (2022) found that experienced teachers in Estonia reported lower self-assessments of intercultural competence compared to their less experienced counterparts when teaching immigrant students. In-depth interviews with individual teachers helped further explore the reasons for these differences. Novice teacher D mentioned, *"I am very willing to explore fresh knowledge and uncharted territories, and I am also willing to learn new teaching concepts."* Unlike novice teachers, who prioritize professional growth and success, experienced teachers tend to focus more on benefits and remuneration. Proficient teacher F stated, *"I don't think it's important whether international awareness is taught in the curriculum; what's important is that students can speak."*

Although proficient teachers possess higher teaching and research abilities, they often lose enthusiasm and creativity over time. Their teaching and research become formulaic, and they passively engage in educational activities, leading to burnout. Newly hired teachers, in contrast, tend to adopt "non-intervention" or "minimal intervention" classroom management strategies, which create "free space" for implementing international understanding education. Wolfgang and Glickman (1995) categorized teachers' beliefs about child development into non-interveners, low interveners, and high interveners, based on their level of control. Subsequent studies show that as teaching experience increases, teachers' control intensifies, while new teachers tend to be more patient, share responsibilities, and engage with students. Proficient teachers often lack sufficient training in international understanding education, while novice teachers have the strongest awareness, which tends to decline with experience. Proficient teacher E stated, *"The continuity of training for international Chinese teachers is too poor; everyone is working independently."*

Teaching Institutions Have a Significant Effect on the Level of Education in International Understanding

Research reveals that Chinese language teachers in international schools score higher on four evaluation dimensions of international understanding education compared to their counterparts in other teaching institutions. This highlights the positive impact of the working environment, curriculum design, and training mechanisms in international schools, which help enhance teachers' awareness of international understanding education. The survey indicates that all 161 Chinese language teachers in international schools have received training on this topic. For example, in schools offering the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum, all Chinese teachers participate in professional development courses aimed at creating curricula that promote global coexistence, fostering tolerance, and encouraging respect for diverse cultures, while also promoting their own national culture.

A study by Martin and Nakayama (2018) explored the cross-cultural competence of scholars with interdisciplinary backgrounds, noting that the workplace environment can limit individuals' cross-cultural skills. Teacher A observed, *"Chinese teachers in international schools must navigate the diversity of students from various countries and cultures, each with unique traditions, demanding higher cross-cultural communication skills."* Additionally, multicultural factors enhance cross-cultural communication and reduce communication costs among individuals from diverse backgrounds (Balakrishnan, Angusamy, & Bava Harji, 2023). Teacher Z confirmed this, stating, *"In international schools, Chinese teachers collaborate with colleagues worldwide, gaining exposure to diverse teaching experiences and cultural backgrounds, which fosters international understanding education."* In conclusion, the unique environment, curriculum design, and training systems in international schools create favourable conditions for Chinese language teachers to strengthen their international understanding education, helping them adapt to multicultural settings and cultivate students' global perspectives and cross-cultural communication skills.

Research Implications

An in-depth examination of international Chinese language teachers' awareness of international understanding reveals the following key findings: first, teachers have positive attitudes toward international understanding; second, they possess a relatively balanced understanding of the four dimensions of international

understanding education; and third, individual factors influence teachers' awareness differently across these dimensions. Based on these findings, we propose the following recommendations and countermeasures:

Deepening the Integration of Education for International Understanding and the Teaching of Chinese as an International Language

Given the positive attitude of most respondents towards incorporating international understanding education into international Chinese language teaching, it is crucial to strengthen its central role within the teaching system. This involves systematically integrating key elements such as intercultural communication and global citizenship into the curriculum and teaching materials to cultivate students' international outlook and intercultural communication skills. Additionally, teaching activities like simulated international conferences and cross-cultural dialogues can help students deepen their practical understanding of international issues. A regular evaluation mechanism should be established to gather timely feedback from teachers and students, allowing for flexible adjustments to teaching strategies and content. A resource bank and communication platform for international topics and education for international understanding should also be developed to promote resource sharing and experience exchange. Notably, over 75% of teachers reported facing greater challenges when teaching international understanding education to Chinese beginners. Thus, it is recommended that the curriculum be adjusted to gradually increase the content and depth of international understanding education as students' language proficiency improves.

Overall Enhancement of Teachers' Capacity to Teach International Understanding

To address the lack of experience some teachers have in teaching specific international themes, targeted teacher training programs should be implemented that emphasize continuous professional growth. While education for international understanding is not new, its integration into the professional development of international Chinese language teachers still faces challenges. It was found that teachers in units outside of international Chinese language teaching often lacked consistent and comprehensive training. Over 78% of teachers agreed that courses on education for international understanding should be included in their training. Therefore, teacher training content should be reformed to incorporate courses on international understanding education, such as multicultural instructional design and cross-cultural teaching methods, to help teachers effectively foster students' international awareness. Additionally, teachers should be encouraged to embrace lifelong learning by actively participating in international academic seminars and educational exchange programs to further enhance their professional development.

Optimize the Top-Level Design of the Curriculum and Flexibly Integrate Education for International Understanding

The survey results show that over 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed (mean score of 4.19) that education for international understanding should be included in international Chinese language teaching. The most suitable courses for integrating international understanding education are integrated/intensive reading, skills courses, and Chinese culture courses, with over 50% of respondents supporting their inclusion. For lecture and other course types, content and format adjustments are needed to better align them with international understanding education. Course design should be flexible, either by offering an independent international understanding education course or integrating it into existing courses like intensive reading, writing, and reading. In either case, international Chinese teachers must enhance their awareness and ability in international understanding education, balancing language knowledge and skills with international education goals to foster their parallel development.

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