

Research on the Current Situation of Chinese Language Learning and Communication Among University Students in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, via Social Media Platforms — A Case Study of YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of increasingly close China–Vietnam cooperation under the “Belt and Road” Initiative, the demand for Chinese language learning among university students in Ho Chi Minh City has continued to grow. This study focuses on the role of three major social media platforms—YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook—in facilitating Chinese language learning and communication among this group. Using a mixed research method, the study combines a questionnaire survey of 251 university students in Ho Chi Minh City with in-depth interviews of 20 learners to explore the functions, characteristics, effects, and challenges of social media in enhancing learners’ interest in and practical ability with the Chinese language. Based on these findings, the study proposes optimization suggestions from the perspectives of platforms, content creators, and educators, such as building multi-platform linkages and improving content quality. The aim is to provide a reference for promoting cross-cultural exchange and mutual understanding between China and Vietnam.

Keywords

Social media; university students in Ho Chi Minh City; Chinese language communication; cross-cultural communication

1. Research Background

In the context of accelerating globalization, language learning and dissemination have become key bridges for promoting economic, cultural, and social exchange among nations. As Wang Mingzhi (2020) pointed out, language transmission is not only a means of communication but also an essential path for constructing cultural identity. As one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, Chinese has been

gaining increasing international influence.

With the growing closeness between China and Vietnam—marked by frequent exchanges in geography, history, culture, and economic cooperation—Chinese has gradually become a linguistic trend and a continuously expanding learning demand within Vietnamese society.

Under the overarching framework of the deepening “Belt and Road” Initiative and the building of a China – Vietnam community with a shared future, bilateral cooperation in trade, investment, infrastructure, and cultural fields has reached unprecedented levels. As Vietnam’s economic and educational hub, Ho Chi Minh City’s university student population is highly responsive to these developments. Therefore, this study is situated in the context of China – Vietnam friendship and cooperation, examining how university students in Ho Chi Minh City utilize global social media platforms to learn Chinese. This inquiry not only relates to individual career development but also serves as a micro-level window into new models of people-to-people and cultural exchange between China and Vietnam, carrying practical significance for fostering mutual understanding between the two nations.

With the rapid advancement of information technology and the widespread adoption of the internet, university students’ learning methods are undergoing profound transformation. Traditional classroom-based and textbook-centered approaches no longer fully meet the diverse learning needs of today’s students. In contrast, social media—with its features of real-time updates, convenient interaction, and diverse content—has increasingly become an important channel for language learning and dissemination. In Vietnam, platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook are particularly popular. These platforms not only offer learners easily accessible and flexible language resources but also rely on algorithmic recommendations, user interaction, and community networking to support learning engagement.

This research specifically surveyed students from Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry (HUIF), Ho Chi Minh City University of Education (HCMUE), and the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH), under Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City.

University	Major Orientation	Advantages
Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade (HUIF)	Application-oriented, cultivating practical talents capable of using Chinese in enterprises.	Closely aligned with market demand, strong practical orientation, employment-oriented towards enterprises (especially Chinese-funded and Taiwanese-funded companies).
Ho Chi Minh City University of Education (HCMUE)	Focused on Chinese language education and application, cultivating Chinese teachers and language service professionals.	Strong faculty, high-quality teacher training, long-standing teaching tradition, comprehensive language skills training.
University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (USSH)	Mainly academic research and interdisciplinary studies, also emphasizing translation and international communication.	Strong academic atmosphere, emphasis on research orientation, broad international cooperation, beneficial for academic research and cultural exchange.

Table 1. Basic Information of Three Universities in Ho Chi Minh City Offering Chinese Major

The participants of this survey were undergraduate students (from first to fourth year). According to the demographic characteristics collected through the questionnaire, the majority of respondents were university students aged between 18 and 24 (accounting for 71.4%). The gender ratio was approximately 4:6, with a slightly higher proportion of females. The respondents' academic backgrounds were highly concentrated in foreign languages, communication, and business-related majors, while the proportion of students from science and engineering fields was relatively low. Geographically, nearly three-quarters of the sample came from the Southeast region of Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh City and surrounding areas) and the Red River Delta (Hanoi and Haiphong), whereas rural and remote provinces accounted for less than 8%, indicating a clear urban bias.

1. Gender Distribution:

Among the respondents, females accounted for 72.5% (182 individuals), while males made up 27.5% (69 individuals). This distribution aligns with the common phenomenon that female participation is generally higher in language learning disciplines.

2. Age Composition:

The respondents were mainly concentrated between 19 and 22 years old, representing 88.4% of the total. Specifically: 19 – 20 years old: 45.8% (115 individuals); 21 – 22 years old: 42.6% (107 individuals); 18 years old and below: 5.2% (13 individuals); 23 years old and above: 6.4% (16 individuals).

3. Major Distribution:

The respondents came from diverse academic majors, including: Chinese language and related majors (41.8%, 105 individuals), economics and management (18.7%, 47 individuals), engineering and technology (12.0%, 30 individuals), social sciences (10.4%, 26 individuals), natural sciences (8.0%, 20 individuals), and arts and others (9.1%, 23 individuals). The ratio of Chinese-major to non-Chinese-major students was approximately 1:1.39, indicating that Chinese learning has transcended traditional language boundaries and become an important interdisciplinary skill.

4. Grade Distribution:

Respondents covered all year levels with a relatively balanced distribution: first-year students (24.3%, 61 individuals), second-year students (26.7%, 67 individuals), third-year students (25.9%, 65 individuals), and fourth-year students (23.1%, 58 individuals). This balance ensures that the study reflects the characteristics of students at different stages of learning.

5. Regional Distribution:

Most respondents were from southern Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City and surrounding provinces (63.7%, 160 individuals), the Mekong Delta region (18.3%, 46 individuals), the central region (11.2%, 28 individuals), and the northern region (6.8%, 17 individuals). This distribution reflects the radiating effect of Ho Chi Minh City as an

educational center in southern Vietnam.

6. Chinese Learning Background:

Students of Chinese ethnic origin accounted for 18.3% (46 individuals), while non-Chinese ethnic students accounted for 81.7% (205 individuals). Notably, among students with Chinese ethnic backgrounds, only about 30% had some degree of Chinese language environment at home, while the majority still required systematic Mandarin learning.

In summary, these demographic characteristics indicate that:

1. Chinese language learning among university students in Ho Chi Minh City has a broad foundation, extending beyond the boundaries of language-related majors.
2. Female students play a dominant role in Chinese learning.
3. The participants are predominantly young, consistent with the general age structure of university students.
4. The regional distribution highlights Ho Chi Minh City's attractiveness as an economic and cultural center.
5. Students with Chinese ethnic backgrounds represent a certain proportion, yet most still need systematic learning from the basics.

These demographic features provide essential contextual background for the subsequent analysis of students' learning motivation, platform preferences, and learning outcomes. They also confirm the representativeness and necessity of conducting research on Chinese language dissemination in Ho Chi Minh City.

2. An Academic Study on the Motivations and Current Status of Social Media Platform Utilization among University Students in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Survey data indicate that learners' platform preferences show a highly concentrated trend. YouTube and TikTok have emerged as the two dominant platforms representing the "long and short video" formats. YouTube, with an overwhelming preference rate of 51.6%, has become the most popular platform for learning Chinese, while short-video platform TikTok occupies an important share of 28.6%. Together, these two platforms account for 80.2% of learners' preferences, forming the core digital space for Chinese language learning among Vietnamese university students.

YouTube (Long-form Videos): The primary advantage of YouTube lies in its depth and systematic content. Users can find complete teaching courses, HSK test analyses, film and television clips, and long vlogs. These resources provide a structured and comprehensive learning experience that facilitates continuous Chinese language improvement.

TikTok (Short-form Videos): TikTok's strength lies in its fragmented content and high interactivity. It is particularly suitable for learning daily vocabulary,

popular expressions, and cultural knowledge during fragmented time intervals. Through concise, creative, and entertaining video formats, TikTok effectively stimulates and sustains learners' interest in Chinese language learning.

In comparison, traditional social media such as Facebook (13.5%) primarily play a supplementary role. Its group functions may serve as the main setting for users to acquire learning resources and engage in community interactions. Other platforms such as Xiaohongshu, Douban, and Douyin are also used by a small number of respondents, but their overall share remains minimal, indicating their limited popularity among Vietnamese learners of Chinese.

2.1. Motivation for Platform Use: Content Ecosystem and Intelligent Algorithms as Core Competitiveness

The multiple-choice data regarding “the main reasons for choosing this platform” clearly reveal the key factors that attract users. The results are as follows: rich and diverse content (83.3%), ease of use (57.1%), high video quality (54%), accurate recommendations (22.2%), and strong interactivity (11.1%).

1. Core Driving Forces: Unparalleled Content Ecosystem and Exceptional Convenience
Rich and Diverse Content (83.3%): This was the overwhelmingly dominant factor. As many as 83.3% of respondents selected this option, indicating that learners value most a platform that provides a comprehensive repository of content covering all levels—from beginner to advanced—as well as a wide range of topics from grammar instruction to cultural exploration. Platforms such as YouTube and TikTok offer massive and diversified learning materials, forming the fundamental cornerstone of user attraction.

Ease of Use (57.1%): “More than half of the respondents chose “ease of use,” making it the second most influential factor. This reflects the learners' strong demand for a seamless and smooth learning experience. The intuitive interface, simple search functions, and instant access to video playback allow learners to begin studying with virtually no barriers.

2. Key Quality Assurance: Video Production Quality
High Video Quality (54%): Following closely behind, over half of the respondents emphasized the importance of “high video quality.” This includes visual clarity, clear audio, logical content structure, and overall production sophistication. High-quality videos can significantly enhance the comfort and efficiency of the learning process, indicating that learners are selective and seek both form and substance in their educational resources rather than consuming content indiscriminately.

Supporting Factors: Limited Role of Algorithms and Interactivity.
Accurate Recommendations (22.2%): Contrary to the assumption that intelligent algorithms play a decisive role, only 22.2% of respondents identified “accurate recommendations” as a main reason for platform selection. This suggests that although algorithmic recommendations assist users in discovering relevant content, they are not the primary driving force influencing platform choice.
Strong Inter-

activity (11.1%): This factor ranked the lowest among all options. This finding strongly indicates that, for most respondents, Chinese language learning platforms are primarily perceived as content consumption and self-learning tools rather than as social or interactive communities. The characteristic of “unidirectional input” in the learning process is particularly evident here.

2.2. The Digital Learning Ecosystem of “Content Consumption – Interactive Communication – Community Co-construction”

At present, language learning has gradually shifted from traditional classroom-based instruction to digital and networked learning models. The emergence of systems such as E-learning, U-learning, and B-learning has provided learners with diversified learning channels and flexible learning environments. As Dr. Vinviane Gomes (2021) pointed out, contemporary distance education is characterized by virtual classrooms and multimedia interaction, emphasizing collaborative learning and technological integration. This theoretical and technological foundation enables Vietnamese university students to learn Chinese through social media platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook. This study finds that the surveyed group does not regard YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook as homogeneous learning tools. Instead, students utilize each platform differentially according to its content characteristics and communication patterns, thereby forming a functionally complementary “platform ecosystem.”

What kind of Chinese content do you like to watch?

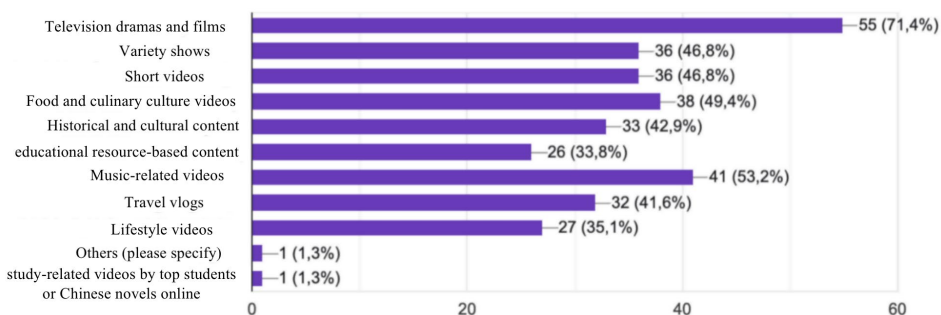


Table 2. The Platform Ecosystem for Chinese Learning among University Students in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Television dramas and films are the most popular content types, accounting for 71.4% of respondents. This indicates that visually engaging and narrative-driven audiovisual materials are more effective in attracting learners and assisting them in understanding language within contextualized settings.

Music-related videos (53.2%) and food and culinary culture videos (49.4%) also rank highly, suggesting that students not only focus on linguistic learning itself but also enhance their motivation through content related to culture and personal interests.

Variety shows (46.8%) and short videos (46.8%) follow closely, reflecting that

modern university students tend to prefer light, fast-paced, and entertaining learning formats.

Historical and cultural content (42.9%) and travel vlogs (41.6%) further demonstrate that learners have a certain degree of interest in understanding Chinese culture and social life.

Relatively fewer respondents selected educational resource-based content (33.8%) and lifestyle videos (35.1%), while only a small proportion reported watching study-related videos by top students or Chinese novels online. This suggests that although some students actively seek structured learning materials, the majority still favor “implicit learning” through entertainment-oriented content.

Overall, university students tend to engage with Chinese through films, music, and food-related cultural entertainment, highlighting a clear trend of interest-driven learning. Together, these three types of content form a digital learning ecosystem that integrates the functions of content consumption, interactive communication, and community co-construction.

1. YouTube: The Primary Platform for Systematic Learning and Deep Immersion

YouTube, with its long-form video format and vast content repository, has become the preferred platform for students engaging in systematic learning and deep linguistic immersion.

(1) Core Content Types

Systematic Instructional Courses: Many respondents reported following YouTube channels such as Thay Hung Chinese (teaching videos, HSK tutorials) and Thao An Chinese (grammar videos). These channels provide structured series of lessons covering topics from Pinyin and grammar to HSK test preparation, functioning as “online tutors.”

As a long-form video platform, YouTube naturally aligns with Krashen’s (1985) Input Hypothesis, which emphasizes the importance of comprehensible input in language acquisition (Krashen, 1985). Similarly, Vargas-Urpí (2021) found that YouTube-based instructional videos can effectively promote autonomous learning and enhance language input efficiency among foreign language learners (Vargas-Urpí, 2021). By watching subtitled instructional videos or selecting dramas appropriate to their proficiency level, learners are essentially engaging with “i+1” language input — that is, content slightly above their current ability (i) to facilitate incremental acquisition (+1). The combination of visuals, narrative context, and subtitles provides multimodal cues that enhance comprehension and retention.

Long-form Vlogs and Audiovisual Content: Study-abroad lifestyle vlogs (e.g., Hà Kiara), educational channels (Yangdexin), and Chinese television dramas (such as *Empresses in the Palace* and *When I Fly Toward You*) are among the most popular types of content.

Hà Kiara is a young Vietnamese YouTuber who shares her real-life experiences studying and living in China. Her videos often cover topics such as applying for Chinese government scholarships, practical Chinese learning tips, and pronunciation and listening practice, thereby combining experiential narrative with educational utility.

The Yangdixin YouTube channel, created by a Vietnamese teacher with study and work experience in China, offers systematic foundational Chinese courses covering pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and HSK exam preparation. Through such content, students not only improve their listening comprehension and accumulate authentic expressions but also gain deeper insights into Chinese society and culture.

(2) Communication Patterns

Primarily Search-driven Learning: Learners exhibit goal-oriented behavior, often searching for specific resources using keywords such as “HSK 5 mock test” or “Chinese grammar.” This proactive approach indicates a high degree of self-directed learning.

Deep Cognitive Engagement and Emotional Resonance: The long-form video format allows content creators to deliver in-depth explanations, helping students build a systematic linguistic knowledge base. Meanwhile, vlogs that share authentic personal experiences foster emotional connection between creators and learners. As one respondent (Wen Shihe) noted, watching popular Chinese vloggers sharing their life in China provided continuous motivation for learning.

2. TikTok: Fragmented Input and Interest-driven Learning

With its short, fast-paced content and powerful recommendation algorithms, TikTok has become a key platform for students to make use of fragmented time and sustain learning motivation. According to Zhang Xiaoli (2022), an empirical study on TikTok users revealed that the platform’s entertaining content design and algorithmic recommendations can significantly enhance learners’ engagement within a short period of time (Zhang, 2022).

(1) Core Content Types

Practical Skill-sharing: Channels such as Thay Hung Chinese excel at re-editing Chinese short videos by adding pinyin and Vietnamese subtitles, producing “secondary-processed” content that lowers the learning threshold. This approach enables students to acquire practical vocabulary and expressions through entertaining formats, effectively integrating learning with leisure.

Micro-knowledge Points and Fun Expressions: Most videos last between 15 – 60 seconds and focus on a single learning point—such as a popular online phrase, a grammatical distinction (e.g., “竟然 vs. 居然”), a Chinese character explanation, or a brief cultural insight. These micro-learning modules provide learners with easily digestible linguistic input suitable for fragmented learning contexts.

Real-time Online Interaction: Creators such as Cô gái đeo khẩu trang and May nói

tiếng Trung specialize in producing 30 – 60-second short clips featuring bilingual subtitles (Chinese – Vietnamese) while using OmeTV to chat casually with Chinese speakers. Their “learn while chatting and joking” style—combining short videos, random online conversations, and emotional resonance—turns Chinese learning, cultural encounters, and personal growth into engaging, fast-consumed digital content. This format allows Vietnamese audiences to be exposed to authentic Chinese communication naturally while scrolling through videos.

Localized Creator Content: A large number of local creators, such as Hỷ Khí Dương and Cho Lon Downtown, are active on the platform. These (often Chinese-Vietnamese) creators explain Chinese expressions using both Cantonese and Vietnamese, providing contrastive bilingual explanations that help learners quickly grasp and memorize new vocabulary. Cho Lon Downtown, for instance, focuses more on Chinese – Vietnamese cultural themes, such as food, festivals, and customs within Chinese communities in Vietnam. Through authentic scene recordings and bilingual narration, the channel allows viewers to simultaneously explore cultural contexts and absorb Chinese naturally, thereby enhancing cultural understanding and learning motivation.

(2) Communication Patterns

Algorithm-driven Recommendation: Learning behavior on TikTok is highly passive in nature. Students usually do not have specific search objectives but instead encounter educational content through the platform’s recommendation algorithms. Questionnaire data show that 22.2% of respondents valued “accurate recommendation,” highlighting the algorithm’s influence in shaping incidental learning exposure.

Interest Orientation and Viral Dissemination: Content that is entertaining, practical, and creative is more likely to achieve viral spread through TikTok’s mechanisms of likes, shares, and comments. This reflects an interest-driven and emotionally resonant mode of digital learning, where engagement and enjoyment play crucial roles in sustaining learners’ motivation.

3. Facebook: The “Hub” for Community-based Learning and Resource Integration

Facebook serves as a central hub for learner collaboration and resource exchange. Facebook groups, functioning as “mediating tools,” embody the principles of collaborative learning and scaffolding in sociocultural theory, facilitating knowledge construction through interaction and emphasizing the importance of community engagement in the internalization of language.

(1) Core Content Types

Sharing and Discussion of Learning Resources: Groups such as Everyday Chinese (每天中文), Self-study Chinese Group (自学中文群), and HSK Club are active spaces where members frequently share HSK preparation materials, study expe-

riences, electronic books, and useful video links. These communities serve as repositories of collective knowledge that support self-directed and collaborative learning.

Information Dissemination and Event Organization: Within these groups, members regularly post updates on Chinese language competitions (such as Chinese Bridge), scholarship opportunities, and study abroad programs. As such, Facebook groups have become vital channels for students to access academic and professional opportunities related to Chinese language learning.

Q&A and Peer Support: Facebook groups also provide platforms for asking and answering questions, allowing students to seek help when encountering learning difficulties. Responses often come from fellow learners or experienced teachers, thereby fostering a mutual aid system within the online learning community.

(2) Communication Patterns

Community-centered Interaction: The communication model on Facebook is inherently community-oriented, organized around shared learning goals. Information circulates within groups, creating learning communities that function as micro-ecosystems of mutual exchange and co-construction of knowledge.

User-generated Content and Resource Sharing: Most of the shared materials are user-generated content (UGC), created and distributed by group members. This enables effective integration and redistribution of learning resources, fulfilling learners' needs for targeted and practical study materials while enhancing collective participation in the learning process.

3. The Influence of Social Media Platform Utilization on Chinese Language Learning

According to the questionnaire results, the majority of students believe that Chinese learning content on social media has been helpful to their studies. Among them, 48.4% of respondents considered it "very helpful," while 47.6% believed it was "somewhat helpful." Only about 4% of students reported that it was of little or no help to their learning.

3.1. Positive Impacts

1. Enhancing Learning Interest and Sustaining Motivation

Social media transforms the traditionally monotonous process of language learning into an engaging and enjoyable exploration. Luo and Gao (2020) also demonstrated that social media platforms, by strengthening interaction and instant feedback mechanisms, significantly enhance learners' motivation and sustained engagement.

For instance, respondent Deng Suxin stated that her motivation came from "liking my idol Xu Guanghai and wanting to learn Chinese to visit his country." Similarly, respondents Wen Shihe and Shi Qiu Ying mentioned that following in-

fluencers such as Ha Kiara and Yangdexin, who share their study-abroad experiences in China, continuously encouraged and inspired them to keep learning.

2. Expanding Vocabulary and Exposure to Authentic Expressions. Social media provides access to a vast amount of authentic language materials in real contexts, including colloquial expressions, online slang, and daily vocabulary that are often absent from textbooks.

For example, respondent Chen Hongfu shared that one of his learning methods was “listening to short clips to learn phrases and guessing meanings from context.” Respondent Yin Fang mentioned that “learning song lyrics” helped increase her vocabulary, while Fan Qingyan explained that “listening to podcasts” helped her acquire more words and idiomatic expressions.

3. Deepening Understanding of Chinese Culture and Society. Social media offers an intuitive and dynamic cultural window, enabling learners to go beyond the static cultural knowledge presented in textbooks. Respondent Chen Hongfu noted that he learned about “Peking Opera and Sichuan face-changing” through TikTok. Many other respondents expressed interest in Hanfu, the Tang Dynasty, calligraphy, Chinese cuisine, and traditional festivals such as the Lantern Festival—interests that were largely inspired and reinforced by exposure to social media content. Several participants also mentioned becoming interested in specific aspects of contemporary Chinese life, such as recycling culture, food markets, and nightlife scenes, which further expanded their cultural horizons.

3.2. Negative Impacts

The survey of 251 respondents revealed that while learning Chinese through social media offers convenience and flexibility, it also presents several negative effects and challenges, which are discussed in the following section.

No.	Type of Negative Impact	Percentage (%)	Degree of Impact
1	Difficulty in sustaining learning motivation	57.9%	Very high
2	Fragmentation of learning and lack of systematic structure	56.7%	Very high
3	Insufficient academic or professional rigor	40.1%	Relatively high
4	Susceptibility to distraction during the learning process	36.5%	Relatively high
5	Other issues (e.g., inaccurate information, lack of authoritative sources, etc.)	3.6%	Low

Table 3. The Negative Impacts of Social Media Platform Usage on Chinese Language Learning

Among the identified issues, difficulty in maintaining learning motivation (57.9%) emerged as the most prominent problem. Due to the lack of systematic supervision and disciplinary mechanisms on social media, learners often lose interest or discontinue their studies midway. The second major issue is fragmented learning (56.7%), as online content mainly consists of short videos or segmented information that lacks coherence and systematic structure, making it difficult for learners to develop a comprehensive knowledge framework.

Lack of professionalism (40.1%) and easily distracted attention (36.5%) are also key negative factors. Some content is produced by non-professional creators and contains a high degree of entertainment elements, which can negatively affect learners' focus and academic discipline.

1. Inconsistent Content Quality and Questionable Accuracy

The absence of a content review mechanism allows for the circulation of inaccurate information, slang, and non-standard expressions, which may mislead beginners.

For instance, respondent Shi Qiu Ying mentioned that “when searching for vocabulary online, errors often occur, especially with internet slang.” Similarly, Li Mengshi pointed out that “online content lacks standardization and is not as accurate as textbook materials.”

4. Lack of Systematicity and Fragmented Knowledge Structure Leading to Distraction

Short videos and fragmented information streams make it difficult for learners to construct an integrated linguistic knowledge system. The entertainment-oriented nature of platforms and algorithmic recommendations often divert learners' attention away from their initial learning goals.

Respondent Nguyen Thi My Huyen noted that social media “easily causes distraction and wastes time scrolling through short videos; some content is too entertaining, making me curious and eventually forget about studying Chinese.” This reflects how learning processes are frequently interrupted, preventing the formation of a coherent knowledge structure.

Similarly, respondents Wen Shihe and Fan Qingyan, among others, expressed that they “prefer offline learning because online study easily causes drowsiness and lack of concentration.”

5. Algorithmic Dependence and the Formation of an “Information Cocoon”

Students tend to passively receive information, which limits their exposure to broader and more diverse learning resources—and in some cases, may even expose them to harmful or biased content.

Respondent Hai Deng expressed concern about the lack of a reliable review system, noting that “some politically sensitive content between Vietnam and China might appear, which decreases motivation.” This indicates that algorithmic recommendations may inadvertently push emotionally charged or negative content, directly undermining learners' motivation and overall learning experience.

6. Conclusion

Social media has become an important tool for Chinese language learning among

university students in Ho Chi Minh City, forming a functionally complementary ecosystem centered on YouTube (systematic learning), TikTok (interest stimulation), and Facebook (community support). It has effectively enhanced students' learning interest, listening and speaking abilities, and cultural awareness. However, its inherent drawbacks—such as fragmented content, uneven quality, and susceptibility to distraction—have also limited the depth of learning.

Content creators should balance professionalism and engagement, providing accurate and educationally sound materials. Educators should guide students to use social media resources critically and reflectively, while learners themselves must cultivate media literacy, engage in self-directed planning, and avoid overindulgence. Only through collaborative efforts among all parties can the positive functions of social media be maximized, fostering a more efficient and innovative model for Chinese language dissemination.

In essence, social media serves as a double-edged sword for Vietnamese university students learning Chinese. While it successfully stimulates learning interest and provides authentic linguistic input and cultural immersion that traditional classrooms cannot easily replicate, it also necessitates thoughtful guidance and self-regulation to ensure sustainable, meaningful learning outcomes.

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