

KIN100 – Kultur, historie, somfunn og Språk i Kina

Emnerapport (engelsk) fra emneansvarlig Shouhui Zhao

1. Course organization / teaching methods

53 students signed up for the course according to the registration system and 13 gave their feedback in the online student evaluation survey. The course targets at learners who study Chinese language both as a major and minor and is open to all with admission to the University of Bergen, and this is the first time that such a course was offered exclusively for Chinese learners with an aim to help students attain a). a general picture of Chinese civilization development through milestone events happened throughout dynastic history; b).a multidimensional understanding about Chinese society through modern history, geography, education development, religion, people (ethnic groups) and politics (parties, governance and administration structure).

The course consists of lectures on both subject and language knowledge, delivered by three teachers respectively in a close and dynamic collaboration. The former refers to knowledge of Chinese civilization history, with particular emphasis on culture and history, specifically, Chinese history (both dynastic and modern), geography, religion, education, politics/governance, people (ethnic minorities) and Media and propaganda, the latter includes introductory lectures on Chinese language plus basic practical skills in Chinese pinyin and Chinese characters.

2. Student attendance

Students are required to attend at least 75 % of all classes. As the lectures were conducted in parallel sessions (i.e., two repetitions for each unique topic), the course fared a relatively satisfactory attendance rate, albeit 10 failed to meet the requirement of mandatory attendance. Two students have applied for and were granted mandatory attendance exemption. One enrolled an English course that shares similar topics in a Chinese university and one had ever attended courses at times in his previous education, the same student was also widely exposed to Chinese culture and society in personal experience. During the course, one student personally complained to one teachers about the rigidity of attendance requirement.

According to feedback, whereas 2 students indicated 'svært misfornøyd', 5 students choose 'svært fornøyd', 4 opted for 'ganske fornøyd' and 2 for 'verken eller'. In answering question about Hvor stor andel av forelesningene har du deltatt på hittil I semesteret? 4 students indicated they attended all lectures and 7 came for over 80% classes, 2 students choose 'under 80% - klarer ikke oppmøtekravet'. This picture came in line with our general impression. The personal communication with students showed that the major reason why some students that could not come to classes as regularly as being desired is because of the time clashing with her other courses at the UiB.

3. Exam and course materials (recommended reading literature)

This course has one final three hour written exam. In order to be eligible to take the exam, on top of the minimum 75 % mandatory attendance, the students will have to pass a Chinese language qualifying test on practical skills in spelling pinyin and character recognition. The qualifying test included listening part and written part. All students passed the qualifying test with good performance. The written exam paper contains altogether 5 pages and 4 tasks, including four major formats, namely (1). explain briefly the terms or concepts; (2). fill in the blanks; (3). to choose 'true' or 'false' about given statements; and (4). answer/discuss the questions/statements according to what were covered in lectures or your own views/understanding. While the first three questions are about the factuality across all 7-8 topics covered in the study, the last question, which accounts for 45% of total 100 marks, concerns more students' application of the learned knowledge in resolving problems and dealing with challenges prevalent in areas of China studies through their analytic skills in synthesizing factual knowledge, either learned from class lecture or obtained from their own extracurricular reading. There are no hard and fast keys for assessing these questions, and students are encouraged to articulate their own views and arguments in a critical manner. For reading literature, for subject knowledge part of the course, except lecture notes in form of PPT slides, a compendium of 500 pages was provided for students to photocopy before the course started.

When it comes to students' feedback, three questions concern assessments and two questions are relevant to reading literature. About the questions "Hvor fornøyd er du med å ha skriftlig skoleprøve?", it shows that the majority ('svært fornøyd' = 33%; 'ganske fornøyd' = 33% and 'verken eller' = 25%) are generally happy with the written exam ('svært misfornøyd' = 8%). About the questions patterns (Hvor fornøyd er du spørsmålene på eksamen?), 67% students

(svært fornøyd + ganske fornøyd) indicated their satisfactory, and 25% of them had no clear cut opinions, one student (8%) expressed his/her dissatisfaction. Speaking of the question validity (seen in question of “Syns du eksamenen gav deg mulighet til å vise hva du kunne?”), the respondents manifested disparity among themselves. While 25% answered ‘yes’ and 50% ‘to quite a great extent’, 8% respectively choose ‘neither’, ‘at least extent’ and ‘no’. For their feeling and concept about suggested reading materials, in answering the short question of “Hvor fornøyd er du med pensum?”, students showed modest content (svært fornøyd = 17%; ganske fornøyd = 33%), or had no certainty (verken eller = 42%). One student choose ‘svært misfornøyd (8%)’. The survey also asks about the match between the course contents and reading literature through the question of “Er pensummengden tilpasset kursets omfang? ”, the result showed a rather mixed feedback. Specifically, svært fornøyd = 23%; ganske fornøyd = 50%, and verken eller = 8%. Again, the number of discontent student is one. It is probably reasonable to think that the student ticked 'Nei' across all above five questions might be the same one.

4. Course statistics

Number of students signed up for the Kin100 (according to Mitt UiB) in 2017: 53.

Number of students who attended the exam: 44.

Grade distribution: 2 A, 9 B, 16 C, 5 D, 7 E and 5 F (fail). Average grade: C

5. Course assessment

This assessment of the course is based on both the student's exam result and their feedback showed in the online evaluation form. Examination results were largely satisfactory, particularly in terms of stretched distribution across all 6 grades. The fact that 5 students failed to pass the minimum requirements came beyond expectation. The problem was discussed and a closer look at their question paper performance reveals that the last question is particularly a challenge for weaker students, suggesting there is a need to further narrow down their preparation scale. To provide referenced answers can a future solution.

Totally, 20 questions were asked in the survey. Approximately half of these questions are about the evaluation (concerning personal opinions) on various aspects of the course and teaching. Specifically, the first four questions target at the course design, the learners' own commitments and the course delivery. While the absolute major (12) of respondents were either ‘svært fornøyd’ or ‘ganske fornøyd’, one student was ‘svært misfornøyd’ and one was

‘verken eller’. When it comes to the comprehensiveness of the course, although no one held negative attitude towards the general arrangement of the course (samsvar mellom ulike deler, god nok tid på hvert tema, pensum), three students felt hesitant in articulating a confirmed views. A similar assessment also basically applied to their own efforts and devotion (Hvor fornøyd er du med din egen innsats på kurset?). In comparison, the 13 respondents appeared a bit divided among themselves in answering “Hvor fornøyd er du med forelesningene på emnet?”. Ten of them were either very happy or fairly happy about the teachers’ instructional practice, two choose to remain noncommittal, and there was one who choose ‘ganske misfornøyd’. Attendance, instructional materials and exams are other three aspects that we teachers would like to hear from the students. My summary and analysis can be read in other parts of the report. Students’ learning result is also a big topic. The majority was found happy with their accomplishment (stort utbytte=4 and nokså utbytte=6). The fact that two students felt ‘lite utbytte’ suggests that there is a room to improve in the future. The course takers’ views on “den praktiske informasjonen om kurset (frister, undervisningsopplegg osv)” is also worthwhile to solicitate. Whereas equal number (four) opted for ‘svært fornøyd’ and one ‘ganske fornøyd’, two students declined to comment and one expressed his/her disappointment in getting any benefit from the course by choosing ‘svært misfornøyd’.

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