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Japanese and U.S. Programs in Taiwan: New Patterns in Taiwanese Television

Kenichi Ishii, Heng Su, and Satoshi Watanabe

Recent deregulation in Taiwan, including the lifting of a ban against Japanese programs and the authorization of commercial CATV, has resulted in a rapid increase in the number of foreign programs. After reviewing the unique broadcasting history of Taiwan, this study examines exposure to and preference for foreign programs based on a nationwide survey. The findings demonstrate that, in addition to social status, historical and cultural backgrounds substantially affect individuals' choices of foreign programs.

Rapid economic growth and political democratization in Taiwan in recent years have accelerated the dissemination of foreign popular culture in the form of comics, music tapes, videotapes, home video games, and TV programs. This article focuses on two foreign cultures in Taiwanese TV, one from the U.S, the other from Japan. After briefly reviewing the history of broadcasting in Taiwan, this article will examine how historical background as well as social status influence viewers' preference for foreign TV programs. This examination is based on a national survey conducted by the authors.

Taiwan has had three terrestrial broadcasting stations - TTV, CTV, and CTS - since the 1960s. Legally, they are commercial television networks relying on advertising for income. In fact, however, they have been under governmental control and bound by strict restrictions regarding TV programs. For example, entertainment programs may not exceed 50% of total broadcast time. Overseas programs are restricted to less than

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30%. Programs imported from overseas must have explanations or superimposed captions in Chinese. In 1991, when Japanese TV programs were still banned on the terrestrial channels, 83.92% of the programs broadcast by one of the stations (TTV) were in Mandarin, 7.61% in English, 8.05% in Taiwanese, and 0.42% were in other languages (Su, 1992). According to recent statistics, 17% to 22% of TV programs on the three terrestrial channels were foreign (TV Yearbook Compilation Committee, 1996). There are also regulations on the relative proportions of news, educational and cultural programs, and advertisements on terrestrial TV.

Cable TV (CATV) penetration to households in Taiwan exceeded 70% in 1996, just three years after the authorization of commercial CATV in 1993. Commercial CATV in Taiwan has a unique background with an illegal CATV station called the "Fourth Channel" having operated extensively for quite some time before legalization in 1993.¹ A 1983 survey indicated that between 150,000 and 300,000 households in Taipei and its suburbs had subscribed to the Fourth Channel (Wang, 1984). According to that survey, the most popular program on the "Fourth Channel" was a Japanese detective story (a TV drama) in the 1980s. Programs broadcast on CATV were mostly Japanese and Western movies (Wang, 1984). Despite the Government's repeated disciplinary actions which included cutting cables, CATV continued to prosper, and the Government finally authorized CATV in 1993. At that time, about 400 CATV operators broadcast programs which were mostly received via such foreign satellite broadcasting as Star TV (Hong Kong), MTV and NHK (Japan).

The authorization of CATV generated a large number of channels that compete for viewers and divide advertising revenue. At the moment, CATV subscribers pay an average of NT\$ 450 (US\$ 16) per month. There were approximately 150 operators in 51 legal franchises in Taiwan as of 1996. The CATV systems are operating in an extremely competitive environment. Some areas have three or four licensed operators, which compete intensely for audience (TV Yearbook Compilation Committee, 1996). There are three reasons for the rapid penetration of CATV in Taiwan.

First, many Taiwanese were discontented with programs on terrestrial TV, due to restrictions enforced by the Taiwanese Government. Even though deregulation was underway in the 1990s, considerable discontent was felt, particularly by the younger generation and by intellectuals (Bureau of General Budgets, 1992). Second, satellite broadcasts from abroad were becoming more available in Taiwan in the 1980s. Japan's NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) launched satellite broadcasting in 1987. Other satellite broadcasting stations such as STAR TV and CNN arrived in the Taiwanese market in the late 1980s. CATV stations owe much of their success during the 1980s to the popular appeal of satellite programs aired through the CATV network. NHK's "spillover" broadcasting was widely received without any charge until 1996, because Japanese law restricted NHK's broadcasting service to Japanese territory. Today, however, the need for direct reception of satellite programs using parabolic satellite dishes is decreasing. This is because most satellite broadcasting channels can be viewed via CATV. Thirdly, the cost of subscribing to CATV was

initially very low, due to the keen competition among illegal stations using pirated foreign programs.

While CATV and satellite channels require a large number of programs, they lack the professional human resources required to produce such programs. The restrictions of the Broadcasting and Television Law limit the proportion of overseas programs to less than 30%, but do not apply to satellite broadcasting and CATV. Consequently, a large number of imported programs are aired on CATV. Star TV Chinese Channel, for example, has aired many Japanese TV dramas called "trendy dramas," popular among young people. These dramas are dubbed in Chinese and are viewed mostly through CATV.

A CATV survey shows that there are seven U.S. channels (ESPN, HBO, Discovery, TNT, CNN, Sun Movie and Disney) and four Japanese channels (Gold Sun, NHK Asia, Video Land Japan, and Boshin Toei) among the top 35 CATV channels with the highest penetration rates.² Judging from the many foreign programs on other CATV channels, the percentage of foreign programs on CATV is much greater than on terrestrial TV.

American and Japanese Culture in Taiwan

The government of Taiwan has taken a negative stance toward Japanese culture, which is understandable given Japan's earlier colonial rule over Taiwan. The cessation of diplomatic relations with Japan in 1972 was followed by banning imports of Japanese TV programs and popular songs. Despite this negative attitude, Japanese culture has gradually begun to gain more influence. This was symbolically demonstrated by the lifting of the ban against Japanese TV programs at the end of 1993. It is reported that the satellite broadcasting companies, eager to broadcast Japanese programs due to their popularity and high audience ratings, pressured the Government, and that the Government reluctantly changed its policy in response to this pressure.³

As a result of the direct experience of colonial rule by the Japanese, elderly people in Taiwan usually understand the Japanese language and appreciate traditional Japanese culture (Chu, 1998). According to a survey conducted by the authors, 15% of elderly people (over age 55) are fluent in Japanese, while only 5% of young people (age 15-29) are fluent in Japanese. On the other hand, only 4% of the elderly are fluent in English, while 19% of the young people are fluent in English.

Today, the impact of American culture on Taiwanese society is growing, especially among the intellectual community. This can be seen from a range of evidence. For example, high-ranking government officials and university professors in Taiwan usually choose to study in the U.S. or in Europe. As the population educated in the Japanese language before World War II has decreased, the percentage of Japanese books imported to Taiwan has dropped accordingly. Further evidence of the strong cultural influence of the English language can be found in magazines. For example, among the top 10 ranking magazines in Taiwan in terms of circulation, the Chinese

version of "Reader's Digest" is rated highest, followed by three instructional magazines for English study (Ishii, 1995a). A content analysis of advertisements in journals published in Taiwan shows that a Western orientation, expressed by indicators such as usage of English, became increasingly common in Taiwan during the 1980s (Tsao, 1994). Such evidence combines to suggest that the influence of American culture has grown gradually in the intellectual community in Taiwan.

According to Fang and Su (1994), in 1993, when Japanese TV programs were still banned on terrestrial TV, 99% of foreign TV programs came from the U.S. The dominance of U.S. television programs in the world market has been examined by many previous studies. Hoskins and Mirus (1988) explain that the U.S. dominance of international television programming follows from the economics of television programming, where its own domestic market (the largest in the world) provides the U.S. with huge economies of scale. On the other hand, Cantor and Cantor (1986) downplay economic factors and emphasize the importance of cultural values and beliefs, using the example of the marketing failure of "Dallas" in Japan. The production and distribution of U.S. programs abroad is clearly a complex and intricate process that must include consideration of each specific audience (Cantor & Cantor, 1986).

A great deal of information about Japanese culture has been conveyed in the form of entertainment through an array of visual media in Taiwan since the 1980s. According to a qualitative survey by Lii and Chen (1998), in the years since the lifting of the ban, Japanese TV programs have increased the popularity of Japanese entertainment products among the young. A large quantity of Japanese "soft" products such as comics, music tapes, and videotapes, mostly containing pirated contents, was also disseminated in the 1980s. Prior to the amendment of the Copyright Law, pirated tapes of overseas TV programs were in circulation through many of Taiwan's videotape rental shops. Japanese TV programs with subtitles were also popular on illegal CATV (the "Fourth Channel") in the early 1980s, especially among people with low levels of education (Wang, 1984). Today, such pirated programs have almost disappeared because of the amended Copyright Law. However, Japanese culture in Taiwan still flourishes in the form of entertainment received through visual media such as comics and videotapes.

In Taiwan, since the lifting of the ban against Japanese TV programs, TV stations have been scrambling to broadcast Japanese TV programs, most of which are serial dramas typically aired during or near prime-time. A Japanese drama entitled "Oshin", broadcast by NHK in 1983, had been shown in more than 15 countries by 1989 (Nowlana & Rad, 1992). This program set a new record with more than 30% of Taiwanese viewers in 1994. Most TV dramas were at first sold to Taiwanese broadcasting stations at very low prices. This has been because Japanese TV stations have not considered Taiwan as a market in the absence of diplomatic relations with Japan. For example, the price of "Oshin" was only one tenth the production costs of a Taiwanese serial drama of the same duration. However, in recent years the price of

Japanese programs has increased with the rapid increase in the number of CATV channels (Ishii, 1995b).

Despite their recent commercial success, Japanese programs have not been totally immune to criticism and opposition on the part of Taiwanese audiences. In December 1994, a group of actors and actresses objected to the broadcast of Japanese programs during prime-time (20:00 to 21:00), arguing that Taiwanese culture on TV should be protected from Japanese programs. As a result, the terrestrial TV stations voluntarily agreed not to broadcast Japanese programs during prime-time. In September 1996, some Members of Parliament called for the elimination of Japanese programs in Taiwan in protest against Japanese policy regarding the disputed ownership of islets in the East China Sea. These facts suggest that the Taiwanese have ambivalent feelings toward Japanese TV programs.

Current Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze demand-side factors in the choice of foreign TV programs by Taiwanese audiences, with a special focus on their choices between the U.S. or Japanese TV programs. Note that this study will examine factors concerning use of foreign programs, but will not examine influences of viewing *foreign programs on audiences*. The two major categories of foreign TV programs in Taiwan, those from Japan and those from the U.S., are very different in viewers attracted and content. Our basic position is that preferences for foreign programs should be understood in the context of the unique historical experiences of Taiwanese viewers, although some historical experiences have also determined the present social status of viewers. Thus, the present study examines cultural background factors, as well as social class.

Social class has been identified as an important factor affecting TV viewing in previous studies. For example, a study in Brazil showed considerable differences in preferences for U.S. programs between different social classes (Straubhaar, 1991). The study indicated that preference for U.S. programs was stronger among better educated people and the preference for national programs is stronger among less educated people. As pointed out above, American culture has more impact on the educated class in Taiwan; thus it is expected that U.S. programs are more likely than Japanese programs to be viewed by educated people:

H₁: Educational level has a higher correlation with amount of U.S. TV viewing time than with amount of Japanese TV viewing time.

It is not, however, appropriate to explain the role of Taiwanese audiences simply by reference to one factor "social class". As discussed above, preferences for foreign programs should be explained not only by present social status but also by past cultural backgrounds, because Taiwanese have experienced significant historical

changes that affect the viewers' preferences. Historical changes, including the end of Japan's colonial rule and recent deregulation and consequent proliferation in TV channels and foreign programs, have probably influenced the preferences of Taiwanese viewers.

Two factors are closely related to these historical experiences: (1) generation and (2) ethnic origin. The effect of generation is assumed to have been determined in youth depending on social conditions. Generation is theoretically different from age, although it is difficult to identify these two concepts with our survey data. If a person's preference is built up during youth, generation rather than age will influence that person's preference for TV programs. Elderly people educated in Japanese schools are more likely to culturally identify themselves with Japan (Chu, 1998). Thus they are expected to have a stronger preference for Japanese programs than the younger generation. Young people are also expected to have a stronger preference for Japanese TV programs, because they have watched Japanese programs since the introduction of satellite broadcasting and the subsequent removal of the ban against Japanese TV programs (Lii & Chen, 1998). It is therefore expected that generation will show a nonlinear effect on preferences for foreign programs.

The second important factor, ethnic origin, is closely related to cultural identities (Chu, 1998). Elderly people who came from mainland China in the 1940s culturally identify with mainland China, whereas elderly people of Taiwanese origin culturally identify with Japan due to their experience of Japanese colonial rule. On the other hand, the younger generation (generally under 55 at the time of the survey) share the same historical backgrounds regardless of the ethnic origin in Taiwan. Thus, the gap in preference for foreign programs between the Taiwanese and mainlanders will be largest for the elderly people:

H₂: Preference for U.S. or Japanese TV programs is correlated with cultural backgrounds of respondents, that is, generation and ethnic origin.

H_{2.1} Middle-aged people are more likely to prefer U.S. programs than both elderly people and young people.

H_{2.2} The difference in preference for foreign programs based on ethnic origin is largest for elderly people.

Japanese and American programs in Taiwan differ in content and in the make-up of their viewers. Previous studies have shown that Japanese cartoons and TV dramas are popular in foreign countries (Kawatake & Hara, 1994). U.S. movies dominate the market worldwide (Hoskins & Murus, 1988), whereas American TV programs are not always popular in foreign countries due to cultural differences (Liebes & Katz, 1990). Taiwan has stronger historical and cultural links with Japan than with the U.S. Hence, the following hypotheses are reasonable:

H₃: Favorite U.S. TV programs are more likely to be movies, whereas favorite Japanese programs are more likely to be ordinary TV programs (e.g. TV shows and dramas).

H₄: U.S. programs are more appreciated for their high quality, whereas Japanese programs are appreciated more for their familiarity.

One of the reasons for the U.S. dominance of movies is that the U.S. movies target the world market whereas TV programs mostly target the domestic market (Cantor & Cantor, 1986). Another possible reason for the different responses to U.S. and Japanese programs is viewers' psychological needs. Taiwanese viewers probably seek high creativity and quality in U.S. programs whereas they seek similarity in Japanese programs because of the cultural similarities. Two bodies of theory and research have studied the psychological needs of the audience (Straubhaar, 1991). Uses and gratification research focuses on the active role of the audience in selecting media inputs (Blumer & Katz, 1974). Cultural studies also focus on the active role of the viewer in interpreting television programs, arguing the importance of social class as a major factor (Fiske, 1987). It is difficult to accurately measure these psychological needs by telephone survey. As a result, only subjective reasons for watching these two types of foreign programs were sought in the survey.

Method

Under the auspices of the Survey Research Center at the Union Daily News in Taipei, the authors conducted a nationwide telephone survey, using a computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system.⁴ Through the six days of the survey period in August 1996, the national probability sample in Taiwan yielded 1,145 successful respondents, 273 (19.3%) people refused to answer.

Respondents aged 15 or older chosen by the random-digit sampling method were asked 20 to 35 questions by experienced interviewers depending on viewing patterns of the respondents. The respondents' median age was in the category of 35 to 39 years old. About half (50.4%) of the respondents were male, and the other half (49.6%) were female. Most (74%) were Taiwanese, 10% Hakka, 14% mainlanders, and 2% aborigines.⁵ A tenth (10%) were college graduates, and about half (52%) were high school graduates. In terms of demographics, the sample did not differ significantly from the national population.

Respondents were asked how often they watched U.S. programs, Japanese programs, and any programs on TV. Based on these answers, the respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with a series of ten statements about either U.S. or Japanese TV programs, which were more frequently watched by each respondent⁶ (Table 6). Those who did not watch either U.S. or Japanese programs were asked only about demographics. Reasons for watching U.S. or Japanese programs were asked in an open-ended question. The answers were coded using categories prepared by the authors.

Results

CATV and Terrestrial Channels

About three-quarters (76.5%) of the respondents have CATV in their homes. Taiwanese habitually watch an average of 1.96 CATV channels and 1.69 conventional terrestrial channels. These results show that CATV is becoming more popular than the conventional terrestrial TV channels.

Table 1 shows the top 10 channels according to viewing rates reported in the survey. The three terrestrial TV channels have considerably higher viewing rates than CATV channels. The characteristics of the respective audiences for CATV channels and the terrestrial channels are also different. The audiences of the three terrestrial channels are close to the average in age and are slightly lower in educational level. By contrast, viewers of the CATV channels are younger, and their educational levels are more varied. For example, an American movie channel (HBO) and a Chinese news channel (TVBS) are primarily watched by highly educated audiences. Star TV Chinese Channel, which has been broadcasting many Japanese dramas, is watched by young people. On the other hand, some channels broadcasting domestic entertainment programs (Sanli 1,2) are watched mainly by less educated people. Generally speaking, the CATV channels have a much wider diversity of audiences than the existing terrestrial channels.

Table 1
Frequent Viewers of the 10 Channels with the Highest TV Viewing Rates

	Frequent Viewers (% of Sample)	Average Age of Viewers	University Graduates (% of Viewers)	Program Type
Terrestrial TV channels				
TTV	60.7%	39	7.9%	General channel
CTV	54.5%	38.1	7.9%	General channel
CTS	53.7%	39	7.4%	General channel
CATV channels				
HBO	19.9%	30.5	24.9%	American movies
TVBS	12.3%	33.1	22.8%	News and others
San-li 1	10.6%	34.4	2.8%	Entertainment
TVIS	9.2%	30	20.4%	Sports
San-li 2	8.9%	31.1	5.6%	Entertainment
Lian teng	8.2%	28.3	8.4%	Chinese and American movies
Star TV Chinese	8.1%	26.7	11.0%	Dramas and entertainment
Average	—	38.1	10.0%	

Exposure to U.S. and Japanese Programs

Taiwanese people watch more U.S. TV programs than their Japanese counterparts. According to our survey, 50% and 35% of the respondents, respectively, watch U.S. and Japanese programs on more than two days a week either on CATV or on terrestrial TV. The present study focuses on U.S. and Japanese programs, because Taiwanese spend only a small amount of time watching programs from other countries.

In order to estimate the effects of four demographic variables (age, sex, educational level, and household income) on time spent watching U.S. and Japanese programs, a multiple classification analysis was performed.⁷ The coding for these variables is provided in Table 2. As for American programs, education and income significantly affect the amount of viewing time, i.e., the higher the education or income of a Taiwanese, the more he or she tends to watch American programs. In the other words, American programs are watched mainly by intellectuals. On the other hand, education does not affect the amount of Japanese TV viewing time, therefore H_1 is supported.

By contrast, the results of Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) for Japanese programs demonstrate that only age is significantly correlated with the amount of

Table 2
Multiple Classification Analysis of Time Spent Viewing U.S. and Japanese Programs

Variable and Category	Deviations for Category and Betas for Variable		
	N	U.S. Programs	Japanese Programs
Gender		.02 n.s.	.04 n.s.
Male	344	.04	-.09
Female	283	-.05	.10
Age		.08 n.s.	.21 ***
Young (15-29)	211	-.17	.57
Middle (30-54)	335	.16	-.39
Old (55-)	81	-.23	.16
Education		.12*	.09 n.s.
Junior high or lower	194	-.25	.03
High School	255	-.07	-.14
Junior College	100	.21	.41
College/University	78	.58	-.14
Income		.14 **	.06 n.s.
Low	295	-.33	-.07
Middle	217	.25	.17
High	115	.37	-.13
Multiple R		.234	.234

Note: Deviations are adjusted for other independent variables. Significance level: ***: $p < 0.001$, **: $p < 0.01$, *: $p < 0.05$, and n.s.: not significant.

time spent watching Japanese programs, although the relation is not linear. Young people are likely to watch Japanese programs more, while middle-aged people are likely to watch Japanese programs less than the average. Old people (over 55) watch Japanese programs only moderately despite their fluency in Japanese.

Preference for Foreign Programs

When asked whether they like to watch foreign programs, a majority of the respondents (72%) said that they liked to watch them either "very often" or "fairly often," whereas only 19% did not like to watch them. An interesting result is that a majority of respondents (51%) prefer broadcasting in the original language with subtitles, rejecting dubbing as unnatural, and only 35% of the respondents prefer dubbing in Mandarin or Taiwanese. A survey conducted in 1994 shows that 30.7% of Taiwanese think that TV channels should have more foreign TV programs, and only 4% think that they should have fewer (Su, 1995). These results indicate that the Taiwanese audience has very positive attitudes toward foreign TV programs.⁸

Age and educational level are closely related to the preference for foreign TV programs. A majority of young people (87%) like to watch foreign TV programs, whereas fewer old people (54%) like to watch them. Educational level is also significantly related to preference for foreign TV programs: only 59.8% of respondents with middle high school or lower education like to watch foreign programs, while 91.8% of university or college graduates like to watch them.

In order to explore factors influencing preferences for foreign programs, three logistic regression analyses were performed. The results are summarized in Table 3. The parameters of junior college (a dichotomous variable) and income (a continuous variable) are significantly correlated with viewing foreign programs, whereas the parameters of age show a negative correlation, although the latter is not statistically significant.

The preference for U.S. and Japanese programs shows a pattern similar to that of viewing time. Young people (under 30) and old people (over 55) show a strong preference for Japanese TV programs. On the other hand, it is middle-aged people who most prefer U.S. programs. These results are consistent with $H_{2.1}$. Table 4 shows the relationship between preference for Japanese programs and ethnic origin. The gap between the two groups is largest for elderly people and smallest for middle-aged people and young people. Elderly Taiwan-origin viewers show by far the highest percentage (77.4%) of the preference. This result clearly supports $H_{2.2}$.

Only a few young people are fluent in Japanese. However, a higher percentage of young people than old people watch Japanese programs (which are subtitled or dubbed). This apparently contradictory result can be explained by historical and supply-side factors. Given the historical background of colonial rule by the Japanese, many elderly people in Taiwan are fluent in Japanese and prefer Japanese TV programs. However, the audience targeted by most Japanese TV programs (e.g., TV dramas and cartoons) broadcast in Taiwan does not consist of such elderly people,

Table 3
Logistic Regression of Preference for Foreign Programs

	Regression Coefficients		
	Preference For		
	U.S. Programs	Japanese Programs	All Foreign Programs
Age			
Young (15-29)	.044	.370	.150
Middle (30-54)	.527 ***	-.631 ***	.107
Old (55-)	-.571 *	.293	-.257
Education			
Primary school	-1.527 ***	.601 *	-.966 ***
Junior high or lower	.122	.006	-.371
High School	.457 **	-.037	.207
Junior College	.470 *	-.156	.816 *
College/University	.478 *	-.413	.315
Gender (M = 0; F = 1)	-.036	.388	.160
Income	.054 **	.023	.101 ***

Note: Significance level: ***: $p < 0.001$, **: $p < 0.01$, *: $p < 0.05$, and n.s.: not significant.

but of younger people. Only a few Japanese programs are broadcast for older people in Taiwan.

Similar relationships between Japanese language ability and Japanese TV viewing can also be observed in other types of media consumption patterns. Animated cartoons, videotapes and comic strips are translated into or dubbed in Chinese, and one needs no knowledge of Japanese language to understand them. In other words, the Japanese culture, which is so popular among young Taiwanese people, is mainly conveyed in visual images and therefore does not depend on Japanese literacy. Characteristically, young Taiwanese people receive Japanese popular culture more through visual images than through words.

Table 4
Percentage of Respondents Preferring Japanese Programs by Ethnic Origin and Age

Age	(N)	Ethnic Origin		Chi-Square Test
		Taiwanese	Mainlander	
Young (15-29)	(276)	34.5%	23.7%	n.s.
Middle (30-54)	(346)	22.1%	18.8%	n.s.
Old (55-)	(66)	77.4%	7.7%	***

Note: Asterisks denote the results of the chi-square test. Significance level: ***: $p < 0.001$ and n.s.: not significant.

Taiwanese viewers watch different types of U.S. and Japanese programs. The frequencies of multiple choices demonstrate that U.S. programs most frequently watched by the audience are movies (66.1%), followed by dramas (36.1%) and information programs (10.4%). Their choice of Japanese TV programs is more varied; Japanese programs most frequently watched by the audience are dramas (63.2%), followed by TV shows and comedies (32.4%), animated cartoons (16.8%), and movies (8.4%). Chi-square tests demonstrate that U.S. programs consist of more movies than Japanese programs (chi-square=301.7; $df=1$; $p<0.001$), and that Japanese programs consist of more dramas (chi-square=61.8; $df=1$; $p<0.001$), and more TV shows and comedies than U.S. counterparts (chi-square=95.3; $df=1$, $p<0.001$). Hence, H_3 is supported.

Tables 5 and 6 contrast the audiences of U.S. and Japanese programs in Taiwan. Table 5 shows that U.S. programs are chosen for their exciting content (43%) and high production quality (30%), whereas Japanese programs are chosen because they are a favorite (54%) and are useful for learning Japanese (18%). Table 6 also shows that U.S. programs are perceived to be significantly more amusing, more creative, and more useful for learning new things than Japanese programs, while Japanese TV programs are perceived to be more closely related to their own life. These differences between U.S. and Japanese programs are basically consistent with H_4 .

Discussion

Our study has focused on the importance of audience factors in Taiwan. The historical review demonstrated that foreign enterprises had not played an active role in the Taiwanese market until recently. Taiwanese viewers supported the illegal CATV "Fourth Channel" for a long time, despite the Government's repeated disciplinary

Table 5
Main Reasons for Preferring U.S./Japanese TV Programs
(multiple choice; percentage of viewers)

	U.S. Programs (N = 481)	Japanese Programs (N = 147)	Chi-Square Test
Being exciting/interesting	43	15	***
High production level	30	10	***
High creativity	27	22	n.s.
Being people's favorite	24	54	***
Learning the language	9	18	**
Enlarging knowledge	4	2	n.s.
Understanding foreign culture	2	3	n.s.
Favorite characters/stars	7	12	n.s.

Note: Asterisks denote the results of the chi-square test. Significance level: ***: $p < 0.001$, **: $p < 0.01$, *: $p < 0.05$, and n.s.: not significant.

Table 6
Attitudes Toward U.S. and Japanese Programs:
Percentage of Agreement With Each Statement

	U.S. Programs (N = 413)	Japanese Programs (N = 429)	Chi- Square Test
(1) U.S. (Japanese) programs are especially amusing.	72.3%	63.9%	**
(2) U.S. (Japanese) programs are creative.	82.3	69.0	***
(3) U.S. (Japanese) programs are good for killing time.	50.5	57.1	n.s.
(4) People watch U.S. (Japanese) programs habitually.	56.3	48.5	*
(5) The content of U.S. (Japanese) programs is close to the real life.	52.9	54.5	n.s.
(6) U.S. (Japanese) programs are useful for understanding the life in the U.S. (Japan).	70.9	76.5	n.s.
(7) I can learn new things through U.S. (Japanese) programs.	78.9	66.7	***
(8) People often talk about U.S. (Japanese) programs.	60.2	57.1	n.s.
(9) People watch U.S. (Japanese) programs because they like actors or TV personalities.	67.3	64.8	n.s.
(10) The content of U.S. (Japanese) programs is closely related with my own life.	30.3	44.1	***

Note: Asterisks denote the results of the chi-square test. Significance level: ***: $p < 0.001$, **: $p < 0.01$, *: $p < 0.05$, and n.s.: not significant.

actions. Consequently, the growing number of foreign programs must be explained by the demand-side factors in Taiwan.

Our findings demonstrate that social class, which is emphasized in cultural studies, does not completely account for the varieties of Taiwanese viewers. Educational level has a positive correlation only with amount of U.S. TV viewing (H_1). Preferences for U.S. or Japanese TV programs are correlated with generation and ethnic origins (H_2). In other words, cultural backgrounds, which were acquired when they were adolescent have substantially affected individuals' choices of foreign programs. Elderly people educated in the Japanese language before World War II prefer Japanese TV programs, although they do not often watch Japanese programs, because the majority of Japanese programs imported to Taiwan are aimed at the younger generation. Young people, who have not experienced a strict ban on Japanese culture, are the most frequent viewers of Japanese programs as well as other foreign programs in Taiwan. On the other hand, middle-aged people, who were adolescents

during the ban on Japanese culture, seldom watch Japanese programs and most frequently watch American programs instead. These results indicate that the wide diversity displayed among Taiwanese viewers, especially with respect to their choices of American or Japanese programs, cannot be explained by a single factor, such as social class, as hypothesized by cultural studies. Instead, it is a combination of individual factors such as social and cultural backgrounds that have led to the diversification of exposure to and preference for foreign programs in Taiwan.

The findings of the audience survey indicate that the two major categories of foreign programs, i.e., those produced in the U.S. and those produced in Japan, occupy quite different positions in the minds of Taiwanese viewers. Favorite U.S. and Japanese TV programs are quite different (H_3); most American programs are movies, while Japanese TV programs are more varied, including a wide range of entertainment programs. The reasons for their preferences are also significantly different (H_4); Japanese TV programs are perceived to be more closely related to their own life, whereas American programs are appreciated for their quality and exciting stories.

These results suggest that U.S. and Japanese programs occupy quite different psychological positions for Taiwanese viewers; U.S. programs are appreciated for their product quality, whereas Japanese programs are appreciated for their familiarity. Previous studies have found differences in TV content between Japanese and U.S. TV dramas with regard to cultural values. For example, Japanese TV dramas have a stronger emphasis on the traditional spirit of self-sacrifice, while American dramas emphasize personal happiness (Mikami, 1993). Cultural values reflected in Japanese TV programs are consistent with those of Taiwanese audiences. This is seen in the major success of NHK's drama "Oshin" in Taiwan. Cultural similarities between Taiwan and Japan may be key to understanding why Japanese popular entertainment such as TV programs, comics, and videotapes are especially favored among Taiwanese, although it is difficult to measure the cultural similarities. These differences between Japanese and U.S. programs suggest that, as Cantor and Cantor (1986) indicated, cultural values are more important than economies of scale in deciding the popularity of foreign programs among Taiwanese.

In Taiwan, economic conditions, which provide a limited domestic market for cultural goods, have made it easy for foreign enterprises to enter the market. Until the 1980s, Taiwanese TV had been relatively independent in the midst of heavy political and economic dependence on the U.S. and Japan (Lee, 1980). However, in the 1990s, as demonstrated by the fact that the majority of programs on CATV and comics are imported from overseas, the Taiwanese culture industry now holds a relatively minor position. An increase in the number of CATV channels in Taiwan has led to more dependency on foreign programs, although the indigenization of imported programs has been progressing in line with market forces.⁹

The number of foreign TV programs shown on new channels is increasing in other Asian countries as well. Some have strongly criticized the international one-way flow of TV programs (Kim & Kim, 1993), but their arguments are based on ideological and nationalistic sentiments rather than reliable data regarding audiences. Our findings

have demonstrated that Taiwanese audiences actively choose a TV program from a wide range of alternatives, including foreign and domestic programs. These results suggest that no class of Taiwanese people, despite their pride in their country's low dependence on foreign media, wants to return to the situation of the 1970s where choice was limited to three domestic channels.

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Notes

¹ Taiwan had three existing terrestrial TV stations, thus CATV was called the "Fourth Channel".

² *Cable & Satellite Magazine* (in Chinese), p.37, November 1996 (Taipei).

³ See an article in *TV Guide* (no.1663, pp.72-79, 1994) published in Taipei.

⁴ The survey methods were basically the same as employed in Su (1995), but more detailed questions about viewing and preference for U.S and Japanese TV programs were included in our survey (See Ishii, Watanabe, and Su, 1996).

⁵ The original inhabitants of Taiwan were Malayo-Polynesian aborigines. The great majority of the population, those now called Taiwanese, are descendants of the original immigrants from the Chinese provinces of Fukien. The Hakka are originally from northern Kwangtung in China. The most recent immigrants are "mainlanders" who came from all parts of China in the late 1940s.

⁶ Respondents who watched U.S. programs as often as Japanese programs were asked about Japanese programs, because it was expected that fewer people would watch Japanese programs than the U.S. counterparts.

⁷ Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) is a variant of ANOVA models. In the present analysis, the three coefficients for income, that is, low, middle and high, correspond to the following income categories: (1) less than NT\$ 60,000 per month (Low), (2) between NT\$ 60,000 and NT\$ 120,000 per month (Middle), and (3) more than NT\$ 120,000 per month (High).

⁸ A study in Belgium, the most cabled country in Europe, also showed that viewers prefer foreign programs, especially those with subtitles, and reject dubbing as irritating (Bens, 1986).

⁹ Clear evidence of indigenization in Taiwan is found in the downward trend of NHK's TV ratings. NHK satellite channels broadcast programs without subtitles, because they are intended for viewing by Japanese people. TV ratings of NHK channels were relatively high in 1994 when no other Japanese channels were available (Su, 1995). Today, however, Taiwanese people watch Japanese programs with subtitles mostly on new Japanese channels run by Taiwanese companies (Ishii and Watanabe, 1997).