Survey and Correlation Analysis of the Learning Motivation and Language Identity of Cambodian Chinese Learners

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Abstract: Language identity is an important area of sociolinguistic research. The development of second language identity is constrained by a combination of motivation, second language level, and cognitive factors. Taking the Royal Academy of Cambodia Confucius Institute as an example, this paper analyses the correlation between Cambodian Chinese learners' linguistic identity and motivation. The results show a positive correlation between integrative learning motivation and language identity, whereas no correlation exists between instrumental learning motivation and language identity.

Keywords: language identity; motivation to learn; second language teaching

1. Introduction

The investigation content of language identity, the mindfulness approach argues that attitudes are the combined product of human emotions, behaviours, and cognitions   Rosenbeng and Hovland (1960) split attitudes into 'affective components', 'behavioural components', and 'cognitive components', otherwise known as the 'ABC model of attitudes'[1], which is regarded as one of the most important theoretical frameworks for examining language attitudes. Wang Ling (2009) proposed that language identity can be found through the study of language attitudes[2], Chen Mo (2018) argued that it refers specifically to the process of recognition and acknowledgement of a language by an individual or a group, which can be reflected by the scope and frequency of language use[3]. Following the teleological framework, this paper combines Chen Mo's (2018) and Wang Ling's (2009) views and examines the Chinese language identity situation of language speakers in terms of their cognition, attitude, and use of language.

Motivation, as an important concept in psychology, explains human behaviour and thoughts (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008)[4]. According to Harmer (2011: 98), fundamentally, motivation is 'the intrinsic drive that pushes us to do something, to achieve a goal'[5]. Meanwhile, Dörnyei (2005) also points out that motivation is concerned with the direction and scale of human behaviour. Motivation plays a crucial role in language learning. Learning motivation refers to a kind of motivational tendency that triggers and maintains students' learning behaviours and enables them to accomplish certain academic goals. Investigating and studying students' learning motivation can help improve teaching strategies and enhance teaching effectiveness.

Learning motivation can be further classified into instrumental and integrative motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972)[6]. Integrative motivation refers to the intention of learners to communicate or socialise with people from another culture through language learning. A strong link has been found between integrative motivation and success in second language acquisition (Gardner, 1972)[7]. This paper analyses the correlation between Cambodia Chinese language learners' integrative and instrumental motivation and language identity, respectively. It analyses the extent to which different types of learning motivation affect Chinese learners' language identity.

2. Methodology

A quantitative research method was used in the research process. Taking the Confucius Institute of the Royal Cambodian Academy of Sciences as a case study, the survey was conducted after questionnaire design, release, recovery, statistics, and collation. Then SPSSAU data analysis software was used to conduct correlation analysis on the degree of Chinese language identity of 201 survey respondents to analyse the correlation between different kinds of motivation and language identity.

Questionnaire statements about cognition, affective attitudes, and behaviours were set as 'completely disagree', 'relatively disagree', 'uncertain', 'relatively agree', 'completely agree', 'relatively agree', and 'completely agree'. The response options of 'agree' and 'completely agree' were set respectively, and the scores of the options are 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5; higher scores indicate a higher degree of identity.

3. Results of the survey on linguistic identity

Linguistic identity was investigated from the three dimensions of language cognition, affective attitude, and language behaviour, and the survey results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Language Identity Questionnaire.

Dimension (math)	Language identity descriptors	Average value	Overall average
Language recognition	9. Chinese is practical.	4.562	4.464
	10. Chinese is an elegant language.	4.537	
	11. Chinese is a precise language.	4.378	
	12. Chinese is a prestigious language.	4.378	
Emotional attitude	13. Chinese is my favourite foreign language.	4.547	4.330
	14. I think Chinese sounds good.	4.368	
	15. I think Chinese is friendly.	4.189	
	16. I think Cambodian who can speak Chinese are excellent.	4.189	
Verbal behaviour	17. I communicate and share in Chinese on online platforms.	2.363	2.433
	18. I communicate with my classmates and friends in Chinese class.	2.706	
	19. I speak Chinese at home with my family or teach them to Chinese.	2.194	
	20. I try to speak Chinese in public.	2.468	

From Table 1, it can be seen that Cambodian learners of Chinese are in more agreement in terms of the cognitive and affective components, with a total mean of agreement of 4.464 and 4.330, respectively, than in terms of the behavioural component, with a total mean of 2.433. This may be related to the fact that the current students of the Royal Academy of Cambodia Confucius Institute are mostly at the beginner level.

4. Results of the study motivation survey

This study also investigates the motivation of Cambodian Chinese learners to learn Chinese, and examines the relationship between different types of motivation and the language identity of Chinese learners. The results of the study motivation survey are as follows.

Table 2: Study Motivation Survey

Motivation	Number of students	Proportion in the total sample	Type of motivation
A. Parental requirements	12	5.97%	Instrumental motivation
B. Finding a good job	102	50.75%	
C. Travelling or studying in China	89	44.28%	
D. Doing business with the Chinese	71	35.32%	
H. Belief that China is becoming more important in the world	52	25.87%	
E. Finds the Chinese language interesting	82	40.8%	Integrative motivation
F. Likes China	77	38.31%	
G. Wants to learn more about Chinese culture and customs	90	44.78%	
I. Other Students' answers	3	1.49%	

Table 2 shows the proportion of the total population of students who were motivated to learn

Chinese for the following reasons: 102 students (50.75%) wanted to find a good job; 90 (44.78%) wanted to learn more about China's culture and customs; 89 (44.28%) wanted to travel to or study in China; 82 (40.8%) found the Chinese language very interesting; 71 (35.32%) hoped it would help them do business with Chinese people; 77 (38.31%) liked China; 52 (25.87%) believe that China is becoming more important in the world; and 12 (5.97%) answered that their parents required them to learn Chinese. Only three students chose the others.

5. Correlation between integrative learning motivation and Chinese language identity

First, the relationship between integrative type learning motives and Chinese language cognition was analysed. One integrative type learning motivation was equivalent to 1 point. Table 3 shows the results of the correlation analysis between respondents' integration-based motivation scores and their degree of agreement with the four statements on language cognition. Pearson's correlation coefficient is used to express the strength of the correlation.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation - Standard Format

	Correlation coefficients between integration-based motivation scores and level of identification
9. Chinese is a practical language.	0.215**
10. Chinese is an elegant language.	0.220**
11. Chinese is a precise language	0.198**
12. Chinese is a prestigious language.	0.051
* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$	

As can be seen from Table 3, the correlation analysis is used to study the correlation between the respondents' integration motivation scores and the four descriptors of identity, namely, 'Chinese is practical', 'Chinese is an elegant language', 'Chinese is a precise language', 'Chinese is a prestigious language', and 'Chinese is a good language'.

There was a significant positive correlation of respondents' integrative motivation score with 'Chinese is a practical language' (0.215), 'Chinese is an elegant language' (0.220), and 'Chinese is a precise language' (0.198), which were all significant at the 0.01 level. The correlation coefficient between the integrative motivation score and 'Chinese is a prestigious language' was 0.051, which is close to 0, and the p-value was 0.475>0.05, indicating no correlation. These results show that the level of the respondents' integrative motivation scores did not affect the degree of their agreement with the statement 'Chinese is a prestigious language', but it was positively correlated with the other three descriptions. The more the respondents chose integrative motivation, the more they agreed with the other three statements on language perception. This suggests that the stronger the motivation of the Chinese learners, the higher their identity of Chinese language cognition.

Second, the relationship between integrative motivation and Chinese affective attitudes was analysed. Table 3 shows the results of the correlation analysis between the respondents' scores on integrative learning motivation and their degree of agreement with the four items on language affective attitudes. Pearson's correlation coefficient is used to indicate the strength of the correlation.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation - Standard Format

	Integrative Motivation Score
13. Chinese is my favourite foreign language.	0.239**
14. I think Chinese sounds good.	0.265**
15. I think Chinese is friendly.	0.207**
16. I think people who speak Chinese are excellent.	0.224**
* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$	

As shown in Table 4, correlation analyses were conducted to investigate the correlations between the integrative motivation score and the following four items: 'Chinese is my favourite foreign language', 'I think Chinese sounds good', 'I think Chinese is friendly', and 'I think people who speak Chinese are excellent.

The results show a positive correlation between the level of the respondents' integrative motivation scores and their degree of agreement with the four items on language affective attitudes. The more integrative motivation was selected, the more respondents agreed with the four statements. Specifically, there was a significant positive relationship between respondents' integrative motivation score and 'Chinese is my favourite foreign language' (0.239), 'I think Chinese sounds good' (0.265), 'I think Chinese is friendly' (0.207), and 'I think people who speak Chinese are excellent' (0.224), which all showed a 0.01 level of significance. Thus, the stronger the integrative motivation of Chinese language

learners, the higher their Chinese language identity in terms of affective attitudes.

Third, the relationship between integrative learning motivation and verbal behaviour was analysed. Correlation analysis was performed between the respondents' integrative motivation scores and the frequency of verbal behaviours. Pearson's correlation coefficient is used to indicate the strength of the correlation.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation - Standard Format

	Integrative Motivation Score
17. I communicate and share in Chinese on online platforms.	0.148*
18. I communicate with my classmates and friends in Chinese after class.	0.224**
19. I can speak Chinese at home with my family or teach them to speak Chinese.	0.161*
20. I will try to speak Chinese in public.	0.183**
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01	

As can be seen from Table 5, correlation analysis was used to study the correlation between the integrative motivation score and between the integrative motivation score and the four items of 'I communicate and share in Chinese on online platforms', 'I use Chinese to communicate with my classmates and friends after class', 'I will speak Chinese at home with my family or teach my family to speak Chinese', and 'I will try to speak Chinese in public'.

The results show that the level of respondents' integrative motivation scores was positively correlated with the frequency of all four linguistic behaviours, and the more integrative type motivation was chosen, the higher the frequency of linguistic behaviours. Specifically, there was a positive correlation between the integrative motivation score and 'I communicate and share in Chinese on online platforms' (0.148) as well as 'I can speak Chinese at home or with my family or teach them to speak Chinese' (0.161), which both showed a 0.05 level of significance. Respondents' integrative motivation score was also significantly positively correlated with 'I communicate with my classmates and friends in Chinese after class' (0.224) and 'I will try to speak Chinese in public' (0.183), which both showed a 0.01 level of significance. These findings indicate that the stronger the integration-type motivation of Chinese learners, the higher the degree of their identification with the Chinese language in terms of language behaviours.

6. Correlation between instrumental learning motivation and Chinese identity

A correlation analysis was performed between the respondents' instrumental motivation scores with their degree of agreement with the 12 descriptions pertaining to the three parts of language identification (i.e., language cognition, language affective attitude, and language behaviour) (Table 6). One type of instrumental motivation was equivalent to 1 point.

Table 6: Pearson Correlation - Standard Format

	Instrumental Motivation Score
9. Chinese is practical.	0.058
10. Chinese is an elegant language.	0.054
11. Chinese is a precise language	-0.029
12. Chinese is a prestigious language.	-0.044
13. Chinese is my favourite foreign language.	0.010
14. I think Chinese sounds good.	0.025
15. I think Chinese is friendly.	0.010
16. I think people who speak Chinese are excellent.	0.089
17. I communicate and share in Chinese on online platforms.	0.073
18. I communicate with my classmates and friends in Chinese after class.	0.006
19. I can speak Chinese at home with my family or teach them to speak Chinese.	0.007
20. I will try to speak Chinese in public.	0.047
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01	

The results show no correlation between respondents' level of instrumental motivation scores and their degree of identification with the 12 descriptions of language identification. These findings indicate that the strength of Chinese learners' instrumental motivation did not affect their degree of identification with the Chinese language.

7. Summary

Chinese learners' integrative motivation was positively correlated with their linguistic cognition, affective attitudes, and language behaviours. The stronger the integrative motivation, the higher the degree of the Chinese language identity of learners in Cambodia. Chinese learners' instrumental motivation showed no correlation with their linguistic identity, and the strength of instrumental motivation had no effect on their linguistic identity.

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