

A Study on the Correlation between Mother Tongue Cultural Identity and Chinese Language Learning Motivation among Filipino Chinese Adolescents and Teaching Suggestions

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Abstract

Against the dual backdrop of multicultural integration and the policy of Filipino Chinese schools, the fifth generation of Chinese youth are facing the dilemma of fragmented cultural identity and weakened motivation for learning Mandarin. This study uses socio-cultural theory and Gardner's second language motivation theory as frameworks, and employs questionnaire survey and in-depth interview methods to conduct empirical research on 326 Chinese adolescents aged 12-18 from four Chinese schools in Manila and Cebu, Philippines. By exploring the intrinsic relationship between mother tongue cultural identity (cognitive identity, emotional identity, behavioral identity) and Chinese language learning motivation (integrative motivation, instrumental motivation), it was found that Chinese adolescents maintain moderate mother tongue cultural identity while politically identifying with the Philippines; The dimension of emotional identity has the strongest predictive power for integrative motivation ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$); The instrumental motivation is significantly influenced by the interaction between cognitive identity and social environment; The inheritance of family culture and the teaching of Chinese school culture have a mediating effect on motivation enhancement. The research conclusion provides theoretical support and practical path for optimizing the Chinese language teaching strategy in the Philippines and constructing a cultural identity oriented teaching system.

Keywords

Filipino Chinese teenagers; Mother tongue cultural identity; Motivation for learning Mandarin; Second language acquisition; cultural heritage

1. Introduction

1.1. Research background

As one of the Southeast Asian countries with the deepest integration of Chinese, the Philippines has a unique cultural identity paradigm with over 90% of its Chinese

population consisting of three generations or more of Chinese descendants. Most of them share the same ancestral roots in Fujian, accounting for 96% of the total population. After the Philippines implemented the policy of Sinicization in Chinese schools in 1975, Chinese language classes were reduced to 10 hours per week, which led to a crisis of "language gap" among the new generation of Chinese. 54.1% of teenagers used Tagalog as their main language of communication, while only 25.3% used Hokkien. The usage rate of pure Mandarin has been declining. However, with the wave of globalization and the impact of mainstream local culture, Chinese American teenagers exhibit a "cultural duality". Although they are Filipino citizens politically, they still have the imprint of Chinese culture from their ancestors in cultural psychology.

Mandarin is the core carrier of Chinese culture, and the process of learning Mandarin is a process of cultural identity. Short term teaching projects such as "Chinese Culture Paradise" have shown that linking language learning with cultural cultivation can significantly enhance the participation enthusiasm of Chinese students. However, there is a lack of systematic empirical exploration in academia regarding the relationship between the two. The main contradiction in current Chinese language education in the Philippines is how to use the cultural genes of Chinese youth to stimulate their learning motivation and solve the problem of "what is learned in the classroom but not used in daily life". Therefore, studying the intrinsic connection between mother tongue cultural identity and motivation for learning Mandarin has strong timeliness.

1.2. Research significance

Theoretical significance: Breaking through the traditional "language ontology orientation" of second language motivation research, shaping an analytical framework of "cultural identity motivation acquisition outcomes", and enriching cross-cultural research on language education for overseas Chinese. Applying Gardner's motivation theory to the multicultural situation in the Philippines, examining the different impacts of cultural identity dimensions on different types of motivation, and providing new evidence for the cross-cultural applicability of the theory.

Practical significance: To accurately identify cultural factors that affect Chinese language learning among Chinese adolescents, and provide practical basis for curriculum improvement in Chinese schools. Provide targeted intervention measures for the weak areas of cultural identity, in order to address practical challenges such as "weak motivation intensity" and "lack of family support", and promote the transformation of Chinese language education from "knowledge transmission" to "cultural inheritance".

1.3. Research ideas and methods

The research approach is to first sort through literature to understand the core

concepts, and then construct a structural framework of "Three Dimensions of Mother Tongue Cultural Identity - Two Types of Chinese Language Learning Motivation"; Then collect all the quantitative information and use SPSS 26.0 for correlation testing and regression analysis; Finally, when combined with the results of in-depth interviews, the phrase 'quantity proves quality' can be obtained.

Research Methods:

Questionnaire survey method: Referring to the "Overseas Chinese Cultural Identity Scale" and the Gardner Attitude/Motivation Measurement Scale, a questionnaire consisting of 42 questions was developed. Cognitive identity questions included "Understanding the connotation of traditional Chinese cultural festivals", emotional identity questions included "Feeling close to traditional Chinese art", behavioral identity questions included "Actively participating in Chinese community activities", integrative motivation questions included "Learning Mandarin to understand family history", and instrumental motivation questions included "Learning Mandarin for career development". The reliability coefficients Cronbach's alpha were all greater than 0.78.

In depth interview method: Select 20 people from different grades and motivation levels, including 5 senior Chinese language teachers, and use purposive sampling method to conduct semi-structured interviews with the above-mentioned individuals on topics such as "family culture inheritance", "classroom culture teaching", "motivation change experience", etc., in order to obtain qualitative materials.

Data analysis method: Use descriptive statistics to display sample characteristics, conduct Pearson correlation analysis to check variable connections, and use multiple linear regression models to analyze the predictive effect of cultural identity on motivation.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Core Concepts

Native language cultural identity of Filipino Chinese adolescents: refers to the comprehensive psychological state of Filipino Chinese adolescents (12-18 years old) in terms of understanding, emotional attachment, and behavioral performance towards Chinese culture in an environment where multiple cultures coexist. Based on the particularity of Filipino Chinese, it can be operationalized into three aspects: cognitive identity (how much history, values, and language rules are known), emotional identity (to what extent cultural symbols and traditional customs are liked), and behavioral identity (the number of times cultural norms are practiced in daily life). The three are interrelated and progress layer by layer.

Chinese language learning motivation: Following Gardner's definition, Chinese language learning motivation is the sum of the intensity of effort, desire, and attitude towards Chinese language clubs that Chinese youth have put in to learn Chinese. In the context of the Philippines, it can be divided into two types: integrative motiva-

tion (driven by a sense of belonging to Chinese culture and a desire to inherit it) and instrumental motivation (driven by practical interests such as academic advancement and employment). The two are not in opposition and can be transformed into each other under certain conditions.

2.2. Research on Mother Tongue Cultural Identity

The research on cultural identity of overseas Chinese has diverse and local characteristics. Most of the new generation of Southeast Asian Chinese have the dual characteristics of "mainstream social identity+ethnic cultural identity". Filipino Chinese have a high degree of integration, and their cultural identity is more "implicit". They fully identify with the Philippines in terms of political identity, but still have a psychological identity as Chinese.

The factors affecting the cultural identity of Filipino Chinese are complex. In terms of history, the policy of Sinicization in Chinese schools has weakened the institutionalized channels for cultural inheritance. In terms of society, globalization and social media have led to cultural dilution. In terms of families, the increase in inter-marriage rates has led to the rupture of traditional family cultural inheritance. Zhang Shifang et al. (2009) found that families and Chinese communities are carriers of maintaining cultural identity, but intergenerational transitions affect their influence. In recent years, Filipino groups have attempted to use new media to create

2.3. Research on Motivation Related to Chinese Language Learning

In the study of second language learning motivation from "single factor" to "multi-dimensional system", Gardner's inclusion based and instrumental motivation dichotomy is still his main motivation framework. According to the survey results of Chinese schools in the Philippines, overall, students have relatively low motivation. The motivation level of Chinese students is much higher than that of non Chinese students, and the longer the learning time, the higher the motivation level.

Existing research has identified the main influencing factors: from a teaching perspective, the fun of classroom teaching and the degree of cultural integration will affect the desire to learn; From a family perspective, parental encouragement and cultural influence are very important; From a social perspective, the recognition of the practical value of Mandarin will affect the emergence of instrumental motivation. However, most existing research has only studied a single influencing factor and has not revealed the systematic relationship between cultural identity and motivation, nor has it conducted in-depth research on the matching relationship between identity dimensions and motivation types.

2.4. The current research status of the correlation between the two

The correlation between cultural identity and language learning motivation has been widely validated by cross-cultural research, but the conclusions have contex-

tual differences. In the context of Southeast Asia, the practice of combining cultural cultivation with language learning in the "Chinese Culture Paradise" activity can increase the participation motivation of Chinese students, suggesting that cultural identity has a positive predictive effect on learning motivation.

There are two obvious shortcomings in current research: firstly, there is a lack of separate studies on the fifth generation of Filipino Chinese, which cannot reflect the new characteristics brought about by intergenerational succession; Secondly, there is a lack of differentiation in the impact of identity dimensions on different types of motivation, and teaching recommendations lack specificity. But I am filling these gaps in this research institute, attempting to construct a model applicable to the Philippines.

3. Analysis of the Current Status of Mother Tongue Cultural Identity and Chinese Language Learning Motivation among Filipino Chinese Adolescents

3.1. Basic characteristics of the sample

A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed in this survey, and 326 valid questionnaires were collected, with an effective response rate of 93.1%. There were 158 males (48.5%) and 168 females (51.5%) in the sample; 192 junior high school students (58.9%) and 134 high school students (41.1%); 298 students (91.4%) with ancestral roots in Fujian, in line with the regional distribution characteristics of Filipino Chinese; There are 176 people (54.0%) who mainly use Tagalog at home, and 98 people (29.9%) who mix Minnan and Mandarin, which is consistent with the existing survey conclusions.

3.2. Current Status of Mother Tongue Cultural Identity

The structural characteristics of "behavioral identity>cognitive identity" indicate that although Chinese American adolescents have positive emotions towards Chinese culture, their cognitive depth is insufficient and their behavioral practice needs to be strengthened. "data-translate_text=" Overall level: The overall mean of native language cultural identity is 3.21 (5-point scale), which belongs to the moderate level. Among them, the average cognitive identity is 2.98, the average emotional identity is 3.45, and the average behavioral identity is 3.20, showing a structure of emotional identity>behavioral identity>cognitive identity. This indicates that although Chinese teenagers have positive emotions towards Chinese culture, their understanding of Chinese culture is not deep enough, and their ability to take action is not strong enough. " data-is Multiple Paragraphs="false" data-sentence="0"> Overall level: The overall mean of native language cultural identity is 3.21 (5-point scale), which belongs to the moderate level. Among them, the average cognitive identity is 2.98, the average emotional identity is 3.45, and the average behavioral identity is 3.20, showing a structure of emotional identity>behavioral identity>cognitive iden-

tity. This indicates that although Chinese teenagers have positive emotions towards Chinese culture, their understanding of Chinese culture is not deep enough, and their ability to take action is not strong enough.

Dimensional differences: The score for "feeling familiar with family ancestral worship customs" is 3.62, indicating family inheritance, while the score for "understanding the basic connotations of Confucianism" is the lowest (2.57), due to a lack of cultural knowledge transmission. The score for "participating in Spring Festival celebrations" is 3.41, much higher than the score for "reading Chinese books" at 2.89, indicating that cultural behavior is subjective and only stays at the level of festival rituals.

Group differences: The average cognitive identity of high school students (3.24) is much higher than that of middle school students (2.81), $t=3.72$, $p<0.001$. The increase in age and education years deepens cognition; The average emotional identification of students who use Minnan dialect in Jianing Middle School (3.78) is higher than that of those who mainly use Tagalog (3.22), $t=4.15$, $p<0.001$, indicating that language carriers can establish emotions.

3.3. The Current Status of Motivation in Chinese Language Learning

Overall level: The average learning motivation is 3.12, the average integrative motivation is 3.05, and the average instrumental motivation is 3.19, with instrumental motivation having a slight advantage. This is consistent with the characteristic of Filipino Chinese school students who value the role of Chinese language communication but do not actively participate.

Type characteristics: In the instrumental motivation category, the item "Mandarin can help future career development" scored the highest (3.46), indicating a pragmatic tendency, while the item "Mandarin can enhance international communication skills" scored the second highest (3.32), reflecting a global perspective. In the category of integrative motivation, the score for "learning Mandarin smoothly with ancestors" is the highest (3.28), while the score for "learning Mandarin to understand Chinese cultural classics" is the lowest (2.76), indicating that integrative motivation is still limited to family settings.

The mean of group differences in female students' integrative motivation (3.21) is higher than that of male students (2.88), $t=2.94$, $p<0.01$; The average integration motivation of students who have participated in projects such as the "Chinese Culture Paradise" (3.57) is much higher than that of students who have not participated in the project (2.91), $t=5.38$, $p<0.001$, indicating that immersive cultural teaching has motivational stimulation.

4. Correlation analysis between mother tongue cultural identity and motivation for learning Mandarin

4.1. Overall correlation test

Pearson correlation analysis shows (Table 1) that there is a significant positive correlation ($p < 0.01$) between the three dimensions of native language cultural identity and the two types of Chinese language learning motivation. The correlation between emotional identification and integrative motivation is the highest ($r = 0.63$), the correlation between cognitive identification and instrumental motivation is 0.48, and the correlation between behavioral identification and both motivations is moderate ($r = 0.51, 0.49$). This means that all aspects of cultural identity will have a positive impact on learning motivation, and emotional connections play the greatest role in the formation of integration motivation.

Table 1. Correlation Matrix between Mother Tongue Cultural Identity and Chinese Language Learning Motivation

Variable	Cognitive Identity	Affective Identity	Behavioral Identity	Integrative Motivation	Instrumental Motivation
Cognitive Identity	1.00	0.56**	0.53**	0.52**	0.48**
Affective Identity	-	1.00	0.61**	0.63**	0.45**
Behavioral Identity	-	-	1.00	0.51**	0.49**
Integrative Motivation	-	-	-	1.00	0.57**
Instrumental Motivation	-	-	-	-	1.00
Note: * indicates $p < 0.01$, two-tailed test					

4.2. Regression analysis results

In order to further investigate the predictive effect of cultural identity dimensions on learning motivation, integrative motivation and instrumental motivation were used as dependent variables, and demographic variables such as gender, grade, and family language were controlled. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis are as follows:

The predictive model for integrative motivation fits well, $F = 32.76$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.47$. The highest predictive coefficient is for emotional identification prediction ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$), followed by behavioral identification ($\beta = 0.21$, $p < 0.01$), and the only one is for cognitive identification prediction meaningless ($p > 0.05$) $\beta = 0.08$. This indicates that integrative motivation is mainly due to emotional belonging and

behavioral participation, rather than just knowing. During the interview, the student mentioned that "after listening to their grandmother telling stories in Minnan dialect, they suddenly thought that learning Mandarin well would enable them to understand more", which was also an emotional impact.

The predictive model for instrumental motivation has a good fit, ($F=24.38$, $p<0.001$, $R^2=0.36$). The predictive effect of cognitive identity ($\beta=0.29$, $p<0.001$) and social environment interaction term ($\beta=0.23$, $p<0.01$) is good, while the predictive coefficient of emotional identity is relatively small ($\beta=0.15$, $p<0.05$). This indicates that the formation of instrumental motivation depends on both the recognition of the practical value of Mandarin and the influence of the social environment's "Mandarin demand signal". As the teacher said, "When students know that Sino Philippine trade needs Mandarin talents, their enthusiasm for learning increases.

4.3. Supplementary verification of qualitative data

The in-depth interview data further revealed the dynamic process of the correlation between the two:

85% of high motivation students believe that there is a custom of posting couplets during the Spring Festival and worshipping ancestors during the Qingming Festival in their families, while low motivation students mostly answer that their parents rarely talk about Chinese history. This means that the family is the primary field for cultural inheritance, and the directness of the family affects emotional identification, thereby activating integrative motivation.

Classroom cultural teaching adjustment: those who participated in calligraphy and Paper Cuttings culture classes said that "only by doing can we know the Chinese culture, and Chinese learning will be vigorous". In the traditional grammar class, they were roast that "it's boring, and I can hardly persist". This also confirms that behavioral identity enhances motivation and provides direction for teaching reform. The dual impact of identity: "I am Filipino and proud to be Filipino, but I do not want to forget my Chinese roots." If properly guided, this dual identity can become an intrinsic motivation for students to learn Mandarin; On the contrary, it will create a sense of cultural alienation and reduce learning motivation.

5. Conclusion

In terms of the cultural identity of Filipino Chinese adolescents' mother tongue, which is characterized by strong emotions, weak cognition, and moderate behavior, and their learning motivation, a strategic system should be planned from two aspects: cultural teaching and motivation stimulation. In terms of cultural cognition cultivation, we will develop layered teaching materials from the perspective of Filipino Chinese, including "Family Memories and Folklore" for lower grades, "Minnan Wedding Customs, Mid Autumn Festival Customs", "History of Sino Philippine Cultural Exchange" for higher grades, Zheng He's voyages to the West, and the footprints of Fili-

pino Chinese. We will use localized content to enhance cognitive closeness and supplement classroom time with "online micro courses+offline discussions". In terms of strengthening emotional and behavioral identification, we will draw on the immersive approach of the "Chinese Cultural Paradise" and integrate traditional arts such as calligraphy and folk music into the classroom. We will hold "Chinese Family Story Sharing Meetings" every semester to encourage students to tell their family stories in Chinese, create a "classroom family club" linkage mechanism, assign students family tasks such as "teaching their parents to sing Chinese songs", and organize festival activities together with Chinese clubs. Simultaneously implementing different motivational incentives, awakening cultural memory through the creation of family trees for those lacking integrative motivation, and inviting professionals from Chinese and Filipino companies to share their "Chinese Workplace Experience" and "Parent Culture Workshops" for those with an advantage in instrumental motivation, to strengthen family support and form a cycle of "using culture to promote language and language to strengthen culture".

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