

The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational & Social Sciences (EPESS), 2022

Volume 25, Pages 1-8

IConSoS 2022: International Conference on Social Science Studies

Relationship between Motivation and Listening Achievement in Learning Chinese as Second Language in Malaysia

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Abstract: Motivation is a major factor in the success or failure of students in learning second language. Low motivation will affect language learning. Therefore, this study will assess the motivation towards subject of Chinese as Second Language in national primary school among Year 4 students as well as examine the relationship between Second Language Motivational Self-System (L2MSS) and listening skills achievement. The instruments used to analyze motivation are Listening Achievement Test (UPM) and L2MSS Questionnaire which are divided into 3 components, namely Ideal Second Language Self (IL2S), Ought to Second Language Self (OL2S) and Second Language Learning Experience (L2LE). A simple random sampling method involving 48 participants was randomly selected in this study. The results of the study showed that the study participants had a significant relationship of IL2S component with listening skills achievement. Based on the findings of the study, a discussion on the possible contributing factors is presented along with the implications of the results of this study in the field of motivational studies. Institutions and educators need to plan curricula, syllabi and teaching methodologies accordingly to maintain and strengthen motivation with listening achievement in learning.

Keywords: Chinese as Second Language, Listening Achievement, Motivation

Introduction

In the last 15 years, the importance of learning Chinese as a second language (CSL) has become increasingly popular and attracted increasing attention within and outside China (Gong et al., 2020). Today, Chinese language obtained the most speakers in the world (Wang, 2016). Nearly 100 million people (about 16% of the world's population) speak using Chinese language (source: quoted from China News Service (Cai, 2014). Therefore, learning CSL is growing rapidly in the world (Gong et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020), a tendency to learn CSL in Malaysia is also increasing. The subjects of Chinese, Tamil, Arabic and other mother tongues such as Iban, Semai Language and Kadazandusun Language are offered as additional subjects to non-native learners (Chuah et al., 2020). Thus, National Primary Chinese Language (Bahasa Cina Sekolah Kebangsaan, *BCSK*) as additional subjects are offered in most national schools in mastering the student's language in Malaysia. This will help non-native speakers to strengthen access and opportunities to learn languages other than their mother tongue. This is in line with the Malaysian Education Blueprint (Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia, *PPPM*) 2013-2025 which was launched to ensure all students from all ethnic groups and communities to learn at

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least three languages to enable them to collaborate and communicate effectively with friends among Malaysians and other countries in today's global world.

Literature Reviews

Achievement in Listening Skills

York et al., (2015) define achievement operationally through a test based on teacher assessment in a test. In other words, achievement is usually measured through examination results where students are tested for each subject. Academic performance will be negatively affected by low academic engagement, limited motivation, and passive behavioral behaviors (Carter et al., 2011). Therefore, academic achievement is one of the most important components in the education system. Good academic achievement serves as a passport to further studies to a higher level. The study of academic achievement is very important to help educators to identify the situations the develop and grow of students. Therefore, the main function of academic achievement is as a yardstick to the amount of knowledge acquired by a person.

However, various studies (Chen et al., 2021; Asbulah et al., 2018; Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2020; Oh, 2019; Tan et al., 2016; Wei, 2013) have explained that achievement in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills is closely related to an individual's level of motivation in language learning. There are studies revealing that the motivation of students who learn a second language is at a satisfactory level only. This is in line with the findings of Tan et al., 2016. Thus, the underlying B2 learning mechanism has not been fully explored by highly motivated students (Han, 2017) achieving outstanding achievement in listening in order to acquire and generate knowledge more efficiently (Deci et al., 1991) in learning. Thus, most researchers (Chen et al., 2021; Csize'r & Kormos, 2009; Henry, 2010, 2011, 2015; Huang, Hsu, & Chen, 2015; Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2020; Oh, 2019; Palmer, 2005; Siridetkoon & Dewaele, 2018; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009) agreed that motivation is a very important factor in language learning, especially it is very important for a person in mastering skills in a second language. Clearly, motivation has been the focus of empirical researchers in studying theories in the context of second language learning in addition to mother tongue in recent times (Boo et al., 2015). Thus, it can be explained that a student cannot achieve goals in learning a second language if they are not motivated in learning a second language.

Researchers (Chen et al., 2021; Henry, 2010, 2011, 2015; Huang, Hsu, & Chen, 2015; Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2020; Oh, 2019; Siridetkoon & Dewaele, 2018) believe that second or additional language learners will devote sufficient effort to achieve their goals until successful. Therefore, learning goals are important in learning a second or foreign language. Unfortunately, studies show the level of student motivation is not encouraging in learning CSL. Thus, a study on the relationship of motivation with achievement in listening skills is needed for students learning BCSK as an additional language in primary school.

Motivation in Second Language Learning

Motivation is a process that motivates a person to do something. Motivation is seen as an order or systematic steps to influence an individual in carrying out a task (Abdullah et al., 2019). Thus, research on motivation began to be a highly controversial issue beginning 50 years ago. Since the introduction of motivation by (Gardner & Lambert, 1959), motivational research on second language has undergone many changes. The development of motivation in second language learning begins with the social psychological period (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Gardner, 1979), subsequent research has changed to the cognitive-situated period (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991), oriented period process (process-oriented period) (Dörnyei & Otto, 1998; Williams & Burden, 1997) and to the socio-dynamic period (Dörnyei, 2005, 2010). The last motivation theory proposed by Dörnyei (2009) in second language is the Second Language Motivational Self System (L2MSS) to date. The Second Language Motivational Self-System (L2MSS) is used to study second language learning. This theory is based on possible theories and theories of the future of the self in the field of psychology. This theory includes three main components, namely Ideal Second Language Self (IL2S), Ought Second Language Self (OL2S) and Second Language Learning Experience (L2LE). The next section will discuss in more detail the developments in second language learning motivation.

L2MSS consists of three components, namely IL2S, OL2S and L2LE which are strongly influenced by the self - concept used in psychology (Higgins, 1987). The emphasis of the IL2S component in L2MSS is a B2 specific aspect of one's self -ideal. If one wants to speak in a second language, then IL2S will reduce the contradiction between the real self and the ideal. The OL2S component is that a person believes should have a responsible

attitude, duty, multi -tasking to avoid the possibility of negative outcomes. Whereas, this L2LE component corresponds to Higgins (1987) and Rajab et al (2012) i.e. self and more extrinsic instrumental motifs. This L2LE is closely related from the 'executive' motive to the learning environment and experience (e.g., teacher, curriculum, peer group, experience).

Currently, researchers are more focused on L2MSS where they measure student motivation and achievement. However, there is still a lack of studies that investigate the motivation of Chinese language learning from the point of view of L2MSS. Therefore, this study attempts to provide a description of listening skills from the point of view of L2MSS among students in BCSK learning. From the introductory statement and problem statement above, the researcher will conduct this study by assessing the upward motivation of students in BCSK learning.

Research Objective

The researcher determined several objectives of this study. The objectives determined by the researcher are as follows:

- 1. Identify the achievement of listening skills and the level of motivation among primary school students in learning BCSK.
- Identify the relationship between each component of L2MSS with the achievement of listening skills 2. among primary school students in learning BCSK.

Methodology

Research Design

This study uses quantitative data collection methods. This study uses two types of research instruments, namely the L2MSS Questionnaire and the Listening Assessment Test (UPM). The L2MSS questionnaire contained a five -point Likert scale consisting of 18 items, of which 6 items were associated with IL2S, another 6 with OL2S, and another 6 with L2LE as an instrument. The items of this questionnaire were mostly adapted from Taguchi et al. (2009). Taguchi et al. (2009) used six scales namely from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Since most local respondents are more accustomed to answering questionnaires that use five scales, the L2MSS Questionnaire will use five scales namely Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree in this questionnaire. This adjustment was made because primary school students may be more familiar with the five -scale questionnaire items compared to the six -scale questionnaire items like the original questionnaire. Prior to distributing the L2MSS Questionnaire, the English version was translated into Bahasa Malaysia and the language used was appropriate to the level of the students. In addition, the Listening Assessment Test (UPM) instrument was also used in this study.

Moreover, the sampling technique used in this study is simple sampling. With this, the study sample involved is 48 Year 4 students from six national schools. The participants meet the characteristics required in this study who have received education under BCSK subjects in national primary schools from Year 1 to Year 3. Table 1 shows the demographics of the participants involved in this study.

	ics by study participants	
Demographics	Frequency (n=48)	Percentage
		(%)
Gender		
Male	23	47.92
Female	25	52.08
Age		
9	-	-
10	48	100
11	-	-
Races		
Malay	44	91.67
Chinese	1	0.02
India	2	0.042
Other	1	0.02

Table 1. Demographics by study participants involved in the study

Data Analysis

Data obtained and processed from the L2MSS and UPM Questionnaires were included in SPSS 23.0. Part A of the L2MSS Questionnaire is a form of participant background information and feedback on the questionnaire items. Background information is about gender, last year's BCSK results and age. Participants' responses to the questionnaire items were calculated in the form of five scales where Strongly Agree equals five points, Agree equals four points. No opinion equals three points. Disagree equals two points, and finally Strongly Disagree equals one eyes. Meanwhile, UPM contains 20 questions taken from instructional materials used by students in classes. UPM Instrument and L2MSS Questionnaire were used to answer research questions 1 and 2.

Research Objective 1: Achievement of listening skills and the level of motivation among primary school students in learning BCSK.

Based on Table 1 shows the analysis of UPM, found that the level of mastery of listening skills is (mean = 8.58, SD = 2.923) which is at a high level. Meanwhile, Table 1 also shows the analysis of L2MSS, found that the level of mastery of listening skills is (mean = 8.58, SD = 2.923) which is at a high level. There are three components that contribute to the overall mean of second language learning motivation including IL2S, OL2S and L2LE. Among the three components of L2MSS, IL2S ranked highest (M = 3.93, SD = .687), L2LE was in second place (M = 3.18, SD = .862), and OL2S was in third place (M = 3.05, SD = .98). The IL2S mean score is the highest among the L2MSS components, while the OL2S mean score is the lowest among the L2MSS components and this is similar to the Dornyei & Chan (2013) study.

Table 2. Levels of UPM and L2MSS for BCSK students			
	Mean	SD	
UPM	8.58	2.923	
L2MSS			
IL2S component	3.93	.687	
OL2S component	3.18	.862	
L2LE component	3.05	.978	

Research Objective 2: Relationship between each component of L2MSS with the achievement of listening skills among primary school students in learning BCSK.

To obtain the relationship between UPM and L2MSS scores, Pearson (r) correlation was used. This formula was performed to look at the relationship between student scores and each component of L2MSS, namely IL2S, OL2S and L2LE. Finally, to see to what extent each component of L2MSS students can predict achievement in listening skills. Table 2 shows Guilford's guidelines (from Rodziah, 2004) in determining the strength of a relationship that is very weak (r <0.20), followed by a weak relationship (r = 0.20 to 0.40), moderate (r = 0.40 to 0.70), strong (r = 0.70 to 0.90) and very strong (r < 0.09).

Table 2.	Value of the	correlation	coefficient	with the s	strength o	of the relationship	D

Correlation coefficient, r	Strength of the relationship
Less than 0.20	Very weak
0.20-0.40	Weak
0.40-0.70	Average
0.70-0.90	Strong
More than 0.90	Very strong
Source: Rodziah 2004	

Source: Rodziah, 2004

		UPM	IL2S
UPM	Pearson Correlation	1	.420
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.040
	Ν	48	48
IL2S	Pearson Correlation	.420	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.040	
	Ν	48	48

Table 3 shows the correlation between UPM's achievement in BCSK learning with the IL2S component. Based on Guilford guidelines (Table 2), the relationship between L2MSS motivation with listening skills achievement was moderate [r (48) = 0.42] and showed significant (p <.05) between listening skills achievement with IL2S component level in L2MSS motivation. This indicates a significant relationship between the level of IL2S component with the achievement of listening skills. Next, Table 4 shows the correlation between UPM's achievement in BCSK learning with the OL2S component. Based on Guilford guidelines (Table 2), the relationship between L2MSS motivation and BCSK listening skills achievement was weak [r (48) = 0.110] and insignificant (p <.456) between listening skills achievement and OL2S component levels in L2MSS motivation. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between the level of OL2S component in L2MSS motivation with the achievement of listening skills.

Table 4. Corre	lation between UPWI's achiev	ement and OL.	25 component in L2MSS
		UPM	OL2S
UPM	Pearson Correlation	1	.110
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.456
	Ν	48	48
OL2S	Pearson Correlation	.110	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.456	
	N	48	48

Table 4 Correlation between UPM's achievement and OL 2S component in L 2MSS

Furthermore, Table 5 shows the correlation between UPM's achievement in learning with the L2LE component. Based on Guilford guidelines (Table 2), the relationship between L2MSS motivation with listening skills achievement was weak [r (48) = 0.137] and insignificant (p <.355) between listening skills achievement with L2LE component levels in L2MSS motivation. The null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between the level of L2LE component in L2MSS motivation with listening skills achievement.

Table 5. Correlation between UPM's achievement and L2LE component in L2MSS

		UPM	L2LE
UPM	Pearson Correlation	1	.137
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.355
	Ν	48	48
L2LE	Pearson Correlation	.137	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.355	
	N	48	48

Discussion

The IL2S component was shown to have a significant relationship with listening skills in BCSK learning. These findings are supported by the study of Rahman & Sahayu (2020) who explain motivation as an important element in producing perfect learning. Most of the study participants were of the opinion that IL2S motivation had a greater impact on the way of learning and achievement of UPM. Garavalia & Gredler (2002) state that students who have effective goals, use appropriate learning strategies and assess learning needs, tend to achieve higher levels than other students. The IL2S component in L2MSS motivation has a significant relationship with student academic achievement. A significant positive relationship between these two variables is supported by the findings from (Halim et al., 2017) who found motivation to be important for academic achievement. Furthermore, the correlation between UPM and IL2S may be associated with the young people of the study participants being too idealistic towards IL2S. Instead of describing the realistic possibilities of themselves in the future, study participants on IL2S may reflect their hopes and positive attitudes toward their future.

However, the OL2S component and the L2LE component showed no significant relationship with listening skills in BCSK learning. This may be due to the weak learning drive in the student. The findings of this study are contrary to Lamb (2012) who showed that L2LE is the most significant component by high school students from Indonesia in language learning. This is also supported by (Tan et al., 2016) who proved that university students who are taking Mandarin courses have a significant correlation between achievement and L2LE. However, the age of the study participants should also be taken into account. This may be due to the young age of the study participants, so this causes them to lack the desire to further their studies to university. This is supported by Dunn and Dunn (1978) who stated that motivation is built when there is an internal urge in students to participate in learning, especially listening skills to BCSK learning, the findings of the study showed that each study participant had a different level of motivation and was at a moderate level of motivation. The results also found that there is a significant relationship between IL2S and UPM achievement, but there is no significant relationship between OL2S and L2LE with UPM achievement. Thus, this study hopes that the parties involved as well as each individual can play their respective roles in improving excellence in achievement, especially in CSL learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Kannan (2019) is of the view that listening is the first step in language learning, whether the child's mother tongue or an additional language before the child is able to speak, read or write. Therefore, listening skills become key skills in human interaction (Ismail et al., 2011). This is in line with (Vandergrift, 2008) that listening is the most important skill for second/foreign language learning, especially in the early stages. Motivation is seen to have its own importance in the life of each individual and even in every layer of society and is often associated with the purpose of the student himself and his own interest in a subject or activity.

Scientific Ethics Declaration

The authors declare that the scientific ethical and legal responsibility of this article published in EPESS journal belongs to the authors.

Acknowledgements

This article was presented as an oral presentation at the International Conference on Social Science Studies (<u>www.iconsos.net</u>) conference held in Istanbul/Turkey on August 25-28, 2022

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To cite this article:

Chuah, K.P, Ngoi, G.P. & Foo, A.P. (2022). Relationship between motivation and listening achievement in learning Chinese as second language in Malaysia. *The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational & Social Sciences* (*EPESS*), 25, 1-8.