2011

The Impact of an Online Learning Community Project on University Chinese as a Foreign Language Students' Motivation

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by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Secondary Education
College of Education
and
Department of World Languages
College of Arts & Sciences
University of South Florida

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Date of Approval
March 10, 2011

Keywords: Chinese as a foreign language, motivation, online learning community, L2 motivational self system, online learning experience

DEDICATION

To my husband Lanxi, my son Justin,
and my parents Shiwu Cai and Wanxiu Li

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank a number of people without whom I would never have been able to finish this dissertation. First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my major professor, Dr. Wei Zhu, for constantly providing guidance, support, and encouragement from the preliminary to the concluding stages of the dissertation. I truly appreciated her clear feedback and unrelenting patience during times when the study seemed to be stuck. Her guidance and encouragement made me persevere and pull the study out of the dark tunnel. My heartfelt thanks also go to other members on my committee. I am very grateful to Dr. Linda Evans for her insightful inputs, never-ending caring, and unwavering support; to Dr. Yi-hsin Chen for sharing his wisdom and expertise in statistics to ensure rigor and quality of the study; to Dr. Victor Peppard for being willing to serve on my committee and inspiring me to consider different angles and perspectives. A special thank you also goes to Dr. James White, who served on my committee at the proposal stage, for his constructive comments and thought-provoking questions.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Eric Shepherd and Professor Xiaomei Zu for allowing me to recruit participants from their classes and being willing to incorporate the research project into the curriculum. My thank you also goes to the students who participated in the study. Their valuable feedback and first-hand experiences provided the sole source of data for this study.

In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to show my sincere appreciation to all the faculty and students in the SLA/IT Ph.D. program, from whom I have received a tremendous amount of support, encouragement, and inspiration. In particular, I would like to thank Dr. Amy Thompson for sharing her expertise in L2 motivation and providing feedback to the preliminary version of the instruments for this study. I am also grateful to Dr. Paul Garcia and Maria Paul who constantly encouraged me along the way. I would also like to thank my cohort members Rebecca Blankenship, Jane Harvey, and Victoria Russell for sharing this academic journey with me, and my friends Darunee Dujsik, Li Jin, Radhika Lothe, and Ho-Ryong Park for their friendship. A special acknowledgement goes to my colleague and good friend Qi Zhang for co-coding the data and providing emotional support. When reflecting on my earlier years in the program, I would also like to extend a special thank you note to Drs. Carrine Feyten and Jeffra Flaitz for guiding me into this interdisciplinary program and inspiring me to take the first steps in this intellectually transformative journey.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband, my parents, and my parents in law, for their love and support. I was able to complete the Ph.D. program while giving birth and taking care of my son largely because I am fortunate to have such a loving and supportive family who has made my doctoral studies a priority in their lives. Without them, I would not have been able to accomplish this. I would also like to thank my son, who is a toddler now, for being a perfect bundle of joy and making my whole world so much brighter.

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ABSTRACT

This study empirically investigated the impact of an online learning community project on university students' motivation in learning Chinese as a foreign language (CFL). A newly-proposed L2 motivation theory - the L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei 2005; 2009) - was used as the theoretical framework for this study. The three aspects of motivation (ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience), as described in this theory, were measured before and after the online project. Specific motivating and demotivating features of the online project were generated from participants' responses. Four individuals with different heritage and technology backgrounds were selected as cases to provide information about their perception of this online project and the possible impact of this project on their motivation.

A concurrent transformative mixed method design was employed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. A pre- and post-test survey and semi-structured interviews served as the main instruments for data collection. Paired t-tests were conducted to identify differences in the participants' pre- and post-scores for the three aspects of motivation. Constant comparative method and double

coding method were used to generate the major themes about the motivating and demotivating features of the online project. A narrative analysis approach was taken to explore how individuals with different backgrounds perceived their experience in this online project and the possible impact of the project on their motivation.

The results indicated that there was a significant difference in L2 learning experience before and after the online project, while there was no significant difference in the other two aspects of motivation (ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self). This finding provided empirical evidence about the different natures of the three motivational aspects. That is, ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self were built up over a long period of time and thus relatively stable, while L2 learning experience was more dynamic and fluid and had a tendency to change even within a relatively short period of time. Regarding the motivating and demotivating features, the results suggested that the most motivating features of this online project were the access to alternative learning resources and tools and opportunities to connect to a larger community of Chinese learners, while the demotivating features were mostly related to the technology barrier and the time and effort it took to complete this project. Furthermore, findings from the interviews with the selected individuals implied that regardless of their different heritage and technology backgrounds, most of them had a positive experience of this online project. However, the impact of this project on their motivation was limited.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In recent years, the enrollment for Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) has increased significantly in higher education in the U.S. According to a survey by the Modern Language Association (2006), the enrollment in Fall 2006 for Chinese had increased 51% since 2002 and accounted for 3.3% of all language enrollment. The university where the present study was conducted was also experiencing a similar enrollment increase in CFL. In Fall 2007, there were two sections of Chinese I and one section of Chinese III, with 15 students or so in each section, while in Fall 2009, there were three sections of Chinese I and two sections of Chinese III, with more than 20 students on the average in each section. The rapidly increasing enrollment raised the question about what factors had motivated these students to choose to enroll in the Chinese class.

Another fact about the Chinese program at this university was that even though recently there was a curriculum shift from the previous grammar translation teaching method to the current performance-based method, the program remained largely traditional in terms of technology integration. For example, the most technology-relevant component in Chinese II, from which the participants of the

study came, was a DVD that accompanies the textbook. Students were encouraged to self study the materials on the DVD after class.

However, with the easy access of Internet and other technologies, there is a need to integrate more Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) components into foreign language programs. First, students of this generation grow up with computer technologies, and introducing technologies to the language class will provide them an alternative method of studying a foreign language in addition to the face-to-face method. Some of them, if not most, may welcome the integration of technology into the curriculum. Second, since Chinese is a less commonly taught language (LCTL) in the United States, opportunities are extremely limited for students to interact with native speakers as well as other learners of Chinese, other than their instructor and classmates, in their real-life situation. However, the existence of online CFL learning communities provides ample opportunities for students to meet native speakers and other learners of Chinese. A multitude of authentic materials can be easily accessed on these online communities. Furthermore, technologies have the potential to increase students' motivation (Ushida, 2005; Warschauer, 1996).

Given these reasons, the researcher decided to investigate how the integration of technology through an online learning community project affected students' motivation and how they perceived the new online experience in their CFL classes.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

Motivation is a critical factor in learning a second/foreign language (L2/FL) and has been extensively investigated in the past half century. However, due to the extremely low enrollment of CFL and thus low public interest in CFL learning in the past, a very limited amount of motivation research has been done in the area of CFL, compared with motivation research in other languages such as French and Spanish. Extensive searches of the major databases and major journals in the field by the researcher have only yielded only a few studies. With the increasing enrollment in Chinese, more attention should be paid to motivation in CFL. The present study hopes to contribute to this body of research.

Another trend in the CFL field is the emerging technology integration into the curricula. One widely-recognized potential of technology applications in education in general and in language learning in particular is that it can stimulate students' motivation (e.g. Chapelle & Jamieson, 1986; Kinzie, Sullivan, & Berdel, 1988; Sullivan, 1993; Warschauer, 1996). For example, Warschauer (1996) stated that "the motivating aspects of learning with computers are widely touted" (p. 29). However, the motivational effect of technology in CFL classrooms has remained largely uninvestigated. According to the researcher's extensive search of literature, the only study that has touched upon this topic is Jiang and Ramsay (2005), in which email exchanges between the CFL students and the teachers are found to be rapport-fostering, thus leading to increased motivation. More research is needed in

this area to help us understand how and why a certain CALL component is motivating or demotivating in a specific CFL classroom.

The present study investigated how an online learning community project affected students' motivation and how different individuals with different backgrounds perceived the new online experience. A mixed method research design was employed not only to quantitatively examine the differences in students' motivation before and after the online project but also to qualitatively understand what specific features of the online project impacted students' motivation and how different individuals made sense of their new experience. The findings from the study helped to narrow the gap in the literature and to shed light on the future direction for further studies in this line of inquiry.

In terms of theoretical significance, this study tested the tenets of a new theoretical approach in a very different context from that of the few existing studies. The new theoretical approach adopted in this study is the L2 motivational self system proposed by Dörnyei (2005; 2009). This new approach connects motivation with one's own desire to change from identity as-is to identify to-be (or ideal self or possible self). This new theorization of L2 motivation has grown out of both the advancement in self theory in psychology and the development of motivation research in second language acquisition (SLA). It expands the scope of motivation research in SLA and offers a new lens for researchers to look at L2 motivation from a whole-person perspective. Within this framework, motivation is viewed as a

tripartite construct consisting of three major aspects/components: ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience. Each of these components is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Given that this new theoretical conceptualization came into being quite recently, only a few empirical studies (Al-Shehri, 2009; Csiz ¨ ¦ r & Kormos, 2009; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009) to date have tested the tenets embodied in this approach. Since the new theoretical framework includes the L2 learning experience as a major motivational aspect, it is important to understand how the different learning experiences gained from different contexts (i.e. traditional face-to-face vs. CALL) impact students' motivation. All of the abovementioned few studies have focused on the traditional face-to-face context, and none has tried to investigate motivation in the CALL context. Besides, all of the few existing empirical studies have been carried out in English as foreign/second language settings. There is the need to test the validity and applicability of this theory in the settings of a different target language. In addition, the L2 learning experience component at the level of individual learners has been largely under-explored in the abovementioned studies. How individuals experience the learning in a given specific learning context is worth exploring.

The current study helped to fill this gap in that students' motivation was investigated in the context of an online learning community project and the target language was Chinese. An exploratory investigation of how individuals perceive

their learning experience were carried out. By testing the tenets of the new theoretical approach in a very different setting from the existing studies and further exploring the L2 learning experience component, this study triangulated and added to the findings in the literature and helped to further refine the new theory.

In terms of the significance of the study for classroom practice, the findings about the influence of the online project on students' motivation, especially the qualitative findings about what specific features of the online project were perceived as motivating by students, shed light for CALL practitioners and language teachers to develop better research-based technology applications to motivate students. In addition, the findings about individuals' experience of the online project in relation to their different backgrounds provided information for educators and teachers to make informed decisions when integrating CALL components into classes with a diverse student population.

Research Questions

The present study investigated the impact of an online learning community project on CFL students' motivation based on the L2 motivational self system - a new theoretical approach proposed by Dörnyei (2005; 2009). The three aspects of motivation proposed in this approach (i.e. ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience) were investigated, and the specific features of the online project that students found motivating or demotivating were identified. Possible connections

between individuals' heritage and technology backgrounds and their experience in the online project were also explored.

A concurrent transformative mixed method design (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) with two layers of analysis was adopted in order to provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. One layer of the study consisted of all the participants as a group, and this layer of analysis was to look for general trends in the group. Two research questions (RQs) were investigated at this level, with one being quantitative and the other qualitative. The other layer involved a few individual students selected based on heritage backgrounds and prior technology experience. This layer of analysis focused on how these selected individuals made meaning of the new online experience, thus being qualitative in nature. The RQs for this study were:

RQ 1. Is there any significant difference in students' motivation, as conceived in the L2 motivational self system, before and after the online learning community project?

RQ 1.1. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ideal L2 self before and after the online project?

RQ. 1.2. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ought-to L2 self before and after the online project?

RQ. 1.3. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on L2 learning experience before and after the online project?

RQ 2. What features of the online project do the students find motivating and what features demotivating?

RQ 3. How do the selected individuals from different heritage and technology backgrounds perceive the online project experience and the influence of the project on their motivation?

These research questions were raised in order to capture a comprehensive picture of CFL students' motivation at the different points on the continuum from a macro level down to a micro level. The macro end of the motivation continuum concerned the overall change in motivation of all the participants as a group during the online project, while the micro end focused on the impact of specific features of the online project on individuals. RQ 1 was towards the macro end of this continuum in that the purpose is to identify the general trend in this group, while RQ 2 was somewhere in the middle of the continuum in that it looked for the specific features of the online project that impact students' motivation but still looked at the participants as a group and aimed to identify the group trends. RQ 3 was towards the micro end of the continuum because it focused on the specific individuals and concerned about how they made meaning of the online project given their specific heritage and technology backgrounds.

For RQ1, a survey was used to collect quantitative data from all participants before and after the online project to determine if there was any significant change in each of the three aspects of motivation. For RQ2, an open-ended question in the posttest version of the survey was used to elicit information from all participants to identify the specific motivating or demotivating features of the online community project. For RQ3, profiles for the selected individuals, including journal entries,

online posts, and semi-structured interviews, were created to understand how these individuals with different background factors perceived this online project, and possible connections between background factors and motivation were explored.

Delimitations

The theoretical framework adopted in this study is a new approach to L2 motivation in the field – the L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei, 2005; 2009). It has evolved from the existing approaches and offered the most comprehensive way to systematically investigate L2 motivation. However, as a newly proposed theory, there have been only a few empirical studies conducted to test the tenets in this theoretical framework. Instruments to measure the three components of motivation as conceived in this theory have also been scarce. Especially, for the L2 learning experience component in this motivation theory, there is no existing instrument available, partially due to the fact that this component is "conceptualized at a different level" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29) from the other two components in this theory. Thus, for the current study, the researcher had to create her own items to measure this component of motivation. Even though great efforts have been taken to enhance the construct validity, face validity, and reliability of the items, the external validity of these items still needs to be tested by further studies. However, the findings from the current study can shed light on the directions for future research in this line of inquiry.

Another delimitation of the study is related to the applicable age groups of this new motivation theory. As Dörnyei (2009) pointed out, the clear representation of possible/ideal selves does not emerge before adolescence, and young children notably are not good at considering the ought-to self which are projected by others' and outside expectations. Thus, "the self approach may not be appropriate for pre-secondary students" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 38). Therefore, the findings from the current study, which focuses on university students, are not intended to be generalizable or transferable to younger children.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter One introduces the background of the study, points out the gap in the literature, states the purpose and significance of the study, presents the research questions, and analyzes the delimitations and limitations of the study. Chapter Two reviews the relevant literature in mainstream motivation research in SLA and examines in detail the guiding theoretical framework for this study - L2 motivational self system. Connections between motivation studies and CALL research, including the possible connections between the new motivation theory and community-based online language learning, are discussed. In addition, the few existing studies concerning CFL students' motivation are examined. Chapter Three discusses the research design, the participants, the study setting, the online learning community project, the

instruments, and data collection and analysis procedures. Measures taken to enhance the validity and reliability of quantitative results and the trustworthiness of the qualitative results are also mentioned. Chapter Five presents the results from both the quantitative and qualitative data. Descriptive and inferential statistics of the participants and their scores from the pretest and the posttest of the motivation questionnaire are reported to answer RQ 1. Themes about the motivating and demotivating features of the online project emerged from students' open-ended responses are summarized to answer RQ 2. Detailed information about the four selected individuals from the interviews as well as their journals and online posts are provided, and possible connections between their heritage and technology background and their experience of this online project are discussed to address RQ 3.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the relevant literature. The major approaches to L2 motivation in the past half century are reviewed by examining the key concepts brought forward by each of these approaches and methodologies used in the different lines of inquiry. Then the most recent reconceptualization of L2 motivation, which is used as the guiding framework for the current study, is presented in detail. The need and basis for such a new conceptualization, the three aspects of motivation in this new approach, and existing empirical evidence so far to support the new approach are discussed. Empirical motivation studies in CALL contexts and CFL settings are reviewed separately, and gaps identified in these two areas are used to inform the design of the current study.

Major Approaches to L2 Motivation Research

Research on motivation in SLA has a history of over half a century with Gardner and Lambert's seminal work in late 1950s. Over the past few decades, this social psychological approach, especially the distinction between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation, has been most influential and become classic in the field of L2 motivation research. However, because of the complex and

multifaceted nature of motivation and the limit of this social psychological approach, other alternative approaches to L2 motivation research have also emerged and provided different lenses for researchers in this area to look at the various aspects of motivation.

Dörnyei categorized the different approaches to motivation into four groups (2003a) and then in his later publication (2005) divided the history of motivation research into three phrases. The only difference between the four-group division and the three-phrase division was that in the latter the cognitive psychological approaches were concurrent with the situated approach, so he combined these two into a cognitive-situated period.

However, to the best of the researcher's understanding, the cognitive approaches and the situated approach have come from different theoretical traditions. Thus, to better understand the origin and evolution of the different approaches, the current literature review retains the four categories Dörnyei outlined in his 2003 proposal (Dörnyei, 2003a): (a) the social psychological approach, proposed by Gardner and associates; (b) the cognitive psychological approaches, including self-determination theory, attribution theory, and goal theory; (c) the situated approach, proposed by Dörnyei (1994) based on theories of willingness to communicate and task motivation; and (d) the process-oriented approach, first described in Dörnyei (2001).

These different lines of L2 motivation research together have enriched the body of SLA research and contributed to our understanding of language learning processes and individual differences. In the following, the concepts brought forward by these approaches and methodologies in empirical studies aligned with the different lines of research are examined, and advantages and limitations of each approach are discussed.

The Social Psychological Approach

Gardner and his colleagues initiated motivation research in SLA in late 1950s (e.g. Gardner & Lambert, 1959) in Canada, where the social situation was often characterized as the confrontational coexistence of English and French speech communities. Given the social and cultural milieu, it was not surprising that Gardner and his colleagues mainly focused on the social aspects of motivation in L2 learning. They indicated that foreign language learning, unlike several other school subjects, was heavily affected by socio-cultural factors such as language attitude, cultural stereotypes, and even geopolitical considerations (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Thus, this line of motivation research concerned largely macro-level social-affective, particularly attitudinal, factors, that is, the collective motivational disposition of a certain community as a whole. The specific and immediate situational factors related to a single classroom or a single individual were usually not the concern of the researchers in this line.

In this approach, motivation was conceptualized as a combination of various variables. According to Gardner (1985), motivation was "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language" (p. 10). The most developed part of this complex of motivation in this line of research was the distinction between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation, which, as commented by Crookes and Schmidt (1991), had "influenced virtually all SL-related research in this area" (p. 471). Integrative orientation in this conceptualization referred to the "sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 132), while instrumental motivation usually reflected the interests in the practical benefits and advantages of learning the new language. Between the two aspects of motivation, the integrative motivation was believed by many scholars to be associated with higher achievement in language learning, thus superior to instrumental motivation. Thus, the integrative aspect of motivation stimulated a large number of empirical studies and dominated the L2 motivation research till late 1980s. However, reviews and syntheses of results from empirical studies in this line (e.g. Au, 1988; Gardner, 1985; Oller, 198l) indicated that integrative motivation was not necessarily associated with higher L2 achievement. Oller (1981) suggested that the relationship between integrative motivation and language learning may be "an unstable nonlinear function that varies greatly across individuals, contexts, and

learning tasks" (p. 15). Thus, alternative approaches were needed to capture the complete picture of motivation in L2 acquisition.

Not only did the discrepancy between the theoretical hypothesis and the results from empirical studies call for revisions and alternative approaches, but also terminological difficulties existed in the social psychological approach. The term *integrative* was used at different levels of abstraction. For example, *integrative orientation*, as mentioned above and explicitly defined by Gardner & Lambert (1972), was widely used to stand for *integrative motivation*. However, *orientation* and *motivation*, though related, were not exactly the same. The former referred to "the underlying reasons for studying an L2", while the latter referred to "the directed effort individual learners make to learn the language" (Ellis, 1994, p. 509). In Gardner's later models (1985; 1988), a new term *integrative motive* was introduced as a general umbrella to include: (a) integrative orientation, (b) desire to learn the language, (c) attitudes towards learning, the learning situation, and the people who speak the target language, and (d) effort to learn the language. This expansion of the concept and the breakdown of the concept into sub-measures helped to operationalize the term, but it did not help with the conceptualization of the term *integrative motivation*. The concept itself was still ill-defined. As pointed out by Gardner himself in a later writing, the term *motivation* was "used frequently in the literature, though close inspection will reveal that it has slightly different meanings to many different individuals" (Gardner, 2001, p. 1).

Despite the ambiguity of this concept, a number of empirical studies have been carried out through this approach. Masgoret and Gardner (2003) did a meta-analysis of the important studies in this line of inquiry. Among the 75 studies reviewed, most were large-scale cross-sectional quantitative studies to identify the correlation between L2 achievement and motivation or sub-measures of motivation. The meta-analysis results indicated that the correlations between achievement and overall or general motivation, as measured by the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), were higher than those between achievement and the sub-measures of motivation (e.g. integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, and attitude). Almost all of the studies in this approach took place at a single point in time and used mostly self-reported data on motivation.

It is worth noting that after being tested in various empirical studies by advanced statistical techniques, the AMTB and particularly its sub- measures showed good reliability. As reported in the abovementioned meta-analysis by Masgoret and Gardner (2003), the reliability of the attitudes toward the learning situation component reached 0.93 on the average in the studies reviewed; the reliability of integrativeness had a mean of 0.90; and the reliability of motivation had a mean of 0.92. Most of the items in the AMTB were six- or seven-point Likert scale items, and a minor portion of the items were multiple choice questions.

To summarize, Gardner's social psychological approach to motivation research has contributed to SLA studies in that it has initiated an extensive line of

motivation research in the field to investigate the social factors involved in individuals' language learning processes. Research findings from large-scale cross-sectional studies in this line have provided macro-level insight about motivational patterns of the intercultural communities as a whole. However, studies adopting this approach at large have ignored the micro-level factors such as the specific learning situations which have shaped an individual's motivation. Another disadvantage of this approach is the ambiguity of the concepts involved and its inability to capture all the factors, both macro and micro, that influence L2 motivation. Because of this disadvantage, Dörnyei (2003a) has suggested that scholars seek new conceptualization and interpretations of the concept of motivation. Among these potential new conceptualizations is identification process, in which integrative motivation is viewed as the person's desire to change from identity as-is to identify to-be (or ideal self or possible self). Later, this advocacy, together with other advances in SLA and psychological research, developed into the L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei 2005; 2009), which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

The Cognitive Approaches

During the 1990s, a new line of L2 motivation emerged as a response to the need for a change and expansion of the focus and scope of motivation research in SLA as well as to the advances in cognitive psychology. Quite a few different

cognitive theories were introduced to the field of SLA, including self-determination theory, attribution theory, goal theory, etc. Schumann's (1998) *stimulus appraisal* theory, which was rooted in cognitive neuroscience, also fell into this category, in the researcher's opinion. Because the self-determination theory and the stimulus appraisal theory are most relevant to the L2 motivational self system, which serves as the main theoretical framework for this study, only these two theories are reviewed below.

Douglas Brown and Kimberly Noels are two major proponents of the integration of self-determination theory into L2 motivation research (e.g. Brown, 1994; Noels, 2001; Noels, Pelletier, Cl¨¦ment, & Vallerand, 2000). A systematic and comprehensive review of the self-determination theory itself would be beyond the scope of the current review, but it is worth noting that a key assumption in this theory is that human beings have an innate tendency to explore and master new situations in their environment. Thus, human behaviors are self-determined motivated efforts.

From this approach, a new pair of concepts – *intrinsic motivation* and *extrinsic motivation* – became popular. According to Noels, Pelletier, Cl¨¦ment, and Vallerand (2000), *intrinsic motivation* arises from the inner needs for the activity per se (e.g. the activity is enjoyable to do), while *extrinsic motivation* occurs when carrying out the activity aims at achieving some instrumental end or fulfilling other purposes (e.g. to do the activity is to avoid a punishment). To the researcher, this pair

of concepts on motivation seems to have advantages over the distinction between integrative vs. instrumental motivation for two reasons. Firstly, it has been clearly and consistently defined in the self-determination theory in cognitive psychology and has been applied to analyze the motivational factors in classrooms of not only foreign languages but also other school subjects. Secondly, it helps to explain the failure of the superiority of integrative motivation. The superiority of integrative motivation predicts that the lack of integrative motivation would result in low achievement in L2 learning. However, in some foreign language situations some learners have no integrative motivation but still succeed in learning the language. In these situations, the concept of intrinsic motivation helps to explain that those FL learners, even without the desire to integrate with the target language group, have intrinsic motivation, i.e. they enjoy the process of learning the language per se. This leads to their success.

John Schumann (1998) proposed the *stimulus appraisal* theory rooted in cognitive neuroscience as a different framework for motivation research. In this theory, five dimensions of motivation were identified: (a) novelty (degree of unexpectedness/familiarity), (b) pleasantness, (c) goal/need significance, (d) coping potential (whether the individual expects to be able to cope with the event), and (e) self- and social-image. Later Schumann (2001) further developed this theory to conceptualize learning as *mental forage* for knowledge, which engages the same neural systems as the organisms forage for food.

Even though the terms *intrinsic* and *extrinsic motivation*, *novelty effect*, and *self-* and *social- image* have been quite popular in the literature since their introduction to the field, not many empirical studies have systematically adopted the self-determination theory or the stimulus appraisal theory as the theoretical framework, probably because of the dominance of Gardner's social psychological approach in SLA at that time and the mergence of the application of these two theories (self-determination theory and stimulus appraisal theory) in SLA with the identity and L2 self research in the following years. As Noels noted in the abstract she wrote for the reprint of the article (Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerand, 2000) in Dörnyei (2003a), their study "was the only, or at least one of the very few, empirical investigations of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in this area" (p. 34) at that time. Noels (2001) carried out another study to follow up the first study. These two studies (Noels, 2001; Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerand, 2000) constituted the representative empirical studies in this line of research. Similar to those adopting the social psychonological approach, these two studies were quantitative correlational studies, which explored the relationship between subtypes of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and various orientations identified in the self-determination theory. In the following years, the application of the self-determination theory in SLA gradually merged with the identity and L2 self research.

For Shumann's neuropsychological approach, there was no empirical study adopting the entire framework in this approach, to the best of the researcher's

knowledge. But a few studies utilized concepts from the stimulus appraisal theory. For example, Wen (1997) was an investigation on motivation and language learning in Asian-American students who were studying Chinese at universities in the U.S. Though not explicitly stated, Wen adopted a few concepts related to coping potential in her discussion of students' motivation. The results indicated that students were intrinsically motivated to learn Chinese with the purpose to understand their own cultural heritage at the initial stage of their learning. In the later stage of the learning process, the coping potential and self-efficacy played an important role in motivating students to continue with their Chinese study. That is, if students thought that with reasonable effort they could cope with the learning tasks in future courses, they were more likely to be motivated in their Chinese study.

One of the advantages of the cognitive approaches is, as mentioned above, that it is rooted in the theories in cognitive psychology. Thus the underlying theories help to predict and explain the inter-relationships of different concepts involved and to reorganize these concepts into a more systematic framework. For the same reason, the empirical studies in this line, although rare and at their initial stage, have been based on the theoretical framework and have had very clear and specific guiding questions from the very beginning.

The Situated Approach

Starting in the 1990s, there was a focus shift in L2 motivation research from the macro-level sociocultural factors, which were stressed in Gardner's social psychological approach, to individuals' immediate learning situations. For example, Dörnyei (1990) was trying to determine the relevance of Gardner's approach to the foreign language (FL) context. This research can be viewed, in the researcher's opinion, as both a continuance of Gardner's approach and, perhaps more importantly, a starting point for the shift to the situated approach. Other scholars, at almost the same time, also felt the need for a shift. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) advocated the reopening of the L2 motivation research agenda and outlined three levels of situational factors for motivation research: (a) classroom level, (b) syllabus/curriculum level, and (c) extracurricular level. Dörnyei (1994) also included situational factors as an important part in his framework of foreign language learning motivation (see Figure 1), in which motivational factors at the situational level were categorized into: (a) course-specific factors, (b) teacher specific factors, and (c) group-specific factors. Factors at these levels were thought to have more direct influence on individuals' motivation than the general sociocultural factors in the broader intercultural community.

It is worth noting that the situated approach is interwoven with other approaches to motivation and other fields in SLA. The first two levels in this model (language level and learner level) are largely based on the social psychological

LANGUAGE LEVEL	Integrative Motivational Subsystem
	Instrumental Motivational Subsystem
LEARNER LEVEL	Need for Achievement
	Self-Confidence
	Language Use Anxiety
	Perceived L2 Competence
	Causal Attributions
	Self-Efficacy
LEARNING SITUATION LEVEL	
Course-Specific Motivational Components	Interest
	Relevance
	Expectancy
	Satisfaction
Teacher-Specific Motivational Components	Affiliative Drive
	Authority Type
	Direct Socialization of Motivation
	Modeling
	Task Presentation
	Feedback
Group-Specific Motivational Components	Goal-Orientedness
	Norm & Reward System
	Group Cohesion
	Classroom Goal Structure

Figure 1 Components of Foreign Language Learning Motivation
Adapted from Dörnyei (1994)

approach and the cognitive approaches to motivation respectively, and the third level (learning situation level) is the main contribution of Dörnyei's situated approach to the field of L2 motivation. Furthermore, in the following years, the situated approach partially has merged with research in learning strategy use, as reflected by a co-authored article (Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002), with one author being the leading

researcher in strategy studies and the other the well-known scholar in motivation research. After all, learning strategies, to some extent, are motivated learning behaviors.

Research in this line usually used longitudinal qualitative methods to get more in-depth information about the learning situation to identify possible motivation factors. For example, Ushioda (1997) utilized qualitative data from interviews to document students' motivation changes due to learning context and other factors. She stated it explicitly that her study "chose to set aside the traditional view of motivation as an affective variable implicated in L2 achievement, in favor of a focus on the qualitative content of language learners' motivational thinking" (p. 41). The findings indicated that learners' past learning experience played a critical role in shaping their motivation. The learning goals and rewards in a specific context helped learners to focus on positive elements while deemphasizing the negative elements in their past experience.

The Process-oriented Approach

If the situated approach has largely stressed the static and context-related motivational factors, the process-oriented approach has focused on the dynamic and ongoing nature of motivation. As most teachers may have noted, learners tend to demonstrate "ups and downs" in their motivation over time. These ongoing changes in motivation over time, largely neglected in the past, became the focal point of

attention for Dörnyei and his colleagues in the late 1990s. Dörnyei (2001) discerned three phases of the changing process of motivation: (a) preactional stage, when the motivation is generated and initiated, (b) actional stage, when the motivation needs to be maintained and protected, and (c) postactional stage, when learners retrospectively evaluate how the activity has gone and this evaluation will influence their motivation in the similar activities in the future. Figure 2 below is Dörnyei's (2001) explanation of how different motivational factors may impact learning at different stages.

Because this approach is relatively new in the field, there is not much empirical research explicitly testing the tenets of this approach. However, the changes in learners' motivation have been noticed and documented in some studies even before Dörnyei's proposal of this approach. For example, in a longitudinal study, Koizumi and Matsuo (1993) documented that after a decline of attitude and motivation in the first seven months, the 7th grade English as a foreign language (EFL) students investigated in this study started to develop realistic goals for their EFL study. Subsequently, their motivation seemed to be stabilized. A similar study by Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, and Mihic (2004) discovered a declining tendency in motivation in Canadian university students in a year-long intermediate French class. Chambers (1999) and Williams, Burden, and Lanvers (2002) both found there was a decrease in student motivation in learning foreign language from Year 7 to

Figure 2 Process Model of L2 Motivation
Adapted from Dörnyei (2001, p.22)

Year 9 in the U.K. All the studies mentioned here used the questionnaire as the instrument for data collection.

It is interesting that in all the studies mentioned above the motivation decreased after the initial phase. This may be due to the novelty effect as mentioned by Schumann (1998) and the unrealistic goals at the beginning of the learning process. However, as pointed out in an empirical investigation of the overlap of concepts from different motivation models by MacIntyre, MacMaster, and Baker (2001), these results do indicate that the process or dynamic aspect of motivation is a salient and unique component of motivation. Thus, the process-oriented approach addresses one important aspect of motivation.

A New Conceptualization of L2 Motivation – Self System

The Need for a Reconceptualization of Motivation in SLA

Having reviewed the major approaches to L2 motivation research in the past half century, the researcher is now to examine a new framework to reconceptualize L2 motivation advocated by Dörnyei (2005, 2009) – the L2 motivational self system. This new conceptualization is chosen as the theoretical framework for the proposed study because it offers the most comprehensive and systematic way to investigate L2 motivation. Given the fact that empirical studies in the past few decades have focused on different aspects of motivation, it is obvious that motivation is a complex multi-dimensional construct and involves a wide range of components. But it seems

that the various studies focusing on the different components have not added up to a big picture of L2 motivation. Our understanding about motivation in L2 learning processes is still scattered in its separate components.

As Dörnyei (2009) has stated, these concerns and dissatisfaction with the current theoretical approaches to L2 motivation have been one of the two major sources that inspired him to propose the new conceptualization of L2 motivation. These concerns and dissatisfaction call for a new theoretical framework that can systematically connect these scattered motivational components together to provide a comprehensive and cohesive picture of motivation in the L2 acquisition processes. The L2 motivational self system seems to be promising in regard to this need.

The Contribution from Psychology – Possible Selves

The other major source that has led to the genesis of the L2 motivational self system is the advances in psychological research on the self, particularly the study of *possible selves* and *future self-guides* (Dörnyei, 2009). This subfield of study has emerged from the research on personality traits, which focuses on the major and stable dimensions of personality and the translation of these traits into behavioral characteristics (i.e. the *doing* sides of personality). As a result, an intriguing interface has been formed to link personality psychology and motivational psychology.

Higgins (1987, 1998) and Markus and Nurius (1986; Markus, 2006) are the leading scholars in the study of possible selves and future self-guides. Higgins (1987;

Higgins et al., 1985) has proposed two key components in the self system – the *ideal self* and the *ought self*. The *ideal self* involves the attributes that one would ideally like to have. It is a representation of hopes, aspirations, or wishes. The *ought self* represents usually one's sense of duties, obligations, or moral responsibilities. That is, it is mainly a representation of others' or the society's expectations.

Markus and Nurius (1986) have gone further to develop this system into three main types of possible selves: (a) "ideal selves that we would very much like to become" (e.g. "the successful self, the creative self, the rich self, the thin self, or the loved and admired self"), (b) "selves that we could become", usually the likely and expected self held by others or the society, and (c) "selves we are afraid of becoming", (e.g. "the alone self, the depressed self, the incompetent self, the alcoholic self, and unemployed self, or the bag lady self") (p. 954). So the first two types of selves are very similar to those proposed by Higgins, but Markus and Nurius have proposed that it is possible that for each type, there may exist multiple selves for an individual (e.g. multiple ideal selves for an individual). Thus, it is *selves*, rather then *self*, in Markus and Nurius' conceptualization. The third type – the feared selves – is Markus and Nurius' original contribution. They have expanded the scope of possible selves to include the best case, the default, and the worst case scenarios.

Dörnyei (2009) has pointed out two important issues that are worth noting. First, since all the three types of selves are under the label *possible*, it indicates that

no matter whether it is the best or the worst case scenario, it has to be reasonably based on reality. So none of these possible selves can be a mere fantasy which is completely detached from reality. Second, outlining the three main types of possible selves is to provide an example of a possible range of the future-oriented selves, rather than to set a precise and finite taxonomy.

Markus and Nurius (1986) have summarized that these possible selves concern how people's unrealized potentials as well as hopes and wishes can guide them to move from the present toward the future. Thus, the function of the possible selves as *future self-guides* is emphasized by Markus and Nurius' interpretation of the self theory.

The Composition of the "L2 Motivational Self System"

Dörnyei proposed the L2 motivational self system as a new approach to L2 motivation studies first in 2005. Recently in a book chapter (Dörnyei, 2009), he continued to provide detailed explanation as well as evidence from a few empirical studies to support this model. The definition of the three aspects of motivation by Dörnyei is quoted below:

> 1. *Ideal L2 Self*, which is the L2-specific facet of one's 'ideal self': if the person we would like to become speaks an L2, the 'ideal L2 self' is a powerful motivator to learn the L2 because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between our

actual and ideal selves. Traditional integrative and internalized instrumental motive would typically belong to this component.

2. *Ought-to L2 Self*, which concerns the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes. This dimension corresponds to Higgins' ought self and thus to the more extrinsic (i.e. less internalized) types of instrumental motives.

3. *L2 learning experience*, which concerns situated, 'executive' motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success). This component is conceptualized at a different level from the two self-guides and future research will hopefully elaborate on the self aspects of this bottom-up process. (p. 29)

Compatibilities with Existing Approaches

Although the new conceptualization of L2 motivation has been inspired partly by the dissatisfaction with the existing approaches, it is not surprising that there exist some parallels between the L2 motivational self system and the existing major approaches to motivation, given the fact that new theories often time grow out

of and are based on previous theories. Actually, this new approach to motivation supplements and develops the earlier approaches, rather than being totally incompatible with them.

The ideal L2 self closely corresponds to the most important aspect of motivation in Gardner's social psychological approach - integrative motivation. People with an ideal self that speaks an L2 would typically have sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the L2. It would be very difficult to envisage a person who has an ideal L2-speaking self but despises the L2 group and the culture. In this sense, integrative motivation is included in the concept of ideal L2 self. But the advantage of the self system is that by doing away the term *integrativeness*, it broadens the scope to allow cases in which people have L2-speaking as one trait of the ideal selves but may not necessarily want to integrate or identify with the L2 group because they hope to keep their own identities. This indeed makes more sense in that people are constantly in the process of moving toward the self images held by themselves, rather than constantly moving toward an external reference group. In a broader sense, this development in L2 motivation theory reflects the current shift to the whole-person paradigm in SLA in general.

As for the instrumental motivation in the social psychological approach, it has been divided into two types by Higgins (1987; 1998) – instrumental-promotion v.s. instrumental-prevention. The former refers to the regulation that people use to achieve goals (e.g. make more money or gain promotion) by becoming proficient in

a target language. The latter is related to the regulation that people use to prevent an undesired situation from happening (e.g. failing an exam) by learning the target language. It is hypothesized and has been tested by a few studies that the instrumental-promotion is overlapping with the ideal self, while the instrumental-prevention is correlated with the ought-to self.

Regarding the parallels with the cognitive approaches, intrinsic motivation (i.e. interests in the activity itself) overlaps to a great extent with L2 learning experience in the L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei, 2009). For instance, a person who enjoys the challenges and successful experiences brought by learning an L2 can typically be described as intrinsically motivated. Extrinsic motivation (i.e. doing the activity to fulfill other purpose) is closely related to the ought-to self. For example, people may learn an L2 because their parents expect them to learn it, as in some cases of heritage language learning. This is called extrinsic motivation in the cognitive approaches, while in the self system it is part of the ought-to self.

As far as the relationship with the situated approach is concerned, in the researcher's view, the L2 learning experience component at large is an inclusion of the situational factors in the self system. As Dörnyei (2009) has pointed out, this component is "conceptualized at a different level from the two self-guides" (p. 29). It may seem to be quite detached from the two self-guides in this system, but the inclusion of the situational factors is necessary and indispensable if this new approach is to reconceptualize L2 motivation in a way as comprehensive as possible.

As for the compatibilities with the process-oriented approach, Dörnyei (2005) has indicated that the ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self are probably heavily involved in the preactional stage of motivation evolution, and the L2 learning experience is closely related to the executive motivation during the actional stage. However, he has also pointed out that "further research is needed to establish its [the L2 motivational self system's] compatibility with the process-oriented conception of L2 motivation" (p.107).

Empirical Validation of the L2 Motivational Self System

Since its first publication in 2005, the L2 motivational self system has inspired a few empirical studies (Al-Shehri, 2009; Csiz ¨ ¦ r & Kormos, 2009; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009) to test its validity in different settings. All of these studies mentioned above were reported in the edited book by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009). They were carried out in five different countries and involved participants ranging from secondary school students to adult learners. Some studies (e.g. Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009) touched upon all the three major components of the proposed L2 motivational self system, while others (e.g. Csiz ¨ ¦ r & Kormos, 2009) focused on one or two of the components. The two major common themes that emerged from the findings of these studies were:

1. In all studies, the components investigated were significantly correlated with motivated behaviors, thus giving validity evidence to the proposed system.
2. In the studies that tested the relationship between ideal L2 self and integrativeness, the two variables were significantly correlated with each other, thus providing empirical evidence that these two concepts largely overlap with each other.

Given that these studies were based on the same theoretical framework and had more or less similarities in instrument design and data analysis, to avoid reiteration, only one study (Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009) is reviewed in detail below as a representative example. This study was actually a comparative study of three sub-studies carried out in three different countries – China, Japan, and Iran. Near 5,000 participants in total were surveyed in this study. Three versions of a questionnaire were used in the three countries respectively to collect information about participants' motivation and their self-reported effort in studying English as a foreign language. Structural equation modeling analyses were carried out for each sub-study to test how the ideal self and ought-to self could predict the motivated effort, and comparisons were made among the three sub-studies. It was concluded that for all the three different country-specific settings, the ideal self and ought-self could validly predict the motivated effort, thus providing partial validity evidence for the new theory.

However, the L2 learning experience component has been only briefly touched upon in this study by addressing learners' attitudes to learning English. The other studies mentioned above have not addressed this component at all. There may be two reasons that this component has been under-explored in these studies. Firstly, the large sample sizes in these studies may have made it difficult to measure the specific learning experience of the individuals. Secondly, the L2 learning experience component "is conceptualized at a different level from the two self-guides" (Dörnyei, 2009; p. 29), for which there is less theoretical guidance for empirical studies. The proposed study is an attempt to help narrow this gap by exploring the specific learning experiences of individuals in the specific context of the study, with the hope that the findings will contribute information to future development of this component in this new theoretical approach.

Motivation Research and CALL

Motivation-related CALL Studies

Since this is a study which investigates the students' motivation in a CALL context, it is necessary to review the possible connections between motivation studies and CALL research. Based on the review of the major theoretical approaches to L2 motivation research and methodologies used in and findings from empirical studies associated with each of the approaches, it is apparent that most of the motivation studies have been carried out in the traditional educational context, that

is, without the technology integration. However, this is contradictory to the current trends of technology applications in the language classrooms in the past two decades. Especially, with the claim that technology integration has the potential to increase students' motivation (Ushida, 2005; Warschauer, 1996), it is so surprising to find that only a few empirical studies have systematically explored motivation in the CALL context.

Some studies have addressed motivation as either a subcategory of affective factors or a by-product of the technology applications, thus not giving the attention it deserves (e.g. Gruber-Miller & Benton, 2001; Jiang & Ramsay, 2005; Stepp-Greany, 2002; Strambi & Bouvet, 2003; Weasenforth, Biesenbach-Lucas & Melono, 2002). The only two exceptions that the researcher has discovered in the process of reviewing the relevant literature are Ushida (2005) and Warschauer (1996), which have explicitly and extensively focused on motivation in CALL contexts. In the following, the two exceptional studies as well as a few other existing studies which have included the discussion of motivation in CALL context are reviewed. However, all of the studies reviewed here have been conducted prior to the proposal of the L2 motivational self. Thus, the theoretical approaches adopted or key terms used in these studies are mainly from the earlier approaches in motivation research. The studies are reviewed in chronological order, with the purpose to examine the history and development of motivation research in the CALL context in the past two decades or so.

Warschauer (1996) was one of the first few that focused on the impact of the CALL context on students' motivation. This survey study collected data from 167 university students in 12 ESL and EFL writing classes in the United States, Hong Kong, and Taiwan with a questionnaire created by the researcher. All these classes had CALL components in which students used computers for writing (e.g. word processing) and for communication (e.g. emailing the teacher and classmates). In the introduction, Warschauer briefly mentioned the different lines of studies in L2 motivation research and summarized the major inadequacies of the social psychological approach to L2 motivation research, which he referred to as the traditional framework in this area. Even though he did not explicitly mention which approach he was adopting, the three research questions apparently focused on the situation-specific aspects of motivation, similar to those in the framework proposed by Dörnyei (1994). The first research question addressed the effect of context-specific factors (i.e. computer-assisted writing and communication context) on motivation, the second research question the effect of student-specific factors (i.e. student background) on motivation, the third research questions the effect of class-specific, teacher-specific, SL- vs. FL- specific factors on motivation.

The findings from this study (Warschauer, 1996) indicated that students generally had a positive attitude toward the computer-assisted writing and communication context. Students' previous knowledge and experience with computer and e-mail were shown to be positively correlated with motivation in the

CALL context. That is, students with more computer knowledge and more previous experience with email were generally more motivated in using computers and emails for learning. Class- and teacher-specific factors, such as how the teachers integrated the computer-based projects into the overall structure of the course, did result in differences in motivation. Regarding the difference between SL and FL contexts, FL students' motivation in the CALL context was shown to be significantly higher than the SL students'. But Warschauer suggested that this might be due to the different activities used in the SL and FL classes, thus still demonstrating class-specific differences rather than the general SL vs. FL context differences. A factor analysis of the questionnaire items revealed three themes emerged from the factors that were thought to contribute to motivation in the CALL context:

1. communication, which motivated students to communicate with other speakers of the language in the other parts of the world;
2. empowerment, that is, students felt that the CALL context helped to enhance their personal power and made it less threatening to write in the target language; and
3. learning, by which students indicated that with computers their learning was faster and more creative.

These three themes of motivation are beyond the traditional social psychological framework in that they are neither integrative nor instrumental motivation. In my opinion, they are associated with the specific learning context.

Following Warschauer's seminal work on motivation in the CALL context, other scholars also started to address this topic in their studies. Gruber-Miller and Benton (2001) investigated the application of a MOO (Multi-user Object-Oriented) project in Latin courses and collected data from students' daily journals and evaluations at the end of the course. They found that students in their open-ended comments mentioned that MOO was motivating. Three themes emerged from their comments: (a) it provided a different learning resource from the textbook; (b) the visual and spatial aspects helped them learn Roman culture with a new prospective; and (c) it was fun to learn with MOO. It is an inadequacy that Gruber-Miller and Benton did not explicitly mention any theoretical frameworks or previous studies on motivation in this study. However, from the three themes they identified about motivation, it is reasonable to relate this study to Schumann's stimulus appraisal theory in that the first two themes can be related, to some extent, to novelty, and the third theme to pleasantness.

Stepp-Greany's (2002) was a large scale survey study on student perception of the technology components. Data were drawn from a total of 358 students from 20 sections of the first and second semester Spanish classes. The technology applications used in these classes included Internet activities, CD-ROM, electronic pen pals, and threaded discussions. There was no explicit statement about which theoretical framework was used, but from the fact that the researcher identified language proficiency level, class activity type, structure of curriculum, etc. as the

factors which might have impacted student motivation and that she used findings from Warschauer (1996) to back up her discussion, this study seemed to be more in line with the situated approach than with other approaches in L2 motivation research. Two major findings about motivation from this study were:

1. Lack of relevance between the technology components and the overall coursework may not lead to increased motivation.
2. Limited proficiency level may decrease student motivation to the CALL tasks.

Weasenforth, Biesenbach-Lucas and Meloni (2002) investigated the integration of electronic discussion into a constructivist curriculum in six advanced university-level ESL reading/writing classes. Students were required to participate in the online discussion board by starting a new topic about the course content or responding to peer- or teacher-initiated topics. The effect of the technology application on affective factors, including motivation, was addressed. Data were obtained from 52 students' posts on the discussion board and their responses to a survey at the end of the semester. It seemed that the framework used to analyze data is quite eclectic. The researchers mentioned intrinsic motivation, novelty of technology, students' perception of the relevance of the technology component to their future professional work, and group-specific motivation. The results indicated that the novelty of this technology component and its possible relevance to future professional work motivated students to learn, but students also felt that the

electronic discussion assignments were some extra burden in that they were to some extent repeating the traditional assignments which they had already done. Besides, group dynamics was identified as a factor that may have influenced the motivation of students in a specific group.

Strambi and Bouvet's (2003) study was actually a report of the design and development of two technology-enhanced language classes. But the authors carried out a preliminary pilot study to evaluate the courseware developed. From their discussion of the literature, it seemed that they also adopted a quite eclectic approach in that their literature review combined Gardner's socioeducational model, Noels' self-determination theory, and Dörnyei's process-oriented approach. However, because of the very limited number of students involved in the pilot study and the preliminary nature of the study, no conclusive findings were drawn on the impact of CALL components on motivation.

Jiang and Ramsay (2005) was actually a study on student-teacher rapport building in a CALL context. It was partially related to motivation research in that the results indicated that the CALL applications in this context helped foster learner-teacher rapport building, which was an important motivational factor at the teacher-specific level in Dörnyei's (1994) situated approach to motivation research. Sound files and emails were the major technology components examined in this study. Twenty-eight students in total participated in the study. Their sound file responses, reflections, email messages, and responses to an email interview were

analyzed qualitatively. However, the researchers did not explicitly mention any qualitative data analysis method that they followed in this study. Mostly they identified the key words that emerged from the data. They then concluded that the CALL applications helped foster learner-teacher rapport building thus motivating students to learn even beyond the regular classroom.

Ushida's study (2005), which was based on her dissertation research, provided a clearly stated theoretical position and was an exemplary study of combining and applying two different theoretical frameworks to investigate different aspects of motivation. Gardner's socioeducational model was used to identify the relationship between motivation, attitude, and L2 achievement; Dörnyei's situated model was used to examine the immediate situation. Actually, the changes of student motivation over time were also investigated, which can be viewed as a feature of the process-oriented approach, although Ushida did not mention this approach explicitly in her study. The participants were students in three online language courses. A modified version of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), created by Gardner, Tremblay, and Masgoret (1997), was used to measure students' motivation. The same test was administered once at the beginning of the semester and again at the end of the semester to identify changes over time. The results indicated that students' motivation was generally high in the online courses and remained relatively stable during the time period of the courses. It was also found that there were significant differences among the courses. The author went further to suggest

that the teacher-specific factors might have been the major source for these differences and that teachers may play a crucial role in shaping students' motivation. In addition, the author also suggested that individual student's perception of the online courses might have been affected by their familiarity with the specific online learning environment, rather than their familiarity with computer technologies in general.

In summary, even though some major concepts in motivation research have been used to inform these studies in the CALL context, most of these studies either did not mention any systematic theoretical framework used to analyze students' motivation at all or just mixed the key terms from the existing major approaches to motivation research without differentiating the theoretical frameworks behind each of these terms. The only exception is Ushioda (2005), which explicitly mentioned two theoretical frameworks and applied these two frameworks in investigating different aspects of motivation. That is, the social psychological approach was used to examine the relationship between motivation, attitude, and L2 achievement; the situated model was used to identify the effect of the immediate environment on motivation. This is an exemplary model of using different approaches in a complementary way to capture a comprehensive view of motivation in a CALL environment. This study in particular has inspired the present researcher to look for a more comprehensive framework which can capture the various aspects of motivation, and Dörnyei's (2005; 2009) recent proposal of the L2 motivation self

system seems to have the potential to serve this purpose. It is the most comprehensive and the newest theoretical framework for L2 motivation research so far, as reviewed earlier in this chapter.

Furthermore, an issue mentioned by both Warschauer (1996) and Ushida (2005) is that students' familiarity with the specific technologies used in the CALL components and/or the specific technology environment might have important impact on their motivation. That is, if students are not familiar with the specific technologies or the specific CALL environment, they might be very anxious about the new technology environment and possibly less motivated to learn in such an environment. However, more research is needed to understand the interaction between students' technology experience and their motivation. This issue is addressed in the proposed study by interviewing both tech-savvy and tech-novice individual students for in-depth information about their perception and experience in the CALL environment, which will be discussed in Chapter Three.

Online Learning Community and Motivation

As a study on students' motivation in CALL context, the present study focuses on a specific CALL project – the online learning community project. This decision is based on practical reasons determined by the specifics of the research site as well as theoretical considerations associated with the guiding framework of the study. These practical reasons and theoretical considerations will be discussed in

detail in Chapter Three. For this section, the possible connections between online learning community and motivation in the existing literature are examined. It is worth noting that because the major focus of the present study is on students' motivation, this section is not intended to be a comprehensive review of the application of online learning communities in language teaching and learning. Rather, the purpose of this section is to explore the possible role of community-based online learning in shaping students' motivation under the framework of the L2 motivational self system.

A very recent article (Thorne, Black, & Sykes, 2009) reviewed the impact of Internet interest communities on foreign language (FL) and second language (L2) learning. Among many aspects examined, the authors pointed out that language learners discursively constructed self and social identities in various Internet interest communities by using L1 and L2 to interact with others. A specific example was the study by Lam (2000), which explored how Almon, who emigrated from China to the United States, gained confidence in using English through his participation in an online fan community about Japanese pop culture. Almon felt that he was a competent global English user – an identity that he was not able to take on in the physical setting of his new home in the United States. A later study of Lam (2004) examined how Chinese diaspora youth perceived their experience in the online chat room. The focal participants enjoyed the experience where they could interact with a broader range of Chinese-origin English speakers and assumed a new trans-cultural

identity. Take Black (2005) as an example of another study cited in this review article by Thorne, Black, and Sykes, various English language learners, by receiving supportive comments and collaborating with others in an online fiction fan community, constructed identities as successful writers and developed strong social affiliations with the community.

Darhower (2007) examined the process of building virtual learning communities by 70 English-native learners of Spanish and L1 Spanish learners of English through weekly online chatting. The participants were divided into different groups and required to discuss assigned weekly topics with other group members. Chat episodes from two extreme groups, one with clear signs of social bond among group members and the other without such signs, were analyzed to contrast different levels of community development. For the first group, most members participated in group chat room regularly and provided most supportive feedback with a minimum level of negative feedback to one another. As early as Week 4, there were clear signs that the members reached a high level of social bond and continuous collaboration with one another. By contrast, the lack of the same level of social bond and collaboration in the second group continued till the end of the study, Week 10. One of the noted differences in the chat episodes of the two groups was that, for the second group, members often gave each other negative feedback, and sometimes it escalated to sarcasm and revenge.

Among all the studies reviewed above, none of them has explicitly discussed the impact of the online community experience on learners' motivation. However, one important issue that was repeatedly discussed by Thorne, Black, and Skyes (2009) was that language learners discursively constructed self and social identities in the various online communities. That is, their interactions with others in these online communities helped the shaping and reshaping of their self and social identities. The construction and reconstruction of self and social identities, in particular the language identities, is largely overlapping with the ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self in the L2 motivational self system, as reflected by the coauthored book chapter by Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009). Thus, it is reasonable to anticipate that participating in an online community may impact learners' ideal self and ought-to self.

The participation in an online learning community may also impact the third aspect of motivation – L2 learning experience. As in Lam's (2000; 2004) two studies, both reviewed above, the focal participants developed a sense of accomplishment as competent language users and social affiliations with peers in the online communities that they had not been able to develop in his physical contexts. According to Dörnyei (2009), the "experience of success" and the "peer group" (p.29) are two important factors, among others, that may affect learners' learning experience. Actually, the participation in an online learning community has the potential to impact learners' learning experience. As in the abovementioned study

(Darhower, 2007), regular participation and supportive peer feedback led to a highly enjoyable only social network for the first group, while too much negative feedback in the second group hindered the development of the online community and, in turn, negatively affected individual members' learning experience. Thus, regular participation and supportive peers are two important factors for achieving positive learning experience from an online community.

In summary, participating in an online learning community may provide an alternative or supplementary environment for language learners to construct and reconstruct their self and social identities, thus potentially leading to the shaping and reshaping of ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self. Furthermore, regular online interactions with supportive peers may help language learners to develop the sense of success and strong social affiliations with the online community, thus positively expanding their L2 learning experience.

Empirical Motivation Studies in CFL

Having explored the possible connections between motivation and CALL research, the researcher is now to examine in this section the empirical studies in the field of CFL. With the increasing enrollment in Chinese in recent years, educational policy makers, educators, and the general public are starting to pay more attention to understanding issues involved in CFL pedagogy and instruction. What motivates students to learn Chinese is among these issues. Compared with motivation research

in other languages such as French and Spanish, empirical studies on motivation in CFL are rare. Searches of the major databases and the major journals in the field of L2 and FL teaching and research as well as the *Journal of Chinese Language Teachers Association* have yielded only a few studies.

The earliest published study identified by the researcher was Wen (1997), which investigated motivation of 77 college Asian-American students enrolled in the beginning or intermediate CFL classes. The cognitive psychological approach, particularly the self-efficacy theory, was the main theoretical framework used to analyze data and discuss the findings. Data were collected via a survey. Factor analysis, regression procedures, *t*-tests, and correlational analyses were carried out to identify motivation variables and the difference in the motivational patterns between the beginning level students and the intermediate level students. The results indicated that students in the beginning classes held an intrinsic motivation in that they wanted to understand their own cultural heritage. At the intermediate level, the main motivational factor was students' expectation that their effort in the class would lead to the desired learning outcome. That is, in terms of the self-efficacy theory, knowing that their expectation would be met motivated them to continue their Chinese study. Even though this study compared the different motivational factors at the different levels of proficiency, it was not explicitly process-oriented.

Rueda and Chen (2005) was another survey study of the different motivational patterns between Asian heritage learners and non-Asian heritage

learners and the differences among subgroups of Asian heritage learners. A combination of the social psychological and the cognitive psychological approaches was used as the theoretical framework. Data were collected from 150 college students via a questionnaire designed by the researchers. Factor analysis was used to analyze the data. It was found that there were significant differences in intrinsic motivation, instrumental motivation, and perception of task value between the Asian group and the non-Asian group. Within the Asian heritage learners, motivational patterns were not homogeneous. However, the reasons why there were significant differences in motivation patterns among the subgroups of Asian heritage were still unclear.

A most recent study (Yu & Watkins, 2008) was conducted in the Chinese as a second language (CSL) context, which may be quite different from the CFL context. However, the design of this study was very similar to that of Rueda and Chen (2005) in that it was also a survey study focusing on the differences in motivational patterns between Asian heritage students and Western students of Chinese, except that this study was in the CSL context. The participants were 115 college students ranging from beginning to advanced levels of proficiency. It was found that there were differences in integrative motivation and instrumental motivation between the two groups. Thus, findings from these two studies suggested that for both CFL and CSL contexts, students' cultural background may have an impact on their motivational patterns.

Another recent study (Liu & Shibata, 2008) was not exclusively on motivation in CFL classes. Instead, the researchers were interested in similarities and differences of motivational patterns among students who enrolled in four Asian languages, including Chinese. There were 27 CFL students surveyed in the Chinese component of the study. The top three reasons that were identified for these students to choose Chinese were: (a) cultural understanding, (b) integrative orientation, and (c) achievement orientation (e.g. expectation to earn good grades in the class).

As seen in the recent years, more and more CALL components have been integrated into the CFL curricula. However, all the studies identified through the researcher's extensive search of existing literature and subsequently reviewed above in this section have focused on traditional CFL classroom, except for Jiang and Ramsay (2005), which is reviewed earlier in this chapter. This study focused on teacher-student rapport building in the CALL context in a CFL class. As mentioned before, it was not designed to focus on motivation. Instead, it addressed teacher-student rapport building, which is related to the teacher-specific factors in the situated approach to motivation. In addition, only qualitative data were collected in this study, and the researchers just highlighted the key words from participants' responses without explicitly mentioning any data analysis method they used. Thus, a systematically designed study to examine comprehensively CFL students' motivation in the CALL context is needed.

Synthesis

In this chapter, the researcher has reviewed the major theoretical approaches to motivation research in SLA in the past half century. These different approaches and sometimes conflicting findings from empirical studies associated with each approach have demonstrated that L2 motivation is a complex and multifaceted construct. To capture the various components of L2 motivation as comprehensively as possible, Dörnyei (2005, 2009) has proposed a new reconceptualization of L2 motivation – the L2 motivational self system. The new model is based on both the existing literature in SLA motivation study and the new developments in psychological research. A few empirical studies have been conducted and shown results in favor of this new theoretical model. However, all of these studies have been carried out in the traditional educational settings. With the wide use of technologies in language classrooms nowadays, it is necessary to examine if the tenets in this new theory are also valid in the CALL context, since students' learning experience in a specific learning context is one of the three major components included in the new motivation model and may also, in turn, affect the other two components.

In addition, the review of the existing empirical studies concerning motivation in the CALL context has revealed that most of these studies have not adopted any theoretical framework in a systematic way in their discussion of motivation, with the only exception of Ushida (2005). Furthermore, through the

review of the few existing empirical studies on motivation of CFL students, the theme that heritage learners and non-heritage learners have different motivational patterns in learning Chinese has emerged. However, almost all of these studies have been conducted in the traditional education settings. With more and more technology integration into the CFL curricula, more research is needed to understand CFL students' motivation in the CALL context, as the immediate learning context may play an important role in shaping learners' motivation. Thus, a systematic study clearly guided by a sound theoretical framework that investigates CFL students' motivation in the CALL context would be a significant contribution to L2 motivation studies, CALL research, and CFL pedagogy.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the design of the current study, participants, setting, instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of an online learning community project on CFL students' motivation guided by the framework of the L2 motivational self system. This purpose was fulfilled by addressing the following research questions:

RQ 1. Is there any significant difference in students' motivation, as conceived in the L2 motivational self system, before and after the online learning community project?

RQ 1.1. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ideal L2 self before and after the online project?

RQ. 1.2. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ought-to L2 self before and after the online project?

RQ. 1.3. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on L2 learning experience before and after the online project?

RQ 2. What features of the online project do the students find motivating and what features demotivating?

RQ 3. How do the selected individuals from different heritage and technology backgrounds perceive the online project experience and the influence of the project on their motivation?

Research Design

A concurrent transformative mixed method design (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) with data collected from two layers of analysis was employed for the present study. In this type of research design, the quantitative and qualitative data are collected at the same stage during the study in order to capture a comprehensive picture of the research problem, and usually an existing theoretical framework is used to guide the study. The current study fell in this category in that the study was guided by the L2 motivational self system as well as research findings from the existing literature and that such a design could best capture the various aspects of motivation at multiple levels at the same time. The quantitative data (for RQ 1) and the qualitative data (for RQs 2 and 3) were collected and analyzed at roughly the same time, and the integration of data occurred mostly during the interpretation phrase. It is worth noting that the qualitative data are exploratory in nature, with the purpose to collect rich and in-depth information about the specific local context and the specific individuals. This type of information may easily be missed in the quantitative data.

As for the two layers of analysis, the first layer consisted of all the participants as a single group. Quantitative data about their motivation before and after the online learning community project as well as qualitative data from their open-ended responses were collected and analyzed at the group level. The second layer of the study was at the individual level. Four individual students selected based

on heritage background and prior technology experience formed this layer of analysis. Interviews with these selected individuals as well as their online posts and weekly reflective journals provided qualitative data in order to understand the impact of the online project on motivation at the individual student level. At this layer of analysis, how the individuals' heritage background, prior technology experience, and possibly other individual background factors might have influenced the individuals' experience of the online project and their motivation were explored.

A schematic representation of the research design of the study with the two layers of analysis is shown in Figure 3. This figure follows the notation system developed by Morse (1991), which uses a plus (+) sign to indicate the simultaneous collection of different types of data and uppercase letters to suggest the major emphasis at each layer of analysis.

	RQ1		RQ2		RQ3
Data type	QUAN	+	qual	+	QUAL
Data source	All participants				Four selected individuals based on heritage & tech. background
Instrument	Pre & post tests of motivation		An open-ended question about the motivating/demotivating features of the online project		Weekly journals, online posts, & one-on-one interviews
Layer of analysis:	Group level				Individual level

Figure 3 A Schematic Representation of the Design of the Study

For the four individuals selected for the analysis at the individual level, the decision to use heritage background and prior technology experience as the selection criteria was based on the findings from the literature review on motivation studies in CALL and in CFL in Chapter Two. Existing studies (e.g.: Rueda & Chen, 2005; Ushida, 2005; Warschauer, 1996; and Yu & Watkins, 2008) have shown that students' heritage background and technology experience, particularly their experience with the specific technologies used in a CALL component, played an important role in shaping their motivation. The composition of these four individuals is shown in Figure 4 below.

	Chinese heritage	Experienced w tech.
Individual #1	Yes	Yes
Individual #2	Yes	No
Individual #3	No	Yes
Individual #4	No	No

Figure 4 The Composition of the Four Selected Individuals for RQ3

For the quantitative part of the study (RQ1), a repeated measure design was employed to examine whether there was any significant change in the participants' motivation that resulted from their participation in the online community project. The participants were asked to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix 1) before (pre) and after (post) the online project. That is, the participants served as their own

controls (Shaughnessy, 2006). This maximized the amount of data that could be gathered from a relatively limited number of participants.

Participants

Participants were students in the three sessions of Chinese II in the semester of Spring 2010 at a southeastern public research university in the United States. Initially, 52 participants took part in the study. However, two participants were under the age of 18 and thus were excluded from the data analysis. Additionally, six participants did not complete the posttest, and data collected from them were excluded from analysis. As a result, 44 participants' responses were entered into the dataset for analysis. Among the 44 participants, one missed one item on the subscale of ideal l2 self in the pretest, which was treated as a missing data point in the inferential statistical analysis.

Based on the information collected from the background information section in the pretest, the participants in this study were composed of 25 males and 19 females. Their age ranged from 19 to 31, with an average of 22. One fourth of the participants were of Chinese heritage, most of them had some degree of exposure to either Mandarin Chinese or Cantonese at home. The rest were of non-Chinese heritage. Their heritage backgrounds were summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Heritage Background of the Participants

Heritage background	Frequency
Chinese heritage	
Parents spoke Mandarin Chinese at home (to varied extent)	8
Parents spoke Cantonese at home (to varied extent)	2
Parents were of Chinese origin but spoke neither Chinese nor Cantonese at home	1
Total:	11
Non-Chinese heritage	
Caucasian	22
Hispanic	5
African American	2
Other Asian origin	4
Total:	33
Grand Total:	44

The participants' prior experiences with technologies that were relevant to the online project were summarized in Table 2 below. As the data revealed, more than half of the participants considered themselves not familiar with any sound recording programs (i.e., "still need technical assistance" or "never heard of or used these programs"). Most of the participants had none or minimum experience of using online communities for academic studies (i.e., 37 out of 44 used online communities for academic purposes once a week or less).

Table 2 Prior Expexperience with Technologies

	Frequency
Prior experience with audio recording programs	
Never heard of these programs	6
Heard of but never used these programs	10
Tried one (or more) once or twice but may still need technical assistance to use them	9
Tried one (or more) a few times and do ***not*** need technical assistance to use them	17
Consider themselves experts of using these programs	2
Total:	44
Prior experience using online communities (e.g.: online forums or bulletin boards) for academic studies	
Once a week or less	37
2-5 times a week	6
More than 5 times a week	1
Total:	44

For the individual level of the study, four individuals were selected based on their heritage background and prior technology experience. The information about their heritage background and prior technology experience was collected through a background information section in the pretest. The selected individuals were invited to one-on-one interviews with the researcher at the end of the online project. As represented in Figure 4 above, the four individuals served as cases respectively for:

1. a Chinese heritage learner who is experienced with the technologies involved in this online community project;
2. a Chinese heritage learner who is inexperienced with the technologies involved in this online community project;

3. a non-Chinese heritage learner who is experienced with the technologies involved in this online community project; and

4. a non-Chinese heritage who is inexperienced with the technologies involved in this online community project.

For any of the four cases, when more than one individual met the criteria and were willing to take part in the interview, the researcher made an effort to identify the one who had participated the most actively in the online community, by considering the number of their posts and assessing their weekly reflective journals. This individual was selected as the case in question, because he or she most likely made a "good informant" (Spradley, 1979, p. 45) for an understanding of the impact of the online community, due to his or her active participation and wide range of experience in this online community.

Two days before the study, the researcher distributed a copy of the informed consent form (see Appendix 2) to all participants and invited them to take part in this study. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the participants and what activities they would take part in if they agreed to participate in this study. The researcher also made it clear to the participants that they could also choose not to participate in this study. In this case, they would still need to do any alternative assignments that the instructors prepared for them. Contact information of the researcher was given to the participants, and the participants were encouraged to contact the research if they had any questions about this study. At the beginning of

the study, participants who had agreed to take part in the study signed the informed consent form and answered the pretest version of the questionnaire.

Setting

In this program, the instruction of Chinese II was delivered by a team of three instructors. Each of the three Chinese II sessions met one hour every day from Monday to Thursday. The lead instructor, who was a native speaker of English but highly fluent in Chinese, designed the overall curriculum for Chinese II and sent an outline of the schedule to the other two instructors before the semester started. After the semester began, detailed biweekly schedules were sent out by the lead instructor to the team on a regular base. The lead instructor taught all the three sessions two days in a week, and each of the other two instructors taught one day a week.

The overall approach of the Chinese program was performance-based foreign language instruction (for an overview, see Christensen, 2002). Basically, class activities were designed for students to learn and practice the language through performance. Most of the class time was used for students to perform role-plays in the format of short conversations. For Chinese II, there were two major teaching objectives:

1. to reinforce the fundamental listening and speaking skills that students have acquired in the previous semester; and

2. to expand students' language repertoire in telling time and describing events and consequences.

Short conversations in school and business settings were the major language content in Chinese II. Students were expected to study the course materials and prepare for in-class performance before each class meeting. The average amount of time expected for students to spend on self-study and preparation before each class meeting was one and a half to two hours. See Appendix 3 for a sample syllabus of the Chinese II course.

In addition, there was a one credit hour lab class that supplemented the regular face-to-face Chinese II class. All students enrolled in Chinese II were required to enroll concurrently in the lab class. For this lab class, students were expected to spend one hour or so every Friday to self study the materials on the DVD which accompanies the textbook. They could also work on other assignments as suggested by the instructors. Except for this DVD component, there was no other technology component in this program. For the present study, an online learning community project was added to the lab assignments. In this project, the students participated in an online CFL learning community by interacting with other CFL learners, sharing CFL learning experience, seeking and providing feedback on one another's pronunciation, and reflecting on their online learning experience. The specific content of the online project was designed by the researcher by consulting the instructors, as discussed in detail in the next section.

Online Learning Community Project

Rationale

As a study to investigate motivation in the CALL context, an important component in this study is the online learning community project. To provide more context and history and explain the rationale for choosing to introduce the online learning community project to the Chinese II students, the evolution of the idea of the online learning community is described below.

First, since 2005 when the researcher first had contact with the instructors and the students in the Chinese program, there had been some changes in the program such as the curriculum innovation from grammar-translation method to performance-based method. However, one aspect that had remained largely unchanged was that little technology had been integrated into this program. The most technology-related component in this Chinese program was the DVD that accompanied the textbook. There was definitely room for the introduction of more technologies into this program. After all, the students in the program were the new generation who grew up in the digital era. Some of them, if not all, felt that using technologies for schoolwork was a necessary supplement to the traditional method, and technology integration might be a motivational factor for them.

Second, nowadays there are a large number of educational resources on the Internet that students can easily access. Students should be introduced to these online educational resources so that they have the option to select among those

online resources as supplementary study materials to meet their individual needs. In the long run, this will help them take charge of their own learning and become autonomous learners.

In addition, considering that the students in Chinese II classes already had a very heavy workload with their assignments and preparation for Chinese classes (i.e. one and a half to two hours per day after class), a project that they could easily implement without having to learn many new technology skills would be the most suitable for this situation. An online community project was a good candidate of this kind, because it did not require much technology preparation and yet it could introduce numerous resources and build a supportive network for Chinese learning.

More importantly, an online community project has the potential to impact students' motivation on each of the three aspects as outlined in the L2 motivational self system. First of all, since currently Chinese is still a less commonly taught foreign language in the U.S. and students usually do not have much contact with Chinese-speaking people, except their instructors and classmates, the opportunities for them to practice Chinese are very limited. From the researcher's personal contact with the students in the program in the past few years, some of them even felt "lonely" or "isolated" in the process of learning Chinese because not many people around them were learning Chinese. This lack of a sense of community, as a factor of the L2 learning experience in the L2 motivational self system, may be a negative factor to students' motivation. Online communities can enlarge students' Chinese

speaking social network, and once they participate actively in a CFL learning community and develop a sense of belonging, it is very likely that they will feel more motivated to continue with their Chinese study.

Secondly, through the online project, the students are likely to learn about real and successful stories of others learning Chinese. This can help students set realistic goals of learning Chinese, which will potentially impact their L2 ideal self. Lastly, the students will very likely get to know what other people use Chinese for in their life and work and what negative impact it would have for these people if they had not studied Chinese. This may help the students envision the barriers they would encounter in their future career and personal life if they gave up their Chinese study. This may impact their L2 ought-to self.

The Online Learning Community

With these purposes in mind, after a comprehensive search and comparison of existing online Chinese learning communities, the researcher found www.chinese-forums.com (see Appendix 4A for a screenshot of this online community) as a suitable online community to introduce to the target group of students in this study. This online community consisted of 28 forums concerning various aspects about Chinese study, Chinese culture, and working and living in China. It had 7,713 registered members, as of November 5th, 2009, and people participated actively in the online community. As reflected by the example of the

day of November 5th, 2009, there were 291 users online, including 27 members and 264 non-member guests, and there were more than 70 posts and replies on this single day. The record showed that the highest number of users ever online simultaneously for this community was 1,079, at 11:36 pm, December 9th, 2008.

The researcher spent two weeks to experience and explore intensively the various forums and reading and posting in this online community before deciding to use this online community for this project. The two weeks' intensive participation in this online community allowed the researcher to conclude that most members here were CFL learners with proficiency ranging from the beginning to advanced levels. There were also a few native Chinese speakers who participated actively in this community. Most of the members who were actively posting in this community were friendly and highly interested in learning the Chinese language and culture. They gave mostly supportive feedback and constructive suggestions when replying to others' posts. The researcher had confidence that after being introduced to this online community the participating students would have a similar experience.

Tasks of the Online Community Project

After observing a few class meetings of Chinese II, reviewing the syllabus and textbooks, consulting with the instructors, and considering the focus of the proposed study, the researcher decided that for students in Chinese II, whose proficiency was very limited, the online activities should focus on stimulating their motivation for further study of Chinese as well as pronunciation practice. Three

forums chosen to be introduced with emphasis to the participants were *General Study Advice and Discussion*, *Resources for Studying Chinese*, and *Speaking and Listening Skills*. As can be inferred from the titles, these three forums respectively focused on sharing learning experience and providing study tips, sharing learning resources, and improving listening and speaking skills. It was worth noting that some members in this online community had started the activity of posting their pronunciation samples and giving one another detailed constructive feedback (see Appendix 4B for the thread for this activity). This was very similar to one of the activities that would be carried out with the participants for this study. Since this type of activity had already been started and participated in by many members in this online community, the researcher anticipated that when the students in Chinese II posted their pronunciation samples on this forum, they would very likely receive feedback of the same kind from members in this online community.

This online project lasted four weeks in this study. The main activities of the online community project included navigating and exploring the online community, learning about other members' experience of studying Chinese, and posting samples of pronunciation in order to receive feedback from other members. The participants were required to write a short reflective journal and turn it to the researcher and the lead instructor at the end of every week during the project. In this weekly reflective journal, they were asked to write briefly about some given topics as well as anything else that they wanted to comment on. Appendix 5 is the handout to the participants

about the tasks and the given topics for each week during the project. A description of the tasks is as follows.

In the first week, students registered for this online community and navigated through the various forums. Two forums, *General Study Advice and Discussion* and *Resources for Studying Chinese*, were highly recommended to the students. Students were asked to read posts on these two forums to complete their weekly tasks. The major goal for this week was to get students started with their exploration in this online community. Then they reflected on what they have learned from this community, especially from these two forums, in their weekly journal. They were asked to provide their username in this online community in their journal so that the researcher could track their posts if necessary.

In the second week, students learned more about other members in this community and about their experience of learning and using Chinese, particularly their successful stories of learning Chinese and using Chinese to achieve career and personal goals. In addition, they were also required to post at least one sample of their pronunciation in the subforum *Chinese Pronunciation, Pinyin, and Audio Samples.* Sounder Recorder and Audacity were recommended for recording their pronunciation samples. It was expected that most students were familiar with at least one of these two programs. For those who were not, a training session offered by the researcher was scheduled at the beginning of this week and announced to the participants. In addition to the training session, the researcher also scheduled

one-on-one technical assistance sessions with students who still had technical difficulties to record their sample of pronunciation.

This audio recording activity served not only the current study but also the purpose of encouraging students to constantly and regularly evaluate their own pronunciation by recording and listening to their own pronunciation. Students could choose a short conversation, a drill, or any other topics that they needed to practice for class this week, and they recorded themselves and uploaded their recorded pronunciation samples on this site. They were also asked to check back in one or two days for possible feedback that they might have received from other members in this online community. In the weekly journal for this week, they were asked to reflect on the stories of learning and using Chinese they had learned and to comment onthe usefulness of the feedback they had received for their pronunciation sample.

In the third week, students continued the pronunciation sample activity by recording and posting their rehearsal of another short conversation or a short paragraph of their choice. They also picked up a forum to explore based on their interest. They were encouraged to post any questions they had about learning Chinese in this forum. In their weekly journal, they were asked to briefly discuss their new experience in this forum, in addition to their reflection on the feedback they had received for their pronunciation sample of this week.

In the last week, students continued the pronunciation sample activity. In addition, they were asked to prepare for an imaginary summer trip to China. They

needed to search information on the forum *Life, Work and Study in China in General* to collect information about what they needed to prepare for this trip. In the weekly journal, they were to summarize the information they had gathered as well as briefly discuss the feedback they had received for their pronunciation sample.

Instruments

The instruments for this study included:

1. a questionnaire to measure students' motivation before and after the online project, plus a section on heritage background and prior technology experience in the pretest version and an open-ended question about their perception of the online project in the posttest version of the questionnaire, and
2. semistructured interviews with the selected individuals, combined with their weekly journals and online posts, which provided qualitative data about how these individuals, with different heritage and technology backgrounds, perceived this online project and the possible influence of the online project on their motivation.

Each of these two instruments is discussed in detail below.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire had two different versions – the pretest version and the posttest version (see Appendices 1A and 1B). The motivation scale in this questionnaire remained the same in the two versions, which included 18 Likert scale items. The L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei 2005, 2009) was the overarching framework used to identify or create the specific items for the motivation scale. However, a different order of the three aspects of the L2 motivational self system was used in the questionnaire for practical reasons. The L2 learning experience was investigated at the beginning (items 1 to 6) because the researcher anticipated that it would be easier for the participants to start with concrete and specific aspects of their Chinese learning before they were asked to answer questions related to the more abstract and imaginary ideal self. These items were created by the researcher because so far there were no tested questionnaire items available in the literature for this aspect of motivation. The creation of these items was guided by the theoretical framework and the findings from relevant studies. As conceived in the L2 motivational self system, the learning experience related motivation came from "the immediate learning environment and experience" and "is conceptualized at a different level" (Dörnyei, 2009, p29) from the other two aspects. To ensure the construct validity of the items, the researcher used both the learning situation level components proposed by Dörnyei (1994) for foreign language learning and the findings from Ushioda's (1997) qualitative study on motivational factors that were

related to individual experience to determine the scope for items in this subscale of motivation. All items created for the L2 learning experience subscale met two criteria: (a) They were within the determined scope as suggested in the literature; and (b) they were relevant to the focus of the online community project in this study.

The latter two subscales of this scale measured the other two aspects of motivation respectively. Participants' L2 ideal self was assessed by items 7 to 11, and the L2 ought-to self by items 12 to 18. The order of assessment of the ideal self before the ought-to self was determined with the hope that when answering the items for the ideal self, participants could focus their thought on what they themselves really want, hope, and wish to become, with as little influence of the ought-to self as possible. Thus, the ought-to self was placed at the end of this session. All the items in the questionnaire that measured ideal self and ought-to self were selected and adapted from Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009), which was a representative empirical study under the same theoretical framework. This study was reviewed in Chapter Two.

As an index of convergent validity, the correlation coefficients of the two subscales with the concepts that they are theoretically related to in Taguchi, Magid, and Papi's (2009) study are reported in Table 3 below. Since this study consisted of three substudies in three different countries (i.e., China, Japan, and Iran), the correlation coefficients were reported separately for the three country-specific contexts. As can be seen, most of the correlation coefficients between the subscales

and the related concepts reached an effect size at a medium (r > .3) or large (r > .5) level, as suggested by Cohen (1992), except the correlation coefficient between ideal L2 self and promotional instrumentality (i.e.: one's desire to achieve professional success, personal advancement, or other positive outcomes) in the context of Japan and that between ought-to L2 self and preventional instrumentality (one's desire to avoid negative outcomes) in the context of China. Overall, the two subscales of motivation showed evidence of good convergent validity. In addition, based on the fact that the two subscales were successfully applied in different contexts in this study, it can be claimed that they had good external validity to some extent.

Table 3 Correlation Coefficients (r) between Motivation Subscales and Related Concepts

subscale	Related concept	Japan	China	Iran
Ideal L2 self	Attitudes to L2 culture and community	.53	.37	.46
	Instrumentality (promotional)	.28	.45	.47
Ought-to L2 self	Instrumentality (preventional)	.54	.23	.39
	Family influence	.50	.64	.59

Note: All coefficients are significant at p < .001

Adapted from Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009)

As for the reliability of these two subscales, Table 4 below reports the Cronbach's alpha for each of subscales as an index of the internal consistency

reliability in the three different contexts in this study (Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009). According to the rules of thumb provided by George and Mallery (2003), these subscales had good (α > .8) to acceptable (α > .7) internal consistency reliability.

Table 4 Cronbach Alpha (α) for Motivation Subscales

	Japan		China		Iran	
subscale	Number of items	α	Number of items	α	Number of items	α
Ideal L2 self	5	.89	5	.83	6	.79
Ought-to L2 self	4	.76	7	.78	6	.75

Adapted from Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009)

Because the original items used in Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009) for these two subscales were for English as a foreign language in three Asian contexts (i.e.: China, Iran, and Japan) and were slightly different in the three contexts due to cultural differences, the researcher had to select and adapt items for the specific context of the current study. The selection of items to be included in the current study followed two criteria:

1. the items should represent the major factors in the respective aspects of motivation as identified in the L2 motivational self system; and

2. there should be enough items to sensitively capture possible changes in participants' motivation as a result of the online project.

After the completion of an early draft of the motivation scale, all the items in this scale were tried out with three Chinese learners who were very similar to the target group of participants in terms of age, educational experience, and overall Chinese learning experience but with slightly higher proficiency in Chinese. They went through the items and provided comments on the wording and the clarity of the items.

In addition, an experienced L2 motivation researcher was invited to provide feedback on the content and the selection of the items as well as the layout of the questionnaire. The experienced researcher went over the theoretical framework with the researcher, and the researcher introduced the background and the overall research design of the present study to the experienced researcher. Then, items of the questionnaires were discussed one by one to ensure that they could measure what the researcher aimed to measure for this study. Modifications were made in the second version to enhance face validity and construct validity of the motivation scale. For example, an item which was originally written as "I feel I belong to a Chinese learning community" was revised as "I feel I have a supportive community for Chinese study", in order to correctly measure the possible positive impact of the experience with a learning community on the participants' motivation.

As for the reliability of the scale, a pilot study with a test-retest method was carried out with a small group of Chinese learners who were similar to the target group in terms of age, educational experience, and overall Chinese learning experience but with slightly higher proficiency in Chinese. The test and the retest were two weeks apart. Fourteen participants in total took part in the pilot study. However, due to absences on either the test or the retest date, only 11 participants completed both the test and the retest. The data from the pilot test were submitted to SAS 9.2 for Pearson correlation tests. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, as the index of the test-retest reliability, was computed to assess the relationship between the test score and the retest score for each of the three motivation subscales. A correlation of 0.7 or higher was considered satisfactory (Nunnally, 1978). The results indicated that the test-retest reliability for the ought-to L2 self subscale was satisfactory ($r = .87$, $n = 11$, $p = .0005$), but the reliabilities for the L2 learning experience subscale ($r = .68$, $n = 11$, $p = .0203$) and the ideal L2 self subscale ($r = .54$, $n = 11$, $p = .0897$) were slightly less than satisfactory. Thus, it was necessary to make further revisions to these two subscales.

In order to identify the problematic items in the L2 learning experience and the ideal L2 self subscales, the test-retest reliability coefficient of each item in these two subscales was computed, and a backward procedure was employed to eliminate the problematic items. That is, for each of these two subscales, the item with the worst test-retest reliability coefficient was eliminated, and the test-retest reliability

of the subscale with the remaining items was recomputed. The same procedure was repeated until the test-retest reliability of the subscale reached the satisfactory level. As a result, one item ("I enjoy learning Chinese with other learners") was eliminated from the L2 learning experience subscale, and two items ("I can imagine in the future I'll need Chinese for further studies" and "Learning Chinese will be beneficial to my personal life ") were eliminated from the ideal L2 self subscale. The test-retest reliability for the final version of the L2 learning experience subscale was 0.74 ($n = 11$, $p = .0093$); for the final version of the ideal L2 self subscale, it was 0.73 ($n = 11$, $p = .0103$).

Thus, in the final version of the motivation scale, there were 18 items in total (see Appendix 1). The number of items in each subscale is reported in Table 5 below. The standardized Cronbach's alpha, as an index of internal consistency reliability, was also computed for each of the subscales and reported in Table 5. As shown below, the Cronbach's alpha reached the acceptable ($\alpha > .7$) or good ($\alpha > .8$) level (George & Mallery, 2003), except for the subscale of ideal L2 self in the retest. Even though the internal consistency reliability for the retest of the ideal L2 self was slightly lower than the acceptable level, considering that all the other internal consistency reliabilities, including the overall internal consistency, reached an acceptable or higher level, the researcher moved forward with the current motivation scale to collect data. Post hoc analysis after the data collection about the internal consistency of the subscales was carried out and is discussed in Chapter Four.

Table 5 Composition of the Motivation Scale with Reliability Indices

	Number of Items	Possible range of scores	Test-retest reliability (Pearson *r*) n=11	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's α)	
				test	retest
L2 learning experience	6	6 to 36	.74**	.75	.80
Ideal L2 self	5	6 to30	.73*	.76	.66
Ought-to L2 self	7	6 to42	.87***	.79	.83
Total motivation score	18	6 to 108	.79**	.77	.83

Note: * = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001.

In addition to the motivation scale, in the pretest version of the questionnaire, there was a section which collects participants' background information such as cultural heritage, prior experience with sound recording technologies, and participation in online communities. This part was not intended to be a comprehensive capture of all aspects of participant' background information. Rather, only aspects relevant to this study were investigated, so that the whole questionnaire was not too long and the completion of it would not be too much of an imposition to the participants. See Appendix 1A for the pretest version of the questionnaire.

In the posttest version of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1B) administered at the end of the online project, there was a short answer question which elicited participants' open-ended responses to a question concerning what features of the online project that participants found motivating or demotivating. The question read as follows:

> Please reflect on your experience in the past few weeks about the online learning community project. List at least one feature/aspect of the project that you found motivating for your Chinese study and at least one that you found demotivating.

Finally, it is worth noting that, because the questionnaire asked participants questions about their personal opinions and motivational factors for Chinese study, a survey identification number was preassigned and distributed to each student by the researcher before administering the pretest version of the questionnaire, in order to protect participants' privacy and to promote sincere answers to these questions. The participants wrote down their survey number on the pretest and the posttest of the questionnaire. The researcher kept the document that linked the survey identification numbers with participants' names in order to select the four representative individuals for follow-up interviews. The participants were assured that strict confidentiality would be observed for this document as well as their answers to the

questionnaire. It was expected that this step was able to increase the accuracy and sincerity of participants' answers to the questionnaire items.

Interviews

For the second level of the study – the individual level, semi-structured interviews, combined with the individuals' online posts and weekly reflective journals, were used to get in-depth information about the individual experiences and perceptions. The interviews were to explore how the four selected individuals, given different heritage backgrounds and prior technology experiences, had perceived the online project and how their participation in this online project might have impacted their motivation. Guiding questions for the interviews included:

1. What are the three words you would use to describe your experience with the online project? Please explain.
2. What are the major factors that have impacted your experience in this online project?
3. (for Chinese-heritage individuals) In what way has your Chinese-heritage background impacted your experience in this online project?
4. In what way do you think your prior technology experience has impacted your experience in this online project?
5. Did the project have any influence on your learning in the Chinese class? If yes, in what way?
6. Do you think the online project has any influence on your motivation for your future Chinese study? If yes, in what way?

Based on the content of the online posts and the weekly journals of a specific individual, these general questions were tailored, and more individualized questions were added. For example, an individual mentioned that she considered Cantonese as her first language and English as her second language. An individualized question about this participant was added into the interview questions with her about her proficiency in Cantonese and her experiences in using these two languages in everyday life. New questions either emerged during the interviews as a result of what the individuals had responded or based on information gathered from their weekly reflective journals and online posts. During the interviews, the researcher used member check techniques such as restating and summarizing what the individuals had said and asking the participant to confirm the accuracy of the researcher's understanding of their responses. This was to enhance the accuracy and credibility of the qualitative data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each of the interviews lasted half an hour to an hour and was audio recorded and transcribed later for analysis. The interviews took place in the researcher's private office.

Data Collection Procedures

After this proposal was approved and the IRB approval was obtained in the Spring 2010 semester, students enrolled in Chinese II were asked to complete the pretest version of the questionnaire, which included the motivation scale and the section about heritage background and prior technology experience. Shortly after the

administration of the pretest version of the questionnaire, the online learning community project was launched, and it lasted for four weeks. Details about the online project are discussed earlier in this chapter, and the specific tasks of the online project can be found in Appendix 5.

At the beginning of the last week of the online project, the researcher invited individuals for the follow-up interviews. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, four individuals were selected to serve respectively as the case of a Chinese heritage learner experienced in using technologies, the case of a Chinese heritage learner inexperienced in using technologies, the case of a non-Chinese heritage learner experienced in using technologies, and the case of a non-Chinese heritage learner inexperienced in using technologies. When more than one individual met the criteria for any case, the one who had participated the most in the online community, as reflected by the number of their posts as well as by the content of their weekly reflective journals, was selected to serve as the case in question, for reasons mentioned above in the *Participants* section. The researcher tracked all their posts in the online community by using the search function in this online community (see Appendix 4C) and examined their weekly reflective journals. If any excerpts in the online posts and journals were related to the individual's heritage background, prior technology experience, experience with the online project, and motivation in learning Chinese, the researcher discussed these excerpts with the individual during the semi-structured interview.

The week immediately after the completion of the online project, the posttest version of the questionnaire was administered to the participants. This version of the questionnaire included the motivation scale and an open-ended question about the specific motivating and demotivating features of the online project. After that, the four selected individuals were interviewed, each for half an hour to an hour, in the researcher's private office. Guiding questions, as listed in the previous section, as well as identified excerpts from their online posts and weekly journals, were discussed. Questions that emerged from the individuals' responses during the interviews were also addressed. During the interview, the researcher used member check techniques such as restating or summarizing the individuals' responses and requesting confirmation of accuracy to enhance the accuracy and credibility of the qualitative data. The interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed. Figure 5 below is a summary of the data collection procedures for this study.

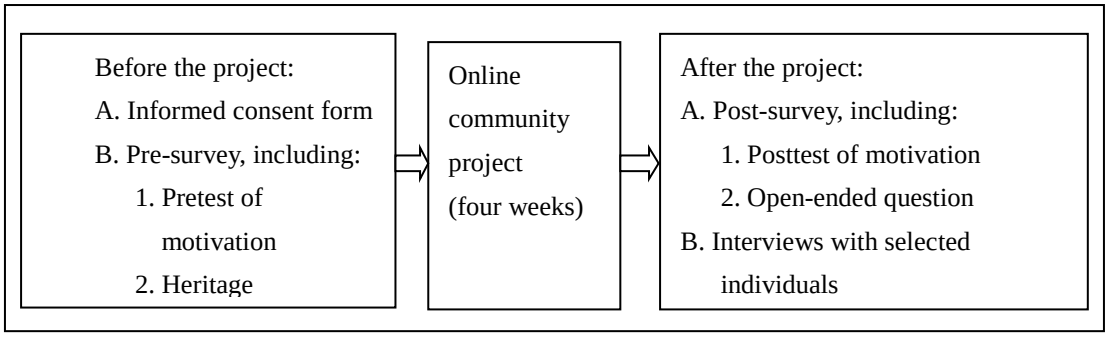

Figure 5 Flowchart of Data Collection

Data Analysis

Data collected from the pretest questionnaire about the participants' background were first analyzed by using descriptive statistics, to give an overview of the participants. Gender, cultural/racial heritage, and prior technology experience were treated as nominal variables, and frequency for each category were calculated. Age was treated as an interval variable, and the range and the mean were computed.

Research Question 1

RQ1 (i.e.: Is there any significant difference in students' motivation, as conceived in the L2 motivational self system, before and after the online learning community project?) was answered by addressing the following three sub-questions:

RQ 1.1. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ideal L2 self before and after the online project?

The null hypothesis was that there is no significant difference in students' scores on ideal L2 self before and after the online project.

RQ. 1.2. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ought-to L2 self before and after the online project?

The null hypothesis was that there is no significant difference in students' scores on ought-to L2 self before and after the online project.

RQ. 1.3. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on L2 learning experience before and after the online project?

The null hypothesis was that there is no significant difference in students' scores on L2 learning experience before and after the online project.

For each of these sub-questions, the independent variable (IV) was the test condition, which was a nominal variable with one level being the pre-intervention test condition and the other post-intervention test condition. The dependent variable (DV) was their scores from the motivation subscales on the questionnaire, which was treated as an interval variable. The possible range for the DV was from 6 to 36 for the L2 learning experience subscale, 6 to 30 for the ideal L2 self, and 6 to 42 for the ought-to L2 self (see Table 5 above for the composition of each subscale).

Participants' responses in the pretest and posttest of the motivation scale, which consisted of 18 six-point Likert scale items, were converted to numerical scores. A response of "strongly agree" at one of the 6-point scale was scored as 6, with the scores decreasing along the scale from 5, 4, 3, 2 till the other end of the scale "Strongly disagree" as 1. For item 2 (*I feel "lonely"/"isolated" when learning Chinese because not many other people learn Chinese*), which was a statement of a demotivating L2 learning experience, responses were converted in the reversed way (i.e. "strongly disagree" as 6 and "strongly agree" as 1). Each participant received a total score for each of the three aspects of motivation (i.e. L2 learning experience, L2 ideal self, and L2 ought-to self) in each (pretest or posttest) version of the questionnaire. Higher scores indicated higher levels of motivation. The possible range of scores was from 6 to 36 for the L2 learning experience subscale, 6 to 30 for the ideal L2 self, and 6 to 42 for the ought-to L2 self. Then, the participants' scores from the pretest and the posttest for each of the three subscales were submitted to

SAS for a paired *t*-test to examine if there was any significant difference in each aspect of motivation between the pretest and posttest. The alpha level was set at .05, as it is the commonly used alpha level in educational research.

In order to give some estimates of the effect of the online program on the participants' motivation, effect size of the *t*-test for each of the three subscales was computed, using the equation $d= t_c[2(1-r)/n]^{½}$ suggested by Dunlap, Cortina, Vaslow, and Burke (1996) for paired *t*-tests. In this equation, t_c is the t value for the particular paired *t*-test; r is the correlation across the pairs of scores; n is the sample size for the *t*-test.

The assumptions underlying paired *t*-tests include normality and independence. However, *t*-tests are relatively robust to the normality assumption. But as a common practice in educational research, the kurtosis and the skewness of the score distribution were conducted and reported to determine normality of that data. As for the assumption of independence, the pair difference (i.e. the change in a participant's motivation scores from the pretest to the posttest) was independent from each other. Thus the third assumption was met based on the design of the study.

Research Question 2

RQ2 (i.e. What features of the online project do the participants find motivating and what features demotivating?) was answered by analyzing participants' responses to the short answer question included in the posttest version

of the questionnaire. Data were entered and coded in Microsoft Excel. Major themes in the responses were generated by using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The double coding method suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used to enhance the accuracy of the themes generated. An advanced student in the same doctoral program as the researcher was invited to co-code the data. The co-rater had taken courses in qualitative research methods and participated in research projects that utilized the constant comparative method. Thus the co-rater was experienced with qualitative data coding. The researcher and the co-rater first worked independently to read all the responses and code the data. Then they categorized similar units of meaning together and constantly compared among categories. Similar categories were collapsed to one, while a category with too diverse units of meaning resulted in new categories. Once the two co-raters individually generated a list of all the categories, the two co-raters met to compare their lists and solve the disagreements on their categories by precisely defining each category. After achieving a common set of categories with a precise definition for each, the two co-raters used the new list of amended categories to recode the data. The amended list of categories provided the answer to the research question. The inter-rater reliability of the final coding was calculated and is reported in Chapter Four.

Research Question 3

RQ3 (i.e. How do the selected individuals from different heritage and technology backgrounds perceive the online project experience and the influence of the project on their motivation?) was answered by analyzing the interview data. After the individuals for the interviews were selected, the researcher tracked and saved all the posts in the online community by these individuals in a Microsoft Word document. For each of them, a profile was created to include information gathered from the background information section in the pretest as well as from their posts and weekly journals. Based on their profiles, events discerned by the researcher as related to the individual's heritage background, prior technology experience, their experience with the online project, and their motivation in learning Chinese, were used to generate individualized questions, which were discussed together with the generic guiding questions during the interview.

A narrative analysis approach (Reissman, 1993) was taken by the researcher to describe the four selected individuals' backgrounds and their perception of this online project, because, as Reissman proposed, the narrative analysis approach is "appropriate for oral first-person accounts of experience that take a particular form" (p.69). The major steps in this approach included: 1) attending to experience, 2) telling about experience, 3) transcribing experience, 4) analyzing experience, and 5) reading experience.

The present study utilized the five steps in the following way. For the first step, the selected individuals attended to their experiences by reflecting, remembering, and recollecting what had happened during the four weeks of the project. For the second step, the individuals told the researcher about their experience during the interviews. The researcher tried to elicit their responses by asking open-ended questions and listening with a minimum of interruptions. For the third step, the researcher recorded and transcribed the interviews.

For the fourth step, the researcher re-listened to the recording and re-read the transcription multiple times and tried to identify the critical and essential information during the interviews, in order to create "a metastory about what happened by telling what the interview narratives signify, editing and reshaping what was told, and turning it into a hybrid story" (Ressman, 1993, p. 13). In identifying the critical and essential information in the interview data, the researched relied heavily on the focus of the research question. That is, the information about the individual heritage and technology backgrounds and their experience of this project and their motivation toward Chinese study was given ultimate attention in analyzing the data. Possible connections among the individuals' changes in motivation, experience of the online project, heritage background, prior technology experience, and possibly other individual factors were explored (see Chapter Four). For the last step, the researcher shared the summaries and excerpts of the interview

data with the dissertation committee and their comments were considered and incorporated in the final draft.

During the transcribing stage, VoiceWalker (http://www.linguistics.ucsb.edu/projects/transcription/tools.html), a software program was used to help the researcher in managing and playing back the recordings in a controlled way for transcribing. During the analyzing stage, Nvivo (http://www.qsrinternational.com/products_nvivo.aspx), a qualitative data analysis program, was used to organize the transcripts and manage the excerpts.

Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Data

As the qualitative aspect of this study, the inquiry of RQ2 and RQ3 was conducted with consideration of trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (1985) pointed out that the trustworthiness of a qualitative inquiry can be established by addressing these four issues: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility concerns how "credible" the interpretation of the original data gathered from the participants is. Transferability is the degree to which the findings of this inquiry can apply beyond the bounds of the study. Dependability focuses on how the integrated processes of data collection, data analysis, and conclusion generation are audited. Confirmability concerns how well the inquiry's findings are supported by the data collected.

For credibility, three strategies were employed in this study. Member checking was conducted during the interview process; a co-rater was invited for theme generating for RQ2; and different types of data (i.e. interviews, online posts, weekly journals, and responses in the questionnaire) were used to make the inquiries for these four individuals for RQ 3. For transferability, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), a thick description of the setting of the study, the online project, the background of participants, and their participation in this online project was used to allow the readers to make informed decisions about whether they can transfer the conclusions of this inquiry to other cases. For dependability, the researcher relied on my dissertation committee to audit and examine the various stages of my inquiry. They provided feedback and suggestions based on their extensive professional experience of supervising doctoral dissertation studies. For confirmability, the researcher included a detailed record of the inquiry process in the dissertation and kept copies of all recorded interviews, transcripts, and documents of the online posts and weekly journals.

Summary

This chapter discussed the concurrent transformative mixed method design of the study with two layers of analysis (i.e. the group level and the individual level). Different sections reported information about the participants, the setting of the study, the rationale for choosing the online project, the specific tasks of the online

project, the construction and the revision of the motivation scale, and the selection criteria for the individuals for the interviews. Particularly, steps to enhance the validity and reliability of the motivation scale were discussed. Data Collection section described the procedures and timeframe for the data collection. Data Analysis section presented the methods to analyze data for each of the three research questions. The trustworthiness of the qualitative part of the study was also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of this study in the order of the research questions (RQs). For RQ 1, a quantitative question in nature, both descriptive and inferential statistics are reported. For RQ 2, themes generated by the two co-raters from the participants' responses are listed and summarized, and inter-rater reliability of coding is reported. For RQ 3, a detailed description of the four individuals and their perceptions of the online project and its possible impact on their motivation is provided. A summary of the results is presented at the end of the chapter.

Results for Research Question 1

RQ 1. Is there any significant difference in students' motivation, as conceived in the L2 motivational self system, before and after the online learning community project?

RQ 1.1. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ideal L2 self before and after the online project?

The null hypothesis was that there is no significant difference in students' scores on ideal L2 self before and after the online project.

RQ. 1.2. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ought-to L2 self before and after the online project?

The null hypothesis was that there is no significant difference in

students' scores on ought-to L2 self before and after the online project.

RQ. 1.3. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on L2 learning experience before and after the online project?

The null hypothesis was that there is no significant difference in students' scores on L2 learning experience before and after the online project.

Descriptive Statistics

RQ1 consists of three sub-questions, because there are three aspects of motivation (ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience) according to the L2 motivational self system. For each sub-question, the independent variable was the test condition (i.e. pretest or posttest), and the dependent variable was the participants' scores for that particular aspect of the motivation from the questionnaire. The number of data entries was 44, except that the ideal L2 self subscale in the pretest missed one data point due to the fact that one participant did not provide an answer for one item in that subscale. The descriptive statistics for each of the three motivational aspects in the pretest and posttest are summarized in Table 6 below. As revealed by the relatively small degrees of skewness and kurtosis, the distributions of the scores did not excessively deviate from normal distribution.

Table 6 Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Motivational Scores

		n	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Ideal L2 self	Pretest	43	25.93	3.91	-0.89	-0.08

(Maximum score: 30)	Posttest	44	25.91	3.61	-0.91	-0.09
Ought-to L2 self	Pretest	44	17.98	5.65	1.20	1.62
(Maximum score: 42)	Posttest	44	18.25	6.28	1.25	1.51
L2 learning experience	Pretest	44	27.84	5.67	-0.28	-0.67
(Maximum score: 36)	Posttest	44	29.05	5.34	-0.84	-0.98

Because the maximum scores for the three aspects varied due to the different number of items in each aspect, the means reported above did not directly reveal the relative strength of the participants' motivation in the three aspects. In order to demonstrate the relative strength of scores across the three aspects, the means were converted into percentages. A visual representation of the percentage of the means for each aspect can be found in Figure 6 below.

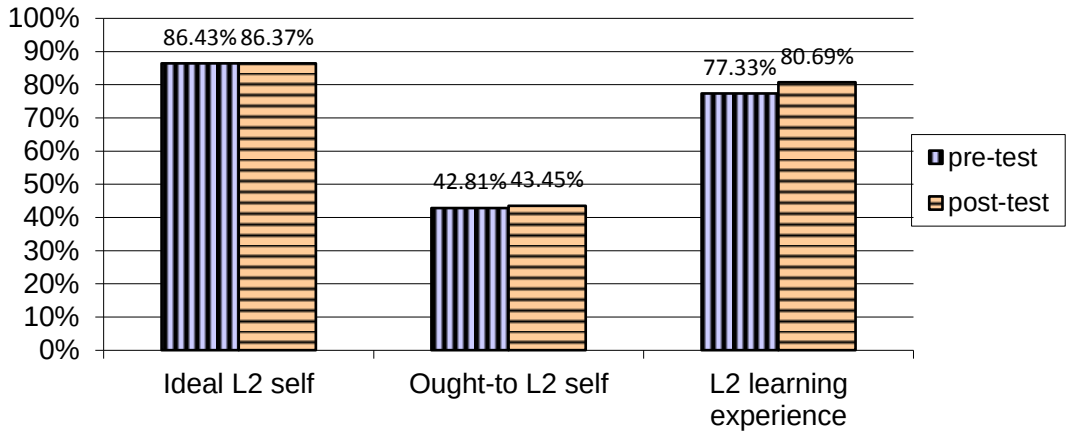

Figure 6 Percentages of Mean Scores for Three Motivational Aspects

As revealed above, for ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience, the distributions of scores from both the pretest and the posttest were negatively skewed (see Table 6), and the percentages were high (see Figure 6). This indicated that the

participants had a relatively strong motivation in aspects of ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience both before and after the project. As for ought-to L2 self, the distributions of scores for both the pretest and the posttest were positively skewed, and the percentages were low, which indicated that this aspect of motivation (i.e. ought-to L2 self) was relatively low both before and after the project. The possible interpretations for this finding are discussed in Chapter Five.

Inferential Statistics

After examining the descriptive statistics of the scores, the researcher proceeded to inferential statistics to identify if there was any significant difference between the pre and posttest scores. For each of the three sub-questions, a paired *t*-test was conducted. The alpha level was set at .05. The effect size *d* was also computed for each *t*-test, in order to provide estimates about how large the effect was. The method to compute the effect size for the paired *t*-tests was discussed in Chapter Three.

For the first sub-question, the null hypothesis was that there was no significant difference in the participants' scores on ideal L2 self before and after the online project. The results revealed that there was no significant difference between the pre and posttest scores, $t(42) = -0.28$, $p > .05$, d=0.05. In this case, the results failed to reject the null hypothesis, and the effect size, d=0.05, did not reach even the level of small effect size 0.2, as set by Cohen (1992).

For the second sub-question, the null hypothesis was that there was no significant difference in the participants' scores on ought-to L2 self before and after the online project. The results revealed that there was no significant difference between the pre and posttest scores, $t(43) = -0.45$, $p > .05$, d=0.05. Thus, we failed to reject the null hypothesis, and the effect size, d=0.05, did not reach even the level of small effect size 0.2, as set by Cohen (1992).

For the third sub-question, the null hypothesis was that there was no significant difference in the participants' scores on L2 learning experience before and after the online project. The results revealed that there was a significant difference between the pre and posttest scores, $t(43) = -2.33$, $p < .05$, d=0.22. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected at .05 level of significance. The effect size, d=0.22, was small, according to Cohen (1992). Table 7 below summarizes the *t*-test statistics for the three sub-questions.

Table 7 Paired *t*-test Statistics for the Three Motivational Aspects

Variable	Paired *t*-test statistics						
	t	df	*p*	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95% Confidence Interval of the Diff.	
						Lower	Upper
Ideal L2 self	-0.28	42	0.78	0.12	0.41	-0.72	0.95
Ought-to L2 self	-0.45	43	0.65	-0.27	0.60	-1.49	0.94
L2 learning experience	-2.33	43	0.02	-1.20	0.52	-2.25	-0.16

As indicated by the results reported above, a significant difference between the pretest and the posttest only existed for L2 learning experience, while for the other two motivational aspects – idea L2 self and ought-to L2 self, there was no significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. Possible interpretations of this finding are provided in Chapter Five.

To provide more information about the reliability of the instrument, post hoc internal consistency analyses were carried out. Table 8 below reports the standardized Cronbach's alphas for the *post hoc* internal consistency analyses. As revealed, all the Cronbach's alphas reached the acceptable ($\alpha > .7$) or good ($\alpha > .8$) level (George & Mallery, 2003), except for the subscale of ought-to L2 self in the pretest. Thus, overall the instrument had acceptable internal consistency.

Table 8 *Post hoc* Analysis of Internal Consistency

	Number of Items	Possible range of scores	n	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's α)	
				Pretest	Posttest
L2 learning experience	6	6 to 36	43	.82	.82
Ideal L2 self	5	6 to30	44	.79	.76
Ought-to L2 self	7	6 to42	44	.66	.74
Total motivation score	18	6 to 108	43	.80	.82

Results for Research Question 2

RQ 2. What features of the online project do the students find motivating and what features demotivating?

Inter-rater Reliability

The second research question was answered by analyzing the participants' responses to the short answer questions on the posttest questionnaire. Data were entered and coded in Microsoft Excel. The constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to generate the themes that emerged from the data. A co-rater who was experienced with the constant comparative method was invited to co-code the data. The double coding method (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was utilized as the guideline for co-coding the data. That is, the researcher and the co-rater first worked independently to read all the responses and generated a list of

themes. Then, they met to compare their lists and solve the disagreements on their themes by giving examples and defining each theme. After achieving a common set of themes, the two co-raters used the new list of agreed-upon themes to re-code the data.

As an index of inter-rater reliability, the percent of agreement was calculated for both the initial coding and the recoding stages. The percent of agreement was calculated by dividing the times of agreement between the two inter-raters in assigning the themes by the combination of the times of agreement plus the times of disagreement in assigning the themes (Berk, 1979). The inter-rater reliability for the initial coding was 79% and 72% for the motivating features and demotivating features respectively. As a result of the discussion and refinement of the themes, the team reached 100% inter-rater reliability for the final coding in assigning the responses to the agreed-upon themes.

Motivating Features

The final agreed-upon themes for the participants' responses about the motivating features of this online community project as well as the frequency of each theme mentioned by the participants are listed in Table 9. There were 64 codes identified in the participants' responses for motivating features, which were then categorized by the two co-raters into 10 themes. The themes are listed in order of frequency of codes from high to low.

Table 9 Themes that Emerged from Participants' Responses about the Motivating Features

Themes of motivating features of the online project	Frequency
Learning resources & tools • "many resources & tools to explore" • "access to online resources" • "there are a lot of good resources & study tips"	15
Knowing the existence of a large number of people who are also learning Chinese and opportunities to connect to them • "it's motivating to see so many people interested in Chinese" • "there are a lot of people out there learning Chinese culture" • "gives a chance to connect to people one might never have encountered otherwise"	11
Feedback from & interactions with others, including getting others' opinions/advice • "getting other people's experience & advice" • "others can help you with pronunciation & tone"	10
Opportunities to pursue personal interests in Chinese culture or related topics • "getting information about the country and visiting the country" • "interesting topics"	7
Pronunciation sample activity (i.e. opportunities to practice pronunciation/tones) • "I really like the recordings & feedback" • "to post voice samples to work on tones"	6
Reading about others' experiences of learning Chinese • " I saw others did learn Chinese immediately and it was encouraging" • "viewing others from my class, their performance"	6
Generic positive comments on the online project • "forums are useful"	3

Friendly and helpful community/people • "people were so helpful online"	3
Comments about Chinese language learning in general, rather than specific about the online project • "learning Mandarin is useful"	2
Ease of technology use • "ease of access"	1
Total number of codes:	64

As reported above, the most frequently mentioned motivating features of the project, mentioned by 10 or more participants out of 44, included that: 1) the online community provided the participants with useful learning resources and tools; 2) through this project, the participants became aware of the existence of a large number of people who are also learning Chinese and felt that they were provided the opportunities to connect to them; and 3) the participants were able to receive feedback from and interact with other members in this online community. Some of the other motivating features mentioned included opportunities to pursue personal interests in Chinese culture or related topics, opportunities to practice pronunciation and tones, opportunities to read about others' experiences of learning Chinese, and friendliness of the members in this community.

Demotivating Features

There were 55 codes of demotivating features identified from the participants' responses to the open-ended question. These codes were then categorized by the two

co-rater into to 14 themes using the coding method describe earlier in this chapter. The final agree-upon themes for demotivating features and the frequency for each theme are listed in Table 10, in order of frequency from high to low.

Table 10 Themes that Emerged from Participants' Responses about the Demotivating Features

Themes of demotivating features of the online project	Frequency
Generic negative comments on the pronunciation sample tasks • "the repeated recordings we were required to post"	8
Lack of organization or functionality of the website/forums • "the forum was kind of confusing to navigate"	7
Technology barrier • "the audio clip posting - the new software & technology was a barrier for me"	6
Lack of time • "I also work & aiming graduate school so I had limited time to assistance outside of class"	6
Volume of work • "it was just too much work"	5
Overwhelming amount of information • "a lot of unnecessary info"	4
Lack of posting etiquette by peers or unsupportive/rude comments from other members of this online community • "harsh comments and criticisms of the forum users"	4
Language barrier • "When people reply to recordings, they respond in Characters Hanzi. My reading isn't that strong so am not sure what is being corrected."	3
Doubt on the accuracy of the information or the qualification of the members who provided the info in this community • "people who helps you might not always be a professor"	3

Lack of in-class reminders for a project like this one that is not part of the regular face-to-face class • "need more reminders about deadlines when not part of regular course curriculum"	2
Incompatibility with individual learning styles/beliefs/perceptions • "I am not a forums type of person... It just was not for me."	2
Irrelevance or inappropriate difficulty level of the topics • "felt some topics were too advance"	1
Difficulty to gain membership of the community by new users • " 'sense of community' that is hard to break if you are a new user"	1
Comments about Chinese language learning in general, rather than specific about the online project • "hard to completely learn the language"	1
Total number of codes:	55

As revealed by the results reported above, there were fewer codes identified for demotivating features than for the motivating features. Regarding the themes that emerged from the codes about the demotivating aspects of the online project, except some generic comments on the pronunciation sample activity as being demotivating, the most frequently mentioned themes were: 1) lack of organization or functionality of the forums, 2) technology barrier, 3) lack of time, and 4) volume of work involved in completing this project. Other themes mentioned about the demotivating aspects of the online project included the overwhelming amount of information, rude comments from other members in this online community, language barrier, doubt on accuracy of information provided by other members in this community, lack of

reminders for this project in face-to-face class, and incompatibility with individual learning style.

Results for Research Question 3

RQ 3. How do the selected individuals from different heritage and technology backgrounds perceive the online project experience and the influence of the project on their motivation?

This qualitative question was answered by interviewing four selected individual participants with different heritage and technology backgrounds. Questions about their heritage background, parents' influence on their Chinese study, their experience of the technology aspect of the project, and their perception of the project and its impact their motivation towards learning Chinese were asked and discussed during the interviews. Some individualized questions that were based on the interviewees' responses to questions asked earlier in the interview process or on their reflective journals and online posts were also discussed by the researcher and the interviewees. A narrative analysis approach (Reissman, 1993) was adopted to collect and analyze the data, as described in Chapter Three. In the following report of the results for this question, rich description was used to provide detailed information about the individuals and the contexts. A mixture of summaries of the content of the data and direct quotes of the individuals' speech were used to present the essential information in order to answer the research question. Each individual

was reported separately, and a summary of the four cases was presented at the end of this section.

Jessica

Jessica's Profile

Jessica was an international business senior. She was a heritage speaker of Cantonese and an experienced user of sound recording programs. Though born in the U.S., she learned Cantonese at home as her first language. She did not start learning English until kindergarten. She still spoke mostly Cantonese with her parents at home. Her father's family was originally from southern China and emigrated to Vietnam and then to the U.S., and because of this rich immigration history of his family, Jessica's father spoke Mandarin, Hakka (a dialect of the Chinese language), Cantonese, Vietnamese, and English fluently. Jessica's mother immigrated to the U.S. from Hong Kong, so she spoke Cantonese and English fluently and understood Mandarin to some extent. During the interview, Jessica mentioned that sometimes she practiced the drills for the Chinese class with her parents at home.

Regarding her prior technology skills with the sound recording programs, Jessica mentioned that she had been using Sound Recorder in Windows for various purposes before the project. She commented, "I just assume everybody knew how to use sound recorder. I didn't think it as a great challenge or anything. As I use it all

the time. It wasn't hard. I use it to take notes in class, hmm, record a professor ..." So she found the technical part of this project was neither difficult nor fancy for her.

During the interview, Jessica stated that her heritage background was one of the major reasons that she chose to take Chinese, and she believed that knowing Cantonese would make it easier for her to learn Mandarin Chinese:

> "Because when you ... when you speak Cantonese and you pick Chinese, you think 'oh, this is going to be really easy, the words are similar.' But then you realize that the tones are different. But the words... it's easy for us to get the definition and the meaning and then the structure and the culture. But it's just the tones that are different. So I'm constantly reminded in Chinese II, it's just my tone. It did help that and... it's easy to know the words. We used to learn the words. In Chinese I, I used to call my mom and read the words that I learned that night. It helps that knowing and having that very background."

She also mentioned that her parents "wanted", though not "expected", her to study Chinese, and they were excited to know that she chose to take Chinese in college. Another reason that she chose to take Chinese was related to her major in international business and her future career plans. She anticipated that she would

need to use Chinese in the future, so she "would rather to do it now than having to do it later".

During the four weeks of the online project, Jessica submitted her reflective journals on time each week. Her journals covered all the items listed in the writing prompts (see Appendix 5). She made fours posts in the online community, three of which were required for the pronunciation sample activity and one of her own personal interest.

Jessica's Perception of Experience

When asked to use three words to summarize her overall experience with this online project at the beginning of the interview, Jessica used "overwhelming, outside, and repetitive". She continued to explain that it was overwhelming because "there's so much information and there are so many forums. And I actually clicked on one of the forums. You didn't know which one you want to click on. So it's just a lot." By "outside", she expressed her feeling that it was hard for her as a newcomer to gain the membership in this community, because "everyone already knows everyone on that site" and it was hard to "connect to it". By "repetitive', she referred to her impression that many of the topics discussed in the online community were similar and "people ask the same questions".

Jessica's description of her experience seemed to be negative to some extent at the beginning of the interview. However, towards the latter part of the interview,

she started to share her positive experience with this project as well. She commented "it was fun clicking at first ... it's really fun looking at it...", "I still think there is a positive experience, 'cause I know that resources are out there. If I ever need to use them, they're there." It was interesting that she even reflected on her own learning style when commenting on why this type of online community project might not be the best for her. She stated, "I think, when I wrote my last journal, if you are really an independent learner, it's not really good for you, it's a community thing. So for me, I only did it because I had to do it for the lab. I guess it helps other people who like to learn with help and a group of people."

When asked the possible influence of this online project on her motivation to study Chinese in the future, Jessica commented that there was no big difference. She explained that she was already highly motivated and was already "looking forward to the Chinese class everyday".

Henry

Henry's Profile

Henry, a sophomore business major, was a Chinese heritage learner with less experience in sound recording. Henry's parents immigrated to the U.S. from Hong Kong and raised four children, including Henry, in the U.S. The main language used at home was Cantonese. Henry said that all four children had no problem understanding Cantonese and spoke mostly Cantonese to their parents. His parents also understood Mandarin to some extent. In terms of technology skills, he indicated

that he had never heard of these sound recording programs at all at the beginning of the project, so he was identified as an inexperienced technology user for this study.

When asked about the reasons why he chose to take Chinese in college, he said, "I know Mandarin is more influential, popular in China than Cantonese ... I want to learn Mandarin so that I can kind of just learn both, because they are very similar just the tones are a little different. Sometimes I can tell what words are said. I can translate both." When asked about his parents' expectation and reaction to his decision of taking Chinese in college, he claimed that they didn't have any expectation for him to take Chinese but they were happy after knowing that he decided to take Chinese.

During the four weeks of the project, Henry submitted three reflective journals out of the required four. He also missed one pronunciation sample post. However, he made a post on the topic about the life in a Chinese university where he was going to attend for the summer study abroad program. It seemed that he was more interested in topics of his own choice than those outlined in the project.

Henry's Perception of Experience

When asked to use three words to summarize his experience of the online project, Henry used "helpful, fun, and feedback". In his follow-up explanation, he blended "helpful" and "feedback" together in his comments like these: "As I am posting [pronunciation samples] online, I am getting feedback from other people.

It's exciting to hear what I am doing wrong and what I'm doing right." He mentioned that he also read feedback for his classmates and found it was helpful to learn from others' mistakes as well. He continued to explain, "I had fun recording myself and listening to myself... it's better than just reading and speaking into a room when no one is there to have feedback."

As for the technological aspects of the project, despite the fact that Henry had never heard of or used the sound recording programs before the project, it seemed that overall he had a smooth process of acquiring the technology skills involved in this project and had enjoyed the process, though he did have to spend some time getting familiar with the technologies at the beginning. For example, he had to borrow a microphone from a friend and spend some time to figure it out and test it, and the first recording he posted in the community was too low in volume so he did not receive much feedback from other community members. However, throughout the process, he gradually acquired these technology skills and found it fun to record and listen to himself.

When asked about the possible impact of the project on his motivation towards learning Chinese, Henry commented that knowing the existence of such a resource was motivating to him. But he also added that he was already highly motivated towards learning Chinese, so this project was "just a bonus" in terms of motivation.

Matthew

Matthew's Profile

Matthew was a junior student of non-Chinese heritage with advanced technology skills in sound recording. He identified himself as "German" and mentioned that he had lived in Germany and Spain for a long time, so he spoke German and Spanish fluently in addition to English. When asked why he chose to take Chinese, Matthew mentioned that one of the major reasons was that he enjoyed traveling to different places in the world and was hoping to visit China in the near future. He also mentioned that since he already spoke a few Germanic and Romance languages, he thought that it would be interesting to learn Chinese since it was a quite different one from those he already spoke. Matthew also commented, when asked about his impression of the difficulty level of learning these different languages, "from what I have learned so far, the grammar is not too difficult in Chinese. It's more the tones and the pronunciation. The English comparatively, or German, or any other languages ... the grammar structures are a lot more complex; it has a lot gender differences, tenses, everything ..." In terms of technology skills in sound recording, Matthew mentioned that even before this project, he had been using Audacity and SoundRecorder for some time, so he was categorized as an advanced technology user for this study.

When asked about his parents' expectation and influence on his decision to take Chinese, his answer was similar to those two heritage learners above, even though he was not of Chinese heritage. He said that his parents did not have any

expectation for him to take Chinese, but they were happy to know that he decided to take it.

During the online project, Matthew submitted four reflective journals, as required. His journals mostly covered the writing prompts provided by the researcher (see Appendix 5). He also made three online posts of his pronunciation sample, which were also required for the project.

Matthew's Perception of Experience

When asked to use three words to summarize his experience with this online project, Matthew used "interesting", "insightful", and "innovative". He continued to explain:

> "it was very nice to see the opinions of others, you know, the people who lived in China and so, what their experience was with moving over there, with getting a life and a credit card, with apartments and housing, you know, it was interesting and insightful, kind of goes into the same round... you got a nice general picture of how life would be if you were in China."

By "innovative", Matthew referred to "the new ways and innovative ways of learning languages", "the new resources like the flash cards", and some e-books. Matthew said that he started to use the flash card program introduced in this

community to help him review the characters he had learned in the Chinese class, and he also planned to read some of the electronic grader books shared in this online community in the summer to improve his reading skills.

Regarding his experience with the technology aspect of the project, Matthew commented that he had no problem at all using these programs, which was not surprising given that he had had some prior experience with sound recording. However, he did mention that when uploading the recorded files to the online community, he encountered some minor issues at first, such as exceeding the file size limit set on this site, so he had to redo his recording and adjust the file size in order to upload it there. But overall Matthew felt that the technology part of the project was very easy for him.

It was also worth noting that during the interview Matthew himself offered some critical thinking about both sides of using an online community project in a language class. One the one hand, he pointed out that an online project of this kind offered a less threatening environment for learners to practice their language skills, especially speaking skills. He commented, "I mean, that's online, and you don't know the people, I think it makes you less shy... my voice is out there, but it doesn't really matter to me, I'm not really standing in front of them. So that was a little easier to talk." On the other hand, based on his own language experience, he believed that, compared to face-to-face situations, the online community could not provide enough opportunities for learners to engage in real-life interactions. For this,

he commented, "for me, language learning is you have to interact a lot with the people, something I think you cannot really do online constantly."

When asked about the possible impact of this online project on his motivation toward learning Chinese, Matthew's response was positive. He explained that he worried about if it would take too long for him to become fluent in Chinese. By reading some of the posts and learning from other members' real-life experiences, it was encouraging for him that the task of learning Chinese was something achievable. He commented,

> "you always … you hear how you have to know three thousand something characters to read a newspaper, and how it takes eight years to learn Chinese. And you get worried if you are in the right place or not, and a lot of posts on the forum, they talked about their own experiences, and you know how they... at a point they may not know but after they went there ... after they study a little longer, they came fairly proficient in the language. So ... I thought that was encouraging, it was like... I get ... I'm not going to give up. I know that if I just keep going, it will work out..."

Anna

Anna's Profile

Anna was a freshman majoring in English and British literature. She identified herself as of Hispanic heritage. However, it should be noted that during the interview, she mentioned that her great grandfather was Chinese, but after two consecutive generations, they lost all ties to China, and no one in her family could speak Mandarin or any other dialect of Chinese fluently. For this reason, she was still considered as a non-Chinese heritage speaker in this study. Regarding her prior experience and skills in sound recording programs, Anna categorized herself as an inexperienced user of the sound recording programs. She had never used any of these programs before the project.

When explaining the reasons why she chose to take Chinese, she emphasized that she was extremely interested in language and literature, as partially reflected by her choice of British and American literature as her major, so she wanted to study Chinese as well. She also mentioned that she anticipated that in the future Chinese would be useful in the workplace due to the fast growth of the Chinese economy. When asked about her parents' expectation about learning Chinese, she stated, "I don't think that [learning Chinese] even ever crossed my parents' mind ... I'm bilingual by the time I graduated from high school. So it's just another language that I'm adding."

During the online project, Anna submitted three reflective journals out of the required four. Other than addressing the writing prompts provided by the researcher,

she also expressed her interests in reading more translated Chinese literature in her journals. She made three online posts, all for the required pronunciation sample activity.

Anna's Perception of Experience

When asked to use three words to summarize her overall experience of this online project at the beginning of the interview, Anna used "interesting, insightful, and useful". She explained that she found the information provided through the discussion threads in this community very interesting. She commented, "I found a lot of materials that I spent numerous hours going through... it's kind quite like Wikipedia where you go on and you get lost remarkably. It's sort of like that one thing led to another, which led to another, and I found myself spending two or three hours on it." By "insightful", she explained that through this project she gained access to information about the Chinese culture and life in China that was provided mostly by other learners in this community, which offered a different perspective from what she usually learned in the face-to-face class. She commented, "...especially I knew some of them were students. And they were giving us advice on things what they've done already...just learning Chinese in general." By "useful", she mainly referred to the feedback she had received from other members in this online community. For example, she explained "... the feedback, specifically. I always have trouble with my tone. And from this website that I actually got the idea

of separating the vowels, the Roman alphabet, and learning them like that, and then inserting them back to the word. And I never looked at it from that ... and I liked that someone gave me that idea."

Even though quite inexperienced with the sound recording programs at the beginning of the project (she had never used one before), Anna commented that after spending an hour or so with the sound recording program Audacity at first, she became comfortable with it. Actually, during the interview, she mentioned that she started to apply the sound recording skills she acquired from this project to help herself with other tasks, such as practicing a song for a performance. She stated, "I'm not a pro at it. But I'm definitely comfortable using it. I was actually using it ... I'm trying to learn a song for the program tomorrow, and I actually recorded the song and slowed down a part of it through Audacity to listen to... It helped. I just learned more of the song than just listening to the song by myself." But she did mention that she had some minor problems with uploading the sound files to the forums at first, and it turned out to be a random problem with her Internet connection. However, overall her experience with technology in this project was "smooth and rewarding".

When asked the possible influence of this online project on her motivation to study Chinese in the future, her reaction was similar to Henry's. She commented, "I'm not going to say that it has a huge influence on it, because I'm already

self-motivated." However, she added, "but knowing that I have a community where I can go to gives a little extra push."

Summary of Findings for RQ3

The information from the interview data for the four selected individuals was quite rich, and each individual composed a unique case. In order to summarize the major findings for this research question, a visual representation of the essential information for the four selected individuals is offered in Table 11.

Table 11 Four Individuals' Perception of the Online Project

Individual's Profile	Overall Perception of the project	Perceived Experience of the technology part of the project	Perceived influence on motivation
Jessica, heritage learner with advanced tech skills	"overwhelming, outside, and repetitive"	neither difficult nor fancy	Already highly motivated, no big difference
Henry, heritage learner, inexperienced with technology	"helpful, fun, and feedback"	Overall a smooth process of acquiring the technology skills, though had to spend some time at the beginning to get familiar with the technology	Already highly motivated, no big difference, but knowing the existence of such a resource was "bonus"
Matthew,	"interesting,	Easy to use the	Encouraged by

non-heritage learner with advanced tech skills	insightful, and innovative"	sound recording programs, but also encountered some other technology issues, which he was able to figure out quickly	others' successful stories of learning Chinese
Anna, non-heritage learner, inexperienced with technology	"interesting, insightful, and useful"	A fast learner, overall had a "smooth and rewarding" experience using the sound recording programs	Already self-motivated, but knowing the existence of such a community gave "a little extra push"

As summarized above, Jessica, a heritage learner with advanced technology skills, perceived this online project in a mixed way. On the one hand, she summarized her experience as "overwhelming, outside, and repetitive". On the other hand, she also added that "it was fun clicking at first" and "there is a positive experience". Her experience of the technology part of the project was neither difficult nor fancy. As for the possible influence of this project on her motivation towards Chinese study, she stated that there was no big difference mostly because she was already highly motivated.

Henry, as a heritage learner with less technology experience, found this project to be "helpful" and "fun" and appreciated the feedback provided by other members in this online community. Though inexperienced with sound recording

programs, Henry gradually acquired the skills and found it fun to use the sound recording programs through this project. As for the possible influence of this project on his motivation, his response was similar to Jessica's in that he also claimed that there was no big difference since he was already highly motivated. But he added that knowing the existence of such a resource was a "bonus" for him in terms of motivation.

Matthew, a non-heritage learner with advanced technology skills, summarized his experience of this project as "interesting", "insightful", and "innovative". Though with advance technology skills, he encountered some problem with uploading the sound file to the website, which he figured out later. But overall, he felt that the technology aspect of the project was very easy for him. Regarding the possible influence of this project on his motivation towards learning Chinese, Matthew responded positively by commenting that he was assured by real examples of other members from this community that achieving high proficiency in Chinese was indeed achievable.

Anna, a non-heritage learner with less technology experience, commented on the project as "interesting, insightful, and useful". Starting with no experience with sound recording programs at all, Anna was a fast learner and quickly became comfortable with the program. She even started to use the program for her other projects as well towards the end of the online project. In terms of the possible influence of the online project on her motivation towards learning Chinese, Anna's

response was very similar to Henry's in that she also claimed herself as a highly motivated learner already, but knowing the existence of such a community gave her "a little extra push".

Despite the different backgrounds of the four individuals, some patterns seemed to be common across the four cases. Overall, the participants had a positive experience with the technology part of the project, no matter whether they had prior experience with sound recording programs or not. Three out of the four also perceived the online project positively, and the one that described her experience with this project negatively also offered some positive comments toward the latter part of the interview. Regarding the perceived influence of the project on their motivation, one individual commented that he was encouraged to continue with his Chinese study by reading others' successful stories through this project; two indicated that the project gave them a little extra push, but it was not a big difference; only one individual commented that there was no big difference. So generally speaking, the project had some limited positive impact on the individuals' motivation.

With respect to the background factors, for the four individuals, it seemed that their heritage and technology backgrounds alone were not the determinant factors of their experience and motivational change in this online project. Rather, it seemed that many more factors, such as their learning style, personal interests, and personality, as mentioned by some of the individuals, intertwined with other factors

and formed a unique complexity for the particular individual, which led to their unique experience and perception. However, it is worth noting that though the heritage background did not appear to be the determent factor for their experience and motivational change in this project, it seemed to be one of the factors that impacted their initial motivation to choose to take Chinese. Both of the two heritage speakers mentioned that because of their family background and their proficiency in Cantonese, among other factors, they chose to take Mandarin Chinese, thinking that it would be easy for them.

Summary of the Results

This study investigated the motivational impact of an online community project on college CFL students through both quantitative and qualitative methods. Three research questions were addressed by analyzing both the quantitative and qualitative data collected from 44 participants from a Chinese as foreign language program in a southeastern public research university. The findings for each of the research questions are summarized below.

RQ 1. Is there any significant difference in students' motivation, as conceived in the L2 motivational self system, before and after the online learning community project?

Given that motivation is composed of three aspects in the L2 Motivational Self system, this question was answered by addressing the following three sub-questions.

RQ 1.1. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ideal L2 self before and after the online project?

Findings: There was no significant difference in the participants' scores on ideal L2 self before and after the online project.

RQ. 1.2. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on ought-to L2 self before and after the online project?

Findings: There was no significant difference in the participants' scores on ought-to L2 self before and after the online project.

RQ. 1.3. Is there any significant difference in students' scores on L2 learning experience before and after the online project?

Findings: There was significant difference in the participants' scores on L2 learning experience before and after the online project.

RQ 2. What features of the online project do the students find motivating and what features demotivating?

Findings: Out of the many themes which emerged from the participants' responses about the motivating features of this online project, two were prominent and were mentioned by one fourth of the participants or more: 1) the project provided useful learning resources and tools; and 2) through this project, the participants ascertained the existence of such a large number of people who were also learning Chinese and were able to connect to them, which relieved their feeling that they were a minoritized group. Demotivating features were mentioned less

frequently by the participants than the motivating features. The most mentioned demotivating feature, by eight out of the 44 participants, was about the recording tasks that they had to complete for this project. A possible reason was that participants felt that they had to do the same task again and again.

RQ 3. How do the selected individuals from different heritage and technology backgrounds perceive the online project experience and the influence of the project on their motivation?

Findings: Heritage background seemed not to be a determinant factor of the participants' perception of their experience with this project. Three out of the four individuals, including both heritage and non-heritage learners, commented positively about their experience with this project. Only one individual, who happened to be a heritage learner, commented negatively, but she also added some positive comments during the latter part of the interview. Prior technology background also seemed not to be a crucial factor in determining participants' perception of their experience with the technology part of this project. All four individuals had an overall smooth experience of the technology part of this project, regardless their technology background. In terms of the possible influence of this project on their motivation towards learning Chinese, three out of four individual perceived that this project did not have big influences on their motivation towards learning Chinese, mainly because they were already highly motivated. Only one individual, who happened to be a

non-heritage learner, perceived that this project motivated him to continue with Chinese study and not to give up.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter begins with interpretation of the results and continues with discussion about the theoretical and pedagogical implications that can be drawn from the results. Then limitations of this study are discussed, and suggestions for future research are presented, followed by a conclusion section.

Interpreting and Interconnecting the Findings

Composition of Participants' Motivation towards Learning Chinese

As can be seen from the descriptive statistics of the participants' scores on the three aspects of motivation from both the pretest and the posttest, the participants scored relatively high in ideal L2 self and L2 learning experience and relatively low in ought-to L2 self. This indicated that generally speaking, the motivation of the participants in this study mainly came from their vision of their ideal selves and the positive learning experience that they had with Chinese learning. That is, the participants strongly believed that ideally they would like to become fluent in speaking Chinese and that proficiency in Chinese was important for them to achieve their personal and career goals. They were also motivated by what they had experienced in their Chinese study (i.e. their experience of learning Chinese had

been positive and had been encouraging for them). As for ought-to self (i.e. to meet expectation of others and to avoid negative outcomes), it was not the main source of the motivation for the participants in this study.

This finding was in consistence with the findings from the interviews. Despite the participants' different heritage and technology backgrounds, all four interviewees claimed that the main reason for them to choose to take Chinese was neither because their parents expected them to learn Chinese nor because they had to take Chinese to fulfill the foreign language requirement (they either had met the requirement or could have taken another language which they believed to be easier to learn for them). Rather, they chose to take Chinese because they were personally interested in Chinese and/or believed that Chinese was useful in the future.

Motivating and Demotivating Features of the Project

As revealed by the results for RQ 2, the participants' perception of the motivating features mostly focused on the learning resources and tools provided to them by this project and the opportunity to connect to and interact with other learners. This indicates that technology projects have the potential to provide alternative resources to meet different individuals' needs, and it is able to overcome the physical constraints of a face-to-face classroom and connect students with other learners around the globe.

Demotivating features mostly focused on technology issues and time and work involved with the project. The technology issues mentioned included difficulty in navigating the forums and problems with sound recording programs.

Different Natures of the Three Aspects of Motivation

As revealed by the results from RQ 1, among the three aspects of motivation (i.e., ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience), there was a significant difference in participants' scores between the pretest and the posttest only for L2 learning experience. There was no significant difference for ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self. This suggests that ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self are the more stable aspects of motivation and thus are largely not influenced by the four-week project. In contrast to these two stable aspects, L2 learning experience seems to be a more fluid and dynamic aspect of motivation and have a tendency to change noticeably even within a relatively short period of time.

The findings from RQ 2 can also be used to partially explain why the significant difference only existed for the aspect of L2 learning experience. Most of the comments that the participants provided about the motivating and demotivating features of the online project were about their experience in this project, while comments about ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self hardly occurred among the participants' comments. This indicates that the project influenced the participants' learning experience to some extent but did not impact their ideal L2 self and

ought-to L2 self at large. The 64 codes identified for motivating features slightly outnumbered the 55 codes identified for demotivating features, which is in consistence with the finding of the noticeable but small increase in scores on the aspect of L2 learning experience.

The interview data can provide information at the individual level about the dynamic nature of the L2 learning experience. Out of the four interviewees, one stated that there was no big difference in her motivation before and after the project; two added that though not a big difference, they felt that knowing the existence of such a resource and such a community was an extra bonus in terms of motivating them with their Chinese study. These two reasons (i.e. knowing a resource and knowing a learning community) are both within the domain of L2 learning experience.

For the fourth interviewee, he claimed that he felt that the project motivated him more in that he was assured through the personal stories of the members in this community that proficiency in Chinese was an achievable goal. This, again, is within the domain of L2 learning experience. The findings from the qualitative data of the interviews partially echoed with the results from the quantitative data.

Theoretical Implications

This study adds to the small existing body of literature which employs the newly reconceptualized theory – the L2 motivational self system - as the theoretical

framework. More specifically, it applied the new theory in the context of Chinese as a foreign language, a context that this theory had not been applied to before. What made it even more unique was that with the integrated technology component, it also explored the patterns of possible motivational changes in a technology integrated context, which had not been examined by other studies guided by this theory.

In terms of methodology, both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed, complementing the existing literature on this topic which had mostly relied on quantitative data only and focused mostly on the two self aspects of motivation and ignored the aspect of L2 learning experience at large (e.g.: Al-Shehri, 2009; Csizer & Kormos, 2009; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009). The data from the open-ended responses in the present study yielded a wealth of information about the various features that participants perceived as relevant to their motivation. The interview data provided detailed whole-person oriented information for us to contextualize the individuals' motivation and factors that may be related to their learning experience and motivational change. Such a multi-method multi-perspective analysis enriched the existing literature by including a person-in-context relational view at L2 motivation, as advocated by Ushioda (2009).

The results of the study confirmed some of hypotheses embedded in the L2 motivational self system. One of the reasons that Dörnyei proposed the L2 motivational self system to replace the traditional motivation theories was that the traditionally conceived "instrumental motivation" actually consists of two types of

distinctive motivation, one being promotional and the other preventional (Dörnyei, 2009). The promotional instrumental motivation usually stems from a desire to achieve professional success, personal advancement, or other positive outcomes, while the preventional instrumental motivation is usually associated with avoidance of negative outcomes, such as to avoid failing an exam or disappointing one's parents. These two types of "instrumental motivation" can be distinctively different and sometimes even negatively correlated with each other. Thus, Dörnyei proposed that the promotional motivation should be categorized with one's idealized image (i.e., the ideal L2 self), and the preventional motivation should be included as ought-to self because it is mostly externally imposed by others. Based on this theoretical categorization, it can be predicted that one's ideal self and ought-to self can be noticeably different from each other.

The results from the current study confirmed this distinction between the ideal self and the ought-to self. For the participants in this study, their motivation scores from their ideal L2 self were high, probably because most of them chose to study Chinese because they were personally interested in Chinese language and culture and/or believed that proficiency in Chinese would help them achieve their personal and career goals. Their motivation from ought-to self was relatively low because for most of them, the reason for them to take Chinese was not to fulfill the language requirements. Some of them already spoke another foreign language fluently and thus already met the requirements. Some others could have taken

another language which they had more exposure to and thus would be easier for them if it were only to fulfill the language requirements. Nor did they choose to take Chinese to please their parents. The results from this study illustrate with empirical evidence that it is reasonable and necessary to separate the promotional instrumental motivation and the preventional instrumental motivation into two categories.

The results from this study also confirmed that out of the three aspects of motivation, the ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self are relatively stable aspects of motivation and thus tend not to show substantial change in a short period of time. As Dörnyei stated, these aspects are "fairly robust" and "concern self-images that are built up over a period of time" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009a, pp. 351-352). During the four weeks of the study, even though some activities were designed to strengthen the participants' self images in learning Chinese, the results suggested there was no significant difference in both their ideal self and ought-to self. In contrast, the results indicated that participants' L2 learning experience changed significantly during the four weeks. This implies that L2 learning experience is more dynamic and fluid among the three aspects of motivation and lends itself to motivational practice in the classroom.

The qualitative results from the interviews about the motivational patterns of heritage and non-heritage learners are also in alignment with the findings from Rueda and Chen (2005) and Yu and Watkins (2008). Both of these two studies, one conducted in CFL context, and the other in CSL context, found that there were

differences in motivational patterns between the Asian heritage learners and non-Asian heritage learners. In the current study, both of the two Chinese heritage learners admitted their heritage background was one of the major factors that they chose to study Chinese. However, this is not to be mixed with parents' expectations. Both of the two heritage learners claimed that their parents did not expect them to learn Chinese. It was because they believed that since they also spoke Cantonese, it would be easy for them to learn Mandarin since they share most of the vocabulary and grammar structures, as well as most part of the culture. In addition, since their parents also understood Mandarin to some extent, the two participants thought that they had access to such a support system that they could draw upon for their Chinese study. Such pre-existing knowledge about Chinese language and the supporting system for Chinese study were not available for the two non-heritage learners. Thus, this finding provides some information about the different motivational drives that may exist between heritage and non-heritage learners.

Pedagogical Implications

One major pedagogical implication than can be drawn from this study is that learners' experience of L2 learning is of fluid and dynamic nature and thus lends itself to classroom motivational practice. That is, teachers can employ various strategies to stimulate and enhance students' motivation in this aspect and can expect to see noticeable change in even a relatively short period of time.

Based on the results from themes generated from the participants' comments on the motivating features of the project, effective strategies to enhance learners' motivation in a CFL classroom include: 1) providing alternative learning resources and tools which students can explore at their own pace and based on their own interests; 2) providing opportunities for students to connect to a larger group of Chinese learners, not just only the classmates in the same class, so that they can interact with them and acquire experience from multiple perspectives; 3) utilizing activities that allow students to receive feedback from their peers in the same class as well as from other advanced learners from larger communities beyond the classroom boundary.

Students highly appreciate the feedback that instructors provide to them, but they also realize that the amount of feedback that they can expect to receive from the instructors may be quite limited, given the large student to instructor ratio. Students constantly seek feedback from others. However, they may doubt the accuracy of the feedback that they receive from the peers in the same group or at the same proficiency level. Two possible strategies to address this concern are: 1) providing opportunities for students to connect to more advanced learners, and 2) giving more specific guidance and scaffolding for peer feedback within the same proficiency level.

Another implication from the findings of this study is about technology integration in the classrooms. Even though nowadays students are sometimes called

the “digital generation”, when introducing a new project with heavy technology components to students, we as teachers cannot assume that all of them are equally technology savvy or that they are familiar with the specific technologies that are to be used for the class. To further complicate matters, some students may be technology savvy when using technologies for everyday life and personal pleasure but have not had experience in applying their technology skills in academic studies. As revealed from the data collected in the background information section during the pretest, more than half of the participants admitted that they were not familiar with any sound recording programs, and almost all participants indicated that they participated in online forums or online communities for academic studies less than once a week. This suggests that when a new technology application is implemented in the curriculum, it is necessary to provide technology training at the beginning and make technical assistance available throughout the process.

Additionally, the results from the present study as well as from the existing literature suggest that there are noticeably different motivation patterns between heritage and non-heritage learners. Heritage learners usually have had some exposure to the language or, in some cases, have reached novice or intermediate proficiency in the heritage language. For the cases in the present study, even though both heritage learners had almost no preexisting proficiency in Mandarin, they had reached intermediate proficiency in Cantonese, which served as a preexisting knowledge base for their Mandarin Chinese study. Thus, for them, their main task

was to acquire the phonological system of Mandarin Chinese, rather than the reading and writing skills or the grammatical structures of the language, since Cantonese and Mandarin share most aspects of the writing system and grammatical structures. Actually, as partially revealed by the results from the interview data with Jessica, a heritage speaker of Cantonese, she felt the content and the tasks were too easy or even boring, which may have had negative impact on her motivation. So, when there is a large portion of heritage learners in the student body, instead of a regular introductory Mandarin class, a separate section for them which takes into consideration their pre-existing knowledge and skills in the target language and addresses their special needs would benefit them most. As a matter of fact, some universities in the U.S. which have larger enrollment in Chinese have been offering this type of courses, such as the Mandarin for Cantonese Speakers courses at University of Michigan (http://www.lsa.umich.edu/asian/language/chinese). If low enrollment makes it impossible to offer separate sections for these heritage speakers, differentiated class assignments could address the different needs of these learners.

Limitations

A limitation of the study is the relatively small sample size for the quantitative part of the study, compared with other large scale studies. Due to various reasons, such as absences during the pretest and posttest as well as exclusion of students who were under the age of 18, only 44 participants were included as the sample for the quantitative analysis. It was all the students enrolled in the three

sections of Chinese II in the semester when the data were collected at the research site, due to the relatively low enrollment in Chinese. However, this limitation is lessened by the fact that the focus of the study was not only on the generalizability of the quantitative results but also on the understanding of the specific features of the online project that might have impacted students' motivation and how individuals made sense of their experiences in this online project given different individual backgrounds.

Another limitation of the study is the length of the online project. The length of the intervention in a naturalistic setting is a double-edged sword. To measure the impact of the online project on students' motivation, if the period of the project is too long, other factors may come into play to impact students' motivation. If it is too short, there may not be enough time for the change in motivation to take place. The researcher determined a four-week period as the length for the online project based on practical reasons as well as the findings from Darhower's (2007) study, which indicated that it could take as few as four weeks to develop the social bond and continuous collaboration in an online community. The researcher hoped that, with the careful selection of an existing online community, the regular participation of the participants, and specially designed activities for the online project, the participants would have an adequate number of interactions with other members in this online community in four weeks, in order to allow possible changes in the three components of motivation to happen. However, as the results indicated, during the

four weeks, the participants' L2 learning experience had changed significantly, but the other two aspects of motivation (i.e., ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self) did not change to a significant degree. Thus, what is the optimal time length for an intervention in a study on motivation will have to be answered by future studies.

Finally, there is a limitation associated with the data collection method for the open-ended responses. After collecting and analyzing the data, one theme emerged about the demotivating features of the project, that is, eight participants mentioned that they felt the pronunciation sample activity was a demotivating feature for them. In contrast to this, some other participants indicated that they felt the pronunciation sample activity was a motivating feature for them, mostly because it provided the opportunity for them to practice their pronunciation and tones and to receive feedback from other members in this community. So it would be interesting to know for what specific reasons the participants viewed the same activity differently. However, due to the format of the short answer question, the participants did not provide specific reasons. Thus, the researcher could not be sure about why some of the participants viewed this activity as demotivating. Even though the demotivating features were not the major focus of this study, if the participants were asked to provide specific reasons about why they thought certain features were demotivating, it would provide more in-depth information about future implementation of similar technology projects in classrooms.

Directions for Future Studies

As an exploratory study which applies the new motivation theory in the context of technology-enhanced CFL teaching and learning, the findings from this study point to directions for future studies in this area. First of all, since ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self seem to be the relative stable aspects of motivation and do not change significantly during a short period of time, longitudinal studies which aim to track motivational changes in all three aspects over time would benefit the field. These longitudinal studies can focus on one or a few individuals and document their gradual, regular motivational changes over a long period of time as well as dramatic fluctuation in motivation during some milestone events or under atypical situations. Results from studies of this type would provide more comprehensive understanding about motivational change.

A more specific direction for future research related to the stability of ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self is about the extent to which these two aspects are subjective to manipulation via certain motivational practices. Dörnyei (2009) proposed some strategies that he believed teachers could use to promote and enhance the vision of one's ideal L2 self. So far, the effectiveness of these strategies has not been tested by empirical studies. He also claimed that ought-to L2 self "is external to the learner (as it concerns the duties and obligations imposed by friends, parents and other authoritative figures)" and thus "does not lend itself to obvious motivational practices" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 32). However, if parents, relatives, and

other parties involved do want to contribute and have a positive impact on students' motivation, especially for some heritage learners, what strategies can be used and how effective can they be? Future studies that address these questions would contribute to the construction of a comprehensive picture of language learning motivation.

Another direction for future research would be to compare the motivational patterns between face-to-face learning contexts and technology-based learning contexts. In the current study, the online project was just an extra project that the participants completed as part of their lab project, in addition to their regular face-to-face curriculum. The technology aspects involved were also very limited, with mostly sound recording and online discussion activities. With the emergence of technology-based language teaching and learning, especially distance language learning, we need to further develop our understanding about the underling motivational drives that learners hold in the new technology contexts. Research in this line can focus on the L2 learning experience aspect of motivation and further explore learners' experiences of various different technology applications, and findings will shed light on the design and implementation of pedagogically sound technology-based language programs.

Conclusion

With the steadily increasing enrollment in Chinese as a foreign language in the U.S. as well as other countries in the world, it is critical for language teachers

and policy makers to understand the motivational drives of the learners. The current study applied the newly developed motivation theory, the L2 motivational self system, in the field of CFL, and took into consideration the fast spread of technology applications in language classroom. It investigated the impact of an online learning community project on college CFL students' motivation, guided by the theoretical framework as outlined in the L2 motivational self system.

The main conclusion that can be drawn from the results of the study is that a short term online project may have the potential to promote students' motivation in the aspect of L2 learning experience, but the other two motivational aspects (i.e. ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self) are relatively stable and do not change significantly during a short period of time. When designing and considering a technology project to stimulate and enhance students' motivation, teachers may consider projects that can provide alternative learning resources and opportunities to connect with a larger group of peer learners. The demand on students' technology skills and time and effort involved in completing the project should also be considered in order to achieve positive impact on motivation.

Some extra findings also emerged from the study. Though not the main focus of the study, they can shed light on future theory development and pedagogical implementation. These extra findings included: 1) the strength of motivation resulted from three different aspects in the L2 motivational self system may not be equal (i.e., students may have relatively strong motivation in one aspect while relatively weak

motivation in another); and 2) students' heritage background may also result in differences in their motivational patterns.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

A. Pretest Version

Survey ID: _____ Date:

_____

Chinese Study Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this dissertation study. The purpose of this study is to understand the reasons that you choose to study Chinese and your experience of learning Chinese. This questionnaire is an important component of the study. Please give your answers sincerely as only this will ensure the success of the study.

It will probably take 10–15 minutes to complete this questionnaire. Thank you very much for your time and your honest responses.

Section 1

This section is about the demographic information that we need to know about you for this study. Please indicate your answer to each of the questions.

1. Gender: ¡õ male ¡õ Female

2. Age: _____

3. Do you consider yourself of Chinese heritage?

   ☐ Yes. If so, do your parents speak Chinese at home? ¡õ Yes ¡õ No

   ☐ No. If so, please specify what you consider as your cultural/racial heritage?

   _____

4. How familiar are you with basic audio recording programs (e.g. Sound Recorder in Windows, Audacity)?

   ☐ I have never heard of any of these before today.

   ☐ I heard about these programs but have never used one.

   ☐ I have tried one (or more) once or twice but may still need technical assistance to use them.

   ☐ I have used one (or more) a few times and do ***not*** need technical assistance to

use them.

☐ I consider myself an expert of using these audio recording programs.

5. How often do you participate in online forums/bulletin boards (including the Discussion Board on BlackBoard) or other online communities/groups for your academic studies?

   ☐ once a week or less

   ☐ 2-5 times a week

   ☐ More than 5 times a week

Section 2

Following are a number of statements with which some people may agree and others may disagree. Please read them carefully and indicate your opinion to each of them by putting an "X" on the 6-point scale to best reflect the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Note that:

1 = ***strongly disagree***,

6 = ***strongly agree***.

		Strongly disagree					**Strongly agree**
		1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	I'm interested in learning Chinese.						
2.	I feel "lonely"/"isolated" when learning Chinese because not many other people learn Chinese.						
3.	I have access to a lot of Chinese learning resources.						
4.	I feel I have a supportive community for my Chinese study.						
5.	My Chinese learning experience so far has been						

	encouraging for my future Chinese study.						
6.	I think I'll be successful in learning Chinese.						
7.	When I think of my future career, I imagine myself using Chinese.						
8.	I'm interested in Chinese culture.						
9.	I'd like to make friends with Chinese-speaking people.						
10.	I'm interested in know more about Chinese-speaking countries.						
11.	Learning Chinese will make me a better person.						
12.	Other people will respect me more if I know Chinese.						
13.	My parents expect me to study Chinese.						
14.	My friends think it is important to study Chinese.						
15.	My relatives put a lot of pressure on me to study Chinese.						
16.	Other people surrounding me think I should study Chinese.						
17.	It will have a negative impact on my life if I don't learn Chinese.						
18.	I have to learn Chinese to fulfill the foreign language requirement.						

Have you answered all the questions?

Thank you for your help with the study!

B. Posttest Version

Survey ID: _____ Date:

_____

Chinese Study Questionnaire – Posttest

Thank you for participating in the posttest of the study. The following is a questionnaire about your Chinese study that you answered some time before. But now after you have participated in the online learning community project, we would like to ask you to answer it again. In addition, we have a short answer question at the end, for which we would like to know your honest opinion about the online project.

It will probably take 10–15 minutes to complete this questionnaire. Thank you very much for your time and your honest responses.

Section 1

Following are a number of statements with which some people may agree and others may disagree. Please read them carefully and indicate your opinion to each of them by putting an "X" on the 6-point scale to best reflect the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Note that:

1 = ***strongly disagree***,

6 = ***strongly agree***.

		Strongly disagree					**Strongly agree**
		1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	I'm interested in learning Chinese.						
2.	I feel "lonely"/"isolated" when learning Chinese because not many other people learn Chinese.						
3.	I have access to a lot of Chinese learning						

	resources.						
4.	I feel I have a supportive community for my Chinese study.						
5.	My Chinese learning experience so far has been encouraging for my future Chinese study.						
6.	I think I'll be successful in learning Chinese.						
7.	When I think of my future career, I imagine myself using Chinese.						
8.	I'm interested in Chinese culture.						
9.	I'd like to make friends with Chinese-speaking people.						
10.	I'm interested in know more about Chinese-speaking countries.						
11.	Learning Chinese will make me a better person.						
12.	Other people will respect me more if I know Chinese.						
13.	My parents expect me to study Chinese.						
14.	My friends think it is important to study Chinese.						
15.	My relatives put a lot of pressure on me to study Chinese.						
16.	Other people surrounding me think I should study Chinese.						
17.	It will have a negative impact on my life if I don't learn Chinese.						
18.	I have to learn Chinese to fulfill the foreign language requirement.						

Section 2

This section is about your personal opinion on the online learning community project.

Please reflect on your experience in the past few weeks about the online learning community project. List at least one feature/aspect of the project that you found motivating for your Chinese study and at least one that you found demotivating? You may want to consider the tasks you have completed for this project and the content that you have reflected upon in your weekly journals.

Motivating features/aspects: 1. _____

other(s): _____

Demotivating features/aspects: 1. _____

other(s): _____

Anything else you want to share with us about your experience in this online project?

_____

Have you answered all the questions?

Thank you very much for your help with the study!

Appendix 2 Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study

---

Researchers at the University of South Florida (USF) study many topics. To do this, we need the help of people who agree to take part in a research study. This form tells you about this research study.

We are asking you to take part in a research study that is called:

The Impact of an Online Learning Community Project on CFL Students' Motivation

The person who is in charge of this research study is Shengrong Cai, who is distributing this informed consent to you and is the Principal Investigator of the study. She will be available to answer any questions you may have about this study.

The research will be done in your Chinese II class in the Spring 2010 semester.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to

- *understand the motivation of the students who study Chinese as a foreign language in an online learning community project*
- *collect data for a dissertation study.*

Study Procedures

If you take part in the survey part of this study, you will be asked to participate in a pre and a post test of a questionnaire, which will ask your motivation and experience of learning Chinese, some demographic information that is relevant to your Chinese study, and your personal opinion about the online project in your Chinese class. The

pre and post test of the questionnaire will be administered in your Chinese class, and the completion of each of them will take about 10 -15 minutes.

We will also need four individuals for interviews. If you also agree to take part in the interview part of the study, you will be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview with the Principal Investigator. The interview will last half an hour to an hour. It will be audio recorded and then transcribed. Your weekly reflective journals and online posts will be also used to provide information for this study. We may publish the results of the study, including all collected data. However, your name and any other identifiable references to you will not be included.

Alternatives

You have the alternative to choose not to participate in this research study. In this case, you will just need to complete the assignments as given by your instructors for the Chinese II class, without taking part in the survey and the interview for this study.

Benefits

The potential benefits to you are: by participating in this study, you may discover your own beliefs and motives for learning Chinese and envision the long-term goals for your Chinese study.

Risks or Discomfort

This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

Compensation

We *will not* be able to pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study.

Confidentiality

We must keep your study records as confidential as possible. Particularly, your teachers will have no access to your answers on the questionnaire. For the four individuals who will take part in the interviews for the study, the audio recording and transcripts of the interviews as well as the weekly journals and online posts will be kept on a flash drive with password protection by the Principal Investigator for three years, after which the files will be ultimately deleted.

However, certain people may need to see the study records. By law, anyone who looks at your records must keep them completely confidential. The only people who will be allowed to see these records are:

- The research team, including the Principal Investigator, a co-rater for data, and the members on the dissertation committee**.**
- Certain government and university people who need to know more about the study. For example, individuals who provide oversight on this study may need to look at your records. This is done to make sure that we are doing the study in the right way. They also need to make sure that we are protecting your rights and your safety.) These include:
    - The University of South Florida Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the staff that work for the IRB. Other individuals who work for USF that provide other kinds of oversight may also need to look at your records.
    - The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not let anyone know your name. We will not publish anything else that would let people know who you are.

Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study, to please the investigator or the research staff. You are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty if you stop taking part in this study. Your decision to participate or not to participate will not affect your course grade.

Questions, concerns, or complaints

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, call or email Shengrong Cai at (813) 974-3563 / scai@mail.usf.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, general questions, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the Division of Research Integrity and Compliance of the University of South Florida at (813) 974-9343.

If you experience an unanticipated problem related to the research, call or email Shengrong Cai at (813) 974-3563 / scai@mail.usf.edu.

Consent to Take Part in this Research Study

It is up to you to decide whether you want to take part in this study. If you want to take part, please sign the form, if the following statements are true.

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

_____ _____

Signature of Person Taking Part in Study Date

_____

Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect.

I hereby certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he or she understands:

What the study is about.

What procedures/interventions/investigational drugs or devices will be used.

What the potential benefits might be.

What the known risks might be.

_____ _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent Date

_____

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

Appendix 3 A Sample Syllabus of Chinese II

Modern Chinese II

Course Description

Chinese II is a continuation of a two-course introductory sequence in modern Mandarin Chinese. It is designed for students with no or minimal previous exposure to Chinese. Students with previous study or heritage background in Chinese should take a proficiency exam so that they can be placed in the appropriate USF course. Students who have not successfully completed the prerequisite Chinese I are not permitted to take the course unless they score high enough on a proficiency exam to earn credit for Chinese I.

Course Goals

The goal of this course is to further your training in the effective and appropriate use of modern Mandarin Chinese. We will continue to train you to function autonomously (on your own, without the assistance of an instructor) in commonly encountered Chinese cultural contexts. To do this successfully, you will need to continue to develop the foundation in the Chinese linguistic code you attained during Chinese I at the same time you deepen your understanding of Chinese interaction patterns and cultural norms. Language is inseparably intertwined with behavioral patterns and modes of thinking so we will continue to use a performance-based approach that has proven effective for learning cultures

inherently different from our own base American culture. The goal is for you to be able to use what you learn in actual interaction with real Chinese people so the pace of the course will be dictated by your ability to demonstrate what you can do in Chinese.

Fundamental Ideas

All of our learning activities involve a few fundamental ideas: learning in cultural context, learning in Chinese, and learning through performance. Learning in context suggests that all of our classroom activities will be embedded in contexts commonly encountered in China. Chinese culture is the standard for our performances. Learning in Chinese refers to the fact that 90% of all instruction will be in the target language. English is *only* used during FACT classes (see below). Learning through performance means that we will learn by doing. Once in the target contexts for a given class, we will do what is typically done by Chinese people in those contexts, which involves the use of both language and behavior appropriate for the given context. This means that significant attention will be paid to the way you *behave* as well as your use of the language. That also means that behaving in ways inappropriate for the specific Chinese context created will affect your performance grade.

The notion is that we are learning to do things in Chinese culture, of which the language happens to be an important part. We will be your guides and coaches as to how to interact with Chinese people according to Chinese cultural norms. This is a

long-term process that will require significant behavioral adjustments on your part. We are not asking you to become Chinese but will require you to perform according to Chinese cultural norms in order to help you internalize behaviors proven effective by your predecessors.

The assumption is that you are interested in interacting with Chinese people in a ways that will facilitate the pursuit of professional goals that involve engagement with some segment of Chinese society. This means that we expect you to learn how to present yourself in a way that a Chinese person not experienced at interacting with foreigners would find comfortable. If a Chinese person has to adapt their behavior in order to communicate with you, it is not likely that they will want to continue to interact with you in Chinese over the long term and it is not likely that you will be able to accomplish what you intend to in China or with Chinese professionals.

In order to develop the ability to function autonomously in Chinese cultural contexts, you will also need to learn how to learn Chinese efficiently in situations in which you do not have all of the interaction information available to a native speaker of Chinese. This means that training will be focused on both how to recognize situations and how to use the Chinese you know to negotiate those situations in ways that will encourage Chinese to continue interacting with you in Chinese. This approach also places the burden of responsibility for the learning process on your

shoulders. You must prepare assigned content on your own outside of class in order to be prepared to perform that content for evaluation during class.

Learning How to Learn Chinese Efficiently

When you were learning your native language, by the age of six, you had already been exposed to 21,900 hours of language. To get that same exposure, an adult who spends two hours every weekday studying and attending foreign language classes would need over 42 years to reach the same level! Add to that the fact that Chinese is a Category IV language according to the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and it should be clear that we have a long road ahead of us. To achieve an advanced level in Category IV languages, the FSI estimates that it requires at least 1,320 hours of training (compare that to the 480 hours of training it takes to achieve a similar level in Category I languages such as French, Spanish, or Italian). One year of college instruction typically totals around 150 hours, which means that to reach the advanced level, it should take 8.8 years (3.2 years for Category I languages). In Chinese I, you completed the first 56 hours or about 4.2% of that journey.

This is not intended to discourage you from learning Chinese. It simply means: 1) traditional approaches to learning Chinese have proven less than efficient; 2) the approach to learning Chinese we will be coaching you in has proven to be more efficient than traditional models and will be one of the most important things you take away from this course; 3) the course is designed in an intensive manner to accelerate your learning and achieve the highest possible proficiency level; and 3)

your ultimate success in both this course and in learning Chinese will be determined by what you do outside of class. For you to develop the ability to use Chinese in sophisticated ways, you will need to use it as often as possible. Developing a consistent routine that involves practicing all of your language skills and rehearsing the contexts we will encounter every day will lead to your ultimate success in Chinese as well as this course.

Course Procedures

You will attend five kinds of classes during this course: ACT, ACT Reading, ACT Writing, FACT, and ACT Interpretation. All ACT classes are designed to elicit your performance. They are conducted completely in Chinese and revolve around commonly encountered contexts in Chinese culture. English will not be used and your instructors will react to any English you use as if they could not speak English, which means you will need to use the Chinese you know to negotiate the contexts you encounter. When you encounter problems or questions, try first to negotiate the situation in Chinese. If you still are not clear, you are then able to raise your questions during FACT classes or after class. ACT classes involve your performances based on the drills you work on outside of class so thorough preparation is critical to your success.

ACT Reading classes are conducted in Chinese and involve activities designed to assist you in the development of the skills necessary to read Chinese in natural

contexts. They require you to familiarize yourself with a given set of content prior to class. During class, you encounter that content in new contexts.

ACT Writing classes are conducted in Chinese and involve activities designed to assist you in the development of the skills necessary to produce written Chinese appropriate for routine contexts. They require you to do sufficient prewriting exercises outside of class in order to be prepared to produce the target Chinese on your own during class.

ACT Interpretation classes are designed to review learned content and rehearse skills often used in real communication settings. You are given a context in which you must facilitate the communication between two speakers who are unable to communicate without your assistance and must use the Chinese you know to negotiate the situation.

FACT classes are designed to fill in gaps in and should help raise the level of your performance in subsequent ACT classes. English and Chinese are used. FACT classes are opportunities to ask questions on usage, structure, or any other problem area. This is your opportunity to clarify any aspect of instruction that you have questions about. You and your performance guide the direction of much of the FACT class content. This means that you should be preparing questions about what you encounter during ACT classes. Note that the last three letters of the word FACT are ACT. This means that many ACT-like activities will occur during FACT classes so you will still need to be prepared to perform during these sessions.

Materials

Chinese: Communicating in the Culture, Performance Text Two (with DVD)

Chinese: Communicating in the Culture, Performance Text Three

Chinese Written Transfer, Volume One

Overview of Chinese: Communicating in the Culture

CCC is NOT a textbook. It is a set of learning materials. If you are looking for the things you would find in a traditional textbook, you won't find them. The materials focus the learner on aural learning. This means that much of the content is only found in the audio files and on the DVD. It is intentionally designed this way so that learners develop an understanding of Chinese by listening. Research has shown that students who have first developed a solid foundation in the phonology of Chinese before moving on the written language are more successful in the long term. However, all content is presented on the DVD in multiple formats (written, visual, aural) for your benefit.

DVD

The key to your success in this course revolves around what you do outside of class and in particular how you use your time outside of class to rehearse assigned content. Using the DVD will be critical to your overall success. Familiarize yourself with the

various sections and where particular types of information are found as soon as possible.

Preparing for ACT Classes

When preparing for a typical ACT class, begin by listening to the assigned dialog several times without checking the English meanings of things or looking at the tutors. This will be critical to developing a familiarity with the sounds of Chinese, which will be the foundation for both good production (pronunciation) and good listening skills. Your sound in Chinese will be an obvious indicator as to whether you are preparing with the DVD or preparing by looking at the Romanization system in the performance text. Once you have listened once or twice, look at the written Pinyin script to ensure you understand what you are listening to. Write down any information you need to aid your performance as well as anything that is not clear so that you can ask questions during FACT classes.

Dialog Coaching

After you have listened to the new material several times, then work with the DVD by going through the dialog coaching. This is where you will learn exactly what is taking place in the dialog. Be sure that you understand the context. Always assess the basic elements of a performance: roles (who is involved, what is their relationship to one another, what is their social position, etc.); time (when is this occurring and how does it affect what is being said and done); location (where is this occurring and how does it affect what is being said and done); script (what is being

said and what is being done...what are the speakers' intentions and how are they accomplishing them); and audience (who else is present in the situation and how does this affect what is being said and done).

Tutors

After you have gone through the dialog coaching, move on to the tutors. The tutors contain information vital to your success on FACT class quizzes! The culture tutor provides you with useful information about Chinese culture relevant to that context. The grammar tutor gives you written explanations about how the language in the dialog works as well as additional example phrases, sentence, vocabulary and dialogs. This section of the DVD materials is where content for FACT class quizzes comes from. The pronunciation tutor gives coaching on difficult areas and exceptions to many rules. The vocabulary tutor offers additional vocabulary as well as drills designed to help with memory. A thorough grasp of the content of each of these sections will be necessary for successful in class performance.

Role Play

After having gone through the tutors, you are ready to rehearse role play. You are rehearsing for a performance that will take place in your next ACT class so you should be repeating out loud. Prepare as if you are an actor or actress memorizing your part for an upcoming play. You will be expected to perform all roles of the dialog verbatim from memory during class so you will need to rehearse all roles in the dialog. Also, be sure you are working with the DVD. With the audio files it is

very easy for your mind to wonder and the content to turn into background noise as you think about other things. Use the DVD function that allows you to record your sound so that you can compare your sound to the model on the DVD. Then, make any necessary adjustments and refine your own performance. Again, it will be obvious during your in class performance if are preparing silently. You should not be saying things for the first time in class. Be sure that you practice saying the dialog from memory prior to class. Once you have the language down, work on smoothness of delivery and behavior associated with that exchange. This final step will separate passing performances from A-level performances.

Dialogs are the starting point for each class not the end goal. Thus, dialogs must be memorized and rehearsed. In class activities will be designed to help you expand upon or manipulate the language found in them. Our goal is to develop automaticity with accuracy when it comes to the language found in the CCC materials so that when you encounter a similar situation in real life you can apply what you know.

Drills

Once you have the dialog prepared, move to the drills assigned for that class. While doing the drills, be sure you are thinking about the elements of performance so that you understand the context (s) within which they could be used. This means that one time through the drills is not enough to prepare you for class. During class, you will find yourselves in similar contexts and will have to apply both the patterns and vocabulary found in the assigned stage of the materials, which means you must

come to class with the structures and vocabulary already committed to memory. While rehearsing the drills, write down the responses you hear on the DVD in your workbook so that you can quickly refer to them when you review. This step will also aid in your thorough understanding of the patterns you are learning.

Audio Programs

Chinese audio recordings are available as MP3 files on the CD that is included in the CCC materials. These are supplemental materials that can be used to review the material as you drive to campus or walk to class. Be careful not to make these the sole source of your learning. The DVD provides the important visual elements of the contexts we are learning as well as elements of behavioral culture you will need to perform well. The additional supportive information found in the tutors is also not found in the audio files.

Performance Book

Finally, once you are ready to perform, move to the book. Use it as a means of reviewing and solidifying things in memory. Be careful not to begin by looking at the book as your pronunciation will be subconsciously adversely affected by looking at the letters used in Romanizing Chinese.

Evaluation

Developing a daily rehearsal and performance routine is critical to your long-term success in learning Chinese. Thus, daily performance is the most important factor in your grade. Consistency in preparation and performance will determine your success.

One and a half to two hours of preparation time for each class hour is expected. Regular attendance is mandatory and make-up work is not accepted for credit. Your lowest four scores will be dropped to allow for some flexibility. If you are late for class, your performance grade will be adjusted accordingly. If your conduct influences other students' opportunities to learn, action will be taken to correct the situation. In a performance-based, context-sensitive format, arriving to class late adversely affects others' opportunity to maximize learning time.

Each class will be graded on a scale of 8 maximum possible points. For ACT classes, 0-4 points can be earned for the performance of the memorized dialogue. This means that you have the answers to the daily quiz ahead of time so scoring high should be merely a matter of rehearsal time. The focus here is on smoothness and accuracy of delivery in terms of both language and behavior. Another 0-4 points can be earned for your application of the assigned content in new contexts during classroom drills and exercises. For FACT classes, the 8 points is based on quizzes, performance and participation in classroom activities.

An oral proficiency interview will be conducted at the midway point in the course and will serve as a "test", but will count as two daily grades (16 points). Although not weighted heavily in your final grade, you cannot pass the course without having taken the interview. The interview will be videotaped. Your final grade will be calculated by adding the total daily points you have earned and dividing by the total number possible (For example, if there are 60 class hours X 8 points = 480 points +

oral proficiency exam 16 points = 496 points. If you earn 477 points, your grade is 477/496 = 96%.)

Daily Grading Criteria

Daily performance is graded on the following four-point scale. Read the criteria for each score carefully.

4 Solid Preparation with excellent performance that promises interaction with a native with no difficulty, discomfort, or misunderstanding; no English hesitation noise used in speaking, no telltale "foreignisms" in the written work.

3.5 Good preparation with superior performance, but some noticeable errors that would hinder smooth interaction with a native.

3 Good preparation with good performance, but evident weakness or patterned error.

2.5 Some preparation evident, but requires a lot of help from the interlocutor.

2 Minimum preparation, which puts a burden on the interlocutor (a native would avoid using Chinese with you and would shift to English to lessen the workload).

1.5 Barely prepared.

1 Evidently unprepared.

0 Absent.

Grades will be kept for every class. You will need a minimum of 60% to pass the course and absences exceeding 8 class hours for any reason will result in failure of the course. You will be given regular feedback from your instructors indicating your standing in the course. It is your responsibility to know your standing based on that feedback. Your performance should incorporate comments and suggestions made in that feedback. Failure to do so will adversely affect your performance grade.

Note on Disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Dr. Shepherd as early as possible to discuss specific needs. If accommodations are needed, a letter from the Office of Students with Disabilities Services (SVC 1133) will be required.

The Daily Schedule

Your performance will be aided by schedules which tell you exactly what to prepare for and what to expect in class. If you do not understand what the schedule is asking you to do, it is your responsibility to seek clarification from the instructors. Schedules will be distributed on a bi-weekly basis to allow for adjustments based on your classroom performance.

Appendix 4 Screenshots of the Online Community

A. Screenshot of the Homepage – Chinese-forums.com

B. Screenshot of the Pronunciation Sample and Feedback Thread

Post Reply

Page 1 of 4 1 2 3 > Last »

Thread Tools ▾ Search this Thread ▾

16th January 2009, 07:16 AM #1

mandarina

Join Date: Mar 2007
Posts: 36

Post a sample of your pronunciation here!

I just saw the thread about the italian guy and his chinese, and I was thinking that you guys really do know how to correct someone's pronounciation.
so, i was thinking, that if anyone is interested, we could choose one article and then everybody records it and posts the audio clip, and ideally we would then share some constructive criticism concerning our pronounciation.
what do you think?

sample article:

08年度中国最具幸福感10大城市出炉

2008年12月26日在云南昆明，揭晓了2008年度中国最具幸福感城市，其中10座城市入选，并举行了隆重的颁奖仪式。这10座城市分别是杭州 宁波 昆明 天津 唐山 佛山绍兴 长春 无锡 长沙。其中杭州由于连续五年在调查推选活动中名列前茅而获得金奖。

此次评选由新华社《瞭望东方周刊》联合中国市长协会从今年四月开始，调查内容涉及自然环境，交通状况，发展速度，文明程度，赚钱机会，医疗水平，教育水平，房价，人情味，治安状况，就业机会，生活便利共12项指标，采取专业公司调查与公共调查相结合的方式进行，近300家媒体参与，共计700万张调查问卷和 7000万次网络投票。

16th January 2009, 07:27 AM #2

Gemini0603

Join Date: Jan 2009
Location: he chuan chongqing
Posts: 2

Re: an experiment! who's in?

foreigners record it，i should be the judgement 。 LOL

16th January 2009, 09:03 AM #3

yersi

Join Date: Jun 2006
Posts: 261

Re: an experiment! who's in?

Could you possibly have picked any drier text than that?

Here's my take on it, at least, sorry for the low volume.

16th January 2009, 10:04 AM #4

mandarina

Join Date: Mar 2007
Posts: 36

Re: an experiment! who's in?

wow! you have a very good pronounciation, I think you got most of the tones right.
the only thing that I noticed is the pronounciation of "r", especially in the word 二, also the difference between "zhi" and "ji" should be more clear.
otherwise, i think you did a really good job. how long have you been studying?
I chose this text becuase it has a lot of fancy, newspaper words that are sort of difficult for me. it is taken from the csl pod, so I figured we could also compare it to the native speaker.

Attached Files

rec3.mp3 (842.6 KB, 92 views)

C. Screenshot of the Statistics of a Member's Posts in this Online Community

Appendix 5 Weekly Tasks of the Online Project

Handouts to the participants:

Dear students,

We have designed an online learning community project, which is to introduce you to an online Chinese learning community. We hope by doing this project, you will get connected with more Chinese language learners as well as native speakers and develop long-lasting interest in your Chinese study.

This online project is part of the assignments for your Chinese II lab class and will last four weeks. Your completion of the project is necessary for us to assess your participation in the Lab class. You need to complete some weekly tasks and send your weekly reflective journals to Xie Laoshi and Ms. Cai (scai@mail.usf.edu) by email by 5pm every Monday for the four weeks of the project.

If you have any problems or questions when completing any of these tasks, please feel free to contact Ms. Cai at the email address provided above.

The following is the tasks for the 1st week of the project.

	Estimates of time needed for

		each task
Week 1 (Mar. 30 – Apr. 5)	1. Register for the online learning community: www.chinese-forums.com 2. Go over all the forum titles in this online community to get some ideas about what topics are typically discussed in each of these forums. 3. Choose 10 or more recent posts to read in the forum General Study Advice and Discussion, to see if you have some of the same questions in your Chinese study and if you can find some useful suggestions from the replies. 4. Choose 10 or more recent posts to read in the forum Resources for Study Chinese, to see if any of these resources may be useful to your current Chinese study. 5. Write a short journal (200 words or so) to reflect on your 1st week's experience in this online community. Please discuss the following items and anything else you'd like to add. Send your journal by email to Xie Laoshi and Ms. Cai	5min 5 min 10 min 10 min 30 min

	(scai@mail.usf.edu) by 5pm, April 5, Monday. a. Please provide your username in this online community so that we can track your activities in this project. (Of course we will keep this information confidential.) b. Describe your overall impression of this online learning community, based on your experience in the past week. c. Briefly mention one or two pieces of suggestions that you found most useful from this community. d. Briefly discuss one or two learning recourses that you found most useful from this community and would like to recommend to your classmates.	
Week 2 (Apr. 6 – Apr. 11)	1. Get to know one or two members who are successful in learning Chinese in this online community by reading their past posts. Pay special attention to their stories of learning and using	10 min

	Chinese in their everyday life and work, if they mentioned any. You may want to use the search function in this community to find their past posts. 2. Record at least one pronunciation sample of yours for the short conversations that you need to rehearse for your Chinese class. You may use SoundRecorder, Audacity, or any recording program that you know to do the recording. In case you need technology support with this, contact Ms. Cai by email. She will assist you. Post your pronunciation sample on the sub-forum Chinese Pronunciation, Pinyin, and Audio Samples for feedback from other members. In one or two days, check back to see what feedback you have gotten. 3. In your journal entry of this week, briefly discuss the following items. Feel free to add any other things you would like to comment on. a. What is the most encouraging story about learning and using Chinese that you have learned in this online community? Do you find	20 min 30 min

	it's motivating to your own Chinese study? In what way? b. Did you receive feedback for your pronunciation sample? Is it useful? Why or why not?	
Week 3 (Apr. 12– Apr. 18)	1. Among all the forums on this online community, choose one that is most interesting to you and spend about 20 minutes or more reading the posts there in this forum. If you'd like, start a new thread there on a topic that you are interested in. 2. Like what you did last week, record a pronunciation sample of yours for another short conversation that you need to rehearse for your class. Post it on the sub-forum Chinese Pronunciation, Pinyin, and Audio Samples for feedback. 3. In your weekly journal, briefly discuss the following items as well as other things you would like to add. a. Why have you chosen this forum to explore?	20 min 20 min 30 min

	What have you learned from it? b. Did you receive feedback for your pronunciation sample of this week? Is it useful? Why or why not?	
Week 4 (Apr. 19-Apr. 25)	1. Imagine that you are going to spend two months in China this summer (either for a study/intern abroad program or an extended travel). Explore the information on the forum Life, Work and Study in China in General in order to prepare for your trip. Post any questions you may have there. 2. Like what you did the previous weeks, record another pronunciation sample of yours for a short conversation that you need to rehearse for your class. Post it on the sub-forum Chinese Pronunciation, Pinyin, and Audio Samples for feedback. 3. In your weekly journal, briefly discuss the following items as well as anything else you would like to add. a. After exploring the information on this online	20 min 20 min 30 min

	community, what did you become aware of for your trip to China? b. Did you receive feedback for your pronunciation sample of this week? Is it useful? Why or why not? c. What comment do you have for the 4-week online community project?	

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shengrong Cai received her MA degree in Applied Linguistics in 2005 and her Bachelor's degree in Physics with a minor in English in 2002, both from Beijing Normal University, China. She taught English as a foreign/second language in both China and the United States. While studying for her doctoral degree in the Second Language Acquisitions and Instructional Technology (SLA/IT) program, she also taught Chinese as a foreign language at the secondary and tertiary levels. Most recently, she has taught ESOL courses to pre-service teachers and worked as the program assistant for the SLA/IT Ph.D. program.

During her doctoral studies, Shengrong has published on peer reviewed journals and presented at international, national, and local conferences. Her research interests include second language acquisition, teaching Chinese as a foreign language, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), teacher education, and bilingual and multilingual education.