

IoE Confucius Institute Annual Chinese Teaching Conference 2018
15th – 16th June 2018

**From extrinsic to intrinsic motivation: A
case study of Chinese character
teaching**

Jane Woo & Sophia Lam



What are they?



Extrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation

A teacher's question (S) ...



Self-determination Theory

(Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000)

- Two prominent motivation constructs of self-determination theory - **Extrinsic and Intrinsic motivation**.
- Self-determination theory regarded extrinsic and intrinsic motivation lying along a **continuum** where through the process of self-regulation, extrinsic contingencies are progressively transformed into intrinsic motivation (Noels et al., 2003).
- Learners who are more intrinsically motivated, are **likely to continue** studying a foreign language (Ramage, 1990).
- It is also believed that **social environment** such as the language classroom can facilitate intrinsic motivation of learners (Ryan & Deci, 2000).



Research questions

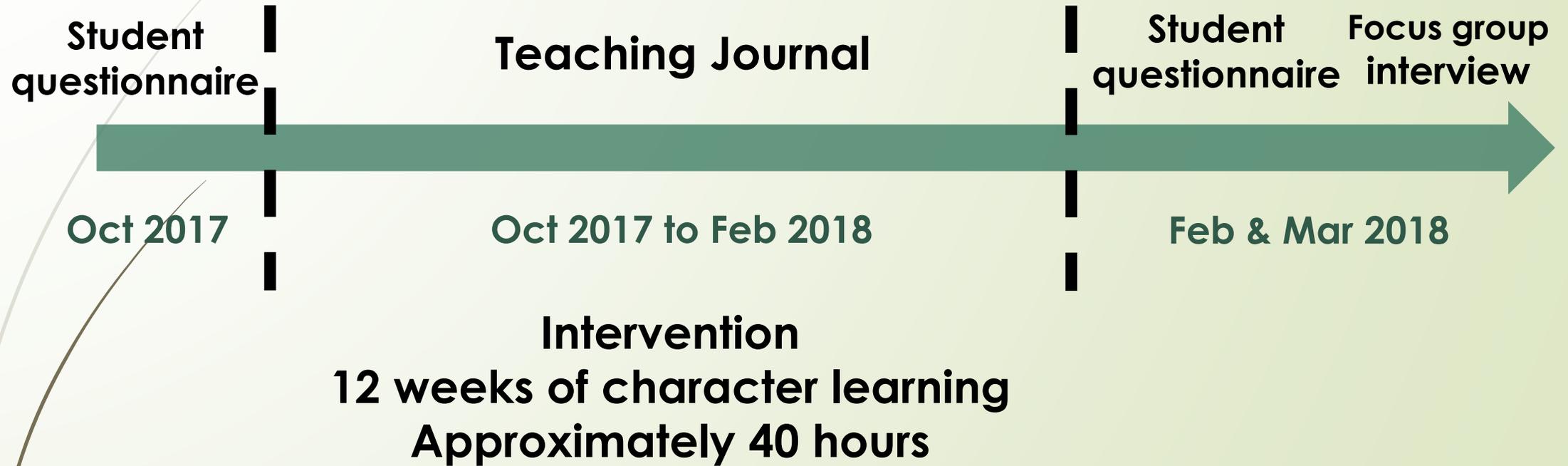
- What happens during the transformation from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation?
- As a teacher, how can I help sustain motivation? In other words, how can I **transform** the **extrinsic motivation** to **intrinsic motivation**?
- Focus: the learning of **Chinese characters**.
- Students' voice.



Context

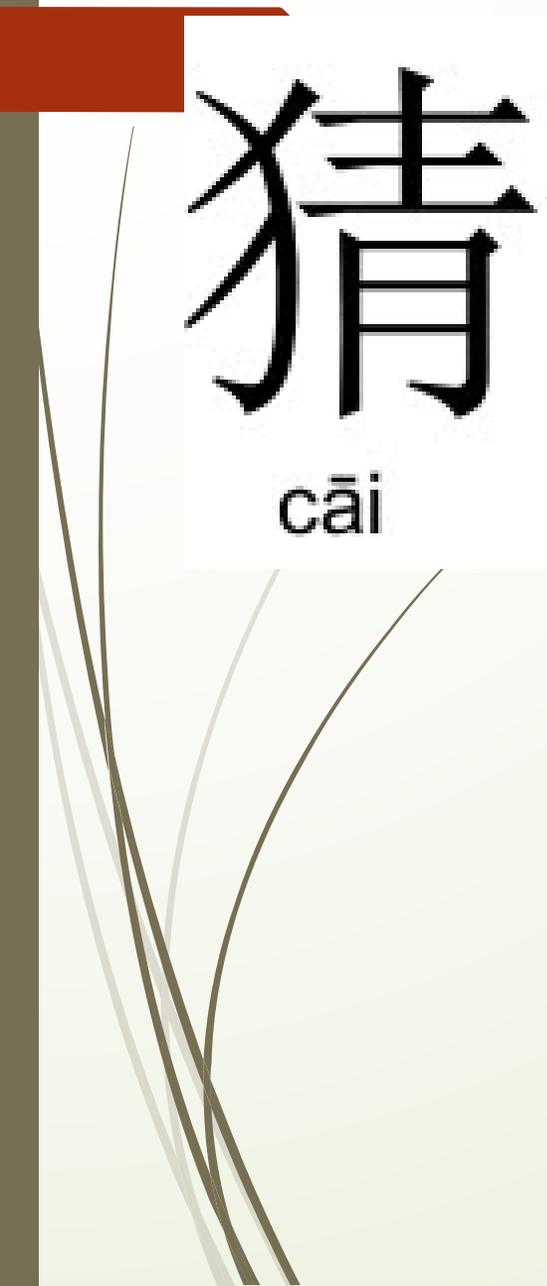
- A boys state school in London
 - Participants: 25 Year 7 MEP students
 - Language proficiency: beginner
- 

Research Timeline



Teaching activities





猜

cāi

countryside

海边

hǎi biān

seaside

城市

chéng shì

city

seaside

农村

nóng cūn

countryside

city

BEAT the
TEACHER

海邊

hǎi biān

seaside

城市

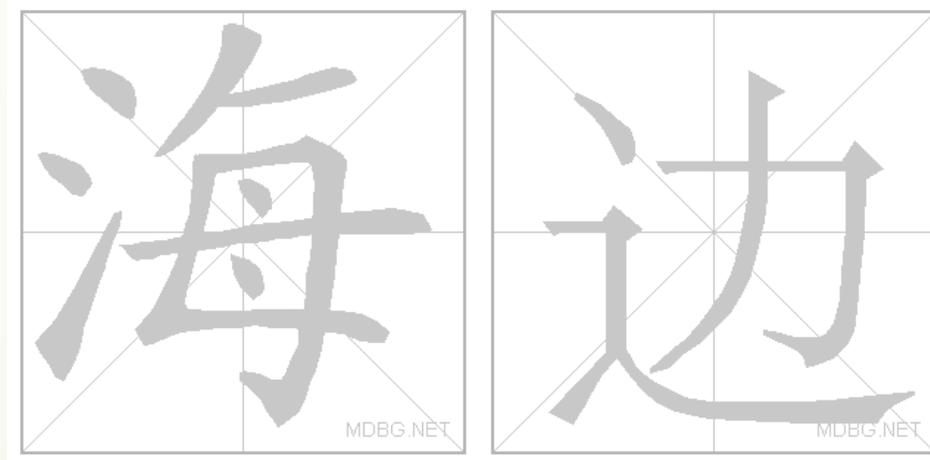
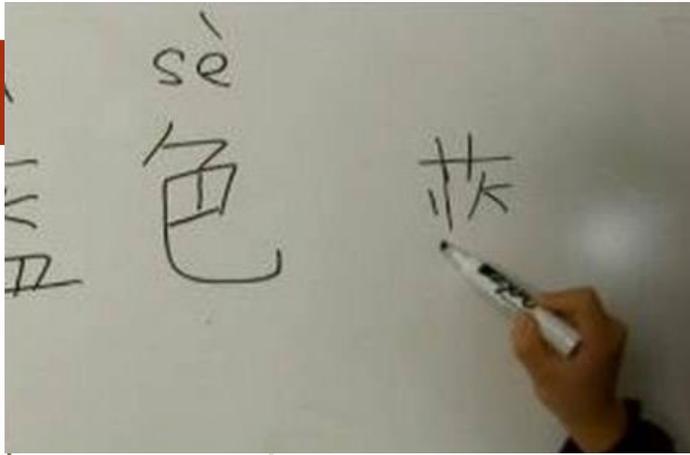
chéng shì

city

农村

nóng cūn

countryside



海边

hǎi biān

seaside

城市

chéng shì

city

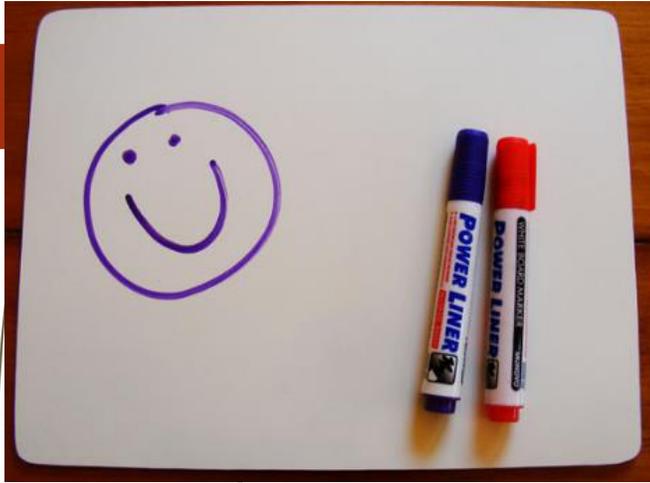
农村

nóng cūn

countryside

猜

cāi



How would you run the competition?

What skill do you want to test your students?

海边

hǎi biān

seaside

城市

chéng shì

city

农村

nóng cūn

countryside

Recap...

猜
cāi

BEAT the
TEACHER

海
MDBG.NET





我

wǒ = I

你

nǐ = you

他

tā = he

她

tā = she

N-1

喜欢

xǐ huan = like

不喜欢

bù xǐ huan = dislike

海边

hǎi biān = seaside

城市

chéng shì = city

农村

nóng cūn = countryside

我

wǒ = I

你

nǐ = you

他

tā = he

她

tā = she

喜欢

xǐ huan = like

不喜欢

bù xǐ huan = dislike



qù = to go

zài = at

看书

kàn shū = to read

上网

shàng wǎng = to surf internet

听音乐

yīn yīn yuè = listen to music

Student Questionnaire

Name: [REDACTED]

8/11/17

Gender: Male

1. How long you have been learning Chinese?

about 2 months

2. Why you would like to learn Mandarin?

I would like to learn it as I think it would be beneficial for finding a job.

3. Do you have Chinese related background?

(For example, you have Chinese family or you have learned Chinese before)

A. No

B. Yes, _____

4. What are the three most interesting things in learning Chinese characters?

I like writing Chinese characters, speaking Chinese and a new thing I've learned - radicals.

5. To what extent do you agree with the statement? Please put a '✓' in the boxes.

No.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I really enjoy learning Mandarin.	✓				
2	Learning Mandarin is a challenge which I enjoy.	✓				
3	I find learning Mandarin really interesting.	✓				
4	Learning Mandarin is one of the most important aspects of my school life.		✓			
5	I like the challenges that learning Mandarin poses.	✓				
6	I think knowing Mandarin will help me to become a more knowledgeable person.	✓				
7	I think Mandarin will help in my future career.	✓				
8	Learning Mandarin will help me to learn better in other subjects.		✓			
9	Studying Mandarin is important to me because with a high level of proficiency in a foreign language I will be able to earn more money.		✓			
10	I can imagine myself speaking and writing Mandarin as if I were native speaker of Chinese.	✓				
11	I can imagine myself communicating in Mandarin with Chinese.	✓				
12	Whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself using Mandarin.		✓			
13	I can imagine myself writing Chinese Mandarin emails fluently.	✓				
14	I can imagine myself living abroad and using Mandarin effectively for communicating with the locals.	✓				
15	I invest much time and effort on all Mandarin assignments.	✓				

Student questionnaire

No.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
16	I am working hard at learning Mandarin.	✓				
17	I am confident at my Chinese characters abilities.	✓				
18	When learning Chinese characters, I can always quickly understand the meaning.		✓			
19	When learning Chinese characters, I can always quickly recognise them.	✓				
20	When learning Chinese characters, I can always quickly memorise how to write them.	✓				
21	I am always motivated to learn Chinese characters.	✓				
22	I developed different strategies to learn Chinese characters.		✓			
23	Learning Chinese characters is fun.	✓				
24	I am confident to learn new characters.	✓				
25	I am always motivated to use the Chinese characters I have learned in writing.		✓			

6. Are you interested in participating a focus group interview (small group interview about your experience and perception of learning Mandarin)?

A. Yes

B. No

Teaching journal

A: 我家有五口人。

I jiā to have 5 measure word person

home/family for how many person in family

Q: 你家有几口人?

you jǐ kǒu rén

(jǐ) = how many

learned (green)
new (orange)

Enjoyment	Engagement	Difficulty
H (guessing the meaning & finding out answer)	H	M



Focus group interview questions

1. Why would you like to learn Mandarin?
2. How did you feel when you start learning Mandarin?
3. How do you feel after you have been learning Mandarin for four months?
4. Why you have such changes in your learning attitudes towards Mandarin?



From extrinsic to intrinsic motivation: the before and after

1. Effort

- I invest much time and effort on all Chinese character assignments.

2. Instrumental

- I think learning Chinese character will help in my future career

3. Learning strategies

- I develop different strategies to learn Chinese characters

4. Ideal L2 self

- I can imagine myself speaking and writing mandarin as if I were native speaker of Chinese

Results of questionnaires

Motivation construct	Pre-test	Post-test	Change
Instrumental	4.46	4.35	↓
Effort	4.61	4.52	↓
Ideal L2 Self	4.21	4.33	↑
Learning strategies	4.17	4.37	↑

Changes of motivation

BEFORE

- Yes, it is difficult. You are used to English and what is that in Mandarin? Arh...it's completely different.
- At first when I start learning Mandarin, I was thinking how I am going to learn this language, it's so hard.
- I was kind of stressing as I don't know any of the characters and I wasn't really familiar with them.

AFTER

- At the beginning, we are just saying 你好, but we are now writing paragraph. So it's really cool.
- I really proud of the results. It is because at the beginning I don't really understand anything. But now, I can write like a short paragraph in Mandarin.
- We have learnt so many words and sentences, say structures of sentences. The only time that I am not confident is the test. Because I don't know if I am going to get it right or not.

What sustain students' intrinsic motivation?

- *“Sometimes I think about myself older and I will learn Chinese and I will be able to speak it fluently to native speakers.”*
- *“When I look at any jobs in the future, it is better if you know more languages. Again, Mandarin is really useful and it spoken a lot.”*
- *”Sometimes when I really get bored in lessons, I just write characters in my hands.”*
- *“Watch the video about the Great Wall of China. We are doing quizzes about the Great Wall of China, that’s really cool!”*
- *“I found it very interesting, sometimes I go google and look at images and really like the culture, that’s kind of one of reasons that I like Mandarin as well.”*



What sustain students' intrinsic motivation?

Student A: How miss motivates us a lot, we play games sometimes that we love.

- White board games
- Beat the teacher
- MEP projects (e.g. watching cultural videos)



Discussion: Reflecting teaching

1. What is the most commonly activity you use in your classroom?
2. What new element would you add to this activity to sustain students' motivation?
 - Ideal L2 self
 - Learning strategies
 - Culture
 - Others



Conclusion

HOW WOULD YOU DO IT DIFFERENTLY?

1. Extrinsic motivation wears off **DO IT!**
2. Ideal L2 self - the projection of students' self image as a Mandarin user in the future. Help the students nurture this, which research tells us this is important to sustain the motivation.
3. Chinese culture, the students were fascinated by every aspect of Chinese culture.
4. Learning strategies – sharing of learning strategies with the students in different skills can promote the self-efficacy.



Question and Answer

Thank you!

Jane Woo: jwo@ccfplus.com

Sophia Lam: sin.lam.15@ucl.ac.uk