

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY
AND COUNSELLING
(IJEPC)**www.ijepr.com**SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF CHINESE LANGUAGE
MOTIVATION, COURSE ENGAGEMENT AND CHINESE
VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AMONG STUDENTS IN
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Article Info:**Article history:**

Received date: 25.04.2024

Revised date: 02.05.2024

Accepted date: 20.05.2024

Published date: 13.06.2024

To cite this document:

Li, C., Abdul Raman, M. N., & Jin, X. (2024). Systematic Review Of Chinese Language Motivation, Course Engagement And Chinese Vocabulary Acquisition Among Students In Confucius Institute In Thailand. *International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling*, 9 (54), 131-143.

DOI: 10.35631/IJEPC.954011**This work is licensed under** [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)**Abstract:**

This review examines the aspects related to Chinese language Learning Motivation, Course Engagement, and Chinese Vocabulary Acquisition among Students in Confucius Institute in Thailand publications during the period from 2008 through 2024. The review sought to answer two questions: (1) What is the characteristic of the current studies in the aspect of Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement, and Chinese vocabulary acquisition published in English-language and Chinese language journals? (2) What problems can be concluded based on current studies of Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement, and Chinese vocabulary acquisition published in English-language and Chinese-language journals? Qualitative analyses report on the content and analysis of the research from: Chinese language learning in Thailand, Chinese language learning motivation, Course engagement, and Chinese vocabulary acquisition. The results found the answers to research questions and the gaps of Chinese language learning highlighted and discussed.

Keywords:

Chinese Language Learning, Motivation, Course Engagement, Chinese Vocabulary Acquisition, Thailand

Introduction

This study describes the studies related to Chinese language learning among students in Confucius Institute in Thailand during the period from 2008 through 2024. It focuses on research related to Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement and Chinese vocabulary acquisition to some extent. This review was conducted to grasp the pulse of field of research and practice of Chinese vocabulary acquisition of students in Confucius Institute in Thailand.

There are more than 30 million people studying Chinese in many schools around the world (Song, et al., 2023). Chinese is also widely spoken in ASEAN countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Vietnam. There are also many Chinese in Thailand, and there are also many Chinese-speaking people in Thailand. Thailand has a close relationship with China, and Thailand needs more Chinese-speaking talents, so the development of Chinese in Thailand has become increasingly important (Sun, 2023). with more than one million people studying Chinese in schools, accounting for 60% of the number of people studying Chinese in schools in Southeast Asia. The number of people learning Chinese ranks first in the world (Song, 2022).

Chinese vocabulary acquisition is important for Thailand students who is learning Chinese language as second language (Bueno-Alastuey, et al., 2022). Second language proficiency largely depends on the range of vocabulary a learner has acquired, and that limited vocabulary knowledge can impede successful communication (Bueno-Alastuey, et al., 2022). Motivation for language learning is a very complex psychological phenomenon and is the s most influential factor in learning a new language (Gardner, 1985, cited in An, 2022; Zheng, et al., 2020). The level of engagement can fluctuate from high to low and adjusted accordingly to personal and environmental conditions in the learning environment (Barkley, 2010; Newmann et al, 1992).

It is evident from the research that Chinese learning is important for students in Thailand. However, the arguments and context of Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement and Chinese vocabulary acquisition among students in Thailand have not yet been evaluated systematically. To offset this situation, the current paper used the systematic review methodology with a view to collate, analyze, and evaluate as well as summarize relevant research. The systematic literature review plays an important role to minimize bias and provide a complete, coherent overview of contemporary knowledge in research topics, research subjects and research methods. This review paper sought to answer two primary questions:

1. What is the characteristic of the current studies in the aspect of Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement and Chinese vocabulary acquisition published in English-language and Chinese language journals?
2. What are the problems can be concludes based on currents studies of Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement and Chinese vocabulary acquisition published in English-language and Chinese language journals?

The systematic review is aimed to take into Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement and Chinese vocabulary acquisition and sought to examine the overview of patterns of research that were coded as reflected in contemporary research literature (up to January 2024). To obtain a comprehensive view of the research, the researcher reviewed theoretical literature, quantitative and qualitative studies.

However, the review has two limitations. Firstly, this review cannot cover all the papers in the field of Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement and Chinese vocabulary acquisition. Moreover, although English-language and Chinese language journals were reviewed, it does not represent an international perspective.

Method

Search Strategy

This research employed English electronic databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, UM Library, Sci-Hub, ProQuest and Chinese electronic database CNKI, WEIPU and WANFANG DATA for searching. There is no particular start date to search papers, and the last search was conducted by author in January in 2024. These databases are suitable for the education topic and can increase the probability that all relevant studies have been located. The Boolean Operators search strategy was adopted within the electronic databases, including 'language learning', with Chinese language learning, language learning motivation, vocabulary acquisition, Chinese vocabulary acquisition. Inverted commas were inserted around the term 'Chinese language learning' to ensure searches would find papers related to Chinese language learning to ensure the papers which are in relation to this topic would appear in the results

Eligibility Criteria

The criteria for inclusion in this systematic review were (i) papers published status; and (ii) publications in the English language and Chinese language until the date last searched. The duplicate papers which are in different search databases were removed. Moreover, the following is exclusion criteria: (i) papers which is not associated with Chinese language as second language; (ii) papers that used Chinese language learning in the title, keywords or abstract, but not covering students in Thailand in the full body of text; (iii) book reviews, book synopses and book chapters; (iv) conference reports and newspaper; and (v) editorials and forewords. On the other hand, full-text articles excluded if the papers aimed at measuring students' Chinese language learning, provided programs of young children aged below ten who are in preschool and primary school. As a result of adopting the inclusion and exclusion criteria, a total of 18 papers were included in the systematic review. Figure 1 shows the PRISMA flow diagram for screening process. PRISMA prefer reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (Moher et al., 2009).

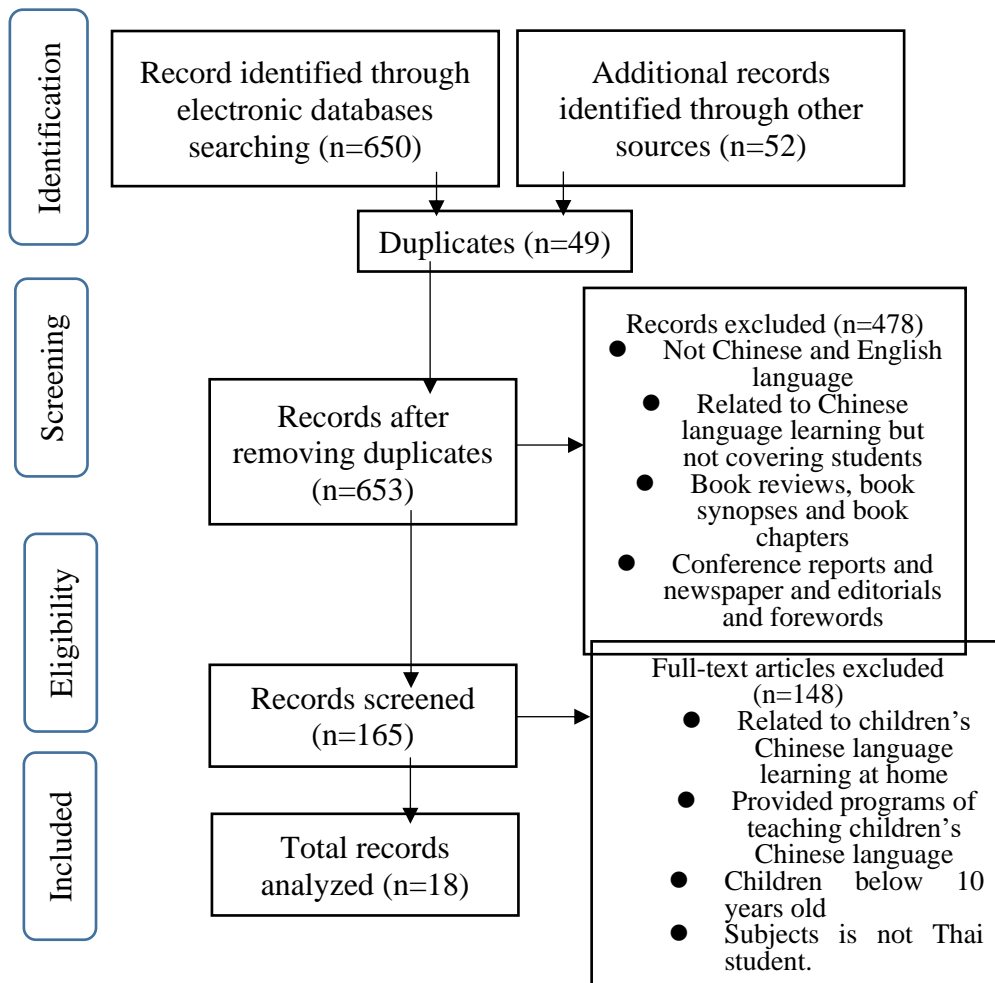


Figure 1: An Overview Of The Search Protocol Based On PRISMA Statement
(Moher et al., 2009)

Analysis

Firstly, the researcher conducted thematic coding to identify distinct categories from the retrieved papers in the analysis. According to coding scheme, the researcher performed two-step process based on research questions. Research address, type of research, sample, research instrument, research theory and research main findings of the study were entered in Excel. First version of the coding scheme was established. Then core categories were identified, followed by thorough and interpretative coding, which highlighted themes form the studies.

Results

Summary Of Studies

A total of 18 papers were collected. Eight studies were conducted in Thailand. The setting of six studies is in China including investigating the international students who are study in China. Among 18 studies, there were six studies used mixed method and one is qualitative study. Ten studies were quantitative study. As the sample, only one study had large sample related to 1003 participants. Majority of study employed questionnaire as instrument.

Table 3.1 Main information of 18 Studies

AUTHOR	ADDRESS	TYPE OF RESEACH	SA MP LE	INSTRUMENT
Yao (2023)	China	quanti	1003	questionnaire
Jiang and Bai (2020)	58 Indonesian in China	quali	58	questionnaire
Song, et al., (2023)	Thailand	mixed	118	Questionnaire and interview
Wang (2023)	Thailand	quanti	341	questionnaire
Su (2022)	Thailand	mixed	110	Questionnaire and interview
Bao (2023)	Danish university	quanti	252	action research
Wang (2022)	China	quanti	105	questionnaire
Zang et al., (2022)	China	mixed	63	Questionnaire and interview
He (2022)	Thailand	mixed	154	questionnaire
Xie (2022)	Bangladeshi International Students	mixed	38	questionnaires and interview
Li (2008)	Thailand	mixed	107	questionnaire and interview
Zeng (2014)	Myanmar	quanti	28	questionnaire
He (2021)	China	quanti	172	questionnaire
Zhang (2017)	Mongolian	quanti	110	questionnaire and interview
Gong & Thaima, (2020)	Thailand	quanti	20	experiments
Kanoksilapatham (2011)	Thailand	quanti	105	questionnaire
Ji (2020)	Thailand	quanti	30	experiments
Yu (2019)	China	quali		Case study

After collected the main information of 18 paper (shown in Table 3.1), the researcher will use conventional content analysis and directed content analysis when analyzing qualitative data. First, coding and classification were performed. These categories were summarized based on themes with high frequency in the data. Table 3.2 lists the categories or topics of previous research.

Table 3.2
Categories and Themes form Previous Studies

Core categories	Themes
demographic variables (n=4)	Chinese language learning in Thailand
Language learning (n=8)	
In Thailand (n=8)	
Chinese learning motivation (n=10)	Chinese language learning motivation
The reason of learning Chinese (n=7)	
Differences in the Chinese learning motivations (n=4)	
Motivation types (n=5)	
Project-based Learning intervention (n=1)	Course engagement

student engagement (n=6)	
the interaction between teacher and student (n=4)	
students' intrinsic motivation and engagement (n=1)	
learning strategies (n=3)	Chinese vocabulary acquisition
Chinese vocabulary teaching (n=2)	
learning motivation and vocabulary acquisition (n=4)	

Numbers in parentheses represent the number of papers that referred to the core categories apparent, of a possible 18 papers

Qualitative Synthesis

The analysis identified a total of 67 codes, which were organized into 14 core categories. four themes were organized, and following section will review the themes from the analysis: namely, Chinese language learning in Thailand, Chinese language learning motivation, Course engagement, Chinese vocabulary acquisition.

Chinese Language Learning In Thailand

Three core categories that were adopted under the themes of 'Chinese language learning in Thailand,' included demographic variables (n=4), language learning (n=8) in Thailand (n=8). Four papers examined the influence of demographic variables. Eight papers emphasized the language learning, and eight papers focus on the Chinese learners in Thailand.

Kanoksilapatham (2011) investigated the reasons why Thai students study Chinese from teachers' perspectives. The researcher concluded that the students decided to take Chinese, primarily because of its usefulness, their parents' recommendation, their future study plans, and their friends' advice. Although the study focuses on the reason of learning Chinese language for Thai students, it did not mention the relationship between motivation and Chinese language.

Song (2022) reported that Thailand currently has more than 2,000 universities, middle schools and primary schools offering Chinese courses, with more than one million people studying Chinese in schools, accounting for 60% of the number of people studying Chinese in schools in Southeast Asia. The number of people learning Chinese in Thailand ranks first in the world. Thailand has become one of the countries with the highest concentration of Confucius Institutes and the fastest development of Chinese teaching in the world (Song, 2022).

However, Thai students encounter many problems in the process of learning Chinese. Because students have a weak foundation in Chinese and lack of awareness of learning, they are unable to master correct learning methods and techniques and fail to acquire more Chinese vocabulary (Yu, 2019).

Chinese Language Learning Motivation

Four core categories that were adopted under the themes of 'Chinese language learning motivation,' included in Thailand (n=8), Chinese learning motivation (n=10), the reason of learning Chinese (n=3), and differences in the Chinese learning motivations (n=4). The subjects of eight studies were Thai. Ten papers mentioned Chinese learning motivation. Seven papers related to Chinese learning including the reason of learning Chinese and the difference in Chinese learning motivations.

Yao (2023) conducted a quantitative study among 1,003 foreign students in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou through a questionnaire survey. The relationship between the demographic variables, Chinese language learning motivation, media use and Chinese cultural identity of foreign students were investigated. The research found that there is a significant impact between foreign students' Chinese learning motivation (integration motivation, instrumental motivation, achievement motivation) and Chinese cultural identity (Chinese cultural symbols, Chinese cultural types, Chinese cultural emotions, Chinese cultural behaviors). The influence of foreign students' Chinese learning motivation on their media usage behavior (media usage frequency, media information sources, media trust, and media dependence) is partially significant.

Similarly, Jiang and Bai (2020) conducted a study to investigate Chinese learning motivation of foreigners among 58 Indonesian students who are study in China. In the survey on learning motivation, regarding the answer to "Why do you learn Chinese?", the mean value of "In order to learn an important language in the development of the world economy" ranked first. Among them, junior, intermediate and advanced students believed that Chinese is an important language in the world economy. The number of people speaking an important language in development accounted for 19.1%, 23.6%, and 15.8% respectively. Indonesian students believe that Chinese is an important language in world economic development. For junior, intermediate, and advanced students, the mean answer of "It will be useful to find a job after graduation and increase in salary" ranked second, accounting for 4.7%, 17.6%, and 21% respectively. Explain the importance of Chinese language in the work of international students. They work hard to learn Chinese in order to get promotion opportunities or find better jobs.

Jiang and Bai (2020) found that there are certain differences in the learning motivations of male and female students. Girls are more interested in Chinese because they want to benefit from job hunting and job appreciation after graduation. Boys are more likely to believe that "Chinese is an important language in world economic development", which makes them work hard to learn Chinese. Su (2022) used mixed research method to investigate Chinese learning motivation of primary Chinese school students in Thailand. 110 students took part in the study. The researcher interviewed five teachers. The study found that more than 80% of students have varying degrees of demotivation in Chinese learning, among which the learning situation level has the greatest impact. In terms of individual differences, only the different attitudes of parents towards students learning Chinese have significant differences in Chinese learning motivation and demotivation. Chinese learning motivation factors show a significant correlation with Chinese learning demotivation. Regression analysis shows that learning interest, learning strategies and learning content are the fundamental factors leading to students' Chinese learning demotivation.

Song, et al., (2023) investigated the motivation types and learning commitment among heritage speakers of Chinese in Thailand through mixed research method. This study selected 118 Thai-born Chinese heritage speakers from three Chinese learning institutions in Suphan Province, Thailand, as the survey subjects. Eight learners were randomly selected from the survey respondents for semi-structured interviews. Results reveal two main types of motivation: learning environment and cultural communication. Both instrumental motivation and integrated motivation are found in a state of integration, while in general their learning motivation intensity is at the medium level. The relationship between motivation types and learning commitment is complex. In particular, five types of motivation including cultural

communication, learning environment, sense of achievement, personal hobby, and language interest, have a positive effect on predicting learning commitment, while the future planning and cultural identity motivation have a reverse prediction effect.

Wang (2023) investigated Chinese learning motivation among 341 middle school students in Thailand. The study found that the Chinese learning motivation of the students of Ratchaborikanukroh Middle School is strong, the proportion of integrative motivation in learning motivation is greater than instrumental motivation, and the role of internal motivation is stronger than external motivation. When analyzing the differences in learners' Chinese learning motivation among individual factors, it was found that the gender of the learner has a significant negative correlation with Chinese learning motivation, and whether the learner is Chinese and whether he or she is in the graduating class has a significant positive correlation with Chinese learning motivation.

Zang et al., (2022) conducted mixed research to investigate the influences of online learning environment on international students' intrinsic motivation and engagement in the Chinese learning as the sample of 63 international students taking Chinese courses in China. These studies focus on Chinese learning motivation of students but not the students who study Chinese as second language in Thailand.

Wang (2023) investigated Chinese learning motivation among 341 middle school students in Thailand. The study found that the Chinese learning motivation of the students of Ratchaborikanukroh Middle School is strong, the proportion of integrative motivation in learning motivation is greater than instrumental motivation, and the role of internal motivation is stronger than external motivation. Su (2022) used mixed research method to investigate Chinese learning demotivation of primary Chinese school students in Thailand among 110 primary school students. The study found that more than 80% of students have varying degrees of demotivation in Chinese learning, among which the learning situation level has the greatest impact.

Regard to relevant literature, it was found that the research on the learning motivation of learning Chinese in Thailand is not in-depth enough. There are not many studies on the Chinese learning motivation of students in Confucius Institutes in Thailand. Moreover, the survey research samples of Chinese learners in Thailand are not large enough, with the number of samples mainly below 400. The schools surveyed have a small scale of learning Chinese, and the results obtained are not regionally representative.

Course Engagement

Three core categories that were adopted under the themes of 'course engagement' included project-based learning intervention (n=1), student engagement (n=6), the interaction between teacher and student (n=4), and students' intrinsic motivation and engagement (n=1).

Student course engagement and the interaction between students and teacher is important (Bao, 2023). However, since the worldwide spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education has primarily converted online (Ali, 2020). The study of international students affected during the pandemic (Sarker, et al., 2021). International students' Chinese language learning was affected by pandemic (Zang et al., 2022).

Wang (2022) conducted a study related to effects of online Chinese classroom teacher-student interaction on students' learning effectiveness among 105 Chinese language learner who study Chinese language as second language. As course engagement, the study found that the content of teacher-student interaction has a significant positive impact on students' learning effects. He (2022) did research on the problems and countermeasures of online Chinese teaching in Thailand through mixed research method. A total of 154 questionnaires were collected, including 124 from students and 30 from teachers. He (2022) found that the form of interaction between teachers and students, students and students is relatively simple. Xie (2022) investigated students' course engagement in the online class of advanced Chinese comprehensive course as sample of 38 Bangladeshi International Students. Research has found that many international students have low engagement in Chinese online classes. Online teaching is a helpless choice under the background of the epidemic.

Based on previous studies, students' course engagement was affected by epidemic. Moreover, most of the current studies on student engagement are researched on native language learners, and there are very few relevant literatures on international students or second language learners.

Chinese Vocabulary Acquisition

As Chinese language acquisition, three codes "learning strategies (n=3), Chinese vocabulary teaching (n=2), and learning motivation and vocabulary acquisition (n=4) were found.

He (2021) investigated the effect of learner happiness on Chinese language acquisition among 172 international students who study Chinese as second language in China through mixed research method. He (2021) found that Chinese language acquisition can be predicted based on Chinese language learners' well-being. Zhang (2017) conducted mixed research to investigate the effect of Chinese learning motivation on Chinese acquisition among 110 Mongolian students who is in Primary Chinese level. In terms of the relationship between acquisition effect and learning motivation, the acquisition effect of Mongolian international students is directly proportional to instrumental motivation.

Li (2008) conducted a Chinese vocabulary test on 107 college students majoring in Chinese at Lampang Royal University in Thailand. She also examined the learning strategies used by Thai students to learn Chinese vocabulary. The survey results show that Thai students generally have a weak awareness of vocabulary learning strategies, and students' strategy use shows great differences due to gender and grade differences.

Bao (2023) conducted an action research of teacher language use and learner participation in Chinese as a foreign language class. A researcher video- recorded their own class at a Danish university. Bao (2023) found that student engagement and the interaction between students and teacher is important. Moreover, the teacher language use can promote learner engagement. These methods included creating an interactive space for learners, involving students in problem- solving, and providing ample opportunities to communicate with their teacher.

Ji (2020) investigated whether Project-based Learning could enhance Chinese vocabulary learning achievement of three Thai secondary school students. The study conducted a one-class Pre-Post Test experimental study design among 30 students in a Bangkok School in Thailand. A Pre-Post Test was used before and after the intervention to find the learning achievement of the students. The questionnaires and semi-structured interview were instruments to collect the students' feedback on the course they participated in. The findings revealed that the Project-

based Learning could enhance Chinese vocabulary learning achievement of three Thai secondary school students.

Zhang (2017) conducted mixed research to investigate the effect of Chinese learning motivation on Chinese acquisition among 110 Mongolian students who is in Primary Chinese level. Questionnaire and interview are instruments for the study. The study found that the overall motivation level of Mongolian international students with elementary Chinese proficiency is average, mainly instrumental motivation, and the level of integrative motivation is low. Second, in terms of gender, the overall motivation level of girls is higher than that of boys. Third, in terms of age, the motivation level of students between the ages of 21 and 30 is higher than that of students between the ages of 16 and 20. In terms of the relationship between acquisition effect and learning motivation, the acquisition effect of Mongolian international students is directly proportional to instrumental motivation. Students with mainly instrumental motivation have relatively better Chinese acquisition effects.

Gong & Thaima (2020) used teaching media as YouTube videos to teach 20 students' Chinese vocabulary in the Thanompitvittaya primary school. The students' activities in Chinese vocabulary teaching are using Chinese flashcards, playing game, singing a song by using music, and watching the video. The researcher conducted experiments among six grade students aged 11-12 years old and tested The Chinese vocabulary in HSK level two. The comparison results scores of Chinese vocabulary were recorded and found scores of post-test are higher than pre-test.

Based on previous studies, the research on motivation for Chinese language acquisition is mostly carried out with a specific school as an example, less research of Chinese learning motivation on students' vocabulary acquisition in Confucius Institute in Thailand.

Discussion And Conclusion

In this study, the first research question examines the characteristic of the current studies in the aspect of Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement and Chinese vocabulary acquisition published in English-language and Chinese language journals. The results reveal four themes related to Chinese learning including Chinese language learning in Thailand, Chinese language learning motivation, Course engagement, and Chinese vocabulary acquisition. The reasons of Thai students learning Chinese were investigated (Kanoksilapatham, 2011; Yao, 2023; Jiang & Bia, 2020). There are different types of motivation of learning Chinese as second language. Majority of students believed that Chinese is an important language in world economic development. It is necessary to understand students' Chinese learning motivation (Yao, 2023; Song, et al., 2023; Wang, 2023). Student course engagement for student is essential (Bao, 2023), who learning Chinese as s second language (Ali, 2020; Wang, 2022; He, 2022). As Chinese language acquisition, Project-based Learning could enhance Chinese vocabulary learning achievement of three Thai secondary school students (Ji, 2020). Students with mainly instrumental motivation have relatively better Chinese acquisition effects (Zhang, 2017).

The second research question is to investigate the problems based on currents studies of Chinese language learning motivation, course engagement and Chinese vocabulary acquisition published in English-language and Chinese language journals. Yu (2019) reported that Thai students encounter many problems in the process of learning Chinese such as failing to acquire

more Chinese vocabulary. Thai students generally have a weak awareness of vocabulary learning strategies (Li, 2008). Many international students have low engagement in Chinese learning class (Xie, 2022).

It was found that the research on the learning motivation of learning Chinese in Thailand is not in-depth enough. Most of the current studies on student engagement of international students who study Chinese as second language in China rather than in Thailand (Yao, 2023; Jiang & Bia, 2020; Bao, 2023; Zang, et al., 2022). There are not many studies on the Chinese learning motivation of students in Confucius Institutes in Thailand.

On the other hand, for Chinese language acquisition is mostly carried out with a specific school as example (He, 2021; Zhang, 2017; Ji, 2020), less research of Chinese learning motivation on students' vocabulary acquisition in the Confucius Institute in Thailand. there is few research to investigate the relationship between Chinese learning motivation, course engagement and Chinese vocabulary acquisition.5 acknowledge

Acknowledgement

The authors wish to thank Dr. Li Cemei, Prof. Mohd Nazri, and Mr. JinXiong., for their time investment and critical review of the paper revised.

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