THE RELATIONSHIP OF MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING CHINESE AND PERCEPTION OF PARENTAL ENCOURAGEMENT FOR LEARNING CHINESE WITH CHINESE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF GRADE 3, GRADE 4, AND GRADE 5 STUDENTS AT AIN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL IN THAILAND

En-Ci Huang\(^1\)
Richard Lynch\(^2\)

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine the relationships between Grade 3, Grade 4, and Grade 5 students’ level of motivation for learning Chinese, perception of parental encouragement for learning Chinese with their Chinese academic achievement at an international school in Thailand. An adapted version of attitude/motivation test battery was used to collect data from 55 Grade 3 students, 52 Grade 4 students, and 48 Grade 5 students during the second semester of academic year 2016 – 2017. Descriptive statistics – means, standard deviations, and multiple correlation coefficients were used to analyze the data. The findings suggested that Grade 3, Grade 4, and Grade 5 students at this school had high levels of motivation for learning Chinese and high levels of perception of parental encouragement for learning Chinese. Motivation for learning Chinese was found to correlate significantly with students’ Chinese academic achievement, while parental encouragement for learning Chinese did not significantly correlate with students’ Chinese academic achievement.

Keywords: Motivation, Perception of Parental Encouragement, Chinese Academic Achievement, Foreign/Second Language Acquisition, Socio-Educational Model, Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)

Introduction
China’s successful economic development in recent years has led to a huge increase in the numbers of non-Chinese heritage people learning Chinese around the world, a phenomenon known as global Mandarin fever (Gao, 2011). The trend of Mandarin fever is also evident in Thailand, as Mandarin is now considered the most popular foreign language among Thai students (The Nation, 2012). A survey at 700 schools throughout Thailand carried out by the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) showed that majority of the Thai students’ preference for foreign language are moving away from European languages to Asian languages, with Chinese Mandarin as their first choice (The Korea Times, 2012). As Chinese is becoming a more popular foreign language in Thailand, it is important to study the factors that influence Chinese language teaching and learning in the Thai context.

This study explored the relationship between motivation, which is a construct that has been consistently found to be a crucial factor in language learning, and perception of parental encouragement for learning the language, an important social factor in the language learning process, with students’ language academic achievement at an international school in Thailand.

Research Objectives
The following are the specific research objectives addressed by this study:
1. To determine the levels of motivation for learning Chinese of Grade 3, Grade 4, and Grade 5 students at an international school in Thailand.

\(^1\)M.Ed. Candidate, Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction, Assumption University of Thailand.
enchhuang27@hotmail.com

\(^2\)Ph. D., Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Human Sciences, Assumption University, Thailand.
richardlynch2002@yahoo.com