Thai Undergraduate Students' Feedback Preference and Motivation in Learning Chinese as a Foreign Language in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

Aim. This study aims to examine the intersection of learning feedback and student motivation in the context of Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) education within Thai higher education institutions, an area with limited prior research.

Methods. Employing a mixed-method design and convenient sampling, 215 Chinese major students at an autonomous Thai institution participated. Data was collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to validate the measurement model (χ^2/df=2.07, CFI=.932$, TLI=.924, RMSEA=.083, SRMR=.048). The regression analysis was used to examine the relationships between learning feedback and student motivation. Furthermore, thematic analysis was utilised to identify and extract themes from the interview data.

Result. The results demonstrated a strong preference among students for corrective feedback and feedback provided by their teachers, with lower-year students exhibiting a greater feedback preference. Advanced academic-year students displayed a propensity to engage critically with feedback, fostering self-reliant learning skills. Learning feedback significantly and positively predicted motivation. Regression analysis showed that this relationship was consistent across academic years.

Conclusions. The findings highlight the motivational significance of structured and informative instructional feedback in foreign language education. This study emphasises the crucial role of teachers in delivering feedback and fostering an environment conducive to active learning, emphasising the need for both educators and students to understand and effectively utilise feedback to enhance learning outcomes. Additionally, the findings revealed that Thai undergraduate students' motivation stemmed from their desire to build meaningful social connections with those who value the CFL and recognise its relevance for future career prospects.
Keywords: learning feedback, learning motivation, CFL students, feedback preference, Chinese

Introduction

The rising global prominence of China, economically and socially, has led to an increasing demand for Chinese language education in various parts of the world, particularly in Asia . Within this global context, Thailand has emerged as a significant focal point for Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) learning, boasting over one million learners owing to mutually beneficial educational policies fostered by both the Chinese and Thai governments (Gong et al., 2018; Xu, et al., 2022). While multiple studies have delved into various aspects of CFL education, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, research gaps persist — especially concerning Thai undergraduate students' feedback preferences and their motivation for CFL acquisition. Existing literature predominantly examines the effects of the pandemic on CFL education by focusing on student behaviour, motivation, teacher-student interactions, and learning outcomes (Jaturanon, 2019; Mahatharathong, 2021). However, their research is narrowly focused on vocabulary learning, limiting its applicability to broader CFL acquisition paradigms. Similarly, En-Ci Huang and Richard Lynch (2019) studied motivation and achievement in CFL, but their focus was restricted to primary and middle school learners, leaving a notable research gap concerning undergraduate students.

Another dimension that is critically underexplored is the preference for and perception of learning feedback among Thai CFL learners. Numerous studies have examined the technical and curricular aspects of effective CFL teaching, emphasising the utility of internet platforms, network connections, and innovative learning

tools (Kittinanthawat, 2020). However, there is a conspicuous absence of research investigating how feedback mechanisms correlate with motivation and learning outcomes in the context of Thai undergraduates learning CFL. Therefore, to address these limitations, the current study aims to be the first to systematically explore the interplay between learning feedback and motivation within the specific demographic of Thai undergraduate students learning Chinese as a foreign language.

Literature Review

Feedback

Feedback in academic settings plays a vital role in influencing student achievement, especially within the constraints and challenges of higher educational institutions (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Recent scholarlship has exponentially grown in this domain, reflecting an emerging interest in understanding student engagement with feedback, optimising its design, and evaluating its impacts on learning outcomes (Jensen et al., 2021; Wisniewski et al., 2020).

Feedback can be conceptualised as a complex, multidimensional construct through which learners interpret evaluative information to refine both the quality of their work and their learning methodologies (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The construct encompasses a range of applications, each with distinct implications for academic performance and learning outcomes (Wisniewski et al., 2020). Furthermore, the timing of feedback is crucial, particularly its synchronicity with the learners' position in the instructional cycle; a shift has been noted from task-oriented to process-oriented and self-regulatory strategies (Dong et al., 2021). Feedback can be categorised into three primary levels: task, process, and self-regulation (Gan, 2020). Task-level feedback provides insights into the effectiveness and comprehension of the executed tasks, while process-level feedback addresses the techniques or methods employed by the learner (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Self-regulatory feedback, on the other hand, pertains to how learners manage their cognitive strategies, with particular emphasis on individual personality traits (Wang et al., 2021; Wisniewski et al., 2020). Importantly, the most impactful feedback enables learners to understand not only their errors but also the underlying rationales for these errors, thereby facilitating preemptive strategies for future academic endeavour (Filius et al., 2018; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Tanis, 2020).

Some studies have examined the influence of the medium through which feedback is communicated, differentiating among oral, written, and technologically mediated methods such as computer, audio, or video-assisted channels (Cavalcanti et al., 2021; Espasa et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020). For instance, Xuan Van Ha et al. (2021) observed that Thai students engaged in foreign language acquisition and particularly

focused on learning outcomes demonstrated a preference for non-verbal feedback modalities that minimised face-threatening acts.

The orientation of feedback is delineated by both the provider and the recipient and can be classified into three primary categories: instructor-to-student, student-to-instructor, and student-to-student feedback (Kim, 2022; Liu et al., 2023; Wisniewski et al., 2020). The corpus of research focusing on instructor-to-student feedback is notably extensive (Wisniewski et al., 2020). Additionally, scholarly discourse has engaged with students' perceptions and affective considerations related to peer feedback, both as an independent variable and in comparative contexts with instructor feedback (Nguyen, 2018; Sritrakarn, 2018; Tran et al., 2023). Empirical findings indicate that students tend to accord less credibility to peer evaluations compared to feedback from instructors (Er et al., 2021; Kim, 2022).

A substantive portion of the existing literature on foreign language feedback is devoted to corrective feedback (Buchari, 2022; Jensen et al., 2021; Wisniewski et al., 2020). This feedback typically oscillates around task-level evaluations, offering binary judgments of "right" or "wrong. High-information feedback, however, integrates corrective feedback with insights into self-regulation, proving more conducive to learning enhancement (Er et al., 2021; Jensen et al., 2021; Wisniewski et al., 2020). Especially in L2 writing courses, writing corrective feedback (WCF) emerges as a crucial tool, enhancing grammatical competencies (Jahbel et al., 2020; Sinturat et al., 2022; Valizadeh, 2020). Nonetheless, factors like task genre, context, and learner capability remain pertinent, influencing the effectiveness of corrective feedback (Dong et al., 2021; Espasa et al., 2019; Ha et al., 2021).

Motivation

The landscape of academic motivation has been fertile ground for research, with the pivotal role of motivation in determining student success becoming increasingly recognised. The dynamics between an individual's motivation and their interactive behaviour with the learning environment are central to understanding this phenomenon (Algharaibeh, 2021; Fandiño et al., 2019). The multifaceted nature of academic motivation has provoked significant scholarly attention, underpinned by various models and theories. Richard Ryan and Edward Deci's (2000) self-determination theory, for instance, exemplifies such attempts, emphasising the interplay between intrinsic motivation and external factors like autonomy and competence. Their work buttresses the proposition that intrinsic motivation — the inherent drive arising from genuine interest and enjoyment of activities — is positively correlated with academic engagement and achievement (Bailey et al., 2021; Fandiño et al., 2019). Contrastingly, extrinsic motivation arises in response to external reinforcements, such as rewards or external validations, as delineated by Charles G.

Morris and Albert A. Maisto (1999) and Ryan and Deci (2000). These externally driven motivations can sometimes border on introjection, where the drive is fuelled by a need to demonstrate value or competence (Morris & Maisto, 1999; Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the educational field, motivation, or lack thereof, profoundly affects students' engagement level, with motivational apathy leading to passive or disengaged behaviour (Cheon & Reeve, 2015).

Robert C. Gardner's socio-educational model of L2 motivation, a prominent framework in the field, underlines the significance of positive attitudes towards the learning environment and a favourable disposition towards the target language in motivated language learners (Gardner, 2001). Building upon Gardner's ideas, Ema Ushioda and Zoltán Dörnyei (2009) introduced the concept of the L2 motivation self-system, drawing on established psychological motivation theories. Within this framework, Yashima emphasised the interconnectedness of an individual's present self and their future aspirations (Gan, 2020). Dörnyei and colleagues further extended this by developing the L2 Motivational Self System, incorporating multivariate aspects, and encompassing conceivable selves related to L2 motivation (Algharaibeh, 2021). The notion of the ideal L2 self, representing the person one aspires to become through language acquisition, is central to this framework. Failure to achieve career goals, academic success, or university graduation is seen as hindrances to realising this ideal (Dörnyei, 2019; Lee & Lee, 2020). Learners aspiring to align themselves with the target L2 culture are strongly linked to the ideal L2 self and integrativeness within the socio-educational paradigm (Dörnyei, 2019; Li & Zhang, 2021). Additionally, the concept of the ought-to L2 self is closely associated with instrumental motivation, representing external expectations placed on the learner (Moskovsky et al., 2016). Dörnyei argued that when learners perceive proficiency in the target language as crucial to their ideal or ought-to be self, it becomes a significant motivator in their language learning journey due to their desire to minimise the gap between their current and potential selves (Dörnyei, 2019; Gan, 2020). The L2 motivational self-system introduces a third dimension, the L2 learning experience, focusing on situational factors like teachers, peers, and learning materials (Dörnyei, 2019; Gan, 2020; Takahashi & Im, 2020).

Nonetheless, numerous scholarly investigations have explored the multifaceted determinants influencing students' motivation in English language learning, as demonstrated by studies conducted by Bambang Yudi Cahyono and Titik Rahayu (2020), Wen Hsu-Hsiao (2019), and Ahmad Bukhori Muslim et al. (2020). Their collective findings have unveiled an array of influential factors, encompassing socioeconomic variables such as school location, classroom learning environments, students' aspirational career choices, parental support, and the pivotal role of instructors in cultivating motivation (Muslim et al., 2020; Riyanto & Aryulina, 2020; Ulfa et al., 2019). Additionally, the impact of linguistic proficiency and gender on motivation has been scrutinised (Cahyono & Rahayu, 2020; Hsu-Hsiao, 2019).

Furthermore, Bunyamin Celik and Yunus Yildiz (2019) have probed the nexus between language and culture within the foreign language education domain, elucidating the vital role of cultural elements in galvanising student motivation to acquire a new language. This underlines the significance of incorporating cultural dimensions into foreign language pedagogy to enhance motivation. Advocating for the active role of educators, Jacob Filgona et al. (2020) underscore the responsibility of teachers in nurturing learner motivation, emphasising the need for inventive, engaging, and practical teaching approaches that seamlessly connect language learning with real-life applications, thereby kindling and sustaining students' motivation (Moskowitz et al., 2022).

Amidst the recent educational landscape disrupted by the pandemic, the transition to online education has introduced fresh complexities and considerations. Preliminary investigations like the one conducted by Romualdas Malinauskas and Jurat Pozeriene (2020) reveal discernible variations in motivational patterns between learners engaged in online and traditional learning modalities, although caution is warranted in making broad generalisations due to the study's inherent limitations. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that motivation assumes an escalated significance within online educational contexts, as it plays a pivotal role in propelling self-regulated and self-directed learning — qualities of paramount importance for achieving success in virtual learning environments (Fandñio et al., 2019; Sergis et al., 2018). In summary, despite the extensive body of research delving into the multifaceted aspects of learning motivation, especially in the realm of language acquisition, a notable gap persists regarding the specific motivations and feedback preferences of Thai undergraduate students engaged in Chinese language learning. This void emphasises the imperative need for a targeted inquiry aimed at establishing a robust groundwork for the development of tailored pedagogical strategies and effective interventions in this context.

The Relationship Between Learning Feedback and Learning Motivation

Feedback influences motivation variables like intrinsic motivation, locus of control, self-efficacy, and perseverance, supported by Diah Aryulina (2020) and Benedict Wisniewski et al. (2020). Delivery method — positive or negative, private or group — affects motivation levels, as research by John Hattie and Helen Timperley (2007) and J. Fong Carlton et al. (2019) shows. To deepen understanding, it is vital to explore causal links between feedback and motivation, highlighted by Stephen J. Aguilar (2022), and examine their dynamic interplay. Zhe Gan (2020) views anticipated effort as a key motivational proxy in Dörnyei's model, while W. L. Quint Oga-Baldwin (2019) warns that relying on intent alone may be insufficient. Engage-

ment is recommended as a more appropriate measure for assessing long-term effects of motivation models, encompassing behaviour like class participation, interactions, and course engagement — all distinct from motivation or effort, as seen in student feedback engagement.

Hsu-Hsiao (2019) posited that feedback plays a crucial motivational role in facilitating learners' goal attainment and substantially influences individual motivation. In support of this notion, Elvis Ahmetovic et al. (2023) conducted a similar study, revealing that students who harbour positive attitudes toward the feedback they receive exhibit markedly higher motivation to persist in their studies compared to those with negative attitudes. Iman Said Al-Darei and Abdelrahman Mohamed Ahmed (2022) demonstrated a notable enhancement in both motivation and academic achievement following feedback implementation.

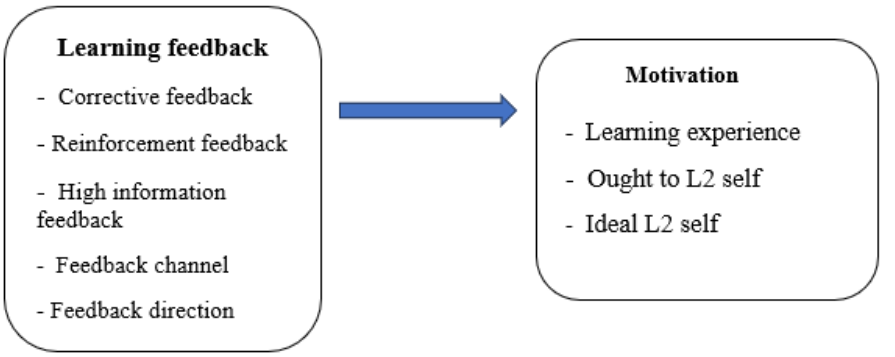
Students' motivation to actively engage with feedback is crucial, but their ability to do so may be limited. To improve feedback effectiveness in second language education, it is important to explore the link between motivation for learning a second language and students' perceptions of feedback, as highlighted by research from David Carless and David Boud (2018), Carlton et al. (2019), and Gan (2020). Most studies focus on learning feedback and motivation in the EFL context, but little attention has been given to how CFL students' motivation influences their feedback preferences, despite hints of a connection. This study aims to fill this gap by examining how CFL students' motivation affects their feedback expectations and preferences.

Medthodology

Research Design and Framework

This study examines the preferences of Thai Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) students regarding feedback in the context of their learning experiences. Additionally, the research sought to discern potential variations in feedback preferences among CFL students across different academic years, including first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year students, in order to provide insights into how feedback preferences may have evolved throughout their academic journey. Furthermore, the study explored the correlation between learning feedback and the motivation to learn among CFL students, shedding light on the extent to which feedback influenced student motivation and engagement in the process of acquiring the Chinese language. To achieve these objectives, a mixed method involving quantitative and qualitative data analyses was employed, as detailed in the data analysis below.

Figure 1
Illustration of the Research Framework



Source. Own research.

Research Questions

Based on the research objectives and the reviewed literature, the study addresses the following research questions:

- What are the preferences of Thai Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) students concerning feedback in the context of their learning experiences?
- Do variations exist in feedback preferences among first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year CFL students?
- To what extent does a correlation exist between learning feedback and the motivation to learn among CFL students?

Research Hypotheses

In order to investigate students' feedback preferences and their relationship with learning motivation, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

- Thai CFL students demonstrate a significant preference for teacher-provided corrective feedback over other types of feedback.
- There is a significant difference in the feedback preference among first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year CFL students.
- There is a significant positive correlation between the quality/type of learning feedback received and the level of learning motivation among Thai CFL students.

Participants

Employing a convenient sampling method, the study encompassed a cohort of 215 participants, all of whom were Chinese major students enrolled at an autonomous university located in southern Thailand. The participant distribution comprised 43 first-year students (with 5 males and 38 females), 60 second-year students (inclusive of 5 males and 55 females), 63 third-year students (consisting of 1 male and 62 females), and 49 fourth-year students (comprising 8 males and 41 females).

Instruments

The motivation survey utilised in this study was adapted from the Academic Motivation Scale (College Version) developed by Robert J. Vallerand et al. (1989). This survey comprised 15 items, with items 1–5 assessing learning experiences, items 6–10 gauging the concept of an "ought to" L2 self, and items 11–15 exploring the ideal L2 self. To investigate students' feedback preferences, a questionnaire was developed based on a comprehensive literature review (Carless & Boud, 2018; Ha et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021; Wisniewski et al., 2020). The questionnaire encompassed dimensions related to corrective feedback, reinforcement feedback, high-information feedback, feedback direction, and feedback channel. The reliability of both scales was established with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.85 and 0.98, respectively, signifying their internal consistency. Moreover, the questionnaires underwent validation by three expert assessors using Item Objective Congruence (IOC), resulting in scores of 0.90 and 0.95, respectively.

Interview questions were formulated with the aim of delving deeper into the quantitative findings. To facilitate subsequent data transcription and analysis, all interviews were systematically recorded in audio format. Employing a simple random sampling technique, a total of twenty students were chosen to partake in the interviews, including 5 first-year students, 5 second-year students, 5 third-year students, and 5 fourth-year students.

Data Collection

The study received ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee at Walailak University before commencing data collection in the first semester of the 2023 academic year, resulting in the acquisition of a human research ethics permission certificate (WUEC-23-121-01). The distribution of questionnaires was facilitated through the utilisation of a Google form. Prior to their participation, a comprehensive explanation of the research's objectives was provided to all participants. They were made fully aware that their involvement was entirely voluntary and would

have no bearing on their academic performance. Consent for the utilisation of their identities was obtained with their informed approval.

Data Analysis

This study employed a convergent mixed-methods design to investigate the relationship between learning feedback and motivation among 215 undergraduate students majoring in Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) at an autonomous Thai institution. To investigate students' preferences regarding learning feedback, the questionnaire responses were subjected to statistical analysis, yielding measures such as mean values, ranges, and standard deviations. The quantitative data were analysed using SPSS and R (lavaan package). The measurement model was validated quantitatively using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which showed acceptable fit indices (χ^2/df=2.07, CFI=.932, TLI=.924, RMSEA=.083, SRMR=.048). The regression was then used to test the predictive ability of learning feedback on motivation. The impact of academic year level on this relationship was also investigated using a regression analysis. Additionally, thematic analysis, following the framework outlined by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2019), was applied to examine, and extract themes from the interview data. The questionnaires utilised a five-point Likert scale for responses, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). as seen in Table A 1.

Results

Quantitative Findings

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the measurement properties of the constructs. The measurement model demonstrated an acceptable overall fit to the data (χ^2/df = 2.07, CFI = .932, TLI = .924, RMSEA = .083, SRMR = .048). Although the RMSEA slightly exceeded the conventional .08 threshold, the remaining fit indices met recommended criteria, supporting the adequacy of the measurement model.

Table A 2 showed that standardised factor loadings ranged from .77 to .91, indicating strong indicator reliability. Composite reliability values exceeded .90 and AVE values were above .50, supporting convergent validity of the motivation construct.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the five learning feedback dimensions ranged from .71 to .96 (see Table A3), indicating good to excellent internal consistency. These findings further support the reliability of each subscale rather than only the overall construct.

As shown in Table A4, Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .827 to .966 across the five dimensions, indicating good to excellent internal consistency. These results support the reliability of the various learning feedback scales.

The descriptive analysis (Table A5) indicates that participants reported high levels across all study variables, with mean scores ranging from 3.76 to 4.23. Corrective feedback (CF) got the highest mean (M = 4.23, SD = 0.74), while Learning experience (LE) showed the lowest yet still positive mean (M = 3.76, SD = 0.82). Skewness values ranged from -1.28 to -0.65, while Kurtosis values ranged from 0.87 to 2.68. Although some kurtosis values slightly exceeded ±2, all skewness and kurtosis values were within acceptable limits for regression analysis, indicating no severe violation of normality assumptions, indicating that the data have a reasonably normal distribution and can be used for additional inferential statistical analysis.

Table A6 presents descriptive statistics of feedback preferences across academic years (first- to fourth-year students). Descriptively, first-year students reported slightly higher mean scores compared to other cohorts. Among the different feedback types, corrective feedback garnered the strongest favour among first-year students, with a mean score of 4.45, whereas third-year students recorded the lowest mean scores in their responses, falling behind students in their first, second, and fourth years. Notably, Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) students demonstrated a comparatively diminished appreciation for reinforcement feedback, with a mean score of 3.90.

According to Table A7, six regression models were used to examine the relationships between learning feedback and students' motivation, including three empty models and three full models incorporating interaction terms between feedback dimensions and year of study.

The results of the empty models indicate that several feedback dimensions significantly predicted students' motivation. As Table A7 showed, for learning experience (LE), reinforcement feedback (RF) ($\beta = .257$, $p = .013$) and feedback channel (FC) ($\beta = .254$, $p = .005$) showed significant positive effects. This suggests that students who received reinforcement and reinforcement feedback tended to report higher levels of engagement in learning activities. For the L2 self (OT), corrective feedback (CF) ($\beta = .421$, $p < .001$) and feedback channel (FC) ($\beta = .235$, $p = .025$) were significant predictors. These findings indicate that corrective feedback and feedback channels may enhance students' expectations of successful learning outcomes.

For the ideal L2 self (ILS), both corrective feedback (CF) ($\beta = .256$, $p = .007$) and reinforcement feedback (RF) ($\beta = .268$, $p = .004$) were significant positive predictors, suggesting that these forms of feedback may increase students' interest in studying the language for future careers. In contrast, high information feedback (HI) and feedback direction (FD) did not show significant effects on any of the three motivation dimensions.

The full models were estimated to examine whether the relationship between learning feedback and motivation was moderated by year of study. The results revealed significant interaction effects for learning experience. In particular, the interaction between corrective feedback and year of study (CF × Year) was significant ($\beta = 2.201$, $p = .001$), indicating that the effect of corrective feedback on learning motivation differed

across academic years. Similarly, the interaction between feedback channel and year of study (FC × Year) was also significant ($\beta = -1.304$, $p = .007$). These findings suggest that students at different academic levels may respond differently to specific types of feedback, particularly corrective feedback and feedback channels.

However, no significant interaction effects were observed for ought to L2 self (OT) or ideal L2 self (ILS), indicating that the moderating effect of year of study was limited to the dimension of ought to L2 self and ideal L2 self.

As shown in Table A8, the model fit statistics indicate that the regression models explained a moderate proportion of variance in students' motivation. For the empty models, the explained variance ranged from 43.6% to 55.8% across the three motivation dimensions. Specifically, the model explained 43.6% of the variance in learning experience (LE), 54.7% in ought to L2 self (OT), and 55.8% in ideal L2 self (ILS).

After including interaction terms with year of study, the models showed comparable explanatory power, with R^2 values from .476 to .558 and adjusted R^2 from .450 to .536, indicating stable performance. RMSE ranged from .572 to .624, suggesting acceptable prediction error. These results suggest that the regression models reasonably explain the relationship between learning feedback and students' motivation.

Note: All tables were shown in the appendix section.

Qualitative Findings

After thorough analysis of the interview responses from Thai undergraduate students learning Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL), four distinct themes surfaced concerning their preferences for feedback in the learning process:

- *Theme 1: Predominance of Oral Feedback:* Oral feedback emerged as the predominant preference among the students. It was noted that teachers primarily employ this method in the classroom setting. A representative statement was: "I listen carefully when my teacher corrects my errors." Several students believed that immediate oral correction, particularly after oral tasks, anchored their understanding and helped them avoid future errors. This was evident in remarks like, "When I mispronounce a word, my teacher corrects it right away, allowing me to repeat and recognise it." The paramount importance of pronunciation errors was underlined as they played a vital role in shaping communication. This preference was congruent with quantitative findings which highlighted that a significant majority of students favoured corrective feedback from their instructors.
- *Theme 2: Reliability of Teacher Feedback:* Feedback procured from instructors was perceived as indispensable to the students' linguistic journey. Quantitative results paralleled this finding, accentuating the importance of teacher feedback. Students manifested a profound trust in, and reverence for, the feedback given by their teachers. The qualitative data contained statements such as: "I appreciate teacher evaluations on my tasks as they highlight areas of improvement.", "Peer feedback often lacks the rigour and objectiv-

ity teachers bring; sometimes, peers give high scores to maintain good relations.", "The teacher's feedback significantly shaped my motivation and enhanced my attitude towards learning Chinese."

- *Theme 3: Limited Preference for Reinforcement and Written Feedback:* A conspicuous trend from the interview data indicated students' diminished inclination towards feedback obtained from tests or exams. The rationale behind this sentiment stemmed from their inability to rectify mistakes post-assessment and the perceived intricacy of the exam content. However, a subgroup of first-year students expressed a predilection for summative assessments, believing them to be reflective of their language proficiency. On another note, while written feedback found favour among some, many lamented the legibility of teachers' handwriting or voiced concerns about potential misinterpretations. A sentiment echoing the preference for a blend of oral and written feedback was evident. For instance, one student mentioned, "Being able to gauge the teacher's emotions via oral feedback offers a richer understanding than through written comments."
- *Theme 4: Demand for Extensive Feedback on Homework Assignments:* The interview data emphasises a palpable demand among CFL students for a more comprehensive feedback mechanism for homework assignments. This stemmed from their aspiration to refine their skills and be exam-ready. The importance of purposeful assignment distribution and strict adherence to submission timelines was articulated by second-year students. However, some expressed discontent regarding the feedback on their written tasks, with one student noting that teachers often generalised errors rather than offering specific corrections. A predominant sentiment was the students' dissatisfaction stemming from the lack of evaluative scores on their homework.

Discussion and Implications

The primary objectives of this study revolved around discerning the preferences of Thai Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) students regarding the way they receive feedback on their learning and exploring the intricate relationship between feedback and their learning motivation. The findings of this study employ a convergent mixed-methods design, where qualitative insights from student interviews serve to triangulate and elucidate the statistical patterns observed in the quantitative phase. The quantitative preference for teacher-led corrective feedback is deeply mirrored in the qualitative theme of "Reliability of Teacher Feedback." Interview participants consistently noted that in the context of Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL), they perceive the instructor's feedback as the primary benchmark for linguistic accuracy. This qualitative depth confirms that the high mean scores for teacher-led feedback are not merely a passive preference but are rooted in a cultural and pedagogical trust in the instructor's expertise.

The study showed Thai CFL students preferred corrective feedback, especially oral feedback for pronunciation, aligning with its pedagogical benefits (Wisniewski et al.,

2020). Students' responses confirmed this, echoing Wacharapol Wiboolyasarin et al. (2022), who found corrective feedback crucial in helping Thai EFL learners recognise and correct errors. Various factors like students' proficiency, grammatical structures, teachers' pedagogical beliefs, and feedback strategies influence preferences (Singh & Halim, 2023). Students also highly value oral feedback in their Chinese speaking efforts, aligning with research by YouJin Kim and Tamanna Mostafa (2021) and Xuan Van Ha et al. (2021), which highlight the importance of oral feedback in improving language skills.

Interview responses further underlined the important role of teacher feedback, which students consistently regarded as more reliable and trustworthy. Teachers emerged as central figures in delivering feedback, a role that transcends both traditional classroom settings and online learning environments, aligning with research by Jiye Hong (2023) and Sidney Martin and Ibis M. Alvarez Valdivia (2017). It was observed that Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) students accorded greater importance to teachers' evaluations as compared to peer feedback, citing the limited participation of peers in the assessment process and a lack of confidence in their peers' capacity to provide accurate assessments. This preference for teacher feedback may be attributed to the deeply ingrained cultural concept of respecting elders, influenced by Buddhism, ancestor worship, and spiritual beliefs in Thai culture, which fosters admiration and trust in teachers' feedback. Furthermore, the interview data elucidated the significant role of teacher feedback in shaping students' emotional well-being, particularly their motivation levels and attitudes toward acquiring the Chinese language. This finding aligns with recent studies by Victoria Kim and Jeongyeon Kim (2020) on teacher feedback in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, highlighting the substantial impact of teacher feedback in promoting innovative approaches to language instruction and facilitating active learning engagement.

Reinforcement feedback had the lowest agreement score compared to corrective and high-information feedback. Many students disliked summative assessments due to limited correction opportunities. They favoured take-home assessments, which boosted confidence and exam preparation. The study highlights a strong student preference for formative feedback, which correlates with better learning and supports its effectiveness. Formative assessment helps teachers identify gaps in understanding and apply targeted strategies like differentiation and scaffolding before final assessments, as supported by research from Cam Brooks et al. (2019) and Hattie and Timperley (2007).

Many students expressed a desire for personalised feedback focused on specific errors, aligning with Napha On Sritrakarn (2018), who found EFL students preferred more discussion with instructors about feedback. Teachers should allocate enough time for support and clarification, as Anna Espasa et al. (2019) suggest. The study also shows that lower-year CFL students favour feedback more than higher-year students. First-year students, with less exposure to higher education, engaged more with feedback, echoing Gan (2020), who observed first-year EFL students utilised feedback more

than their junior counterparts. Advanced students may approach feedback more critically and become more self-reliant. Interestingly, fourth-year students were more receptive to feedback than third-year students, possibly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced them into online classes with native Chinese instructors, increasing their need for feedback to improve performance.

According to the current research, learning feedback plays a crucial role in the L2 learning experience. In particular, feedback improves learners' perceived competence and clarity of progress when it is corrective, informative, directional, reinforcing, and given through the right channels. These situations may boost students' self-assurance in reaching their ideal L2 selves and support the belief that future language proficiency is achievable. Importantly, the quantitative data highlighted that the "ought-to" L2 self got the highest mean score (M = 4.04). This outcome implies that Thai Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) students' learning motivation is influenced by social factors, including family support, peer expectations, and the prospect of lucrative job opportunities, all of which encourage their engagement in L2 language study. These findings echo the results of prior research conducted by Paisan Sukjairungwattana (2019) and Ting Cao and Noparat Tananuraksakul (2023). This form of motivation, often characterised as the "ought-to-L2" motivation, is primarily driven by the aspiration to establish positive social connections with individuals who value the language and perceive it for personal growth and intellectual development (Cao & Tananuraksakul, 2023).

The findings suggest that feedback acts as a contextual prior that fosters motivational processes rather than motivation as a predictor of feedback preferences. Feedback that is high-quality and constructive can help learners feel more confident, clarify performance expectations, and reduce uncertainty. This could therefore support internalised expectations of future language proficiency. Feedback, therefore, actively shapes and maintains motivation rather than just reacting to it. Overall, the findings show that feedback techniques are essential motivators in foreign language instruction rather than auxiliary teaching aids. Effective feedback may be an effective tool in maintaining L2 motivation by promoting competence, clarity, and future-focused self-beliefs.

Conclusion and Limitations

The findings of this study lead to several key conclusions within the context of university-level Chinese language learning: students prefer corrective feedback and feedback from their teachers; lower-year students tend to engage more actively with learning feedback than their higher-year counterparts. Furthermore, learning feedback emerged as a significant predictor of students' motivation, given its central role in shaping motivational engagement.

Corrective feedback from teachers is undeniably invaluable, as it facilitates students' learning from their mistakes and helps prevent their recurrence. Therefore, to effectively consider and strategise the implementation of feedback that prioritises the learning process, interventions should be devised and implemented to raise awareness among both teachers and students regarding the importance of comprehending and utilising feedback in ways that enhance both learning outcomes and the development of learning strategies and processes conducive to a deep understanding of the study material, in line with research by Gan (2020) and Wisniewski et al. (2020).

It is important to acknowledge certain limitations in this study. The study focused on only three forms of feedback (corrective feedback, reinforcement feedback, and high-information feedback), while many educators propose various other forms of feedback for learning. As such, the results may be confined to CFL students at the university level and may not be readily generalisable to other learner groups in distinct contexts. Furthermore, the study did not investigate how students act upon feedback. Future research endeavour should aim to expand upon this study and encompass a diverse array of participants from various educational backgrounds, enabling a more comprehensive comparison and contrast of the findings obtained.

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Appendix

Table A1

Interpretation of the Likert Scale Categories

Scale	Range	Interpretation
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree
3	2.61-3.40	Neutral
4	3.41-4.20	Agree
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree

Source. Developed by the researcher based on a five-point Likert scale.

Table A2

Measurement Model Results for Motivation

Construct	Loading Range	CR	AVE
Learning experience	.77–.87	.90	.64
Ideal L2 Self	.81–.91	.94	.76
Ought-to L2 Self	.84–.88	.92	.71

Note. Standardised factor loadings are reported. All loadings were significant at $p < .001$. CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

Source. Own research.

Table A3

Measurement Model Results for Learning Feedback

Construct	Loading Range	CR	AVE
Corrective feedback	.81–.88	.94	.70
Reinforcement feedback	.80–.88	.83	.71
High-Information feedback	.82–.96	.96	.79
Feedback direction	.72–.89	.87	.64
Feedback channel	.71–.90	.90	.61

Note. Standardised loadings are reported. All estimates were statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Source. Own research.

Table A4

Cronbach's Alpha for Learning Feedback Dimensions

Construct	Cronbach's α
Corrective feedback	.949
Reinforcement feedback	.827
High-Information feedback	.966
Feedback direction	.877
Feedback channel	.904

Source. Own research.

Table A5

Summary of Descriptive Statistics for All Study Variables

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic			Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
CF	215	1.00	5.00	4.2259	.73665	-1.276	.166	2.684	.330
RF	215	1.00	5.00	4.0628	.78211	-.846	.166	1.278	.330
HI	215	1.00	5.00	4.1375	.77829	-1.095	.166	1.801	.330
FD	215	1.00	5.00	3.9256	.79773	-.776	.166	1.458	.330
FC	215	1.00	5.00	3.9101	.74496	-.850	.166	1.814	.330
LE	215	1.00	5.00	3.7591	.82133	-.654	.166	.874	.330
OT	215	1.00	5.00	4.0419	.85024	-1.025	.166	1.423	.330
ILS	215	1.00	5.00	3.9563	.83931	-.935	.166	1.385	.330
Valid N (listwise)	215								

Note. CF= Corrective feedback, RF=Reinforcement feedback, HI= High information feedback, FD=Feedback direction, FC=Feedback channel, LE=Learning experience, OT=Ought to L2 self
ILS= Ideal L2 self.
Source. Own research.

Table A6

Feedback Types Preference by Year-Level

Year	Corrective feedback		Reinforcement feedback		High information feedback	
	M.	S.D	M.	S.D	M.	S.D
1	4.45	.82	4.29	.91	4.36	.95
2	4.24	.63	4.13	.66	4.18	.67

Year	Corrective feedback		Reinforcement feedback		High information feedback	
	M.	S.D	M.	S.D	M.	S.D
3	4.07	.65	3.90	.69	3.96	.69
4	4.15	.82	4.02	.87	4.14	.80

Source. Own research.

Table A7

Regression Analysis of the Learning Feedback on Motivation

Predictors	Empty Model LE (β)	Empty Model OT (β)	Empty Model ILS (β)	Full Model LE (β)	Full Model OT (β)	Full Model ILS (β)
CF	0.209	0.421***	0.256**	-0.729	0.394	0.307
RF	0.257*	0.178	0.268**	0.74	0.058	0.261
HI	-0.083	-0.028	0.041	-0.108	-0.236	-0.015
FD	0.09	-0.007	0.112	0.041	0.086	0.149
FC	0.254**	0.235*	0.145	0.838	0.492	0.12
CF × Year	–	–	–	2.201***	0.099	-0.128
RF × Year	–	–	–	-0.926	0.294	-0.001
HI × Year	–	–	–	-0.031	0.458	0.15
FD × Year	–	–	–	0.069	-0.238	-0.079
FC × Year	–	–	–	-1.304**	-0.565	0.06

*Note. *p <.05, **p< .01, ***p < .001; CF= Corrective feedback; RF=Reinforcement feedback; HI= High information feedback; FD=Feedback direction; FC=Feedback channel; LE=Learning experience; OT=Ought to L2 self; ILS= Ideal L2 self*

Source. Own research.

Table A8

Model Fit for Regression Models Predicting Motivation

Model Fit	Empty LE	Empty OT	Empty ILS	Full LE	Full OT	Full ILS
R^2	0.436	0.547	0.558	0.476	0.554	0.558
Adjusted R^2	0.423	0.536	0.547	0.45	0.532	0.536
RMSE	0.624	0.579	0.565	0.609	0.581	0.572

Source. Own research.

The Questionnaire

Level: ☐ 1st-year student ☐ 2nd-year student ☐ 3rd-year student ☐ 4th-year student
Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Item
Learning Experience
I prefer material that challenges me to learn (such as graphics, pictures, animation, videos, presentation PPT, and web pages)
I prefer course material that arouses my curiosity, even if it is difficult to learn.
I enjoy reading Chinese texts related to my subject.
I prefer to accomplish my tasks that I can learn from them, even if they don't guarantee a good grade.
I am active and concentrate on lesson.
Ideal L1 self
1. I imagine myself using Chinese effectively for communicating with Chinese people.
2. I imagine myself as someone who can speak Chinese fluently.
Studying Chinese is enjoyable.
4. I like to learn a foreign language .
5. I like Chinese people and Chinese culture.
Ought to L2 self
Learning Chinese will help me make a better choice regarding my profession.
2. Getting a good grade is the most satisfying for me .
3.I want to do well in this class because it is important to show my ability to my family, friends or others.
4. I am proud to learn Chinese.
5. Because when I succeed in university, I feel important.
Expectation of Feedback
Corrective Feedback
1. If I make an error, I want my teacher to correct .
Teachers' corrective feedback is important for students' learning.
3.My teacher corrects me as soon as I make an error.
4.My teacher's use of body language and gestures to signal my errors can help me pay attention to the errors .
5.I prefer corrective feedback on my assignments.
6.Encourage students' self-correction because it is helpful for them.
7.Describe the purpose of learning tasks is necessary .
Reinforcement Feedback
I prefer connecting feedback with assessments.
Feedback for the timing of submission is important.
High information feedback
1. I prefer the teacher to connect current tasks with the learned skills .
2.I like diagnostic feedback which indicates the current and desired performance.
I prefer corrective feedback that students make frequently.

Item
I prefer corrective feedback which is clear and easy to understand .
I prefer suggestions for me to improve tasks.
Suggestion for finding supportive learning resources is important .
Connecting current learning tasks to other learning tasks is better for me.
Feedback Direction
1.I want my teacher to train me and my classmates to provide feedback to each other.
2. Encourage me to communicate with teachers.
3. I want my classmates to point out my errors.
4. Peer feedback is more beneficial than teacher feedback.
Feedback Channel
1.If I make an error, my teacher wants me to say it again and pause before the error so that I can correct it by myself
2. I prefer written feedback.
3. I prefer oral feedback.
4. I prefer computer-assisted feedback.
5. The amount of feedback you receive from your teacher.
6. I prefer positive feeling from the teacher such as an appreciation of my tasks, using emojis, showing sympathy etc.