

# Integrative versus Instrumental Orientation among Online Language Learners

## Orientação Integrativa versus Instrumental entre aprendizes on-line de língua

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**Resumo:** Embora um número crescente de pessoas estejam estudando línguas on-line, o que motiva aprendizes on-line de línguas ainda não é bem compreendido. Baseando-se em dados de um questionário internacional conduzido entre usuários de um grande site, este estudo explorou a orientação motivacional dos aprendizes e sua relação com a formação individual. Os resultados sugerem a orientação instrumental e integrativa para grupos de francês, chinês e português, e apenas orientação instrumental para respondentes de espanhol. Além disso, os resultados sugerem que a orientação do aprendiz varia por idade, sexo, renda, educação, formação linguística e a língua-alvo. Este estudo confirma que as distinções entre a orientação instrumental e a integrativa são significativas na aprendizagem on-line de línguas e também são aplicáveis em outros contextos culturais.

**Palavras-chave:** motivação, redes sociais, Livemocha, transcultural

**Abstract:** Though a growing number of people are studying languages online, what motivates online language learners is not yet well understood. Drawing on data from an international survey conducted among users of a major online site, this study explored the motivational orientation of learners and its relationship to individual background. The results suggest instrumental and integrative orientation for English, Chinese, and Portuguese groups, and only instrumental orientation for Spanish respondents. In addition, the results suggest that learner orientation varies by age, gender, income, education, linguistic background, and target language. This study confirms that the distinctions between instrumental and integrative orientation are meaningful in online language learning and applicable to other cultural contexts as well.

**Keywords:** motivation, social networks, Livemocha, cross cultural

### 1. Introduction

One of the most important individual differences shaping language learning outcomes is learner motivation. Given the considerable amount of time and effort needed to achieve advanced language proficiency in a second language, learners who are strongly motivated are much more likely to succeed. For these reasons, the issue of motivation has been a central one in language learning research.

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Today, new technologies provide learners with a wider array of opportunities to study and learn languages, but, since these opportunities are largely available on a voluntary out-of-school basis, they further highlight the importance of learner motivation. Though a number of studies have been carried out on the relationship of online learning to motivation in classroom settings, there has as yet been little research on language learning motivation in out-of-school settings.

This study investigates the motivation of thousands of independent language learners on a major online site. The study is based on the theoretical constructs of integrative and instrumental orientation, as initially proposed by Gardner (1985). We first review relevant research and theory on language learning orientation, and then proceed to the methods and findings of the study.

## **2. Motivational Orientation**

The most influential theory in the field of language learning motivation is the socio-educational model proposed by Gardner (1985). This model highlights the impact of attitudes towards second language (L2) communities on motivation and student achievement. According to this model, motivation includes three components: effort, want, and affect. This model also identifies two types of motivational orientation: *integrative* and *instrumental*. Integrative orientation is defined as “a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other language group” (Lambert, 1974, p. 98), while instrumental orientation pertains to the potential pragmatic gains of L2 proficiency, such as to get a better job or to pass a required examination. According to a meta-analysis that examined 75 independent studies involving 10,489 individuals, Masgoret and Gardner (2003) found that there was a positive correlation between both types of orientation and achievement. Both integrative and instrumental orientation had an indirect effect on achievement through motivation.

Many studies have shown the impact of integrative and instrumental orientations on student achievement through motivation, but less attention has been focused on the effects of learners’ demographic and linguistic background on motivational orientation. For example, according to Gardner’s (1985) socio-educational model, social milieu as reflected in home environment plays an important role in motivation and thus impacts learner achievement. Other studies have found that learner variables, such as language of study and gender, significantly impact motivational orientation (see, e.g., Yang, 2003). Most previous studies

explored the motivation models for a specific language, typically English or French. Whether these models are applicable to the learning of other languages or people with different background is not clear.

## 2.1 Gender difference

Gender effects have been reported on motivational orientation. A number of studies have demonstrated that females possess a higher integrative orientation and more positive attitudes towards L2 learning than their male counterparts (Dörnyei & Clément, 2001; Kissau, 2006; Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Mori & Gobel, 2006; Williams, Robert, & Ursula, 2002; Yang, 2003). The motivational orientation of East Asian language learners in the United States was explored by Yang (2003), whose results indicated that female students had higher integrative motivational orientation than male students. A study of Japanese learners of English found that female participants had a higher integrative motivation and a stronger desire to study a foreign language than males (Mori & Gobel, 2006). Dörnyei and Clément (2001) adopted the scale by Dörnyei (1998) to assess integrativeness and instrumentality, which are conceptually similar to integrative and instrumental orientation respectively, and results showed that females had significantly higher scores on *integrativeness*. Kissau (2006) performed a discriminant function analysis and the results showed that integrative orientation was a relatively accurate predictor of sex of the student, meaning that female students in Canada frequently reported that they wished to learn French to get to know French-speaking people. In contrast, Shaaban and Ghaith's (2000) study of 180 undergraduate Lebanese learners of English found no gender difference in integrative motivation.

Research on gender differences in instrumental orientation is inconclusive, with some studies showing higher instrumental motivation among females (see, e.g., Bacon and Finneman 1992), other studies indicating no gender differences (e.g., Shaaban and Ghaith, 2000; Young, 2003), and other studies indicating higher instrumental motivation among females for the study of some languages but not others (e.g., Dörnyei and Clément, 2001).

In summary, numerous studies have reported gender differences in integrative orientation, but there is not yet a consensus on gender differences in instrumental orientation.

## 2.2 Age

Few studies have investigated the relationship between age and motivational orientation (Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Williams, et al., 2002). A study by Williams et al. (2002) demonstrated that seventh grade pupils initially expressed high enthusiasm about language learning, but their enthusiasm gradually disappeared after two years. Students in seventh grade reported a higher integrative orientation than they did in ninth grade. These findings are in line with other studies conducted in England (e.g., Chambers, 1999; Philips & Filmer-Sankey, 1993). Williams et al. (2002) explained that this declining trend may occur in other school subjects and is “a part of function of this general switching off from school-based learning” (p. 509). Similarly, a study comparing motivational orientation among elementary, secondary, and university students found that both integrative and instrumental orientation declined with student age (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). In a counter-example, Kormos and Csizér (2008) found no age-related difference in integrative motivation to learn English as a foreign language when comparing secondary school pupils, university students, and adult learners.

Though this body of research provides some ideas about age-related variations in language learning among students of different levels, little is known about motivation of adult learners studying languages in voluntary contexts, beyond the above-described study by Kormos and Csizér (2008) which may not be relevant outside its Hungarian context.

### **2.3 Socioeconomic Status**

Socioeconomic status (SES) is generally regarded as an important factor in language learning, since SES affects people’s level of symbolic and material resources (Bourdieu, 2000) and thus increases their opportunities to interact with people of diverse languages through international travel or careers. Yet, little research has explored the effect of SES on language learning motivation, effort, or outcomes. In a study of learners of French as a foreign language in England, Burstall (1975) found a linear, positive relationship between SES and student achievement. Students of French from higher SES families were found to have significantly higher scores than those from lower SES families, with the impact of SES more prominent in secondary school than in primary school. The results also indicate that students attending different types of secondary schools in Britain’s stratified educational system have different attitudes towards learning French. Students in schools reserved for higher-achieving students had more favorable attitudes than students in schools for lower-achieving students. The study found that this difference was due not only to a more general

difference in attitudes toward education, but also to a specific belief by low-SES students that they would be unlikely to ever speak French in their lives beyond school. These findings are in line with Bourdieu's (2000) emphasis on the importance of cultural capital in education.

The question of how SES impacts adult motivation in language learning remains unanswered. In the current research, it is hypothesized that people with more advanced education have a higher instrumental orientation than those with less advanced education because the former group is more aware of the importance of language learning. In terms of income, the current study hypothesizes that people with higher income have a higher integrative orientation than those with lower income because the former group does not need to meet any educational requirements and study for possible career opportunities. Instead, they study for personal interests and are more willing to communicate with L2 community.

## 2.4 Contextual Influence

Gardner's socio-educational model highlights the role of social milieu in language learning. According to Gardner, social milieu is measured by two indicators: importance of learning the language and its utility (Gardner, Lalonde, & Pierson, 1983). It is hypothesized that individual differences in these beliefs reflect sub-cultural differences within a community. Empirical evidence from Gardner and his colleagues (e.g., Gardner, 1985; Gardner, 1988; Gardner et al., 1983) suggests that social milieu is associated with orientation, attitudes towards L2 communities, and motivation.

Much of the research on the socio-educational model has been conducted among learners of French or English in Canada, and observers have noted that these *second* language learning contexts in Canada likely differ substantially from foreign language learning contexts there and elsewhere (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). For example, some theorize that second language learners have a higher integrative orientation while foreign language learners may have a higher instrumental orientation (see, e.g., Dörnyei, 1998). Though the results of a meta-analysis by Masgoret and Gardner (2003) do not show that language learning environment has a clear moderating effect, this lack of effect may be due to the small variance of language learning contexts in the motivational studies in Canadian communities.

To date, there is very limited multi-country international research examining the effect of social milieu on language learning. One example, though, is provided by Kouritzin, Piquemal, and Renaud's (2009) study of the contextual influence on foreign language

learning in Japan, France, and Canada. Undergraduate learners of English in France and Canada exhibited primarily integrative and instrumental orientation respectively, while undergraduate learners of English in Japan instead showed what the authors referred to as *social capital motivation*, i.e., the belief that communicative ability in a foreign language is a commodity reflecting prestige and power.

## **2.4 Language of Study**

In addition to the effects of gender, age, SES, and contextual influences on language learning motivation, target language may also be associated with motivational orientation. A study by Yang (2003) explored the relationship between learner differences and motivational orientation among undergraduate learners of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean in the United States. Yang found that learners of Chinese have a significantly greater instrumental orientation than learners of Japanese and Korean. This is not surprising given the growing impact of China on the world economy.

There also appears to be an interaction effect between gender and language of study (Dörnyei & Clément, 2001; Kissau, 2006; Williams et al., 2002). For example, a study of secondary students learning foreign languages in England found that students considered French as a feminine language of love and German as a masculine language more associated with military history (Williams et al., 2002). As a result, boys exhibited a higher motivation to learn German whereas girls were more motivated to learn French. Similarly, a study of ninth grade students of French in Canada found that boys felt less capable than girls in French, in part because they were less interested in learning about French culture, which boys tended to view as girlish (Kissau, 2006). Even boys who were good at French and liked it frequently gave up studying the language due to their concerns about societal perception. Dörnyei and Clément's (2001) study of Hungarian adolescents' motivation also demonstrated a gender preference on choices of target language, with French and Italian preferred by females, German and Russian preferred by males, and English viewed as gender-neutral.

## **3. Online Language Learning**

The instructional use of the Internet and computer-mediated communication (CMC) has introduced the benefits of real-time, many-to-many discussions by an entire class or small groups (Warschauer, 1996a, 1996b, 1999). Such features are believed to boost student

motivation in language learning (Alm, 2006, 2008; Jiang & Ramsay, 2005; Warschauer, 1996c; Young, 2003). However, the impact of technology use on learner motivation in language learning has not been well explored. As suggested by Brown (1994) and later discussed by Meunier (1998), the effect of technology use on language learning motivation falls into two categories: situational motivation, which assesses comfort, anxiety, and risk taking in particular language learning contexts, and task motivation, which accounts for the relevance and excitement originating from specific language learning activities.

Regarding situated motivation, both language anxiety (Beauvois, 1994; Jiang & Ramsay, 2005; Warschauer, 1996a, 1996c, 1999) and technology anxiety (Greenfield, 2003; Warschauer, 1996c) have been shown to decrease when students use CMC. In addition, the use of CMC not only promotes classroom participation, but also leads to more equal student participation in the CMC environment (Kern, 1995; Warschauer, 1996a, 1999).

As for task motivation, a number of studies have shown that students were integratively and instrumentally motivated when using particular online tools, such as email (Shang, 2007; Warschauer, 1999), computer-assisted conversation (Meunier, 1998; Warschauer, 1999; Young, 2003), or blogs (Alm, 2008; Sun, 2009).

To summarize, there are several gaps in motivation for language learning. First, though motivation is socially and culturally shaped (Dörnyei, 2001), the majority of research on motivation for language learning has been conducted in North America (Gardner, 1985, 1988; Gardner et al., 1983; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, & Mihic, 2004; Gardner, Tremblay, & Masgoret, 1997; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). This selection bias toward U.S. and Canadian contexts may limit the generalizability of previous studies to other countries.

Second, most studies have explored learner attitudes toward English as a second (Clément & Kruidenier, 1983; Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 2001; Peirce, 1995) or foreign language (Benson, 1991; Chen, Warden, & Chang, 2005; Li, 2006; Warden & Lin, 2000). Only a few studies have investigated attitudes toward languages other than English.

Third, much previous research has focused on motivation in language learning in school (Hsieh, 2008; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Pamela, 2009; Reynolds, Howard, & Deák, 2009), and little is known about learner motivation in an out-of-school-context. The emergence of computer-mediated communication (CMC) and Web 2.0 offers online communities where individuals can talk with and learn from native speakers. Online language learning is more autonomous than school-based learning because online learning is initiated by the students themselves, allowing them to control the pace of learning. Investigating the

motivation of online language learners may shed light on an important new domain in second language acquisition.

The current study used a large international dataset to investigate online learner motivation internationally. The study focused on the following research questions:

1. What kinds of motivational orientation do people have?
2. How does motivation vary by learners' linguistic background, target language, age, SES, or gender?

## **4. Methods**

### **4.1 Survey Sample**

A 23-item survey, requiring approximately 20 minutes to complete, was developed by the researchers and, with the cooperation of Livemocha, made available on its Website in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Portuguese from April to October 2009. The original survey was worded in English and then translated into Chinese, Spanish, and Portuguese. The accuracy of this translation was verified using backward-translation made by a bilingual individual unacquainted with the original English items. This exercise ensured the content and semantic equivalence. During this time, people who accessed Livemocha in any of these four languages were exposed to a link near the top of the page inviting them to take the survey.

According to the user's choice of interface language, links to each survey would randomly appear on Livemocha and users voluntarily took the survey. Each language version of the survey was targeted by the researchers to have at least a thousand responses, and the Chinese, English, and Spanish versions surpassed this goal in three months. The Portuguese survey was made available for five months and then was removed when there were no additional responses over a two-week period.

### **4.2 Context**

Livemocha is a hybrid between an instructional Website and a social networking site, offering both language tutoring materials and opportunities to learn through social interaction, thus attempting a blend long called for by computer-assisted language learning researchers (see, e.g., interview of Warschauer in Ancker, 2002). Founded in September 2007, Livemocha has grown rapidly and claims more than five million users from over 200

countries (Taub, 2010). It is widely believed to be the most popular site of its kind in the world, with *iTalki*, the language learning site typically cited as its main competitor, claiming only one-tenth as many users (iTalki HK Limited, 2010) and ranking far behind Livemocha in web traffic (Alexa, 2010).

Users on Livemocha have diverse international backgrounds. The top four languages that Livemocha users speak are Portuguese, English, Spanish, and Chinese; speakers of these four languages comprise about 84 percent of users (see Figure 1). According to data from Livemocha during November, 2008, the top ten countries where users are located include Brazil, China, United States, Columbia, India, Turkey, Mexico, Egypt, Italy, and Peru.

After users create a Livemocha profile, they then choose the language they wish to study, with more than 160 hours of language learning materials available for free in any one of 26 languages. These materials address beginner and intermediate levels, and include reading, listening, writing, and speaking exercises (Harrison & Thomas, 2009). Once users complete a lesson, they are asked to post their speaking and writing exercise so that other users can review them and provide comments. On Livemocha, users can also find language exchange partners, add them as friends, and tutor each other using voice- or text-based chat.

## **5. Results and Discussions**

The results of descriptive statistics across language groups are presented in Table 1. Language group was determined by participants' response to their main language. Among respondents, 47 percent were males with a mean age of about 30 years, an average income of 7,659 USD, and 14.20 mean years of education. Among the full sample, 59 percent of participants were learning English, including 44 percent of English speakers, 69 percent of Chinese speakers, 62 percent of Spanish speakers, and 56 percent of Portuguese speakers.

**(Insert Table 1 here)**

### **5.1 Types of motivational orientation**

We first investigated the kinds of motivation orientation of language learners. One survey question included twelve reasons for learning a language (see Question 11 in Appendix). Respondents could check all that apply. We performed exploratory factor analyses using principal factor extraction and oblique rotation, which allows correlations

among factors. To control for cultural differences in motivation, factor analyses were performed separately for each language group according to the participants' main language.

Scree plot analyses revealed two factors with eigenvalues greater than one for the English, the Chinese, and the Portuguese groups, which indicates that there were two types of motivational orientation for these three groups. The Spanish group, in contrast, revealed a one-factor structure. Since previous research (e.g., Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) has consistently reported a correlation among motivational orientation, we then rotated the matrix to adjust the correlation among factors and get more precise estimations. Only items with their loadings greater than .4 or smaller than -.4 on given factors were considered. The results are presented in Table 2.

For the English, Chinese, and Portuguese groups, the first factor had five common items, including test preparation, academic improvement, study abroad, work requirement, and career opportunity. One item, *emigration*, appeared in the English and the Chinese groups but not in Portuguese. Cronbach's alpha for factor 1 in the English, Chinese, and Portuguese group was .82, .75, and .77 respectively, indicating an acceptable level of reliability (DeVellis, 1991). Overall, factor 1 was universal for English, Chinese, and Portuguese people, and it reflected potential practical benefits of language learning; therefore, factor 1 was named as *instrumental orientation*. We did not name factor 1 differently for the Portuguese group as items loaded heavily on factor 1 were the same in the English and the Chinese groups, and emigration was not central to this factor.

Factor 2 had the same items for the English and the Portuguese groups, including learning other cultures, making friends, romance, personal interest, and travel. The Chinese group had four factors in common with the English and the Portuguese group, but *romance* did not load on either factor 1 or factor 2 for the Chinese group. In addition, Chinese participants had one additional item, *intellectual challenge*, which did not load on any factors for other linguistic groups. Though factor 2 had slightly different items in these three groups, the central items, such as *learning other cultures* and *making friends*, were the same, and thus, factor 2 was named as *integrative orientation*, indicating participants' inherent interest and desire to connect with a target language community. Cronbach's alpha for factor 2 in English, Chinese, and Portuguese group was .69, .71, and .65 respectively, indicating an acceptable level of reliability (DeVellis, 1991).

In contrast, the Spanish group had seven items loaded on only one factor, including test preparation, academic improvement, study abroad, romance, work requirement, future career opportunities, and emigration. The factor loadings were above .4 and Cronbach's alpha

was .8, indicating an acceptable level of reliability. Though the Spanish group had a different simple structure from the other three groups, this factor for the Spanish group was similar to the instrumental orientation of the other three groups in that the Spanish group had six items in common with the English and Chinese groups and five items in common with the Portuguese group. We decided to adopt the name “instrumental motivation” for the Spanish group as well because the central items to this factor reflected the practical benefits of language learning just as instrumental motivation did in the other three groups. The difference with the Spanish participants was that they considered studying a language for romance reasons as instrumental orientation, whereas English and Portuguese participants perceived it as integrative orientation. Interestingly, different from other three groups, Chinese respondents did not consider learning a language for romance to be either instrumental or integrative orientation.

Integrative and instrumental orientation in English, Chinese, and Portuguese groups showed a medium correlation, .44, .40, and .39 respectively. After identifying two types of motivational orientation, we created a scale for these two constructs. The scale of instrumental and integrative motivation ranging from one to three was computed by the sum of related items and then divided by the number of these items in each group.

## **5.2 Individual differences in motivation**

Our next goal was to evaluate the individual differences in motivation. Since there were less than a hundred participant studying Chinese, Russian, and Hindi, these participants were excluded in order to not bias the estimation. In order to examine whether there was a significant learner difference in integrative and instrumental orientation, a multiple regression was performed on two types of motivation separately (see Table 3).

The reference group in the analysis were 19.5 year-old Chinese female learners of English with 10 years of education and income of 0. Individual differences, including age, years of education, income, main language, and language of study, impact instrumental orientation. Males and females do not vary in instrumental orientation. Age, education, and income have a negative impact on motivation. Older people and participants with more years of education and higher income have less instrumental orientation. Compared with Chinese speakers, Portuguese and Spanish participants have a stronger instrumental orientation, but English speakers have a similar level of instrumental orientation as Chinese natives. In addition, language of study has a negative impact on instrumental orientation. Compared with

participants who are studying English, learners of other language are less likely to study for pragmatic benefits.

Individual background also impacts integrative orientation. Males have a higher level of integrative motivation than females. People of different ages and income do not vary in their integrative motivation, but years of education has a negative impact on integrative motivation. Interestingly, compared to Chinese speakers, English and Portuguese participants have a lower level of integrative orientation. For language of study, all but French learners do not differ in integrative orientation.

The answers to the first research question pertaining to types of motivational orientation is that English, Chinese, and Portuguese participants have demonstrated two types of motivational orientation, integrative and instrumental, and these two types are associated with similar items for the three groups. Integrative orientation reflects individuals' inherent interest and willingness to connect with the target language community, and instrumental orientation reflects potential pragmatic benefits of language skills. Though the Spanish group only has one type of motivation, items loaded on this motivation are similar to instrumental orientation for the other three groups. Previous research on language learning motivation is mainly based on data from English speakers in North America (e.g., Gardner, 1985, 2000; Hsieh, 2008); this study extends its findings to provide empirical evidence that Chinese and Portuguese speakers have similar types of motivational orientation. The Spanish group, however, has a somewhat different motivation. Spanish speakers have an instrumental orientation with similar items to other three groups, but the results do not find other types of motivation. It could be the case that Spanish participants still have an inherent interest in language learning, but these questions about motivation do not fully capture their motivation. Or, it could be the case that Spanish participants study other languages only for potential benefits. Either way, language learning motivation for Spanish speakers requires further study to confirm our findings.

Based on the two types of motivational orientation, the results suggest that individuals vary in their motivation. First, gender impacts integrative orientation. Compared to females, males have the same level of instrumental orientation but a higher integrative orientation. Previous research of gender effects on instrumental orientation are mixed. Bacon and Finneman (1992) and Dörnyei & Clément (2001) reported that females were likely to have a higher instrumental motivation, while Shaaban and Ghaith (2000) and Yang (2003) did not see any differences in instrumental motivation between males and females. Prior research (Dörnyei & Clément, 2001; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Mori & Gobel, 2006; Yang, 2003)

reported that males have a lower integrative orientation than females, but our data suggests the opposite. Given that our sample is solely composed of adult learners and that prior research usually focused on K-12 students, gender impact for adults may differ in an out-of-school context.

Second, age has a negative impact on instrumental orientation but no effect on integrative orientation. When people get older, they do not have to study a L2 for practical benefits. Instead, they study for their personal interests and willingness to communicate with an L2 community. Previous studies have not specifically focused on age-related differences in orientations among adult language learners (Kormos & Csizér, 2008; Williams et al., 2002). Though Kormos and Csizér (2008) investigated age-related differences among secondary students, undergraduates, and adult learners, it is not clear whether there is an age-related difference within adult learners. Other confounding variables, such as education and income, may contribute to the variances of their motivation. Our results confirm the age-related differences among adult language learners after controlling other demographic differences.

Third, SES has a negative impact on instrumental and integrative orientation. Respondents with higher income have a lower instrumental orientation. One possible explanation is that individuals with higher income may not be required to meet any institutional or work requirements, and thus have a lower instrumental motivation. However, income is not associated with integrative orientation, meaning that people with different levels of income may have a comparable passion for language learning. Respondents with more years of education have a lower integrative and instrumental orientation. Interestingly, respondents with more advanced education have a lower integrative and instrumental orientation.

Linguistic background also influences motivational orientation. Compared to Chinese speakers, the Portuguese and Spanish speakers are more instrumentally motivated. This can possibly be attributed to the monolingual nature of China and Taiwan, where mastering English or other languages may not bring a great deal of instant practical benefits. In contrast, Spanish and Portuguese speakers are more connected with English communities and feel compelled to master English. In addition, Chinese speakers have a stronger inherent interest in mastering English than English and Portuguese speakers. The Chinese speakers' passion of English is similar to the research on Japanese speakers by Benson (1991). Though Japanese student have limited exposure to English and low self-rating proficiency, their integrative and personal reasons for learning English are preferred over instrumental ones. Similarly, Chen, Warden, and Chang (2005) provide a vivid picture of a young woman and her dream of

mastering English in Taiwan. Since she scored the highest in the country on the TOEFL in 1995, Ja-Shin Pao became famous and was known as English Wizard Girl. She promptly published four books advising students how to learn English. Her popularity stems from a dream of mastering English shared by many Chinese speakers, and may explain why Chinese respondents have the highest level of integrative orientation. As reported by Kouritzin, Piquemal, and Renaud's research (2009) on Japanese learners of English, Chinese participants may perceive social capital as motivation, and thus have a higher integrative orientation.

Language of study is mostly associated with instrumental orientation. Learners of English have a higher instrumental orientation than learners of languages other than English, suggesting that the majority of learners of English are studying for potential practical benefits. New technologies and globalization results in the further spread of English as an international language, and nonnative speakers of English see the increasing need of using English for international collaboration and presenting ideals (Crystal, 1997; Warschauer, 2000).

## **6. Conclusion**

This paper presented the results of a large international study of motivation for language learning conducted on a major language learning website. We first examined types of motivations for each linguistic group, and the results suggest that integrative and instrumental orientation for English, Chinese, and Portuguese speakers and integrative orientation for Spanish speakers. Second, we examined the relationship between individual differences and motivational orientation, and our findings suggest that all individual differences are associated with motivational orientation.

Implications should be interpreted with limitations in mind. Data were gathered from a particular language learning website, and participants under 18 years old were excluded. The survey adopted voluntary design, and the sample might differ from the population. These factors consequently limit the generalizability of results. Moreover, learning on Livemocha is likely to be self-initiated, which may differentiate it from other learning contexts. The generalizability of findings compared to other online language learning websites or classroom instruction needs to be tested in the future.

Implications for research and theory can be drawn from this study. For motivation theory, though Lamb (2004) and Dörnyei (2003) argue that integrative orientation is gradually losing its explanatory power, based on our results, the distinctions between

integrative and instrumental orientations among learners of different languages are still apparent and meaningful. Moreover, given the international data we had, our study extends these two types of motivational orientation to Portuguese and Chinese participants. In addition, learner differences may have an impact on motivational variables, which calls for future cross-cultural research on language learning motivation. As our data suggest, learning a language for romance may be perceived as different types of motivational orientation for different cultural groups. Future research is necessary to find universal indicators for different types of motivational orientations or to find a culture-specific motivational orientation.

In addition, recruiting participants on a large language learning website may be an alternative to conduct international research. To date, few studies have focused on motivation for language learning in different countries. Moreover, social milieu, such as attitudes towards language learning and L2 community, has been shown to have a direct or indirect effect on motivation (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Clément, 2001; Gardner, 1985; Kouritzin, Piquemal, & Renaud, 2009). Given the difficulty of conducting international research and the importance of understanding the influence of social milieu on motivation, online language learning sites may help researchers explore these issues. With a well-developed instrument, researchers can estimate the magnitude of social and cultural influence on language learning among participants with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, reaching a large and representative sample can increase the statistical power of the analyses.

The popularity of online language learning sites, such as Livemocha and iTalki, may shed light on the trend of language learning in the near future. These websites incorporate learning, teaching, and communication and create a community of practice. The main idea behind these websites is language learning through social networks. This concept builds on the sociocultural perspective, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in creating an environment to learn language, learn about language, and learn through language (Vygotsky, 1978). As opposed to ten years ago, the features of today's computer-mediated communication are not just "a potentially useful tools for collaborating language learning" (Warschauer, 1997, p. 477). Instead, with the access to the Internet and the websites above, online language learners are connected and empowered to communicate with native speakers, and their motivation may be improved and strengthened when they develop their language proficiency.

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## Appendix: English Survey

1. What is your gender?  
Male Female
2. What is your age?  
18-21 22-25 26-29 30-39 40-49 Over 50
3. Which country do you live in?
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?  
less than high school  
high school  
some college or university  
college or university degree  
post-graduate degree (e.g., Master of Arts, Ph.D.)
5. What is your main language?  
English Chinese Spanish Portuguese  
  
 Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_
6. How long have you been using Livemocha?  
less than a month 1-2 months 2-4 months 4-6 months  
6-12 months more than 12 months
7. What is the primary language are you studying on Livemocha?  
English Chinese Spanish Portuguese French German  
Russian Italian Japanese Hindi other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### **The remaining questions apply to the primary language you are learning on Livemocha**

8. What is your level in this language?  
 beginning  intermediate  advanced
9. What do you hope to learn through use of Livemocha?  
 Some useful words or expressions, such as greetings  
 Basic proficiency  
 Intermediate proficiency  
 Advanced proficiency
10. Which language skills are you most interested in improving through Livemocha? Check all that apply.  
 Listening  Reading  Writing  
 Speaking or conversation  Grammar  Vocabulary
11. What are your goals for studying this language on Livemocha?  
Very important      Somewhat Important      Unimportant to you

Test preparation

Academic  
improvement

Intellectual challenge

Study abroad

Learn about other cultures

Making friends

Romance

Personal interests

Travel

Business/Work requirement

Career opportunity

Emigration

Other very important goals (please specify)

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12. How many hours a week on average do you spend on Livemocha?

- Less than one hour    1-2 hours    2-3 hours    3-5 hours  
 5-7hours    7-10 hours    More than 10 hours

13. How many hours a week on average do you spend on studying language OUTSIDE of Livemocha?

- Less than one hour    1-2 hours    2-3 hours    3-5 hours  
 5-7hours    7-10 hours    More than 10 hours

14. What tools or materials are you using to learn the language?

A major source for language learning	Supplementary source for language learning
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Livemocha

Audio Lesson  
(MP3/Podcast/CD/cassettes)

Book

Currently enrolled in a high school or college language course

Language school

Private Tutor

Friends

Websites

Other major source (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

15. How helpful do you find the following features for your language learning? (check “Not Applicable” if you do not use that feature)

	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not helpful to you	Not applicable
Free courses or lessons				
Chatting with native speakers				
Posting audio recordings				
Posting written practice				
Feedback from others				
Flashcards				
Premium/Paid courses				
Live/Paid tutoring				

16. What language skills does Livemocha help you with?

	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not helpful to you	Not applicable
Writing				
Speaking				
Reading				
Listening				
Grammar				
Vocabulary				

17. Overall, how much do you feel you learn from Livemocha?

- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Nothing

18. Attitudes and perceptions

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral or no opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
I feel more comfortable communicating with native speakers on Livemocha rather than in face-to-face communication						
I am motivated to spend more time learning a language after using it on Livemocha						
Learning on Livemocha increases my self-confidence in the language						
Negative feedback from others on Livemocha discourage me						

19. Which of these features of Livemocha are the most important to you?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important to me
Free/Low cost			
Available at all times and locations			
Individualized, self-paced learning			
Quality of language learning materials			

Opportunities to practice			
Opportunities to get feedback from others			
Opportunities to meet people			

20. What do you like best about Livemocha?

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21. What suggestions do you have for improving Livemocha?

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22. We will be conducting interviews among (1) English native speakers studying Chinese and (2) Chinese native speakers studying English to learn more about Livemocha. If you fit one of these categories and would like to be invited to participate in the interview (no obligation), please complete the following. If you do not fit either of these categories or do not want to participate, leave this question blank.

Please check which one applies:

I am an English native speaker studying Chinese

I am a Chinese native speaker studying English

List your email address \_\_\_\_\_

Table 1

## Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Backgrounds, Learning Hours, Fluency, and Perceived Progress by Mother Tongue

	English		Chinese		Spanish		Portuguese		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Male	0.54	0.50	0.37	0.48	0.50	0.50	0.54	0.50	0.47	0.50
Ages	29.32	10.93	26.34	8.86	32.75	12.74	30.74	11.42	29.50	11.19
Years of education	14.69	2.21	13.58	2.49	14.34	1.99	14.44	2.17	14.20	2.29
Income	11439.54	24068.69	3897.95	13605.60	7330.31	17930.98	9433.59	20181.82	7659.32	19156.09
Language of study										
English	0.44	0.50	0.69	0.46	0.62	0.49	0.56	0.50	0.59	0.49
Chinese	0.03	0.17	0.01	0.10	0.02	0.14	0.01	0.07	0.02	0.13
Spanish	0.12	0.33	0.05	0.22	0.03	0.17	0.11	0.32	0.07	0.26
Portuguese	0.03	0.18	0.01	0.11	0.05	0.22	0.01	0.10	0.03	0.16
French	0.13	0.34	0.05	0.22	0.09	0.28	0.12	0.32	0.09	0.29
German	0.08	0.27	0.03	0.17	0.06	0.23	0.07	0.26	0.06	0.23
Russian	0.04	0.19	0.01	0.10	0.02	0.14	0.01	0.08	0.02	0.14
Italian	0.05	0.23	0.03	0.18	0.08	0.27	0.09	0.29	0.06	0.24
Japanese	0.04	0.20	0.11	0.31	0.03	0.16	0.02	0.15	0.06	0.23
Hindi	0.03	0.16	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.06	0.01	0.09
Level of current language fluency										
Observations	1042		1318		1046		768		4174	

Table 2

## Dimensions of Language Learning Motivation

	English		Chinese		Portuguese		Spanish
	Instrumental	Integrative	Instrumental	Integrative	Instrumental	Integrative	Instrumental
Test preparation	0.76		0.57		0.65		0.55
Academic improvement	0.74		0.46		0.59		0.57
Intellectual challenge				0.47			
Study abroad	0.50		0.45		0.48		0.67
Learning other cultures		0.59		0.70		0.55	
Friends		0.63		0.55		0.59	
Romance		0.45				0.41	0.43
Interest		0.48		0.58		0.50	
Travel		0.49		0.46		0.48	0.54
Work	0.63		0.71		0.68		0.53
Career	0.70		0.69		0.74		0.64
Emigration	0.44		0.42				0.55
Eigenvalues	3.11	1.15	2.57	1.21	2.72	1.02	2.91
Reliability coefficient	0.82	0.69	0.75	0.71	0.77	0.65	0.8

Note: Factor loadings less than .4 were blanked.

Table 3  
Multiple Regressions for Learner Difference in Motivation

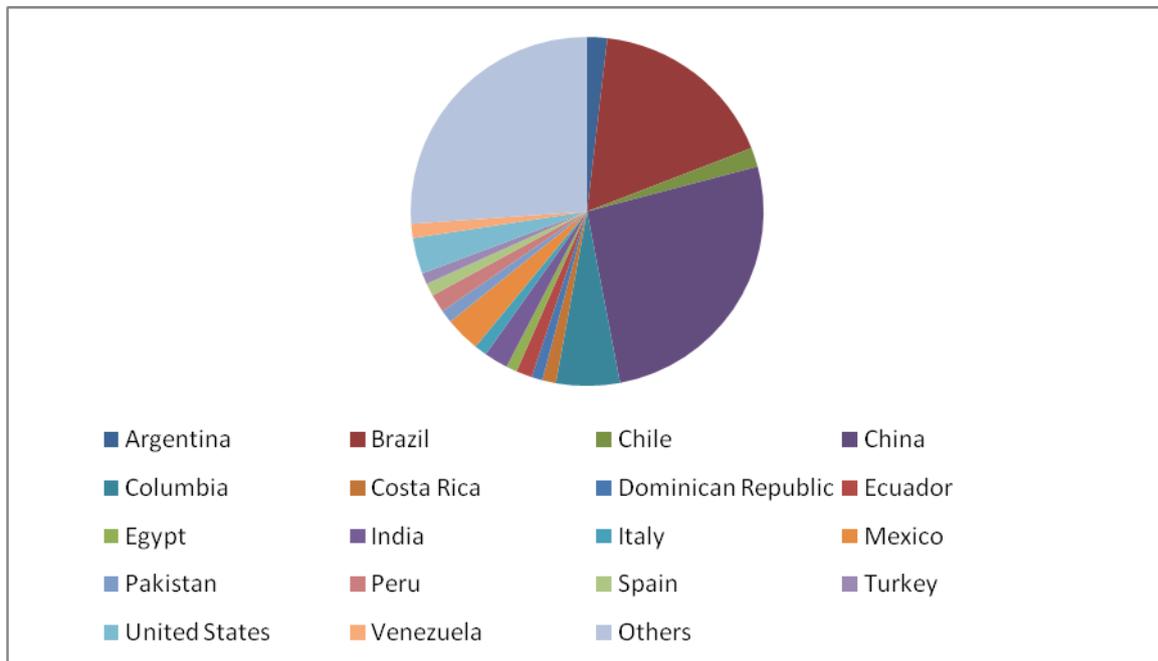
	Instrumental orientation	Integrative orientation
Male	0.028 (1.491)	0.049** (2.699)
Ages	-0.005*** (-5.660)	0.001 (1.328)
Years of education	-0.016*** (-3.702)	-0.010* (-2.431)
Income	-0.005*** (-4.193)	-0.002 (-1.795)
Main language		
Chinese	--	--
English	-0.004 (-0.162)	-0.156*** (-7.039)
Portuguese	0.109*** (3.943)	-0.258*** (-11.075)
Spanish	0.054* (2.078)	--
Language of study		
Spanish	-0.214*** (-6.025)	0.022 (0.694)
Portuguese	-0.273*** (-4.822)	0.048 (0.728)
French	-0.266*** (-8.186)	-0.080** (-2.590)
German	-0.232*** (-5.870)	-0.035 (-0.931)
Italian	-0.251*** (-6.427)	0.030 (0.746)
Japanese	-0.209*** (-5.154)	-0.004 (-0.110)
Constant	2.508*** (103.087)	2.556*** (117.951)
Observations	3867	2891

Note: *t* statistics in second column. Age is transformed to start at 19.5 years old. Income is transformed so that one unit increase is equivalent to USD 2,500 increase. Years of education is transformed to start at 10 years.

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Figure 1

The proportion of users' country of residency for the full sample



Note: Countries that have less than 3 percent were grouped together and considered as Others.

Recebido em 15/06/2011.  
Aprovado em 28/06/2011.