Impact of CMC on L2 Learning Demotivation:
The Case of Irish Chinese Learners

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Irish Chinese learners were identified to suffer the issue of language learning demotivation, which was reflected in reduced enrolment and increasing dropout rate of Chinese programmes (Zhang & Wang, 2018: 38). The difficulty in learning Chinese literacy was perceived to be a significant source of learners' demotivation, and the implementation of Chinese CMC was proposed to be a promising approach in addressing such issue (Li, Zhang, Xie, Wang, H. & Wang, J., 2018).

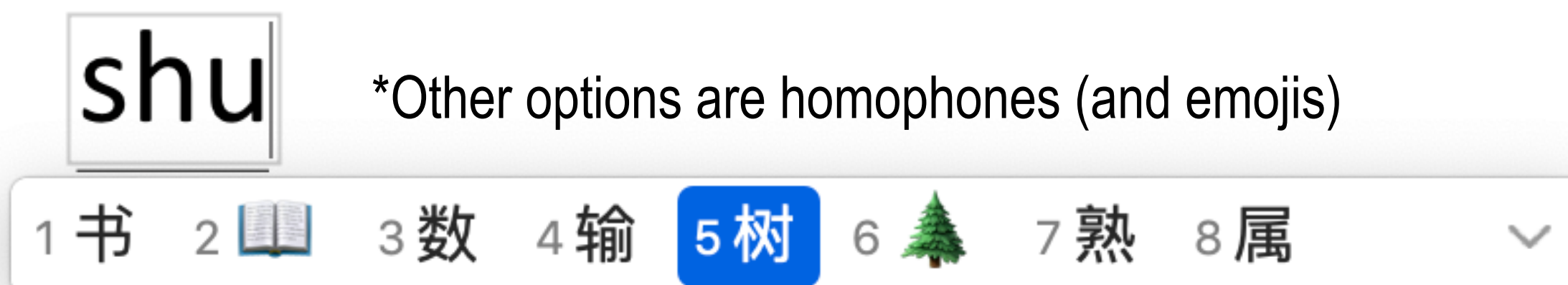## The Two Approaches, Facts & Perceptions

- A commonly used method in a domestic context
- A good method to observe and learn characters in detail
- Responsible for learners' demotivation in L2 Chinese learning
- An inevitable process of learning Chinese literacy

- A popular method of Chinese CMC
- More commonly adopted in learning Chinese overseas
- Reduce learners' demotivation in learning the characters
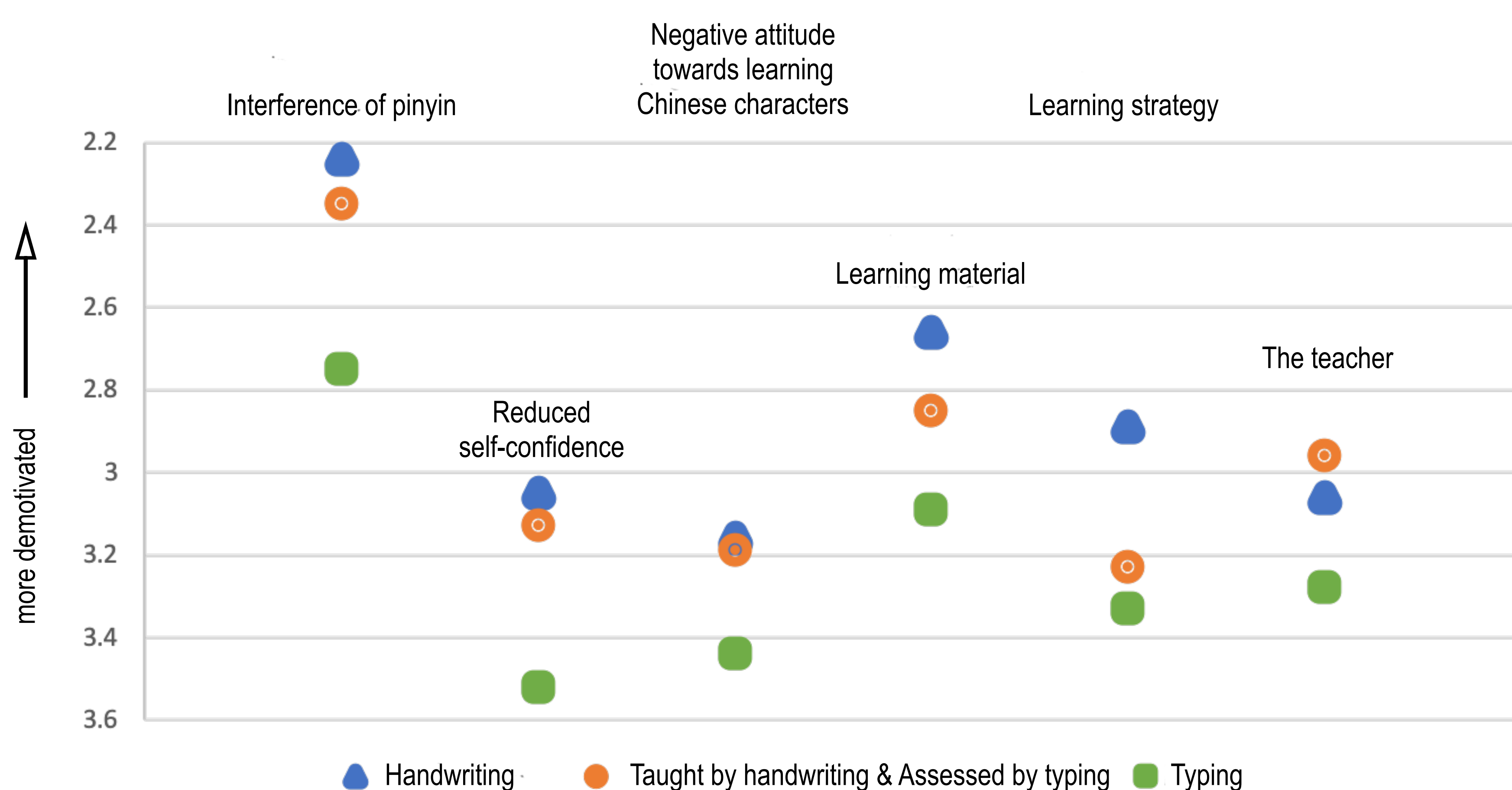- Reduce learners' demotivation in learning the language

树
pinyin: shù
meaning: tree

shu
*Other options are homophones (and emojis)

1 书 2 📖 3 数 4 输 5 树 6 🌲 7 熟 8 属

The stroke order of **handwriting**

The character panel of **pinyin input software**

Impact on learning Chinese characters

Negative attitude
towards learning
Chinese characters

Interference of pinyin

Learning strategy

Learning material

The teacher

Reduced
self-confidence

more demotivated

- Handwriting   - Taught by handwriting & Assessed by typing   - Typing

Previously, a quantitative survey (n = 202) was carried out which investigated the impact of implementing different writing methods on learners' demotivation in learning Chinese characters among Chinese learners in Irish higher education (Zhang & Wang, 2016).

The typing method was more effective in:
- Bridging the gap between pinyin and character learning

While only a full implementation in the teaching, learning and assessment was effective in:
- Changing learners' perception of pinyin as an alternative (and easier) path of learning the Chinese language
- Reducing learners' negative attitude towards learning Chinese characters
- Maintaining learners' confidence in learning characters

It was still unknown whether these benefits could be extended to the level of learning the Chinese language.

Impact on learning Chinese language

The current research was another quantitative survey study (n = 218). It first identified six main demotivating factors for learning Chinese language in the context of Irish higher education.

Negative ought-to L2 self

Negative ideal L2 self

The teacher

Reduced self-confidence

Course design

Influence of another language

* Notice the negative attitude towards learning Chinese (characters) did not emerge as a significant factor

To further investigate the impact of different writing methods on the demotivation of learning the language, participants were grouped and compared with data regarding the factors and the associated items.

Handwriting 40.37%	Typing 50.00%	Both 9.63%

- Results of ANOVA and post-hoc pairwise comparisons showed **no statistical differences** between groups on the main factors

- Further comparison of the items identified two differences between learners who only studied handwriting or typing:

1) Learners who studied typing were **more stressful in learning Chinese characters** after being exposed to the study of pinyin (associated with the factor negative ought-to L2 self)

2) However, they were also **more confident** in taking on a job which requires Chinese as the working language after graduation (associated with the factor negative ideal L2 self)

Take home messages

On a general level, the implementation of different writing methods had **no significant impact** on learners' demotivation in learning the language.

Demotivation in learning **the language** and in learning **specific elements of the language** might not be closely associated, so separate remedy solutions need to be developed while applied comprehensively.

More about
Chinese learning
demotivation

References

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