

## COMPLETION REPORT

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Subject of Research Project: **Language Immersion and Chinese Japanese Bilingual Cognition**

Can learning another language change the way people think? More empirical evidence has been provided to support that learning a second language (L2) can result in conceptual change in the speaker's mind in domains such as time, space, and motion events, object and substance categorisation, etc. Some argue that learning an L2 will result in a conceptual shift to the L2 norms of conceptualisation. Meanwhile, learners may not reach the ultimate acquisition of the L2 and often end with an incomplete shift to the L2 norms. As a result, they also think in different ways from their L2 monolingual counterparts.

161 adults participated, including Chinese and Japanese monolinguals, bilinguals with long-term length of residence (LoR) in Japan (averaged 5.2 years) and bilinguals with short-term LoR (averaged 2 years). A standardised elicited imitation test confirmed bilinguals' advanced Japanese proficiency. The long-term and short-term bilinguals scored similarly, lower than the Japanese monolinguals. We used a similarity judgment task in which participants rated the perceptual similarity of object pairs that either share or do not share the same classifier in the target languages.

The results confirmed the classifier effect on object perception. Overall, objects with the same classifier were rated perceptually more similar than objects with different classifiers. Monolinguals were mostly affected by their L1. Bilinguals showed a weaker classifier effect than the monolinguals, suggesting that bilinguals conceptually deviated from the L1-based categorisation pattern, but they had not achieved nativelike conceptual categorisation based on the target classifier system. LoR did not yield a difference, though the long-term bilinguals demonstrated more nativelike pattern of conceptualisation as the Japanese monolinguals than the short-term bilinguals. The current findings imply that bilinguals experienced conceptual restructuring which could lead to a merged bilingual conceptual domain distinct from both L1 and L2.

The current findings contributed to our understanding of bilingual migrants in Japan. Chinese-Japanese bilinguals in Japan have seldom been investigated in previous bilingualism literature. Rich data collected from this bilingual group advanced the field of bilingual cognition and expanded its theoretical scope. Furthermore, research efforts dedicated to this bilingual group generate positive social impact and show societal care and recognition of the Chinese migrant community in Japan. Finally, results of the project inform the pedagogy of teaching Japanese as a second language.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

<p>Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)</p> <p>20-21 November 2021, Taiwan, The Third International Conference on Theoretical East Asian Psycholinguistics, “Bilingual Conceptual Categorisation on Chinese and Japanese Classifiers”, Presented by Helen Zhao and Yugo Tsunai</p> <p>26-30 June 2023, Sydney, International Symposium on Bilingualism, “Language-Specific Categorisation and Bilingual Cognition: Numeral Classifiers in Chinese and Japanese”, Presented by Helen Zhao and Yugo Tsunai</p>
<p>Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)</p>
<p>Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)</p>