

# The Influence of Intercultural Communication Competence on College Students' English Language Learning Motivation at Jiangxi, China: Mediated by Cultural Exposure

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## Abstract

This study investigates the influence of intercultural communication competence (ICC) on English language learning motivation among college students in Jiangxi, China, with a focus on the mediating role of cultural exposure. The research aims to understand how ICC, defined as the ability to interact effectively across diverse cultural contexts, affects students' motivation to learn English, a critical skill in a globalized world. Utilizing a quantitative cross-sectional survey approach, data were collected from a sample of Chinese college students majoring in English. The study's findings reveal a significant positive relationship between ICC and English language learning motivation, underscoring the importance of intercultural competence in enhancing educational outcomes. Moreover, cultural exposure was identified as a key mediating factor, influencing the degree to which ICC impacts motivation. These results suggest that educational strategies should incorporate cultural exposure and intercultural training to foster higher motivation for English language learning. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on language acquisition and intercultural communication by highlighting the intertwined nature of these elements and providing insights into the development of more effective language education programs in culturally diverse settings.

**Keywords:** Intercultural Communication Competence, English Language Learning Motivation, Cultural Exposure, Chinese College Students, Quantitative Study.

## Introduction

The problem at hand pertains to the challenging landscape of intercultural communication competence (ICC) and English language learning motivation among college students in Jiangxi,

China. Despite significant strides in technology and globalization, there remain persistent obstacles in understanding and enhancing these critical facets of language acquisition (Tao & Gao, 2022). These challenges are multifaceted and hold profound implications for the students, educational institutions, and broader society.

An intricate and worrisome issue is the driving force for EFL education among students in Jiangxi, China. These students' motivation, which is critical to their academic achievement and future prospects, seems to fluctuate, according to recent research. There is still a lack of consistency in the levels of motivation among ESL students, even if blended learning methods have become more common in colleges. A major obstacle is this discrepancy because intrinsic motivation is a key component in learning and mastering a language (Li, 2023). Students' lack of desire has a direct effect on their success in English as a foreign language classes in China. It is critical to treat these children's motivational concerns immediately because of the strong association between motivation and academic success (Yung, 2023).

The problem is made worse by the fact that the educational system is always changing and that being able to communicate well in English is becoming more important on a worldwide scale. A number of factors, including cultural and educational circumstances, impact the motivation of students at China's QiLu College of Technology to learn English (Qingqing et al., 2021). The importance of this discovery lies in the fact that it highlights the necessity for a more sophisticated comprehension of the elements impacting motivation in various regional contexts within China.

Students' health and academic performance can take a hit when their motivation is low and they experience increased burnout (Yu et al., 2022). The importance of interventions and support systems to boost student motivation is shown by the correlation between motivation, burnout, and academic performance in the context of English language learning in Jiangxi, China. Tackling this matter is crucial for young students' academic performance, mental health, and future employment opportunities in our increasingly interconnected society.

The primary problem revolves around the students' proficiency in intercultural communication. In the context of a globalized world, the ability to effectively interact and communicate with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds is essential. However, even as English is taught extensively in Chinese schools, a substantial language barrier persists. Chinese students often grapple with pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary issues, hampering their capacity to articulate their thoughts and comprehend native speakers (Fang, 2022). This language barrier is intertwined with cultural perceptions, as language is a pivotal element in shaping how individuals perceive and engage with different cultures. It poses a significant challenge, inhibiting successful cross-cultural communication.

Moreover, culture plays a pivotal role in shaping communication styles, values, and beliefs. While Western cultures tend to prioritize individuality, equality, and direct communication, Chinese culture values collectivism, respect for authority, and indirect communication. These cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and conflicts during cross-cultural interactions (Koyuncu & Denise Chipindu, 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to equip Chinese students with intercultural communication skills to navigate these cultural differences effectively.

Secondly, the problem relates to the students' motivation to learn English. Learning a second language, such as English, is a time-intensive and energy-demanding endeavor that requires unwavering determination. However, many Chinese students may lack the intrinsic motivation and passion required for autonomous language learning. This can stem from perceiving English as an obligatory duty rather than a personal choice or interest. Consequently, their motivation to engage in English language learning diminishes, leading to a passive attitude toward the learning process (Sinaga & Pustika, 2021). This lack of motivation further deters them from actively participating in intercultural communication.

Additionally, the availability of opportunities for students in Jiangxi, especially in rural areas or regions with homogenous populations, to engage with diverse cultures is limited (Lin & Tao, 2024). This lack of exposure to various cultures impedes the development of intercultural communication skills and the motivation to cultivate them. It creates a deficiency in the experiential learning required to bridge the cultural gap effectively.

To date, research in this field has made considerable progress but is characterized by notable gaps. The literature primarily focuses on external factors such as teaching methods, curriculum design, and language competence, often neglecting internal variables like beliefs, attitudes, and motivations of learners (Luo et al., 2021). This is a crucial research gap since internal factors play a significant role in shaping how individuals engage with the language acquisition process.

Furthermore, the existing studies often lack uniform definitions of intercultural communication competence and motivation, leading to a lack of consistency in research findings. This lack of standardization limits the comparability and generalizability of research results. There is a need for a clear consensus on how these concepts should be defined and operationalized in research (Ashford et al., 2019).

### **Literature Review**

Within the context of today's modern society, which is becoming more globalized and multicultural, an increasing number of individuals are beginning to recognize the relevance of intercultural communication skills and cultural experience. The ability to communicate and interact effectively across cultural barriers is what is meant by the term "intercultural communication competency." This ability helps to cultivate mutual understanding, empathy, and respect for one another among individuals who come from various cultural backgrounds. Cultural exposure, on the other hand, is the process of being familiar with diverse cultures via the study of various kinds of artistic expression as well as through contacts that are both real and imagined. This is accomplished through the practice of cultural exposure. It is necessary to have the ability to communicate effectively across cultural barriers in order to build cross-cultural relationships that result in experiences that are both informative and satisfying, as stated by Zamroni et al. (2021). As individuals develop in these areas, they become better able to converse with people of different cultures in a manner that is polite and to negotiate the cultural norms and expectations that are prevalent in their own cultures. It is more likely that a person will be receptive to experiencing new cultures if they are able to communicate smoothly across cultural borders. Those who are well-versed in the art of cross-cultural communication may feel less dread when meeting people from different cultures in person or online through exchange programs. For example, they may feel less anxious about meeting

people from different cultures. This is due to the fact that they generally have a higher probability of being able to converse effectively across cultural borders. By actively partaking in the traditions, rituals, and principles that are connected with different civilizations, they have the opportunity to obtain a more profound and genuine understanding of the cultures of other peoples.

The ability to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries is one of the most crucial elements to consider when it comes to making the most of interactions that involve people from a variety of cultural backgrounds. When it comes to obtaining a real cultural understanding and appreciation, one of the most crucial components is gaining an awareness of the significance and meaning of cultural manifestations. This is one of the most significant components. When individuals possess the competences in intercultural communication, they are able to comprehend the complexities of cultural norms and values, grasp the historical and social context of cultural things, and communicate effectively across cultural boundaries across different cultures. As a consequence of this, individuals are able to obtain a more nuanced understanding of many societies and become more knowledgeable as a result of their own cultural experiences. As stated by Godwin-Jones (2019), the cultivation of skills in intercultural communication has the potential to result in an increase in sensitivity as well as an interest in other cultures. Empathy, which may be defined as "the capacity to understand and share the feelings of others," is a skill that is crucial for forming relationships with other people and overcoming cultural differences. You can learn more about empathy by reading this article. When people have the skills necessary to communicate effectively across cultural barriers, they are more likely to be open to the prospect of receiving information about new ways of thinking and ways of living. This is because they are more likely to be able to learn about new ways of living and ways of thinking. Individuals who have a real desire to know the perspectives of others and a profound appreciation for the variety of human experiences are more likely to feel as though they are immersed in a culture.

When it comes to reducing the implications of potential cultural shock, having the ability to communicate successfully across cultural borders can be of essential value. There is a possibility that individuals from different cultures will be unable to comprehend the intentions or behaviors of one another, which can lead to misunderstandings and even conflict between them. Individuals who are proficient in intercultural communication, on the other hand, are better able to notice and avoid falling into such traps. They are also more able to avoid falling into them. They have the ability to more clearly define their objectives, to seek out further information in order to avoid making assumptions, and to adjust their communication in order to conform to the standards that are prevalent in the community where they are located. As a result of this, individuals have a better potential to acquire knowledge from the cultures of one another and to engage in conversations with one another that are deeper and more meaningful. Individuals who are proficient in intercultural communication are more prepared to serve as cultural mediators and ambassadors during interactions between representatives of other cultures (Kulich et al., 2020). People who have great intercultural communication skills have the capacity to play a key role in circumstances when people of different cultures come into touch with one another. These individuals have the ability to develop channels of communication, promote mutual appreciation, and reduce gaps in knowledge and understanding. They are capable of interpreting social norms, providing assistance in the resolution of problems, and fostering mutual respect and

comprehension among individuals around them. These individuals, in their capacity as cultural ambassadors, play a vital part in the process of building mutual understanding and togetherness among various populations through the execution of techniques that involve cultural exposure.

There are far-reaching ramifications for society as a result of the mutually beneficial relationship that occurs between cultural experience and the ability to communicate effectively across cultural barriers. Individuals who travel to different countries bring back with them fresh viewpoints that have been enlightened by the skills they have learned in the field of intercultural communication. These perspectives are brought back with them when they return home. As a consequence of this, they mature into ardent supporters of multiculturalism and intergroup harmony, who encourage individuals to seek out new cultural experiences in order to broaden their perspectives and engage in direct confrontation with prejudice. It is likely that this will have a domino effect, resulting in communities that are more tolerant and accepting of cultural differences, as well as communities that embrace and celebrate those differences. This would be a positive outcome. The incorporation of intercultural communication skills and experiences is advantageous to both global citizenship and a feeling of shared humanity (Guo-Brennan and Guo-Brennan, 2020). Individuals are able to cultivate a sense of belonging to the global community through the process of engaging in interactions with people who come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and being exposed to a wide range of points of view. People are motivated to engage in global citizenship as a result of this realization. Global citizenship is characterized by the conviction that individuals have a responsibility to collaborate in order to find answers to global difficulties and to promote harmony and tolerance.

In order to successfully communicate across cultural boundaries, it is necessary to establish a connection between one's own unique cultural experiences and the ability to interact effectively with people from other cultures. The ability to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries is something that involves time, effort, and introspection on the part of the individual concerned. In a similar vein, the capacity of an individual to have formative experiences of different cultures may be limited by variables such as a lack of resources, distance, or accessibility. These factors can all be considered types of barriers. It is likely that some people are unable to engage in discussion with people from different cultures owing to their own preconceived views or because they are afraid to travel outside of their comfort zones. Both of these factors could be contributing factors. According to Cassani and colleagues (2020), it is necessary to implement a complete strategy in order to overcome these problems and make the most of the good impacts that intercultural communication skills have on exposure to other cultures.

By adding cultural sensitivity training, language lessons, and intercultural exchange programs into their curriculum, educational institutions have the ability to play a critical role in the development of students' capacity for effective cross-cultural communication. This is because of the potential for these institutions to play a pivotal role in the success of the students. They are able to make use of technology in order to present pupils with a virtual experience of a variety of cultures from all over the world. One technique that may be utilized to increase the amount of exposure that employees have to a variety of cultures is the creation of workplaces that are welcoming, diverse, and that welcome and support cultural diversity. Through the

provision of cross-cultural training, the encouragement of employee resource groups, and the promotion of international collaboration, businesses may be able to assist their staff in feeling more at ease while communicating across cultural boundaries.

By financing cultural exchange programs, displaying support for a wide range of artistic expressions, and publicizing events that highlight this richness, governments and communities can do more to increase the amount of exposure that residents have to a variety of cultures. By increasing international diplomacy, collaboration, and cultural exchanges, it is possible to strengthen an individual's ability to communicate across cultural boundaries on a global scale. The combination between intercultural communication competencies and cultural immersion has a great deal of promise for fostering greater levels of understanding, respect, and peace among persons and cultures. Learners who are prepared with the abilities essential for effective intercultural communication are better able to manage cultural differences and develop their capacity for empathy and curiosity as a result of their experiences abroad (Kim, 2020). This is because they receive the skills necessary to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries. It is possible that we will be able to assist individuals in becoming better global citizens and in developing communities that are more accepting and interdependent if we combine these talents with cultural immersion programs. The collaborative efforts of schools, corporations, governments, and communities to strengthen people's intercultural communication skills and their exposure to diverse cultures have made it possible to envision a future in which diversity is celebrated and cultural understanding is embraced. This is a future that is attainable.

A great number of studies have been conducted in order to research the complex topic of the influence that intercultural communication skills have on the amount of cultural exposure that an individual receives. When it comes to this matter, a wide variety of different approaches have been utilized through the course of the investigation. These skills are of the utmost importance in the context of multicultural environments since they are a method that can improve both one's knowledge and one's effectiveness. Specifically, this is due to the fact that they enhance both knowledge and efficiency. As a consequence of research that has been carried out over the course of the past several years, a great deal of information regarding this link has been brought to light. When it comes to this area, some of the components that are included include the experiences of clinical mentors, the implementation of education that is culturally relevant, and the development of intercultural abilities in a variety of different scenarios.

Students get more agency and are able to develop professionally when they are able to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries, according to the findings of a qualitative study that focused on the experiences of clinical mentors. A gathering of clinical mentors was responsible for carrying out the study. This conclusion was reached as a result of the findings of the investigation since they presented proof. The research underlined the importance of empathy and motivation as two of the most significant components in the process of establishing intercultural communication skills among mentors who are also mentoring nursing students who come from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. These students come from a wide range of backgrounds. The following is an explanation of these two aspects: (Hagqvist et al., 2020).

According to research that was carried out on culturally responsive pedagogy in higher education, one of the most essential elements of a future that is sustainable for the entire world is the teaching of intercultural communication skills. This is one of the most vital components. As a result of the outcomes of the research, this decision was made. When it comes to the value of having cultural competency, the study, which has received respect on a global scale, placed a heavy focus on the importance of having it. As an illustration of this acknowledgment, the individual in question took part in the Programme for International Students that was made available by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Willsher & Oldfield, 2020).

For the purpose of producing a paper, an investigation into the establishment of sociocultural competency and the components that comprise that competency was carried out during the course of the investigation. A particular emphasis was placed on the value of language and cultural competence in the present world, which is marked by a diversified environment and is characterised by globalisation (Varga, Enkhjav, & Szira, 2021). This study evaluated social, cultural, and linguistic competences, with a particular emphasis given on the value of language and cultural competence.

An increase in the perceived degree of Intercultural Communication Competence among college students was shown to be highly influenced by the completion of a cross-cultural international psychology course, as indicated by the findings of a study that was quasi-experimental in character. The study was conducted by the University of California, San Diego. College students were the ones who carried out the research. Through the implementation of a Cultural Immersion Project and weekly group projects that were centered on experiential learning, this curriculum demonstrated the value of such courses in the development of intercultural competency. This was accomplished by incorporating both of these elements. According to Wei et al.'s research from 2020, the curriculum placed a significant amount of attention on the cultural immersion project of the students.

Students should work on improving their ability to communicate with people who come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, as the findings of the research that was conducted on the development of intercultural communication in the context of the instruction of foreign languages made it abundantly clear how important it is for students to do so. A number of extra-linguistic factors of intercultural communication, including worldview, rituals, conventions, and taboos, have been found to have a significant influence on the process of language acquisition and teaching between various cultures, according to the findings of the study (Makhmudov, 2020).

According to the findings of a study that investigated the connection between cultural exposure, intercultural sensitivity, and Intercultural Communication Competence, it was discovered that deep cultural exposure is more beneficial than broad cultural exposure when it comes to improving an individual's ability to interact with people from different cultures. This was the conclusion reached by the researchers. Researchers came to this realization as a result of their investigation. The researchers came to this understanding as a result of the findings of the investigation, which they obtained. As a consequence of this, it has implications for the methods of human resource management that are implemented in organizations that

are made up of individuals who come from a variety of cultural backgrounds (Dias, Zhu, & Samaratunge, 2020).

The cultural differences that exist between the instructor and the students present opportunities for positive challenges, according to the findings of a study that determined whether or not asynchronous online instruction is effective in fostering intercultural competency in a second-generation Asian-American ministry course that was taught in a seminary setting. These findings were derived from the findings of the study that was conducted. To acquire a better knowledge of the success of training students in such a manner in order to establish intercultural competency, the goal of the study was to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of such instruction. The most important aspects of the course were the students' cultural experiences, their capacity to reflect on a variety of cultural views, and their capacity to communicate across cultural boundaries. According to Hung and Lu (2022), both of these considerations were taken into consideration.

On the basis of the outcomes of these studies, it is probable to make the conclusion that the quantity of cultural exposure that an individual receives is substantially influenced by the intercultural communication abilities that they possess. To promote understanding, empathy, and the ability to effectively participate in multicultural situations, they underline the relevance of gaining these talents in a range of settings, including as healthcare, school, and the workplace. This is done in order to improve the ability to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. This is done in order to strengthen one's capacity to interact successfully with people from different cultural backgrounds. The accomplishment of this action is carried out with the purpose of strengthening the capability to successfully interact in situations that are multicultural.

The Social Learning Theory is the relevant theory for the study that investigates the impact of intercultural communication competence on the English language learning motivation of Chinese students (Chaya & Inpin, 2020). Albert Bandura, a psychologist, is credited with developing this theory, which postulates that individuals learn by observing the behaviour of others and the consequences of those behaviours.

According to the Social Learning Theory, which is applied to the study of language acquisition, the level of motivation that students have to learn a new language can be affected by the attitudes and actions of both their teachers and their classmates. In particular, the theory suggests that the development of intercultural communication competence, which involves the ability to understand and interact effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds, can have a positive impact on language learning motivation. Intercultural communication competence refers to the ability to understand and interact effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds (Makhmudov, 2020).

According to this theory, increasing one's motivation to study a foreign language can be accomplished by cultivating and encouraging positive attitudes and behaviours toward intercultural communication. This indicates that there is a correlation between a student's level of encouragement and reward for demonstrating intercultural communication competence and the student's level of motivation to continue learning a language (Nadeem et al., 2020).

According to the Social Learning Theory, the development of intercultural communication competence can have a positive impact on the English language learning motivation of Chinese students. This is suggested to be the case by the theory (Nguyen, 2021). Social learning theory, as proposed by Albert Bandura, relates to the study by emphasizing the importance of observational learning and modeling in intercultural communication competence. In Jiangxi, China, students can acquire language skills and motivation by observing culturally competent individuals, fostering a sense of self-efficacy and motivation to engage in intercultural interactions.

Social Learning Theory posits that learning occurs within a social context and can happen purely through observation or direct instruction, even in the absence of motor reproduction or direct reinforcement. In the context of this study on intercultural communication competence (ICC) and English language learning motivation among university students in Jiangxi, China, SLT can provide a theoretical basis for understanding how cultural exposure might influence students' motivation to learn English.

Students may observe and emulate proficient speakers or peers who demonstrate effective intercultural communication, which can enhance their motivation to learn. Cultural exposure can provide numerous models for students to learn from, showing the utility and success of Intercultural Communication Competence in real-life situations. This observational learning can be internalized, affecting their attitudes and efficacy beliefs regarding language acquisition. The study might explore how vicarious experiences, reinforcements, and social persuasions through cultural exposure contribute to shaping students' motivation to learn English, thereby testing the mediating role of cultural exposure within the framework of SLT. Conceptual frameworks are visual representations of the hypothesised relationship between variables. The study's independent variables are the qualities or attributes under consideration.

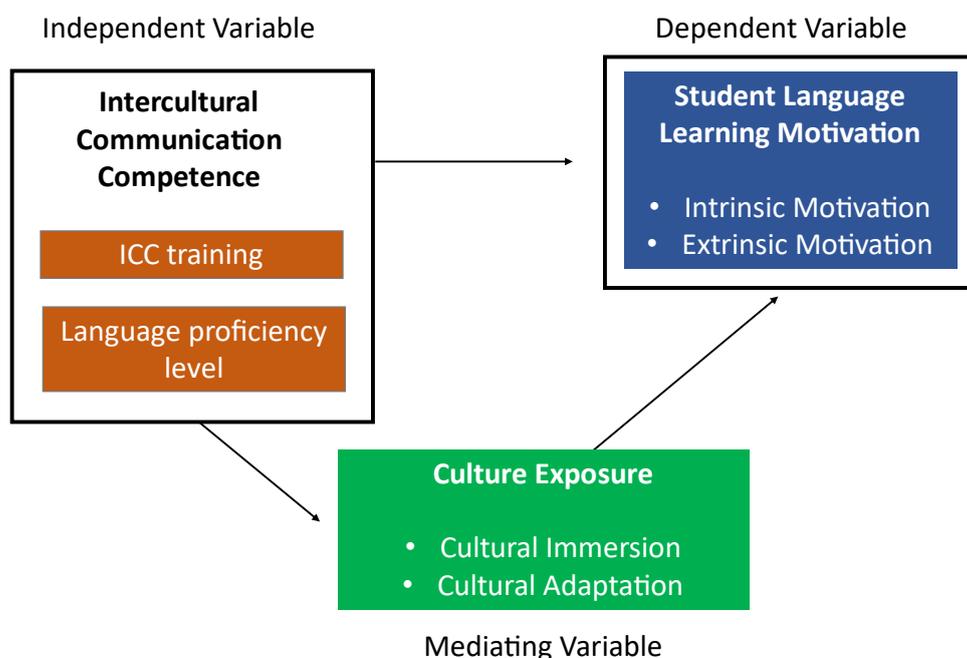


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework outlines a study on how intercultural communication competence (ICC) influences English language learning motivation among students in Jiangxi, China, with the mediating effect of cultural exposure. The independent variable, ICC, is broken down into ICC training and language proficiency level—these are the aspects of competence that are hypothesized to affect motivation. Cultural exposure is the mediating variable that might influence the strength or direction of this effect. The aim is to investigate ICC and cultural experiences interaction to drive students' eagerness to learn English. The underlying idea is that students who are better equipped to communicate across cultures and who are more exposed to different cultures may have higher motivation to learn a language. The research aims to assess the levels of these variables, examine their relationships, and investigate the extend cultural exposure mediates the influence of intercultural communication competence on English language learning motivation in Jiangxi's university setting.

### **Methodology**

A quantitative approach was taken by the researchers in this study to assess the China students' level of intercultural communication ability as well as their motivation in English language study. It is possible to establish a plan for the collection of information on the China students' intercultural communication competence as well as their motivation in English language study that is now in operation. Quantitative research is a method of conducting research that places an emphasis on the quantitative aspects of data collecting and analysis (Taherdoost, 2022). The empiricist and positivist philosophies helped to establish its foundation, which is a deductive method that places an emphasis on the testing of ideas.

Quantitative research offers several benefits for this study. Firstly, it enables the measurement and analysis of variables such as intercultural communication competence, English language learning motivation, and cultural exposure with precision and objectivity. Through statistical methods, quantitative research allows for the identification of patterns, correlations, and trends among these variables, providing empirical evidence to support findings. Additionally, quantitative data collection techniques, such as surveys or standardized assessments, facilitate the gathering of large-scale data from a diverse sample of college students in Jiangxi, enhancing the generalizability of the results. Moreover, quantitative research enables the establishment of causal relationships and the testing of hypotheses, thereby offering insights into the mechanisms underlying the influence of intercultural communication competence on English language learning motivation, mediated by cultural exposure.

A cross-sectional survey design was used for the quantitative research that was conducted for this particular study. The data for this design were gathered from a representative sample of respondents at a single centralised point in time. The design's goals are to test hypotheses concerning the relationship between variables as well as to provide a description of the relationship between the variables. The methodology for the survey involves giving a questionnaire to a representative sample of Chinese students who are majoring in English. The purpose of the survey was to collect data on the students' levels of intercultural communication competence as well as their motivation to improve their English language skills. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions with a variety of response options that are designed to be simple to quantify and thoroughly examined statistically (Story & Tait, 2019).

A cross-sectional survey in the context of researching the influence of intercultural communication competence on students' English language learning motivation in Jiangxi, China, offers several benefits. Firstly, it provides a snapshot of data at a specific point in time, allowing researchers to capture a wide range of responses efficiently. Secondly, it enables the exploration of relationships between variables, such as intercultural communication competence, cultural exposure, and language learning motivation, offering insights into potential mediating factors. Lastly, it facilitates the generalization of findings to the broader population, enhancing the study's external validity and informing educational policies and practices effectively.

The information gleaned from the questionnaire was subjected to statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and mediation analysis for the purpose of examination. In order to summarise and describe the data that was collected from the questionnaire, descriptive statistics are going to be utilised. The strength and direction of the relationship between variables was determined through the use of correlation analysis.

In the study focusing on the influence of intercultural communication competence on students' English language learning motivation in Jiangxi, China, quantitative surveys play a crucial role in several ways. Firstly, they allow researchers to gather numerical data on variables such as intercultural communication competence levels, language learning motivation scores, and levels of cultural exposure among students. This numerical data enables the analysis of trends, comparisons between different groups of students, and the identification of patterns or relationships between variables.

By quantifying these aspects, researchers can draw more precise conclusions and make informed recommendations for educational interventions or policies. Additionally, the data collected from quantitative surveys can inform the design of future surveys, ensuring that they are more effective in capturing relevant information and providing deeper insights into the dynamics of intercultural communication and language learning motivation among students in Jiangxi, China. Overall, quantitative surveys serve as a valuable tool for generating empirical evidence and advancing our understanding of the complex interplay between cultural factors and language learning motivation in this context.

### **Data Analysis and Results**

The research findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the intercultural communication competence (ICC), English language learning motivation, and cultural exposure of college students in Jiangxi, China. The overall moderate levels of ICC ( $M = 3.587$ ,  $SD = 0.825$ ) and English language learning motivation ( $M = 3.39$ ,  $SD = 0.843$ ) suggest that while students exhibit a fair ability to interact and communicate across cultures and are moderately motivated to learn English, there is significant room for improvement. Similarly, the cultural exposure level ( $M = 3.368$ ,  $SD = 0.847$ ) indicates a moderate engagement with diverse cultures. These findings highlight the balanced yet incomplete proficiency in intercultural communication and language learning, revealing specific areas where students excel and others where they struggle, such as distinguishing between similar cultures and adapting communication styles.

The correlation analysis further underscores the interconnectedness of these constructs. There is a significant positive relationship between ICC and English language learning

motivation ( $r = .578$ ), ICC and cultural exposure ( $r = .798$ ), and English language learning motivation and cultural exposure ( $r = .862$ ). These strong correlations suggest that enhancing one aspect, such as ICC, could positively influence both language learning motivation and cultural exposure. The findings also indicate that students who possess higher levels of Intercultural Communication Competence are more likely to be motivated to learn English and engage in diverse cultural experiences. This interplay emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to education that fosters intercultural skills alongside language proficiency. The mediation analysis reveals that while cultural exposure does not directly influence English language learning motivation, it is significantly impacted by ICC, which in turn positively affects language learning motivation. This highlights the critical role of intercultural communication competence in driving students' motivation to learn English. Therefore, educational strategies in Jiangxi should prioritize developing ICC to enhance both language learning motivation and cultural engagement. By integrating Intercultural Communication Competence training into the curriculum, educators can better prepare students for the globalized world, fostering a more motivated and culturally aware student body. This approach not only improves language proficiency but also promotes greater cultural understanding and appreciation, which are essential in today's interconnected society.

*Mediating Influence of Cultural Exposure on the Relationship between Intercultural Communication Competence and English Language Learning Motivation of College Students in Jiangxi, China*

	<b>Original sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample mean (M)</b>	<b>Standard deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>T statistics ( O/STDEV )</b>	<b>P values</b>
<b>Culture Exposure -&gt; Student Language Learning Motivation</b>	-0.133	-0.212	0.408	0.325	0.745
<b>Intercultural Communication Competence -&gt; Culture Exposure</b>	1.125	1.123	0.030	37.778	0.000
<b>Intercultural Communication Competence -&gt; Student Language Learning Motivation</b>	1.057	1.138	0.401	2.637	0.008

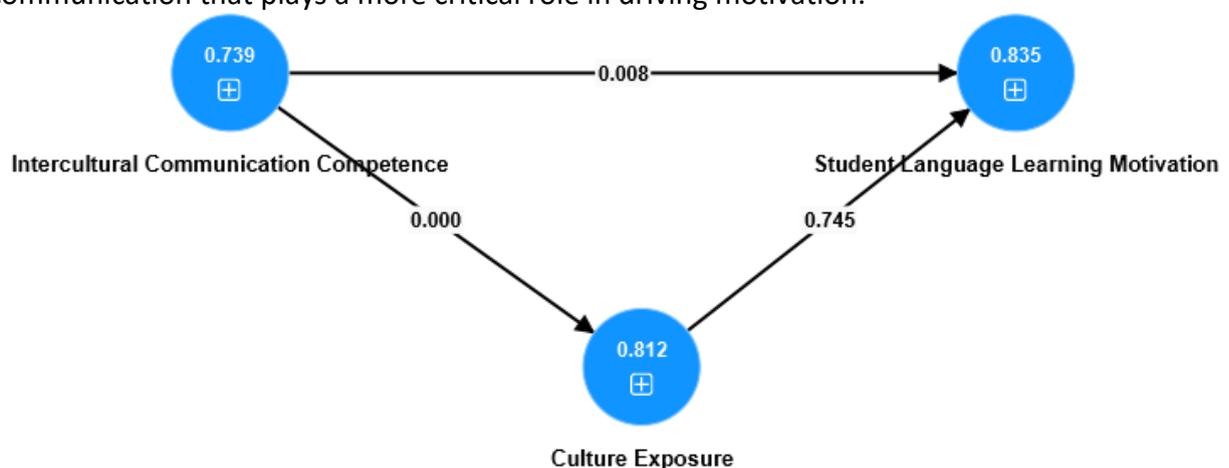
The table presents an analysis of the mediating influence of cultural exposure on the relationship between intercultural communication competence and English language learning motivation among college students in Jiangxi, China. The values provided include the original sample (O), sample mean (M), standard deviation (STDEV), T statistics ( $|O/STDEV|$ ), and P values for three paths: Culture Exposure to Student Language Learning Motivation, Intercultural Communication Competence to Culture Exposure, and Intercultural Communication Competence to Student Language Learning Motivation.

The path from Culture Exposure to Student Language Learning Motivation shows an original sample value of -0.133, a sample mean of -0.212, and a standard deviation of 0.408. The T statistic is 0.325, with a P value of 0.745. These results indicate that cultural exposure does not have a statistically significant direct effect on students' motivation for learning English, as the P value is much higher than the commonly accepted threshold of 0.05. The negative original sample value and sample mean suggest a potential inverse relationship, but the high standard deviation and low T statistic further imply that this effect is not reliable or consistent across samples.

In contrast, the path from Intercultural Communication Competence to Culture Exposure has an original sample value of 1.125, a sample mean of 1.123, and a standard deviation of 0.030. The T statistic is 37.778, with a P value of 0.000. These results demonstrate a very strong and statistically significant positive relationship between intercultural communication competence and cultural exposure. The high T statistic and extremely low P value indicate that students with higher intercultural communication competence are significantly more likely to engage in cultural exposure activities. This finding aligns well with the understanding that Intercultural Communication Competence facilitates greater interaction and engagement with different cultures, thus increasing exposure.

The final path from Intercultural Communication Competence to Student Language Learning Motivation shows an original sample value of 1.057, a sample mean of 1.138, and a standard deviation of 0.401. The T statistic is 2.637, with a P value of 0.008. These results reveal a statistically significant positive relationship between intercultural communication competence and English language learning motivation. The relatively high original sample value and sample mean suggest that greater intercultural communication competence directly enhances students' motivation to learn English. This relationship is supported by the T statistic and P value, indicating a reliable and consistent effect.

Considering these findings in the context of Jiangxi college students, it appears that while cultural exposure itself does not directly motivate English language learning, it is strongly influenced by students' intercultural communication competence. This competence, in turn, has a direct and significant positive impact on their motivation to learn English. The mediating role of cultural exposure might be less pronounced than expected, suggesting that while exposure to different cultures is beneficial, it is the underlying competence in intercultural communication that plays a more critical role in driving motivation.



This analysis highlights the importance of fostering intercultural communication skills among students as a means to enhance their motivation for language learning. For educators and researchers, particularly those focused on improving educational outcomes in diverse settings like Jiangxi, these insights emphasize the need to integrate Intercultural Communication Competence training into language learning curricula. By doing so, students can be better equipped to navigate and appreciate different cultural contexts, ultimately leading to a more motivated and effective language learning experience. This approach aligns with the broader goals of enhancing educational quality and cultural understanding, which are crucial for preparing students to thrive in an increasingly globalized world.

### **Discussion**

The research reveals that most students demonstrate a moderate to high level of intercultural communication skills, allowing them to engage effectively with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds (de Hei et al., 2020). However, individual proficiency levels vary based on factors such as personal experiences and previous cultural encounters. Additionally, the study emphasizes that motivation to learn English is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and students exhibit varying levels of enthusiasm. Understanding these motivational drivers is crucial for educators and policymakers to design effective interventions that enhance language learning (Kirss et al., 2021).

The study also establishes a strong correlation between intercultural communication competence and English language learning motivation, with students who possess higher cross-cultural communication abilities showing more interest in language learning. Cultural exposure plays a significant role in this relationship, as students with greater exposure to different cultures tend to have better intercultural communication skills and are more motivated to learn English (Tsang, 2022). The findings suggest that increased cultural interactions broaden students' perspectives, improve cultural sensitivity, and enhance their communication abilities, making them more eager to engage in language learning (Schwarzenthal et al., 2020).

The research underscores the mediating role of cultural exposure in the relationship between intercultural communication competence and English learning motivation. Exposure to diverse cultures fosters students' openness and curiosity, motivating them to improve their language skills (Huh & Lee, 2020). The study concludes that integrating cultural exposure into the educational curriculum through programs such as language immersion, ethnic festivals, and study abroad initiatives can significantly boost students' language proficiency and intercultural competence. This knowledge is essential for educators and policymakers to develop interventions that promote cross-cultural understanding and language learning in increasingly diverse educational settings (Dimmock, 2020).

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this research is to shed light on the interconnected dynamics of intercultural communication skills, English language learning motivation, and cultural exposure among college students in the province of Jiangxi in China. The goals of this study are to shed light on these dynamics. When it comes to the establishment of efficient language education programs and the promotion of cross-cultural understanding, it is apparent that it is of the utmost importance to take into consideration the cultural backgrounds, the reasons for

learning a language, and the experiences that students have had with languages from other cultures. Specifically, this is due to the fact that these studies make it abundantly clear that it is imperative to take into consideration these elements. The purpose of this research is to make a contribution to the larger body of literature that has been accumulated on the subject of language acquisition and intercultural communication in the context of multicultural relationships. Addressing the limits of the study and making recommendations for additional research will be the means by which this objective will be fulfilled.

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