

ARTICLE

The Use of Persuasive Discourse on X Platform and Its Effects on University Undergraduates Motivations and Attitudes to Learn Chinese

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ABSTRACT

In early 2020, the Saudi Ministry of Education introduced Chinese as a foreign language (CHL) in selected high schools and universities across major cities such as Jeddah and Riyadh. Implemented in ten schools and three universities, this initiative marked the first stage of a national strategy to expand Chinese instruction across the Kingdom by 2030. The policy highlights Saudi Arabia's growing diplomatic and economic partnership with China, particularly after Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's 2019 visit to Beijing, where language learning was emphasized as a tool for strategic cooperation. This study examines the motivations—instrumental, integrative, or personal—driving Saudi undergraduates to learn Chinese, their attitudes toward the language, and the influence of persuasive discourse on the X platform. Specifically, it explores how mechanisms such as repetition, lexical choice, and reasoning affect learners' motivation and perceptions. Using a triangulation mixed-methods approach, data will be collected from 100 randomly selected first-year female students majoring in Chinese at Princess Noura University. The study aims to determine whether cultural, personal, or social media factors shape motivation. Preliminary findings suggest students view Chinese mainly as beneficial for business and national development, indicating an instrumental orientation reinforced by persuasive discourse. Some limitations were encountered, including participant numbers and academic obligations, which constrained availability for interviews.

Keywords: Persuasive Discourse; L2; Motivation; Attitude; Language Learning; Mixed-Methods; Persuasive Online Discourse

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1. Introduction

The Saudi Ministry of Education planned at the beginning of 2020 to teach Chinese language as a selective course in some high schools and universities. Ten schools and Three universities of different cities started offering CHL (Chinese language) courses like in Jeddah and the Capital of KSA. This resolution was the first step of the ministry plan to start teaching it all over the kingdom's schools by 2030^[1].

China, after hosting the Olympic Games and joining the World Trade Organisation has become more incorporated and attractive for the world^[2]. Another reason of starting to teach CHL in Saudi Arabia was after the Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman visit to Beijing in 2019^[3]. It was part of an agreement between the two countries to maintain a good economic partnership. In addition, learning different languages was supported by the ministry of education and the Saudi society since the English language learning. speaking Mandarin as a second language can help our youth promote cultural diversity and contributes to achieving the goals of the Kingdom vision 2030.

The increasing use of persuasive discourse in social media emphasizes the need for academic attention, especially in relation to language learning motivation. Today, social media platform is more present and active in our interaction and communication. Its targeted content forms learners' attitude personal goals and perceptions. Many university learners can get easy access to the language used in these platforms since it is concise and influential. Therefore, understanding how persuasive messages impact learners' attitudes and reasons for acquiring new languages becomes both academically and socially significant. Exploring this area contributes to a richer understanding of the factors that drive motivation in digital contexts, while also providing educators and decision-makers with valuable perspectives to improve learner engagement and develop more effective language learning approaches in our globally connected environment.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Concept of Language Use and Persuasive Discourse

Language is one tool of persuasion^[4]. An individual might use certain words/manipulate their speech to achieve

their goals by sending a specific message. When people receive a persuasive speech, they usually try to use all kind of information they have to form their opinion. It is about 'Who says what to whom, when, and how?'^[5].

Persuasion has various linguistic styles which have been examined to Aristotle's modes: (ethos) sender/message source credibility (X front), (logos) message/Tweets (logical aspects), and (pathos) addressee (emotional element of the message). Some of these styles are commonly used such as *powerless language* that has some markers like (tag questions, hedges, hesitations) and *linguistic intensity* some of the markers here like (very, extremely, really).

In her book *Rhetorical Style*^[6] was mentioned four different aspects of persuasion which are: words choice, sentence structure, the effects of words' choices on speakers' relationships and units larger than the sentences. Regrading words choice, she believes that individuals are usually influenced by social, regional and personal patterns when it comes to their words' choices. Fahnestock provided many examples of words selection such as using synonyms in speech and the power they have in persuasion.

2.2. The Role of Social Media as a Discursive Medium

In recent years, social media has emerged as a significant discursive medium, reshaping how individuals and communities communicate, construct meaning, and negotiate social realities. Unlike traditional media, which largely operated through one-directional flows of information, social media fosters dialogic and participatory forms of discourse, enabling users not only to consume but also to co-create and spread content. These platforms therefore serve not simply as channels for communication but as dynamic arenas where identities are performed, ideologies are contested, and persuasion is exercised in both subtle and explicit ways.

2.2.1. Theoretical Perspectives

The conceptualization of social media as a discursive medium can be traced to several theoretical foundations. Habermas^[7] declares that notion of the public sphere provides an important point of departure, highlighting the role of communicative spaces in democratic deliberation "The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they... claimed

the public sphere regulated from above... to engage... in a debate over the general rules governing relations...". While Habermas originally theorized a rational-critical discourse located in print culture "Publicity loses its critical function in favor of a staged display; even arguments are transmuted into symbols to which again one cannot respond by arguing but only by identifying with them.", later scholars argue that digital environments extend this concept, though in more fragmented and networked forms "we live surrounded by a crowd of citizens who are 'digitally enabled and digitally extended' ... political discussion takes place in the 'digital private space'"^[8]. Social media platforms, particularly X (Twitter), thus serve as contemporary sites of public discourse, where individuals articulate positions, challenge dominant narratives, and participate in collective meaning-making.

From a Foucauldian perspective, discourse is inherently bound to power and knowledge^[9]. Social media exemplifies this relationship, as discursive practices both reproduce and challenge established norms, "We shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation," Foucault^[9] highlighting that discourse is not merely language or communication but a structured system of statements. Platform affordances, moderation policies, and algorithmic filtering play crucial roles in determining which discourses gain visibility and which are marginalized, thereby shaping the terrain of digital knowledge production. In addition, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a valuable framework for analyzing how social media discourse reproduces or resists ideologies. Scholars such as Fairclough^[10] and Van Dijk^[11] emphasize the ways in which language sustains power relations. Within social media, discursive strategies such as hashtags, memes, and retweets provide new mechanisms for amplifying voices, legitimizing claims, and constructing identities.

2.2.2. Discursive Practices in Social Media

Social media discourse is marked by distinctive practices that differentiate it from traditional communicative contexts. As Zappavigna^[12] states, "Discourse tagging is the beginning of searchable talk, a change in social relations whereby we mark our discourse so that it can be found by others, in effect so that we can bond around particular values." Hashtags illustrate this dynamic particularly well, functioning not only as organizational tools but also as discursive devices that frame events and align users with ideological

positions. Viral memes further highlight the multimodal nature of digital discourse, often relying on parody, irony, or humor to circulate persuasive messages that resonate with collective cultural knowledge.

The persuasive character of social media discourse is also evident in its reliance on emotional and affective appeals. In a fast-paced communicative environment, users often draw on tragedy to attract attention and influence audiences. This accelerates the rhetorical process, compressing complex arguments into short, memorable, and emotionally charged content. Such strategies have been shown to be particularly influential among younger populations, including university students, whose engagement with discourse often occurs within these fast-moving and highly affective contexts.

2.2.3. Identity Construction and Representation

One of the most significant features of social media as a discursive medium is its role in identity construction. Users actively curate digital selves through textual, visual, and interactive practices. For university students, this process often involves balancing academic, cultural, and personal identities. Social media allows for experimentation with self-presentation, offering a space to align with particular discourses, communities, or movements. Research has demonstrated that young adults use platforms like X not only to express opinions but also to perform belonging and solidarity through shared discourses^[13].

This identity work extends to discourses of activism, fandom, and professional affiliation. Students may participate in global movements such as #MeToo or climate change campaigns, thereby situating themselves within broader ideological conversations^[14]. Others use social media discourse to negotiate everyday identities linked to culture, gender, or language. In both cases, the performative nature of social media underscores its role in shaping subjectivities through discursive engagement.

2.2.4. Power, Ideology, and Persuasion

The discursive practices of social media are deeply convolute with issues of power and ideology. On the one hand, platforms provide spaces for marginalized voices to challenge dominant narratives. Social movements such as #BlackLivesMatter illustrate how collective discourse can

be mobilized to contest systemic inequalities and generate counter-hegemonic perspectives. On the other hand, Gillespie^[15] discussed how algorithmic design and commercial logics often reinforce existing power structures by privileging content that maximizes engagement rather than fostering rational debate.

Persuasive discourse in social media is characterized by its brevity and intertextuality. Complex arguments are often condensed into slogans, hashtags, or symbolic images that gain legitimacy through likes, shares, and retweets. These discursive markers of popularity operate as proxies for credibility, shaping how messages are interpreted and internalized. For university students, whose social and academic lives are increasingly mediated through these platforms, such persuasive practices can significantly influence attitudes, beliefs, and even political orientations.

Recent scholarship underscores these dynamics. For instance, Cistadewi and Latupeirissa^[16] highlights how echo chambers in social media environments intensify persuasion by narrowing exposure to alternative viewpoints, thereby fostering ideological rigidity. Their findings resonate with broader concerns about polarization and the limitations of digital spaces as democratic discursive arenas^[17].

2.2.5. Effects on University Students

Engagement with social media discourse offers both opportunities and challenges for university students. On the positive side, exposure to diverse discourses can enhance critical thinking, communication skills, and digital literacy. Garcés-Fuenmayor et al.^[18] found that while excessive dependence on social media could impair critical reasoning, purposeful engagement with discursive practices—such as problem-solving and content creation—encouraged reflective learning and intellectual growth. Similarly, Budiyanto and Ridho^[19] reported that integrating social media discourse analysis into English language learning significantly enhanced students' critical thinking, suggesting that digital discourse can be leveraged pedagogically.

Social media also contributes to the development of linguistic and pragmatic skills. Al Mulhim and Ismaeel^[20] showed that postgraduate students in Saudi Arabia regarded social media as a valuable resource for improving academic writing, particularly in contexts of remote learning. Almeahmadi^[21] further demonstrated that Saudi EFL students viewed social media as instrumental in developing pragmatic

competence, offering authentic opportunities for conversational practice not easily replicated in traditional classrooms. Together, these studies confirm the formative potential of digital discursive engagement in shaping students' academic and communicative repertoires.

Nevertheless, challenges remain. The prevalence of misinformation emotionally charged rhetoric, and algorithmically reinforced echo chambers exposes students to persuasive mechanisms that may undermine critical engagement. Ndukwani^[22] analysis of student discourse across Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp illustrates how students use these platforms for identity work and persuasion but also reveals patterns of engagement that risk reinforcing homogeneity of viewpoints. Navigating between the demands of academic discourse, which prioritizes evidence-based reasoning, and social media discourse, which rewards immediacy and affect, therefore presents a critical literacy challenge for university students.

2.2.6. Challenges and Critiques

Despite its affordances, conceptualizing social media as a discursive medium also entails recognizing its limitations. The formation of echo chambers restricts discursive diversity, reducing opportunities for students to encounter alternative viewpoints. Moreover, orchestrated campaigns by bots or trolls compromise the authenticity of digital discourse, raising concerns about manipulation and trust. Economic and commercial imperatives further complicate the picture, as platform algorithms often privilege content designed to maximize user engagement rather than foster meaningful deliberation.

Another important consideration is digital inequality. Not all students engage with social media from equal positions of access, literacy, or cultural capital. These disparities influence whose discourses gain visibility and whose remain marginalized, reminding us that the democratic potential of social media is mediated by structural inequalities both online and offline.

Taken together, the literature demonstrates that social media functions as a powerful discursive medium, shaping how meanings are constructed, identities performed, and persuasive strategies deployed. Drawing on theoretical traditions from Habermas, Foucault, and CDA, scholars have shown that social media discourse is not a neutral communicative process but a site where power, ideology, and identity

intersect. For university students, engagement with these digital discourses offers opportunities for critical thinking, academic skill development, and identity negotiation, while also presenting risks of manipulation and overreliance on affective persuasion.

Understanding the role of social media as a discursive medium is therefore essential for analyzing the use of persuasive discourse on platforms such as X and its broader effects on students. By situating social media within discourse theory and recent empirical research, it becomes possible to appreciate both its empowering and constraining dimensions, providing a critical foundation for the present study.

2.3. Motivation Theories in Foreign Language Learning

A lot of studies and several researchers discussed the importance of L2 motivation. Some researchers argued how culture and society can be an influence for learning languages^[23,24]. Many Scholars discussed several factors affecting SLA some of them related to the human cognitive, others to the environment around them (school, parents, society, personal goals^[25,26]). It is necessary for educators in the field of language learning to understand the importance of motivating their learners to achieve their goals and develop their learning skills, and students need to become more independent's learners to keep themselves motivated for achieving their goals.

According to Gardner^[27] motivation refers to “the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity”. There are several theories about motivation, one of them is “*integrative motivation*” which represents the willingness for a learner to become bilingual and bicultural individual. Another theory that looks into motivation differently from the previous which is called “*instrumental motivation*”. Learners here are more willing to learn L2 for school purposes or to get a proper job.

2.4. Attitudes

Attitudes is a broad term that includes mass media, family socialization, sex, age, peer group, anxiety, religion, occupation, education, income^[28]. Likert cited in Al-Tamimi and Shuib^[29] has a specific definition of attitude as “an in-

ference which is made on the basis of a complex of beliefs about the attitude object”. Some scholars^[30] discussed that attitudes include three parts; cognitive (refers to believes and opinion), affective (indicates feeling and emotion) and finally behavioural (is about actions). This made some scholars like McGuire claim that the three components are connected and measuring one of them is enough to get sufficient data.

2.5. Mandarin Language Teaching Policy in Saudi Arabia (CHL Context)

In early 2020, the Saudi Ministry of Education announced the introduction of Chinese as an elective subject in selected high schools and universities. Ten schools and three universities across various cities, including Jeddah and the capital, Riyadh, began offering Chinese language courses (CHL). This decision marked the initial phase of a broader plan to incorporate Chinese language instruction across all schools in the Kingdom by 2030. One of the key motivations behind this initiative was Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's official visit to Beijing in 2019, which resulted in agreements aimed at strengthening economic ties between the two nations. Moreover, the promotion of language learning has long been supported by both the Ministry and Saudi society, beginning with the introduction of English. The implementation of this policy reflects an increasing recognition of multilingualism as a means of empowering youth, enhancing cultural exchange, and advancing national development.

2.6. Related Studies

The field of language learning motivation and attitude started long time ago^[31-34]. The importance of motivating LLs and the factors that affect their willing to acquire a language needs more studies to examine these factors, their impact on LLs and what might be blocking their learning.

One of these studies that were examining the effectiveness of the relationship between LL and motivation and attitude^[28]. They applied descriptive and analytical approaches to some materials they gathered from books, world-known journals, websites, and their experiences as university lecturers. Their findings were showing how motivation and attitude have great impact on learners' language proficiency and efficiency. At the end of their investigation, they were recommending some factors that can influence learners' lan-

guage efficiency such as creating a friendly atmosphere in the classroom, encouraging learners to enhance their personality into classroom environment and to encourage learners to place their short-term goals.

Another study was investigating the importance of using both languages; in Chinese society; Chinese (Putonghua “the national language in China recently”) and English in secondary schools of China^[35]. The researcher used in depth focused group interviews and individual semi-structured interviews; Chinese English teachers were part of the study too. The findings identified several factors affecting the learners’ choice of language learning such as language status, the understanding of the ability of achieving the targeted goal, practical communication and learner’s culture identity.

The next unpublished study was conducted in China as well but with 305 international students; both gender; who were learning Chinese as a second language. The study took place at Beijing Language and Cultural University in two sessions. One was conducted in 2005 and the other in 2006. All participants were doing their second year of college because the researcher noticed some gap about this year specifically, and so he conducted this study to investigate the problems. The results of the surveys showed that motivation is very important element for language learning while language anxiety has a huge negative effect on learners’ sociocultural and educational adaptation.

A descriptive analysis study was conducted on the persuasive discourse of Twitter (X platform)^[36]. The researcher investigated some variant Arabic tweets to analyse them and specify the language tools are used by the tweeters. His analysis depends on Aristotle’s three modes of persuasion (ethos, pathos and logos). His results showed a certain dynamic structure, and the diversified and numerals methods were used by the senders.

By looking through these studies and their findings, the researcher was hoping that the data in this research will show some positivity regarding Chinese language learning motivation in one of the Saudi universities and if there are any cultural, personal or other elements might be affecting the results.

Questions of The Study:

1. What is the type of motivation of Saudi Undergraduates for learning Chinese?
2. What is the attitude of Saudi undergraduates toward

learning Chinese as a foreign language?

3. To what extent persuasive discourse used in X platform affect Saudi learners’ motivation and attitude of learning Chinese?

3. Method and Design of Research

3.1. Purpose of the study

The reason behind investigating in the field of learning a second/foreign language attitudes and motivation that is most learners in general and language learners in specific have their reasons of achieving their goals^[37-40], such as learning a second language^[41], or to pass an exam in their school which is known as instrumental motivation^[42]. Others might learn it to identify themselves in their community^[42,43], or maybe just to know about a certain culture^[44], which is called integrative motivation.

This study purpose was to determine which types of motivation (instrumental, integrative and personal) could be the primary source of Princess Noura university undergraduates’ motivation towards learning Mandarin. In addition, to identify the type of attitude they have towards learning Chinese, and the effect of persuasive language that used in social media; X in specific because it has a limit number of letters; on their motivational reasons of learning Chinese.

3.2. Method

The study was conducted using a research tool called a *triangulation mixed method design*. The need of such research approach was to focus on “the meaningful integration of both quantitative and qualitative data” which “can provide a depth and breadth that a single approach may lack by itself^[45]”. Quantitative method was conducted to record students’ motivation towards learning CHL as a second language. On the other hand, qualitative approach helped the researcher to investigate subjective value and to obtain more details on the participants’ experiences in a natural sitting^[38].

4. Study Design (Explanatory Design)

Explanatory design was used in the study to identify Saudi university female students’ motivational and attitudinal orientation in learning Chinese language. The quantitative

phase of the study purpose was to obtain an overall picture of 100 Saudi female ELLs motivations, while the qualitative phase was to explore in more depth their attitudes through individual semi-structured interviews with three intentionally selected participants.

It is the most explicit mixed method design^[46], which helps junior researchers to describe the data and give a statement about it easily. Moreover, it is used widely in applied linguistics research^[46], yet researchers might need a lot of time to complete the design of the study.

4.1. Population

100 Female undergraduate students; aged between 19 and 21 years; at Princess Noura University who enrolled in their first academic semester in the Chinese Language major at Princess Nourah University were selected randomly to participate in the study. They were all native speakers of Arabic. Inclusion criteria required that participant be female students. Given the limited number of institutions offering Chinese language programs in the region, the sample is considered representative of the broader population of female university student pursuing this specialization.

The graduate students were excluded from the data collection due to their full schedule and practical field courses which prevented them from completing the survey as planned. Prior to data collection, all participants were informed of the study's objectives and provided written informed consent.

4.2. Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis (Questionnaire)

A Likert scale questionnaire was used to investigate students' motivations of learning Mandarin. The questionnaire was administrated online via the university's internal communication platform, and the participant link was shared through official student channels. Participants' responses were anonymized and treated with strict confidentiality throughout the research process. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section is to collect some information on students' background. The second one is to identify students' motivation to learn the Chinese language. The questions were adapted from Al-Tamimi, et al. and Qashoa based on two scales of Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB); (the instrumental and integrative

orientation scales); and personal motivational construct.

4.3. Qualitative Data Collection (Text-Analysis)

Although semi-structured qualitative interviews were initially planned to complement the quantitative data, they were not conducted due to limited participant availability and geographic constraints between the researcher and the participants. This limitation may have reduced the potential for data triangulation and the depth of qualitative insight.

However, the researcher decided to choose Seven different texts which were collected from X and analyse them qualitatively (descriptively) for persuasion markers like tag questions, synonyms or word choice. After that, the results were compared to the quantitative data for connections.

X platform is a huge source of data that cannot be all specified and this is why the researcher picked only some of them for the current study purposes. The reasons of choosing X over the other social networks were due to a specific feature that it exclusively has which is the limitation number of letters that can be used in a single tweet. This feature leads the tweep to choose their words wisely in order to affect their readers.

5. Data Analysis

Due to the limitation of time, the researcher received 50 complete responses out of 95, yielding a response rate of approximately 52.6% which is considered adequate for studies of this nature. None of the participants were able to be interviewed, so instead some texts from X were selected randomly and analysed to look for specific markers of persuasion language. The complete survey was attached at the end of this paper as **Appendix A**, and all the captured response from X were attached as **Appendix B**.

5.1. Quantitative Data

Due to the limitation of time, data collection and analysis, the researcher used Zoho.com for designing the questionnaire and analysing its responses. Zoho is a website that allows researchers to design their survey or to choose a model from their library, then it helps analysing the quantitative data using several design charts and tables. Part of this

survey was presenting specifically the results that linked to the qualitative data. Those results were participants' answers to question 6 and 8 of the quantitative survey.

Question six was asking them about their motivations of learning Chinese, and they were asked to rate their answers according to their importance. (51) complete responses were collected as it shown in **Figure 1**, and Most of the answers with (4.33) pointed at the usefulness of learning Mandarin to get a job. While (4.08) thought of using the language to continue their higher education, and (2.33) had an obligation of taking the course as a university requirement.

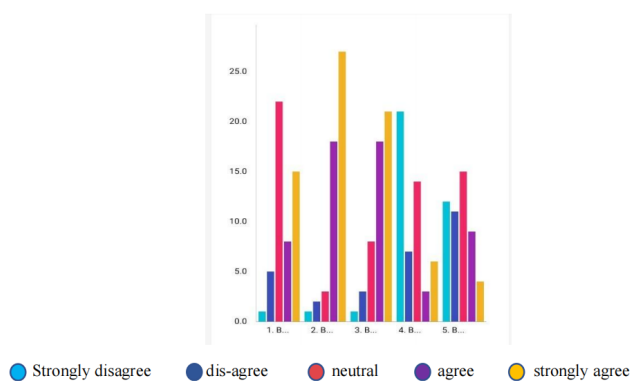


Figure 1. Participants responses of Q6.

On the other hand, Q8 was asking participants to choose the best attitude statement of learning CH. L that explains their view (**Figure 2**). Fifty complete responses were recorded for this question. A lot of the participants thought of the importance of speaking the language very well like a native (4.66). The rest of responses were varied between the importance of using Chinese in business (3.88), speaking Chinese helps in developing the country and its communities (3.86) and using Chinese in Saudi schools is essential (3.22).

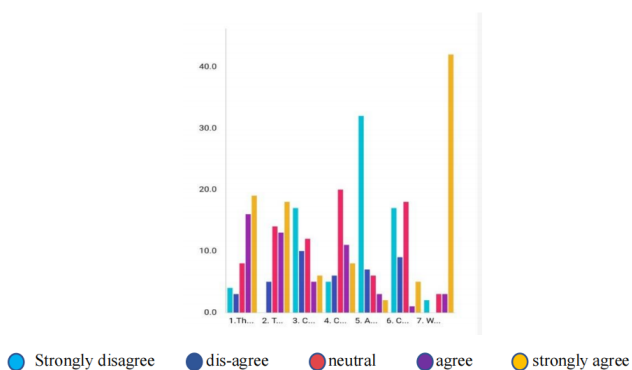


Figure 2. Participants responses of Q8.

5.2. Qualitative Data

Some texts were collected randomly from X. They represented different governmental sectors and public reaction to the initiation of teaching Chinese in Saudi schools and universities. As had been noticed that tweets which support the government decision of teaching Chinese in SA were mostly trying to repeat some of the words that used while initiating the resolution. It was noticed that different universities and other governmental sectors reacted on this news by announcing their support on social media, specifically X which is widely used by many governmental departments in Saudi Arabia. Those markers as it was mentioned in the literature were linked to different persuasion styles of a language.

Some tweets focused on the *word choice* just like the one used by the administration of education in Riyadh, **Figure 3** (اكتشاف / discover) (آفاق / horizons). Such words can send a message to the reader that by learning this language you can reach your goals of discovering and finding out about different cultures, and it can expand your knowledge too.



Figure 3. This tweet (X platform) was in 2019.

Translate to English: The tweet was posted by Riyadh education dep. under the (hashtag "The integration of the Chinese language into the curricula") allows students to explore a new culture and broadens their academic horizons throughout their educational journey.

They started their tweet with the following hashtag *integration of the Chinese language into the curricula*, usually hashtags in X are used to share a wider community of similar point of views to reach many audiences. So, the hashtag in this tweet is part of the sentence structure not just an addition.

Repetition is another style of persuasion language that a speaker/writer usually repeat the same word or use its synonym to emphasis on a certain idea that was mentioned

in a different resource^[23]. Like the following examples (Figures 3–5) when some tweeters were repeating a word previously mentioned in several tweet/s, and that repeated word is (آفاق/horizons).



Figure 4. This tweet (X platform) was in 2019 Tabuk administrator of edu. “Persuasion lang”.

Translate to English: This tweet was posted by Tabuk education department. Director of (hashtag) Education in Tabuk: (hashtag “The inclusion of the Chinese language”) as a subject of study is a strategic step toward new academic horizons.



Figure 5. This tweet (X platform) was in 2019 KSU administrator “Persuasion lang”.

Translate to English: This tweet was posted by King Saud university, using the same (hashtag “The integration of the Chinese language into the curricula”). Leadership in Chinese Language Education... Toward New Horizons.

In Figure 4 a picture of the administrator of education

in Tabuk (one of Saudi regions) was posted along with the tweet. His body position indicates; in Saudi culture; the importance of his talk (tweet) by using his finger to point at something. The same tweet includes the phrase (strategic step/ خطوة استراتيجية) which is usually used with business. He might refer to the importance economic and political relationship the two countries have which was mentioned in the Crown Prince (Muhammad Bin Salman) speech and some other news-channels in X. So, he was indicating that education is as important as economic and politics.

Furthermore, Figure 5 showed a tweet that posted by King Saud university (KSU). They repeated the same word (horizon) and included a brochure that was advertising some information of the Chinese language such as: number of words, number of speakers, the history of this language. In addition, it was advertising the Chinese Language Centre at KSU by referring to its objectives of teaching Mandarin, date of starting and the number of their graduates since 2010. This kind of information can lead readers or convince them about a specific idea.

Another style of persuasion in language is *words of reasoning*. These words refer to reasons like (because, due to). In persuasion language these words are used to build someone’s argument and justify their actions to convince the audience^[47]. An example of such language can be seen in Figure 6 and Figure A2 (Appendix B) which represents a tweet of the minister of education in SA. As noticed, he used the same hashtag to reach a wider base of audiences, again it was part of a sentence then he followed that hashtag by a reason morpheme (لـ to-for) that connected to the verb (be/ يكون) so he can be more convincing to readers. Moreover, to add more emphasis to this tweet, he gave another reason of the importance of teaching CH.L. by choosing persuasive words such as (قوة اقتصادية/ economic strength) and (الدول المتقدمة/advanced nations).

All the above examples shared the credibility of a message source because all of them belonged to governmental accounts which are highly trusted in SA.

The next example Figure 7 represented an eye from public which was also trying to persuade readers on the importance of teaching and learning Chinese in KSA choosing to use words like (creating opportunities – job creation/ وظائف خلق الو).



Figure 6. This tweet (X platform) was in 2019 a use of persuasion language by the minister of edu. in SA.

Translate to English: The tweet was posted by @minister_moe_sa Advanced nations adopt the teaching of two or more languages in addition to their native tongue, and it is now time to (hashtag "include the Chinese language in our curricula") so that our education aligns with these global trends. The selection of Chinese stems from China's economic strength and its strategic partnership with the Kingdom.



Figure 7. This tweet (X platform) was in 2019.

Translate to English: The tweet was posted by @shahideian Teaching the Chinese language in Saudi Arabia contributes to job creation for Saudi citizens and enhances the prospects of those who speak it in joint ventures. Under the same hashtag "The integration of the Chinese language into the curricula".

6. Study Results and Discussion

6.1. Descriptive Data Analysis

The analysis of the attached tweets showed the following results: (1) Persuasive discourse was determined by the sender of the message goal, and it was free from exercising non-linguistic authority. (2) The attached tweets had the three important elements of any language message. Those elements are (the sender) which corresponds to the tweeter, (the message) corresponds to the tweets and (the receiver) corresponds to the electronic recipient who is browsing the

site. (3) It is difficult to specify every linguistics characteristic of persuasive speech. (4) Creativity is an important component of such language. (5) It is difficult and challenging to rely on specific linguistic template for persuasive discourse, so several tools and language mechanisms were employed here such as repetition, like in **Figures 3–5** the word (أفاق/horizons) was repeated in several tweets, words choice such as (strategic step/خطوة استراتيجية) in **Figure 4** and (creating opportunities - job creation/خلق الوظائف) in **Figure 7**, also words of reasoning like the Arabic morpheme of reason (ل/to-for) **Figures 4** and **6**. The reasons of all of that were to persuade the audience and convince them with certain ideas and beliefs.

6.2. Quantitative Data Analysis

Looking back at the motivation question's results and the tweets may lead to some connections between them. Most of the analysed tweets were emphasising on good opportunities for job seekers as in **Figure 7**, good education such as **Figures 3** and **4**, higher education, etc. At the same time students rated the following statement, in the given questionnaire (**Appendix A**), *easily finding a job* as the most agreed on among them, **Figure 1**. After finding a job statement, comes *seeking higher education* statement, **Figure 1**. Otherwise, a smaller number of participants agreed on the followings as a motivation for learning Mandarin: an efficient tool for completing tasks, university requirement, a tool to enhance an individual status.

On the other hand, the attitude question's results showed that learning Chinese helps things getting done in business and brings more benefits to country development, **Figure 2**.

7. Discussion & Conclusions

The analysis of selected tweets revealed that persuasive discourse relies on the sender's intention rather than external authority and is composed of essential communicative elements which include the sender (tweeter), the message (tweet), and the receiver (audience). Although persuasive speech lacks a fixed linguistic structure, it involves creative language use and tools like repetition, word choice, and reasoning. These mechanisms aim to influence beliefs and attitudes.

Finally, findings from the motivational and attitudinal questions, questions 6 & 8, revealed the understanding of female students at Princess Noura university of the importance of learning a foreign language such as Mandarin as a gateway to business success, educational and career advancement. These results indicated a largely instrumental and personal motivation shaped by both educational policy and persuasive online content.

In conclusion, the Saudi Ministry of Education's decision in 2020 was to introduce Mandarin as a selective subject in several high schools and universities reflects the country's efforts to align its educational goals with broader economic and cultural strategies. The motivation behind this move is tied not only to China's growing global influence—especially after joining the World Trade Organization and hosting the Olympic Games—but also to the strategic visit by Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman to Beijing in 2019, which emphasized cooperation and partnership between the two nations.

Furthermore, the integration of Chinese language learning is supported by both the Ministry of education and the Saudi society, continuing the tradition of embracing multilingualism, as seen with English. Learning CHL can contribute significantly to cultural diversity and economic development, supporting the goals of Vision 2030.

8. Study Limitations

This study could be carried in a different way but due to the limitation of resources, time, participants and data analysis the results were as explained in sections (5, 6). The researcher could not conduct a semi-structured interview due to limited participant availability and geographic constraints between the researcher herself and the participants. For this reason, another research tool related to the same topic was used to enrich this study process. That tool was X platform.

Appendix A. Survey Questions

A.1. Motivation to Learn Chinese

Q6. What are your reasons for learning Chinese? Please rate the following reasons according to their importance.

Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5

1. Because it will enable me to carry my tasks more efficiently.

Another point, the quantitative part could be widely taking among different Saudi universities; covering both private and governmental sector; gender, age differences on motivation and attitude of learning Mandarin might be used for future studies.

Interviews as a qualitative method give more insight and information to understand the participants' attitude, personal goal, motivation, learning a second language and their responses on quantitative survey.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement

The data that supports the findings of this study are available from the author upon reasonable request. Kindly contact them on rkali@kau.edu.sa.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

2. Because it will enable me to get a job easily.
3. Because I hope to further my education.
4. Because it is a university requirement.
5. Because it will enhance my status among my friends.

A.2. Attitudes toward Learning Chinese

Q8. What are your attitudes towards the following issues? Please choose the appropriate.

Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5

1. The development of our country is possible mainly by educated people who speak Chinese well.
2. The use of Chinese language in business offices helps in getting things done easily.
3. Chinese should not be a compulsory subject in schools in KSA.
4. Chinese language should be the medium of instruction in Saudi schools.
5. At least some subjects like Physics and Chemistry should be taught in Chinese at the secondary level in KSA.
6. Chinese movies are more enjoyable than those in any other languages.
7. When I hear someone speaks Chinese well, I wish I could speak like them.

Appendix B. More Tweets



Figure 8. This tweet (X platform) was in 2019. Prince Mohammed bin Salman emphasizing (Chinese) language learning as a tool for strategic cooperation.

Translate to English: The tweet was posted by @spagov During His Royal Highness the Crown Prince's visit to China, plans were initiated to introduce the Chinese language as an academic subject across all educational levels in schools and universities throughout the Kingdom.



Figure 9. This tweet (X platform) was in 2019. A use of persuasion language by the minister of edu. in SA.

Translate to English: This tweet was posted by @KSAMOFA Chinese Language in Our Schools. The green box included the same tweet was posted by @minister_moe_sa.

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