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# Multilingual influence on thought patterns in Chinese students in Japan

*Sunday 18 May 2025 09:30 (25 minutes)*

## TITLE

Multilingual influence on thought patterns in Chinese students in Japan

## RELEVANT SIG

Bilingualism

## FORMAT

Research-oriented Oral Face-to-face presentation (25 minutes, including Q&A)

## Short English description

## KEYWORDS

multilingual  
cognition  
emotional engagement  
Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

## First-time presenter?

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## ABSTRACT

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis posits that languages have profound impacts on people's perceptions (Perlovsky, 2009). A broad range of previous research has demonstrated that language can influence an individual's thinking patterns in various ways, and how learning new languages leads to new perspectives (Bialystok, et al., 2012; Boroditsky, 2001; Pavlenko, 2014). However, to date, despite the multilingual turn in applied linguistics globally (May, 2014), studies in Japan have tended to focus on learning L2 English without considering the impact of other languages on learners' identities. To address this gap, this study asked the following research question: "To what extent do multilingual L1 Chinese speakers in Japan change their emotional behaviors

when responding to moral dilemmas in Chinese, English and Japanese?"The presenter investigated this problem by providing two Chinese participants with three moral dilemma situational cues in English, Japanese and Chinese (Greene et al., 2001), followed by stimulated recall interviews (Dempsey, 2010) to explore how language selection influenced their emotions. The results revealed the benefits of multilingual abilities, such as enhanced decision-making, problem-solving, and intercultural competence. Based on the results from this study, the presenter recommends that Japanese education could benefit from an approach that encourages learners to develop multilingual repertoires.

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