HOW CAN STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM CHINESE IMMERSION SCHOOLS

by

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Summary of My Capstone Project

My research question is “How can students benefit from Chinese immersion schools?” My capstone project is a website. My website focus on this question with explanations from my literature review. The homepage of my website has a menu bar to easily navigate each page. There are six major catalogs with drop down labels in the menu. Each label in the menu is a new topic with links on the label to easily take user to a new page just focus on the information they are interested. The first catalog is the introduction part, there are three labels in the drop down menu: the reason to learn Chinese, the definition of immersion, and an introduction about Chinese immersion schools in Minnesota. The second catalog is about how can Chinese immersion schools encourage better Chinese language skills. The third catalog is about how Chinese immersion school improves students’ academic success. The fourth catalog is about why Chinese immersion schools can provide effective classroom learning environments. The fifth catalog including useful resources talk about why other people choose Chinese immersion schools. The sixth catalog is a comment area for people to ask questions and leave comments.

My target audience is parents who are interested in Chinese language and who want to send their children to Chinese immersion schools. With the rapid economic development of China, more and more people realized the importance of learning Chinese and understand Chinese culture. But, Chinese is also known as one of the hardest languages in the world, therefore these parents are trying to find out the best way for their kids to learn it. My website provides the benefit of Chinese immersion schools from Chinese language skills, students’
academic success and classroom learning environments, all information meet the needs of these parents.

I used website builder WIX. Com to create my website. The name of my website is How can students benefit from Chinese immersion schools? The links of my website is https://lzheng01.wixsite.com/chineseimmersion, I plan to publish this website on September 2018. From this website parents can learn information about the benefit of Chinese immersion schools from the following three areas: Chinese immersion school encourage students Chinese language skills, Chinese immersion school improve students academic success, Chinese immersion schools provide effective classroom learning environments. Parents will have a better understanding about what is immersion, why learn Chinese, and what are the Chinese immersion schools in Minnesota. We can also interact with each other on the question and comment area. For more information about Chinese immersion schools, they can go to my resources page to find videos and articles of others talk about Chinese immersion.
Screenshots of my website:

Welcome to this website, let's find out: How can students benefit from Chinese immersion schools

Chinese Language
Welcome to this website, let's find out: How can students benefit from Chinese immersion schools.
The nature of Chinese language needs immersion

Studies of the benefits of various language programs (including foreign language programs, partial immersion and full immersion) have demonstrated that immersion is the most effective way to learn a foreign language (Campbell, Gray, Rhodes & Snow, 1985).

Chinese has its own unique nature. According to Li and Thompson (1981), the Chinese language belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language family. Chinese has its own special characteristics unlike English and other European languages.

First, the Chinese writing system is different. As Fourtan (2012) pointed out, unlike other language writing systems that are phonetic-based, the Chinese language is special because of its character-based writing system. It is not easy to learn how to write Chinese characters, mostly because these characters are a combination of strokes (Padilla, Fan, Xu & Sikua, 2013). The simplest Chinese character can only have one stroke, such as “一” which means “one”, there are also some very complex characters such as “宮” which means “a Chinese province called Jiangsu”, and “源” which means “source”, they have more than 20 strokes in those words (Padilla et al., 2013). Learning to write those strokes is not the hard part, but remembering the position and combination of different Chinese characters can be very difficult for non-Chinese native speakers. (Padilla et al., 2013)

Secondly, the Chinese language has its own pronunciation system called Pinyin. ‘Pinyin’ is a coding system with Roman letters plus diacritical marks adopted by the Chinese government to help pronounce Chinese characters. (Padilla et al., 2013) Pinyin is also a way to find Chinese character in a dictionary. (Mel & Livocclus, 2012)

Thirdly, Chinese is a tonal language. The 4 tones are high level, rising, falling-rising, and falling, each tone is showing a different Chinese word with different meanings (2013, Padilla & Fan & Xu & Sikua). For example, high-level yi “一” means “number one”, rising yi “一” means “first”, falling-rising yi “一” means “char”, and falling yi “一” means “different”.

Last but not least, the challenge of mastering Chinese reading and writing is that it takes more time than other languages. It’s equally difficult for both Chinese native speakers and non-Chinese speakers. (Fourtan, 2012).

References

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