The Toddler Language Project at Morningside PlayCare Immersion

Speak 3 Languages

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National Chinese Language Conference
San Diego
How Does One Build an Early Childhood Mandarin Immersion Program?

1. Research
2. Network
3. Identify a Model
4. Recruit High Quality Staff
5. Establish a Small Demonstration Project
6. Collect data and document
7. Stay closely connected to field & network
8. Replicate with Chinese Partner(s)
First Step

RESEARCH

• PRACTICE ABROAD and in US
• LITERATURE on IMMERSION
• LITERATURE on NEUROSCIENCE & LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
CELIN A HUGE RESOURCE

CELIN @ Asia Society

CELIN Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network at Asia Society
Little Data on Early Childhood Language Immersion

• None on Best Practices in Mandarin Immersion for Children Under Five
According to Neuroscientists Patricia Kuhn, Children are Geniuses at Acquiring New Languages.
A Small Window of Opportunity

Ages 0 to 5 are the Optimal ages for children to learn multiple languages.

See *The Linguistic Genius of Babies*, Patricia Khul, on our BLOG.
Next Step

NETWORKING

Attending since 2015

Joy, Robin, Shuhan, Sharon

Early Childhood Educators
Next Step

ESTABLISH A DEMONSTRATION MODEL

SMALL
SMALL
SMALL
SMALL
The Toddler Language Project at Morningside PlayCare Immersion

Demographics

• Currently enrolls 11 children
• Ages 2 – 4
• Has enrolled children as young as 12 and 14 months
Our Mission

Morningside PlayCare cultivates the language genius, open-mindedness, and wonder-filled hearts of young children.
CREATE THE MODEL

- Enroll Children at Age 2
- Play-Based Curriculum
- Teachers Speak 100% of time in Target Language
- Children Attend 12 months
- Five Days Per Week
  - 8:30 – 12:30 or
  - 8:30 – 3:30
  - 8:30 – 5pm or 6pm
Ready, Set, Go
Spring & Summer at
Morningside PlayCare Immersion
212-316-0313
Morning Meeting
Searching for Insects.
Growing some of the food we eat.
Harvesting Carrots We Planted
Four-Year Old Hera
Cutting-Out Characters
Making Gingerbread Men
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Hand" /></td>
<td>手帮忙 (shǒu bāng māng)</td>
<td>Helping Hands (Manos Ayudan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Ear" /></td>
<td>耳朵听 (ěr duǒ tīng)</td>
<td>Listening Ears (Orejas Escuchan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Eye" /></td>
<td>眼睛看 (yǎn jīng kàn)</td>
<td>Looking Eyes (Ojos Miran)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only Human or Nature Produced Work on Our Walls
Teaching Materials
Teaching Materials
Next Step
COLLECT DATA
To Inform Instruction & Document

• Teaching Strategies
• Videos
• Develop our own

We also looked at
• ELLOPA: Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment, Center for Applied Linguistics,
• CLOCK assessment
• FLAP: Seattle Public Schools
Following Our First Child

MILA
Assessments of Mila
May 2016 at 18 mos.
(Enrolled at 14 months)
Early stages of speaking (in any language)
Mila May 2016 at 18 mos

- TEACHERS MUST PRODUCE LANGUAGE
- MILA PRODUCES BOTH WORDS & GIBBERISH
ASSESSMENT MILA Feb 2017
Age 2 years 2 mos. (26 months)
August 2017 at 3 yrs., 9 mos.
Speech Pathologist Assessment - Mila
“Equivalent to a Bilingual Child”
2019
Mila in Pre-K
at Hudson Way Immersion School
Mila at Hudson Way Immersion

“At the beginning of the school year, Mila completely understood conversations and instruction in the class. She had an extensive vocabulary and was able to express her thoughts with full sentences.”

For example, when kids took turns to introduce their friends, Mila said, “我的朋友是Grayson。我喜欢和他一起在厨房玩。” (My friend is Grayson. I like to play with him at the kitchen.) Mila was also able to identify many Chinese words or phrases we had learned in the class.
What We Have Learned in 3 years working with 24 children and 36 Chinese Interns and Teachers

• Teacher Training: All the challenges of higher grades PLUS mediating the Gap in American / Chinese Child Care methods
• 18 Months is a *Great Age*, but requires *More Staff*
• Parents are anxious about everything!
• Young children can acquire Mandarin before their home language.
• It’s challenging to do Inquiry with 100% immersion
• Collecting data is easy, organizing it- challenging
• Child Temperament is Important – Can’t Accept All
Questions

• Where is the right balance between play-based learning and teaching Chinese Literacy?
• What difference does it make over the short and long term if a child begins immersion before they start speaking, as they are starting to speak, or after?
• What kind of business model best supports accepting children under the age of 2?
• What is the best approach to assessment?
• How to Replicate and Sustain High Efficiency?
Next Step: Replicate with Chinese Partners

How to Replicate and Maintain High Efficiency?

- Early Childhood Summer Program
- Franchise
- Hong Kong
The work of children is play.
“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.”

- Nelson Mandela