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“What Do You
Mean by
‘Immersion’”?

Goals and Principles
of Chinese Language
Immersion
Instruction at CAIS

How would your teachers, administrators, and parents answer these questions?

- What do you mean by ‘immersion’?
- What is the relationship between Chinese language proficiency and academic content mastery?
- How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your Chinese immersion teachers?
- Are they clear about what is expected of them?

Some things I have heard teachers, administrators and parents say about immersion:

- “We teach subject X in Chinese, and in the process, students learn *both* subject X *and* Chinese.”
- “Our students need to pass the district/state test in subject X, therefore we need to teach subject X in Chinese.”
- “Our Chinese teachers are responsible for ensuring proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. They are *also* responsible for ensuring content mastery in the academic subjects.”
- “Immersion is the natural way we all learn our first language.”

Some things to consider about the immersion classroom

- In most immersion classrooms, there is one Chinese speaker and 20-plus students whose first language is not Chinese.
- American children spend approximately 14% of their total time in school. This means that children in most immersion schools spend 7% of their total time in the Chinese immersion classroom.

The responsibility of each immersion school:

Develop and communicate a clear definition and realistic expectations around immersion instruction that are shared and understood by teachers, administrators, and parents.

Goals and Principles of Chinese Immersion Instruction at CAIS:

GOALS:

1. Proficiency in spoken and written Chinese
2. Achievement of core academic competencies
3. Chinese cultural competence

Goals and Principles of Chinese Immersion Instruction at CAIS

PRINCIPLE #1 *Instruction in the Target Language*

At CAIS, 100% of instruction within the Chinese language classroom takes place in the target language.

Goals and Principles of Chinese Immersion Instruction at CAIS

PRINCIPLE #2

Primacy of Language Proficiency

At CAIS, curriculum and instruction in Chinese place primary emphasis on developing Chinese language proficiency. Chinese language proficiency is measured against the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, 2012.

Principle # 3 Academic Content

At CAIS, academic content serves as the vehicle through which Chinese language proficiency is developed. Achievement of core academic competencies through Chinese language may also at times be an appropriate objective. The level of achievement will depend upon one or more of the following factors:

- Chinese language proficiency
- Complexity of the content
- Previous content knowledge acquired in English
- Instructional strategies aimed at creating comprehensible input (sometimes referred to as “sheltered instruction”)

Goals and Principles of Chinese Immersion Instruction at CAIS

PRINCIPLE #4 *Culture*

At CAIS, students' ability to function comfortably, competently, and confidently in a Chinese cultural environment is developed through

- Curriculum content
- Modeling of appropriate cultural practices by faculty and staff
- Deliberately created environment
- Special events
- International programs

PRINCIPLE #5: Cognitive Benefits

At CAIS, students gain cognitive benefits associated with second language proficiency that monolingual students do not. The cognitive benefits of second language proficiency have been demonstrated by a large and growing body of research. CAIS students enjoy these benefits in addition to second language proficiency and academic achievement. Annual standardized assessments of core academic competencies (ie, ERBs) have consistently demonstrated that CAIS students achieve at or above the level of peer groups at suburban and independent single language schools.

Goals and Principles of Chinese Language Immersion Instruction at CAIS

Goals

At Chinese American International School, the goals of Chinese language immersion instruction are:

1. Proficiency in spoken and written Chinese
2. Achievement of core academic competencies
3. Chinese cultural competence

Principles

In order to achieve these goals, the following fundamental principles of Chinese language immersion instruction guide our practice:

1. **Instruction in the Target Language**—At CAIS, 100% of instruction within the Chinese language classroom takes place in the target language.
2. **Primacy of Language Proficiency**—At CAIS, curriculum and instruction in Chinese place primary emphasis on developing Chinese language proficiency. Chinese language proficiency is measured against the [ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012](#).
3. **Academic Content**—At CAIS, academic content serves as the vehicle through which Chinese language proficiency is developed. Achievement of core academic competencies through Chinese language may also at times be an appropriate objective. The level of achievement will depend upon one or more of the following factors:
 - Chinese language proficiency
 - Complexity of the content
 - Previous content knowledge acquired in English
 - Instructional strategies aimed at creating comprehensible input (sometimes referred to as “sheltered instruction”)
4. **Culture**--At CAIS, students’ ability to function comfortably, competently and confidently in a Chinese cultural environment is developed through
 - Curriculum content
 - Modeling of appropriate cultural practices by faculty and staff
 - Deliberately created environment
 - Special events
 - International programs
5. **Cognitive Benefits**—At CAIS, students gain cognitive benefits associated with second language proficiency that monolingual students do not. The cognitive benefits of second language proficiency have been demonstrated by a large and growing body of research. CAIS students enjoy these benefits in addition to second language proficiency and academic achievement. Annual standardized assessments of core academic competencies (ie, ERBs) have consistently demonstrated that CAIS students achieve at or above the level of peer groups at suburban and independent single language schools.

Thank you!

谢谢



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