ABSTRACT

This study attempts to research on the influences of the home and the school on Chinese Language learning in Primary School students in Singapore. Due to Singapore’s unique societal background, students of every race must master both the English Language and their own Mother Tongue. For Chinese students, Chinese Language will be the language that they master.

As China opens her doors to the world, her fast developing economy also means that Chinese Language will gradually increase in economical value. Therefore, it is a need to master the language. The learning of a language depends greatly on the environment in which the language is learned. Thus, this study attempts to investigate the school and home of Primary School students in Singapore, thereby identifying and analyzing the environment which provides more Chinese literacy inputs, therefore playing a greater role in their learning of the language.

Singapore Primary School Students are chosen as a subject of this study because children between the ages of seven and twelve operate best with their language acquisition skills. Thus, it is of great value to study their Chinese literacy practices during this period of time in their lives.

This study will look at the school and home environment of four Primary School students currently schooling in Singapore from various angles of their lives. Interviews, voice recordings and video-recordings will be conducted to make a record of the various influences of the home on their Chinese literacy acquisition.
At the same time, the Chinese literacy inputs that the school environment provides will also be investigated using the statistics provided by the Ministry of Education in Singapore and other studies conducted on Singapore Primary School classrooms, interviewing two Singapore Primary School Chinese teachers, and the verbal accounts of the students themselves.

The results of this study find that the students spend a much longer time at home than in school and the home environment provides a much wider range of activities with Chinese literacy inputs for the children. Therefore, it is the home that plays a bigger part in Chinese literacy acquisition of the students, and the school should not be totally depended upon for providing the literacy inputs.