

*Chinese Language Schools: A
Unique Experience among
Second Generation Chinese
Canadians*

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Research Question

- ❖ How important is the Chinese language for second generation Chinese Canadians in upholding and maintaining one's ethnic identity?
- ❖ Chinese language schools offer an unique approach in looking at this topic

Methodology

- ❖ 20 participants have been interviewed (10 males, 10 females)
- ❖ All participants are either born in Canada, or have come to Canada when less than 5 years old
- ❖ All participants are currently students at Canadian universities in Ontario
- ❖ Most participants raised in the Greater Toronto Area
- ❖ Age of participants varies from 19 to 25 years
- ❖ Interviews were roughly 45 minutes to 1 hour long

The Meaning of Chinese Language Schools: A Way of Maintaining One's Chinese Identity

- ❖ Most participants attended Chinese language schools in their childhood (ranges from 4 to 10 years)
- ❖ Interviewees agreed that Chinese language schools were an important institution in upholding one's Chinese identity, for both the parents and themselves
- ❖ Explanation: Language is symbolic and embedded with cultural values and practices. It allows one to “connect” with, and participate within, the Chinese Canadian community

Implications

- ❖ Places a strong indirect burden and pressure on second generation Chinese Canadians
- ❖ Knowledge of a certain language can also indicate one's affiliation within a sub-group in the Chinese Canadian community

Future plans for the research paper

- ❖ Interview more participants (from more diverse educational backgrounds and ages)
- ❖ Look at the experiences of second generation students born of Chinese descent in other countries such as U.S. and Australia