NOW IS THE TIME, LEARN MANDARIN

by:
Gina T. Fontanillas
Head Teacher III, Bataan School of Fisheries

Learn. Speak. Succeed! Now is the time. Learn Mandarin!

Undoubtedly, as China’s economy has been mounting since the ‘90s, so has the status of its language, specifically the Mandarin Chinese (Lo Bianco, 2007 & Ding, 2008).

According to Accredited Language Services’ blog (2019), with million speakers, Mandarin claims the top spot as the world’s most common language. One of the five key dialects of Chinese, Mandarin is the official language of China and Taiwan, as well as one of the four official dialects of Singapore. Approximately 15 percent of the world’s population is native speakers of Mandarin. It is said that Asia has been the region where learning Chinese has been the strongest. Being considered as a language for business around the Pacific Rim, Chinese is currently becoming more popular. As of now, statistics show that there are more and more learners in more than 100 countries learning Chinese as a foreign language.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) has embraced the Special Program in Foreign Language-Chinese Mandarin (SPFL-Chinese Mandarin) in which 69 chosen public secondary schools (and is still expanding) have been offering the program. In the Division of Bataan, only the Bataan School of Fisheries is offering the said special program, while in the City Division of Balanga, it is only the Bataan National High School. All in all, this is how the Mandarin language is spreading not only in Mainland China but also in the neighboring countries like the Philippines down to their educational systems.

However, Chinese is known to be one of the most difficult foreign languages to learn not only for English native speakers but also for Filipinos who are still continuously learning English as their second language. This is absolutely true, but the fruits of learning another language are
sweeter than the hardships as this adds to one’s competitive edge. The process of learning another language develops skills and attributes we might not otherwise discover. Here, our mental abilities and cognitive capital increase. Much more than merely memorizing the translation of vocabulary words and grammar rules, the process of studying a new language involves understanding and appreciating a new culture and ways of life. This may strengthen our ability to successfully interact and communicate with the people we may want to transact business with as we build business networks and new opportunities.

Ladies and gentlemen, now is the time! Learn Mandarin. Speak. Succeed!

References:


https://www.accreditedlanguage.com/languages/the-10-most-common-languages/