

My name is Jonatan Ryd, I am one of the receiver's of the scholarship in memory of the Swedish School in Beijing. I have recently finished my Chinese studies in Hualien, Taiwan. The studies have been conducted at Tzu Chi Chinese Language Center, made possible through the scholarship. My time in Taiwan has been truly amazing, I've learnt more about the Taiwanese and Chinese culture, but mostly, I've learnt more about myself.

Every week there have been four classes focusing on grammar, writing, speaking and reading while one class has been focused solely on speaking. This has made me feel very comfortable using Chinese in my everyday life and I can make myself understood in almost every situation. Additionally, my international friends and I only spoke Chinese with each other, making us practise daily and adding on the feeling being confident using the language.

Arriving in Taiwan was my second longer stay in a Chinese-speaking country. The first time was 2010-2011 when I was an exchange student in Shenzhen, China. During the fall, I slowly noticed how much of the things I had forgotten, started coming back to me, even words and grammar I hadn't yet studied in Taiwan. This was a very satisfying feeling, which also gave motivation to study even more.

At the end of my time in Taiwan, I did the TOCFL Test of Chinese as Foreign Language, much like the HSK-test. I passed level 3, which requires the knowledge of 2500 words. I believe that this level is sufficient to pass everyday life in a Chinese-speaking environment only communicating with Mandarin. In the future I intend to pass higher levels.

The scholarship has been the major reason why I've been able to stay in Taiwan for such a long period. I am very grateful for the opportunity provided to me. In the future I intend to deepen my exposure to the Chinese language and culture so I can use it not only in my professional career, but also to travel and visit more places where the local language will be a great tool in understanding the rich history and the people's way of thinking.

I believe that China, in the future, will hold many of the scientific, economic and cultural centres. Therefore it will be of great importance knowing this beautiful language and a great tool in strengthening the relationship between the East and the West.