

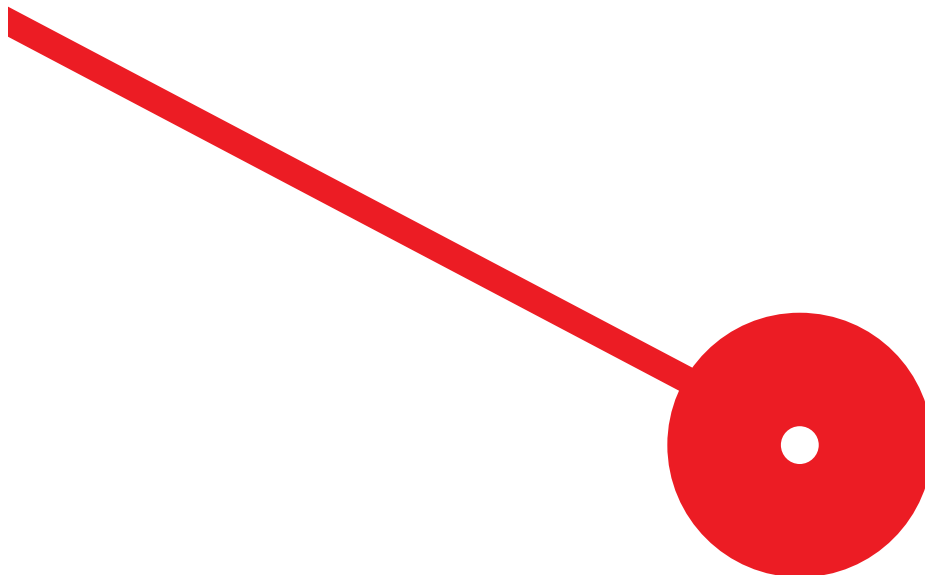


Internship at Little Panda Education

Débora Cristina Freitas Da Silva

Final Version (this version contains the jury's input and suggestions).

10/2023

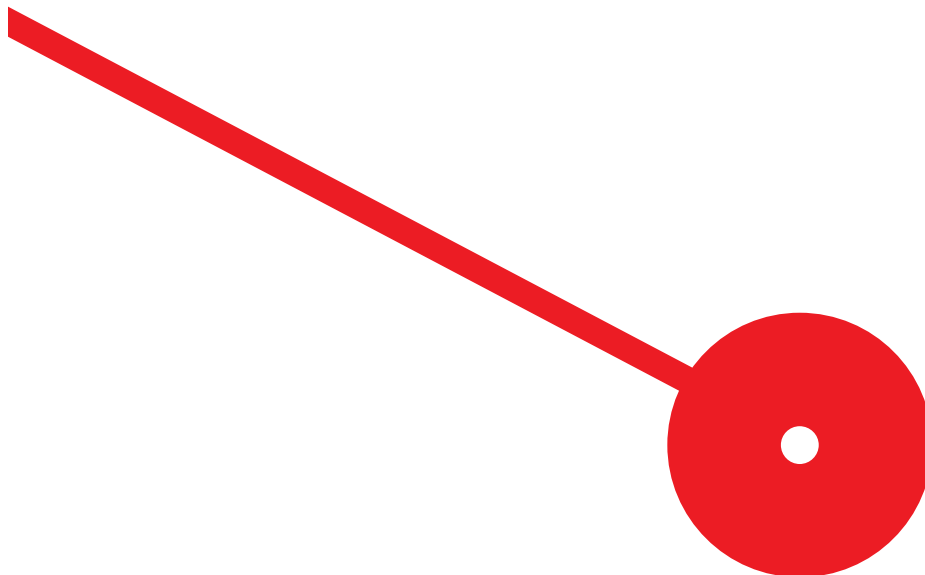




Internship at Little Panda Education

Débora Cristina Freitas Da Silva

Internship Report presented to Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto to obtain the master's degree in Intercultural Studies for Business, under the supervision of Professor Sandra Ribeiro.



Dedication

To my mother, who may not be physically present but continues to inspire me every day.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I am grateful to teacher Sisi Yin for her kindness, invaluable guidance, and support throughout my internship. I also want to express my gratitude to my little students, whom I will miss dearly, for their enthusiasm and willingness to learn. Their curiosity and dedication have truly inspired me and made my internship experience even more fulfilling.

I would also like to thank my advisor, Professor Sandra Ribeiro, who has been instrumental in shaping my report and providing valuable insights. I am grateful for her encouragement and constant support throughout this journey.

Thank you to all my friends, Susana, Filipe, Madalena, Eva, Ana, Pedro, Clau, and Nina, who were always there to provide a listening ear and offer words of encouragement. Their unwavering support and positivity helped me stay motivated during these challenging times. I am truly fortunate to have such amazing friends who have become my pillars of strength throughout this internship.

To my family, particularly my uncles, Paulo and Manuel, grandma, father, and brother. I am incredibly grateful for their constant love and encouragement. Their belief in me and their words of wisdom have been instrumental in shaping my journey. I am truly blessed to have them in my life.

Abstract:

The present internship report was written within the scope of the curricular internship carried out for the conclusion of the master's degree in Intercultural Studies for Business, at the Porto Accounting and Business School, which belongs to the Polytechnic Institute of Porto. Little Panda Education, a Mandarin private school in Luxembourg City, served as the internship site.

Little Panda Education has developed its own interdisciplinary Mandarin curriculum taught by Sisi Yin, the institution's founder teacher; Dr. Gudrun Ziegler, the program's pedagogical advisor; and Professor Chaochao, a Mandarin teacher. The school prioritizes small classes, fostering language immersion to build a strong foundation in Mandarin and Chinese culture.

The decision of applying in an international internship was influenced by my prior experience in learning Mandarin during my academic studies. Having studied Mandarin as part of my bachelor's degree, my exposure to this language inspired me to pursue a master's degree in Intercultural Studies for Business.

My responsibilities as a teacher assistant at Little Panda Education included a variety of tasks, such as designing class materials, managing social media accounts, handling files on Synology Drive, and—most significantly—creating a complex activity book for academic use and online publishing.

Furthermore, considering that Luxembourg has others Mandarin schools, the reasons why parents choose "Little Panda Education" over other possibilities are analysed as well.

Key words: International internship; Little Panda Education; Chinese Culture; Mandarin; Activity book

Resumo:

O presente relatório de estágio foi redigido no âmbito do estágio curricular realizado para a conclusão do mestrado em Estudos Interculturais para Negócios, pelo Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto do Instituto Politécnico do Porto. A "Little Panda Education", uma escola privada de mandarim na cidade do Luxemburgo, serviu como local de estágio.

"Little Panda Education" desenvolveu o seu próprio currículo interdisciplinar de mandarim, lecionado por Sisi Yin, a professora fundadora da instituição; Dr. Gudrun Ziegler, a conselheira pedagógica do programa; e Professor Chaochao, professor de mandarim. A escola prioriza turmas reduzidas, promovendo a imersão linguística e cultural para construir uma base sólida em mandarim e cultura chinesa.

A decisão de realizar um estágio internacional na Little Panda Education foi influenciada pelo fato de ter estudado mandarim como parte do meu curso de licenciatura. Minha exposição a esta língua inspirou-me a prosseguir um mestrado em Estudos Interculturais para Negócios.

Como assistente de professor na "Little Panda Education" as minhas responsabilidades incluíram diversas tarefas, como a conceção de materiais de aula, a gestão de contas de redes sociais, a organização de ficheiros no Synology Drive e, o mais relevante, a criação de um livro de atividades para uso académico e publicação online.

Para além disso, uma vez que existem várias escolas de mandarim no Luxemburgo, exploram-se ainda os motivos que levam os pais a escolherem a "Little Panda Education" em vez de outras escolas.

Palavras-chave: Estágio internacional, "Little Panda Education"; Cultura Chinesa; Mandarim; Livro de atividades

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List of abbreviations

LPE – Little Panda Education

The present report is the final product of the curricular internship developed within the scope of the master's degree in Intercultural Studies for Business at the Porto Accounting and Business School (ISCAP), which belongs to the Polytechnic Institute of Porto. The internship had a duration of approximately 780 hours, starting on February 6th and finishing on July 6th, 2023, with a weekly workload of 35 hours with Saturday evening and Sunday off.

The internship was at Little Panda Education, situated in Luxembourg City. Little Panda Education is a private school that promoting linguistic and cultural immersion to build a solid foundation in Mandarin and Chinese culture.

The classes are divided into three terms per year. First term is from January until April, then from April until July, and finally from September until December. There were 23 children in my group, ages 2 to 9, for the April–July 2023 term.

This report is organized into three main chapters, each of which is subsequently divided into a variety of topics and subtopics. Each chapter offers a thorough overview of the topic, offering pertinent information and supporting arguments. Each chapter's topics and subtopics provide an in-depth examination of particular areas, ensuring a complete comprehension of the subject.

An overview of the internship program and its goals is given in the first chapter's section on internships. The first part consists of an explanation of both the advantages of an internship and the obligations of interns, providing a comprehensive understanding of the program's objectives. Additionally, the section delves into the specific skills and knowledge that interns can expect to gain during their time in the program, highlighting the practical benefits of participating in an internship. Furthermore, it outlines the expectations and responsibilities that interns must adhere to, emphasizing the importance of professionalism and commitment throughout their internship experience.

This topic also provided an overview of the school's location, classrooms, number of children, and all of the courses that Little Panda Education offers, highlighting classes like *Baby Panda* and *Creative Panda* and its importance in providing a well-rounded education to its students. The internship allowed me to observe first-hand how these classes were implemented and how they contributed to the overall development of the students. One of the main questions that emerged at the beginning of the internship was what factors led parents to choose Little Panda

Education over other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg? The research methodology is covered in detail in the second chapter of the report. It offers an in-depth explanation of the interviews conducted in order to gather and analyze the data. Interviews were conducted with Sisi Yin, the school's founder and teacher, as well as the parents of the four pupils that are enrolled in each Little Panda Education Mandarin class.

These interviews served the purpose of analysing the information gathered in order to provide an answer to the main inquiry. Through this analysis, it is aimed at uncovering the distinctive attributes of Little Panda Education that differentiate it from other Mandarin schools in the region.

The different responsibilities executed during the internship, such as working as a teaching assistant, developing course materials for the *Baby*, *Creative*, and *Singing Panda* courses, and making sure they are ready for every class, are also covered in this report. The internship involved working as a teaching assistant as well as observing and supporting the principal instructors in the classroom. Other tasks included organizing the files onto the Little Panda Education Synology Drive, both the new ones and the ones that previously existed.

CHAPTER I – THE INTERNSHIP

1 Internship

An internship is an opportunity to integrate career related experience into an undergraduate education by participating in planned, supervised work.

(Goplani, Gupta & Sabhani, 2020, p. 92)

An internship is a brief period where it is possible to obtain job experience provided by an institution (Goplani, Gupta and Sabhani 2020). Internships are popular among students and recent graduates who want to gain practical knowledge and experience in a particular industry. Owners of businesses may benefit from these placements because they frequently hire staff members from among their best interns, who showed off their abilities, saving time and money in the recruitment process.

For the interns, internships offer a range of benefits, including the opportunity to work in a professional or career-related environment, provide career awareness, assess, and try a career field. These are valuable experiences that can then aid future professionals find future employment, establish contacts in the business-related area, and increase their self-assurance as they become aware of their abilities and skills and more confident in their performance. (Goplani, Gupta, & Sabhani, 2020).

1.1 Why Little Panda Education?

The decision of applying in an international internship was influenced by my prior experience in learning Mandarin during my academic studies. Having studied Mandarin as part of my bachelor's degree, my exposure to this language in both Beijing and Macau inspired me to pursue a master's degree in Intercultural Studies for Business.

The internship at LPE in Luxembourg was driven by my experience of studying and living in a foreign country with a culture that greatly differed from Portugal. Opting for an internship in Portugal would have been a dissimilar experience due to the scarcity of Mandarin institutions.

Having decided on embracing an international internship, it was crucial to identify an institution that offered the potential to provide valuable learning experiences and the opportunity to showcase the knowledge I had acquired during my academic studies.

Consequently, following a thorough research process, I came across the official website of LPE. Upon examining the website and gaining insights into the school's location in Luxembourg City, its values, and significance, I decided to reach out to the principal teacher, Sisi Yin. After undergoing an interview and a practical test, I was granted the opportunity to join their internship program.

I made the choice to pursue a curricular internship at LPE because I was eager to put the knowledge and abilities, I had learned in my academic career to use.

LPE is a private school that teaches Mandarin to kids between the ages 2 and 9. The school is set up with 3 different classes for students with varying levels of linguistic proficiency. For example, the *Baby Panda* class is intended for beginners and accommodating children with no prior exposure to Mandarin. Whether the child is 2 or 6 years old, the key objective is to introduce Mandarin. *Creative Panda* represents an intermediate level, with students who can already be able to recognize Chinese characters and put simple words together. The *Singing Panda* class is the advanced level, where students possess a comprehensive vocabulary, proficiency in reading, and writing skills.

As a teacher assistant, it was my responsibility to create the lesson plans for the classes. This provided an excellent chance to further develop my Mandarin proficiency, which, as previously mentioned, I had been studying for four years prior to my master's degree and continued to study throughout the master's course "Language and Culture" - Chinese (Mandarin). Beyond language practice, the internship also provided an opportunity to delve into the Chinese culture. By participating in and preparing the classes, I gained insights into the cultural aspects, including festivals and the origins of characters, while immersing myself in the teaching and learning process.

The chance for personal development was another important aspect that affected my choice to intern at Little Panda Education. I was able to develop my interpersonal and problem-solving skills significantly by working in a multicultural environment, taking on a variety of challenges, and caring for the needs of young students.

Moreover, I was drawn to Little Panda Education's multicultural focus because it gave me the chance to engage with students from various backgrounds and learn about their cultures. Through this cross-cultural exposure, I was able to help the students develop a global mindset while also deepening my own understanding.

Furthermore, I was very interested in the possibility of working closely with experienced teachers, such as Principal teacher Sisi Yin. I was aware that having such devoted professionals as mentors would undoubtedly help me advance both personally and professionally.

With the school's focus on hands-on learning and practical application of knowledge, it was possible to have a positive impact on the students' language development and overall educational journey thanks to LPE's approach, which encouraged students' language development and overall educational journey.

The prospect of making an impactful contribution was deeply gratifying. Knowing that my role as a teacher assistant directly influenced the students' language development and cultural understanding was immensely motivating. Being able to play a part in their language journey and witnessing their progress brought a sense of fulfilment and purpose to my internship.

1.2 Characterization of the International Internship

1.2.1 Little Panda Education, the Host Institution

LPE formerly known as Little Panda Mandarin Club organized the first Chinese language and culture workshops for children in 2018. The school started with a Club, but after the first language and culture workshop people's interest grew significantly.

Since then, the private school has developed its own interdisciplinary Mandarin curriculum and assembled a staff of qualified instructors (see organizational chart).

As previously mentioned, LPE offers classes based on the language proficiency levels of the students. They are extracurricular and scheduled for Saturday mornings, starting at 9:00 AM and ending at 12:00 PM. With a maximum of 10 students, each class is purposefully kept small to enable personalized attention and involvement. In addition, each class is set at 1 hour to maintain an effective and focused learning environment (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.).

The LPE class schedule aligns with the academic calendar of Luxembourgish public schools. This alignment makes sure that LPE keeps to the same timetable throughout the holiday seasons from the public school, thereby avoiding class sessions during those breaks. The reason behind this scheduling approach results from a common tendency among parents to arrange trips and vacations during the school holidays. By adhering to the public-school schedule, LPE aims to prevent scheduling conflicts and maintain higher attendance rates.

Even though it is an extra-curricular activity, it is recognized by the Ministry of Education in Luxembourg, and we specialize in teaching Mandarin Chinese as a foreign language for children.

The classes are held on the grounds of Lycée | International School Michel Lucius, secondary school, in Luxembourg City where Sisi Yin, the school's principal teacher, has been granted official permission to use the library area.

This allocated area includes a classroom that is fully equipped with desks, chairs, a traditional blackboard, and a teacher's desk. Additionally, the classroom is complemented by an adjacent open space that is furnished with tables, chairs, and lots of educational books. This extra area is effectively used by LPE to support the *Creative Panda* class. Notably, the room's size makes it perfect for artistic undertakings, enabling children to partake in creative activities. This area also serves as a thoughtful waiting place for parents, creating a setting while their children's class are in session. The teachers at LPE believe that language learning goes far beyond rote memorization, so the goal is to create Mandarin classes that are as engaging and enjoyable as possible for the students (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.).

During the most recent term (from April to July 2023), there were 23 children enrolled at LPE overall, with 6 in *Baby Panda*, 8 in *Creative Panda*, and 9 in *Singing Panda*. This does not imply that the number of students in each class remains the same, as the number of students will vary (more or less) with each new term based on the number of students who register. It's crucial to note that most students who regularly attend classes are quick to enrol in the school so they can continue their education (Ibid).

Additionally, it's relevant to mention that LPE also offers private classes at the residences of students (some are registered in the classes, and some are not), but the teacher in charge of that service is Sisi Yin (the school's principal teacher).

As it is in an International School with an international English curriculum, the teachers communicate in English with the parents who don't have any knowledge of Mandarin and speak in Mandarin with the parents who do know how to speak Mandarin. This approach ensures effective communication and understanding between teachers and parents, regardless of their language proficiency. By accommodating the language needs of each parent, LPE fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment for all families involved.

Prior to working as an intern at LPE, I was perplexed as to why Luxembourg, a country with a predominance of French and German speakers, needed a Mandarin school. I also wanted to know what made LPE distinct compared to other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg City. The significance of Mandarin in this city only became clear to me after I relocated to Luxembourg for the internship. This is addressed further in chapter III.

1.2.2 Teaching Methods

At LPE, they embrace the language immersion approach and the “learn through activities” method as guiding principles for all their teaching activities. All classes are

fully taught in Mandarin; however, the teachers can help with English, German, French, or Luxembourgish when needed, as outlined on their official website¹.

According to Maija Kozlova (2021), language immersion is the most efficient and rapid way to learn a new language, regardless of her students' abilities. She made it clear to her students that nothing—not even a textbook with excellent pedagogy—nor even a grammar drill—could make learning a new language as effective as actually immersing oneself in it. Kozlova emphasized that immersing oneself in the linguistic environment was the key to developing language proficiency. The author also argues that immersive language learning is beneficial for students of all ages, but it has particularly powerful effects on young learners.

In second language acquisition research, Eric Lenneberg's *critical period hypothesis* (CPH) asserts that when learning a language in an environment that is linguistically rich and immersive, all humans have a window of time (typically when they are young) during which they can achieve full native competence (Siahaan , 2022, pp. 28-34)

Fortune (n.d.) shares Kozlova's perspective. The author elaborates on the positive outcomes associated with language immersion education spanning almost five decades. The benefits addressed encompass achievements in academics, language proficiency, and literacy across multiple languages, as well as the enhancement of cognitive abilities.

Language and cultural immersion have been studied at length from different research areas, with divergent results, depending on the factors studied. This research while relevant, falls outside the scope of this internship report. Nonetheless, recent studies corroborate the benefits of early immersion programs (Trebits et al. 2022; Rahmani et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2022), which are the principles on which LPE is based.

As mentioned, in their language immersion approach LPE also uses activity-based learning strategies. This method does not rely solely on worksheets and textbooks. For young students, ages 1 to 9, the classes incorporate an essential "fun" component to improve the student's language learning experience. The classes are purposefully created to foster students' creativity while facilitating Mandarin language

¹ Available at: <http://www.littlepandachinese.lu>

learning, considering the stage of development that these children are in. This is accomplished by involving students in activities like arts and crafts, painting, music, and singing. These activities foster an environment where learning Mandarin can occur naturally, free from any sense of pressure.

Hilentzaris (2022) explains that different students learn in different ways, and requiring everyone to adopt a single style of learning could limit two-thirds or more of any given class. According to Makki, specific learning styles have definite advantages over others depending on the subject(s) being studied.

Early childhood learning can help children grow physically and spiritually by allowing them to play while they study, which makes them feel happier and less pressured. Positive effects on the child will result from feeling content and pleased (Indrawati, 2019). According to Manja et al. (2022), the early experiences that children undergo have a significant impact on their future development. Based on the experiences of the activities that children go through during the early education period, teachers play a significant role for children.

In school-age children in the early grades, visual learning techniques emerge as a prevalent method. This involves the use of visual aids such as picture books, flashcards, and subsequently, textbooks. Adding further depth to this, Makki's research highlights the effectiveness of "hands-on" learning, a method which seamlessly merges elements of visual and auditory learning, requiring students to actively participate (Hilentzaris, 2022). Often referred to as "hands-on" learning, this technique finds notable application in the pedagogical practices of LPE.

Goodwin University (2018) refers to Cindy Middendorf's extensive studies on "hands-on" learning, corroborated by Hilentzaris (2022). The article acknowledges the benefits of this approach and emphasizes its capacity to promote holistic brain development. Notably, experiential learning fosters development in both cerebral hemispheres. Indeed, according to Middendorf between the "ages of four and seven, a child's right side of the brain is developing, and the learning derives clearly through visual and spatial activities. The right side of the brain, which involves more analytical and language skills, is said to develop later in childhood, around 10 years old" (Goodwin University, 2018, para. 3).

When a child participates in activities that require multitasking and include components like conversation, listening, and physical movement within the context of hands-on learning, the results are especially advantageous. Such multifaceted interactions cause the stimulation and growth of various brain regions, ultimately resulting in a more thorough trajectory for cognitive development (Goodwin University, 2022).

Furthermore, acquiring a new language fosters cross-cultural understanding. This occurs as language instruction inherently incorporates cultural teachings; for instance, in programs like LPE. Through Chinese instructors, not only is the language imparted but also the accompanying cultural nuances. From their speech patterns and greetings to their expressions and mannerisms, a glimpse into their cultural heritage is unveiled. Even subtleties like gestures, body language, and the spatial dynamics during conversations offer profound insights into a culture. To truly grasp a culture, it's crucial to comprehend how these diverse customs interconnect and their significance within the society (Byram et al., 2002).

Learning a new language isn't just about learning words or vocabulary, it involves comprehending the cultural intricacies of thought and behaviour within that linguistic context. Under the tutelage of instructors, learners can critically assess stereotypes associated with various cultural aspects, such as communication patterns in the Chinese culture, as well as its culinary traditions and appearances (Höferle, 2021).

1.2.3 Organizational Chart

In order to discuss any institution comprehensively, it's crucial to understand the individuals who form its core. As a result, I thought it was relevant to give a brief introduction to the individuals operating the LPE.

Sisi Yin (Figure 1), the institution's principal teacher, Dr. Gudrun Ziegler, the program's pedagogical advisor, and Professor Chaochao, a Mandarin Chinese teacher makes up the LPE personnel (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.).



Figure 1 - Sisi Yin (Principal Teacher and Founder)

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

Yin's bio note available in LPE official webpage² states that before graduating with an M.A. in multilingual education, Yin worked in the art and culture industry for 10 years with her educational background from the top art academy in China. Her educational and professional backgrounds have helped her to appreciate the value of creativity in the learning process. She has committed herself to providing engaging and entertaining Mandarin language and culture activities in Luxembourg since 2018, specifically for children. She is a certificated and experienced Mandarin teacher offering Mandarin class at various local educational institutions.



Figure 2 - Dr. Gudrun Ziegler (Pedagogical Advisor)

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

² Available at: <http://www.littlepandachinese.lu>

Dr. Gudrun Ziegler (Figure 2), a specialist in multilingualism and language instruction who also founded the Luxembourg multi-LEARN Institute, serves as LPE's educational advisor, and plays a crucial role in shaping the curriculum to ensure it aligns with the latest research and best practices in language acquisition.



*Figure 3 - Professor Chaochao
(Mandarin Chinese teacher)*

*Retrieved from: Little Panda
Chinese School Official Website*

Finally, LPE states that Professor Chaochao (Figure 3) joined LPE in 2022 and has four years of experience as a Mandarin instructor from China. He enjoys fusing his teaching of Mandarin with his hobbies of handicrafts, sports, and music.

1.2.4 Types of classes

LPE is dedicated to teaching children mandarin. When this private school first started in the year 2018, it offered two different types of classes. First, there was *Mandarin Funfunfun*, which was a Mandarin class level beginner, for children who never learned Mandarin before joining LPE. The second was called *Mandarin Sprout*, which was considered a level advanced, this was for children who already had knowledge of Mandarin. In this class, basic Chinese characters, pronunciation, order of

the strokes and *pinyin*³ was taught. Every class was led by a theme story which offered the children the opportunity to apply the language in their daily life (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.).

After joining LPE as an intern, the term started on April 22nd and ended on July 1st, 2023. For this term, the institution's principal teacher implemented three new classes for this new term. Those classes are named *Baby Panda* (figure 4), *Creative Panda*, and *Singing Panda*.



Figure 4 - Baby Panda Logo

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

Baby Panda class is considered to be a beginner's level, for children ages 2-5 (figure 5). It consists in a ten-lesson plan course, which introduces children to Mandarin through “hands on” activities. This class is taught by teacher Chaochao and in each lesson the teacher introduces a new theme, such as, numbers, colours, transportation, family members, five senses, vegetables, fruits, animals, weather, and clothes.



Figure 5- Sinolingua Reading Tree Book Series

Retrieved from: [Sinolingua Reading Tree - Starter Level Set | World of Reading, Ltd.](#)

³ *Pinyin* serves as China's official method for transcribing Mandarin Chinese into the Roman alphabet.

The variety of themes covered in each lesson, spanning from numbers and colours to family dynamics and daily life elements, stands out as a significant strength of this class. This approach lays the groundwork by introducing fundamental vocabulary crucial for language learning, fulfilling the developmental needs of young learners.

The suggested shift to a narrative-focused curriculum using the Sinolingua Reading Tree Book series indicates a progression in teaching approaches. Yet, the extent of involvement and flexibility of these stories across varying age brackets within the 2-5 range necessitates closer examination.

In the upcoming term, starting on September 16th and ending on December 2nd, 2023, I'll be actively involved, and there will be notable distinctions in the *Baby Panda* class compared to the preceding term (April 22nd - July 1st, 2023). Sisi and I have jointly decided that the forthcoming classes will be story based, centred around the Sinolingua Reading Tree Book series, as depicted in figure 5 (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.). The curriculum will initiate with the introductory level of the book, progressing systematically. Additionally, each class will incorporate flashcards containing qr codes that I'll personally create, the parents and students will be able to scan them to learn the pronunciation of each Chinese character learned in class and its meaning in English. Besides that, the classes will continue with the teaching method of “hands-on” activities to increase the child's learning experience.

Creative Panda class is considered intermediary level, designed for children aged 4-6 (figure 6) and its main objective is for the students to develop their Mandarin language listening skills while learning about Chinese culture and art history.



Figure 6 - Creative Panda Logo

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

There are two goals that LPE is trying to achieve with this new class. The first goal is to immerse students in Mandarin conversations and be able to understand what is being said to finish the craft activity.

The second goal of the *Creative Panda* class is to learn Chinese characters and radicals' step by step, in relation to the selected material. It is relevant to mention that in

each class the students will learn the pronunciation, the meaning, the order of the strokes of at least one Chinese character per class (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.).



Figure 7 - Creative Panda Class: Creative Art & Craft Kit

Retrieved from:

<https://www.taobao.com/list/item/659586082868.htm>



Figure 8 - Figure 8 - Creative Panda Class: Creative Art & Craft Kit

Retrieved from:

<https://www.taobao.com/list/item/659586082868.htm>

This class is different from *Baby Panda* class because it is not story based, meaning that no books are used for the lessons. The teacher, Sisi Yin, selected two art creative boxes (figures 7 and 8) and had them shipped to Luxembourg city from China. These boxes contain all the material for this class, including colouring pens, scissors, paint, and others. It is based on Chinese art, and it is culture related.

Using art kits imported from China to support Mandarin education represents an innovative and captivating approach. Integrating creativity into language acquisition not only boosts the learning of new words but also encourages artistic exploration, nurturing

Besides that, the focus on mastering key vocabulary alongside the exploration of Chinese culture using these art kits is noteworthy. It provides youngsters not just with a foundation in language essentials but also grants them a deeper understanding of the

cultural facets of China, fostering a well-rounded and comprehensive learning atmosphere.



Figure 9 - Singing Panda Logo

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

The *Singing Panda* class (figure 9) is considered to be the advanced level, and it was designed specifically to meet the needs of young students (ages 6-10) who have already studied Mandarin at LPE. This course is designed for learners who already have an adequate knowledge of Mandarin and aims to increase their comfort speaking and singing in the language. Students will be exposed to new language and sentence structures as they develop their singing, expanding their linguistic repertoire (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.).

Each *Singing Panda* class accommodates a maximum of fifteen students. The main source of material for this course is Beijing Language University's published book "Sing your way to Chinese" level 1 (figure 10), which serves as the foundation of the curriculum.

Notably, the cover of this book depicts two children playing Western instruments, perhaps indicating a Chinese strategy to appeal to Western audiences. When analysing this cover, It prompts reflection on the true level of Chinese children's understanding of the Western musical instruments seen in figure 10.

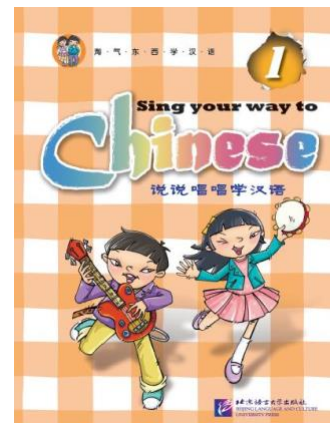


Figure 10 - Sing Your Way to Chinese (Level 1)

Retrieved from: [Sing Your Way to Chinese 1 \(blcup.com\)](http://SingYourWaytoChinese1.blcup.com)

Montefiore (2022) delineates a significant transformation in China's perception of Western classical musical instruments, particularly the piano. Once regarded as symbols of the bourgeoisie and subject to destruction due to suspicion toward Western

culture, a notable shift has occurred. Currently, an estimated 40 million children are engaged in learning the piano, highlighting a profound cultural change.

This book selection was made by teacher Sisi Yin due to its comprehensive presentation of grammar concepts, engaging songs, and interactive activities, as indicated in LPE website.

Additionally, character writing and reading skills are given special attention in this class. Students can explore the pronunciation and meanings of the Chinese characters they are studying with the help of useful worksheets that each have QR codes, fostering a multifaceted and immersive learning experience.

1.2.5 Workshops & Camps

LPE also hosts a variety of workshops and camps for children. These events started in the year 2018 and have been ongoing (figures 11-17). The workshops that the private school organizes are primarily carried out through partnerships with other institutions, according to personal communication with the school's founder (YIN, 2023, personal communication, 20).

These collaborations frequently entail holding events in conjunction with organizations like Sunflower Creche, where profits are shared. In some cases, freelance teachers with specialized knowledge, such as a Mandarin teacher skilled in cooking noodles (figure 11), are brought in for specific workshops.

In 2018, a tea tasting workshop (figure 12) was organized to introduce children to the traditional art of preparing Chinese tea. Through the experience of tasting tea, the aim was to allow children to learn more about this Chinese



NOV 24 Workshop: Handmade Chinese noodle with Little Panda | 跟小熊猫一起来抻面条吧!

Figure 11 - Little Panda Workshop: Handmade Chinese Noodle

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website



SEP 20 Workshop: Tea Tasting with Little Panda | Figure 12 - Little Panda Workshop: Tea Tasting

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

tradition. A variety of other workshops were also provided, such as sessions on making handmade noodles (figure 12), (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.).

As stated previously, the primary purpose of these workshops was to give children a chance for hands-on exploration and education about various facets of Chinese culture. These workshops offered children a chance to not just master cooking techniques for these special dishes but also to grasp the profound cultural meanings attached to each recipe. Before each activity, Sisi Yin would present a brief introduction, detailing the themes, the guest teacher or partner leading the session, and provide an explanation about the traditions and significance of the dishes in Chinese culture. This approach allowed the children to understand first the centuries-old traditions, festivals, and deeper values that these recipes embody within Chinese heritage (Ibid).



Figure 13 - Little Panda Workshop: Little Panda at Sunflower Montessori Creche

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website



Figure 14 - Little Panda Workshop: Chinese New Year Family Fest

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

LPE's workshops highlight the organization's diverse services. One of these workshops in 2019 involved a collaboration between LPE and Sunflower Montessori Creche (figure 13), which produced a learning opportunity that benefited from both parties' contributions. The Chinese New Year Family Feast was a workshop designed to bring people together while celebrating the Lunar New Year with activities such as making dumplings, paper cutting, and cooking (figure 14).

On the 16th of February 2020, an engaging and interactive workshop took place, offering children a first-hand experience in the art of Chinese paper cutting (figure 15). The workshop focused on the use of paper cutting as a traditional art form in China and how it can be used to create unique decorations for the home or gifts for family and friends. Additionally, the children were taught how to create paper cuts of various Chinese symbols, such as dragons and phoenixes, which hold traditional significance in Chinese culture (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.).



FEB 16 Kid Workshop - Chinese Paper cutting with "Little Panda"
Public · Hosted by Little Panda Mandarin Club Luxembourg

Figure 15 - Little Panda Workshop: Chinese Paper Cutting

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

Paper cutting is considered a beloved art in all over China. Mostly passed down from mothers to daughters, especially in rural areas, and requires skills, since artists use various methods, like cutting or engraving paper with designs, adding a lot of colours. Besides that, these paper creations serve the purpose of decorating homes or for celebrations or rituals. This form of art is considered to be very important in Chinese life and traditions because it shows their values and ideas (UNESCO - Chinese Paper-cut, n.d.).

Mid-Autumn Festival (figure 16) was the theme for another workshop in which the children were taught about the history of the festival and its importance to Chinese people. The children also



Figure 16 - Little Panda Workshop: Mid-Autumn Festival Celebration

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

learned how to create their own unique lanterns, which they could use to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival in a traditional way (Ibid).

In the year 2022, LPE introduced a new dimension to its offerings by launching immersive camps. These camps extended the boundaries of Mandarin language education for children by encompassing a more substantial timeframe compared to the workshops.

Camps are typically longer programs that span multiple days or weeks, like summer or winter camps. They frequently provide a broad variety of experiences and activities in addition to academic instruction, as is the case of LPE. This first camp was

called *Mandarin Summer Camp* (figure 17), which had the duration of seven days and was described as a fun, cultural, and creative immersion language camp.



Figure 17 - Little Panda Camp: Mandarin Summer Camp

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

Compared to camps, workshops and classes are typically shorter in length, concentrate on specific skills or subjects, and offer a more focused and intensive learning environment. They are more regimented and curriculum-driven, whereas camps take a more all-encompassing approach by including leisure pursuits, team-building activities, and chances for personal development.

Throughout my internship, I was assigned to work on a several marketing-related tasks. Managing all of LPE's social media platforms was one of these, as detailed in Chapter II. Furthermore, as mentioned in point 1.2.6, I was responsible for overseeing the interface between LPE and the social media domain.

1.2.6 Advertising

LPE is a business that needs to attract customers to propel the business forward. Companies use a variety of social media sites, including Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter,

and others, for social media marketing. The platform selection is influenced by marketing strategy and target audiences. Having a robust internet presence makes it simple for potential customers to find and research the company. Offering specials or discounts to new consumers is another tactic to entice them to try the services and possibly become recurring clients (Rahman, et al., 2021).

Facebook and Instagram are the main social media channels that LPE employs to advertise the company. The activities that the children engage in during the lessons are displayed to viewers through these platforms, which helps stimulate the curiosity of potential customers and acts as a reminder to current customers of the deadlines for class subscriptions, camps, and workshops. With a different approach from its Facebook and Instagram platforms, LPE additionally operates a YouTube channel. Videos on the channel show the learners reading Chinese children's books that are used in the lessons. This enables parents to share the stories again at home.

Social media platforms have been essentially used by LPE to highlight the entertaining and engaging sessions that students may take part in. The videos and pictures posted on these sites serve as evidence of the children's attentiveness and educational approach, and LPE always makes sure to protect the children's privacy.

Interestingly, according to LPE, the posts that it makes on social media aren't always promotional; they can also function as instructional postings to provide the parents of the students with crucial and pertinent details about the topics that are covered in class. These platforms also make it simple for educators, students, and parents to communicate with one another, encouraging a sense of community and cooperation in the classroom.

Teachers can help students outside of the classroom with additional materials and assistance through social media (Little Panda Chinese School, n.d.).

Using logos to identify a company is another common advertising tactic, in addition to social media. Stafford, Tripp, and Bienstock (2004) assert that a logo's capacity to visually convey an organization's identity generally justifies the investment made in one. The authors claim that a well-designed logo helps a business establish an emotional connection with its audience, which fosters enduring customer loyalty.

Additionally, by using this marketing technique, businesses can stand out in a crowded market and continue to be remembered long after website visitors have left (Stafford, Tripp, & Bienstock, 2004).



Figure 18 - Little Panda Education Logo

Retrieved from: Little Panda Chinese School Official Website

LPE uses its logo (figure 18) to be quickly recognized by customers. The logo comprises a panda seated on a red plaque, with 'Little Panda Education' scripted below. Atop the panda's head lies a floral embellishment reflecting the colours of the Luxembourg flag—white, red, and blue.

A Mandarin school, like LPE, might have several reasons to choose the panda as its logo. Note that through the years the panda figure has been used as a logo for food chains, software programs, among others (Songster, 2018). This is because pandas are often associated with China, serving as a national symbol, and representing Chinese culture.

Additionally, Pandas are universally recognized and loved, making them an appealing choice for a school that caters to children learning Mandarin. Their playful and gentle nature might also symbolize the LPE's approach to education. Additionally, they embody traits such as friendliness, nurturing behaviour, and engaging characteristics, all of which harmonize with the values LPE aims to impart.

Business cards are another tool used to enhance LPE's business. As shown in figures 19 and 20, the business card includes contact information and the company's logo and serves as a professional representation of the company.



Figure 19 - Little Panda Education Business Card (front)

Retrieved from: Little Panda Education Official Website



Figure 20 - Little Panda Education Business Card (back)

Retrieved from: Little Panda Education Official Website

Business cards can be an effective networking tool and offer vital contact information in a convenient, portable format. Having a distinctive and eye-catching business card can also leave a lasting impression on potential clients or customers and establish connections and create credibility. In the case of LPE, the business card also includes the official company's colours, which make it distinctive and personalized.

Sharing business cards with people via computers or mobile devices has become incredibly quick and easy in the current digital era. Nonetheless, exchanging business cards in person has an unmatched simplicity and effectiveness when two individuals exchange business cards in person. This process only takes a few seconds and is very time-efficient, with 100% reliability (Milton, 2022).

The exchanging of business cards is well ingrained in Chinese customs and is considered a highly significant custom. Giving out a business card is a sign of honour

and respect, not just a simple requirement. The customary practice involves offering the card with both hands. Likewise, as the recipient, reciprocating this gesture by accepting the card with both hands communicates a profound understanding and gratitude for the giver's gesture (Samly, 2020).

However, the protocol for accepting a business card goes beyond that first interaction. It is not proper to put the card away quickly. Rather, a respectful gesture would be to read the card carefully and show that you are genuinely interested in what is written on it. This pause shows that you have carefully considered the information that has been provided. Following this careful analysis, it is advised to lay the card out in front of oneself on a table to better emphasise its significance. This gesture not only pays tribute to the giver but also acts as a visible reminder of the business relationship that was transferred (Ibid).

Given LPE's emphasis on promoting Chinese culture, the act of exchanging business cards holds significant importance for the school.

LPE also recognizes the importance of brochures in a business, so it is only natural that it also has a brochure that plays an important role in the advertising of the business.

This brochure (figure 21 & 22) provides potential clients with an overview of the program LPE offers students and highlights the strengths and vision that make LPE standout among competitors. It can be distributed physically or digitally and serves as a powerful tool for attracting new business.



Figure 21 - Little Panda Education Brochure (front)

Retrieved from: Little Panda Education Official Website



Figure 22 - Little Panda Education Brochure (back)

Retrieved from: Little Panda Education Official Website

Despite the growing popularity of online marketing initiatives, LPE still uses brochures as a means of communication with potential clients. Additionally, printed brochures may be easier to obtain and read than content found in emails or websites (Walsall, 2023).

In fact, LPE believes brochures provide a level of tangibility and credibility that digital marketing materials frequently lack. Additionally, brochures can be handed out whenever and are a more memorable and personal way to engage potential customers. They can also provide a lasting physical reminder of the products that the business offers.

CHAPTER II – MY ACTIVITIES

2 Description of the activities

My daily responsibilities as an intern included a variety of roles and tasks. In my role as a teaching assistant, my main responsibilities included preparing and printing educational materials for future classes, as well as providing support to the teachers and students during class. Together with my responsibilities as a teacher assistant, I also got to work with Sisi Yin, the principal teacher, to teaching materials and activities for the students.

Besides that, I also organized the Synology Drive, which had all of the data and materials from past classes and functioned as an archive for materials for upcoming classes.

In addition, I conducted research on a few Mandarin schools in order to learn more about their curriculum and teaching methods. Another task was social media management, which included posting content to different social media platforms and interacting with possible customers. I was given the task of creating an activity book called "Mandarin Funfunfun," which was intended to be incorporated in the LPE curriculum.

The introduction of the daily tasks that had to be performed over the five months as an intern at LPE began the first day of the internship. The principal instructor also provided a brief explanation of the organization's objective and vision, highlighting the value of collaboration and communication as well as the commitment to offering high-quality educational services.

2.1 Teacher Assistant

My main responsibility during the internship was to be a teacher assistant and help in any way possible the principal the teacher and students. One of the first tasks was to help teacher Sisi Yin prepare the lesson plans for *Funfunfun* and *Sprout* classes. We had to regularly discuss the books and themes that would be covered in the classes because, as previously mentioned, initially there were two different types of classes, *Funfunfun* and *Spout*, in which the students are divided by age groups.

Along with helping with lesson planning, I had to make the worksheets and handcrafts materials, also had to make sure that I had them for each class and arrange and store them all so that all the teachers could have access to the worksheets, supplies, and books they required.

Figure 23 is an example of a worksheet created for the *Funfunfun* class that is dedicated to teaching Mandarin level beginner. In this specific worksheet, the theme was based on a book (figure 24), called “太阳想吃冰淇淋” which means “The Sun Wants To Eat Ice Cream”. This book's primary goal for this specific class was to familiarize the children with feelings like hot and cold. It was designed to aid children with differentiating between the sensations of being hot and cold as well as what happens when something is excessively hot or cold.



Figure 23 - Funfunfun class worksheet

Description: A self-designed worksheet aimed at reinforcing vocabulary acquisition

Created using: canva.com



Figure 24 - Chinese Children Book "太阳想吃冰淇淋"

Retrieved from: [绘本故事【太阳想吃冰淇淋】_风婆婆 \(sohu.com\)](http://www.sohu.com)

When preparing this worksheet, one of the main goals was to make sure that the key vocabulary and information were well represented visually, to appeal to the children. For this particular class the children listened to the story that was read in Mandarin by teacher Sisi and then the task was to glue the correct character that corresponded to the images. This approach not only helps the children retain the information better but also encourages them to actively participate in the learning process.

As previously discussed in chapter I, incorporating activities and interactive games into the curriculum can also make learning more enjoyable for children, leading to increased engagement and motivation. Additionally, this approach can help children develop important social skills such as teamwork and communication.

An example of a worksheet created for the *Sprout* class, can be seen in figure 25. This worksheet is based on a book (figure 26) whose title, in English, is "About me". The books' theme is about introductions and meeting new friends. The main goal of the book is to teach the student how to introduce themselves in Mandarin, including how to say their name, age, and nationality.



Figure 25 - Sprout class worksheet

Description: A self-designed worksheet aimed at reinforcing vocabulary acquisition

Created using: canva.com

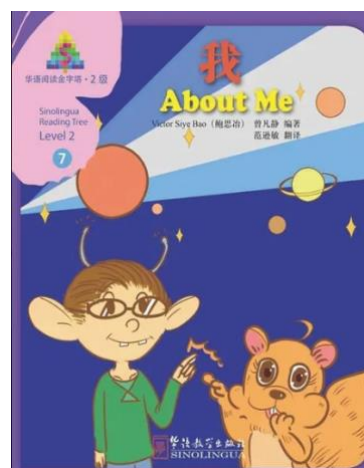


Figure 26 - Chinese Children Book "About me", (Sinolingua Reading Tree, Level 2, Book 7)

Retrieved from: (PDF) About me (Level 2), Chinese Sinolingua Reading Tree (cchatty.com)

This worksheet was design for the children to practice both the stroke sequence and the key Chinese characters connected to the story of the book.

These worksheets are considerably distinct from one another because they have very diverse functions, as shown by figures 25 and 26. The worksheet for *Funfunfun* class contains more visual representation and fewer characters and words. The assignment for *Sprout* class, on the other hand, is more concerned with writing the characters and understanding the sequencing of the strokes.

These worksheets were created taking the students' Mandarin proficiency levels into account. In addition, the principal instructor strengthened the learning experience by adding additional materials to the classes, such as videos and audio recordings. These multimedia resources were used in the classroom and correlated with the topics addressed in the books and worksheets. These audio and video data were safely kept on the Synology Drive, providing quick access for all LPE teachers, in order to guarantee the organization and accessibility for each class.

To provide quality services and materials, all the worksheets have the QR codes of the books, songs, or videos so that parents and students can prepare the lesson before hand or review the content after the classes. LPE's intended not only to enhance the learning experience but also promote independent learning and self-study skills among students. It was also intended to allow parents to actively participate in their child's education and monitor their progress.

During the classes, I aided the students, helping them with writing assignments or aiding them practice pronouncing new characters. This approach helped me identify the specific areas where each student needed more support and tailor my teaching methods accordingly.

As was previously mentioned, LPE introduced new classes to the curriculum. Since these classes weren't in place when I started my internship, I was included in the decision-making process. Initially, Sisi and I collaborated to conceptualize LPE's curriculum expansion, specifically focusing on three new classes and determining their names, along with creating the corresponding educational materials.

To determine the names for each new class, we engaged in an exchange of ideas and collective decision-making, leading to the selection of *Baby Panda*, *Creative Panda*, and *Singing Panda*. The introductory level, which covers basic subjects like colours, weather, transportation, numbers, family, and more, was named *Baby Panda* in order to cater to beginners. The class name *Creative Panda* was chosen to reflect the intermediate level's strong emphasis on creativity. For this class, art boxes were purchased from China; each box was meant for a student and included supplies like coloured pens and scissors for the activities. *Singing Panda* was designed for advanced students who could read and write a substantial number of characters in Mandarin

and had a solid grasp of the language. The "Sing Your Way to Chinese" book series, which covers levels 1 through 5, served as the basis for the class.

In addition to naming the classes and determining their content, It was concluded that *Creative Panda* and *Singing Panda* would benefit from the creation of worksheets. As a teacher assistant, I was tasked with the design and preparation of these new materials. With *Baby Panda*, worksheets weren't required because the kids weren't old enough to complete exercises.

Baby Panda class was lectured by teacher Chaochao, he designed each class for the previous term. Therefore, my only task was to assist him when he needed, for instance, to print, laminate and prepare the class materials. Since I didn't have to design the worksheet for this class, it allowed me to focus solely and efficiently on the other two classes.

The goal of the *Creative Panda* class was designed to help children to recognize Chinese characters and help them explore art, creativity, painting, and Chinese culture. In each class session, a Mandarin video was shown at the start, connecting to the day's activity. For instance, if the topic was about Chinese New Year and the task involved art related to it, the video would explain the Chinese New Year's significance and background (often through cartoons).

In addition to the videos, every class had a worksheet, and I had four to five days to design them, ensuring they were prepared a week or two ahead of time for every class. I designed all the worksheets for the entire term, and this process was a collaborative effort between me and Sisi. Through an extensive week we engaged in a continuous exchange of ideas regarding the design of these sheets.

Regardless of whether the worksheet was for *Singing Panda* or *Creative Panda*, we followed a methodical process. In the *Creative Panda* class, for example, we would choose one or two characters who directly related to the art box's content. In the event that the art box's theme was painting cats, the worksheet's character that the students would learn would be "猫", which means "cat" in Mandarin. Students were always given practice writing the character in one section of the worksheet, given another to learn about the character's radical (if applicable), and they were always provided with images and QR codes for pronunciation guidance.

After designing the worksheets, Sisi reviewed them and made any necessary adjustments to ensure they met the desired standards. This included double-checking the accuracy of the pinyin and confirming that the images corresponded correctly with the characters.

Once they were approved, I had to save them in two different places: one online, in the Synology Drive, in its correct folder. I also had the task of printing them and saving them in the appropriate physical folder for the class. By arranging the printed copies in the proper folder, the teacher could easily distribute the worksheets during class and keep track their usage. In addition, the worksheets would be readily available for use both online and offline.

I created the worksheets using a well-known platform called Canva, which enables users to design a wide range of content, including posters, Instagram posts, PowerPoint presentations, and more.



Figure 27 - Creative Panda Worksheet (Front)

Description: A self-designed worksheet aimed at reinforcing vocabulary acquisition

Created using: [canva.com](https://www.canva.com)



Figure 28 - Creative Panda Worksheet (Back)

Description: A self-designed worksheet aimed at reinforcing vocabulary acquisition

Created using: [canva.com](https://www.canva.com)

Figures 27 and 28 above, shows that the main focus of this worksheet is to be able to fully recognize the character and learn its meaning. Through the front page it's easy to understand that the character “点” (diǎn) means “dot”, and the back page is the activity section, with exercises to find the correct character. This worksheet also enables

students to colour inside the character to really be able to identify it. And just like the other worksheets, these ones also provide the QR codes so that the students can review the pronunciation at home.

For *Singing Panda* class, the approach was slightly different because this class had a book (figure 29) that the children purchased at the beginning of the term and used during the classes. The primary goal of the worksheet in figure 30 was for students to practice writing the characters while also learning the meaning of each character through the illustrations next to each one, which they could colour.

The Worksheets presented in figures 27 and 28 above serve as the initial step in the learning process. They are essential because writing Chinese characters requires first acquiring the ability to recognize them. The worksheets that follow, like the one in figure 30, are built upon this foundation. Figure 30 is intended to be utilized exclusively once students have achieved competence over the worksheets found in figures 27 and 28. Its primary purpose is to guide students in practicing the actual writing of these characters, building upon the character recognition skills developed in the earlier stages.

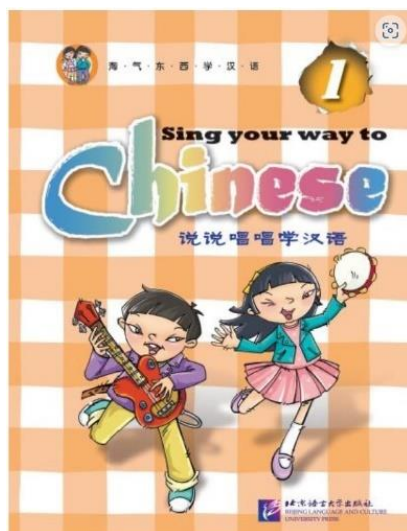


Figure 29 - Sing Your Way to Chinese 1

Retrieved from: [Sing Your Way to Chinese 1 \(blcup.com\)](http://blcup.com)

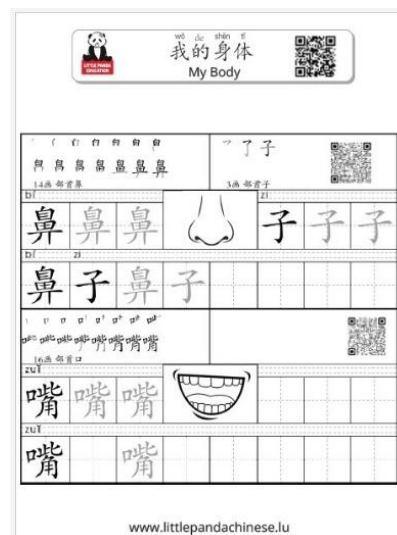


Figure 30 - Singing Panda Worksheet

Description: A self-designed worksheet aimed at reinforcing vocabulary acquisition

Created using: canva.com

2.2 Synology Drive

As previously stated, I was given on extra responsibilities in addition to my primary role as a teacher assistant during the internship. Among these tasks was to store all the class materials (including class plans, photos, worksheets, songs, videos, games, etc.) in Synology Drive, which was the system used at LPE. This Drive is a cloud storage platform that can manage files and folders, shared team folders, and other items in one central location (just like Google Drive).

In the initial phase of the internship, I had to look through the LPE Synology Drive files that contained all the materials and class plans of the institution. The very first task was to go through every file, get familiar with it, and organize it by theme and class. This process allowed me to gain a comprehensive understanding of the educational resources available and how they were structured.

Additionally, by organizing the files by theme and class, it facilitated easier for both me and the other educators in the institution to access the materials we needed for each lesson. This task was relevant because it allowed me, a new intern, to have a better understanding of the materials and class plans, which helped me with future classes.

Prior to each week's classes, LPE sends an email to all the parents of the students in each class. Since the subject and theme of each worksheet are already defined and prepared, the emails are meant to explain in great details what the students will study in that particular class. Along with that, the emails also include some preparation materials for the students. For instance, in the *Creative Panda* class, each week the students are required to watch a video related to the lesson's theme so that they are familiar with it before class. For the children to practice and review the vocabulary at home, the school will occasionally send materials for the parents to print at home (if possible), such as flashcards.

This responsibility was given to me during the internship; I had to send emails every week about the class details to the student's parents. As already mentioned, I was also responsible for preparing and designing the class materials, such as worksheets,

and since it took most of my time, I did not have much spare time to write the emails for the parents. The solution to save more time was to just write all the emails at once, this was possible since me and Sisi already planned and organized all the classes.

Besides Synology Drive, I also had a to-do list in Google Office, in which contained a variety of tasks that I had to complete over the course of the weeks, such as coming up with ideas for workshops and organizing upcoming social media posts. I also used it as a tool to help me prioritize the tasks that were given to me.

This helped me stay organized and focused on my work, as I could easily keep track of what needed to be done and when it needed to be completed. Additionally, I found that having a clear plan of action helped me to be more productive and efficient in my work.

For the class planning, LPE uses shared Google Sheets to register all of the class contents. This Google Sheet was shared with me, and it included the songs the school uses in each class, all of the new ideas and handcrafts, and the characters the children must know for each class. This method of organization not only helps to keep track of what has been covered in each class, but also allows for easy reference and modification for future classes.

2.3 Search Other Schools

Another task was to also do some research on other relevant Mandarin schools around the world, mainly in European countries, such as the Netherlands and France. However, even though this was considered a task, it's relevant to highlight that this activity wasn't a daily task; it was only to be done only when I had available time.

The purpose of the research was to take note of all the classes these schools were offering, what their curriculum looked like, how they organized the classes, etc. This research aimed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of other Mandarin schools and incorporating the best practices into the curriculum of LPE. It also aimed to enhance the

quality of education provided by LPE and to ensure that the curriculum aligns with industry standards and requirements.

The research process began with an online search for the most well-known schools in the countries I've mentioned, followed by the collection and efficient analysis of relevant data. However, on a few occasions, I would come across a lack of information regarding the school's curriculum. To address this, I chose to look up key words such as "curriculum," "course offerings," or "academic programs." This made it possible for me to conduct thorough research and find more detailed information about the educational options offered by the schools.

During my research for Mandarin schools located in the Netherlands, it was elusive to obtain an exact number, because of the size of the country. Nonetheless, historical evidence points to the emergence of the first Chinese educational institution in the late 1970s within Dutch territory. Notably, between 2010 and 2011, every major urban hub throughout the Netherlands accommodated at least one Chinese school. These institutions were dedicated to offering additional education cantered on Chinese language and cultural elements, primarily designed for children with Chinese ancestry (Juffermans & Li, 2015).

In this research, I encountered one particular Mandarin school called "Mandarin Tree Chinese School." While the private school's exact establishment date remains unclear, a thorough exploration of their website and social media profiles—particularly on Instagram and Facebook—revealed similarities in teaching methods with LPE. The school's founder and teacher, Karen Lees-Tang, emphasizes "learning Mandarin through play" and places significant emphasis on sharing and promoting Chinese culture among the students (*Mandarin Tree Chinese School*, n.d.).

Now a day, the French have more ways to learn about China, like traveling, books, and media. But in the 1970s, there wasn't much information about China in France. However, around 1978, more French people got interested in learning Chinese. By 1985, Chinese classes were in primary schools, making France the first European country to do so. In 2014, around 600 middle schools started teaching Chinese, more than any other language like Portuguese, Hebrew, or Arabic in France (*China Today*, 2014).

In the late 1970s, something changed, catching the attention of both the Netherlands and France—they became curious about Chinese language and culture. This curiosity led to the establishment of Chinese educational institutions. As time passed, it became clear that the influence of the Chinese language was expanding, creating a growing demand for more Mandarin schools in both countries.

This change can be traced back to December 1978, China embarked on a remarkable transformation that signalled the start of its economic reform and global integration. This pivotal period marked China's decision to open up to the world, initiating economic changes and inviting foreign investment. European countries noticed these changes and saw China's rising global influence and economic opportunities. As China became more important internationally, Europeans got more interested in learning Chinese because they saw the value in understanding China better (Lisle & Goldstein, 2019).

During my research, I noticed that the LPE curriculum shared a common approach with many schools in the countries I studied. However, I discovered one notable distinction in a Mandarin school in the Netherlands, as previously mentioned, called Mandarin Tree. Unlike other schools, this school incorporated an online course with the children, meaning that the classes were lectured only online. This specific aspect of Mandarin Tree's curriculum highlights the expanding significance of technology in language learning and raises the possibility of LPE considering a similar approach in the future.

2.4 Social Media Management

As previously mentioned, LPE uses social media platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, in order to advertise and communicate with its customers. Therefore, another task that had been assigned to me was social media management. I worked together with Sisi to decide what to post, it would depend on what theme the current classes were part take on. I usually posted on these social media platforms at least twice a week.

The post consists of showcasing the camps that LPE runs as well as informative posts. These informative posts include tips for parents on how to enhance their child's learning experience, updates on upcoming events, the activities that the children do during the class, and relevant information about the upcoming new term. On these posts, besides the description, I also share photos that I took of all the classes, always guaranteeing the children's privacy by not revealing their names or faces. When sharing photos that include the faces of the students, we add stickers or emojis to protect the students' identities.

Moreover, I interacted with the audience by responding to comments and direct messages after each post and as needed based on the feedback, making sure that their inquiries were promptly answered. This social media management strategy helped increase a sense of community among our followers.

2.5 Activity book: Mandarin Funfunfun

One of the most challenging activities that I faced during my internship was the creation of educational content for publication and formal use at LPE. With Sisi Yin's assistance, I was able to create an activity book that would be published and used formally in the classroom. When published, parents of the students could possibly purchase the activity book. This resource was meant to be used at home, with parents providing guidance if needed.

In order to successfully support the students' language learning in this project, it was important to carefully consider the curriculum and learning objectives while also developing engaging and interactive activities. In order to ensure that the content was thorough, teacher Sisi and I also collaborated together, shared ideas to make the necessary changes if needed. To discuss the success of the exercises and crafts and pinpoint areas for improvement, this required us conducting regular meetings and brainstorming sessions.

For this project, it was important that teacher Sisi and I worked closely together on this project to make sure the material was compatible with the school's curriculum and age-appropriate in addition to being engaging. Additionally, I added interactive features and visual aids to the book to increase its appeal to the young reader, such as colourful letters and lively illustrations.

I had no training prior to creating this activity book, so I had no experience with design. As a result, the only method I've found to design this book is to study more about how to do it, what's required, fonts, margins, content selection criteria, and overall layout. I immersed myself in online resources, and through trial and error I eventually improved my design skills to produce an activity book that complied with all the requirements.

My research also led me to discover that Amazon Publishing is among the best options for online book publishing. This platform is well-known for being a simple tool for authors who self-publish; it makes price setting easier and allows the book to be available by people all over the world.

Once I was familiar with the publication processes, I started designing the book. The entire book was created using the Canva platform, which, as was already mentioned, is also where I created the worksheets for the classes. My experience with Canva, which is a user-friendly platform, made the process of creating this activity book more convenient. Canva's features, like photo integration and QR code implementation, made a very effective design contribution to the book.

Since all of the years LPE was in function, teacher Sisi had saved all of the materials used for all the previous classes she made. The majority of those materials were original, made by the LPE team; therefore LPE had the rights to use those materials for online publishing. These materials were all stored in Synology Drive, divided by the class themes. Therefore, I had the task to look into all the files on that Drive and search which materials were original or not, I did this task with the help of teacher Sisi, since sometimes I was unable to identify if they were original or not.

To better organize the activity book, Sisi and I agreed that it was better to divide the book by themes. The activity book includes nine themes, namely: family, body parts, directions, transportations, vegetables, and Chinese character strokes,

The themes follow the same structure. For illustrative purposes the *Colours* section will be described.

Each theme has its own cover page, as seen in figure 31 for the colours theme, and a flashcard with the key Chinese characters that reader will study for that particular theme (figure 32). Then, as an exercise, that exercise is for children to colour the images according to the colour indicated on each sentence, as seen in figure 33, for example. The final activity is typically a craft, as depicted in figure 34.



Figure 31 - Little Panda Education Activity Book: Cover Page

Created using: [canva.com](https://www.canva.com)



Figure 32 - Little Panda Education Activity Book: Flashcards

Created using: [canva.com](https://www.canva.com)



Figure 33 - Little Panda Education Activity Book: Colouring Activity

Created using: canva.com

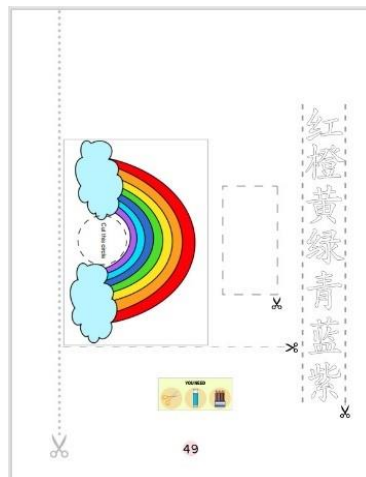


Figure 34 - Little Panda Education Activity Book: Hand Craft Activity

Created using: canva.com

After having the structure of each theme settled, I added all the content I had already gathered from the original materials; however, I also had to create new materials, since the original materials weren't enough, and some themes only had one simple material that could possibly be used. Therefore, I designed exercises, such as figure 44. Besides that, I also created the layout of the cover pages, including the book's cover page, its last page.

The title of the book, "Mandarin Funfunfun" was determined by teacher Sisi and this decision was made because she believed that the book title should be short and straight forward and needed to capture the essence of the book's content.



Figure 35 - Little Panda Education Activity Book: Book cover

Created using: [canva.com](https://www.canva.com)

Besides that, the cover page of the activity book (Figure 35) took some trial and error to create. Sisi and I collaborated closely to thoughtfully select the text's font style, colour scheme, and introductory message. Our mission was to create a distinctive cover that would both attract potential readers and clearly communicate the activity book's theme. Through several alterations and adjustments, we finally came up with a design that satisfied us both and perfectly matched our original intentions for the book.

The aim of the activity book is to make learning Mandarin Chinese a fun and engaging experience for preschoolers. Whether the child is a beginner or has some knowledge of the language, this curriculum will take them on a journey of discovery of the beauty of the Mandarin Chinese language.

To provide a well-rounded learning experience that keeps children motivated and eager to learn, this book also includes simple handcrafts that can be used to play at home and flashcards with QR codes for audio pronunciation.

LPE strives to foster an environment in which children will enjoy learning Mandarin Chinese and be motivated to carry on with their language studies. "Mandarin Funfunfun with Little Panda" will be an invaluable resource for children to improve

their language abilities and cultural awareness, whether it is used in a classroom or at home.

This book is the result of countless hours of research and dedication, with consideration for the educational and linguistic acquisition needs of young children. Each page has been crafted with care, ensuring that every activity not only teaches essential Mandarin lessons but also sparks imagination and creativity.

CHAPTER III – MANDARIN IN LUXEMBOURG

Luxembourg is a country that boasts a significant number of foreign communities, including those who are descendants of 19th and 20th century migrants, expatriates, and visitors who decided to make the country their permanent home. Nearly half of the country's population, specifically 47.1%, consists of foreigners, and the number of nationalities represented in the country is currently at 170. In Luxembourg city, foreigners make up an even larger proportion of the population, accounting for 70.6% of its residents (An open and cosmopolitan society, 2023).

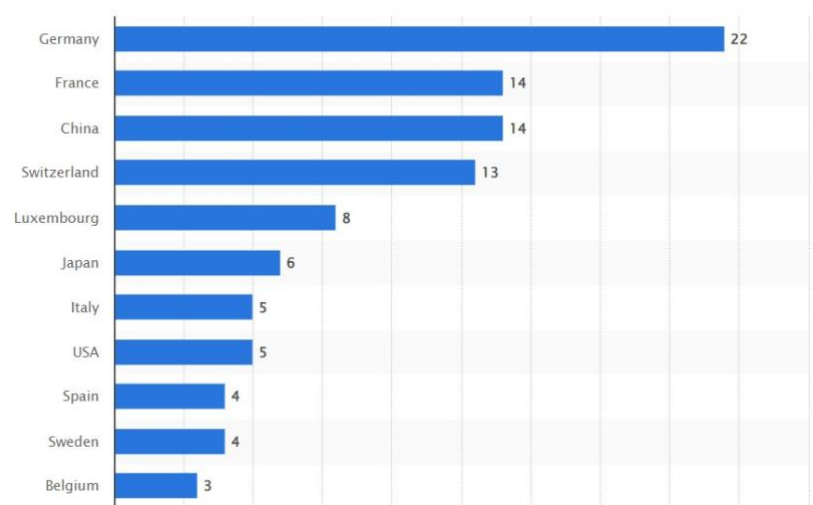


Figure 36 - Total number of banks in Luxembourg as of December 2020, by country of origin of the bank

Retrieved from: Luxembourg: number of banks by country | Statista

Statista Research Department (2023) reports that 14 of the 128 banks in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg were Chinese owned in 2020 (see figure 36). Chinese banks ranked 3rd place after France (with also 14 banks) and Germany in 1st place, with a total of 22 banks. Asian financial institutions like China Everbright established themselves in Luxembourg in order to gain access to the EU internal market.

According to Luxembourg for Finance (n.d.), the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), Bank of China (BoC), China Construction Bank (CCB), Bank of Communications, Agricultural Bank of China, and China Everbright Bank have their European headquarters in Luxembourg.

Lihong Zhou (2022) currently holds the position of chairman at Bank of China, which stands as the inaugural choice among seven Chinese banks to establish

Luxembourg as its central hub within the European Union. In a discussion regarding the interplay between China and Luxembourg and how this dynamic enhances the prospects of Bank of China, the chairman stated:

“The Sino-Luxembourg relations have always been excellent, with strong confidence and economic bond between the two countries. This is of undoubted importance to a Chinese bank such as our bank that has been operating in Luxembourg and serving as a bridge for so many years. Closer ties open up more doors for greater business cooperation, more investments going both ways and more profound understanding from the intercultural exchanges, all of which spell positive benefits not just to Bank of China Luxembourg, but also to many others from both countries, whether they are business entities or private individuals, myself included.”

(Zhou, 2022, para. 14).

Zhou (2022) asserts that China and Luxembourg have had strong and positive relations throughout history. This encompasses both a sense of shared confidence ("strong confidence") and a strong financial connection ("economic bond"). Additionally, it is anticipated that stronger relations between China and Luxembourg would lead to more business collaboration (Zhou, 2022)

The China Cultural Centre opened on November 8, 2022, for the first time in Luxembourg City. The Centre was established with the approval of the Luxembourgish Government and is committed to increasing locals' understanding of Chinese culture and art through cultural events and activities. The centre has been awarded legal recognition as a non-profit organization by the People's Republic of China Embassy in Luxembourg (China Cultural Center in Luxembourg, n.d.)

The opening of this centre confirms that the relations between China and Luxembourg promote the exchange of cultural experiences and foster mutual cooperation in various fields such as education, the arts, and business. This initiative reflects the commitment of both countries to deepen their bilateral ties and create a

platform for cultural dialogue that will further enhance people-to-people connections between China and Luxembourg.

The goal of this centre is to strengthen ties between China and Luxembourg through ongoing partnerships and the provision of a comprehensive image of China and Chinese culture (Ibid).

LPE also shares the same vision; it aims to not only teach the Mandarin language but also promote the culture with the students and their parents. Therefore, LPE and the China Cultural Centre collaborated on May 21, 2023, to celebrate International Children's Day in a workshop called "Chinese Abacus Children Workshop" (Ibid).

The aim of this workshop was to introduce children to the traditional Chinese abacus and its significance in Chinese culture. The children were able to learn how to use the abacus and understand its role in mathematical calculations. This collaboration between LPE and the China Cultural Centre highlights their commitment to fostering cultural exchange and education among young learners.

Through this collaboration with the China Cultural Centre, I was able to understand how LPE promotes its business because they use workshops and camps (which are covered in more detail in Section 1.2.5) as a way to engage the Luxembourgish community in Chinese culture. Additionally, these initiatives not only provide educational opportunities but also foster a sense of cultural exchange and appreciation between the two nations.

This section serves the purpose of analysing the interviews I conducted in order to understand why parents of LPE students choose this institution over other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg and what characteristics they believe set LPE apart from other Mandarin schools in the area.

Through these semi-structured interviews, I aimed to gain insights into the specific aspects of LPE that resonate with parents and make it their preferred choice for Mandarin language learning.

3 Data Collection

To ensure an accurate and well-founded conclusion about why the parents chose LPE over another Mandarin school in Luxembourg, I opted to carry out these interviews. In comparison to other information-gathering techniques, interviews are a quicker way to get answers regarding the problem at hand. They enable me to speak with the interviewee directly and ask pointed questions about the problem in question.

These interviews were relevant to understand what they appreciate about this school and why they decided to let their children learn Mandarin. The participants in this study were parents of children enrolled at LPE. However, it's essential to acknowledge a limitation in these interviews: only four parents were available for interviews due to scheduling constraints. Despite this limitation and the challenge it poses in drawing a definitive conclusion, the insights gleaned from these interviews provide valuable understanding and shed light on the motivations and perspectives of the interviewed parents regarding their children's Mandarin learning journey at the school.

Exploring the viewpoints and experiences of the parents with LPE in depth was made possible by this qualitative methodology. The semi-structured interviews gave the participants the freedom to express their ideas and perceptions, which helped to create a comprehensive understanding of why they chose the school and why they chose to study Mandarin in Luxembourg City.

3.1 Participants

The participants, as mentioned, were the parents, and my goal was to interview the right people who could shed light on the allure of the school and its function in the acquisition of Mandarin. As a result, I decided to interview Sisi Yin, the founder and principal teacher of LPE, as well as a few of the student's mothers because, during the course of my internship, I got to know them and learned about their commitment to their children's education, as evidenced by the fact that they regularly attend and participate in classes, constantly encourage the children, and so forth.

Therefore, those parents came across as trustworthy sources and were eager to provide the most open and truthful responses. I conducted interviews with a total of five people; four of them were parents from a variety of backgrounds and vocations.

The invitations for the interviews, which were used to recruit the participants, were sent via direct email. Prior to the interviews, participants were given an informed consent form explaining the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of participation.

The interviews took place in person, before or after the classes during normal school days, in a calm and quiet location inside the school. Each interview lasted between five and fifteen minutes. In order to enable participants to openly express their experiences and viewpoints, open-ended questions were posed.

The study's goal was to gather parent perspectives through semi-structured interviews and a purposive sampling strategy. This was done to help better understand the factors that led parents to choose LPE and the perceived benefits of the school relative to the rest of Luxembourg's educational options.

It's important to start by briefly introducing each interviewee and their children (the students). Gaining an understanding of each interviewee's background and pertinent information about them and their children is essential to understanding their perspectives and experiences.

Having this relevant information, It's possible to analyze the interviews more thoroughly and find any factors that might have an impact on the participants' responses. Additionally, it provides a deeper understanding of the interactions between parents and students in this study and establishes a context that aids in interpreting the viewpoints of the interviewees.

As detailed in Appendix I, Sisi Yin was the subject of the initial interview. This interview was the first one because I aimed to gain insights into the school's vision and opinions regarding the matter. Understanding her perspective would provide a foundation for comprehending the motivations and expectations of the parents, who are essentially the customers of the school. Analysing both sides of the equation would

enable a comprehensive evaluation of any similarities or differences in their viewpoints.

The second interview was with Wei Hu Chai, who is Mateo's mother (see Appendix II). Mateo is two years old and is enrolled in *Baby Panda* Class. From January 2023 to the present, Mateo has been taking Mandarin classes at LPE. Since Wei Hu Chai is Chinese and Mateo was born in Luxembourg, he is currently studying Mandarin and the official Luxembourgish language.

Cristina, Eva's mother, was the participant in the third interview. Eight-year-old Eva has been taking classes with LPE for about two years. She was enrolled in the *Sprout* class when she first started at LPE, but she is currently an alumni of the *Singing Panda* class. The mother tongue of Cristina and Eva is French. Eva's initial fascination with Mandarin was sparked by the Chinese characters, as stated by the interviewee in Appendix III, question 7.

The fourth interview was with Nadège and Mathildas' mother, Sidone. Mathilda is enrolled in the *Creative Panda* class at age six, while Nadège, who is nine years old, is a student in the *Singing Panda* class. The two students in question have attended LPE since the institution's inception, making them the institution's oldest students.

When they moved permanently to Luxembourg City, the parents met Sisi Yin and after discussion they enrolled the children at LPE. According to Sidone (Appendix IV), they had previously lived in Singapore, and the children were already learning Mandarin there. Also, they haven't participated in Mandarin classes at any other school. Despite having lived in Singapore, they speak French as their native language.

The fifth and final interview was with Elisângela, who is Layanna's mother (Appendix V). Layanna just joined LPE; her first time studying at the school was the last term this year (from April until July 2023). She is eight years old, and both she and her mother speak Portuguese and French. Just like in Eva's case, Layanna also had an interest in Mandarin. However, Eva was interested in Chinese characters, whereas Layanna was more interested in Chinese culture and how to speak it.

3.2 Interviews Questions and Framework

3.2.1 Interview with Sisi Yin

The first three questions that were asked to the school's founder, Sisi Yin, were to get an insight into how the school was created and the motives behind it. As explained by the interviewee in questions 1 and 3 (see Appendix I), she started the business in 2018, but only in 2020 did the school open, and the motives behind it were that because she was born in China and her daughter was born in Luxembourg, she knew how important it was for her daughter to learn Mandarin.

Sisi Yin had a good friend (who is the co-founder, called Sijia) who also had a child, and the children had a regular children play group. Since there was no good Mandarin school for such young children, the moms started by hosting a story corner once a month, where they would read books in Mandarin to the children. This was done in an effort to get them interested in the language and culture of China. This is how they began, and now Sisi Yin is driven by the parents' trust in the school's operational values and philosophical foundation.

For all of the interviewees, Question 4 was the most relevant question and was purposefully asked in a direct manner. This strategy was used so that the interviewers were able to obtain clear and concise responses. We were able to clearly understand the thoughts and opinions of each interviewee by directly posing the question to them. This method made it simpler to compare and analyze the responses given by various people.

The purpose of this inquiry was to learn Sisi Yin's opinion of what distinguishes LPE from other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg that have similar objectives. An important theme that emerged from the founder's observations was her unwavering dedication to developing an excellent curriculum. Creative methods are used in this venture, which puts a priority on giving the students an engaging and enjoyable educational experience. LPE goes beyond the bounds of traditional pedagogy to create

holistic and immersive learning experience by emphasizing engaging, interactive classes and a variety of supplemental workshops and camps.

Since elucidating the reasons behind parents' preference for LPE over competing Mandarin schools in Luxembourg is the main focus of this report, this crucial question remained at the forefront of every parent interview. Investigating this question resulted in essential information about the unique qualities and distinct advantages that attracted families to LPE.

3.2.2 Interview with Wei Hu Chai (Mateo's mother)

Wei Hu Chai responds to the first question about the reason for her decision to enrol her son, age two, in LPE, which can be found in Appendix II, by stating that she conducted an online search for Mandarin schools, came across the website of this private school, and determined that it was an ideal choice for her son's language acquisition. She mentioned that someone she knows also recommended the program to her.

She believes that what sets LPE apart from other Mandarin schools is the ease with which the children can interact with one another. She also values the diversity of cultures represented in each class because it encourages the sharing of ideas. Moreover, the classes are immersive, which is another important aspect; children only speak Mandarin to other children and to the teachers, and in the classes, they learn the meaning of each character and how to write them, which is rather important. Mateo's mother also praised teachers Sisi and Débora for their insightful lessons.

Wei Hu Chai believes that classes are enjoyable not only for the students but also for the parents because it gives the children a chance to make new friends and allows the parents to participate in class activities, according to her answer in question 4, which can be found in Appendix II. This is significant because it fosters a sense of community and support among the parents. Parents can interact with other parents who are facing comparable parenting challenges to exchange ideas, share experiences, and

develop relationships. In addition, parents' participation in the lessons can help them better understand their child's growth and development, leading to a stronger parent-child relationship outside of the classroom.

In response to question 4, Mateo's mother explains that she wants her son to learn Mandarin because it is his mother tongue since both, she and her son are Chinese. Mateo ought to study Mandarin in order to communicate with his relatives, who speak it as their primary language, she explained. Mateo will be able to better connect with his cultural heritage by learning Mandarin. He will also be able to communicate with his relatives in an effective manner, which will help to strengthen those relationships. In addition to giving Mateo a sense of identity and belonging, this will also present him with opportunities for the future on both a personal and professional level.

Wei Hu Chai responded to question 5 by stating her opinion that learning Mandarin in Luxembourg is important. She notes that Luxembourg is home to numerous Chinese businesses. She supports an argument I presented previously: there are roughly six Chinese banks in Luxembourg, which according to her is a lot given Luxembourg's small size when compared to other nations like Spain (which is a bigger country).

When it comes to future employment and career opportunities in Luxembourg, particularly in fields like finance, international trade, and diplomacy, Wei Hu Chai believes that knowing Mandarin is an important advantage.

In response to the last two questions, Wei Hu Chai explains that Mateo gained a lot of knowledge from his LPE classes, including a better understanding of the Chinese character and the correct order of writing strokes. She ends by saying that she would highly recommend this school to other parents, and the main reason for that is that she thinks LPE is working for a good cause rather than just looking to make a profit. She believes that LPE's ultimate goal is to ensure that the children receive adequate exposure to Mandarin while also being able to enjoy and have fun while learning the language.

3.2.3 Interview with Cristina (Eva's mother)

Cristina mentioned in the interview that she discovered LPE through an internet search and that she also discovered other Mandarin schools that might be a good fit for her daughter Eva's language learning in response to question 1 (Appendix III). In response to question 3, which inquires as to why she picked LPE over the other schools, she clarified that the location and the class times were the main factors in her decision.

Cristina's answer to question 4 was that Eva had never attended a Mandarin school before LPE. Cristina responded to question 7 by saying that they chose Little Panda because Eva was interested in learning Chinese characters. Cristina claims that once Eva began learning Mandarin and became aware of its rich cultural heritage, her interest in the language only grew. As a result, over the past two years at LPE, Eva's enthusiasm for Mandarin has only grown.

Eva also sings Mandarin songs at home and converses in the language with her brother, strengthening her language skills outside of the classroom, as Cristina mentions in the answer to question 8. This demonstrates that Eva's commitment to Mandarin extends beyond just her time at *Singing Panda* class and further highlights her sincere love of the language and its culture.

Additionally, Cristina thinks that there is no age limit on learning a new language. Even so, she expresses her wish that Eva had started learning Mandarin sooner because, as was mentioned in the response to question 9, had she started learning Mandarin earlier, Eva would now be more proficient in the language.

Cristina emphasizes that learning a language at a young age can significantly increase a person's proficiency over time. She even said the best course of action would be to begin with *Baby Panda* class, which is for children ages 2 to 5.

Regarding question 12, Cristina responded that, in her opinion, LPE classes are more engaging and entertaining for the students overall than regular school classes. She claimed that Eva wouldn't want to go to *Singing Panda* every week if the classes were, quote, "boring".

Cristina responded to question number 13 by stating that she didn't sign Eva up for *Singing Panda* class with an eye toward potential future opportunities. First, it was due to Eva's keen interest in language, which was also good for brain development. She believes that the development of the brain is aided by learning new languages and

musical instruments like the piano. Furthermore, she added in her response that learning Mandarin was unique because not everyone is fluent in the language and that it might make Eva stand out in the job market in the future.

In the last question, Cristina affirms that LPE is a fantastic place to learn Mandarin and that she would suggest it to other parents. In her point of view, It's more immersive and engaging than the typical school setting.

3.2.4 Interview with Sidone (Nadège and Mathilda's mother)

Sidone stated in her interview (question 1, Appendix IV) that what influenced her to choose LPE for her children to learn Mandarin was that she used to live in Singapore and her children were studying Mandarin there, so it was important for Sidone that they could successfully transition from the school in Singapore to a new school in Luxembourg City. Therefore, she found LPE and then she met teacher Sisi and their first connection was great, Sidone explained that she loved the way teacher Sisi was with the children, she was not only very professional but very warm and understanding as well.

The other factor that made her choose LPE was how the classes were organized. She could see Sisi's dedication to the school's curriculum because she had some prior experience, although it wasn't professional experience. Sidone remarked that the teaching strategies were similar to Singaporean ones. She also appreciated that Sisi was very patient with Mathilda, her youngest child, because she has trouble focusing in class and staying alone during the classes.

Sidone added that the quality of the classes and the variety of themes covered in each class were additional factors supporting her opinion that LPE was a wise choice. She recalls a particular class where Sisi used puppets to teach the students. She thought it was brilliant because it allowed the students to focus on the puppet while not even noticing they were in class because they were having so much fun.

Now that the children are older, Sidone claimed that Sisi uses a variety of techniques to enthrall them, including songs, paper crafts, movements, etc. And Sidone is aware of the work that teacher Sisi puts into creating the curriculum for the school, and she is grateful for it.

When asked whether the children had attended any other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg prior to LPE, Sidone responded that she had only ever joined LPE and had been extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to try it out. She acknowledged that there are other Chinese schools, but that their teaching styles are very different, and that now that they have had exposure to LPE's lessons, they have no plans to switch schools. Sidone even makes mention of her intentions to talk to Sisi about the future of her children's Mandarin language studies when they are older.

On Question 5, Sidone was asked whether she thought it was important for children to learn Mandarin in Luxembourg. Sidone responded that she didn't think it was particularly relevant in Luxembourg; instead, she thought it was important to be a global citizen because the number of people who speak Mandarin is steadily increasing and will make it an important language in the future, similar to how English is today, and because it is crucial to understand one another's cultures in order to communicate effectively.

Sidone believes that learning Mandarin is only good for the world and its people, but she is honest enough to admit that she only started this language learning journey for her children because of the Singaporean influence, and she was pleasantly surprised to see how quickly and how much they enjoyed it.

In response to question 6 about job opportunities, Sidone stated that knowing the language is a benefit and that no matter what the children choose to do in the future, they will always have this added advantage to their skills. She stated that she had already recommended LPE to other parents in response to the final interview question.

3.2.5 Interview with Elisângela (Layanna's mother)

Elisângela, who is Layanna's mother and a new student in the *Singing Panda* class, was the participant in the final interview. Elisângela responds to the first question (Appendix V) by explaining how she learned about LPE, which was after conducting a thorough internet search because her daughter Layanna has been requesting for years that she learn Mandarin.

In response to question 2, Elisângela stated that the teaching strategies and the flexible schedules were what ultimately convinced her to select LPE as her daughter's primary Mandarin language learning institution. She also mentioned how impressively professional teachers Sisi and Debora were.

Elisângela further clarified that she had never attended any other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg prior to enrolling with LPE (the response can be found on question 3, Appendix V).

Elisângela responded positively to question 4's inquiry about whether she thought it was important for Luxembourgers to learn Mandarin. She thought it was crucial to learn the language and be able to communicate with it because, in her opinion, it could be very useful in both cultural and future professional settings.

Layanna has improved since enrolling in *Singing Panda* classes, as Elisângela notes in response to question 5. Layanna, according to her, has strengthened her personal commitment and grown much more interested in China (and Asia in general) and its rich culture.

Elisângela responds to the final question by saying she would suggest LPE to other parents due to the institution's all-encompassing educational philosophy.

3.3 Interview Analysis

After having an insight into the interview content, we are able to analyze the data and draw meaningful conclusions about the subject matter. Additionally, we can

identify any patterns or trends that may have emerged during the interviews, providing further insights into the topic at hand.

Due to the responses to the question about how the parents got to know about LPE, we are able to conclude that the parents found out about the program through internet search engines. This suggests that the company's online presence and marketing initiatives appear to have been successful in attracting its intended audience. Furthermore, knowing how parents found LPE can help the business plan its future marketing initiatives and more effectively allocate its resources for maximum effect.

When analysing the responses to the question about why the parents chose to enrol their children in a Mandarin school, it is possible to see that some parents made that choice based on the requests of the children, as was the case with Cristina and Elisângela; however, in the case of Sidone, the reason was due to the influence of Singaporeans, and she wanted to transition the children's Mandarin language learning from Singapore to Luxembourg.

These perspectives highlight the different motivations and goals that parents have when enrolling their children in a Mandarin school. While some parents prioritize their children's personal interests and desires, others may be influenced by external factors such as cultural exposure or educational opportunities. Understanding these perspectives can provide valuable insights into the diverse reasons behind the decision to enrol children in a Mandarin school.

It's significant to note that all of the parents indicated on Question 4 that none of their children had attended any other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg prior to enrolling in LPE. This information is pertinent to know because it suggests that the parents actively chose LPE as their preferred Mandarin school. This information demonstrates LPE's distinction and appeal in comparison to other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg. It also implies the parents might have had particular considerations or expectations when selecting this particular school, which were further discussed in the interviews to better comprehend their motivations.

When analysing the responses to the questions about why the parents chose LPE over another Mandarin school and what sets LPE apart from the other schools, it is possible to see that each parent had a different motivation. For instance, Sidone stated that she had a positive impression of LPE because she instantly felt "connected" to

teacher Sisi. But in her view, the curriculum, and the way it makes sure students are exposed to Chinese culture in addition to language instruction are what set the school apart.

In addition, she recognizes the effort Sisi expends in creating the curriculum and organizing the classes. After hearing this response, I was able to recognize that these were the same points that teacher Sisi had made in response to the same question during her interview. Sisi claimed that she spends a lot of time creating the curriculum for LPE, and the Activity book that the school recently chose to create in order to ensure that the students have the best learning journey possible is yet another indication of this.

According to Sidone, showcasing the culture is very important for the school, so what makes them stand out is that they don't just teach the language; they also "sell" the culture through an effective curriculum and through the workshops and camps they hold throughout the year.

Wei Hu Chai, on the other hand, believes that LPE differs from other Mandarin schools because of how diverse the classes are and how parents can participate in their children's lessons. She added that the classes are enjoyable for the children, which is a really noteworthy point. Wei Hu Chai's understanding that LPE is not a business that only wants to make profit, as is frequently the case with larger schools, also led her to select it over other schools.

LPE, according to Wei Hu Chai, places a strong emphasis on giving children a high-quality education and encouraging a love of Mandarin in them, both of which are values that align with Wei Hu Chai's. She also valued how each student received individualized attention, ensuring that their particular needs and progress were considered.

Furthermore, teacher Sisi addressed this aspect in her response to the same query. According to her, LPE is centred on the children and works to provide them with a solid curriculum, a fun learning environment, and the opportunity to learn Mandarin effectively. She mentioned that the educators at LPE work hard to foster a welcoming environment where children can feel at ease and inspired to learn. Sisi also emphasized the use of engaging activities and interactive teaching strategies that make learning Mandarin fun for the students.

Upon closely examining the insights gathered from the answers to these queries, I observed that not every parent who joined LPE was looking for the same things. In Cristina's case, the location and flexible schedule were the main factors in her decision to attend this school over other Mandarin schools. However, during the interview, it was clear that Cristina believed LPE was the best decision she could have made because Eva, her daughter, sings and speaks Mandarin at home despite their native tongue being French, as stated in the answers to questions 8 and 12 in Appendix IV.

By delving into the viewpoints provided in connection with the core questions that form the central focus of this report: Why parents choose Little Panda Education and what characteristics they believe set LPE apart from other Mandarin schools in the area, I was able to conclude that what made them choose LPE was the school's curriculum, teaching methods (fun and interactive classes), and how the school does not see this program as a way to make profit.

I am able to conclude that LPE genuinely cares about its pupils and tries to spread Chinese culture through workshops and camps that are not part of the regular school curriculum. Small class sizes are also a priority for LPE, allowing for more individualized attention and improved learning outcomes for each student. They stand out from other Mandarin schools in the region due to their dedication to personalized teaching, which guarantees that students get the help they need to excel in their language studies.

3.4 Mandarin in Luxembourg: Insights and Reflections

Upon reflection of my internship with LPE, I have gained invaluable insights into the dynamics of Mandarin education in Luxembourg. One of the most significant things I took away from LPE was the realization of Mandarin's growing importance in Luxembourg's educational system.

Besides that, the collaboration between Luxembourg and China, particularly evident through the establishment of the China Cultural Centre and its partnership with LPE, showcases the role of cultural diplomacy in fostering deeper ties between nations.

Such initiatives not only promote cultural understanding but also serve as educational platforms, offering immersive experiences for students to engage with diverse cultures.

Additionally, the presence of Chinese-owned banks in Luxembourg highlights the country's growing importance as a financial hub within the European Union. The establishment of major Chinese banks' European headquarters in Luxembourg underscores the strategic advantage of access to the EU market, demonstrating how financial institutions leverage favourable environments to expand their global presence.

The choice of parents to enrol their children in LPE for Mandarin education goes beyond language acquisition. It reflects a growing trend of recognising the broader benefits of learning Mandarin, encompassing cultural appreciation, international opportunities, and potential future economic advantages in a globalised world.

The semi-structured interviews with parents elucidate the significance of personal connections and trust in educational choices. The rapport established between Sisi Yin, the founder of LPE, and parents, along with the commitment of parents to actively engage in their children's learning, signifies the role of interpersonal connections in educational decisions.

The limitation in the number of interviews due to scheduling constraints could potentially impact the depth and diversity of insights gathered. This highlights the challenges inherent in qualitative research methodologies, emphasising the need for a broader participant pool to ensure comprehensive findings.

Overall, Luxembourg's multilingual and multicultural environment, coupled with the growing interest in Mandarin education, highlights the country's commitment to embracing diversity and promoting linguistic and cultural integration, contributing to its reputation as an open and cosmopolitan society.

CONCLUSION

The opportunity to intern as a teacher assistant at LPE was an invaluable experience that enabled me to expand my Mandarin language skills while also gaining real-world knowledge of the education industry. I had the chance to assist in lesson planning, observe and learn from experienced teachers, and even design an activity book for the school.

Through this internship, I was able to deepen my understanding of effective teaching techniques while also solidifying my passion for working in a multicultural environment and fostering cross-cultural communication. I was also able to recognize the value of cultural sensitivity and adaptability in education thanks to my experience in a diverse classroom environment.

The present report provides information on the Chinese community in Luxembourg, and it can be concluded from this that the presence of several Chinese financial institutions with European headquarters in Luxembourg, including the Agricultural Bank of China, Bank of Communications, Bank of China, and China Everbright Bank, is evidence of the two countries' healthy economic ties.

The opening of the China Cultural Centre in Luxembourg City, which aims to promote Chinese culture and foster cultural exchange between China and Luxembourg, is an example of the two countries' relationship in terms of shared cultural understanding. To reduce the cultural and linguistic divide and promote understanding between these two countries, this centre offers a range of programs, including language lessons, art exhibits, and cultural events.

Through in-depth interviews with the parents of the current students enrolled in LPE, as well as the institution's principal teacher, Sisi Yin, a comprehensive analysis was conducted. This analysis aimed to shed light on the qualities that influence parents to choose LPE over other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg. These interviews provided perspectives on what sets LPE apart and the elements that attract families to this particular institution.

The success of LPE in offering a thorough and engaging educational experience is essentially demonstrated by this report. The institution stands out from other educational facilities due to its dedication to fostering cross-cultural awareness and language proficiency, making it an appealing option for parents looking to provide their children with a multicultural learning environment. The experiences had and the lessons discovered as this chapter of the journey comes to an end will undoubtedly continue to influence current projects and aid in the advancement of academic excellence and cross-cultural understanding.

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Appendix I – Interview with institution's founder teacher Sisi Yin

(See point 3.2.1 for more information)

1. When did you start Little Panda Education?

Answer: I initiated Little Panda Education in 2018, and we transitioned to full-term engagement by 2020.

2. What was most difficult when you started this business?

Answer: The hardest part was to find the right people to work with, to find the right teachers who have the same vision as the school.

3. What was motivation to start the school?

Answer: It began when I had my daughter, she's half Luxembourgish and half Chinese. I think that it was important for her to still learn Mandarin even though we live in Luxembourg. So, I started with a friend of mine (co-founder Sijia), we had the children play group, just two little children (at that time they were 1 or 2 years old) and we wanted to make them interested in Mandarin Language, and the culture as well, so we started the story corners every month. That's how we started. And now my motivation is more from the parents that trust us and believe in our methodology and philosophy and how we conduct our lessons. It's a huge responsibility.

4. In your opinion, what sets Little Panda apart from other Mandarin schools in Luxembourg City?

Answer: Well, we always try to do what is best for our students. They are our main focus, it's not just to make profit, the most important is that our children are able to effectively learn the language and learn more about the Chinese culture, that's why we always try to develop our curriculum, always trying to make children interested in Mandarin language and culture and that's also why

we make so many workshops and camps, it's a way to show children about the culture but also to show how fun it can be to learn the language.

5. Do you believe that learning Chinese is very important in Luxembourg City?

Answer: Every person that comes to us believes that it is very important to learn Mandarin, each own has their reasons to learn Mandarin.

6. Can you briefly explain what you do daily? Not just teaching, but also the business part?

Answer: In terms of businesses, there is an accountant, you must know how the business run and what are your expenses and what are your incomes, your turnovers, and how much you should spend on certain things. Those are all part of the business side, of course you also bet on how much you should charge, how much you need to pay for your employees, etc. In terms of the school itself, we do teach, the curriculum design, so we just don't use textbooks, we have our own ideas in every single lesson, so we keep on track what was designed on each class and what was the review on each class. It's also very important, to basically be aware of all students and teachers, and to improve as well.

7. When you first started, how did you know how much you had to charge per class? Did you see and compare what the others mandarin schools were doing?

Answer: For these things you have to check the market price and then you value your business, for instance, is your school adding more value or are it's more of just the same? Are you also more or less competitive? Because of the field of what you are working in. For example, let's say that THAT school charges 20 euros then, of course, you cannot charge too much, you want to be selected, there's different factors that you must consider.

8. When the children started learning Mandarin, what was most difficult for them to learn? Was it the pronunciation, the writing?

Answer: Language is a communication skills, is a tool basically so it's difficult because in Luxembourg you do not have the language environment, so this tool cannot be used on daily basis. When you learn something and cannot apply you are most likely to forget it, that's challenging. So, what we try to do is every minute/moment the students have with us it has to be valuable and efficient even though they do not have the chance and environment to practice it, this way they can "forget" a little bit slower.

9. Why do you think is relevant for those children who don't have Chinese background to learn Mandarin in Luxembourg?

Answer: For different reasons, some believe China is going to be the future, that it's going to be important, so they want their children to be exposed to the language, ex: they are learning Chinese at the same time are learning Russian, because these languages are really different from the romantic languages, like English, French German etc. And they think that their children will benefit. This is one of the reasons. The other reason is that some students have lived in Asian countries, like China, Singapore, etc. Because their parents worked there, and they want to continue the language learning here in Luxembourg. And also, for the children do not forget what they have learned in those years. Some of them also have family that are Chinese or are Chinese descent, so it's only normal for them to learn since they need to communicate with their family. I personally don't think it's that important to learn it, like I'm not trying to convince people to come and learn, I don't promote it in that way. They are the ones that come to me wanting to their children to learn.

10. Do you know if Luxembourg and China have relations regarding education and business?

Answer: Yes, I would say Luxembourg is a country that has a really good relationship with China in different levels. It's very friendly to Chinese people in Luxembourg and also Lux is very open to China and Chinese culture. There are actually 8 or 10 Chinese banks in Luxembourg.

Last year, China and Lux celebrated the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relationship. And Lux just opened the Chinese cultural center, which actually targets and welcomes lux citizens to learn and acknowledge Chinese culture; it's a great new initiative better China and Lux. This building belongs to the ministry of culture in China and they choose which country to have that center, and Lux is one of them.

11. Do you think it would be easier to get a job here in Luxembourg if you know Mandarin?

Answer: Actually yes, there are financial institutions with many Chinese head corners, and I know some people that got the job because they know Chinese.

12. What are the nationalities of your students?

Answer: It's very multicultural; I have students from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, Luxembourg, Singapore and China, Malaysia, also Greeks, Denmark.

13. Do you think social media is very important to attract customers?

Answer: I think is important in a sense that is a way to remind people about the services we offer in our school. But, personally for little Panda, is not the channel we are spending much time to have customers, we target very clearly our market and also we have a very good name so the costumer comes to us, so we grow in a very organic way, so people recommend our school and people come to us with extra students, but to get new costumers from social media could work for other kind of business, like restaurants etc, it's different. Of course, has a business you know you must have a business not only to promote it but also remind people of what we do and show them our teaching methods, etc. We share pictures and if they want to know what we do they can see on Instagram etc. It's a way for them to learn more about this

school besides the official website. It's like a showcase of what you do, and we want to have this image of being creative, friendly, more open and easier to communicate, like style wise. So we need to have Instagram and Facebook to give people the image that they can contact us and that we are easy to communicate etc.

Appendix II – Interview with Parent - Wei Hu Chai (Mateo's Mother)

(See point 3.2.2 for more information)

1. What influenced you to choose Little Panda Education? Did you search the school online?

Answer: First of all, I searched online, of course, but then I was referred as well to the program, actually it's a great program where children can interact with each other, with different cultures as well, but also learning our Chinese culture, which is great to exchange views. But also, for the children interact in Chinese as well, but they also learn how to write the characters, the meaningful inside behind every single character, so I think it's great. Sisi and Deby *laoshi*⁴ has been fantastic to us.

2. Do you think is also fun for the children?

Answer: For sure! The children made friends, but also the parents, and I think it's fun because its interactive with the class.

3. Did you search or tried other mandarin schools in Luxembourg before Little Panda?

Answer: I have not tried other schools, what I did is more to search what are the best, where my child could fit into, yeah.

4. Why did you register Mateo to learn Mandarin?

Answer: Well, me as a mother I am Chinese and Mateo first language is Chinese. Is mother tongue being Chinese, so It also good to learn ever deeper how to write or even what it means each character, but also to interact with

⁴ The word *laoshi* means teacher in Mandarin.

other people in Chinese as well. Luxembourg has a big community of Chinese people here, and Luxembourg has a good relationship with China. Last year they opened a China Cultural Centre.

5. Do you think it's very important to learn Chinese in Luxembourg?

Answer: I do believe so, because there's a lot of Chinese companies based in Luxembourg, we have 6 Chinese banks, which compared to other countries, it's a lot, for example Spain, there's a lot of Chinese banks here in Luxembourg, which is a small country compared to Spain which is way bigger and doesn't have that many Chinese companies. So, there's a lot of benefits to know mandarin here in Luxembourg in terms of future jobs.

Not only this but I think that learning on the most spoken languages in the world is key to go move, break through the future.

6. Did you see an evolution in Mateo's learning journey?

I think that he has learned in terms of how to write or to learn more the characters, like the order of the characters, the strokes, which has a to be learned first, is very important. So, Mateo is learning that, which is key for him to correctly learn the characters in the future.

7. Do you recommend Little Panda to other parents?

I highly recommend to any parents, the main reason is that it is for a good cause, it's not only to make profit, in the end is to make sure that the children have been exposed to another language and has well to be able to enjoy and have fun while learning Chinese language, which is fantastic.

Appendix III – Interview with Parent - Cristina (Eva’s Mother)

(See point 3.2.3 for more information)

1. How did you find Little Panda Education?

Answer: I searched it on the internet.

2. Before Little Panda did you search other schools?

Answer: Yes.

3. And what made you choose Little Panda over other Mandarin schools?

Answer: The location and hour were a big factor, because for us it's important to have other activities during the weekend and also the location here was convenient for us.

4. Did you ever enrol Eva in other Mandarin schools?

Answer: No.

5. You came to a trial first?

Answer: No.

6. So, you just enrol Eva right away?

Answer: Yes, Eva wanted very much to learn more about it, so I search a lot of options for her to start, to see how it goes and then it was the only one we tried.

7. Did Eva choose to learn Mandarin or was your idea?

Answer: It was her, she was interested in the letters, she was attracted by the characters, to draw them. So, this is how it started. She didn't necessarily know it was mandarin, but for us when I searched on the internet this was the only option that was good for us.

8. So far, do you think it's been great for her? Did it improve her mandarin?

Answer: Well, considering she knew nothing about mandarin, it was a big deal, and considering we do not speak mandarin at home it was great. She sings in Mandarin at home, even if it's not enough for the course she's, there are speaking with each other, she speaks in mandarin with her brother, even in the holidays they sing each other, without anyone asking.

9. Do you think this is a good age to learn mandarin?

Answer: I don't think there is an age restriction, for me if we could have started earlier to learn mandarin it would have been better because this way, she would have been more use to the language as a child and maybe now she would be even more advanced that she is.

10. Maybe *Baby Panda*?

Answer: Yes, with *Baby Panda* perhaps, yes. Because the younger you are exposed to language that it's so different from our language is better. The sooner the better, and of course you need to exercise etc. And the musicality of the language is good.

11. How many years has Eva been studying with Little Panda?

Answer: I think last year but not from September, maybe midterm, from January? Maybe a year and a half or 2 years.

12. What's the first impression? Different? More fun?

Answer: For sure more fun, when she started it was fun and she finds very attractive and if it was boring, she would want to come, and because we do not speak mandarin so the thing, I think the progress would be bigger if she spoke mandarin at home. I am sure of it.

13. Do you think it is important to learn Mandarin, especially in Luxembourg?

Answer: For us I it didn't begin to be something important for the future, learning mandarin is a very good exercise for the brain. For me, I think it was a good way to develop the brain, every language, piano, mandarin, and any language cannot harm the brain. And then I think it's a differentiation factor also, because not everybody knows a mandarin and can be a differential factor when she grows up, for the job market etc. But it didn't start like that, but if it happens it's good. It's an added value for her in the future. Any language is an asset.

14. Would you recommend little panda to other parents?

Answer: Yes, it's a very nice place to learn, it's not like a typical school, its Strick but they don't feel like its school, it's something that they like and learn without even noticing.

Appendix IV – Interview with Parent – Sidonie (Nadege & Mathilda’s Mother)

(See point 3.2.4 for more information)

1. What were the factors that influenced your decision to choose Little Panda Education?

Answer: We were coming from Singapore, and the children were actually used to Mandarin, they could hear Mandarin so it was important for us to have a transition and so when we first arrived, I searched on the internet and upon little Panda and then I met Sisi *laoshi* and the first connection was a human one, I loved the way she was with the children, she was very professional/good and then with time I could see how she structures the classes, how well though it is, and how one class was onto another and having being a teacher (I had some experience, but not a professional) and see how well though through it was I was really impressed. It reminded me a bit of the Chinese/Singaporean system/style and, I really appreciated the fact she was very patient with the children, specially the younger one, because she had difficulty in staying alone, concentrating. All the human/relationship aspects Sisi had and also the professionalism and the quality of the class, the variety of the different themes, and the way she brings it to the children. I remember one of the classes they had was with a puppet and I thought it was brilliant. It was a way to transfer the attention of the children into the puppet and the children just forgot they were in a class; they were having fun with the puppet, and I loved this way. And now the children are older, and she uses the ways with the songs, paper crafts, all the different movements, it's a great variety and I know how much work she puts into that, and I see the results with the children, right. They always love coming. They are asking for more. Asking questions about elements of Chinese culture. You really want the children to be curious at this age, they are 5 and 8 right now and they are curious. Then we also do our research because we don't have the answers to the questions.

2. After class do they go home and practice Chinese?

Answer: They are a bit young, and they only have one section per week but I'll see how things go in the future and Sisi laoshi also teaches at high school level so I have that with this time we can see what the future brings. Now it's just one hour in not much but we'll in a few years if we can intensify. It was quite intense in Singapore, so this is continuity. And you see how quickly the children learn when they trust the teacher. Trust is key.

3. What if they change teachers?

Answer: Sisi *laoshi* is amazing and she's amazing in surrounding herself with great teachers, so we always had a good experience.

4. Before joining little Panda did you join any other Chinese school here in Luxembourg?

Answer: No, we were very lucky. There are other schools in Luxembourg, but the format is very different and then now that we have this relationship, we don't want other places. And then we will discuss with her about how to continue the mandarin journey when the children are older, into the curriculum, cause more and more schools here have Mandarin sections so then we also ask for advice, to know where to go etc.

5. Why do you believe it's important for children to learn Mandarin in Luxembourg?

Answer: For us we had the Singaporean experience, my youngest was in a Chinese Singaporean daycare so she was really good at Mandarin, my older was in Germany school but also learning Mandarin. I wouldn't say it's relatively important in Luxembourg, I would say as a citizen in the world, the way themandarin is just growing, the population in China is huge, over 1 billion of people so you'll think it's sort of kind of English, it's very important to learn and understand one another's culture, in terms in peace in the learn is important, to

be able to communicate with the big Chinese powers as well **as the European.**
Learning Mandarin only benefits the world and the citizens. But why mandarin?
To be honest, is because of the Singaporean influence, the trigger point and they
thought it was important. And I saw that the children enjoyed it, and they learn
fast, and they keep asking when are we going to China.

6. For jobs would it be very good?

Answer: I think it's a plus, at that age we do really see it as professional oriented,
I don't have a plan for my children. But I just think don't matter what they do,
they'll always have this extra strength to their skills, if they use it's great, they'll
choose. we'll see if its open doors but honestly professionally/ personally, I don't
have an idea.

7. Have you noticed an improvement in the language learning?

Answer: Yes, even though they only have one lesson per week. Ideally next year
I would like to intensify. We had private lessons, but I like the group dynamic and
I really see the results. Cause they learn from each other; they make friends and
practice the Chinese. It's also about having fun as well.

8. Do you recommend Little Panda to other parents?

Answer: Yes, I actually already did recommend.

Appendix V – Interview with Parent – Elisângela (Layanna’s Mother)

(See point 3.2.5 for more information)

1. How did you learn about Little Panda? Did you search online or was it recommended to you?

Answer: I searched online, at the request of my daughter for many years.

2. What criteria did you consider when selecting this school? What aspects caught your attention?

Answer: The teaching method, the schedules, Debora and Sisi were captivating with their professionalism.

3. Do you think it's important for children to learn Mandarin in Luxembourg?

Answer: Yes, without a doubt, Mandarin can open new professional and cultural horizons.

4. Have you tried other Mandarin schools besides Little Panda? If yes, what do you think sets Little Panda apart from other schools?

Answer: No.

5. Have you noticed an improvement in your daughter's Mandarin skills after these months at Little Panda? Have you noticed any other positive changes? If yes, please provide some examples.

Answer: Yes, more personal commitment, a much greater interest in Asia and its culture.

6. Would you recommend Little Panda to other parents?

Answer: Yes, for its comprehensive education approach.

Annex I – Internship Notes – First 14 days

Internship Notes

Day 1

06.02.2023

- One of the tasks right before starting the internship was to search others Chinese schools (links provided by Sisi), to learn and observe how they are conducting their classes, how efficient they are to teach mandarin to children.
- Upon arriving to Little Panda Educational school, I was told to take a look on some of the books that are used to teach the children. While looking through the books, I was able to understand that the language was simple and easy to read and comprehend.
- During the Internship some of the tasks include:
 - 1- Analyse and look through all of the folders and documents on the schools Drive. I need to organize the files and name the files names in order to make it easier to find it.
 - 2- Post at least 2x per week on Little Panda social media (Facebook and Instagram). The first post was to introduce me as an intern and what was my role in the school. The future posts will consist of the things we learn on the classes, I must cover the children faces with stickers before posting in order to guarantee the children privacy and must have Sisi consent also. I need to also think about what these posts will benefit me and the business.
 - 3- Every Thursday I will give a privet lesson to a child called Fiona (I believe shes 6), and this hour will consist of me reading a book or playing a game etc. After the class, I will need to create a google sheet with the information about the class, for example, the

grammar we learned, the stories I read etc. Use my account and use Synology NAS which is a drive/cloud and can do like google sheet. This is used to inform the parents what their children are learning in school, they can also have access to the books and tools that are used in the classes so that they are more aware of the kids' education.

- 4- Other tasks consist of adding the websites and passwords on Microsoft to do list, it was sent by e-mail to me, and I need to put that information on the to do list because it is a more efficient way to have all the accounts and passwords all together, so that It cannot get lost on the e-mail. Besides that, I also created a google document on my computer so that I can access it easily.
 - 5- On this list, there are some relevant websites, in which consist of downloading material for classes. My job is to go through these websites and look for materials, download it and add it to the files on the Drive. I must put it organized on the Drive, so it is important to know the documents inside the drive so that I can know what to look for and where to put it.
- **Some facts about other Chinese's schools in Luxembourg:**
 - ✚ There are 2 other Chinese's schools in Luxembourg, they are cheap (around 200 per year) – see more information about it.
 - ✚ They are so cheap because they are sponsored by large groups in Lux.
 - ✚ However, they only have 2-hour long classes every Saturday. Little panda is different because they prefer to teach for shorter periods of time, 45 minutes each class, but they do it thought the week and not just one day specifically.

Internship Notes

Day 2

07.02.2023

- **Prepare the first two posts on Instagram:**
 1. The first post was about the Little Panda Chinese camp – Need to take screenshots of the website. Add a description talking about the activities and promoting the camp.
 2. The second post was an introduction about me (the new intern), in which I described my skill and connection to Chinese and teaching. Promoting my next activities and duties.
- Continue looking at the DRIVE to see what files are inside so that in future class preparation or tasks I know the things that are inside the drive so that I don't waste unnecessary time.
- **To do list on e-mail:**
 1. Research different Chinese schools, what are their class? Compare to Little Panda, what do you think we could learn from them? Especially in terms of how we should organise our lessons. Prepare a very short verbal report or list of points.
 2. check LP website, any comments?
 3. post about the "my body" activity.
 4. Check all Mandarin funfunfun past class material, link to working file: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1SC-neej8JQoZYDi3J-cJJEcP2ndGuBy9qBwR6_fYZVI/edit?usp=sharing link to the folder: LPE 教学资源 - 【小熊猫教材_Mandarin Funfunfun】
tell me what you learned in terms of how we designed the class.

- Sisi talked about a new teaching System – STEAM (Science, teaching, engineering, mathematics)
- Set the “TO DO LIST” with my priorities and working hours.
- Add the website of writing characters on the to do list so that it is not lost.
- Brainstorm to find a name for a new art class – Possible names:
 - 小\ artists / Mandarin Creativity/ Creative Panda

Day 3

08.02.2023

- Choose a Children book with a specific theme. I choose the fish theme, so the book that I chose was called "Nemo's friends" and the purpose of the book was to teach the names of the fish and specific Chinese words.
- After choosing the book it was time to analyse it to see what was most important. I also had to search and prepare some games for the class related to the book.
- The structure of the class is as follows:

Theme: Finding Nemo // 1, break ice: baby shark song		
2, Story about Nemo's friends, learn names of all types of fish and numbers.	SONG: Baby Shark Dance (China)	First, to start the class we heard the song "Baby Shark" so that she knows the theme in today's class will be related to fish. We learned the various types of fish we read in the book "Nemo has many friends" (尼莫朋友多). She tried to read by herself with my assistance. Then, We did the game in the book, which was to find the words "天" and "下". I used the card games to help Fiona practice the fish names again. Nemo 尼莫 / Ní mò / , Crab 螃蟹 / pángxiè / , turtle 海龟 / hǎiguī / , sea horse 海马 / hǎimǎ / , jellyfish 水母 / shuǐmǔ / , octopus 章鱼 / zhāngyú / . Then we wrote the fish characters with different colours for her to learn the colors: yellow 黄色 / huángsè / , red 红色 / hóngsè / , blue 蓝色 / lánshè / , green 绿色 / lǜshè / , purple 紫色 / zǐshè / , orange 橙色 / chéngsè / . Know how to say 'Come and see what I found' 你来看看, 我找到了什么。 / Nǐ lái kàn kàn, wǒ zhǎo dào le shén me.
3, Independent reading - book "Nemo has many friends". (尼莫朋友多)		
4, game time		Next time we will review the things we learned again and practice the animal names in the story.

- Conducted a brief interview with Sisi so that I had a new perspective of the company and learn more about its objectives and achievements.
- Search for book: "Company of 1 by Paul Jarvis"
- Continue to search for different Chinese schools.
- Finish the final preparations for Fiona.

Internship Notes

Day 4

09.02.2023

- Prepare for the class – Design a cube with fishes so that the student can guess the fish in Chinese.
- Give class to Fiona – 11h/12h
- After the class:
 - Give feedback to Sisi.
 - Organize the books.
 - At home: Write a detailed report about the class - also prepare for next classes – search websites for themes, games, word games, images games etc.

Internship Notes

Day 5

10.02.2023

- Continue to research to prepare future classes.
- Animal Themes.
- Search more about the ocean animals.
- In the afternoon plan to assist a class to see how it is conducted and to have a better understanding of what to do.

- On the excel: add the things the student knew to say/ if she could or not read the Chinese characters/ What were the words she had more difficulties – what she did in the games – did she find the words? Could read or write etc.
- Helped put together a shelf to put the children's books.
- Organize the books by sections (stories, activities, games etc)
- Prepare for the afternoon class – build and cut a magnifier glass for a kid's game.

WEEKEND

Day 6 & 7

11&12.02.2023

- Prepare for the class of two kids that start at 13h30 and ends at 17h (preparation: structure the class and activities, prepare the class material and the theme of the class).
- Search about effective ways to develop Instagram.
- Think about a caption for the Social Media Post about “My Body”.
- Find out what other schools post on social media to analyse it in a marketing standpoint.
- Assist the Chinese class.

Internship Notes

Day 10

15.02.2023

- Post the post about “My body”.
- Search for video editors for Project Panda – Story Panda, to record videos reading the books.
- Prepare for the afternoon class (books, materials etc)
- View all the Drive folders and organize them

Internship Notes

Day 11

16.02.2023

- New Idea: Create a word of the day to post on social media.
- Search the best apps to create the flashcards for the word of the day.
- The idea of the word of the day is also to make personal, meaning that I have the liberty to use my own photos (from Portugal, China, Luxembourg) of day-to-day objects. Ex: Eggs, trees, clouds etc. and create a word of the day to show the pictures and match it to Chinese characters so that people can learn while I also share my ideas.

Internship Notes

Day 12

17.02.2023

- When possible, search about the other 3 Chinese schools in Luxembourg and see how they prepare their classes, and how they compare and differ from Little Panda.
- Organize some papers from the classes.
- Add the rest of the books on the new drive folder, so that every book is organized and ready to use.
- Download handcrafts from 10 min handcrafts about various topics and themes. Ex: Travel, food, Halloween, Easter, Countries, Transportation, Weather etc.

WEEKEND

Day 12 & 13

18 & 19.02.2023

Internship Notes

Day 14

20.02.2023

- Post about the Word of the day.
- Continue searching and downloading the handcrafts on 10 min handcraft site.
- Add the translation on the flashcards I made for Thursdays class.
- Search the song about “粥” for Fiona’s lesson.
- Discuss with Sisi the activities for the future classes and start preparing the materials so that we already have everything done.
- Do more flashcards (60 characters) about the Chinese books we are working with.
- Don’t Forget to add the materials used for the flashcards on the drive so that it doesn't get lost.