

# How learning Business Chinese helped my career

In conversation with *Martina Fuchs, Business Journalist at Xinhua*



## WHY LEARN CHINESE?

Chinese is by far the most spoken language in the world with more than **1.3 billion speakers**. As a reporter it is crucially important to know the language of the country you're based in. I spent 5 years with CGTN in Beijing, where the working language was Mandarin and I mostly communicated with colleagues, cameramen and interview guests in Chinese. Having also studied Arabic and other African and European languages, I find Chinese the most difficult one to learn on the planet. But I love to challenge myself, train the brain, and memorize the Hanzi characters.

## JOB EXPERIENCE

I'm an international TV anchor, business journalist, event moderator, and expert on China and the Middle East speaking 9 languages and I am based in London and Zurich.

I currently work as a Europe business correspondent for Chinese state news agency Xinhua, international advisor for the St. Gallen Symposium, international consultant for the Lang Lang International Music Foundation and media ambassador for the Montreux Jazz Festival China.

Previously, I was a CNNMoney Switzerland TV anchor in Zurich and China Global Television Network (CGTN) senior business reporter in Beijing. Before that, I worked as a Reuters economy correspondent for the Gulf Arab region in Dubai and Reuters financial TV producer in London.

## BENEFITS OF TAKING A CHINESE COURSE

I've been studying Chinese Language and Culture for Business at CIBL since 2019. The course offers tailor-made classes and I can select the topics I would like to study with the teacher. The programme uses a blended learning approach both physically and virtually, and is comprised of business masterclasses with interesting guest speakers, intercultural communication training and a two-week study trip to China.

The course equips you with the right skills to **engage in business activities** in Chinese and help **expand your global network** with like-minded people.

I especially appreciate the flexible study hours and the personalised learning content which I can use in my work in the media industry.

## HOW DID CHINESE SKILLS HELP YOUR CAREER?

Studying Mandarin is not about just adding a new skill to your CV. It's a **long-term investment and commitment** and requires a huge amount of self-discipline. Chinese has helped me improve my **job opportunities and broaden my international career**. Multilingual employees are always at a premium in the marketplace, and technology will never be able to replace the joy and benefits of learning a language no matter the technological advances with Natural Language Processing, AI, Google Translate and other apps.

Learning Mandarin also helps boost your brain power, and it will sharpen your reading and problem-solving skills as well as creativity.

My Chinese language skills have helped me gain thousands of **important contacts in the business world** to CEOs, policymakers, and start-up entrepreneurs. Especially in the current environment Mandarin is a key asset and irreplaceable tool to **build bridges between East and West** and improve the communication and dialogue both ways.

## 3 TIPS FOR CHINESE LEARNERS

- **Study 15-30 minutes daily:** Audio-visual tools such as videos or short movies with Pinyin transcription and subtitles are proven to be the best way to study Chinese as well as other languages.
- **The Chairman's Bao:** This app publishes 1,600 lessons each year, has different HSK levels, various audio-visual tools, stroke order and character writing, and many more features. It's easy to use on the go and while you're waiting for something or someone. Work on it every day to build and refresh your vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and writing!
- **Hanzi and tones:** I also encourage learners to start with the Hanzi characters from day one and to devote time to memorise them. Personally, I struggled a lot with the four different tones so I try to listen to Mandarin speakers as often as possible.



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