

Faculty Project Information

BizChinese: A Student-Built Business Chinese Learning Mini-Program and App for Global Professionals	
Faculty Name:	Prof Lianyun Pang, Ph.D.
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Research Field:	Chinese language pedagogy and intercultural communication (with experience in teaching Business Chinese and Intercultural Communication, and research focus on second language pragmatics and experiential learning)
Brief Description	
<p>With the rapid expansion of international business engagement in China, global professionals increasingly require practical Chinese communication skills for real workplace interactions. However, most existing Chinese learning platforms emphasize general language knowledge and test-oriented content, offering limited support for authentic professional communication such as meetings, negotiation, requests, and refusals.</p>	
<p>This project addresses this gap by developing a student-built Business Chinese learning mini-program and mobile app grounded in real workplace needs. Integrating Chinese language pedagogy, data science, and product design, interdisciplinary student teams will collaboratively create a market-oriented digital learning product that supports practical workplace communication and intercultural competence. In partnership with selected companies and industry contacts, students will conduct needs analysis based on authentic workplace scenarios, collecting first-hand input from professionals to inform content design and product development. Under faculty supervision, students will design learning pathways, build prototypes, and iteratively refine a Business Chinese learning platform. The core instructional content focuses on four high-frequency professional communication modules: Business Meetings, Negotiation, Professional Requests, and Refusals & Conflict Management. These modules will be implemented through scenario-based micro-lessons, pragmatic strategy guidance, workplace vocabulary, and intercultural communication tips, emphasizing real-world usability, learner-centered design, and data-informed iteration.</p>	

Students will take primary responsibility for user research, content design, technical development, user testing, and product refinement. Data Science and Computer Science students will lead system architecture, backend development, analytics, and user experience optimization, while Business students will contribute to market positioning, user profiling, and product storytelling. Other participating students will support scenario design and intercultural case development.

Together, the team will produce a minimum viable product (MVP) and conduct pilot testing with potential users. The project follows a learning-by-building innovation pathway: students are not only learners, but also product designers, developers, and researchers. Through this process, students gain experience in interdisciplinary collaboration, educational technology development, user-centered design, applied research, and early-stage product incubation. Project outcomes include a functional mini-program and/or app prototype, core instructional modules, user testing reports, analytics summaries, and a market-facing product concept. The project may be further developed into Independent Study, Signature Work, or future educational technology and cultural entrepreneurship initiatives.

Expected Outcome(s)

- A functional MVP of a Business Chinese learning mini-program and/or mobile app
- Core instructional modules focused on workplace communication
- User testing reports and analytics summaries
- Product documentation and demo presentation
- Pitch deck for educational technology incubation
- Potential Signature Work or student co-authored demo / conference

Key Student Tasks

- Conduct user needs analysis with industry partners and Business Chinese learners
- Design scenario-based learning pathways for meetings, negotiation, requests, and refusals
- Develop the mini-program / app architecture and core features
- Implement backend systems, data tracking, and basic analytics
- Create bilingual instructional content and intercultural communication guidance
- Carry out user testing and iterative product refinement
- Produce project deliverables (demo product, documentation, pitch materials)
- Participate in final pitch and campus showcase

Additional Requirements for the Project

The project welcomes outreach with industry partners and potential users for needs analysis and pilot testing. Student-produced materials may be shared for academic and demonstration purposes. Any future commercialization or data use will follow university guidelines.