

WFPW Stuttgart, Germany's International Day of the Chinese Language Event

Gabriele Schickert and Ute Lemme
April 13, 2019



On the occasion of the International Day of the Chinese Language, WFPW Stuttgart/Germany organised an event which was attended by ten people, curious to learn more about the world's most spoken language.

After refreshments, Gabriele Schickert offered an opening prayer. Ute Lemme then told us about this important day. Since 1946, the UN has recognised six official languages, and one of these is Chinese which is spoken by 1.3 billion people. Then in 1973, 'official' or 'high' Chinese, which is based on the Mandarin version, became an official UN language. In 2010, the UN inaugurated the International Day of the Chinese Language, to be celebrated each year on 20 April, as an opportunity to reflect on the history and culture of the Chinese language. This year's topic was: 'looking for peace',

Chinese is spoken in 12 countries, and in three countries is the official administrative language. The Chinese language has several versions and dialects, but there are the same Chinese characters for the same terms.

After this introductory explanation, Ute showed several small videos on the following topics: four reasons to learn Chinese; Chinese is not difficult (it has almost no grammar); anyone can speak Chinese (highlighted with simplified Chinese characters and Latinized phonetics); an introduction to the Chinese language (with the rules of pronunciation) and learning to write Chinese (with a simple example). It was with great interest that we watched these very informative videos. And to round off this impression of the Chinese culture, we watched a short film: 'China's Treasures-from Peking to Shanghai'.

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