

During the spring of 2016 I had a successful exchange semester studying Mandarin Chinese at Fudan University as part of the Mandarin program at the Gothenburg University (GU) in Sweden.

I have spent the majority of my youth in China and learned Mandarin throughout my time there. However, my linguistic competence only extended as far as my spoken Chinese. There was a significant gap between my oral Mandarin and my proficiency in character recognition, reading comprehension and essay writing. My goal during my stay in Shanghai last spring was to build upon the areas in which I lacked and furthermore improve my knowledge of Chinese culture by travelling to new places and making Chinese friends.

My classes at Fudan University included spoken Chinese, intensive reading, listening, extensive reading, and essay writing. I made significant improvements in all subjects and passed all my exams. I had classes 5 hours a day, 4 days a week starting at the end of February till the end of June 2016. My teachers were all excellent and studying alongside my particularly bright classmates made my time in Shanghai even more enjoyable.

As well as my semester at Fudan, I also landed a summer internship at the Swedish company Haldex AB in Suzhou where I was apart of the component purchasing planning team. My time in Suzhou was particularly beneficial to my learning as I only spent time with the Chinese speaking staff both at work and during our spare time.

The university expenses were all covered by GU, however, all other costs, such as airplane tickets, visa fee, food, accommodation, insurance, travel expenses in Shanghai and China, etc. all came from my own pocket. Therefore, the monetary scholarship I received from Svenska Skolan i Beijings Stipendium was of great financial relief to my personal finances.

As a former student at Swedish School in Beijing, I am truly grateful for the support Svenska Skolan i Beijings Stipendium have given me in further developing my Mandarin and my continued pursuit in reaching my goal of working in China in the future.