

## Category: Student Work

### Project: 争夺！ Zhēng duó!

#### What was the challenge?

As a former student of Chinese as a foreign language, I found it difficult to understand all the complexity of such a language due to its differences in structure or syntax with Spanish. Slowly, I realized that the first steps to learn Chinese could be done through the understanding of the characters (Chinese writing), not only because they seem too hard to master, but because I became aware of its relevance to their culture and history.

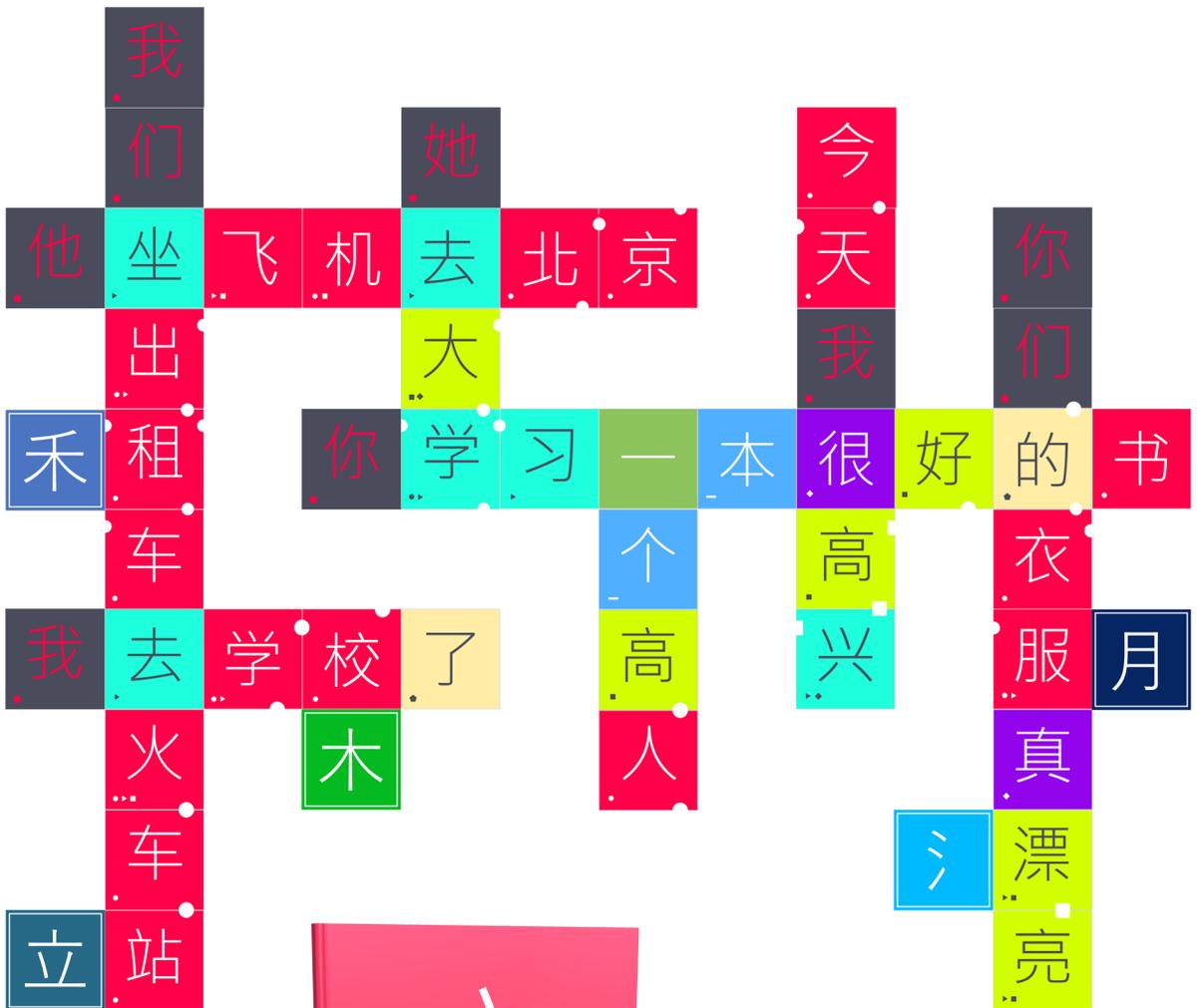
There is also a lack of didactic resources specially designed for Spanish speakers that study Chinese. When I was studying, I faced challenges in acquiring new and interesting learning material. Most of the times they were badly designed or too focused on grammar.

#### What was the solution?

Now, as a student of information visualization, I decided to design resources for learning and teaching Chinese, to make it easier for new learners. Radicals are the elemental structure units of characters. Based on radicals and their recognition, I proposed a boardgame: Zheng Duo! ('to scramble' or 'to contest'). In this game, players use tiles to make sentences, or tiles arrangement using the radicals at the back of the tiles. Colors and shapes are used to differentiate nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, measure words, and particles.

By using a reference booklet, students can verify not only the basic rules but also an overview of basic grammar. This game was designed using a vocabulary set from the HSK 1 list (Chinese language proficiency exam) and a most frequently used word list. Students can check information such as the characters, their pronunciation, the type of word, and the radicals on both sides of the tiles.





#### What was the effect?

So far, the game has gone through design iterations that have demonstrated an improvement in students' skills by recognizing the structural parts of Chinese characters. Besides, their engagement in game activities is far superior to book-based exercises.

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