

Chinese 1011

Week 1

Introduction

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Chinese “Characters”

- Characters/Morphemes are monosyllabic

nǐ hǎo xué zhōng wén
e.g. 你、 好、 学、 中文
you, good, learn, Chinese

- Chinese characters are morphologically and syntactically analytic while with no inflection.

wǒ xué zhōng wén
我 学 中文。 I study Chinese.

tā xué zhōng wén
她 学 中文。 She studies Chinese.

nǐ xué zhōng wén ma
你 学 中文吗? Do you study Chinese?

- Chinese is a tonal language. For example:

shuǐjiǎo (dumpling)  vs. shuìjiào (sleep)……
mǎi (buy) vs. mài (sell)

Hanyu Pinyin (拼音)

- Pinyin is a way to represent and express the sounds of Chinese characters using 25 English letters.
- Once you learn Pinyin you will know how to pronounce a character/word in Chinese and be able to type characters on electronic devices.
- Although Pinyin and English both use Roman alphabets, the sounds they represent can vary WIDELY.
- There are 3 parts in Pinyin to represent a pronunciation of a Chinese character: **Initial** (consonant), **Final** (vowel+ending consonant) and a **Tone**.

Syllable

Tone

wǒ

Initial

Final

Chinese Character

我

36 Finals/vowels Simple Finals (p. 2)

a o e

i u ü(v)

→ 3 semi-vowels

21 Initials/consonants (p.3)

1. b p m f /ending with (u)o/

2. d t n l /ending with e/

3. g k h /ending with e/

4. j q X /like FLAT jee, chee, shee/

5. z “tszz” C (ts) “ts-hh” S

6. zh “jerk” ch “chirp” sh “Shirley”

r “voiced Shirley”

<Important> In zi, ci, si, zhi, chi, shi, ri, the vowel is NOT /i/ like English “see”

Compound Finals (p. 7)

1. ai

ei

ao

ou

2. an

en

ang

eng

ong

3. ia

iao

ie

iu (=iou)

ian

in

iang

ing

iong

4. ua

uo

uai

ui (=uei)

uan

un (=uen)

uang

ueng

5. üe

üan

ün

6. er

Tones

(pp. 9-10)

mā

má

mǎ

mà

ma

妈

麻

马

骂

吗

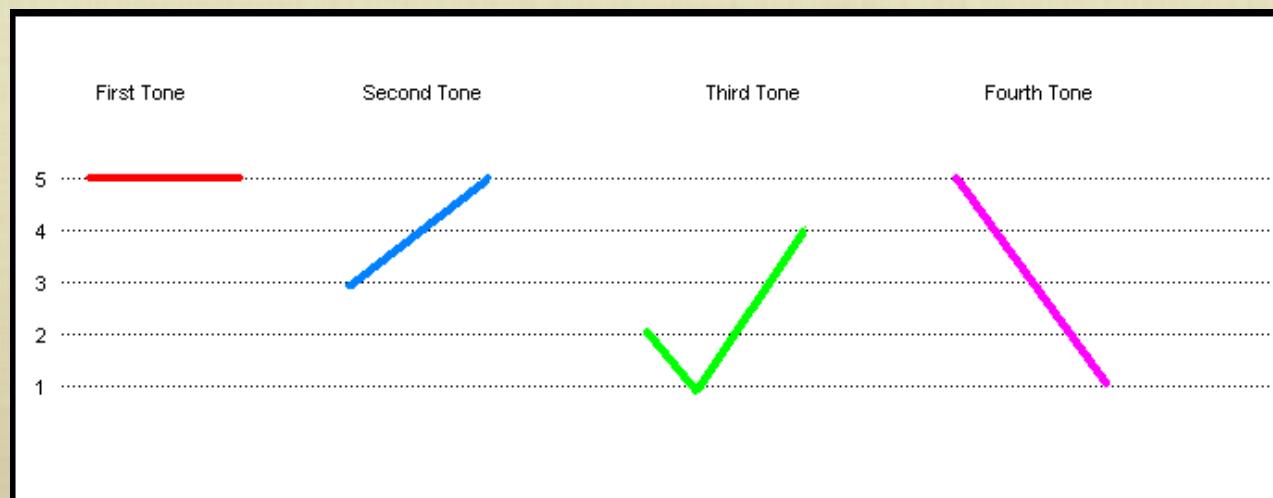
mother

hemp

horse

rebuke

Y/N Qs indicator



Spelling Rules (p. 8)

1. If there is no initial consonant before i, i is written as a semi-vowel, y. Thus ia, ie, iao, iu, ian, and iang become ya, ye, yao, you, yan, and yang. Before in and ing, add y, e.g., yin and ying.
2. If there is no initial consonant before ü, add a y and drop the umlaut: yu, yuan, yue, yun.
3. u becomes w if it is not preceded by an initial, e.g., wa, wai, wan, wang, wei, wen, weng, wo. u by itself becomes wu.

Spelling Rules (p. 8)

4. **ueng** is written as **ong** if preceded by an initial, e.g., **tong**, **dong**, **nong**, **long**. Without an initial, it is **weng**.
5. To avoid confusion, an apostrophe is used to separate two syllables with connecting vowels, e.g., **nǚ'ér** (daughter) and the city **Xī'an** (**nǚ** and **ér**, **Xī** and **ān** are separate syllables). Sometimes an apostrophe is also needed even if the two syllables are not connect by vowels, e.g., **fáng'ài** (to hinder) and **fāng'àn** (plan; scheme).

Spelling Rules (p. 5)

- The finals that can be combined with j, q, and x are limited to i and ü and compound finals that start with i or ü. When j, q, x are combined with ü (or a compound final starting with ü), the umlaut is omitted and appears as u. For example, jü, que and xüan become **ju, que** and **xuan**.

Online Pinyin Table

- As English and Chinese have very different phonetic systems, WYSIWYG (what you see is not what you get). When you are not sure how to pronounce certain combinations, the following website and app may help you (with the choice of four tones):
- Website: <https://chinese.yabla.com/chinese-pinyin-chart.php>
- Mobile App: Pleco, Pinyin Coach

Numbers (p. 20)

líng	yī	èr	sān	sì	wǔ	liù	qī	bā	jǐu	shí
〇	一	二	三	四	五	六	七	八	九	十
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Asking for someone's name

nǐ hǎo

A: 你 好。 (Hello)

You good. (Hello)

nǐ hǎo

B: 你 好。 (Hello)

You good. (Hello)

nǐ jiào shénme míngzì

A: 你 叫 什么名字? (What is your name?)

You (are) called what name?

wǒ jiào

B: 我 叫 (your given name) 。 (My name is ____.)

I (am) called _____.

Common Expressions

(Also see Textbook pp. 19-20)

nǐ hǎo

■ Hello - 你好

xìè xiè

■ Thanks - 谢谢

bù hǎo yì si duì bù qǐ

■ Excuse me / sorry - 不好意思 / 对不起

zài jiàn

■ Bye - 再见, colloquially, just say Bye~bye (similar to English)

Asking for names

nǐ hǎo

你好 = Hello

qǐng wèn

请问 = May I ask…

nǐ ne

你呢 = how about you?

guì xìng

贵姓 = be honourably surnamed