

初级上

# LOVE CHINESE AT FIRST SIGHT

Primary Level

施洁民 [日] 蒲丰彦 编著  
范祥涛 译



## 一见钟情学汉语

(英语版)



上海译文出版社

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江苏工业学院图书馆  
藏书章

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## Preface

*Learning Chinese at First Sight* is a textbook written for beginners of Chinese learning in English countries. It includes four volumes: Primary Level (Vols. I, II) and Intermediate Level (Vols. I, II).

In recent years with the constant intensification of communication between China and English countries in various fields, there have been an increasing number of people from these countries to come to China for study or visit or both. More enterprises from English countries choose to invest in China. These students, visitors and people from these countries staying at or living permanently in China for the sake of work — all of them highly expect to learn Chinese in a short period of time, using correct pronunciation to exchange ideas with Chinese people and correct speech to work. *Learning Chinese at First Sight* is a textbook just intended to satisfy these needs. For the convenience of beginners to remember what is learned, many exercises are specially designed.

This book is the first volume of the Primary Level, including such two parts as pronunciation and texts, in which over 670 words and more than 60 sentence patterns are embraced. They are mostly selected respectively from the contents of the first and second levels in *The Outline of HSK Vocabulary* and *The Outline of HSK Grammar*. Moreover, tens of new words are added which have been internalized in real life.

Our sincere thanks are indebted to Mr. Shen Xunfeng from Shanghai Translation Publishing House for his kind instructions during the writing and publication of this book.

Compiler  
June, 2003

词性简称表  
Abbreviations

adj.	adjective	形容词
adv.	adverb	副词
aux.	auxiliary	助动词
cl.	classifier	量词
conj.	conjunction	连词
int.	interjection	叹词
n.	noun	名词
num.	numeral	数词
pref.	prefix	词头
prep.	preposition	介词
pron.	pronoun	代词
suf.	suffix	词尾
v.	verb	动词

## Pronunciation

Chinese pronunciation consists of initials and finals in addition to four tones. Initials are similar to consonants and finals to vowels in English.

### I. Finals

#### 1. Monophthongs

Chinese pronunciation system has seven basic monophthongs in total. They are

a o e i u ü er

The pronunciation of /a/ is similar to the English vowel /a:/, with the mouth open widest and the tongue lowest in the mouth among all vowels.

The final /o/ is pronounced with the mouth rounded and smaller than when pronouncing /a/. It is similar to the short vowel /u/ in the word “book”, but the mouth is rounded and bigger in pronouncing /o/.

The Chinese sound /e/ differs considerably from any one in English. Its pronunciation is closer to the English sound /æ:/, but the former is pronounced with an obstruction between the back of the tongue and the soft palate.

The Chinese sounds /i/ and /u/ are similar to /i/ and /u:/ in English. But in pronouncing /i/, there is an obstruction between the front of the tongue and the front of the hard palate. Due to the influence of English pronunciation, some people tend to mispronounce the Chinese sound /i/ as the English vowel /i/.

The Chinese final /ü/ has no similar sound in English. It is pronounced in a manner similar to the English sound /u:/, but with the front of the tongue higher and an obstruction between the front of the

tongue and the front of the hard palate.

The Chinese final /er/ is pronounced with the tip of the tongue curled back, but not touching the hard palate. So it is similar to the English consonant /r/.

## 2. Compound finals

In Chinese, there are frequently the cases where two or three monophthongs are combined to form compound finals, including diphthongs, which can also be found in English. There are 13 of them in Chinese as follows.

ai	ei	ao	ou	
ia	ie	ua	uo	üe
iao	iou	uai	uei	

These compound finals fall into the following categories:

### ① Diphthongs

Diphthongs are finals which include two monophthongs, such as /ai/, /ei/, /ao/, /ou/, /ia/, /ie/, /ua/, /uo/, and /üe/. They are pronounced by sliding from one sound to another. But in reading these diphthongs, the two parts within each cannot be distinctively separated. This is similar to the pronunciation of diphthongs in English.

The pronunciation of compound finals with the vowel /e/ is comparatively complex. There are four of them:

ei	ie	üe	uei
----	----	----	-----

They are pronounced with a variation because of the influence of another sound in the same compound final. For example, in spite of the pronunciation of /e/, the Chinese sound /ie/ is pronounced in a manner similar to /je/, and the Chinese sound /ei/ is similar to /ei/ in English.

### ② Compound finals with three monophthongs

There are four compound finals in Chinese which have three monophthongs. They are /iao/, /iou/, /uai/, and /uei/. Here /u/ is similar to the English consonant /w/ and /i/ similar to /j/. So in reading these compound finals, it is necessary to read all the three sounds without any separation.

### ③ Nasal compound finals

In Chinese there are those finals ending with nasal consonants /n/ and /ŋ/, which have pronunciation respectively similar to /n/ and /ŋ/ in English. The following are such nasal compound finals and their roughly corresponding English pronunciations.

Chinese	an	ang	en	eng	in	ing	ong
English	æn	a:ŋ	ən	əŋ	in	iŋ	ɔŋ

Besides, there are other nasal compound finals which combine more finals with /n/ and /ŋ/, such as /ian/, /iang/, /uan/, /uang/, /uen/, /ueng/ and /iong/. Here again both /i/ and /u/ are respectively similar to /j/ and /w/ in English.

Chinese	ian	iang	uan	uang	uen	ueng	iong
English	jæn	ja:ŋ	wæn	wa:ŋ	wən	wəŋ	jɔŋ

Another two nasal compound vowels in Chinese are /üan/ and /ün/, which are similar to /juæn/ and /jun/ respectively in English.

In pronouncing a compound final all sounds within it must be read smoothly. Moreover, there are some sounds which have to be imitated after native speakers since their pronunciations are hard to be described exactly.

## II. Initials

Chinese pronunciation system has 23 initials, some of which roughly correspond to the consonants in English, as is shown in the following table.

Chinese	English	Chinese	English	Chinese	English	Chinese	English
b	b	p	p	m	m	f	f
d	d	t	t	n	n	l	l
g	g	k	k	h	h		
j	dʒi	q	tʃi	x	ʃi	r	r
zh		ch		sh		w	w
z	dz	c	ts	s	s	y	j

Among the above 23 Chinese initials, some are pronounced roughly in the same way as those corresponding ones in English while the others have pronunciations different from those in English.

Three points deserve special attention in practicing their pronunciations:

- (1) Pronunciations of initials;
- (2) Sounds which English pronunciation system does not have;
- (3) The place and manner of obstruction.

The pronunciations of Chinese consonants will be explained in detail in the following.

## 1. Pronunciation of initials .

### ① Initials similar to those in English

The Chinese language adopts Latin letters to indicate its pronunciation. Therefore, some Chinese initials are pronounced in ways similar to those English ones, as are shown in the above table.

For example, /**ma**/ in Chinese is pronounced as /**ma**/ in English.

### ② Initials different from those in English

The Chinese sound /**g**/ is pronounced as /**g**/ instead of /**dʒi**/, /**j**/ as /**dʒi**/ instead of /**j**/, /**q**/ as /**tʃi**/ instead of /**kju**/, /**x**/ as /**ʃi**/ instead of /**eks**/, /**z**/ as /**dz**/ instead of /**zi**/ or /**zed**/, /**c**/ as /**ts**/ instead of /**si**/, and /**y**/ as /**j**/ instead of /**wai**/.

The Chinese initial /**h**/ actually is pronounced a little differently in comparison with the glottal /**h**/ in English. The pronunciation of the



former has an obstruction between the back of the tongue and the soft palate, and a scraping noise is made at that point, while the obstruction in pronouncing the latter is at the glottis, and there is less obstruction at that point.

## 2. Non-corresponding sounds

In Chinese initials there are still three sounds, i.e. /zh/, /ch/ and /sh/, which are pronounced in special ways and have no corresponding sounds in English. Beginners need to imitate after teachers in order to pronounce them accurately. Furthermore, the Chinese language does not have the English consonant /v/, for which /w/ is used instead.

The sounds /zh/, /ch/ and /sh/ are most difficult to pronounce in Chinese. In pronouncing them, the tongue is curved, the tip of the tongue is close to the upper teeth ridge and light friction is made to produce these sounds.

## 3. The place and manner of obstruction

All Chinese initials are aspirated and voiced in their pronunciation, because they are read by combining them with another Chinese vowel, as are shown in the following table. So there is a further distinction between the sound values and their readings.

initial	reading	initial	reading	initial	reading	initial	reading
b	bo	p	po	m	mo	f	fe
d	de	t	te	n	ne	l	le
g	ge	k	ke	h	he		
j	ji	q	qi	x	xi	r	ri
zh	zhi	ch	chi	sh	shi	w	wa
z	zi	c	ci	s	si	y	ya

It is clear from the above table that the reading of a Chinese initial is always combined with another final, which is different from the read-

ing of consonants in English. The reading of Chinese initials remains the same when they combine with another final or finals to indicate the reading of a Chinese character. So the reading of a Chinese character has three parts. For instance, the reading “b + a” is “b + o + a”, but the final reading is still “ba”.

According to the place of obstruction and manner of obstruction, Chinese initials fall into seven groups:

(1)bi-labial — /b/, /p/, and /m/, where the obstruction is formed by the two lips;

(2)labiodental — /f/, where the obstruction is formed between the upper teeth and lower lip;

(3)alveolar — /d/, /t/, /n/, and /l/, where the obstruction is formed by the tip of the tongue and the upper teeth ridge;

(4)retroflex — /zh/, /ch/, /sh/, and /r/, where the obstruction is formed by the tip of the tongue and the back of the teeth ridge;

(5)palato-alveolar — /j/, /q/, and /x/, where the obstruction is formed between the surface of tip of the tongue and the teeth ridge;

(6)alveolar — /z/, /c/, and /s/, where the obstruction is formed between the tip of the tongue and the inside of the upper teeth;

(7)velar — /g/, /k/, and /h/, where the obstruction is formed between the back of the tongue and the soft palate

### III. Special pronunciations

In Chinese pronunciation, it is only needed to combine initials with finals to read Chinese characters. But there are some special pronunciations which do not conform to this way of reading.

#### ①Changes in reading “initial + final”

In pronouncing “initial + uei”, the sound /e/ becomes weak and will be omitted, so /uei/ is read as /ui/, as in /dui/, /gui/, etc. Similarly, /iou/ is read as /iu/, as in /diu/, /tiu/, etc., and /uen/ as /un/, as in /dun/, /gun/, etc.

#### ②/zi/, /ci/ and /si/

The sound /i/ in Chinese is similar to /i/ in English. Therefore it is possible to pronounce /zi/, /ci/ and /si/ as /dzi/, /tsi/ and /si/. In fact, the sound /i/ in /zi/, /ci/ and /si/ is not pronounced as /i/, but

with some modifications. As a result, /zi/, /ci/ and /si/ are respectively pronounced as /dz/, /ts/, and /s/, omitting the final /i/.

### ③ian

The Chinese final /a/ is similar to the English vowel /a:/. But in pronouncing /ian/, the sound /a/ between /i/ and /n/ is similar to another English sound /æ/. Then /ian/ should be pronounced as /iæn/, as in /jian/ and /tian/, which are respectively pronounced as /dʒiæn/ and /tiæn/. But there is no change in pronouncing /jiang/, which is pronounced as /dʒiæŋ/.

Besides there are two principles for writing Chinese *pinyin*, as follows:

①When Chinese finals begin with /i/ or /u/ where there are no initials to combine with them, then /i/ will be changed as /y/ and /u/ into /w/. That is, /i/, /ia/ /iao/... should be changed as /yi/, /ya/, /yao/... and /u/, /ua/, /uo/... should be changed as /wu/, /wa/, /wo/...

②When /j/, /q/, and /x/ are followed by the Chinese final /ü/, /ü/ will be written as /u/, as in /ju/, /que/, /xuan/..., respectively for /jü/, /qüe/, /xüan/. This is because the consonants /j/, /q/ and /x/ are never used together with the final /u/ in Chinese.

## IV. Four tones

### 1. Four tones and their positions

The pronunciation of a Chinese character generally consists of three parts: initial, final, and tone. For example, in pronouncing the Chinese characters “中国”, only /zhong/ and /guo/ are incomplete. With the addition of tones, they will become /zhōngguó/, which are complete *pinyin* for these two characters. There are four types of tone in modern standard Chinese pronunciation, called “four tones”.

(1)The first tone, called “level tone” and marked as “—”, which is high and long in pronunciation, as in /kāi/, /gē/, etc.

(2)The second tone, called “rising tone” and marked as “ˊ”, which rises from a modest tone to the higher “level tone”, as in /dí/, /gé/, etc.

(3) The third tone, called “falling-rising tone” and marked as “ˇ”, which first falls from a modest tone and then rises, but the rising part is normally not pronounced, as in /kǎi/, /gǔ/, etc.

(4) The fourth tone, called “falling tone” and marked as “ˋ”, which falls considerably from the level tone, as in /dà/, /gù/, etc.

Generally, one of these tone marks is placed on the top of a final in the pronunciation of a Chinese character. If there are two or more finals in a syllable, the tone mark is placed on the top of one final in such an order as /a/, /o/, /e/, /i/, /u/ and /ü/. For example, in the syllable /lai/, the tone mark is placed on the top of /a/, with the result of /lái/; in the pronunciation /shui/, the tone mark is placed on the top of /i/, with the result of /shuí/.

There is one exception in this principle. When there is the diphthong /iü/, the tone mark is placed on the top of /ü/ rather than /i/, as in /xiū/, /liǔ/, etc.

## 2. Tone Sandhi

Each Chinese character generally has one fixed tone. But in a small number of instances this fixed tone may change as a result of the influence from the tones before and after it.

(1) Two 3rd tones in a row

When the third tone occurs continuously, the tone changes in the following way:

third tone + third tone → second tone + third tone

For example, when /ě/ and /qiě/ occur together, they are pronounced as /érqiě/ instead of /ěrqǐě/.

(2) Rule for /bù/

The Chinese character /bù/ for negation changes from the fourth tone to the second tone when it occurs together with a fourth tone. For example, when /bù/ and /bì/ occur together, they are pronounced as /búbì/ instead of /bùbì/.

(3) Rules for /yī/

① The pronunciation of /yī/ (meaning “one”) has the first tone. But when it is followed by the first, second, or third tone, it changes into the fourth tone. For example, /yī/ and /biān/ put together should be

pronounced as /yìbiān/; /yī/ and /rén/ put together should be pronounced as /yìrén/; /yī/ and /běn/ put together should be pronounced as /yìběn/.

② When /yī/ occurs with the fourth tone, it changes into the second tone. For example, /yī/ and /bàn/ put together should be pronounced as /yíbàn/.

③ It remains unchanged when it indicates order or when it is in isolation and directly pronounced.

### 3. Neutral Tone

Besides the four tones, there are occasions where no tone mark is used in pronouncing some Chinese characters. These characters are usually used as suffixes after another character, such as /zǐ/, /tóu/. For example, /hái/ and /zǐ/ put together should be pronounced as /háizi/ (meaning “children”) instead of /háizǐ/; /shí/ and /tóu/ put together should be pronounced as /shítou/ (meaning “stone”) instead of /shítóu/.

In modern Chinese pronunciation, neutral tone is not confined to the pronunciation of these suffixes. It is also used in pronouncing a Chinese expression consisting of two characters, where the second one may be pronounced with a neutral tone. For example, /dì/ and /fāng/ put together should be pronounced as /difang/ with the meaning of “place”; /luóbo/ is a fixed expression which means “radish” in English. Neutral tone in reading characters results from habit. More examples:

谢谢 xièxie

对不起 duìbuqǐ

先生 xiānsheng

小姐 xiǎojiě

### 4. The retroflex sound /er/

This refers to the Chinese suffix /er/, as in /huār/ (flower). It is pronounced with the tongue curved backward and it is similar to the sound /r/ in the word “door”, which is articulated in American English.

In the cases of Chinese words with the ending of /i/ or /n/, they are pronounced with some changes. For example, /cí/ followed by /er/ should be pronounced as /cér/. For more examples,

小孩儿 xiǎoháir

玩儿 wánr

The following cases deserve special attention:

(1) The meanings of words are changed when /er/ is added. For example, some words are changed to indicate places when /er/ is added to them. The Chinese character “眼” /yǎn/ means “eye”, but its meaning is changed into “hole” when this character is followed by /er/. More examples,

这(this)→这儿(here)    那(that)→那儿(there)

(2) The parts of speech are changed when /er/ is added. The Chinese character “尖” /jiān/ is an adjective which means “sharp”, but it is changed into a noun with the meaning of “tip” when it is followed by /er/. More examples,

画(v.)→画儿(n.)    弯(adj.)→弯儿(n.)

(3) In some cases, there is no necessity to use the sound /er/ after the Chinese characters. When this sound is deliberately used, the resulting words can get new shades of meaning: friendliness, loveliness, buoyancy, etc. For example, the Chinese word “金鱼” (/jīnyú/, meaning “goldfish”) may be followed by /er/ to express the speaker's love for goldfish. More examples,

猫儿(māor)    鸟儿(niǎor)    玩儿(wánr)    花儿(huār)

(4) Words with the suffix of /er/ may be changed into different words. For example,

一块(num. + classifier) → 一块儿(adv. together)

一点(num. + classifier) → 一点儿(n. a little)

## Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b>	1
<b>Abbreviations</b>	1
<b>Pronunciation</b>	1
第一课 我是驻外人员	1
第二课 这是您的钥匙	8
第三课 办公室在二楼	17
第四课 会客室里有客人	25
第五课 休息天	33
第六课 去超市	42
第七课 见朋友	49
第八课 去参观东方明珠电视塔	58
第九课 他感冒了	66
第十课 生日	74
第十一课 我要邮票	81
第十二课 在学校	88
第十三课 过节	96
第十四课 坐地铁去吃饭	104
第十五课 做客	111
第十六课 去鲁迅公园	118
第十七课 护照不见了	125
第十八课 在银行	133
第十九课 加班	141
第二十课 发电子邮件	149
English translations of texts	157
Grammatical items of each lesson	166
Word list	169

Dì yī kè

# 第一课

Wǒ shì zhùwàirényuán

我是驻外人员



## Language Points

- a. 我是约翰·史密斯。
- b. 我不是学生。
- c. 他是中国人吗？





Text



Nín hǎo! Wǒ shì Shǐmìsī, shì Měiguó zhùwàirényuán.  
史密斯：您 好！我 是 史密斯，是 美国 驻外人员。

Nín hǎo! Wǒ xìng Wáng. Tā xìng Jiāng.  
王小姐：您 好！我 姓 王。他 姓 江。

Jiāng xiānsheng, nín hǎo!  
史密斯：江 先生，您 好！

Nín hǎo, Shǐmìsī xiānsheng!  
江先生：您 好，史密斯 先生！

Qǐng zuò!  
王小姐：请 坐！

Xièxie!  
史密斯：谢谢！

Words



- |         |               |         |                         |
|---------|---------------|---------|-------------------------|
| 1. 我    | wǒ            | (pron.) | I                       |
| 2. 是    | shì           | (v.)    | be, is, am, are         |
| 3. 不    | bù            | (adv.)  | not                     |
| 4. 学生   | xuésheng      | (n.)    | student                 |
| 5. 他    | tā            | (pron.) | he                      |
| 6. 人    | rén           | (n.)    | person                  |
| 7. 吗    | ma            | (aux.)  | (indicating a question) |
| 8. 驻外人员 | zhùwàirényuán | (n.)    | person living abroad    |
| 9. 你    | nǐ            | (pron.) | you                     |
| 10. 您   | nín           | (pron.) | (honorific form of “你”) |
| 11. 好   | hǎo           | (adj.)  | good                    |
| 12. 姓   | xìng          | (v.)    | ... surname is ...      |
| 13. 先生  | xiānsheng     | (n.)    | Mr.                     |
| 14. 小姐  | xiǎojie       | (n.)    | miss                    |
| 15. 请   | qǐng          | (v.)    | please                  |