



# RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

## **M.Ed. In TESL Program Language Group Specific Informational Reports**

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program  
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

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# TESL 539

Language Group Specific Informational  
Report

## ***CHINESE***

*By Xiaoxia Rao*

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*TESL 539*

	oracle bone <i>jiaguwen</i>	greater seal <i>dazhuan</i>	lesser seal <i>xiaozhuan</i>	clerkly script <i>lishu</i>	standard script <i>kaishu</i>	running script <i>xingshu</i>	cursive script <i>caoshu</i>	modern simplified <i>jiantizi</i>
rén (*nin) human	𠤎	亼	𠤎	人	人	人	亼	人
nǚ (*nra?) woman	𡗗	𡗗	𡗗	女	女	女	𡗗	女
ěr (*nha?) ear	𦊐	𦊐	𦊐	耳	耳	耳	𦊐	耳
mǎ (*mrā?) horse	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	馬	馬	馬	𠂇	马
yú (*ŋha) fish	𩺰	𩺰	𩺰	魚	魚	魚	𩺰	鱼
shān (*srān) mountain	𠂇	𠂇	𠂇	山	山	山	𠂇	山
rì (*nit) sun	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	日	日	日	𠄎	日
yuè (*ŋot) moon	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	月	月	月	𠄎	月
yǔ (*wħa?) rain	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	雨	雨	雨	𠄎	雨
yún (*wan) cloud	𠄎	𠄎	𠄎	雲	雲	雲	𠄎	云

# Chinese Characters

# Chinese Dialects

❖ Happy New Year in Dialects

**Dialects:**

Over 100

**Mandarin:**

885 millions

**Total**

**speakers:**

1.176 billion

1/5 of the

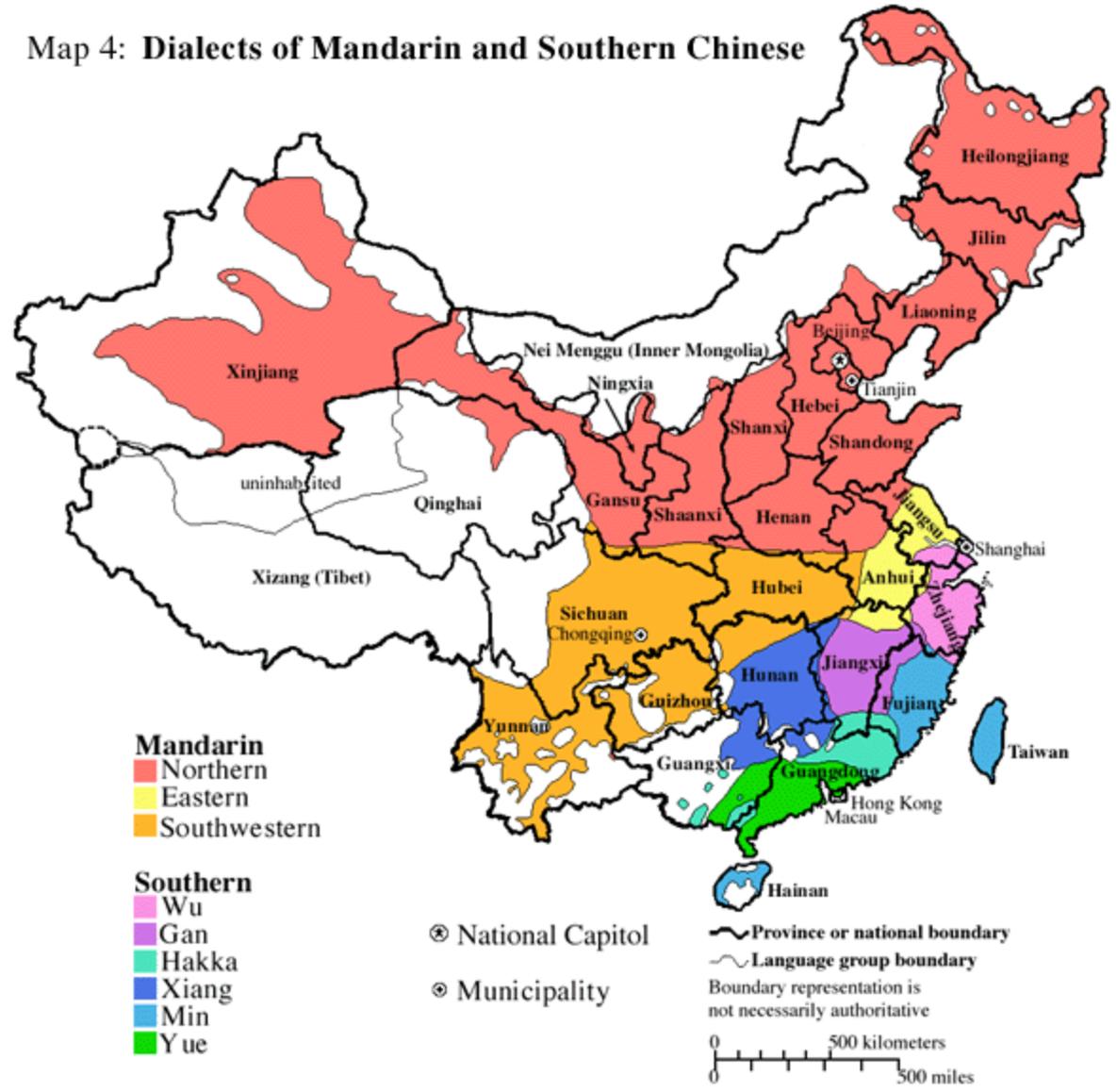
World

population

**Regions:**

China,  
Taiwan,  
Hong Kong,  
Singapore,  
Southeast  
Asia, and  
other regions  
with Chinese  
communities

Map 4: Dialects of Mandarin and Southern Chinese



# History

**1500-950 BC (Shang dynasty)**

on "oracle bones"

**25-220 AD (Late Han Dynasty)**

being standardized (used in  
Korea, Japan, Vietnam)

**1920s'**

Mandarin began developed



<http://sonicnovel.com/kanjia.html>

# Five tones/Pitch Changes

妈 mother

high level

麻 flax

rising

马 horse

falling and rising

骂 scold

falling

吗 a particle to questions

neutral

**Difficulties:** Intonation; adding a tonic value (often a falling tone) to individual syllables; speech may sound flat, jerky, or sing-song to English ears. e.g. You are welcome.

# Chinese Initials and Finals (Consonants & Vowels)

## Consonants:

no [v] sound e.g.  
invite

## Final Consonants:

duck

## Consonants

**clusters:** crisps,  
sprouts,

## Rhythms and

**stress:** Stress on  
words like the, a, to,  
etc.

## Multi-syllabic

**words:** disjointed,  
e.g. others,  
significance,  
sophisticated

Test

gāo	diǎn	Initial	b	p	m	f	d
糕	点	t	n	l	g	k	h
	cake	j	q	x	zh	ch	sh
		r	z	c	s	y	w
		Final	a	o	e	i	u
		ü	ai	ei	ao	ou	ia
		ie	iao	iu	ua	uo	uai
		ui	üe	an	en	ang	eng
		ong	ian	in	iang	ing	iong
		uan	un	uang	ueng	üan	ün
		er	—	/	∨	∖	

9/10

## Diphthongs:

quicker,  
smaller  
tongue and  
lip movement  
[ei]

## Vowels

## distinction:

bean vs. bin  
eat vs. it  
bag vs. beg  
fool vs. full  
short vs. shot

Difficulties in pronunciation, stress,  
intonation, listening and understanding the  
spoken English

# Chinese Characters (汉字)

象形 (pictographs):  
depict directly



ZDIC.NET



ZDIC.NET

指事 (Ideographs):  
pointing out the facts



ZDIC.NET



ZDIC.NET

会意 (compound ideographs):  
combination of meaning



ZDIC.NET



ZDIC.NET

形声 (semantic-phonetic  
compounds)



ZDIC.NET



ZDIC.NET

# Monosyllabic Chinese Characters

## Morphology

- Words usually consist of one or two morphemes for the most part of the language
- Non-inflected language  
Chinese uses word order, particles, adverbials, prepositions and word order to indicate grammatical relationship.
- Difficulties: -ed, -ing e.g. I like swim./ I go swim yesterday./ I go swim tomorrow./ Swim is my best favorite sport.

# Non-alphabetic/ Ideographic Writing System

## Difficulty in learning English spelling:

- **Mistakes from incorrect pronunciation** (e.g. significance spelt signinficance, signifincance or significace)
- **Omission of syllables** (e.g. determining spelt determing)

## Difficulty in learning to read English:

- **Slowing down the speed of reading**

# Syntax

- ❖ Articles do not exist (Difficulty: Articles are easily left out or misused)
- ❖ No plural forms for nouns; plurals can be expressed through an adjective quantifier (Difficulty: -s is often dropped out;)
- ❖ No distinction between subject and object pronouns (Errors: Use subject pronouns instead of object pronouns)
- ❖ Verb forms change by using adverbials, word order, and context.
- ❖ Verbs are not conjugated to reflect time, nor tenses in Chinese (Difficulties: in verb conjugation and tenses) e.g. “*What do you read now?*” for “*What are you reading now?*”
- ❖ Gerunds, participles and infinitives do not exist. (-ing and -ed are easily left out) e.g. “*I like swim.*” for “*I like swimming.*”
- ❖ *Positions of adverbials. I tomorrow morning come here.*
- ❖ *Conjunctions and compound sentences. Difficulties: Duplicate conjunctions of concession and cause)*
- ❖ Subject-adjective sentences in Chinese. (Difficulties: Subject-verb-adjective sentences)
- ❖ Word order is the same in both questions and statements. We add a particle (吗? ) to a question (Difficulty: inverted order, use of auxiliaries )
- ❖ The use of “yes” is different between Chinese and English.
  - to show understanding in Chinese
  - but not agreement (Difficulty: answer to disjunctive questions)
- ❖ Chinese sentences usually start with “topicalized” subjects or objects (Difficulties: making a defective passive sentence) e.g. “*Old people- must respect.*” means that “*Old people - we must respect them.*”

# Syntax (Cont.)

	Features	Difficulties/Problems/Errors	Examples
Articles	No	Articles are easily left out, inserted or misused	She is * teacher. /I can play violin./ He was in a pain./ Xiaohong is a tallest girl of our class./ It took me a hour to clean my room.
Nouns	No plural forms; can be expressed through an adjective quantifier (about 150 quantifiers in Chinese)	-s, -es, -ies are easily left out or misused	I have many comic book*. Let me tell you an interesting news.

# Syntax (Cont.)

	Features	Difficulties/Problems/Errors	Examples
Pronouns	No distinction between subject and object pronouns	Use subject pronouns instead of object pronouns	I love she (for her).
	No distinction between determiners and non-determiners	Use determiners instead of non-determiners	This book is my (for mine).
Verb forms	No inflection in Chinese	Subject-verb concord	Everybody are (for is) here.
	No tense, time, and aspect	Progressive aspect	What do you read? (for <i>What are you reading?</i> )

# Syntax (Cont.)

	Features	Difficulties, problems, or Errors	Examples
Adverbials	<b>Usually come before verbs and adjectives</b>	Positions of adverbials	I tomorrow morning come here.
Conjunction & compound sentences	Usually link together	Duplicate conjunctions of concession and cause	Because I didn't know him, so I didn't talk to you. Although...but ...
Subject-verb-adjective sentences	No verbs between subjects and adjectives in Chinese	Verbs are easily left out	She * very tall.

# Syntax (Cont.)

- Word order is the same in both questions and statements.  
We add a particle (吗? ) to a question

Difficulty: inverted order, use of auxiliaries )

- The use of “yes” is different between Chinese and English.  
----- to show understanding in Chinese  
----- but not agreement

Difficulty: answer to disjunctive questions)

- “topicalized” subjects or objects usually start sentences in Chinese

Difficulties: making a defective passive sentence

e.g. “*Old people- must respect.*” means that  
“*Old people - we must respect them.*”

# Communication Styles/ Social Etiquette

<b>Styles</b>	<b>Chinese People</b>	<b>Western People</b>
<b>Directness of questions, answers, responses, accusation, eye-contact</b>	<b>Indirect/implicit/non-verbal/averting eye-contact is the sign to show respect and give self-privacy</b>	<b>Direct/explicit /verbal/the sign of disinterest even disrespect</b>
<b>Physical touching</b>	<b>Very little/avoided between strangers</b>	<b>Very much</b>
<b>Personal space when standing</b>	<b>Smaller/closer to show more friendly</b>	<b>larger</b>
<b>gestures/pointing/calling</b>	<b>less/using an open hand/waving all fingers with palm facing down</b>	<b>more</b>
<b>Facial expression smile/frown</b>	<b>more/smile: embarrassment /frown: disagreement</b>	<b>less/smile is a sign of joy</b>
<b>Group dependency/hierarchy /who speaks first</b>	<b>Group dependent/self-effacing/modest/the oldest</b>	<b>Self-promoting/ego-centric/</b>

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## Image

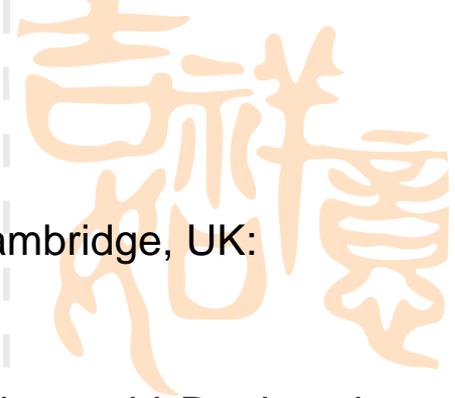
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## Video

Learn to read and write Chinese characters [Video file]. Retrieved from:

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谢谢 Thank you!

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