

The Sounds of Chinese with Audio CD

Yen-Hwei Lin

**Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1536377 in Books Cambridge University Press 2007-12-17 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.72 x .75 x 6.851, 1.53 #File Name: 0521603986328 pages | File size: 35.Mb

Yen-Hwei Lin : The Sounds of Chinese with Audio CD before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sounds of Chinese with Audio CD:

33 of 35 people found the following review helpful. Will help you learn the language By Colin McLarty Even the best introductory Mandarin materials try to encourage learners by seriously under-stating the difficulties of pronunciation. (I refer specifically to ChinesePod, Pimsleur I-III, and books by Claudia Ross. I have also compared Fluenz, which has many fine features, and Rosetta Stone.) They approximate Mandarin consonants by consonants we use in English. You can get by on this travelling in China (I know this) as long as you get the vowels right and get the tones right at least most of the time. But these sources also understate the subtlety of the vowels. In fact Mandarin uses consonant sounds that do not exist in English. These are notably the consonants which pinyin spells j, q, x, and r. Also, Mandarin uses b

and t in ways English does not. These pronunciations are virtually impossible for an English speaker to learn to say, or even to hear consciously, simply by being exposed to them with no comment on them and no explanation. The Chinese tones evolved to work with the language as pronounced in China! They are often awkward with Anglicized consonants. The grouping of syllables into phrases goes better with the syllables pronounced as in China. Correct pronunciation is difficult for Anglophones but is no mere frill. It helps you absorb the language. It does also make you a better speaker. The endless debate over Daoism versus Taoism is due to the fact that the Mandarin word begins with a sound that English never uses to start a word. It is like an English initial letter "d" but not voiced. It is like an English initial letter "t" but not aspirated. To phonologists it is a "voiceless alveolar (unaspirated) plosive." If you are not familiar with this, put your hand in front of your mouth and say "cat," then say "tack." You will probably notice a puff of air on the "t" in "tack" that does not exist on the "t" in "cat." If you can say "Taoism" with a "t" but no puff of air you are on the right track. No introductory Mandarin material that I know of discusses this -- though it may be somewhere in the growing body of discussion on ChinesePod. This book gives beautiful usable explanations. Besides a very helpful cd of examples, it tells you how to hold your mouth and lips and tongue and how the air flow should feel. The tongue positions especially are often ones we simply do not use in English. You will not invent them on your own simply from hearing spoken Mandarin -- unless you are an incredibly gifted mimic. The book is long, and perhaps daunting. But you can dip in for one or another issue that you are interested in. That is what I have done so far. It necessarily introduces a good bit of general phonetics, but it does this in a well paced way, bringing in more when more is needed, rather than front-loading all the general principles. Personally, I wish introductory materials would give more accurate phonetics from the start. And these materials get better all the time as skilled teachers develop them. I believe they will come to use more accurate phonetics. But for now, once you are past Pimsleur I or ChinesePod newby you can benefit a great deal from this book. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Sounds of Chinese By Elaine I love "The Sounds of Chinese" because this book is so wonderful to help us learning for Chinese Linguistics lesson. We use this textbook for required textbook. 5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Excellent for those who have the energy to take advantage of it, but a technical difficulty By (((Marco Buendia))) Digging through the dumpster behind the Zero Public Library (Mississippi), lying on top of the usual worn-out romances and all the multiple copies of James Patterson Inc.'s product from two months back, I found this set on the speech sounds of "Standard Chinese", book and audio (not MP3) CD. The Director's eyes narrowed as I came in. She snorted, turned and bout-faced-marched into what she thought was her office. But it was the broom-closet. The fellow at the "Solution Desk" tensed a bit as I approached. -This is going too far, totally new book in the dumpster. And expensive too. (A bum who lives behind the Library has an I-Pingle he was given by the Salvation Army. We'd checked for the price.) "Well, if you won't blab ..." -I never have (except in reviews, in the pursuit of consumer empowerment and free speech). "We bought it for the Mayor's daughter. Her boyfriend, fianc, it looked, for a while, was Chinese. -And?" He insisted on speaking English all the time. And then they broke up anyway. She started going out with a fellow from Trinidad. He's into Black Power, or whatever they call it these days. So we bought some books on Swahili. "So now I have it. Free of charge. This book offers an *exceedingly* detailed description of *all* the sounds of Mandarin Chinese ("Standard Chinese", the author calls it), segmental and super-segmental (or prosodic, as classicists used to say). In Mandarin, of course, this latter term means, among other things, the four (or five, depending on how you count) tones. So it covers the tones and devilish distinctions like the difference between Pinyin "x" and "sh", etc. But beyond this, it is a detailed description, both practical and philosophical, of modern spoken Mandarin Chinese, dialect, speech register, assimilation of foreign stuff into Chinese, and so on. More than anybody in Zero could possibly have wanted, even if they had a Chinese boyfriend who spoke Chinese. But here's the bad part: the CD wouldn't play. At all. My CD player said, "NO DISC". (I see from another review that other people have had this experience.) This really took the fun out of it, in fact, removed the book's raison d'etre. Or almost. The data offered in the book is so clearly composed, with IPA all over the place, that you'll still get the idea. IF, that is, you're a language nerd, and nimble in transferring abstract knowledge to the concreteness of speech organs blabbering away in the patient air. But most people aren't like that, of course. "IPA?! Might as well learn Chinese!" I had been looking forward to buckling down and perfecting my Mandarin, maybe pass for a mandarin (forgive the pun), and wound up, as so frequently, very exercised with the bad state of technology. My friend Harlow listened to my rant, then said, "Dont git so bothered by it. It aint a O-ring, er a nuclear reactor. H---, it aint even a flat-tire on a motorcar, middelhthenight in the Delta. An' you got it from the library, sorta. So you didn't pay nothin for it."

This accessible textbook provides a clear introduction to the sounds of Standard Chinese, designed for English-speaking students with no prior knowledge of linguistics. It explains from scratch the fundamentals of articulatory phonetics (the study of how speech sounds are produced) and phonology (the study of sound systems), and clearly applies them to the phonetic and phonological properties of Chinese. Topics covered include consonants, vowels, syllable structure, tone, stress, intonation, loan words and different varieties of Standard Chinese. Clear comparisons with English sounds are given wherever relevant, along with practical pronunciation advice. All the sounds described are demonstrated by native speakers on the audio CD (included) and over fifty graded exercises are provided,

encouraging students to put their knowledge into practice. Building a solid understanding of how Chinese sounds work, this text will be invaluable to students of Chinese wishing to improve their pronunciation, their teachers, and students of Chinese linguistics.

About the Author Yen-Hwei Lin is Professor of Linguistics at Michigan State University. She is editor of Special Issue on Phonetics and Phonology (*Language and Linguistics* 5.4, 2004) and Proceedings of the Fifteenth North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics (2004).