# Chinese Language (Language and Phonology), Year 1, Three-Year Course Students

## Prof. Enrica Peracin

# Chinese Language classes (Year 1, Three-Year Course Students)

# Ippolita Lo, Li Man, Zhang Yingying

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***Text under revision. Not yet approved by academic staff***

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with an overview of the linguistic situation in China and of the structure of Standard Chinese, with a particular focus on the phonetic-phonologic and prosodic aspects of the spoken language and etymological aspects of its writing system.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- understand and explain the prosodic features of Chinese;

- recognise the various transcription systems of the Chinese;

- recognise and be able to explain the differences between pictograms, indicators, logical aggregates and phonetic compounds.

***COURSE CONTENT***

- Description of the variety of languages spoken in the People's Republic of China.

- Genetic and typological classification of the Chinese language.

- Phonetic and phonological elements: the Chinese consonant and vowel system, the syllable, the tonal system, the phenomena of sandhi, the atonic syllable, the rhotacization, and prosodic patterns.

- Romanisation systems.

- The Chinese language writing system: origins, classification and structure of Chinese characters, simplification of characters, writing as an artistic expression, Chinese writing today, memorization of characters.

- The most important Chinese dictionaries throughout the history of China.

***READING LIST***

* Lecture notes.
* Arcodia G.F. – Basciano B., *Linguistica cinese,* Pàtron, Bologna 2016 (selected chapters)
* Masini F., Romagnoli C., Zhang Tongbing, Chang Yafang, *Comunicare in cinese vol. 1,*Hoepli, Milano, 2021

non-mandatory reference materials

* San Duanmu, *The Phonology of Standard Chinese, second edition*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2007
* M. Abbiati, *La scrittura cinese nei secoli. Dal pennello alla tastiera,* Carocci, Rome, 2017

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will be delivered through a combination of lectures and practical classes.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam will be oral in format. Students will be assessed on the knowledge and skills acquired as follows: the exam will consist of a practical part and a theoretical part, in which students will be assessed on the skills acquired both on a theoretical and applied level. Specifically, the practical part consists of the following exercises:

1. recital from memory of the poem by Li Bai (max. 5 marks);
2. reading and presentation of exercises covered during lectures (max. 7 marks);
3. analysing the type of character (pictogram, phonetic compound etc.) (max. 3 marks).

The maximum mark for this part is 15. Students who pass the practical part (with a minimum of 9 marks) will be asked three questions on the theoretical part of the course for a maximum of 15 additional marks.

The weighted average of the marks for the interim spoken and written language tests will contribute to the final mark.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students are strongly encouraged to attend lectures regularly. Students may only access the Chinese Language 1 exam (Language and Phonology) after passing both the written and oral language test (in any order) of the corresponding course year.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The main aim of the course is to provide students with the theoretical and practical foundations for a good level of written and spoken Chinese. In particular, the course will teach students the basic phonetics, phonology and morpho-syntax underlying the spoken language, and will focus on analysing, recognising and pronouncing the Chinese characters correctly, both simplified and traditional.

The activities proposed throughout the practical language classes in the first year of the course are designed to bring students up to and beyond level HSK2/elementary HSKK.

By the end of the course, students will be able to interact in a simple way about everyday life both in the written and spoken language. By the end of the course, students will be able to articulate the sounds of the Chinese language correctly and will be able to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity on the topics covered in the course text. Oral and written comprehension and production skills will be developed gradually and simultaneously.

Throughout the year, students will conduct exercises designed to help them assess their own progress and exam preparation. The ability to communicate and interact will be developed through interactions with the mother-tongue lecturers.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Description and practice of the Chinese phonetic system, with a particular focus on producing tones;

Basic concepts for learning to produce and to understand language in various everyday situations.

Ways of producing and analysing characters and the correct pronunciation of basic Chinese vocabulary;

Basic syntactic structures for producing short written texts;

Basic vocabulary.

Active writing and reading of characters, both in books/by hand and on the computer

***READING LIST***

Students must check the reading list at the beginning of lectures.

Masini F. – Romagnoli C. – Zhang Tongbing – Chang Yafang, *Comunicare in cinese*, vol. 1, Hoepli, Milano 2021.

Grammar books (for individual study):

C. Romagnoli, Wang Jing, *Grammatica d’uso della lingua cinese. Teoria ed esercizi.* Hoepli, Milan, 2016.

Dictionaries:

Zhang, Shihua (edited by), *Dizionario di cinese (cinese-italiano, italiano-cinese),* Hoepli, Milan 2007.

Zhao, Xiuying (edited by), *Il Dizionario di cinese (cinese-italiano, italiano-cinese),* Zanichelli, Bologna 2013.

Casacchia Giorgio, Bai Yukun, *Dizionario cinese-italiano*, Cafoscarina, Venezia, 2013

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures will include:

- explanation of grammar in the classroom

– Listening comprehension activities based on simple texts.

- speaking and conversation exercises (sentences and short conversations).

- writing exercises: Chinese characters and short compositions

- the translations of short sentences and texts

- listening and dictation activities.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final mark will be based on a written and oral assessment.

The written test will be structured as follows: dictation, reading comprehension and writing exercises based on the basic grammatical and lexical content taught throughout the year; comprehension questions based on a short written text; production of a written composition. Dictionaries are not permitted. During the year, students will complete self-assessments to gauge their progress. These contribute in no way to the final assessment.

In the oral exam, students will: read the texts and characters examined in lectures, answer comprehension questions on daily life topics, look up new characters in the dictionary and produce sentences using the vocabulary and grammar structures studied during the year.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

The syllabus applies to all levels (beginners, intermediate and advanced). Before the beginning of lectures, students will be divided into groups based on their initial language level.

The series of practical language classes in the first year (which lasts one year) includes a series of "reinforcement" classes intended for beginners.

Students require knowledge of grammatical, logical and sentence-level analysis and of grammatical terminology in Italian, as well as an interest in Chinese language and culture. Students must achieve the level expected in the first year to pass the interim exams of subsequent years. In order to learn effectively and acquire long-lasting knowledge, students must participate proactively in practical classes and regularly complete the assigned tasks, so that they can consolidate the knowledge and language skills developed in class.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.