

Mandarin: an easier language

- minimal unit of meaning: a character
- Character: a mono-syllable word with tone

我 爱 你
[我 愛 你]
Wǒ ài nǐ
I love you

Writing

- English: Alphabetic
 - Meaning: Unique sound
 - dog vs. cat
- Mandarin: Ideographic
 - Meaning: Unique Form
 - 狗 gǒu dog
 - 苟 gǒu if (archaic)

What is equivalent to an English word?

- A WORD is made of 1, 2, 3 or 4 characters
- rén 人 person
- nán-rén 男人 male-person —> man
- nǚ-rén 女人 female-person —> woman
- dà-rén 大人 adult
- Zhōngguó-rén 中国人[中國人] China-person —> Chinese
- Mòxīgē-rén 墨西哥人 Mexico-person —> Mexican

Basic constructs

- Basic Word Order: S V O
Wǒ ài nǐ
I love you
- Serial Vs: V1 V2 V3...
Wǒ yào xué Zhōngwén
I want learn Chinese

How to make a questions?

Add Q-word: No auxiliary, no order change

- Nǐ ài wǒ ma?
You love me Q?
- Nǐ ài shéi?
You love who?
- Nǐ xǐhuān shénme?
You like what?

How to negate?

- Add negation marker: **Bú** vs. **Méi**

- State: NOT True

Wǒ **bú** ài nǐ
I **NOT-true** love you

- Event: **Méi** = NOT exist-not realized

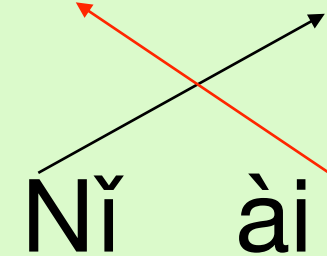
Wǒ **méi** ài nǐ
I **NOT-happen** love you

Case and person distinctions

- NO case: nominative=accusative

Wǒ ài nǐ I love you

Nǐ ài wǒ You love I



- NO inflections: no -s on the 3rd person singular

Wǒ	ài	Tā	ài	Tāmen	ài
I	love	He	love	They	love

Number:

Singular vs. Plural Noun

- No number marking on nouns:

yì běn shū
One Classifier book 'a book'

liǎng běn shū
Two Classifier book 'two books'

How to distinguish tense?

- NO Tense marking on the verb:

Wǒ qù I go

Wǒ zuótiān qù I yesterday go

Wǒ míngtiān qù I tomorrow go

- Past: marked by time or completive aspect le

Wǒ qù le I go-completed

- Future: marked by verb of wanting yào

Wǒ yào qù I want go

变调的教学[變調的教學]

The Tone Sandhi

1. nǐ hǎo mǎ nǚ

2. ˊ + ˊ _____> ˊ + ˊ

nǐ hǎo _____> ní hǎo

hěn hǎo _____> hén hǎo

yǔ fǎ _____> yú fǎ

kěyǐ _____> ké yǐ

3. the 3rd is read aloud as a half 3rd tone

hěn gāo

hěn dà

jiě jie