

Chinese Language

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Course Aims

The course is intended for students with no prior knowledge of the Chinese language and aims to provide the basic elements of phonetics, writing, and the fundamental structure of the Chinese sentence. The objective is to introduce students to the learning of standard Chinese (Putonghua), both spoken and written, in everyday and routine contexts, creating the conditions for autonomous use of basic syntactic structures.

By the end of the course, students will be able to interact in simple conversations about everyday life situations, read, understand, and translate short texts, and will also have acquired the basic syntactic structures of the simple sentence as well as the formative principles of Chinese characters, their classification, and their structure.

Course Contents

Introduction to the Chinese language and writing system. Introduction to phonetics and the pinyin transcription system; initials, finals, and tones; tonal variations; analysis of the Chinese syllable; characters and words; the phenomenon of homophony. Introduction to writing; simple and complex characters; structures of complex characters; semantic and phonetic components; recognition of radicals; basic strokes. Personal pronouns; the verbs 是 and 有; the basic structure of the Chinese sentence (SVO); affirmative sentences; interrogative sentences (with the particles 吗, 呢, and 吧, by repetition and with interrogative substitutes); negation with 不 and 没; the adverbs 也 and 都; Chinese punctuation; determination with 的; the use of 在 as a verb and as a preposition; the demonstratives 这 and 那; the use of classifiers; verb reduplication and the use of the complement 一下儿; numbers from 1 to 100; the nominal predicate sentence; the modal particle 了; the use of 在 as a verb and as a complement; serial verb constructions; motion verbs 去 and 来. Conversation topics include: greetings and polite expressions, introducing oneself and others, asking for and giving phone numbers and addresses, time, date, and day, hobbies, age, price, talking about oneself and one's family, expressing intentions. Lessons will be structured to promote active student participation. Each theoretical explanation will be followed by an appropriate number of grammatical and/or linguistic exercises aimed at developing writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills.

Exam

Written exam with multiple-choice exercises, insertion, recombination, transformation, and sentence translation. During the course, a detailed description of the exam structure and assessment criteria will be provided.

Bibliography

Abbiati, Magda; Zhang Ruoying (2010). *Dialogare in cinese, vol. I*. Venice: Cafoscarina. Additional materials will be used and provided by the instructor during the course.