



Developing a Corpus-based Online Pronunciation Learning System for Cantonese Learners of Mandarin

CHEN Hsueh Chu, Rebecca

WANG Li Xun

KEUNG Shuet

HAN Qian Wen, Veronica

veronicahan923@gmail.com





The Project - Aim

- To develop a corpus-based online pronunciation learning system for Mandarin teachers, learners and researchers
- To help users better understand the major problems in learning Mandarin pronunciation encountered by Hong Kong
 Cantonese learners

The Project - Motivation

- Hong Kong is a metropolitan city that serves as an international financial centre, which has given rise to multi-lingual characteristics in recent years.
- In addition to Cantonese and English which serve mostly as first and second languages, Hong Kong residents have increasingly started to develop a third or even a fourth language.
- Mandarin is encouraged by the Biliteracy and
 The Education University lingualism (两文三语) language policy.

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Mandarin Education in Hong Kong

- The education of Mandarin started in 1984 in Hong Kong school curriculum as an **elective subject** and became a **core subject** in primary and secondary school curricula in 1998 (Leung & Hui, 2011).
- The Hong Kong Examinations Authority (HKEA) included the Test of Proficiency in Putonghua as **public examination** (Tse et al., 1995).
- Exposure to Putonghua does not lead to a 'satisfactory advance in the levels of Putonghua proficiency' due to the fact that media and political debates and education are not supportive enough to

the learning of Putonghua (Leung and Hui, 2011, p. 18).

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Spoken Corpora

- It is believed that language in spoken form can be an effective guide to the basis of language learning than in written form (Chui & Lai, 2008).
- As information technology progresses, there is a growing interest in developing spoken corpora. A number of spoken corpora have been constructed for various research and pedagogical purposes.



Chinese Spoken Corpora

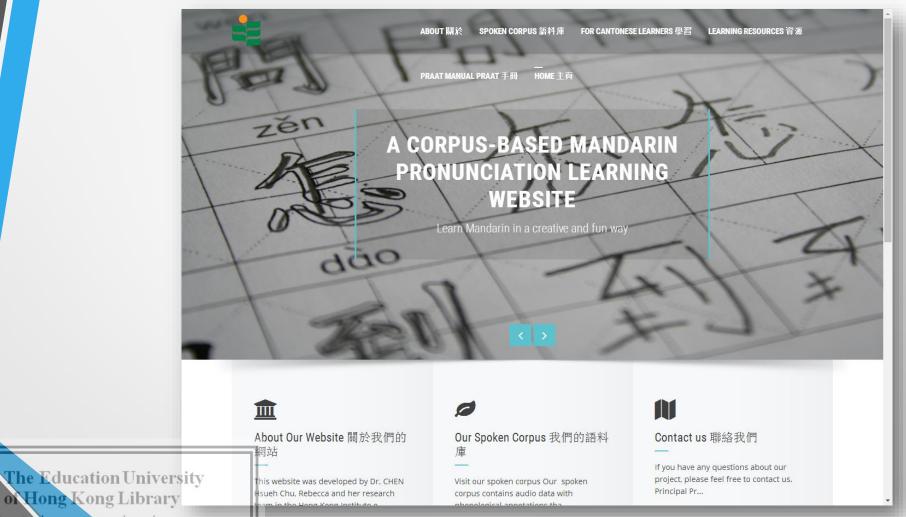
- The National Chengchi University (NCCU) Corpus of Spoken Chinese which established an online access to spoken Mandarin, spoken Hakka, and spoken Southern Min (Chui & Lai, 2008)
- The Mandarin Conversational Dialogue Corpus (MCDC) contains 30 sets of spontaneous dialogues in Mandarin
- The Mandarin Map Task Corpus (MTCC) involves 26 sets of dialogues that are orthographically transcribed
- The Hong Kong Cantonese Adult Language Corpus (HKCAC) contains both the orthographic and phonetic transcriptions of spoken Cantonese from the radio in late 1990s



The PolyU Corpus of Spoken Chinese comprises of conversational in spoken Cantonese with 28 transcripts in early 2010s

Research Gap

- 1. Most of the Chinese spoken corpora simply compile speech data without annotation or analysis.
- 2. Researchers can use data from the corpora for research purpose, but it is difficult for learners of Chinese to learn from the corpora.
- 3. Teaching and learning resources of Chinese can be developed based on a corpus, to be useful for researchers, teachers, and learners.



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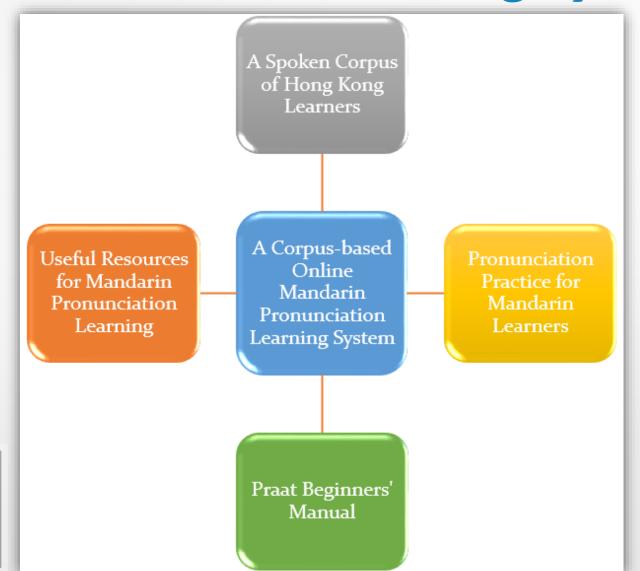




The learning system has been developed for learners to:

- practice segmental and suprasegmental aspects of Mandarin pronunciation through a variety of perception and production exercises
- discover the possible causes of common pronunciation features found in the corpus





Our Spoken Corpus



Our Spoken Corpus - Characteristics

- It provides high-quality recordings that are ideally suited for phonetic and acoustic analysis by researchers around the world.
- It produces recordings and phonological annotations that are easily accessible and immediately available to all learners, teachers and researchers, both in and outside EdUHK.
- It provides a platform for learners to access and rate the corpus data in order to discover the linguistic features on their own and to enhance their active engagement in their own learning.
- It describes the distinctive linguistic features of Mandarin of University of University of University Students in Hong Kong.

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Our Spoken Corpus

The spoken corpus contains:

- 8 hours recording data of Mandarin spoken tasks (reading of monosyllabic words, reading of multisyllabic words, reading of passage, and free speech) from university students in Hong Kong
- detailed phonological annotations of the recordings mainly focused on segmental features (vowels & consonants) and suprasegmental features (tone & finals)

Our Spoken Corpus

Users can:

- browse the recordings by speakers' biographic information (e.g. gender, age, major)
- search the recordings by the pronunciation features they are interested in



Our Spoken Corpus - Browse



Online Mandarin Pronunciation Learning

A Spoken Corpus of the Mandarin of Hong Kong learners



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Our Spoken Corpus - Search



Online Mandarin Pronunciation Learning

A Spoken Corpus of the Mandarin of Hong Kong learners



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- Task 1: Reading of monosyllabic words
- Task 2: Reading of multisyllabic words
- Task 3: Reading of passage
- Task 4: Free speech



Rationale

Task 1 - Reading of monosyllabic words

- Cover all tones
- Even distribution of the 4 tones
- Avoid polyphones
- Avoid overlapping with words in other tasks



Rationale

Task 2 - Reading of multisyllabic words

- Include confusing clusters (e.g. Tone1+Tone4, Tone2+Tone3 etc.)
- Include tone sandhi (e.g. Tone sandhi of Tone3, 'yi', 'bu', and neutral tone)
- Include confusing vowels (e.g. nasal vs back



Rationale

Task 2 - Reading of multisyllabic words

- Word final 'r' vs 'er' syllable
- Include difficult consonants (e.g. retroflex consonants 'zh, ch, sh', nasal consonant 'n' etc.)
- Avoid polyphones
- Avoid overlapping with words in other tasks



Rationale

Task 3 - Reading of passage

• Collect comprehensive speech data that reveals speakers' pronunciation of vowels, consonants, tones, tone sandhi etc.



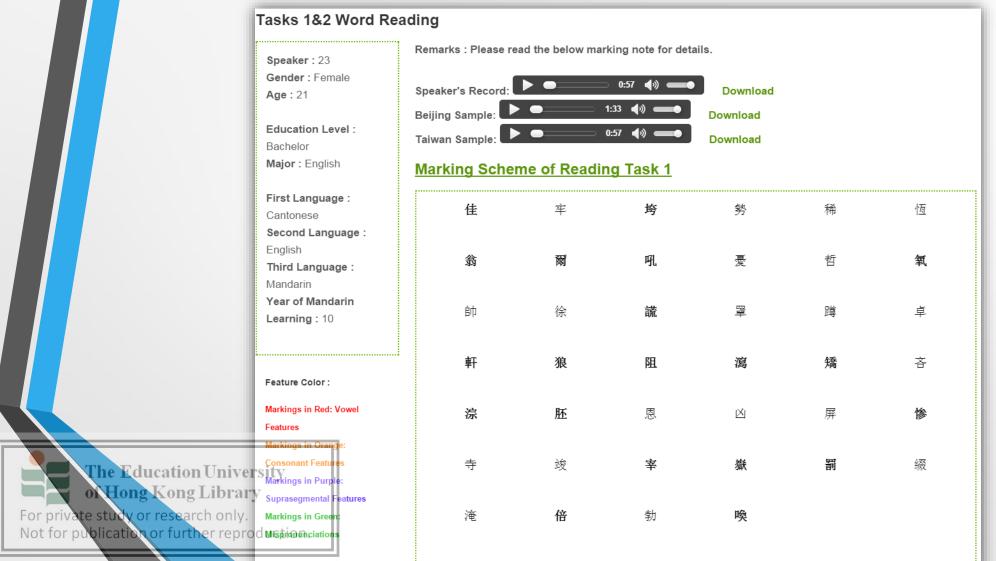
Rationale

Task 4 – Free Speech

- Speakers selected one topic from 'My Studying Life' and 'An Unforgettable Trip'
- Collect authentic speech data of Mandarin for research concerning discourse, phonology, grammar, vocabulary etc.



Task 1: Reading of monosyllabic words



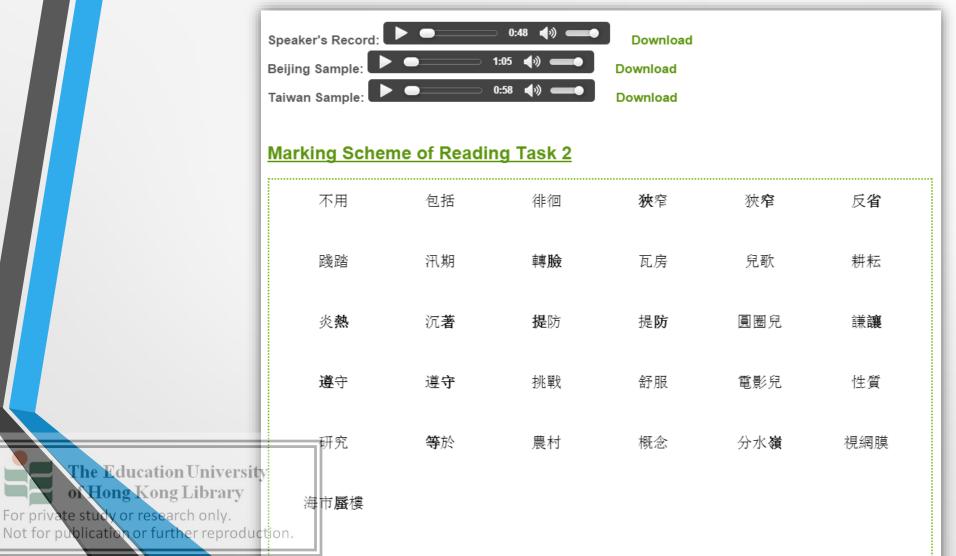
Task 1: Reading of monosyllabic words

佳	车	垮	勢	稀	恒
jiā→jiē		Incomplete			
		Tone 3			
翁	爾	吼	憂	哲	氧
wēng→vēng	Incomplete	Incomplete			Incomplete
	Tone 3	Tone 3			Tone 3
帥	徐	謊	罩	蹲	卓
		Incomplete			
		Tone 3			
軒	狼	阻	瀉	矯	吝
xuān→qiān	láng→lăng	zŭ→zhŭ	xiè→xiē	Incomplete	
xuān→qiān		Incomplete		Tone 3	
		Tone 3			
淙	胚	恩	凶	屏	惨
cóng→zòng	pēi→bēi				Incomplete
					Tone 3
寺	竣	宰	嶽	罰	綴
		Incomplete	yuè→yè	fá→fă	
sity		Tone 3			
淹	倍	勃	喚		
luction.	bèi→bēi		huàn→hùn		

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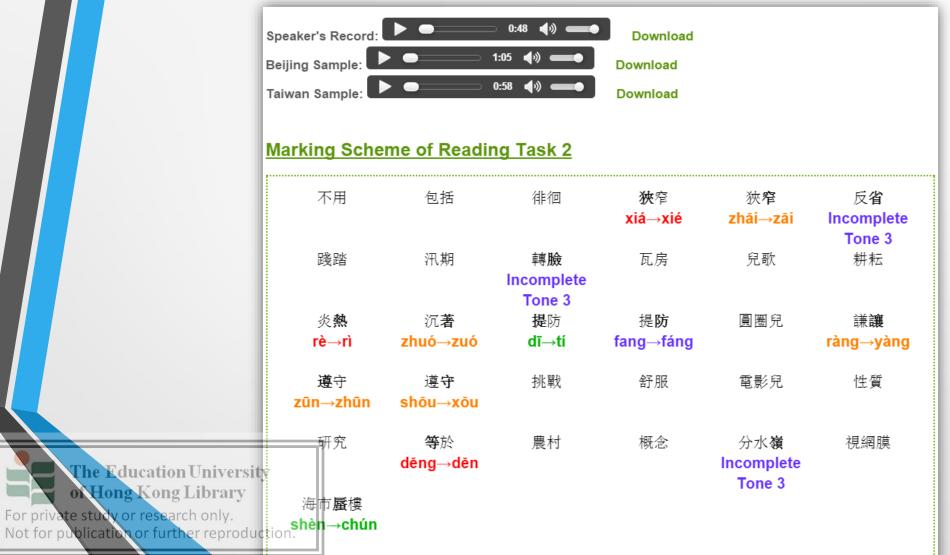
• Task 2: Reading of multisyllabic words



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Task 2: Reading of multisyllabic words



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• Task 3: Reading of passage



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有一年的春天,我因病被迫在家裏休息數周。我注**視**著我的女兒們所養的蠶正在結**繭,這**使 我很感興**趣**。望著這些**蠶**執著地、勤奮地工作,我感到我和它們非常相似。像它們一樣,我總是 耐心地把自己的努力集中在一個目標上。我之以如此,或許是因為有某種力量在鞭策**著**我——正 如蠶被鞭策著去結繭一般。

• Task 3: Reading of passage

生活對於 $(y\dot{u} \rightarrow y\bar{u})$ 任何人都非易事。我們必須相信,我們對每一件事情都具有天賦 $(f\dot{u} \rightarrow f\dot{u})$ 的才(cái→chái)能,並且(Incomplete Tone 3)無論付出任何代價(jià→jiè),都要把這件事完 成。當事情結束 $(shù \rightarrow sù)$ 的時候 $(hou \rightarrow hou)$,你要能問心無愧地說:"我已經盡我所 (suŏ→shuŏ)能了。"

有一年的春天,我因病被迫在家裏休息 $(xi \rightarrow x\bar{i})$ 數周。我注視 $(shi \rightarrow sh\bar{i})$ 著我的女兒們所養的 **蠶(cán→chán)**正在結**繭(Incomplete Tone 3)**,**這(zhe→zhe'r)**使我很感興**趣(qu→qù)**。望著這 些蠶(cán→jiǎn)執著地、勤奮地工作,我感到我和它們(men→mēn)非常相似。像它們一樣,我 總是耐心(xīn→xīng)地把自己的努力集中(zhōng→zōng)在一個目標上(shang→shàng)。我之

以如此,**或(huò→huà)**許是因為有某種力量在鞭策**著(zhe→ze)**我**──**正如**蠶**

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Task 4: Free Speech

Task 4 Free Speech

Speaker: 23

Gender : Female

Age: 21

Education Level:

Bachelor

Major : English

First Language:

Cantonese

Second Language:

English

Third Language:

Mandarin

Year of Mandarin

Learning: 10

Speaker's Record: Download

Topic: 我的學習生活

我的學習生活在小學的時候是非常的煩悶,因為小學的生活很簡單,老師都會為我們安排了一切。所以小時候的生活主要就是唸書,然後應付考試、測驗,等等。父母對我的要求也并不是很高,不像是現在那樣很多的怪獸父母都會要求自己的孩子去上什麼什麼補習班。我當時是非常自由,總是隨自己意願去做的。所以雖然煩悶,但是那些測驗、考試都是能應付得了的。最後就很成功地上了一所挺不錯的第一等級的中學。在中學上面,中學的學習生活比小學的步伐快很多,測驗的次數的...還有那個頻率都比小學來的高好幾倍,所以我在中學的學習生活都是在非常繁忙的考驗和測試中度過。學習生活之中我有遇到過幾個恩師,他們對我的...學科上面,讓某些學科上面的知識增長了不少。尤其是高中最後的一年,我遇上...發現在我身邊的老師其實都是...個實貝。他們的學歷...他們的能力非常的高,教學的...質素非常的好,在他們的帶領下,我對...我從...我在那個...高中那個公開考試裡而就更好地掌握了。



Our Spoken Corpus – Feature List



High Frequency Feature List

category	feature	example	number
	l	segmental	l l
	a→ai	撒(sā→sai)́	
	a→an	撒(sa→̀san)	
	o→e	佛(fó→fé)	
	o→u	模(mó→mú)	
	o→ai	驚心動魄(pò→pài)	
1	e→a	澤(zé→zá)	
vowel	e→o	麽(me→mo)	
	e→i	,∑(tè→tī)	
	i→e	繹(yì→yè)	
y II	u→ao	土(tuǎtaǒ)	
	u→uo	詛(zu→zuò)咒	
tion.	ü→ui	徐(xú→suí)	
	an→ang	然(rán→ráng)	

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English Pronunciation Learning Website 英文發音學習網站





Pronunciation Practice



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LEARNING RESOURCES 資源

PRAAT MANUAL PRAAT 手冊 HOME 主頁 HIGH FREQUENCY FEATURE LIST

PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE FOR HONG KONG SPEAKERS OF MANDARIN 華語發音練習

- 1. Tongue Twisters 繞口令
- 2. Songs 歌曲
- 3. Jokes 笑話
- 4. Quiz 測試

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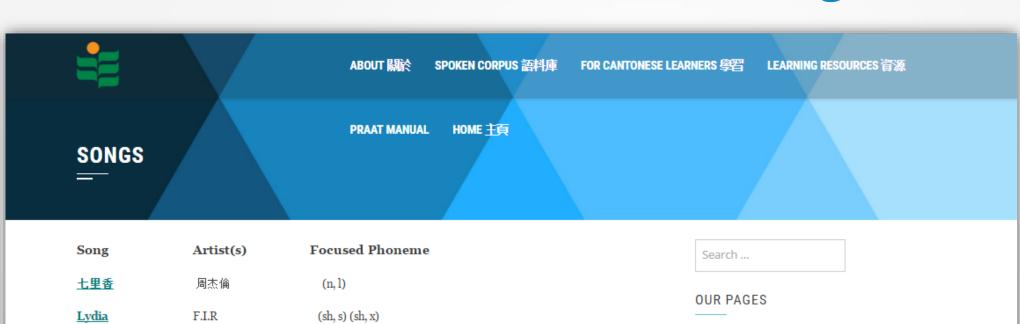




Pronunciation Practice – Tongue Twisters



Pronunciation Practice - Songs



 Lydia
 F.I.R
 (sh, s) (sh, x)

 不得不愛
 潘瑋柏,弦子
 (s,c) (z,j) (j,zh)

 手里之外
 愚玉清,周杰倫
 (y,r) (f,h)

 菊花台
 周杰倫
 (w,f)

(w, m)

(g,k)

(w, m)

(n, l)

(sh, x)

S.H.E

蔡依林

周傑倫

梁靜茹

蔡依林&陶喆

Super star

說愛妳

不能說的秘密

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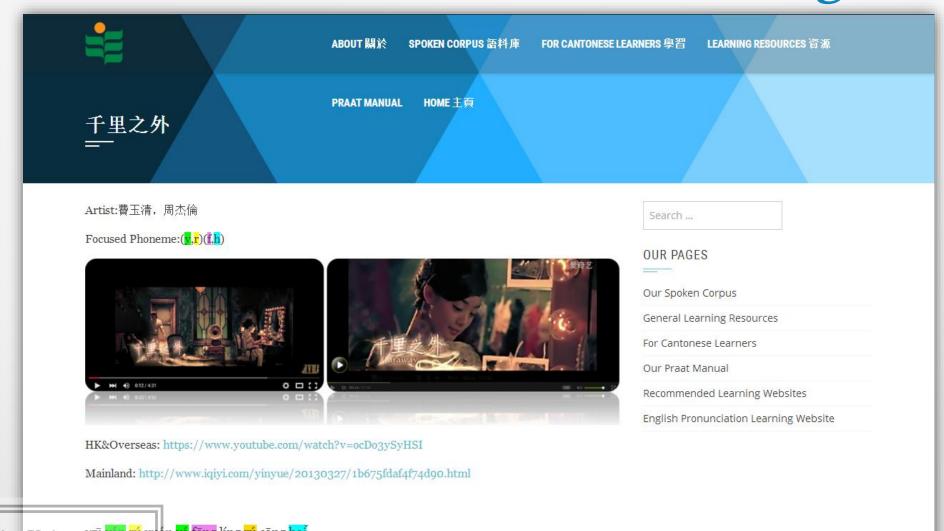
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Pronunciation Practice - Songs



Pronunciation Practice - Jokes



1.有一天,小明在家中看電視,媽媽說:"等一下你去沖個涼吧,用<mark>發(fā)</mark>灑,小明不明白,問:"什麼是發灑?",媽媽想了想說:"哦,我搞錯了,應該是<mark>花(huā)</mark>灑!



2. 小明約了朋友見面,遲到了,他和朋友說:"不好意思,剛剛和媽媽吃了辦!"朋友不解,問:"吃花<mark>辦</mark>(bàn)?"小明意識到自己說錯了:"哦不是,是吃**飯(fàn)**!不要笑話我了哈哈!

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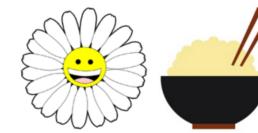
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Pronunciation Practice - Quiz

	Online	<u>Exercise</u>	
Your Score: \$-			Take Another Quiz
Consonant	Vowel	Tone	Mixed
\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200
\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300
\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400
\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
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Pronunciation Practice - Quiz



Phonology Knowledge



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HIGH FREQUENCY FEATURE LIST

MANDARIN PHONOLOGY 華語語音

1. General Introduction 概述

Mandarin Chinese, also called Standard Chinese, has been the official language of China for a few decades. It is commonly used in Chinese schools, communities, institutions and media. The Chinese language is actually a collection of various dialects that can be categorized into eight groups: Northern Chinese (Mandarin), Yueh (Cantonese), Wu, Kan, Northern Min, Southern Min, Hsiang, and Hakka (Chang, 2001). Though 70% of the Chinese population are native speakers of Northern Chinese, which is the basis of modern Standard Chinese, most of the Chinese people do not speak Mandarin accurately (Chang, 2001). According to a survey (Chinese Ministry of Education, 2004), only 10% of the Chinese population can speak Mandarin fluently and accurately.

普通話,也被稱做標準中文,已經在過去的幾十年裡一直是中國的官方語言。普通話在中國學校,社區, 研究所和媒體中被廣泛運用著。中文其實是不同方言的合集,這些方言可以被分成八類;北方中文(普通 話),粵(粵語),吳,贛,閩北,閩南,湘,客 (張,2001)。雖然中國人口的70%都是以北方中文為母語 的,而北方中文又是現代標準中文的基礎,但是大部分的中國人不能講標準的普通話(張,2011)。據調查 (中國教育局,2004),只有中國人口的10%可以講流利標準的普通話。

2. Pinyin System 拼音系統

Pinyin, literally meaning "spell out the sound", is the Romanized phonetic transcription of the Chinese The Education Universitylanguage. The system is now used in China to teach Chinese to students and internationally as a second language. Pinyin system bridges the gap between writing and speech in Chinese, and enables learners to derive the meanings of characters (Siok & Fletcher, 2001).

For private study or research only. Not for publication or further reproduct的,字面上的意思是"拼出讀音",是用羅馬語音系統記錄的中文。在中國,這個系統現在用來教授學生中 文並且在國際上被當作第二語言。拼音系統架起了中文寫作和會話的橋樑,同時讓學習者能夠明白漢字的

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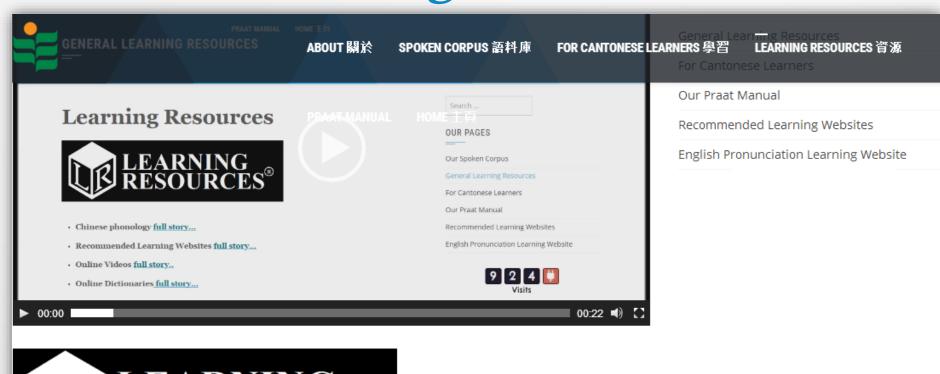
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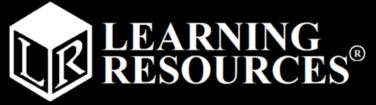
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Websites

• 拼音導修室網站[Pinyin Learning Website]

http://www.cbs.polyu.edu.hk/VTP/mandarin/main.htm

The website provides systematic introduction of Pinyin system, including syllable structure, correcpondence to IPA system and so on. Learners can access a series of exercises whilst learning Pinyin.

• 普通話學習網[Putonghua Learning Website]

http://pth.lingi.org/yuyin/index.html

This website compiles useful learning materials of Mandarin, including Pinyin system, place of articulation, segmental and suprasegmental features of Mandrin. Moreover, vocabularies, correspondence of Cantonese and Mandarin, learning exercises and useful Mandarin learning tools are introduced.

普通話世界[Putonghua World]

The Education University http://www.putonghuaworld.com/putonghua/index.htm

or Hong Kong Library Putonghua world is a platform built by an expert who has taught Mandarin for years. Mandarin teaching experience, researches, and learning resources are shared to Mandarin teachers and learners.

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* 普通話自學網站[Mandarin Self-learning Website]

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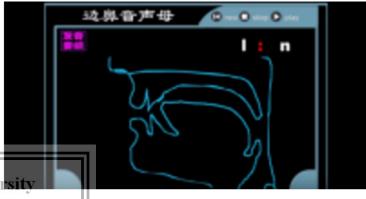


Videos in Chinese

1. Articulation of tones, j, q, x, n, l

https://www.youtube.com/user/zeq160/videos

These videos teach in detail how tones, and difficult sounds such as j, q, x, n, and l in Mandarin should be produced with help of model reading.



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or Hong Kong Library. 50 common mistakes in speaking Mandarin

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The video lists 50 common mistakes for Cantonese speakers in speaking Mandarin, with model reading.

Praat Beginner's Manual



S Praat Beginners' Manual S



- Chapter 1. Introduction: Acoustic Phonetics and Praat
- Chapter 2. Acoustic Analysis of Vowels
- Chapter 3. Acoustic Analysis of Consonants
- Chapter 4. Prosodic Analysis with Praat
- Chapter 5. Annotating Sound Files with Praat

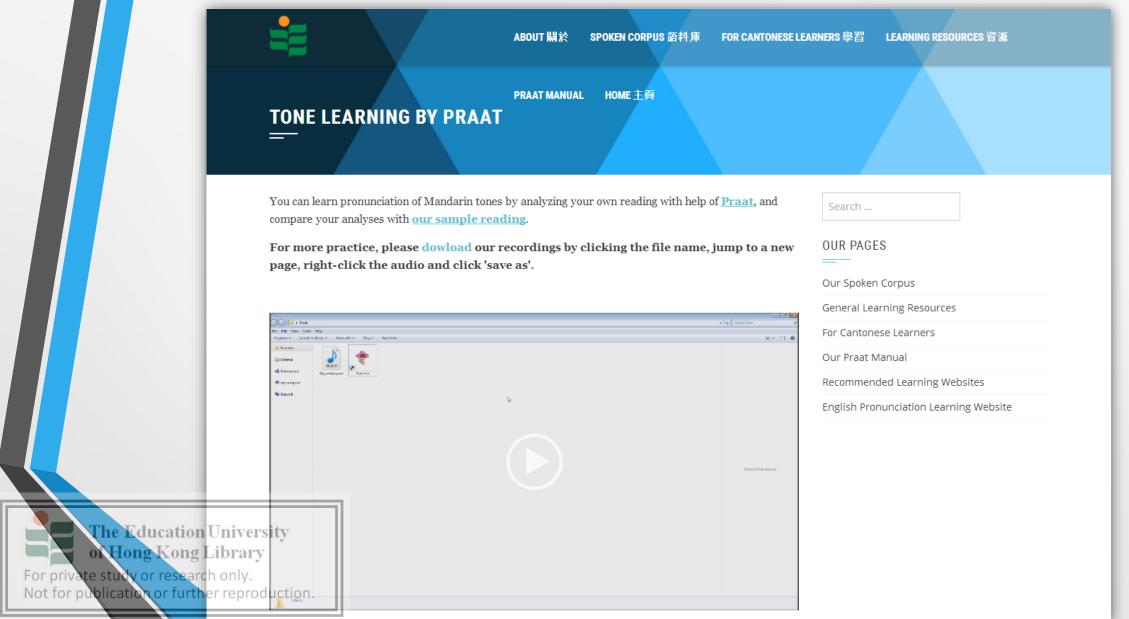
Suggested Answers

Online Resources

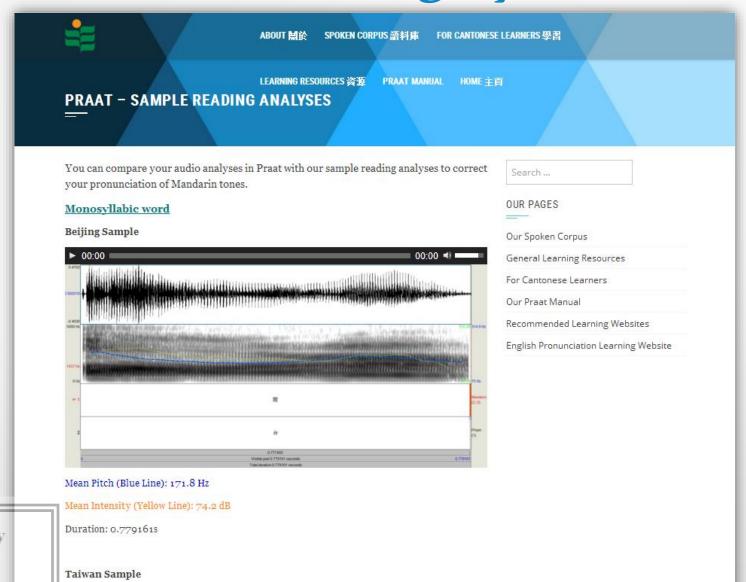


- . Other recommended Praat manuals
- 2. Extra exercises, tutorials, and self-tests
 3. IPA resources: charts&fonts

Tone Learning by Praat



Tone Learning by Praat



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DOWNLOAD AUDIO FOR PRAAT PRACTICE

Monosyllabic words

Sample Reading:

tone1 tone2 tone3 tone4

Learner Reading:

learner tone1 learner tone2 learner tone3 learner tone4

Multisyllabic words:

Sample Reading:

Sample 1 Sample 2 Sample 3 Sample 4

Learner Reading:

Learner 1 Learner 2 Learner 3 Learner 4

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