

nǐ hǎo
你 好

Hi!

Thank you for reading our very first Chinese learning tips article. ☺

This is **Katrina Lee from SMART Mandarin.**

I've been teaching Mandarin for more than three years, and I'm here glad to use my expertise and experience in my classes to assist you with some common questions you might have when learning Chinese.

1. Student: Katrina, I don't want to learn recognizing and writing Chinese characters, because those characters seems difficult and complicated to learn, is it possible to learn without reading and writing also be fluent in Chinese?

Yes, it is possible to be fluent in speaking and listening without learning writing and reading in Chinese. It is possible, but NOT EVERYONE can be like that.

I have some students only learning listening and speaking and they are quite fluent in Chinese, but they are only rare few cases. The reason is when people learning only pinyin, all they can recognize from the book is the English alphabet combinations which is pinyin, but not the real Chinese words.

In the beginning, they find it easy to acquire only using pinyin, but the more they learn, the more challenges they face. First of all, there are so many words with the exact same pronunciation and tone.

Let me take an example : **newspaper is called “^{bào zhǐ}報 紙”(traditional Chinese) “^{bào zhǐ}报 纸”(Simplified Chinese) in Chinese, and only in Chinese is called “^{zhǐ}只”(traditional & simplified) 。 So if you want to say, I only have one newspaper.**

Then we say “^{wǒ zhǐ yǒu yī fèn bào zhǐ}我 只 有 一 份 報 紙”(traditional) “^{wǒ zhǐ yǒu yī}我 只 有 一

fèn bào zhǐ

份报纸” (simplified) , if we only look at the pinyin, we'll see the pinyin combination “zhi” twice! So you might be a little bit confused translating this sentence as “I paper have one paper only” or “ I only have one only...” ???!

It's quite troublesome figuring out those things.

This example is only one minor problem you need to deal with, what if you're reading a whole paragraph or conversation in pinyin only!?

By learning Chinese characters, you can easily tell the meaning of a sentence with less confusion, and the more words you know or you learn, the easier it gets to understand a paragraph in Chinese, because most of the Chinese characters have a meaning or few meanings in it. So when you see the character, you know the meaning and pronunciation altogether.

This is just my personal opinion, if you find it helpful, then I'm glad that this reading helps. If you have different opinions or questions, please feel free giving me your voice, I'll appreciate it!

I'll be sending out my Chinese learning tips at least every week. The learning tips are for encouraging people to learn more, share ideas. All the opinions and questions will be appreciated.

Katrina Lee