

**TWO YEARS' COURSE OF STUDY
IN THE CHINESE LANGUAGE. IN
FOUR VOLUMES. VOLUME I:
ANALYTICAL PRIMER**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649726769

Two Years' Course of Study in the Chinese Language. In Four Volumes. Volume I: Analytical Primer by Robert Thomas Bryan

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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ROBERT THOMAS BRYAN

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TWO YEARS' COURSE OF STUDY

IN

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

THE CHINESE LANGUAGE

BY

REV. ROBERT THOMAS BRYAN, D.D.

In Four Volumes

Volume I.
Analytical Primer

SHANGHAI
METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE

1913

TO MRS
AMBOHIAO

Gift of Harry E. Stevens.

TO

MRS. J. F. SEAMAN,

Whose generous gifts are greatly helping our Mission

To develop and carry on the Work so well begun

By Dr. and Mrs. M.T. Yates, Her Father and Mother,

And our Father and Mother in the Work,

This Volume

Is

Gratefully Dedicated.

THE PREFACE

The publication of this book is in no sense a reflection on the several good books now in use. The author, in his own study of the Chinese language, felt the need of a book containing short lessons, each of which could be easily and thoroughly learned in a day, thus emphasizing both system and thoroughness.

Missionaries in the first few years learn from five hundred to one thousand characters so that they easily recognize them in the Bible, or in some familiar context; but would not be able to recognize many of them alone, or in unfamiliar places, because they do not know the component parts. No character is thoroughly known until its component parts are known. You do not know an English word until you can spell it. The older missionaries will find this method helpful in making their knowledge of the language more thorough and accurate, and it is hoped that many of them will make use of this book.

The Union Language School at Shanghai showed a marked tendency on the part of missionaries to learn to write as well as to read the Chinese; and the analytical study of the character was quite popular, both with beginners, and with those who had studied the language for several years.

The Plan of the Book

Kang Hsi's Dictionary contains about forty thousand characters. Gile's large Dictionary contains ten thousand eight hundred and fifty nine separate characters. Five or six thousand characters are sufficient for printing a daily newspaper. The thorough knowledge of two thousand well selected characters will enable one to read intelligently almost any Chinese production with an occasional reference to the dictionary. It is better to know well a limited number than to half know a much larger number.

This system contains two thousand selected characters, divided into four parts of five hundred each, with a view to making four volumes of one hundred lessons each.

This first volume contains the most common, with the preference given to action words. The second volume is intended to be a natural continuation of the first. The third is to be based on the New Testament, and the fourth is to be a sort of key to the different kinds of Wen-li.

The First Volume

Each lesson, with a few exceptions, contains five characters, which are analyzed into their component parts, when possible into complete characters. Some characters have to be analyzed down to their strokes, and for that reason the Stroke Alphabet has been introduced to make it possible to spell out all the characters. It is a significant fact that a large majority of the component parts are radicals, or combinations of radicals. This strongly emphasizes the importance of learning the radicals. While this volume claims to have five hundred characters, it really has about eight hundred including radicals and other component parts.

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The lesson vocabularies are given in the regular written form, and also in a short hand form which is much used. These can be easily learned along with the printed character, and it will greatly facilitate the reading of both printed and written Chinese.

Each lesson also contains a list of characters under the head, "Synthetic Characters." These have been added to illustrate the synthetic method of building up characters. They need not necessarily be considered a part of the lesson which the student feels compelled to learn. Take them as an extra gift.

It is not only highly important to thoroughly learn the characters, but more so, to learn phrases into which they combine, because the Chinese language consists largely of ready-made phrases. A special feature of each lesson is the two and three character phrases placed at the beginning, and used in the longer sentences. The student is urged to learn these phrases. The sentences illustrate the uses of these phrases, and perhaps could have been made more practical, if more characters had been available. Chinese teachers often criticize each others work. Your teacher may find fault with these sentences. If so, ask him to take the available characters and make better ones. Students will find it an excellent practice to make other sentences with the help of their teachers. The value of this book by no means depends entirely upon the Chinese sentences.

Where Northern and Southern mandarin use different characters, the author at first thought of putting the two readings side by side, but on further consideration decided that this would not be an improvement. If students find that different characters and phrases are used in their localities, they can with the aid of their teachers easily make the necessary changes. This book stands for a system of study, rather than for particular characters, phrases, and sentences.

The English translation is a compromise between a literal translation, that helps to show the Chinese idiom, and a free translation, that easily renders up its meaning. Where the Chinese sentence has two possible meanings both are sometimes given. Some necessary explanations are given in parenthesis. The author has endeavored to translate the finer shades of meaning into English, but has found it a very difficult undertaking.

No English sentences are given to be translated into Chinese, because these English translations may be so used.

The notes do not claim in any sense to be exhaustive, but it is hoped that they will be suggestive and helpful.

They deal largely with characters and idiomatic phrases. They have been made with a view to helping the beginner by making the lessons easier and more interesting. The second volume will go more into the grammar and rhetoric of the language.

The English definitions are short, and generally confined to those uses of the characters that could be illustrated in the sentence. The student is advised to look up the characters in some good dictionary for a fuller definition. The radicals are not defined in the lessons, because they are defined in the radical vocabulary. Each radical has its radical number attached. The special radicals of the lesson vocabularies are sometimes used in sentence-making, but the other radicals and component parts are not so used; still it is

important, if the characters are to be thoroughly learned, to learn all of these component parts.

"The Standard System of Mandarin Romanization" has been adopted, because it is hoped that it will become generally used. It can be bought at the Mission Presses, and therefore need not be treated at length here. It is very unfortunate that so many different systems of romanization are in use. Please do not add another! Many of the Chinese sounds cannot be accurately represented with the English alphabet. The student is urged to get the sounds first hand from the Chinese teacher, and to adapt the romanization to the Chinese, rather than the Chinese to the romanization.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon learning the tones. A tone exercise is given below, and the student ought to practice it daily with the teacher, until the different tones can be clearly distinguished. This will require time and patience, but it will pay well. In this book the tones are indicated by numbers on the characters and diacritical marks on the romanization. The romanized Chinese name, the number, and diacritical mark, of each tone are given below, and should be learned at once.

- 上平 Shang ping, 1
 下平 Hsia ping, 2, —
 上聲 Shang sheng, 3, /
 去聲 Chu sheng, 4, \
 入聲 Ruh sheng, 5

The first has no diacritical mark, and the fifth is shown by the letter *h* being the final of the romanization.

Tone Exercise

夫 ¹ 扶 ² 斧 ³ 父 ⁴ 福 ⁵ ○ 拖 ¹ 陀 ² 妥 ³ 柁 ⁴ 託 ⁵		叉 ¹ 查 ² 杪 ³ 詫 ⁴ 插 ⁵ ○ 梯 ¹ 提 ² 體 ³ 替 ⁴ 貼 ⁵		呼 ¹ 胡 ² 虎 ³ 戶 ⁴ 忽 ⁵ ○ 方 ¹ 房 ² 彷彿 ³ 放 ⁴ 法 ⁵		批 ¹ 吡 ² 吡 ³ 媸 ⁴ 疋 ⁵ ○ 坡 ¹ 婆 ² 叵 ³ 破 ⁴ 拍 ⁵	
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It is also important to be able to distinguish between the aspirated and unaspirated sounds. This is one of the great difficulties of the language. Read what is said about aspirates in the "Standard System of Romanization", Volume one, page three!

Practice with the teacher the aspirate exercise given below, until the aspirated and unaspirated sounds can be easily distinguished!

Aspirate Exercise

章 ¹ 昌 ¹ (找 ³ 炒 ³) (正 ⁴ 秤 ⁴) (幾 ¹ 欺 ¹) (江 ¹ 鎗 ¹) (見 ⁴ 欠 ⁴) (揪 ¹ 秋 ¹)	咒 ⁴ 臭 ⁴ (主 ³ 楚 ³) (專 ¹ 穿 ¹) (中 ¹ 冲 ¹) (崩 ¹ 湖 ¹) (便 ⁴ 片 ⁴) (兵 ¹ 閉 ¹)	玻 ¹ 坡 ¹ (多 ¹ 拖 ¹) (在 ⁴ 菜 ⁴) (租 ¹ 租 ¹) (字 ⁴ 次 ⁴) (句 ⁴ 去 ⁴) (卷 ⁴ 圈 ⁴)	幹 ⁴ 看 ⁴ (該 ¹ 開 ¹) (告 ⁴ 靠 ⁴) (良 ⁴ 擔 ⁴) (光 ¹ 匡 ¹) (古 ³ 苦 ³) (工 ¹ 空 ¹)
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The vocabulary of the characters, arranged under their radicals, with the lesson numbers is given at the back of the book, to enable students to easily trace up any character that they may have forgotten.

A separate list of the radicals is also given. Some students may prefer to learn the radicals in the beginning, but the average student will find it much easier to learn them after finishing this volume, because the common ones will then all have been learned.

There are two methods of learning Chinese Characters. One might be called the picture method, where the character is learned as a whole like a picture; the other is the analytical, or spelling method, which is used in this book. This latter method will help the student to be more thorough, and the daily short lessons and reviews will make it easier to be systematic.

The lessons are purposely made short, so that the student may have plenty of time for constant reviewing, and also for getting out among the people and learning as much colloquial Chinese as possible. Form the habit right in the beginning of being able to learn and use Chinese sounds without the aid of the written character, or romanization! Learn as the child learns! A character, the sound and use of which is already known, will be much more easily learned and remembered. While the characters ought to be thoroughly learned, one's speaking vocabulary need not, and ought not, to be limited by

PREFACE

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the number of characters known. The reviews indicated will enable the student to review all that is behind each month. Other extra reviews will also greatly help to fix the characters in the mind so that they cannot be forgotten. The value of this system depends a good deal upon the reviews. If the lessons are not most thoroughly learned, then longer lessons would be better.

The work on this volume has, for the most part, been done along with other duties, and in a limited time just before leaving China on vacation. The author is far more conscious of its defects than will be those who may be disposed to criticize. It is hoped that the good points of the system, despite any defects, may make this volume useful to those who wish to learn the Chinese language!

Criticism to make the book more useful is invited, and will be utilized in a later edition.

The Chinese teacher has been purposely made responsible for the Chinese sentences. This was done in order to get original Chinese rather than translated Chinese. For what is good in them give him the praise; for what is not good blame the author for trusting him more than was wise.

The author spent two years in learning to analyze and write the two thousand characters, taking five a day, five days in the week, four weeks in the month, ten months in the year, and with sufficient reviewing to enable him to stand an examination on the whole two thousand at the end of the two years. This was done to test the system before publishing even the first volume. He is also convinced by his own experience that two thousand Chinese characters can be thoroughly learned in two years by a new missionary who has no other duties that would hinder the study of the language.

Many useful things have been thought of in connection with this first volume, but they have not been put in for fear of over-loading the book. Some of them will be put in the later volumes, and others can be found in dictionaries and other books.

The author's first and greatest acknowledgements are due to the Rev. J. B. Webster of the Southern Baptist Mission who has been associated with him from the beginning, and has been so helpful in so many ways, that the author insisted on his taking a place on the title page as co-author, and reluctantly consented to his refusal to do so. It is hoped that the student will find the book more interesting and valuable because of his part!

More is due to my Wife for her sympathy, help, and encouragement, than she will allow me to express.

The late Dr. G. A. Stuart of the Methodist Episcopal Mission heartily approved of this plan, and agreed to be co-author, but was, unfortunately, taken away before he was able to do his promised part. He made some very valuable suggestions and wrote a few notes.

Acknowledgements are also due to other friends, who made valuable suggestions.

The acknowledgements would be far from complete without special mention of my teacher, Mr. Hsia Gia Tang, who was made responsible for the Chinese sentences.