第二課 Di-èr kè
Lesson 2

他一我百，他十我千。
tā yī wǒ bǎi, tā shí wǒ qiān
Others 1 me 100, others 10 me 1000.
Describing one’s determination to outdo others to succeed.

2.1 First set

姓 男的 女 她 他

3+5 2+5 5+3 3+0 3+3 2+3
xing nán de nǚ tā tā
surname<di> male; man female she; her he; him

马 吗 陈 不 是 谁

10+0 3+10 3+8 1+3 4+5 7+8
mǎ mà Chén bu shì shéi ~ shuí
horse; surname Q surname not be who; whom

Notes

a) All characters but three in this set are compound, with components that are themselves characters (or combining forms of characters). Those that are not are: 女, 马, and 不. The earliest forms of those graphs show that the first two were representational: 女 seemed to depict a woman crouching or kneeling; and 马 looked quite like a line sketch of some sort of quadruped – presumably, a horse. The modern ‘traditional’ form still recalls the earlier drawing: the cross hatching is the neck and head, the long stroke with the bend in it is the haunches, the four dots, the legs etc. The simplified version, 马, based on traditional calligraphic forms, has an holistic resemblance to the traditional form even though the two share only a single common stroke.
b) 不 represents another type of evolution. The character is said to derive from a drawing of a bird that served to represent another word. It was borrowed to write 不 not because of its form, but because of similarity of sound (just as ‘4’ could be used for its sound to write ‘4get’ in ‘rebus’ writing). 马 (mǎ) underwent a similar process. It was borrowed for its sound to represent the toneless question particle (ma), but the new function was explicitly signaled by the addition of the character 口 (kǒu ‘mouth; entrance’, but here suggesting ‘colloquial’) to form the compound character 嗯. A similar process resulted in the character 媽, used for mā, the informal word for ‘mother’, marked for its new meaning by the addition of the character 女 ‘woman; female’.

c) The character 女 is one element of 姓 xìng ‘surname’ and 她 tā ‘she; her’. In the first, 女 is combined with 生 shēng ‘be born’; suggesting a notion such as ‘children are born of woman and given a surname’. 她 was created in relatively recent times as a counterpart to 他 (a contrast not represented in the spoken language).

d) The counterpart of 女 is 男 ‘man; male’. The latter is not pictorial in origin, but some might want to make a story about a ‘large head’ 田 over ‘spindly legs’ 力. In colloquial speech, 男 and 女 appear only in compounds such as nándé and nûde, with de representing the possessive and attributive marker (ie, ‘the male one’ and ‘the female one’).

e) The right hand element of 誰, 隹 (pronounced zhuī on it own), which occurs in a family of characters that includes 推 tuī ‘push’, should be noted as 8 strokes in order the distinguish it from another commonly occurring element in compound characters, 住 zhù ‘live’, with only 7.

f) 是, like 明 and 昨, contains the character 日 ‘sun’, in this case combined vertically with 足. A student accounting for 是 ‘be’ goes: ‘the sun, over the horizon, providing sustenance (‘being’) through a vertical pipe to mankind (人)’.

2.1.1 Practice.
Words and phrases (unpunctuated): covering the pinyin, read the phrases in characters, then confirm.

| 姓王 | xìng Wáng | 姓周 | xìng Zhōu | 姓毛 | xìng Máo |
| 姓馬 | xìng Mǎ | 男的 | nándé | 是女的 | shì nûde |
| 姓陳 | xìng Chén | 昨天 | zuótiān | 不是他 | bú shì tā |
| 是不是 | shì bu shì | 她姓林 | tā xìng Lín | 他姓周 | tā xìng Zhōu |
| 是他的嗎 | shì tā de ma | 今天 | jīntiān | 二十一 | èrshí’yī |
姓李  xìng Lǐ  三十日  sānshí rì
今年  jīnnián  是誰的  shì shéi de
一九九六年  yījiǔjiǔliù nián  是女的嗎  shì nǚ de ma

Exercise 1
a) On your own, read out the facts in column I (below), along the following lines: Di-yī, <tā> xìng Mǎ, shì nán de; di-èr, tā xìng Máo, yě shì nán de, etc. Then answer the questions in column II.

b) In class, form pairs so that one person asks questions and the other answers, as follows: Di-yī, tā xìng Wáng ma? / Tā bù xìng Wáng, tā xìng Mǎ. // Shi nán de ma? / Di-yī ne…di-yī shì nán de.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>一: 馬 男</td>
<td>一 姓王嗎？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二: 毛 男</td>
<td>二 是男的嗎？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>三: 李 女</td>
<td>三 是誰？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>四: 周 女</td>
<td>四 是女的嗎？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>五: 陳 女</td>
<td>五 姓周嗎？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>六: 白 男</td>
<td>六 姓李嗎？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>七: 林 女</td>
<td>七 是男的嗎？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>八: 馬 男</td>
<td>八 姓馬嗎？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>九: 陳 男</td>
<td>九 是不是女的？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>十: 周 女</td>
<td>十 姓陳嗎？</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2  Second set: Places

中国人  中國人  Zhōngguó rén  middle-kingdom people
東京  東京  Dōngjīng [Tokyo]  east-capital
廣州  廣州  Guǎngzhōu [Canton]  1+3  3+8  2+0  4(tree)+4  2+6  3+11  3+3, 1+5  3+5  1+4  3+0
Notes

a) The shape of 中 zhōng ‘middle’ is suggestive of the meaning. Note that the box is completed before the vertical (shù) is drawn. The inner part of 国, or, is a character in its own right, pronounced huò. The simplified 国 (a Japanese innovation) has been formed with an entirely different inner constituent, 玉 yù (jade), which has neither a semantic nor a phonetic connection to the word 国.

b) 人 ‘person’, originally a drawing of a person walking, should be distinguished from both 八 bā ‘8’ and 入 rù ‘enter’. A combining form of 人 appears in graphs such as 他, 作, 使.

c) 日 ‘sun’ rising in the ‘east’, through trees 木, 本 shows a tree with the trunk marked, hence ‘stem; base’; 日本 Riběn ‘Japan’, ie ‘the [rising] sun’s source’. 西 xī ‘west’ (which, with imagination, can be seen as ‘the sun’s rays disappearing into the ocean at sunset’) should be distinguished from 四 sì ‘4’. The surname, 陳 Chén, has the character, 東 dòng, on the right.

d) 廣 guǎng has the root meaning of ‘vast; extensive’. It contains the element 黃 huáng (‘yellow’). In addition to the name of the city 廣州 ‘Canton’, it appears in the province names 廣東 Guǎngdōng ‘extensive east’ and 廣西 Guǎngxī ‘extensive west’.

e) 州 zhōu was originally a representation of islands or high ground in a river, but came to refer to towns or administrative centers that grew up in such places. So it is a common second element for cities, eg 廣州 Guǎngzhōu, 深圳 Sēnzhōu, 杭州 Hángzhōu, 徐州 Xúzhōu. It is also used to translate ‘state’ in US state names: 加州 Jiāzhōu ‘California’, 德州 Dézhōu ‘Texas’, 康州 Kāngzhōu ‘Connecticut’.
The original graph has been differentiated into 州 and 洲 (also zhōu), with the latter used as the second element in the names of continents, eg: 亞洲 Yàzhōu ‘Asia’ and 欧洲 Ōuzhōu ‘Europe’.

f) 北 běi could be said to resemble ‘two people sitting back to back for warmth against the cold north wind’, hence ‘north’. 北 can be contrasted with the (otherwise unrelated) lower half of 昆, 比 (bǐ ‘compare; than’), in which the two parts are in line (and therefore easier to ‘compare’) rather than back to back.

g) 京, meaning ‘capital’. Nonsense etymology: ‘the gateway to the capital with a slit window and buttresses’. Chinese cities are oriented towards the south; the emperor sat with his back to the north. 南 nán ‘south’, then, might be said to be a drawing of ‘an elaborate southern gate to a city, with observation tower, wide opening, and customs check beneath’.

h) 上 shàng ‘on’ forms a pair with 下 xià ‘under’; both graphs are diagrammatic.

i) 水 ‘water’, has a compounding form that shows three splashes of water, appearing in eg 海 ‘sea’, 河 hē ‘river’, 洗 xǐ ‘wash’, and the second graph in the name 天津, which means a ‘ford’ (Tianjin being founded at a ford on the route from the sea to Beijing). Notice that the box on the lower right-hand side of 海 is formed with two strokes – unlike the standard box (囗).

**Exercise 2**

a) Read the table of data, as follows: Dì-yī, <tā> xìng Wáng, shì nán de, shì Běijīng rén; di-èr, xìng Lǐ, yě shì nán de, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>一</th>
<th>王</th>
<th>男的</th>
<th>北京</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>二</td>
<td>李</td>
<td>男的</td>
<td>東京</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>三</td>
<td>毛</td>
<td>女的</td>
<td>上海</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>四</td>
<td>马</td>
<td>女的</td>
<td>昆明</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>五</td>
<td>白</td>
<td>男的</td>
<td>天津</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>六</td>
<td>林</td>
<td>女的</td>
<td>廣州</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>七</td>
<td>周</td>
<td>男的</td>
<td>廣東</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>八</td>
<td>陳</td>
<td>女的</td>
<td>日本</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>九</td>
<td>李</td>
<td>男的</td>
<td>南京</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>十</td>
<td>明</td>
<td>女的</td>
<td>廣西</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) First of all, you should note that the most natural way to identify someone in terms of a name is: xìng Wáng de ‘the one named Wang’; xìng Mǎ de ‘the one named Ma’. Thus:
The person named Wang is from Beijing.
The one named Ma is female.

Now, using the data contained in the table under (a) above, answer the following questions:

一 北京人是男的嗎？
二 誰是廣東人？
三 姓李的是日本人嗎？
四 姓陳的是中國人嗎？
五 姓明的是不是中國人？
六 姓林的是不是南京人？
七 姓白的是昆明人嗎？
八 誰是日本人？
九 東京是不是日本？
十 姓馬的是女的嗎？

2.3 Simplified characters

Of the 26 characters introduced in this lesson, only 7 have simplified versions, and two of those belong to parallel sets: 馬/马 and 嗎/吗; 陳/陈 and 東/东. As you can observe, simplification involves a variety of processes, including: omission (廣 / 广); partial replacement (國 / 国); and reduction – reducing strokes while keeping the general shape (馬/马; 誰 / 誰). Very few pairs are so different as to lose their overall resemblance. So while learning to write both does require a lot of practice, learning to read both does not. Here are some pairs of comments written in the simplified set.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>一  他是不是中国人？</td>
<td>不是，他是日本人。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>二  她是北京人吗？</td>
<td>是北京人。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>三  今天四月十八日！</td>
<td>不，十月十八日，不是四月。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>四  姓陈的是昆明人。</td>
<td>是，他是昆明人。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>五  是男的吗？</td>
<td>不，是女的。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>六  他是日本人。</td>
<td>是，日本东京人。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>七  不是南京人吗？</td>
<td>不是，她是广州人。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>八  广东人是中国人吗？</td>
<td>是，广东人是中国人。</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
九 东京人不是中国人。是，东京人是日本人。
十 昨天十二月二十日。不，今天二十日。
十一 天津吗？不，北京。
十二 姓马的是广东人。是，广东广州人。
十三 姓白吗？不，她姓毛。
十四 十四不是四十。是，十四是十四。

Exercise 3.

a) If you have not already written out the answers to the questions in exercise 2(b) above in characters, then, using either simplified characters or traditional within each sentence, write them out on ‘squared’ paper.

b) Write the following pinyin words in characters (traditional or simplified), covering up what you have already written as you go:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{jīntiān} & > \text{Tiānjīn} > \text{Bēijīng} > \text{Nánjīng} > \text{nán} > \text{míngtiān} > \text{liùyuè} > \text{Kūnmíng} > \\
\text{xìng Chén} & > \text{Dōngjīng} > \text{zuòtiān} > \text{Guǎngzhōu} > \text{xìng Zhōu} > \text{shíjiǔ} > \text{shí héi}
\end{align*}
\]

2.4 Form of characters

Traditionally, Chinese characters are subdivided into six categories according to the way they are thought to have been formed. These categories are called the 六书 liù shù ‘six scripts’: drawings, indications, borrowing, etc. Though the ‘six scripts’ are sometimes claimed to be descriptive, in fact it requires considerable historical knowledge to decide to which type a graph belongs. For the beginner, seeking a way to gain a foothold on the sheer face of the [written] language by trying to rationalize the relationship between the sound and meaning of a word and the form of its character, there are only two useful kinds of relationship. One is pictorial – or representational: the shape of the character suggests its meaning; 上 ‘on’, 下 ‘under’, 中 ‘middle’, 心 ‘heart’. The other is relational: the character resembles another of the same or similar sound: 马 mǎ ‘horse’, 妈 ma ‘Q’, 妈 mā ‘mother’. These two types can be labeled ‘representational’ and ‘phonosemantic’.

The former are often cited for their pictorial qualities; but it is the latter, the phonosemantic, that are the most common. New characters are almost always created on the phonosemantic model.

2.4.1 Representational characters

As noted earlier, compound characters are those that can be decomposed into constituents that are themselves characters (or combining versions of characters). Using examples from this lesson, 姓 is formed from 女 and 生, 東 is formed from 木 and 日. Non-
compound characters, such as 中, 马 or 王 (or the parts of compound characters such as 女, 生, 木 and 日) can be called ‘simplex’. It is probably true that most simplex characters derive ultimately from drawings or indications that relate to the original meaning of the graph. Thus, 马, standing for the word mǎ meaning ‘horse’, preserves traces of what was originally a drawing of a horse; and 上 shàng ‘on; go up, etc.’, particularly in contrast to 下 ‘under; go down, etc.’, represents the meaning of the word diagrammatically.

The following characters all have forms that can be rationalized fairly easily in terms of their meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>一</th>
<th>二</th>
<th>三</th>
<th>上</th>
<th>下</th>
<th>中</th>
<th>心</th>
<th>必</th>
<th>火</th>
<th>雨</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yī</td>
<td>èr</td>
<td>sān</td>
<td>shàng</td>
<td>xià</td>
<td>zhōng</td>
<td>xīn</td>
<td>bì</td>
<td>huǒ</td>
<td>yǔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>three</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>below</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>heart</td>
<td>must</td>
<td>fire</td>
<td>rain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

米 木 月 山 凸 叉 弓 鱼 鸟 伞
mǐ mù yuè shān tū chā gōng yú niǎo sǎn
rice (tree) moon hill convex fork bow fish bird umbrella

It is worth mentioning a recent coinage: 乒乓 pīngpāng ‘pingpong’, which is composed of characters that not only suggest the two halves of a pingpong table with competing players, but which derive from a graph that also shows a phonetic connection: 兵 bīng ‘soldier’.

A graph can be viewed as representational regardless of whether the historical data supports the notion. Thus, if you agree that 伞 sǎn ‘umbrella’ looks [vaguely] like an umbrella, then you are regarding it as representational – and that image can be of use in helping you recognize it. Similarly, once the graph for 心 xīn ‘heart’ is known, ie 必, then 必 bì ‘must; have to’ can be viewed as representing the notion of obligation as ‘a line crossing the heart’. Conversely, the pictorial features of the graph for 象 xiàng ‘elephant’, 象, may not be evident until someone makes the connection either by citing a more realistic earlier graph, or by drawing attention to the trunk, head, body, tail, etc.

Beginning students show great skill at creating nonsense etymologies (even for compound characters). Thus the character 哭 kū ‘to cry’ is seen as ‘two eyes and a tear’, or 电 diàn (simplified as 电) ‘electricity’ is seen as ‘an appliance with an electrical cord running out the bottom’. Or – more extreme - 会 huì (会 in simplified form) ‘to be able; capable’ (among other meanings) is seen as Darth Vader, complete with helmet and breathing equipment – a man of impressive capabilities. But while it is useful to find representational elements in complex characters, it is often not possible even with a high degree of creative license. There is not much to be said for, say, 皮 pí ‘skin’, 衣 yī ‘clothes’, or 豆 dòu ‘beans’. They are simplex (and may well derive directly from
representations) but their forms are difficult to account for without historical research – or a very creative imagination.

2.4.2 Additive characters – or blends
A small set of compound graphs can be interpreted as semantic blends, in which the meaning of the whole seems to be related to both its parts. Occasionally (b), both meaning and sound are involved.

a) Semantic blends
尖 jiān ‘sharp’, made up of 小 xiǎo ‘small’ and 大 dà ‘big’, ie ‘wedge shaped’;
忠 zhōng ‘loyal’, made up of 中 zhōng ‘middle’ and 心 xīn ‘heart’;
信 xīn ‘believe; letter’, made up of 人 rén ‘person’ and 言 yǔ ‘language’;
孕 yùn ‘be pregnant’, made up of 存 nǎi ‘exist’ and 子 zǐ ‘child’;
好 hǎo ‘be good; well’, made up of 女 nǚ ‘woman’ and 子 zǐ ‘child’, ie the paradigm of ‘goodness’;
尿 niǎo ‘urine’ made up of 尸 shī ‘body’ and 水 shuǐ ‘water’;
屎 shǐ ‘shit’ made up of 尸 shī ‘body’ and 米 mǐ ‘rice [grain]’.

b) Blends of sound and meaning (rare)
甭 bèng ‘no need to’, made up of 不 bù ‘not’ and 用 yòng ‘use’.

‘Blends’ are one of the traditional character types (one of the liùshù), but most cases represent more of an apparent than a real historical process of character creation. As with the simplex characters, students and teachers frequently ignore the historical facts and enlarge the category of blends with their own etymologies: 名 mín ‘name’ from 夕 xī ‘evening’ and 口 kǒu ‘mouth’, explained as ‘at dusk, you have to call out names to identify people’; or 東 dōng ‘east’, made up of 日 rì ‘sun’ superimposed on 木 mù ‘wood’ (originally ‘tree’) and explained as ‘sunrise through the trees’; or 杯 bèi ‘cup’, made up of 木 mù ‘wood’ and 不 bù ‘not’, because ‘cups aren’t make of wood’.

2.4.3 Phonosemantic characters
While with enough time and imagination, the form of almost any character can be accounted for, once the repertoire of characters begins to grow, it becomes more efficient to relate characters not to things (their referents), but to each other. Thus, as noted in the lesson, once 马 mǎ ‘horse’ is learned, then it is easy to relate it to 马 mǎ ‘Q’, or 妈 mā ‘mother’ – or eventually to 嫁 mā ‘ant’ or 码 mā ‘number’. The historical process that gives rise to such sets is borrowing, followed by specification: 马 is borrowed to write
words similar in sound, which are (often) specified by the addition of a classifying character (口, 女, 石 or 虫, etc.).

The process has given rise to what are often called ‘phonetic sets’: 嗜, 媽, 螞, 碼. Many phonetic sets are quite regular, like the 馬 set, or the following set based on 青 qīng (which, as a free form, means ‘green’ or ‘young’):

請, 情, 晴, 清, 氐, 蜻, 鰍
qīng qīng qīng qīng qīng qīng qīng
invite feelings clear clean hydrogen dragonfly mackerel

In some cases, phonetic correspondences that were once regular have been obscured by historical changes in the language; such is the case for 陳 and 東, where the pronunciation, chén and dōng, no longer matches (but remains close). But even the ‘irregular’ sets show patterns of correspondence, as illustrated by the set based on 重 below, which either begins with zhōng or with dōng.

重, 種, 踵, 腫, 動, 懂, 廓
zhòng zhòng zhòng zhòng dòng dòng dòng
heavy category heel swell move understand to lead

The common sound elements are often called phonetics (shēngpànɡ in Chinese); and the specifying elements are called radicals (bùshǒu) -- even though it is usually the phonetic elements that represent the historical root and the radicals, the additions. Radicals do have concrete meanings, eg 言 ‘speech’, 心 ‘heart’, 日 ‘sun’, 水 ‘water’ etc., and initially the selection of a particular radical to form a compound character would have been inspired by meaning. But in many cases, the original impetus has been obscured by linguistic and cultural change. The presence of the water radical in 海 ‘sea’, 河 ‘river’ and 洗 ‘wash’ reflects a connection with water; but its presence in 漢 Hàn ‘Chinese’, 溫 wēn ‘warm’ and 活 huó ‘to live’ is harder to explain. Ultimately, the function of radicals in compound characters is one of differentiation: 活 is not 适, 括 or 活; 漢 is not 難, 喪 or 難.

### 2.4.4 Character retrieval

Alphabetic writing systems, regardless of the regularity of their spelling, make use of relatively few symbols, so ordering titles for filing systems or words for dictionaries is a matter of alphabetization – establishing an order for the symbols and remembering it. For character writing systems, in which the number of symbols ranges in the thousands, retrieval is much more problematical.

The most common method of ordering characters (and ultimately, retrieving them) was suggested by the large number of compound characters that arose from processes of borrowing and specification described above. Compound characters could be grouped by radical, and then subgrouped by number of additional strokes (the second
of the figures written under each large-format characters introduced in this text). Thus 請 could be found under the speech-radical, 言, amongst those characters with 8 (additional) strokes; 蜻 would be under the insect-radical, 虫, 8 strokes, etc. Simplex characters that were themselves radicals (such as 言, 日, 气, 魚) would be listed at the head of their own set. Other simplex characters were brought into the same system by designating parts of their graphs — sometimes rather arbitrarily — to be radicals. Thus 中, 北, 甲 (all simplex) are assigned the radical | (the vertical stroke called shù); 也 is assigned the radical 乙 (even though the character does not contain a stroke of that shape); 元 is assigned 元, and so on.

Eventually, by Qing times (with the publication of the great ‘Kangxi’ dictionary), the number of radicals was settled at 214, ordered by strokes totals. Students of the language, like literate Chinese, who had to be able to look up characters efficiently or search through indexes ordered by radical, came to know the radical chart virtually by heart. Because of their important classificatory role, and because they are stable (each character having one assigned to it) and of fixed number, introductory textbooks have tended to focus on radicals (noting general meanings where possible) rather than phonetic sets. Yet both are useful, and in fact, the information on pronunciation obtained from phonetic elements is probably more useful to the learner (in allowing quick dictionary searches, for example) than the information on meaning provided by radicals (which is often too general to be of much use).

The radical system of retrieval is not the only one used, but it remains one of the more popular systems for looking up characters in dictionaries or other reference works in cases where the pronunciation is not known. Adoption of the simplified set of characters was accompanied by some changes in the assignment of radicals, and altered the arrangement and number of radicals in the chart. The new system has 189 rather than the traditional 214.

The main difficulty in using the radical system is identifying the radical — particularly in simplex characters which are not themselves radicals and which were assigned a radical to make them conform to the system. Nowadays, most dictionaries are organized alphabetically by the pinyin pronunciation of the first character, but they also contain lists organized by radicals that allow you to look up characters when the pronunciation is unknown. But only one dictionary, The ABC Chinese-English Dictionary (cited in the bibliography), is organized by pinyin and word (rather than character), so that words (rather than characters) are ordered uniquely, irrespective of the particular character of the first syllable.

2.4.5 An illustration
The following couplet observed on a shop door in the city of Zhenjiang, not far downstream from Nanjing, provides some good examples of phonosemantic characters. Despite being a product of the Mainland, the ‘scroll’ reads vertically in the traditional fashion, right to left, ie lún jì ào chí, etc. Each character contains the now familiar element 馬, but this time, not as a phonetic, but as a radical, so that the set shows no
particular commonality of sound. Rather, all the characters show a connection of meaning – they all refer to types of horses or to attributes of horses.

The word-for-word glosses below are only very rough indications of meaning. Each set of 4 characters forms a sentence consisting of an adjective and a noun, followed by an adverb and a verb. The sense is one of aspiration and hope.

驤 駿 xiāng Jùn Adj galloping Outstanding
駒 驥 jū jì N foal fleet+horse
驍 驃 huān ào Adv joyously proudly
騰 驶 téng. chí, V soars. races,

The saying is not a well known one; in fact, though they would get the gist of the meaning, many Chinese would be hard pressed to say precisely what the difference was between a jū and a jì (the second characters of each [vertical] line).

Chinese encountering rare characters such as [some of] those in the couplet, are quite likely to make use of radical and phonetic to remind them of meaning and pronunciation, respectively. Students of the language need the hints even more. With some allowance for 駨 which needs to be referred to other compounds (池 chí, 弛 chí) rather than just the right-hand element (也 yě), the pronunciation of the phonetic element alone matches that of the compound (except in tone). Thus 駨 and 冀 are both pronounced jì; 駩 is ào, 駥 is áo, 駤 and 裏 are both xiāng, etc.

2.4.6 The radicals and their names
Radicals have names so that they can be referred to not only in the process of looking up characters in dictionaries, but also in ordinary speech when people want to distinguish homophones. So it is useful to learn the names for at least the most common radicals. Many radical names reflect the position of the radical in the graph. Those placed on the left, for example, are regularly called ‘the character at-the-side’, eg: the 曰 that appears in 昨 and 明 is called rizipáng ‘sun-character-beside’. Those placed on top are called ‘the character at-head’, eg: the top of 茶, 菜, and 英 is called cǎozitóu ‘grass-character-head’.

The following chart shows the more salient radicals that have appeared in the first two character lessons. [The gaps are where the combining forms would be; since they cannot be cited alone, they are illustrated in the examples.] There is no need to learn the radical names as a list, but you should get familiar with them by frequent use.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>radical</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>name</th>
<th>example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>木</td>
<td>wood; tree</td>
<td>mùzipáng</td>
<td>林</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[not at the side] 木</td>
<td>mùzi</td>
<td>李, 東/东, 本</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>口</td>
<td>mouth; opening</td>
<td>kǒuzipáng</td>
<td>嗎/吗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>日</td>
<td>sun</td>
<td>rizipáng</td>
<td>昨, 明</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>言/讠</td>
<td>speech</td>
<td>yánzipáng</td>
<td>誰/谁</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>女</td>
<td>woman</td>
<td>nǚzipáng</td>
<td>她, 姓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>man; person</td>
<td>rénzipáng</td>
<td>他</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>水</td>
<td>water</td>
<td>sāndiānshuǐ</td>
<td>海, 津</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>安 incline</td>
<td>zuǒ`ěrduō – páng</td>
<td>陈/陈</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>广</td>
<td>covering</td>
<td>guǎngzipáng</td>
<td>廣/广</td>
</tr>
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