APPENDIX: A GUIDE TO PRONOUNCING CONSONANTS, VOWELS, DIPHTONGS, TRIPHTONGS, AND TONES IN MEDAN MANDARIN CHINESE

1. Initials and Finals

A syllable in the common speech of modern Chinese usually consists of an Initial, which is a consonant that begins the syllable, and a final, which constitutes the rest of the syllable. For example, in the syllable ‘píng’, ‘p’ is the initial and ‘ing’ is the final. A syllable can stand without an initial, such as ‘yē’, but all syllables must have a final. In the common speech of modern Chinese, there are altogether 21 initials and 38 finals.

2. Pronunciation Keys

2.1 Pronunciations of Initials

Initials: m, n, l, h are pronounced similarly to their counterparts in the English language.

Pinyin IPA       Explanation

b      [p]     (unaspirated, voiceless) p, as in spit

p      [p]     (aspirated, voiceless) as in English

m      [m]     as in English
f  [f] as in English

d  [t] unaspirated t, as in stand

t  [t] as in English ‘time’

n  [n] as in English ‘nine’

l  [l] as in English ‘let’

g  [k] a soft unaspirated k, as in skill

k  [k] (aspirated, voiceless) as in English ‘ear’

h  [x] like the English h if followed by ‘a’; otherwise it is pronounced more roughly

j  [te] is an unaspirated voiceless palatal affricate. To produce this sound, first raise the front of the tongue to the hard palate and press the tip of the tongue against the back of the lower teeth, and then loosen the tongue and let the air squeeze out through the channel thus made. The sound is unaspirated and the vocal cords do not vibrate.

q  [teʰ] is an aspirated voiceless palatal affricate. It is produced in the same manner as ‘j’, but it is aspirated.

x  [ɕ] is a voiceless palatal fricative. To produce it, first raise the front of the
tongue towards (but not touching) the hard palate and then let the air squeeze out. The vocal cords do not vibrate.

zh  [tʃ]  like ‘j’ in ‘jerk’, but with the tip of the tongue curled farther back, unaspirated and very similar to merger in American English

ch  [tʃʰ]  like ‘ch’ in ‘church’, but with the tip of the tongue curled farther back, aspirated.

sh  [ʃ]  like ‘sh’ in ‘ship’, but with the tip of the tongue curled farther back.

r  [r]  similar to the English r in ‘rank’, but with the lips spread and with the tongue or curled upwards. Always pronounce the Chinese /r/ sound with a nice smile!

z  [ts]  unaspirated c, more common example is like ‘ds’ in ‘beds’

c  [tsʰ]  aspirated, more common example is like ‘ts’ in ‘cats’

s  [s]  pronounced as in English, e.g. ‘s’ in ‘see’

2.2 Pronunciation of Finals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Final-only form</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>[aː]</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>if ending a syllable, then as in ‘father’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
o  [uɔ]  o  as in ‘spot’
e  [ə]  e  as in ‘another’
ê  [e]  e  as in ‘bet’. Only used in certain interjections.
ai  [ai]  ai  like in English ‘eye’, but a bit lighter
ei  [ei]  ei  as in ‘hey’
ao  [ao]  ao  approximately as in ‘cow’
ou  [ɔʊ]  ou  as in variant in ‘cold’
an  [an]  an  starts with ‘a’ and ends with ‘n’
en  [ən]  en  as in ‘taken’
ang  [ɑːŋ]  ang  starts with the vowel sound in father and ends in the velar nasal; like ‘song’ in American English
eng  [en]  eng  like e above but with ng added to it at the back
er  [ər]  er  like ‘sister’ in American English
i  [iː]  yi  like in English ‘eat’
ia  [ia]  ya  It’s almost like the word ‘yard’ in English
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>io [iɔo] yo</td>
<td>like American slang ‘yo’; (we will only see this at first) as in final form ‘yo’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ie [iɛ] ye</td>
<td>It’s almost like the word ‘yet’ in English</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>iai [iə] yai</td>
<td>as i + ai</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iao [iəo] yao</td>
<td>as i + ao</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iu [iʊə] yuo</td>
<td>as I + ou</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ian [iən] yian</td>
<td>as i + an; like English ‘yen’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in [iən] yin</td>
<td>as i + en</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iang [iəŋ] yang</td>
<td>as i + ang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ing [iŋ] ying</td>
<td>as i + eng</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u [uː] wu</td>
<td>like English ‘zoo’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ua [oə] wa</td>
<td>as u + a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uo [oʊ] wo</td>
<td>as u + o; the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uai [oəi] wai</td>
<td>as u + ai</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ui [oʊi] wei</td>
<td>as u + ei</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
uan  [œan]  wan        as u + an

un  [œən]  wen        as u + en

uang  [œəŋ]  wang      as u + ang; like the ang in the English anger

ong  [œəŋ]  weng      as u + eng; starts with the vowel sound in book

and ends with the velar nasal sound in sing.

ü  [y]  yu            as in German ‘üben’ or French ‘lune’ (To get
                      this sound, say ‘ee’ with rounded lips)

üe  [ye]  yue          as ü + e

üan  [yan]  yuan      as ü + an

ün  [yən]  yun         as ü + en

iong  [yen]  yong      as ü + eng

3. Tones

Chinese is a tonal language in which the tones convey differences in meaning.

In common speech there are four basic tones, represented respectively by the following tone marks:
‘－’ for the first tone, high level ‘mā’ mother

‘ˊ’ for the second tone, rising ‘má’ hemp

‘ˇ’ for the third tone, low fall-rise ‘mǎ’ horse

‘ˋ’ for the fourth tone, falling ‘mà’ to scold

When a syllable contains only a single vowel, the tone mark is placed directly above the letter as in ‘lù’ and ‘hěn. The dot over the vowel ‘i’ should be dropped if the tone mark is placed above it, as in Hā ‘nǐn’ and ‘píng’. When the final of the syllable is composed of two or more vowels, the tone mark should be placed above the vowel pronounced with the mouth widest open (e.g. hāo).

The openness of the mouth for the vowels, from widest to the smallest is: a o e i u ü.

4. Spelling Rules

1. At the beginning of a syllable, ‘i’ is written as ‘y’ (e.g. iě → yě).

   ‘i’ is written as ‘yì’ when it forms a syllable all by itself (e.g. ī → yī).

2. At the beginning of a syllable, ‘u’ is written as ‘w’ (e.g. uǒ → wǒ).

   ‘u’ is written as ‘wu’ when it forms a syllable all by itself (e.g. wǔ).
When ‘ü’ is at the beginning of a syllable or forms a syllable by itself, a ‘y’ is added to it and the two dots over it are omitted (e.g. ū → yū).

1. When the compound final ‘uei’ is combined with initials, it is simplified to –ui and the tone mark is written over ‘i’. For example: gui.

2. When the compound final ‘uen’ is combined with initials, it is simplified to –un. For example: lùn.

3. When ‘ü’ is combined with j, q, and x, the two dots over it are omitted. For example: xuè. ‘y’ is added to the compound final which start with ‘ü’ and the two dots over it are omitted. For example: Yūyán Xuéyuàn.

‘j’, ‘q’, and ‘x’ are never combined with ‘u’ and ‘a’.

5. **Tone Sandhi of ‘—’**

Normally ‘—’ is pronounced in the first tone when it stands by itself, at the end of a word, phrase or sentence, or is used as an ordinal number. However, ‘—’ is pronounced in the fourth tone when it precedes a first tone, second tone, or third tone syllable. It is read in the second tone when it precedes a fourth tone.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yī } & + \left\{ \begin{array}{c}
- \\
 ˈ \\
 -
\end{array} \right\} \quad \text{yī } + \left\{ \begin{array}{c}
- \\
 ˈ \\
 -
\end{array} \right\} \\
\text{yī } & + ˈ \quad \text{examples: } \quad \text{yī bēi (one cup)} \\
\text{yī } & + \quad \text{yì ping (one bottle)} \\
\text{yī } & + ˈ \quad \text{yì bèn (one copy)} \\
\text{yī } & + \quad \text{example: } \quad \text{yì biàn (one time/once)}
\end{align*}
\]
Curriculum Vitae

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- Master of Science (MSc) in Management Studies at Saint John Institute of Management Studies, Jakarta affiliated with Saint John University, Houston-Texas, USA, 2001 with Magna Cum Laude
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**EXPERIENCE**

• From 1993 to 1997, as an English teacher and a tour guide

• In 1998, as an English teacher in Insearch Language Centre (ILC) at Australia Centre Medan

• In 1998, as an International Marketer at P.T. Tropical Canning & Frozen Industry, Kawasan Industri Medan

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