Grammar Basics

Class objective:

I know the basics of the language and frame sentences accordingly.

Concept A: Facts about grammar.

Chinese grammar is much simpler than that of European languages. There are no articles (a/an/the), no tenses, and no plurals. The basic point to bear in mind is that, like English, Chinese word order is subject-verb-object. In other words, a basic English sentence like "I (subject) love (verb) you (object)" is constructed in exactly the same way in Chinese.

For example, the sentence "I study Chinese" follows exactly the same word order in Mandarin:

I study Chinese. Wǒ xué hànyǔ。 (lit: I study Chinese)

Concept B: Let's learn a few words first

- This-这 zhè
- that- 哪nà
- to be- 是shì
- tea-茶 chá
- rice/meal- 饭fàn
- cup-被子 bēizi
- egg-鸡蛋jīdàn
- question particle- 吗mā
- no-不bù
- what-什么shénme

Concept C: Use the words to frame a sentence (Sentence structure)

We can now try the following statements:

This is tea	Zhè shì chá。
That is rice	Nà shì fàn。
This is cup	Zhè shì bēizi。
That is an egg	Nà shì jīdàn。

Concept D: How to form questions and then answer them:

All we need to do is put Ma at the end of the sentence.

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