

## THE RAPID ROAD TO CHINA

### *How music can help companies cross the last 'Great Wall' in China – the language barrier*

While there are a growing number of companies doing business with China, many westerners find Chinese a very difficult language to learn. Now, UK-based Earworms have found a unique way to teach Mandarin Chinese that takes advantage of the musical nature of the language, meaning businesses could now find themselves saying 'ni hao' (hello) to some of the great business opportunities that China represents.

Earworms co-founder Andrew Lodge has experience of doing business in China and knows the value of being able to speak a few words. "It can really impress your hosts and puts them in a good state of mind and can prove vital during business negotiations."

The emphasis placed on intonation and pitch makes Chinese very different from many European languages. Earworms have managed to turn this difficulty into an advantage – using music to make the learning process much easier, enjoyable and more effective.

"The link between Chinese language and music is very deep," explains Jiang Li, head of the *East Meets West* cultural-exchange project. "Each word in Chinese is spoken in one of four musical tones. After years of learning, many westerners still struggle with these four tones. I think the concept of linking music to learning Chinese is well overdue."

The word 'cha-a' for example, can mean either 'tea', or 'bad' depending on if the tone goes up at the end: cha-<sup>a</sup> = tea or down: cha-<sub>a</sub> = bad. For English speakers used to changing tone to alter the context of a word (for example using a rising tone to indicate a question) this can be a hard concept to learn using traditional language learning techniques.

Chinese needn't be so hard, however. The language itself is grammatically quite simple and the human brain has a remarkable capacity to recognise tone and pitch – if the learning is conducted in the right way.

Even being able to exchange even basic pleasantries can make a huge difference in relationships due to the value placed on cultural sensitivity and respect in China. So this is a well invested endeavour

Earworms mbt (Musical Brain Trainer) have built on the incredible effect music can have on memory, to develop a unique concept in accelerated language learning. Mimicking the way we are taught language as children, the music and tunes that teach Chinese vocabulary and structure need minimal concentration and can be listened to anywhere and everywhere – while stuck in traffic, at the gym or even on the plane to Beijing or Shanghai!

The whole learning process is made fun and relaxing, producing a feel-good sensation rather than the feeling of pressure most people associate with attempts to learn a foreign language. Rapid Chinese Vol.1 provides all the basics needed just by listening a few times – your subconscious will do the rest.

With China's economy rapidly expanding and the doors to the world's most populous nation being opened wider than ever before, the value of speaking Mandarin Chinese (the mother tongue of over 1 Billion people) is recognised worldwide. Now Earworms are helping businesses easily and quickly learn the basics of this important language in an innovative and effective way.

Earworms Rapid Chinese Vol.1 with accompanying booklet is now available in bookshops, on Amazon or directly from [www.earwormslearning.com](http://www.earwormslearning.com) priced £14.99.

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