

Global Feminisms Project Pronunciation Guide

China Interviewee Names

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Naming conventions. In China about 92% of the population are ethnic Han, while the rest are constituted of 55 ethnic minorities according to the official classification. The naming practices among Han Chinese share the same structure; that is, the surname is the first and the given name is the last. A child's surname in most cases follows the father's surname, but occasionally some people follow their mother's surname. Phonetically Chinese characters have only one syllable for each character. In most cases surnames have one syllable, as all the ten interviewees' surnames show. There are also double-syllable surnames with two characters. Given names can be one or two syllables. The interviewees in this group all have given names with two syllables (characters). Some people's given names incorporate their mother's surname. For example, Zhang Lixi's mother's surname Li is in her given name. Some ethnic minorities follow the naming convention of the ethnic Han. For example, He Zhonghua is ethnic Naxi. Although her surname, He 和, is rare among ethnic Han people, the naming structure is the same as that of Han's. In other words, one cannot often tell people's ethnicity by names, as long as their naming structure remains the same as that of Han people's.

In the People's Republic of China, married women do not change their surnames, a feminist practice legalized by the Marriage Law that was drafted by socialist state feminists upon the founding of the socialist state.

Many overseas Chinese, and some young Chinese in China who can speak English, adopt Western naming conventions to switch the order of their family names and their given names when writing or speaking English. This practice makes it difficult for non-Chinese speakers to decide which one is the surname and which one is the given name. In the English transcripts of the Chinese interviews we follow the Chinese naming convention used by all the interviewees.

Interviewee		Pronunciation
艾晓明	Ai Xiaoming	ī shou mēng
陈明侠	Chen Mingxia	chen mēng shiä
高小贤	Gao Xiaoxian	gou shou shiä[n]
葛友俐	Ge Youli	gə yoo lē
和钟华	He Zhonghua	hə jô[n]g hüä

李慧英	Li Huiying	lē huā ēng
刘伯红	Liu Bohong	lyō bō hōng
王翠玉	Wang Cuiyu	wāng tsüay yoo
王行娟	Wang Xingjuan	wāng-shēng-jüän
张李玺	Zhang Lixi	jǎ[n]g lē shē