

Descriptions of Target Student Abilities: Intermediate Conversational Cantonese (50 hours of Instruction)

Sik Lee Dennig

This curriculum aims to help intermediate-low students attain the intermediate-mid level of proficiency on the ACTFL scale.

Interpersonal Communication Skills	Intermediate Conversational Cantonese, 1 st Quarter	Intermediate Conversational Cantonese, 2 nd Quarter	Intermediate Conversational Cantonese, 3 rd Quarter
<p>In the intermediate sequence of conversational Cantonese courses, students extend their linguistic and cultural competence from the basic level, which deals with common everyday topics in the immediate context, to a level that will allow them to survive when they travel or move to a locale where the target language is spoken. Their expanded vocabulary, grammar, and cultural understanding allow them to negotiate meaning more effectively when they converse with native and nonnative speakers about familiar topics, request information and action, describe physical and nonphysical objects, give simple narration, and engage in social transactions for basic survival needs. Their vocabulary is broader and more differentiated and their sentences are no longer mere juxtapositions of simple sentences. They are switching to the topic-comment structure as the primary organizing principle of</p>	<p>In the first quarter, students acquire new vocabulary and grammatical structures and also build upon what they have learned in the first year so that they can talk about an array of familiar topics with some details, give and follow directions, request and provide specific information for survival purposes, and engage in transactions that may involve minor complications. Students interact with each other in role plays throughout the quarter and they also interview native speakers from time to time about the topics studied in class. Five of the role plays and an interview of about 10 minutes are recorded.</p> <p>At the end of the first quarter, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Give more elaborated biographical information. ● Request basic information about traveling to or living in the target country, e.g. how to prepare for different weather conditions and what kind of clothing is appropriate for a specific occasion. ● Ask for and follow directions to unfamiliar places. 	<p>In the second quarter, students continue to develop their linguistic skills and cultural awareness. They become more confident in interacting with native speakers as they have more vocabulary and sentence structures at their disposal. Their fluency and pronunciation have also improved and their speech is highly comprehensible to native speakers used to relating to non-natives. They continue to practice their interpersonal communication skills with their classmates and native speakers. Recordings of 5 to 10 minutes long are made on a regular basis.</p> <p>At the end of the second quarter, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage in exchanges of information about common topics such as education, traffic, and winter festivals. ● Compare the cultural assumptions associated with some of the topics, e.g. the emphasis on education in traditional Chinese culture. ● Use appropriate grammatical structures 	<p>In the third quarter students continue to practice the linguistic functions learned in earlier quarters while adding new forms and functions to their linguistic repertoire. They interact with each other and native speakers and do recordings of 5 to 15 minutes long throughout the quarter. Their speech typically consists of multiple sentences with increasing cohesion and coherence. The more advanced students start producing short, organized paragraphs by the end of the quarter. At the end of this quarter, the instructor tests each student's interpersonal communication skills by conducting a modified oral proficiency interview.</p> <p>At the end of the third quarter, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Converse about a wide range of topics related to school, work, and the local community, e.g. Cantonese cooking, job benefits, and crime rates. ● Give instructions about how to prepare typical

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<p>their interpersonal discourse and they employ an increasingly larger number of discourse particles and cohesive devices to relate topics and comments. Short, coherent paragraphs start to emerge by the end of the sequence. Furthermore, students' awareness of the formality level of an expression has increased, resulting in a better match between context and choice of expression or pronunciation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Give directions to familiar places. ● Make and cancel appointments. ● Resolve minor complications such as time conflicts. ● Talk to medical professionals about common ailments. ● Compliment and respond to compliments in a flexible way, bearing in mind the age and experience of the native speaker. The younger generation and the older speakers who have lived in western countries may not follow the traditional way of being modest when receiving compliments. ● Accomplish the above communicative tasks by using a combination of simple and complex sentence structures. ● Use simple coordinators to conjoin sentences appropriately without the influence from English, e.g. using <i>gám</i> "then" or <i>juhngyáuh</i> "and also" instead of <i>tùhng(màaih)</i> "and" to connect two sentences. ● Use the serial verb construction and the pivotal construction and know the equivalents in English. ● Use basic subordinators to relate two clauses with proper word order. For 	<p>to do positive and negative comparisons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Narrate briefly experiences with some of the topics, e.g. what was it like to attend kindergarten. ● React in social situations, e.g. expressing emotions, likes and dislikes, complaining and responding to complaints, apologizing and accepting apologies. ● Give instructions to native speakers about topics of interest to natives, e.g. how to book a hotel in the U.S. and how to apply to an American university. ● Request information relevant to foreigners living in the target country, e.g. language schools and driving tests. ● Ask for and follow instructions about how to perform a range of functions important to travelers, e.g. how to purchase train and airline tickets. ● Use a variety of structures to highlight different components in the topic-comment construction, e.g. employing the passive construction to move the direct object to the topic position or the focusing device <i>jěung</i> or 	<p>Cantonese dishes and other cultural products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide short personal narratives of current, past, and future events. ● Describe the physical and social aspects of the local community. ● Discuss concretely and briefly social issues that affect Hong Kong and Canton, e.g. minimum wage and water pollution. ● Engage in more complicated social transactions, e.g. renting an apartment, opening a bank account, and having a job interview. ● Add traditional proverbs and idioms to their conversations to show greater cultural awareness and association. ● Start using lexical nouns and pronouns as cohesive devices in ways more consistent with the pro-drop status of the Cantonese language. The null pronoun is the default for reinstating a referent in a narrative or conversation when topic continuity is at its highest level. Students understand both subject and object omissions are allowed in many linguistic environments but achieving native competence takes time and practice.
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	<p>example, temporal subordinators must appear at the end of the subordinate clause, which must occur before the main clause (<i>ngóh hei-sān jīhauh, ngóh sihk jóuchāan</i> “literally: I get up after, I eat breakfast.”)</p>	<p><i>līhn</i> to highlight the direct object in the comment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use more complex coordinators and subordinators to create cohesiveness in their sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a larger variety of connectors to relate events. Use double conjunctions such as <i>sēuihñ ... daahnhaih</i> “although...but” and <i>yānwaih ... sóyíh</i> “because...therefore” appropriately without the influence from English and understand how they contrast with single conjunctions in formal vs. informal speech. For example, <i>daahnhaih</i> “but” can be used by itself but not <i>sēuiyihñ</i> “although.” In general, double conjunctions are more formal than corresponding single conjunctions.
Interpretive Communication Skills	Intermediate Conversational Cantonese, 1st Quarter	Intermediate Conversational Cantonese, 2nd Quarter	Intermediate Conversational Cantonese, 3rd Quarter
In the second year of conversational Cantonese, students practice and refine their interpretive communication skills by listening to and watching longer and slightly more complicated materials, authentic or created for them. They engage in activities that draw on the comprehension strategies they have already cultivated in their native language, e.g. identifying the	During the first quarter, students listen to short conversations, directions, and transactions for survival needs. In addition, they watch short presentations and video clips from the Internet (1 to 5 minutes long) about the festivals that take place in the autumn season. Students listen to the legends or history associated with these festivals. They practice different kinds of comprehension strategies, relying mainly on top-down comprehension strategies transferred from their first	During the second quarter, students listen to longer conversations, instructions, and transactions for survival purposes and watch slightly longer presentations and videos about festivals that take place in the winter season. They interpret the cultural perspectives reflected in the legends behind these festivals. As their knowledge about more complex sentence structures increases, students become better at using bottom-up strategies	During the third quarter, students listen to more complicated recorded transactions for survival needs, descriptions, and conversations about a wide range of familiar social and cultural topics. They continue to watch presentations and video clips about significant festivals and interpret the cultural perspectives expressed in these festivals as a way to build their cross-cultural competence. In addition, they start watching current events

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<p>purpose of the comprehension task, tapping into background knowledge, gathering contextual information, predicting, and listening for the main idea. Students also use their knowledge of the Cantonese culture and language to look for details; for example, the overall level of formality in word choices offers hints about the intended audience and identifying main clauses helps singling out main pieces of information. Students keep track of the strategies they use, do comprehension exercises regularly, and take tests at the end of each unit and in exams.</p>	<p>language and basic knowledge of the Cantonese language to interpret the general idea of an oral text.</p> <p>At the end of the first quarter, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand conversations, directions, social transactions, and presentations modeled in linguistic forms studied in class. • Use top-down strategies and acquired linguistic and cultural knowledge in Cantonese to help interpret the general ideas in more complex oral text in the target language. • Interpret the cultural perspectives expressed by the festivals presented this quarter, namely, the Mid-Autumn Festivals and Thanksgiving. • Continue to develop their awareness of the formality levels of different types of oral text. 	<p>to help interpret supporting details of an oral text.</p> <p>At the end of the second quarter, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand oral text consisting mostly of targeted linguistic forms. • Integrate different types of strategies to interpret oral text in authentic materials. • Interpret the cultural perspectives conveyed by the legend of the Chinese Zodiac, which is related to the Chinese New Year, and the legend of Cowherd and Weaving Maid, which has become associated with the Chinese Valentine's holiday/season. • Further cultivate their knowledge of the formality levels of slightly more complex oral text. 	<p>and full-length Cantonese movies. They become more proficient in combining different types of strategies to interpret the main idea and supporting details in authentic materials.</p> <p>At the end of the third quarter, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand more complex oral text consisting of targeted and non-targeted linguistic forms. • Integrate different types of strategies to interpret oral text in authentic materials. • Interpret the cultural perspectives on patriotism as expressed in the history of the Dragon Boat Festival. • Sharpen their awareness of the formality levels of different types of authentic oral text.
Presentational communication Skills	Intermediate Conversational Cantonese, 1st Quarter	Intermediate Conversational Cantonese, 2nd Quarter	Intermediate Conversational Cantonese, 3rd Quarter
In the intermediate sequence, students become more proficient in adjusting the level of formality in word choices, grammatical structures, and pronunciation in	In the first quarter, students present rehearsed oral reports on common and a small number of social and cultural topics with relative ease.	In the second quarter, students present longer oral reports on broader social and cultural issues in the local Cantonese community with a greater sense of confidence.	In the third quarter, students' presentations include narratives, descriptions, summaries, and commentaries on social and cultural topics specific to Cantonese communities with fluidity and

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<p>response to the purpose of a presentation and audience characteristics. In the last quarter of the sequence, they start learning traditional proverbs and idiomatic expressions in classical Chinese and incorporating them in their presentations when appropriate. They make short presentations to their classmates and other types of audience on the main topics they have worked with under the interpretive-communication section. Each quarter they work on and present part of an infomercial for the Stanford Alumni Association to help recruit students from Hong Kong, Canton, and other Cantonese-speaking communities.</p>	<p>At the end of the first quarter, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make presentations of 3 to 5 minutes long on common topics related to home, school, and the local community. ● Present the differences and similarities in cultural perspectives as expressed by the legends and history associated with fall festivals, specifically, the Mid-Autumn Festival in Cantonese culture and Thanksgiving in American culture, to the class or an intended audience. ● Prepare a PPT about certain aspects of being a student at Stanford for prospective students in Cantonese-speaking communities. ● Connect ideas with complex sentence structures. ● Choose the levels of formality in words, sentence structures, pronunciation, terms of address, and opening and closing rituals appropriate for their presentations. ● Switch to a two-way communication mode during the Q&A session after their presentations. 	<p>At the end of the second quarter, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Present for at least 5 minutes on a wide range of topics related to school, work, and the local community. ● Compare the cultural perspectives expressed by similar festivals in Cantonese and their own cultures and present their observations to the class or an imaginary audience. ● Expand the PPT about student life at Stanford. ● Use a large variety of complex sentence structures to connect sentences. ● Continue to work on adjusting the level of formality to suit the audience and the purpose of a presentation. ● Choose the right mode of communication when questioned by the audience about their presentations. 	<p>confidence. Their presentations show a higher level of organization in both content and structure as their command of the target language improves.</p> <p>At the end of the third quarter, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make presentations of about 10 minutes long about the social and other aspects of the local community. ● Present short summaries of Cantonese movies and make recommendations about whether the audience should watch the movies. ● Give simple narratives of personal experience and other events in different time frames. ● Provide descriptions of the social and other aspects of various Cantonese communities to an intended audience. ● Add current events of the Stanford community to the PPT about life at Stanford. ● Create sentences that are more connected to a central idea. ● Add a limited number of proverbs and idioms to their presentations in culturally appropriate ways.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Adjust the mode of communication spontaneously when answering questions after their presentations.
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