Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide

Practice example

Using a textbook for sequencing learning

UniSA | Research Centre for Languages and Cultures

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Introduction to examples

Collected here are examples of teachers' work. These are drawn from teacher practice and are included here to exemplify aspects of teaching, learning and assessing languages, as discussed in the *Guide*. Teachers were invited to share their planning and programming documents and members of the project team worked with them to further develop aspects of their work.

Programs

The collection of programs includes primary, middle and senior secondary long and short-term programs. These contain annotations designed to point out specific points of interest for you to consider in your reading of them. At the end of each program you will find a commentary that describes how the program exemplifies selected sections of the *Guide*.

A selection of teachers' work

This is a selection of programs and parts of programs, plans for classroom teaching, planned assessment tasks, descriptions of the teaching and learning contexts, investigations and evaluations of practice, and reflections on current practices. It shows teachers engaged in professional thinking, planning, reassessing, and evaluating what they teach, how they teach and who they teach.

About the examples

- These examples of teachers' planning, practice and reflection are provided for you to examine, consider and perhaps use in expanding your own understanding of language teaching and learning. We know that teachers learn best from other teachers and so we encourage you to look across the set of examples in all languages rather than just the language(s) you teach.

- The examples of teachers' work included here belong to individual teachers and are taught in a particular context which means that you will not find models that you can instantly adopt and teach. Rather, you will find ideas about teaching and learning that you can use by adapting and reworking them to produce programs, classroom teaching, learning and assessment practices that you can use in your own context.

- The examples of teachers' work are not included here because they constitute 'best practice' or are exemplars of definitive programs for languages teaching and learning. You will find some outstanding approaches to planning and teaching that advance our understanding of how to make languages teaching and learning a rich and effective learning experience for students. You will also find teachers' honest reflections and evaluations of their pedagogies, questioning what they do and rethinking what they will do.

- The examples of teachers' work may include some pedagogies of which you may be critical. However, you will also find professional educators striving to make sense of their work with students, language teaching and language learning.

Example	Use of a textbook for sequencing learning
Language	Chinese
Level	Year 9/10
Teacher	Andrew Scrimgeour (SA) The following example shows the use of a textbook, (addressing the content, grammar, vocabulary, exercises, and texts) when studying the textbook unit and planning student tasks.

| **Resourcing and materials**
Selecting resources
The purposes of resources
Adapting resources
Using resources critically
Relating resources to each other
Contemporary resources
Learners as resources
Developing a resource bank | In this setting, the textbook has been the core of the curriculum, and the scope of learning and tasks undertaken determined by what is in the textbook. This module takes the textbook unit as the starting point, and extends its scope to include a deeper appreciation of concepts related to the topic. This allows exploration from different cultural perspectives, including how these concepts are expressed in personal (email) and public (advertising) texts in the target language. In this way the scope and sequence of the textbook is not lost, but rather is enriched with an intercultural exploration of issues and extended opportunities for classroom interaction and meaning making by learners in the main tasks that result from this exploration. |

Chinese: Year 9/10

Application of a textbook unit

Resources: *Chinese Made Easy:* **Book 2**

Nihao 2: Unit 3 **'Xiaoming's house'**

The aim of this module was to develop a practical program addressing the content, grammar, vocabulary, exercises and texts in the textbook unit and also to enhance it with intercultural learning experiences arising from the topic. This approach can make learning more conceptual, meaningful and purposeful for the students, as well as more connected to English and their own lives. It means finding additional, authentic texts in Chinese and English that show how language is really used in these contexts when talking about or describing our homes.

The process of developing the unit was aimed at encouraging learners to think about circumstances where using this sort of language is likely or useful. For example:

- sharing information with a Chinese pen pal
  (my house, my room, my activities, my routine);
  and
- selling or buying a home (exploring how homes are represented in texts) and developing tasks in which learners communicate their own understandings of their life-worlds in comparison to others'.

Intercultural exploration

Rather than focusing solely on the language and grammatical content, this unit seeks to make the study of Chinese language secondary to the study of an aspect of people's lives – where they live, how they live, and why, across cultures. Consequently, the intercultural exploration needs to be the focus of the unit, not an add-on.

Intercultural aspects for investigation in this module could include:

- Homes: place and space
- Change: preservation and modernisation
- Communities: space and organisation

Underlying these three themes is the overall intercultural concept of **identity**: who we are, how we see ourselves, and how others see us.

The real issue for intercultural exploration is – How do we live? What do we understand as a 'home'? How does that compare to living in a Chinese home? What are Chinese expectations in terms of housing? How would they view our living experience here? And how might I survive living in their homes?

The textbook: Nihao 2: Unit 3 – a description/review of content

The unit contains a number of common features.

1) Text.
2) Grammar points.

3) Vocabulary.
4) Cultural data.
5) Exercises in the workbook.

The issue is when and how to address these aspects, and what additional planning and resources are needed to assist students to learn effectively.

1) Texts: The unit contains five texts - most of which are descriptive texts without purpose, context or audience. They are pedagogic, or vehicles to introduce grammar and vocabulary in this content area.

- The first text is about **locating people** using 在 *zai* (verb of location).
- The second text is about **locating objects** using 是 *shi* (verb of identification).
- The third text is about **locating objects** using 有 *you* (verb of existence) and 在 *zai*.

So overall, at a conceptual level, all three texts present the way the three verbs are used in describing location (*zai, you* and *shi*): which verb is used when, and why. That's the big question learners need to explore – in contrast to English.

- The fourth text is a dialogue ... in fact, a sequence of two-line dialogues which focus on adjective phrases and the modal form *le*.
- The fifth text is Xiaoming's Sunday routines: it covers sentence order, time-subject- location-verb-object.

These texts are not at all authentic – they are designed to reinforce grammar points – but are useful exercises in preparation for exploring authentic texts and undertaking purposeful tasks.

2) Grammar: in the grammar section **learn the sentences** all the examples explain grammar points, but the purposes for asking questions or making statements are not explored, and the structures for expressing certain ideas are not identified or analysed. There are no comparisons with learners' understanding of these functions in English.

3) Vocabulary: the 70-item vocabulary list is daunting in its presentation and not conceptually organised.

4) Characters: 15 characters are introduced, mainly location words, with some verbs and some question words – but what extension in writing ability would result from increasing writing skills by 15 characters only, when some 70 vocabulary items are included in this chapter?

5) Exercises: There are eight exercises in the workbook.
It is worth considering the purpose of completing these tasks: What further use is encouraged? What deeper understanding results from phrase-level sentence construction? These exercises are perhaps formative – in the sense that they do not represent purposeful use or require personal responses – with the exception of one exercise which is a useful preparation for their main task. Otherwise the exercises are all shaping exercises, focusing on accuracy of grammar at sentence level, rather than creation of meaning. Consider what additional exercises or activities might be useful.

6) Culture: *Something to know*
This section includes sociocultural data – not culture in language really, but information about housing in China. However, it is a starting point for intercultural exploration, which will be the focus of this module. To be intercultural there must be greater attention to learners' own lives as well.

Planning: the scope
In planning for learning we need to document two aspects – *the scope,* or coverage, and *the sequence* of teaching learning activities we plan for the classroom.
So what is the **scope of learning**? And what should be **the sequence**?
The scope should document the coverage of the module at a conceptual level.
What is it learners will *learn about* and *learn to do*? It's not just what grammar, vocabulary and exercises they will complete. More importantly, it is what concepts about language, culture and communication they will explore through their textbook and other resources.

In terms of the conceptual approach, let's first consider some concepts for intercultural exploration. These can be addressed as questions for discussion and further exploration, so that texts are seen as legitimate sources of new information not just as exercises in grammar and vocabulary comprehension.
e.g. houses and homes
- What do *we* expect from our home, and what is normal in different environments?
- What are typical living environments in contemporary Chinese cities?
- How do traditional and contemporary living environments compare in China and Australia?

Key language concepts: Similarly, the language required for study can be treated in more holistic terms – as concepts will be explored in both learners' first language and the target language for:
- expressing time and place
- describing things by their location (the verbs *zai, you* and *shi* and location words)
- comparing how these are expressed in Chinese (Subject -Time - Place - Adjective - Object (STPAO)) and English.

Text types: It is important for real, authentic experiences to encourage learners to view examples of real-world language use, and texts that convey meaningful information.
- Emails - describing where you live (attached)
- Maps or floor plans of homes, rooms, school etc.
- Advertisements – homes for sale, for rent (available online)

Vocabulary: Vocabulary must be ordered logically and coherently – as character, pinyin and English in topical and functional lists e.g.
Home – home types, building features, room types, furniture, outdoors
Location words, adjectives and adverbs (describing things), activities / routines at home
Other

Grammar concepts for exploration

Prepositions placed between subject and verb

a) Describe who or what is involved, identifies position in time or place, or with whom, for whom the action is done **– *placed between subject and verb***
e.g.   at - 在; to, for - 给; with - 跟; to, towards - 对, 向; from - 从.

b) Prepositions of time describe when an action takes place, expressed from the biggest to the smallest.
Days of the week   星期 一 二 三 四 五 六 天/日
Time of day   早上   上午   中午   下午   晚上
Clock time   十点 三十 分 钟

Verbs of identification   是   am, is, are
           of existence   有   to have, to own, there is/are...
           of location   在   to be at, in, on

Adjectives describing words (stative verbs e.g. to **be** tall)
           to describe appearance   She is (very) pretty 她很漂亮
           to describe behaviour   He is not (too) naughty 他不(太)淘气

Adverbs (used to qualify adjectives and verbs)
     1) of degree 很 非常   used to qualify ***adjectives***
                              I am (very) tired   我很累
                              he is (really/extremely) tall 他非常高
     2) of scope 都 也
                              they are (all) students 他们都是学生
                              I am also (very) fat   我也很胖
     3) of time 常常 每天
                              he is (always/often) naughty 他常常淘气
                              I attend school every day   我每天上学

Planning: Sequence
The purpose of the sequence is to outline the order in which the scope will be introduced. In general this will involve consideration of the material in the textbook (vocabulary, grammar, exercises, texts) and teacher generated interactions, experiences (tasks) and reflection.

Key experiences (language use)
Key tasks should be set at the beginning of the module to give learners a sense of purpose and a goal for the unit: all learning can be seen as directed toward the achievement of this goal.

There should be a range of interrelated tasks involving: personal writing, oral interaction, and analysis or interpretation of authentic texts. All will require some degree of intercultural research on home, life and routine in China and Australia.

Intercultural exploration

A sequence of interactions is the basis for exploratory questions for intercultural exploration that are designed to focus on activation of students' prior knowledge (what do they know? How well informed are they? What stereotypes about themselves and others do they hold?) And stimulating their interest in the topic for study could include:

- What do we know about our houses or homes? What is a typical home in your neighbourhood?
- What do we know about Chinese houses or homes? What do you want to know about them?
- What do they know about us?
- What would a typical home look like in a similar Chinese neighbourhood?
- Let's first talk about our own homes, and consider what we value and why; then let's explore Chinese homes, and compare theirs with ours. Later we'll tell Chinese people about our homes, and highlight things that may be different between their lives and ours, and consider why.

Here the 'something to know' cultural text can be the stimulus to further research and enquiry, but more realistic, meaningful texts in Chinese and English would be required. A research process for data collection will also be required.

The sequence of teaching/learning in preparation for the tasks

The sequence proposed can be varied, but I propose to focus on
1)   The vocabulary required
2)   The grammar required
3)   Exercises to consolidate meaning-making
4)   Texts from the text book used as models in creating own texts

All planning for use of resources is represented as ***interactions*** – key questions posed for learners to explore and find their own answers through class discussion.

1.   Vocabulary learning

a) Word selection

Brainstorm vocabulary in English (in small groups) – to build up their knowledge and understanding of what words they will need (in English) (both topical words and functional words) then those they know or need to learn in Chinese.

What words do we use in English to describe?

NOUNS: Home – home types, building features
                Room types, furniture, outdoors (front /back yard)
                Prepositions and location words in, at, on, beside, outside, left, right, in front behind etc.
                Adjectives and adverbs (describing things) big, small, new, old, etc.
                Activities /routines at home - sleep, eat, wash, study, play, watch TV, use computer etc.

Each of these could be made into lists, the next task being to find Chinese equivalents – first from the vocabulary list in the textbook – then from other sources, such as dictionaries. Lists need not be too detailed but must focus on key words likely to be needed to complete main tasks

b) Word learning
Encourage learners to engage in activities involving focusing on new words and characters; e.g. short term memory games – each student reads aloud a Chinese word – other students call out the meaning and vice versa (English – Chinese) students may or may not have access to vocabulary lists.

c) Character learning
Character recognition activities – teacher explores structure and features, identifies components, location and learners suggest function of components in new words, and strategies for recalling characters. Character learning should occur concurrently with vocabulary learning, but character use should not depend on memory alone – learners should have access to vocabulary lists for all classroom-based activities and communication tasks, to express their best meanings in Chinese.

2)   Grammar learning
Encourage learners to consider the language they use when they create their meanings to complete these tasks in English – to highlight the language (grammar) they need in Chinese. The object here is not to create word for word translations, but to focus on structures and features for comparison across languages – to avoid the problem of word for word translation *(teacher, what's the word for 'there is' ?)*. This can be done by getting learners to draft a plan of their house with some sentence descriptions in English – or in response to teacher questions – e.g. Where is your…? What is in front of …? What do you do in the …? What is at the back of your house?

This should draw student's attention to certain structures and features:
- time and place and how these are expressed in Chinese (STPAO) and English
- describing things by their location - the verbs *zai, you* and *shi* (in (place and location word) there is/are (object), (object) is located (place and location word).

Then students can deal with the concepts of inserting time (revision) and place (new) in the familiar Chinese Subject Verb Object structure.
e.g. – place: Where am I? Where is the book? What is on the table?
e.g. – time and place: When you do play in the park? What do you do at 6? Where?

Note: students should always have access to vocabulary lists in such tasks, be taking notes and developing structure schemas for reapplying grammar structures in own language, particularly through teacher-centred oral interaction activities.

3)   Exercises
There are 8 exercises from the workbook. Some (a, e) relate directly to key grammatical concepts (receptive comprehension exercises), others (b, c, d) focus learners on forming their own meanings at phrase and sentence level – only one (f) requires an extended

response as a draft response for their main task. Exercises g & h are not necessary in relation to this unit.

a. Listening comprehension (rooms).
b. Describing the location of objects (no example).
c. Describing location (phrases).
d. Describing location (answer questions).
e. Listen and select the correct house plan.
f. Draw and describe your house plan.
g. Describing items using adjectives.
h. Making words.

At the conclusion of each exercise ask learners how the exercise adds to their understanding of their language required for their tasks; encourage them to make up their own sentences using their own data from their intended task content.

4) Texts
Learners can now explore texts in the text book as read aloud, and respond to question activities for texts, as class activities. Then at the conclusion of each text ask learners how the text adds to their understanding of their language required for their tasks; encourage them to make up their own sentences using their own data from their intended task content.

Additional resources: three emails from China in which young people describe their own homes are provided. Each of these texts describe actual different living environments in different cities, as a point of contrast with learners' own living environments here in Australia, and with their expectations of what living conditions would be like in a Chinese city.

Finally the tasks

Key experiences (language use)
There should be a range of interrelated tasks involving personal writing, oral interaction, and analysis or interpretation of authentic texts. All will require some degree of intercultural research on home, life and routine in China and Australia.
a) Writing - Draw a plan of your home (and yard) and your room and describe them to your Chinese email pen-pal. Include details of the rooms and objects in the room, and activities you do there.
b) Writing - Describe a recent school day or a weekend day; include at least 10 activities and where they are undertaken, to share with your Chinese email pen-pal.
c) Text analysis - Investigate a Chinese and an Australian real estate advertisement: how do the texts and formats compare?
d) Oral - Present a talk to your class (or discuss with your teacher) about your house plan. Describe the rooms, objects in your room and your activities or daily routines there.
e) Reflection - For a class discussion at the conclusion of the unit: What have you learned about home, life and routine in China and Australia? How does the experience of Chinese youth vary to yours, what would surprise them about your life? What surprises you about their life? Can you explain any of these differences?

Sample texts (emails)

你好 我名字叫毛威峰

我是南京人。南京在长江边上，我住在长江的南岸。我家离市中心只有10公里。我住在楼房里。整栋楼有7层，我住在4楼。我们这栋楼建于2000年，还算是挺新的，当时价格挺便宜，现在都卖得很贵了，大概一万多一平。我们这栋楼一层有4户人家，邻居都是我父母的同事，大家相处的都不错。我们家是两室一厅，两间卧室，一间客厅，厨房，卫生间，外加两个阳。总共约80多平米。我很喜欢我的家，因为小区环境不错，交通也很方便。

你好，我名字叫邱芳芳

我是上海人。上海有一条黄浦江，黄浦江的东面叫浦东，西面叫浦西。我家在浦西的静安区。静安区是上海的中心城区，所以从我家到其他地方都很方便。我家不是洋房，也不是别墅，而是公寓房子。我们的公寓楼挺新的，是1999年造的。它一共有十八层楼，在上海我们叫它小高层。每一层楼有六户人家，有的是两室一厅，有的是一室一厅，我们家在十六楼买了两套一室一厅，打通后就成了三室两厅了，住宅面积大约是140平方米。

　　我家有两个卧室，一个书房，一个客厅和一个饭厅，还有厨房和浴室。一进门就是客厅，客厅左面有三间房间，它们是我爸爸妈妈的卧室、书房和我的卧室。书房在我的卧室和我爸爸妈妈的卧室之间。饭厅在我的卧室的对面，浴室在我的卧室的旁边，厨房在浴室的旁边。

　　现在上海的房价涨得很快，99年买房时每平方米只要5000元，现在，每平方米大约要两万元左右。

　　我很喜欢我的家，因为我家小区的环境很好，地理位置也好，到哪里都很方便。

祝　　学习进步

芳芳

你好 我名字叫刘芳

我的家在哈尔滨的香坊区，离市中心大约七、八公里。在中国的城市中，大多数人都住楼房，也就是澳大利亚人说的"公寓楼"，因为中国的人太多了。

我家的楼是2002年建的，有七层高，我家住在四楼。我家不是很大，有三间卧室、一个厨房和一个洗手间，加起来有一百平方米左右。我喜欢我的家，因为妈妈总是把家整理得干干净净，很温馨、很舒服。在中国，哈尔滨的房价不是最贵的，可是也不算便宜了。每平方米的房价大概要人民币3000到4000元。你们能帮我计算一下，我家的房子大概要多少钱吗？