



Australian Government

**Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations**

Teaching and learning languages: a guide

Practice example

Using authentic materials



UniSA

Research Centre for
**Languages
and Cultures**

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Acknowledgment

This work was funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

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	Using resources: authentic documents
Language	Chinese
Level	Secondary
Teacher	Andrew Scrimgeour (SA) The following are examples of authentic text resources - a door and a Chinese supermarket brochure - being used for a series of classroom interactions and student tasks.

<p>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</p>	<p>The texts included here provide rich sources of contemporary linguistic and cultural input, and the opportunity to stimulate discussion about issues relating to representations of cultural values and life-worlds in diverse communities and how they are represented in texts. Module outlines highlight how learners' understanding of the context of the text, and its content can be scaffolded through classroom interactions; the provision of additional language support through glossaries or character lists also make the textual meanings more accessible. At a conceptual level, the demands on learners and the opportunities for intercultural learning are considerable; the language content (values and daily life) the context and format (door as text, brochure) raise many issues of language, culture and their relationship, and promote opportunities for deep reflection on our values. How these are understood and how our life-worlds compare across cultures and are reflected in language.</p>
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The teacher uses two authentic resources, the picture of a door and a supermarket advertising brochure, to develop a series of interactions, activities and a written and reflective task.

Chinese: Secondary



Texts - The Door

Context and content

This doorway, photographed in 'old' Shanghai around Chinese New Year is rich in textual and cultural meaning. Firstly, the door clearly opens onto the street: a traditional domestic arrangement, but no longer common for most urban Chinese who now live in high-rise buildings with steel doors and high security. However, the traditional home would still be common in rural areas and in older urban districts. The spring festival texts are placed on the door by the family, but the green and white 'plaques' are placed there by the local neighbourhood committee to affirm the families' participation in neighbourhood harmony campaigns over a period of years. The harmony plaques may have been there for many years, but similar campaigns continue to be held, though less frequently resulting in door plaques. They are seldom removed, even after many years. The texts are simple in character meaning but complex to 'translate' into cultural meaning, as described and explored through classroom discussion below.

Introducing the texts

Text type – a door – what do you see here, what is your initial impression of the door? What looks familiar to you? What types of text appear on the door?

Can you suggest their purpose and meaning? Who may have put them there? How can you tell? How do they compare to our front doors? What does this door tell you about this living environment?

Exploring the texts in class discussion

- the house number

Why do they use roman numerals? Is this common?

- a pair of new year couplets, and a single character for new year (faded)

福good fortune, 人皆大有, 我亦小康 – everyone is living comfortably, I'm pretty well off too.

- when would these be placed on the door (-placed by the household) – are they removed?

Why / why not? Find out what each character means and see if you can interpret the four character phrases. How do these phrases reflect contemporary life? Do we have similar ways of expressing these sentiments?

-the two plaques 'awarded' or provided by the local neighbourhood committee

人人参与创建“安全小区”活动 – everyone took part in and established the peaceful community movement.

小小鞋钉能保安宁 – (even) a small shoe-nail can guarantee peace

Why might the family have these 'public' texts on their door?

Find out what each character means and see if you can interpret the meaning of each title.

Once you have literal translations, see if you can create 'slogans' that hold a similar meaning.

What do these texts tell you about the relationship between the family and the community?

Are there similar programs in your community? How are they promoted?

Find out what Chinese people think of this picture. What are their impressions of the door, and the texts? How well does this text represent their lifestyle and attitudes?

Creating meaningful tasks on the basis of this exploration

- 1) Write a summary of the text in Chinese and English, outlining the content, purpose, and linguistic and cultural features that made an impression on you. Discuss some of the textual features that are particularly Chinese and how the text content reflects issues in contemporary Chinese society.
- 2) Consider how the content and images on the text may differ if it were produced for an Australian or local audience (i.e. what texts appear on Australian doors? When, why?). Create an image of your front door containing some Chinese texts/images that reflect your values (perhaps at a festival time such as Christmas).
- 3) Write a reflection on your interpretation of the door you have created for your own home and how it compares or contrasts to the Chinese door.



The supermarket brochure

Context and content

This supermarket brochure is a familiar text to students – it is immediately recognizable by its images and format, but the language and some of the objects included are unfamiliar to them and thus provide a rich opportunity for language and culture exploration, based on their prior knowledge of the text type, and their own experience. The text could be used at a range of year levels, with different levels of complexity in linguistic and cultural exploration.

The text task is designed around a sequence of interactions including:

- **Problem setting** - encouraging learners to think about the issues in shopping and encouraging a process of inquiry and problem solving as the focus of the unit
- **Goal setting** – establishing a purposeful language use experience as the goal of the text exploration
- **First impressions** - noticing text features and comparing text with prior knowledge and experience in own culture, and of the target culture
- **Explicit teaching** of relevant vocabulary and grammatical features learners identify in the text
- **Exploring** text purpose, context and content – e.g. the nature of advertising across languages and cultures, and considering what this text tells us about the target language and culture
- **Reflection** on text context and impact of this text on our understanding of life in China and in Australia
- **Main task** and reflection.

Key interactions

1) Problem setting

What influences our food choices / food consumption? How do we plan for and undertake a trip to the supermarket? What choices do we need to make? Why? How do you think this might happen in China? What might the similarities and differences be?

2) Goal setting(main task)

After we have explored the issue of shopping across cultures you will need to plan a shopping trip, using this brochure, with limited money. Explain your reasoning and choices. Reflect on your understanding of Chinese lifestyle and how Chinese life compares to your own.

3) First impressions - noticing and comparing

Supermarket brochures: look at this example of a Chinese supermarket advertisement; think about its content, format, context, purpose and audience, and compare it to an example of a similar brochure from your local supermarket.

What features are common to both brochures? Where would you find it here? This Chinese brochure is pasted on a large billboard in a residential area. Why might this be so? What makes you think this?

What do you notice or recognise in this brochure? What captures your attention in its content, format, and display? What language do you know, or can you guess? What helps us to know/understand the text? What language is unfamiliar to you?

What questions arise? What help do we need to interpret the text? (brainstorm language that needs to be introduced or explained. Develop vocabulary lists of items

and phrases typically found on advertising, introduce grammatical items necessary for understanding the text and sharing interpretations of the text)

4) Culture and context learning

What do we know about markets and supermarkets in different cultures? How does this brochure reflect the expanded food choices, and traditional foods we expect to find in a Chinese supermarket? What is missing from this fresh food and meats brochure that we would anticipate finding in our supermarket brochure? How may these differences be explained? Knowing what we do about the relative value of Chinese currency, how accessible would these items be in price to a typical urban Chinese family?

What impression do you get of Chinese language and culture today from this brochure? How does this differ from our traditional views of Chinese society? How does this impression of China compare to your life here?

5) Main task

You need to plan a shopping trip, with limited money (say 100 yuan), but you are required to buy a suitable range of food types (two types of fruit, some red or white meat, three vegetables, some fish and one other item). Explain your reasoning and choices.

Reflect on how your understanding of Chinese lifestyle has been influenced by this task, and how Chinese life compares to your own.

How has your impression of Chinese language and culture today been influenced by this task? What impact might this text have on other Australian readers? Why?