Basic Spoken Chinese

01:165:107-108

Course Information and Syllabus

This is a two-semester introductory language course (meeting 3 periods/days per week, 4-credits per semester) designed to introduce the fundamentals of spoken Chinese. The course will focus solely on speaking and listening in Chinese, and will not teach written Chinese (neither reading nor writing). All vocabulary and texts will be in the standard Romanization of Chinese called hàn yǔ pīn yīn (or simply pīn yīn), which is fairly easy for beginning students of Chinese to master. By concentrating on speaking and listening, and not taking up the enormous burden of learning the Chinese writing system, students will be able to progress quickly through the fundamentals of the language and develop a solid foundation in spoken Chinese.

The course goal is for students to gain a mastery of conversational tasks demanded by daily life in China, as well as to carry on simple conversations on specialized topics. Through contextual task based instruction and guided conversation practice, the course will work on developing and refining pronunciation, mastery of basic spoken vocabulary, and achieving conversational fluency. The class will focus on themes and discussion topics related to college life and Chinese daily life and culture. Specialized topics will also be introduced midway through the second semester in accordance with student needs and requests. At the end of the two semester series, students will have a command of the basics of spoken Chinese and will be able to converse in Chinese at a high intermediate level.

Text: The main text for this course is the on-line Rutgers Multimedia Chinese Teaching System, of RMCTS, to be found at http://chinese.rutgers.edu. RMCTS includes lively dialogues with related reading texts, audio for both, as well as an extensive set of on-line exercises, vocabulary lists, and grammar notes—all in pīn yīn.

Preparation: Students should prepare for class by reading through the required lessons in advance, both silently and aloud (reading along with audio that is supplied with all the texts) and memorizing the new vocabulary, including the pīn yīn spellings and tones.

Homework: Students should memorize the lessons after the completion of each lesson in class.

Tests and Exams: There will be weekly vocabulary quizzes, a midterm, and a final exam.

Attendance: Most of the learning will take place through oral drill & practice in class. So students must attend every class. Final grades will be lowered by 6% for each day of class missed.

Grading: Final grades will be calculated as follows:

1. Effort & class participation 15%
2. Homework/ assignments 15%
3. Quizzes 20%
4. In-class oral work 25%
5. Exam 25%

Daily Schedule-First Semester (01:165:107)

Week1:  Day1- Introduction
         Day2- Conversation practice, vocabulary

Week2:  Day1- RMCTLS Lessons 1 to 3, pronunciation practice & drill
         Greetings & questions.
         Day2- RMCTLS Lessons 4 to 5, pronunciation practice & drill
               Possession & modification.
         Day3- Conversation practice, review,

Week3:  Day1- RMCTLS Lesson 6, pronunciation practice & drill
         Countries and languages
         Day2- RMCTLS Lesson 7, speaking practice & drill
               Verbs for simple actions
         Day3- Conversation practice, review, vocabulary quiz

Week4:  Day1- RMCTLS Lesson 8, speaking practice & drill
         Forms of address and requests
         Day2- RMCTLS Lesson 9, “What is your family name?”
               Names in Chinese
         Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week5:  Day1- RMCTLS Lesson 10, “He is at the foreign languages institute.”
         Time & place
         Day2- RMCTLS Lesson 11, “May I use your phone for a while?”
               Numbers
         Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week6:  Day1- RMCTLS Lesson 12, “They are good friends.”
         More on verbs
         Day2- RMCTLS Lesson 13, “Do you know him?”
               More on questions
         Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz
Week 7:
Day 1 - RMCTS Lesson 13 (Reading, duǎn wén)
Day 2 - Review
Day 3 - Midterm Test on RMCTS Lessons 1 to 13

Week 8:
Day 1 - RMCTS Lesson 14, “Do you have sisters?”
Day 2 - Conversation practice, structure drills
Expressing existence and family relationships
Day 3 - Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week 9:
Day 1 - RMCTS Lesson 15, “Is there an East Asian Languages Department in your University?”
Day 2 - Conversation practice, structure drills
Verbs of giving and wanting
Day 3 - Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week 10:
Day 1 - RMCTS Lesson 16, “That pair of pants is not mine!”
Day 2 - Conversation practice, structure drills
Verb states
Day 3 - Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week 11:
Day 1 - RMCTS Lesson 17, “What time is it?”
Day 2 - Conversation practice, structure drills
Time expressions
Day 3 - Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week 12:
Day 1 - RMCTS Lesson 18, “A Day in the Life of a Student”
Day 2 - Conversation practice, structure drills
Counting things
Day 3 - Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week 13:
Day 1 - RMCTS Lesson 19, “Do you want black tea or green tea?”
Day 2 - Conversation practice, structure drills
Conjunctions
Day 3 - Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week 14:
Day 1 - RMCTS Lesson 20, “What day of the week is it today?”
Day 2 - Conversation practice, structure drills
Year, month, week & dates
Day 3 - Conversation practice, review, quiz
Week15:
Day1- Review RMCTS Lessons 1-20
Day2- Final Exam through RMCTS Lesson 20

Daily Schedule-Second Semester (01:165:108)

Week1:
Day1- RMCTS Lesson 21, “The student center is right across from my dorm.”
Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
- Direction & location

Week2:
Day1- RMCTS Lesson 22, “She is cleaning her room.”
Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
- Prepositional expressions
Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week3:
Day1- RMCTS Lesson 23, “Have some of Mom’s dimsum”
Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
- More useful words
Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week4:
Day1- RMCTS Lesson 24, “I did not expect that you swim so well.”
- Time & place
Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
- Describing action
Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week5:
Day1- RMCTS Lesson 25, “I will attend graduate school and study Chinese culture.”
Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
- Expressing ability and skill
Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week6:
Day1- RMCTS Lesson 26, “Has the get-together party for the Spring Festival started yet?”
Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
- Verbs & time
Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week7:
Day1- RMCTS Lesson 27, “I went to the New York Consulate to apply for a Visa.”
Review
Duration of actions
Midterm Test on RMCTS through Lessons 27

Week8:  Day1- RMCTS Lesson 28, “The plane is about to take off.”
          Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
                  Impending action
          Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week9:   Day1- RMCTS Lesson 29, “What would you like to do this summer vacation?”
          Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
                  More useful words
          Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week10:  Day1- RMCTS Lesson 30 & special topics, “We took a seventeen hour flight.”
          Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
                  Measuring & marking time
          Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week11:  Day1- RMCTS Lesson 31 & special topics, “Have you had a physical exam recently?”
          Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
                  Talking about past experience
          Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week12:  Day1- RMCTS Lesson 32 & special topics, “It has started raining outside.”
          Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
                  Discussing change
          Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week13:  Day1- RMCTS Lesson 33 & special topics, “Going to the post office to mail pictures”
          Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
                  Continuing and continuous action
          Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week14:  Day1- RMCTS Lesson 34 & special topics, “Chatting with Chinese Friends”
          Day2- Conversation practice, structure drills
                  Summary of verbal states
          Day3- Conversation practice, review, quiz

Week15:  Review RMCTS through Lesson 34
          Final Exam through RMCTS Lesson 34