

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

United States Air Force Audio Comprehension Course (Chinese Mandarin), Basic.

Duration: Thirty-two (32) weeks (30 weeks' instruction, 2 weeks' vacation)

I. OBJECTIVES

- A. The basic objective of this course is the aural comprehension of the Mandarin dialect. The most frequent structural features of the language are taught together with a vocabulary of approximately 4000 items of which well over 1000 constitute the specialized military terminology normally associated with air-military procedures. Students are taught to distinguish and comprehend two or more conversations conducted simultaneously in Chinese Mandarin and to distinguish and comprehend Chinese Mandarin when simultaneously mixed with conversations in other languages or dialects. In addition, other common Chinese dialects are covered in "exposure" situations, and students are trained to understand Chinese in situations simulating field conditions.
- B. Although spoken Chinese Mandarin is not the main emphasis of instruction, students are taught to converse to some degree of fluency within the scope of the vocabulary introduced. Throughout the course, classroom contact hours with native instructors emphasize the exclusion of the English language in class, and students are encouraged (particularly during the last eight weeks of the course) to prepare short speeches for presentation to the entire class. In general, however, conversational Chinese is utilized in the course basically for the reinforcement of aural comprehension.
- C. All students are introduced to the Chinese system of character writing and taught to read and write 300 basic characters. An incentive program is conducted in which highly motivated students may progress beyond this point on an elective basis and, in so doing, acquire additional college credits (some of the latter learn in excess of 1500 characters.)
- D. The fundamentals of simplified characters are also taught, and the student is familiarized with the usage of the Chinese-English dictionary.

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E. The Yale romanization system is emphasized during the first 24 weeks of the course. Thereafter, the Wade-Giles system is introduced and used exclusively throughout the remainder of the course. Finally, the student is familiarized with the conversion of both the Yale and the Wade-Giles systems of romanization into the Pinyin (New Latin) form of romanization.

F. The ability to take dictation in Wade-Giles romanization is emphasized continually until the required speed in transcribing is attained.

G. The main emphasis of the course is placed upon the student's ability to attain maximum speed and accuracy in writing English "hand-gists" of Chinese material given at high speed, under any and all conditions.

II. PROFICIENCY LEVELS

A student successfully completing the USAF ACC course designed to meet the above objectives will attain the following proficiency levels:

General Language Ability

C-2  
S-2  
R-1 (300 characters)  
W-1 (300 characters)

Specialized Vocabulary Language Ability

C-4  
S-2  
R-4 (Phonetic script)  
W-4 (Phonetic script)

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A. Duration:

The course is scheduled for thirty-two (32) weeks and is divided into three semesters, each of which corresponds to the language texts covered during the specified period. Classes are scheduled for six hours a day, five days per week, with an approximate total of 900 class hours. Students get a two-week vacation mid-way through the course.

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B. Textbooks and Materials:

Semester	Week	Textbook*	Description
1st	1st through 12th (7th week begin)	SPEAK CHINESE READ CHINESE I	Elementary Chinese, Spoken Elementary Readings in Chinese (300 characters)
2nd	13th through 24th	CHINESE DIALOGUES RADIO COMMUNICATIONS I	Intermediate Chinese, Spoken Air-Military Terminology
3rd	25th through 32nd	"BLUE II"  RADIO COMMUNICATIONS II	Advanced Chinese, Spoken (Emphasis on air-military and technical terminology) Air-military Terminology (geographical and area emphasis).

\* Supporting texts (including vocabulary lists and dictionaries) are issued throughout the course. ALL texts and supplementary text materials are closely supported by magnetic tape recordings, thereby insuring saturation coverage. It should be noted that two of the above texts, SPEAK CHINESE and CHINESE DIALOGUES, are widely used in this country and abroad in the teaching of Chinese at both the high school and the university level. SPEAK CHINESE is used as a first-year text whereas CHINESE DIALOGUES is used as a second-year text. The third semester text "BLUE II" has been written specifically for the USAF ACC course and includes well over 1000 separate vocabulary entries and/or combinations. Although air-military and technical terms are given substantial emphasis, the supporting vocabulary gives the student a wide scope of conversational Chinese on an advanced level.

C. Class Inputs and Designations:

1. Class inputs are scheduled four times during each fiscal year with beginning dates in July, October, January, and April.
2. Classes are identified by input dates for purposes of record, but are designated as 'C', 'B', and 'A' for purposes of scheduling and morale. (see IV.A) These simple designations also assist the instructors in identifying individual students and in clarifying teaching assignments

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and material. At no given time are there more than three nor fewer than two classes simultaneously enrolled in the Basic Program.

#### IV. COURSE APPLICATION AND PROCEDURES

In order to make maximum use of the allotted time and to maintain constant learning pressures on the student, the course is highly compartmentalized, with strong emphasis placed upon adequate overlapping and constant review to implement and reinforce the material covered.

The 900 class hours of the course are sub-divided as follows:

##### A. Drill Classes:

These classes consist of approximately 300 "contact" hours with native instructors. Each incoming class is divided into eight-man sections (maximum), the students in each section being selected on the basis of academic grades to form a small cross-section of the entire class. Students meet with a native Chinese instructor at the following scheduled rates:

First twelve weeks ('C' class) - three non-consecutive hours per day

Second twelve weeks ('B' class) - two non-consecutive hours per day

Last eight weeks ('A' class) - one hour per day

In these "contact" hours only minimal use of English is permitted and only when justified in the interests of clarification or time. During the first twelve weeks each lesson is scheduled for an approximate twelve-hour cycle, spread over three days. Native instructors are expected to conform to a specific pattern so that each section of a given class is undergoing the identical training at any given time (i. e., vocabulary drill, rhythm drill, numbers drill, sentence patterns, translation, conversation, etc.). Alternate hours are spent either in lecture classes or in the language laboratory.

B. General Classes:

1. Approximately 200 class hours are conducted as 'lecture' hours, with the attendance of all students required, regardless of the size of the class input. These hours include introductions to new lessons, lectures on grammar and structure, familiarization with dictionary usage, explanations of the various romanization systems, drills on English-Chinese translations, and, at the advanced level, explanations of air-military terminology and procedures.
2. Throughout the course all students are exposed to area information through the use of selected films and lectures, with increasing emphasis, at the advanced course level, on the geography and the history of China.

Note: At the beginning level, limited use of English is permitted in the lecture periods, but as the course progresses, the lecture hours are conducted exclusively in Chinese with the exception of the class periods which require the explanation of air-military terminology. Instruction for these hours is assigned to the Course Director, Senior Chinese Instructors, and non-Chinese Audio-Linguists. It is also to be noted that at the beginning level a part of each of these daily periods is devoted to short 'live' tests in high-speed comprehension (Rapid Fire). Headsets are used only during those class hours which are actually pre-designated as test periods. The approximate scheduling for these "General" Classes is as follows:

10 - 12 hours per week during the first twelve weeks	('C' class)
6 - 8 hours per week during weeks 13 through 24	('B' class)
3 - 5 hours per week during weeks 25 through 32	('A' class)

C. Language Laboratory Classes: "Teaching Through Testing"

The balance of the course (some 400 hours) is spent in the language laboratory and adheres to the following schedule:

Weeks 1 through 12 1.5 hours per day (average)

Weeks 13 through 24 3 hours per day (average)

Weeks 25 through 32 4 hours per day (average)

With rare exceptions, every hour calls for intensive listening to Comprehension or "skill" exercises which are carefully gradated within each level, each identifying a specific language skill within the course objectives. Part or all of each period consists of a test which measures the student's skill or achievement on a day-to-day basis. During the first twelve weeks all tests are hand-corrected and graded, but commencing with the thirteenth week, approximately one-third of the tests are machine-graded, employing multiple-choice and, to a more limited extent, true-false questions. During those hours where no test is scheduled (particularly at the more advanced level) students are called upon for oral recitation relative to the material covered during the hour, with participation by the entire class required. All of these periods utilize pre-recorded tapes, both for exercises and tests, and are divided into what are termed "controlled" and uncontrolled" classes.

The majority of these classes fall into the "controlled" category, which in turn is further designated as either "timed" or "untimed". These "timed" classes utilize pre-recorded master tapes which are of continuous duration except for appropriate pauses between statements which are repeated a limited number of times. The "untimed" classes are those in which the timing of the master tapes is directly controlled by the instructor in charge of the class (for more on this category, see "Comprehension" below).

All tapes are heard by the students for the first time, although they are issued similar 'practice' tapes for out-of-class study and homework assignments.

"Uncontrolled" classes require the student to re-record the master tape exercise material onto his own work tape at the start of the class period, after which he is free to work out the test at his own speed and discretion, with unlimited repetition possible. He must, however, complete the test within the 50-minute 'hour'.

To briefly describe the principles behind the "controlled" and "uncontrolled" classes, the former is literally forced "pressure-feeding" closely simulating live situations in which the student has to produce a "hand-gist" of what he hears under circumstances over which he has no control, whereas in the latter he is still under pressure to produce within a limited time, but is permitted the freedom of re-listening to those parts of the tape which may give him trouble.

All classes are staffed by non-Chinese Audio-Linguists and are conducted in a rigid pattern of standardization designed to build up the student's confidence in himself and his instructors. At the end of each period, papers are handed in, and the instructor then reads off the correct answers for immediate re-inforcement.

All papers are corrected and graded, usually within the class day, either by the instructor concerned or by the testing-grading staff (see below). Each student thus becomes aware of his exact standing in his class, as well as his own strengths and weaknesses in any specific language area - all on an 'hour-to-hour' basis. Remedial action is taken with those students who have failed to attain a satisfactory grade and additional homework assignments

are issued for completion overnight.

Exercises conducted in the laboratory are an integral part of the teaching process. Techniques are varied throughout the course, as are the format and the work load. Listed below are some of the language laboratory exercises with a brief explanation of each, together with the levels at which each is used.

<u>Name of Exercise</u>	<u>Explanation and Objective</u>
1. "Comprehension" (all class levels)	Short stories or dialogues (average length 10 min.). Voiced by some 30 - 40 different instructors. Accompanied by question sheet (50 questions). A controlled "untimed" tape is used, i. e., the story is played through completely for continuity, then broken down into segments by the instructor covering one or more questions. Objective: training the student to glean specific information from story content. This exercise is used at all levels with changes in format and technique, both in content and testing. (Minimal new and strange vocabulary is permissible and introduced on the question sheet). Questions and answers in English.
2. "Rapid Fire" (all class levels)	Short phrases and sentences are delivered at slightly above 'normal' speaking speed. 'Normal', in this case, being the speed at which students and instructors speak in the contact classes at each level. Content and speed increase with frequent changes in format. Repetition is limited and strictly controlled. Tapes are timed, allowing a pre-determined number of seconds between repeats in which the student is required to write a complete and detailed translation. During the first twelve weeks students are exposed to both daily 'live' Rapid Fire tests and to taped tests on each lesson. Practice Rapid Fire tapes are issued for outside study. Objective: rapid comprehension of material content and "hand-gisting" of same in English.
3. "Numbers-Drill" ( 'C' class)	Saturation exposure to numbers including clock time, prices, weights and measures, etc., in a wide variety of presentation. Objective: ability to transcribe numbers rapidly and without hesitation.

4. "Count-Off"  
( 'B' & 'A' classes )  
A variant of the above, but at very high speed, and with emphasis on air-military usage.
5. "Hi-Fi"  
( 'B' & 'A' classes )  
(The name derived from the words "Hear it and find it"). This exercise consists of lists of completely unfamiliar terminology given at dictation speed. Student is required to transcribe the word in romanization then look up the meaning in a vocabulary list. Objective: training the student to spell any new word heard in a familiar context in order to minimize loss in a field situation. Acquisition and retention of word meanings is purely incidental but significant.
6. "Diming" ("Timing")  
( 'B' & 'A' classes )  
A similar exercise, but with the entire emphasis on geographical place names. Objective: training the student to hear the place name, spell it, then, at a later stage, to identify them on a map.
7. "Shouting"  
( 'B' & 'A' classes )  
"Listening-in". Exercises in simulated radio traffic incorporating widest possible variety of radio techniques and types of communication. Exercises begin with simple civilian-type communications and progress to sophisticated air-military techniques. Objective: "hand-gisting" content at high rate of speed.
8. "Static"  
( 'A' class )  
Advanced-level radio traffic with noise background and/or voice distortion, together with multiple voices speaking the same language or different languages. Objective: training the student to follow a specific message source under maximum difficulties. Note: Noise background is introduced in all the above exercises at the advanced levels.

#### V. TESTING, GRADING, AND EVALUATION

A. Testing: Of the 400 hours of testing in the laboratory mentioned above in Paragraph IV, (e) the resultant papers from some 300 hours of testing become the exclusive responsibility of a team of two who specialize in this work.

All daily test papers during the first twelve weeks of the course are hand-corrected and graded. During the second 12 weeks, approximately 40% of the daily papers are hand-corrected and graded. The balance are machine-scored. These machine-scored tests are true/false or multiple-choice. For these tests

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a student is given a regular question sheet which he answers just as he would a normal test. He is then given a true/false or a multiple-choice test form which he completes, using the answers he has filled in on the written test sheet as a basis for his decisions. These true/false and multiple-choice forms are then run through the grading machine which scores them. These sheets are then analyzed by the grading team who cross-evaluate them against the written work of the student before they are graded.

In order to ascertain that the student is doing grade work equal to that shown on his machine-scored sheets, his written work is also frequently hand-corrected and evaluated by this team. These two people are also responsible for hand-correcting and grading all the comprehension test papers during the final eight weeks of the course. However, the majority of student test papers during these final eight weeks, together with those tests given in mid-course, are aimed primarily at perfecting the skills needed for future military assignments. These are hand-corrected and evaluated by the non-Chinese Audio-Linguist team whose responsibility it is to conduct these classes.

Grades: Grading is based on the curve system. This system takes into account, with each test, the normal class performance (class curve), and a comparison and evaluation against the specific curve for each test (standard test curve). Test curves have been established over a considerable period of time and vary according to the nature of the test and the varying degrees of difficulty.

B. Major Accumulative Tests: Every six lessons during both the first and second semesters (through week 24), major accumulative tests covering the current or most recent lessons are given. These tests consisting of two parts, Aural and Written, contain a considerable amount of review material. Aural tests primarily measure comprehension ability. Written tests primarily measure knowledge of language structure. Aural test papers are hand-corrected, whereas written

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test papers are all machine-scored, then analyzed and graded by hand. Individual test grades are issued for both the Aural and Written tests. At the same time, all daily grades resulting from the student's performance in lab and drill classes are averaged and combined with the 'major' test grades for an accumulative grade. In this process somewhat heavier emphasis is given to the 'major' test grade than to the daily grades.

#### VI. STUDENT COUNSELLING

An important aspect of the course is the opportunity each student has to see his corrected paper. In the case of 'major' tests, papers are passed back to the students in a 'general' class and the correct answers are read. Students are encouraged to question corrections made on their papers, and may come for individual counseling if they so desire. As for daily tests, certain times each day are made available to the students so they may see their papers and discuss them with the testing staff. Their errors are explained, emphasis being given to aiding them in the hearing of tones and sounds correctly and in clearing up structure problems, etc.

Homework, which has been assigned to the student on the basis of the grade received in a class or 'major' test, is completed and passed in by the student. It is then corrected by the correcting staff, and if the student has failed to show a marked improvement over his classroom test or 'major' test, he is asked to report for individual help. Remedial aid is given in out-of-class hours where the need is indicated.

It is obvious that of necessity, the correcting and grading team must be highly experienced instructors, dedicated to their job, and with all aspects of the course at their finger tips.

Study Hall: Study Hall is held four evenings a week (Monday-Thursday) for two hours, with an instructor (Audio-Linguist) on duty. Study Hall is mandatory for all students when they first enter the course, but on acquiring a satisfactory accumulative grade the student becomes exempt. Assignment to Study Hall is mandatory thereafter only if a student's grade falls to B- or lower. A student who shows a marked weakness in one particular area, but with generally good grades, may be assigned two hours of required study per day, for which he must sign-in, but on a time-optional basis. For this purpose laboratories are kept open throughout the day and until 9:00 P.M. Monday through Thursday, and on Saturday until 3:00 P.M. An instructor (Audio-Linguist) is on duty to provide help for any student who wishes it.

## VII.

INCENTIVE PROGRAM

In recognition of a student's achievement in class, certain privileges are accorded him after he reaches the 'B' class level. Those students maintaining an A- or better average are excused from a limited number of Comprehension class periods. However, many students attend these classes on a voluntarily basis. Additionally, students in the same category are excused from Friday afternoon classes, if, in addition to their average accumulative grade, their weekly test grades are satisfactory and their assignments have all been completed. In addition to the morale factor, this policy permits the utilization of Friday afternoon class hours for concentration on remedial work for the remainder of the class.

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DISTRIBUTION OF CLASS HOURS FOR USAF ACC. BASIC MANDARIN CHINESE COURSE

	<u>Auditorium</u>	<u>Controlled</u>	<u>Uncontrolled</u>	<u>Drill</u>	<u>Week#</u>	
"C" Class <u>SPEAK CHINESE</u>					1	
Drill classes				154	↓	
Grammar	28					
Translation	24					
Comprehension		30				
Rapid Fire		23				
General classes	55		*			
Accumulative tests	10					
 DICTIONARY	 6					
						12
"B" Class <u>CHINESE DIALOGUES</u>						13
Drill classes				100		↓
Comprehension		30	24*			
Grammar	30					
General classes	4					
Rapid Fire		36				
 <u>RADIO COMMUNICATIONS I</u>						
Count Off		16				
Hi-Fi		16				
Diming		20				
Shouting		20	*			
Wade/Giles	4					
Accumulative Tests	13	5				
					24	
"A" Class <u>BLUE II</u>					25	
Drill classes				42	↓	
Dialects	*	*	5			
Comprehension		*	30			
Rapid Fire		10	20			
Vocabulary/Introduction	20					
Accumulative tests	5					
 <u>RADIO COMMUNICATIONS II</u>						
Vocabulary/Introduction	*		20			
Area Talks	20	*				
Shouting		20	*			
Static		20	*			
Rapid Fire		20	*			
Interrogation		20	*			
<b>Total</b>	<u>219</u>	<u>286</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>296</u>	32	

Grand Total: 900 Hours

Auditorium - Lecture classes in which neither tapes nor headsets are required.

Controlled - Tape classes in which students must use headsets, but not tape recorders.

Uncontrolled - Tape classes in which students must use both headsets and tape recorders.

\* - Indicates that some or all of these hours may fall into this category also, depending on the availability of labs and convenience to the instructor.