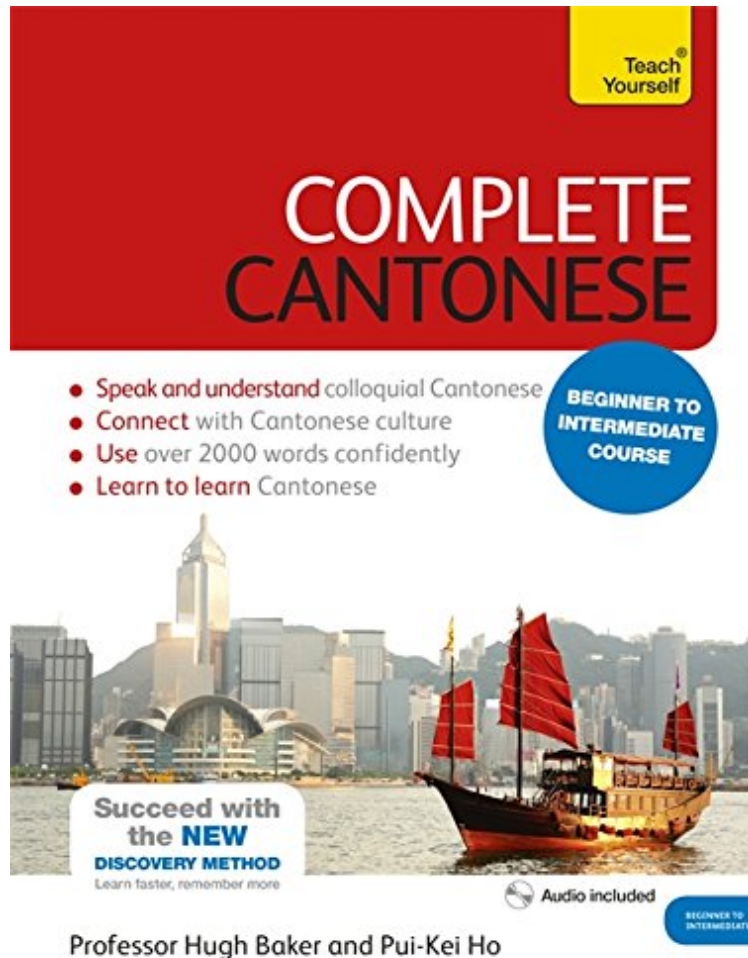


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Complete Cantonese Beginner to Intermediate Course: Learn to read, write, speak and understand a new language (Teach Yourself Complete)

Hugh Baker, Ho Pui-Kei

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#126491 in Books Teach Yourself 2016-03-01 2016-03-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.75 x .75 x 7.50l, .84 #File Name: 1473600820432 pages Teach Yourself | File size: 26.Mb

Hugh Baker, Ho Pui-Kei : Complete Cantonese Beginner to Intermediate Course: Learn to read, write, speak and understand a new language (Teach Yourself Complete) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Complete Cantonese Beginner to Intermediate Course: Learn to read, write, speak and understand a new language (Teach Yourself Complete):

21 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Wouldn't you expect a language textbook to be wordy? By scott@xtdl.com 100% self-taught learner here. I felt compelled to write this product review with the express purpose of

offsetting the utterly amazing and insightful two-word review and shimmering 1-star rating of "Too wordy" from the first reviewer of this book's edition. The irony and lack of self-awareness is staggering. I would suggest to the good reviewer that their time would be better served listening to audio materials or hiring a speaking tutor or something, rather than giving the worst possible rating to what is frankly one of the best books out there on this subject. Anyhow, for those uninitiated about this book's history and/or are curious about learning Cantonese, this is the latest embodiment of a classic textbook previously titled "Teach Yourself Cantonese," authored by Hugh Baker and Ho Pui-Kei. It has been worked over and tweaked a bit since I purchased Teach Yourself Cantonese about 7 years ago, but it is fundamentally the original text, and this is a good thing. For my style of learning, I am glad that the authors decided "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." They merely gave the book a well-deserved tune-up. I own something like a half dozen learner-level textbooks on Cantonese language using both Jyutping as well as Yale (this book uses Yale romanisation), and though I have not used the Sidney Lau materials, I consider this to be the premier beginner-to-intermediate textbook on learning generic modern Cantonese. It has certainly been of the most benefit to me since the content is readable, compelling and contains dialogue that a beginner can relate to in real life situations. The cherry on top is that most of the dialogues are charming and have a flair of humour to them. For those interested in this textbook and are already familiar with past editions of Teach Yourself Cantonese, you will be pleased with two fairly significant updates: (1) the authors have switched terminology from their original dialogues that were colloquially outdated, examples being syu (place -) / johk-yat (- yesterday), and have replaced them with the current respective colloquial de facto standards douh (place -) / (yesterday - depicted as). These historical artifacts were never really an impediment to the learning progress of any serious learner anyhow. (2) The audio recordings were previously these hissing CD copies of an original audio cassette recording. They have COMPLETELY revamped the audio format and the way that the recordings are presented to the listener, and they are included conveniently in .MP3 format. A tremendous amount of work has clearly gone into reworking the audio, the dialogues were recorded in high fidelity, and they have even taken the extra care to introduce some dialogue-appropriate background noises to make the listening experience feel more immersive. Also, as has been pointed out in reviews by others of the previous version of Complete Cantonese, the text is more readable. The format of the book has about 70% more page surface area, and the layout people have done an excellent job. Well done Baker Ho, you're the reason why Cantonese was interesting to learn in the first place. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By Customer Very informative and easy to learn from. The glossary in the back really helps. 18 of 18 people found the following review helpful. This is an improved edition of Complete Cantonese, but it still suffers from some of the same issues as previous editions. By Frankie I am going to be comparing 2016 edition of the text to the newest previous edition which was published in 2011. With regard to the audio recordings, I am going to be comparing them to the 2006 edition because that was the last time audio was recorded for this textbook. It is also worth mentioning that I worked for Hodder Stoughton, the publisher of this textbook, helping them to proofread a previous version of this textbooks manuscript. As far as I know, the manuscript that I proofread was discarded because it was so poorly written. This is an entirely new version. The 2016 edition of Complete Cantonese is better constructed than previous editions. The binding and spine of the book are sturdier and the pages are made of better quality white glossy paper. The pages are also 40% bigger and easier to read. With regard to content, several things have been improved. The 2016 edition has been completely reorganized and has a lot of additional material. There are more thorough Cantonese grammatical and cultural explanations, as well as additional review exercises. Furthermore, there are a lot more Cantonese Chinese characters written throughout the text that were not in previous editions. The audio has also been completely rerecorded and now reflects, more or less, the dialogues and material contained in the text. There are also more audio exercises and pronunciation drills that were not in any of the previous editions. The audio is conveniently in MP3 format and can be simply copied to your computer, or to your MP3 player directly from the included CD. Unfortunately, despite these improvements the 2016 edition of Complete Cantonese still suffers from MANY of the same problems that plagued the 2013 and 2006 editions. Firstly, the book includes the seventh "high falling tone" in Cantonese. While it can be argued that this is not really a major issue, I believe that it is worth mentioning. In modern Cantonese usage, the "high falling tone" has become combined with the "high tone". It is rarely distinguished anymore except in a few rare cases. Therefore, I believe that the text is unnecessarily more difficult than it should be. Going through the entire book and changing all of the "high falling tones" into "high tones" is going to be troublesome and annoying. Secondly, although the audio has been rerecorded to match the current edition of the text, new problems have arisen that did not exist in the previous audio recordings. The updated recordings do not match the text EXACTLY. Sometimes the native speakers omit characters here and there. Furthermore, the native speakers in the audio recordings infrequently switch between the lazy pronunciation and proper pronunciation in Cantonese. This was not an issue in the 2006 edition as the native speakers usually pronounced things properly in that edition. In any case, the text always has the proper Cantonese pronunciation, but this discrepancy in the audio recordings may confuse Cantonese learners. Furthermore, one of the female native speakers has an odd slur in her speech, especially when she pronounces anything with the letter S. My guess is that she is from the country in China. Why would you choose a native Cantonese speaker with a speech impediment and/or thick country accent to record audio for a language learning textbook? I am not trying to be rude, but this is a problem

that could have easily been avoided. Third, exactly the same as the 2011 edition of the text, many Cantonese characters used in the book are not standard. I suppose it can be argued that there is no standard set of Cantonese characters, but there is an unofficial set used by many native Cantonese speakers. This book uses obscure characters at times that native speakers would not normally use, for example and . Fourth, the vocabulary and phrases, while technically accurate, are sometimes outdated or awkward in 2016. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but would it not be better to learn more current Cantonese vocabulary and phrasing? If you wanted to learn archaic phrasings and vocabulary you could just simply purchase an old textbook over one published in 2016. Fifth, exactly the same as the 2011 edition of the text, the book uses "lak" when a simple "la" would do just fine. Lak is an example of when the glottal stops were more emphasized in Cantonese. This is not the case anymore and is unnecessary. Seventh, exactly the same as the 2011 edition of the text, this book mixes up the characters for la1 and la3 constantly. The Romanization is always correct, but the characters are constantly switching around(is typically "tone one" while is typically "tone three"). Finally, exactly the same as the 2011 edition of the text, the book progresses at a fast pace for many learners. I have had several students complain to me that they cannot keep up. Therefore, I have to frequently supplement the material in this book with other materials including other Cantonese textbooks as well as materials that I have created myself. When it comes down to it, this is DEFINITELY a better edition of the text when compared to the 2011 and previous editions. The pages are bigger, the binding is sturdier, and the book contains a lot more content. However, considering the time and effort that was put into revising this textbook, of which I personally took part in, it is a shame that the content was not fixed and improved upon. I honestly believe that the publishers do not have any idea how to improve this textbook. All of these errors could have easily been avoided if they consulted qualified Cantonese scholars. The truth is that they are unwilling to find and pay for qualified people to proofread the finished manuscript. I can only theorize as to why. PROS: * Detailed introduction to the Yale Cantonese Romanization system. * Detailed description of the Cantonese tonal system. * Yale Romanization most intuitive Cantonese Romanization system for native English speakers. * 26 uniquely different chapters each with two dialogues and sets of vocabulary. * The dialogues and vocabulary are interesting and practical. * Cultural insight sections that explain Hong Kong and Cantonese culture. * Detailed grammatical explanations as well as a grammatical summary section in the back of the book. * Recordings to accompany the dialogues as well as pronunciation exercises and drills * Four revision chapters that summarize everything you have learned up until that point. * A Cantonese to English dictionary in the back of the book. CONS: * The seventh "high falling tone" in Cantonese is included which is not really distinguished anymore in modern Cantonese. * Native speakers in the recordings infrequently use lazy Cantonese pronunciation with no discernible pattern or consistency. * Recordings do not match the text EXACTLY, as sometimes words are omitted or inaccurately pronounced. * One of the female native speakers in the recordings has slurred pronunciation. * The Cantonese characters in the text are not always the unofficial standard and are at times awkward. * Some outdated and awkward phrasing that is not used anymore in 2016. * Some of the characters are outright incorrect, but the Romanization is always correct(stick with that when in doubt). * Other minor errors including typos, incorrect English grammar, inaccurate information, formatting, and etc.

Do you want to develop a solid understanding of Cantonese and communicate confidently with others? Through authentic conversations, vocabulary building, grammar explanations and extensive practice and review, Complete Cantonese will equip you with the skills you need to use Cantonese in a variety of settings and situations, developing your cultural awareness along the way. What will I achieve by the end of the course? By the end of Complete Cantonese you will have a solid intermediate-level grounding in the four key skills - reading, writing, speaking and listening - and be able to communicate with confidence and accuracy. Is this course for me? If you want to move confidently from beginner to intermediate level, this is the course for you. It's perfect for the self-study learner, with a one-to-one tutor, or for the beginner classroom. It can also be used as a refresher course. What do I get? -26 learning units plus verbs reference and word glossary and revision section -Discovery Method - figure out rules and patterns to make the language stick -Teaches the key skills - reading, writing, listening, and speaking -Learn to learn - tips and skills on how to be a better language learner -Culture notes - learn about the people and places of China -Outcomes-based learning - focus your studies with clear aims -Authentic listening activities - everyday conversations give you a flavour of real spoken Cantonese -Test Yourself - see and track your own progress *Complete Cantonese maps from Novice Low to Advanced Low level proficiency of ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) and from A1 Beginner to B1/B2 Upper Intermediate level of the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) guidelines. This pack includes a book and one mp3 CD of audio material. What else can I use to learn Cantonese? If you require an absolute Beginner course, you can try our Get Started in Cantonese Absolute Beginner course: 9781444174991 Rely on Teach Yourself, trusted by language learners for over 75 years.

About the Author Hugh Baker taught Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin) for 36 years at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Pui-Kei Ho teaches Cantonese as a foreign language in Hong Kong.