

# Spoken Hokkien Intermediate

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ISBN 978-0-6457070-0-7



**Spoken Hokkien Intermediate**  
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First published: January 2023

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ISBN 978-0-6457070-0-7

Published by Minority Language Press, Australia  
<https://www.speaktaiwanese.com/intermediate>

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Edited by David Nathan

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## Introduction

Hokkien is spoken in Taiwan and in parts of China including Fujian Province. It is also called Tai-gi, Min Nan (Southern Min), Hoklo, or Holo. Throughout this book it is referred to as Tai-gi. Tai-gi; has several dialectal variants - this book mainly uses the variant spoken around the Tainan area, where Tai-gi is most prevalent in Taiwan.

This Intermediate-level textbook is intended for English-speaking learners of Tai-gi who have already learned Tai-gi to an elementary level or have some knowledge of the language. It follows from *Spoken Hokkien*<sup>1</sup> which was designed for starting learners. Because Tai-gi is a minority language, and lacks a range of available teaching materials, this book aims to support both teachers and self-learners, whether in classroom or individual situations. The emphasis is on developing free-flowing speaking and listening, reading and some writing skills.

The text is designed to provide a controlled and learnable sequence of vocabulary, structure, and conversational functions, so that learners can get closer to everyday Taiwanese conversational language usage. I have freely included colloquial language, and even some slang language, appropriate to conversation on the street, market, or amongst friends. If used in a classroom setting, each lesson would take three to four class sessions to be fully mastered before moving to the next one.

The text is arranged around topics found in everyday conversation and monologue, such as socialising, commentary, quarrels, culture, religion, and the recent pandemic. Each chapter includes dialogue, sentence patterns, grammar points, activities and exercises for speaking and reading, and explanations of words. Each chapter

includes a section with a range of additional vocabulary for highly-motivated learners, and concludes with a section on ‘cultural common sense’ to help non-Taiwanese to understand cultural conventions and participate socially when visiting Taiwan or Hokkien-speaking areas. Finally, Appendix 1 lists frequently-used sayings and extended vocabulary from everyday conversation, and Appendix 2 provides answers to exercises.

The Tai-gi orthography in this book uses modified roman characters, derived from a former missionary transcription system. Although this modern romanisation is now widely used, it is not fully standardised, so other spellings are possible. There is a new orthography designed by 臺灣閩南語常用詞辭典, the *Dictionary of Frequently-Used Taiwan Minnan*. Differences in this book are, for example: I use [o], [chē] and [i<sup>n</sup>], where that dictionary uses [oo], [tsē] and [inn] respectively, and I use [góa], [ôan], and [oan] as opposed to [guá], [uân] and [uan]. For details of Tai-gi orthography see *Spoken Hokkien*<sup>1</sup> where the first two lessons indicate the sounds of letters and words using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

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<sup>1</sup> *Spoken Hokkien* is available from the ‘Speak Taiwanese’ website  
<https://www.speaktaiwanese.com>

