

# Moreland University

M28U2A1

## My Listening Self-Assessment and Comparison for Two Languages

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The self-assessment criteria are based on guidelines from CEFR described here:

<https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>

Languages: English, Mandarin Chinese

Listening: English	Listening: Mandarin Chinese
<b>Oral Comprehension (Expanded with Online Interaction and Mediation) – page 177</b>	
<b>C2:</b> I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of oral language, whether live or broadcast even when delivered at a fast, natural speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.	<b>B1:</b> I can understand the main points of clear standard language on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.  I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.
<b>Overall Oral Communication – page 48</b>	
<b>C2:</b> Can understand with ease, any kind of language, whether live or broadcast, delivered at a fast natural speed.	<b>B1:</b> Can understand straightforward factual information about common everyday or job-related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided people articulate clearly in a generally familiar variety. Can understand the main points made in clear standard language or a familiar variety on familiar matters regularly encountered at work, school, leisure, etc., including short narratives.
<b>Understanding Conversations Between Other People - page 49</b>	
<b>C2:</b> Can identify the sociocultural implications of most of the language used in colloquial discussions that take place at a natural speed.	<b>B1:</b> Can follow much of everyday conversation and discussion, provided it is clearly articulated in standard language or in a familiar variety
<b>Understanding as a Member of a Live Audience – page 50 - 51</b>	
<b>C2:</b> Can follow specialised lectures and presentations employing colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology. Can make appropriate inferences when links or implications are not made explicit. Can get the point of jokes or allusions in a presentation.	<b>B1 (Lower)</b> Can follow in outline straightforward short talks on familiar topics, provided these are delivered in clearly articulated standard language or a familiar variety. Can follow a straightforward conference presentation or demonstration with visual support (e.g. slides, handouts) on a

	<p>topic or product within their field, understanding explanations given.</p> <p>Can understand the main points of what is said in a straightforward monologue (e.g. a guided tour), provided the delivery is clear and relatively slow.</p>
<b>Understanding Announcements and Instructions – page 51</b>	
<p><b>C1/C2</b> (no difference between the two levels here):</p> <p>Can extract specific information from poor quality, [audibly and/or visually] distorted public announcements, e.g. in a station or sports stadium, or on an old recording.</p> <p>Can understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions or specifications for familiar products and services.</p>	<p><b>B1</b>: Can understand simple technical information, such as operating instructions for everyday equipment.</p> <p>Can follow detailed directions.</p> <p>Can understand public announcements at airports, stations and on planes, buses and trains, provided these are clearly articulated with minimum interference from [auditory/visual] background noise.</p>
<b>Understanding Audio (or Signed) Media and Recordings – page 52</b>	
<p><b>C1/C2</b> (no difference between the two levels here):</p> <p>Can understand a wide range of recorded and broadcast material, including some non-standard usage, and identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between people.</p>	<p><b>B1 (Lower)</b>:</p> <p>Can understand the main points of news bulletins and simpler recorded material about familiar subjects delivered relatively slowly and clearly.</p> <p>Can understand the main points and important details in stories and other narratives (e.g. a description of a holiday), provided the delivery is slow and clear.</p>
<b>Watching TV, Film or Video – page 53</b>	
<p><b>C1/C2</b> (no difference between the two levels here):</p> <p>Can follow films employing a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage.</p> <p>Can understand in detail the arguments presented in demanding television broadcasts such as current affairs programmes, interviews, discussion programmes and chat shows.</p> <p>Can understand nuances and implied meaning in most films, plays and TV programmes, provided these are delivered in standard language or a familiar variety.</p>	<p><b>B1 (Lower)</b>:</p> <p>Can follow many films in which visuals and action carry much of the storyline, and which are delivered clearly in straightforward language.</p> <p>Can catch the main points in TV programmes on familiar topics when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.</p>

English is my native language, and for nearly all of my life has been my only real method of receiving and producing comprehensible language, although living in China, Mandarin Chinese has begun to take precedence in many everyday contexts. I have studied to a higher education level in English and used English both professionally and personally internationally and with others from all around the world.

Despite this, my growth in all areas of the language, including listening skill continue to this day, and will continue to do so. Over the last six years, in my mid and late 20's and into my 30's, I have been an English language teacher in China. Through this, I have continued to encounter different speaker and variants and accents of English, which has allowed my ability to continue to progress. Teaching the language, I have developed my understanding of the features of the language, including grammar and pronunciation, which in turn has made all skills more sophisticated.

As with other adult native speakers, there are still many technical words across all fields that I still need to meet and learn. Even within the M.Ed programme I am currently completing, which is within my own field, I have met new and challenging vocabulary.

Nonetheless, my experience with and knowledge of the English language allow me to be adaptable to all situations, with effort and concentration when listening to very complex or technical information.

In the coming years, I want to continue to develop my technical vocabulary and familiarity with different variants of English, especially from a listening comprehension point of view.

Looking at Mandarin Chinese now, the key difference is that my proficiency is largely limited to more everyday language and situations, with my technical and professional language still limited.

Although I fall within B1 for all categories, there are some differences. For categories including listening to conversations and being an audience, so long as the topic is relatively familiar, and if some conversation is geared towards me. I might be closer to the B2 level. I spend much time watching vloggers providing comprehensible input, listening to my Chinese friends, and speaking directly with others, so skills here are more practiced. It is skills such as listening to lectures or technical instructions which might be more challenges and for which I might be lower in the B1 level if I am still lacking some vocabulary.

For all areas of my Chinese listening, the main focus that I think will support me at this stage, is building my vocabulary and continuing to gain exposure to different varieties of spoken form, including accents and pronunciations.

Despite the difference, for more common and everyday language and situations, certainly up until around B1 level, Mandarin Chinese feels just as natural and native to me as English now. It is certainly the language I hear more and use more in everyday situations. I am beginning to use it professionally with Chinese colleagues at work now also.

At the time of writing, often when I do watch TV content for pleasure, it is Chinese (with a focus on comprehensible input for language development).

With regards to both listening and even speaking, for many everyday sentences and expressions, as well as even short vocal habits, sounds, utterances and interjections for expression emotion or reaction, Mandarin Chinese feels more natural. It feels very normal to be surrounded by the language all day.

Interestingly, two weeks from the time of writing, I will be returning home to visit the UK for the first time in six years. It will be interesting to see how it feels to be surrounded by English as default.

If, as per my current plan, I do end up staying in China for many years to come, it will be interesting to see things continue to progress with regards to my languages.

## References

Council of Europe. (2020). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume*. Council of Europe Publishing. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>