Sentence patterns

HSK 4 Grammar

Original teaching practice. Read one pattern, cover its model and try the questions before checking the separate answer section. Examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA) retain the course-reference provenance.

以 A 为 B (take A as B)

What do people eat there?

- You are describing food in different parts of China for a class presentation.
- **南方人以米饭为主食。** – "People in the south take rice as their staple food."

以 A 为 B = take A as B

- **以 A 为 B** = "take A as B, regard A as B": a formal, written pattern.
- Common fixed forms: 以 … 为主 (mainly …), 以 … 为中心 (with … at the centre), 以 … 为例 (take … as an example).

这次比赛以学生为主。
zhè cì bǐ sài yǐ xué sheng wéi zhǔ
Word guide: 这 – this; 次 – time; 比赛 – the competition; 以 – takes; 学生 – students; 为主 – as the main part.



Examples and focus

- **以北京为例，地铁线路已经超过二十条。** – "Take Beijing as an example: it already has more than twenty metro lines."
- **我们的课以口语为主。** – "Our classes focus mainly on speaking."

以北京为例。
yǐ Běi jīng wéi lì
Word guide: 以 – take; 北京 – Beijing; 为例 – as an example.

■ Read 为 as wéi

- In this pattern 为 is read wéi (“as, to be”), not wèi (“for”).
- It is written style; in speech say 主要是 … or 比如 ….

■ 以 … 为主 versus 主要

- Written: 这家店以川菜为主 – “This restaurant mainly serves Sichuan food.”
- Spoken: 这家店主要做川菜. Same meaning, plainer style.

这家店主要做川菜。
zhè jiā diàn zhǔ yào zuò chuān cài
Word guide: 这 – this; 家 – (measure word); 店 – restaurant; 主要 – mainly; 做 – makes; 川菜 – Sichuan food.

■ Recap

- **以 A 为 B** = take A as B (written); 以 … 为主 = mainly …, 以 … 为例 = take … as an example.
- 为 is read wéi here; in speech use 主要 / 比如.

Practise this pattern step by step.

Practice without the models

■ 以 A 为 B (take A as B)

1101.1 Complete (written): “Take Shanghai as an example.” …… 上海为例。

1101.2 How is 为 read in 以米饭为主?

- A. wéi
- B. wěi
- C. wēi
- D. wèi

1101.3 Build: “Our classes focus mainly on speaking.”

Arrange all chunks: 以口语 / 为主。/ 我们的课

1101.4 这家店主要做川菜 is a spoken way to say 这家店以川菜为主.

True or false? Explain or repair the statement.

1101.5 You are describing food in different parts of China for a class presentation. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson’s pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

Answers and explanations

■ 以 A 为 B (take A as B)

1101.1 以

以 A 为例 = take A as an example.

1101.2 A. wéi

In 以 A 为 B ("take A as B"), 为 is read wéi: 以米饭为主 "mainly rice". Read wèi, it means "for", as in 为什么.

1101.3 我们的课以口语为主。

Topic + 以 A 为主.

1101.4 True.

主要 is the everyday equivalent of 以 … 为主.

1101.5 One possible response: 南方人以米饭为主食。

Check meaning and form:

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- In this pattern 为 is read wéi ("as, to be"), not wèi ("for").
- It is written style; in speech say 主要是 … or 比如 ….
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

This is supported productive practice. Compare meaning and structure; your answer need not copy the model. A partner or teacher must hear the spoken response to comment on pronunciation.

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