Unit 2

Yu bù zhuó, bù chéng qì.
jade not carve, not become implement

A saying, in classical style, conveying the importance of discipline and perseverance in achieving success.
The root meaning of qì (器) is a ‘vessel’, ie something that can be put to use. Its extended meanings include ‘utensils’, and ‘talent’.

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2.1 Pronunciation

As before, to set the articulatory positions of your mouth and tongue for Chinese speech, contrast the following sets of Chinese and English words:

a) lèi lay  b) lái lie  c) chū chew
měi May  shāi shy  shū shoo
zhèi Jay  màì my  shén shun
bēi bay  pái pie  zhūō jaw
péi pay  bái buy  zhōu Joe
fēi Fay

    d) dízi deeds  xīzi seeds
    tóuzi toads  qíci cheats
    luózi lords  bǐcí beets (or beats)

2.2 Adverbs

In the first unit, you were introduced to a number of words that are classed ‘adverbs’: hén, bù, yě, hái or háishi and yíjing. It is difficult to characterize the general function of adverbs beyond rather abstract notions like ‘degree’, ‘amount’, or ‘manner’; but they can be defined positionally as words that are placed before, and are semantically linked to, a following verb (or other adverb).
2.2.1 Tài with le
Tài, seen only in negative sentences in the first unit (bú tài lèi), is also common in positive sentences, where it is frequently found with a final le: Tài hǎo le. ‘Great!’; Tài jīnzhǎng le. ‘I’m real anxious!’; Tài nán le. ‘It’s too difficult!’ Le in this context conveys a sense of excess (cf. English ‘exceedingly’), and as such, can be regarded as a special case of the notion of ‘new situation’. Notice that negative sentences with tài often suggest moderation rather than excess, so do not attract final le in the same way: bú tài hǎo.

2.2.2 Other adverbs
Below are examples of some additional common adverbs: dōu ‘all’, gèng ‘even more’, bǐjiào (pronounced bǐjiào by some) ‘rather; quite; fairly’, and zǒngshi ‘always’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dōu</th>
<th>Tāmen dōu hěn è.</th>
<th>[They]’re all hungry.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘all’</td>
<td>Dōu duì.</td>
<td>[They]’re all right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dōu méi chī ne.</td>
<td>None [of them] has eaten [yet].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gèng</td>
<td>Xiànzài hěn lěng, kěshi</td>
<td>[It]’s cold now, but [it] was even colder before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘even more’</td>
<td>yǐqián gèng lěng.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bǐjiào</td>
<td>Wǒ jīntiān bǐjiào máng.</td>
<td>I’m fairly busy today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘quite’</td>
<td>Zuótiān bǐjiào rè.</td>
<td>Yesterday was fairly warm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zǒngshi</td>
<td>Xuéshēng zǒngshi hěn máng lèi; dānshì lǎoshī gèng máng gèng lèi.</td>
<td>Students are always busy and tired, but teachers are even more so.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.3 Intensifying or backing off
a) Fēicháng ‘very; especially; unusually’
Rather than answering a yes-no question about a state with a neutral positive response (Nǐ lèi ma? / Hěn lèi.), you may want to intensify your answer. Fēicháng, an adverb whose literal meaning is ‘not-often’, is one of a number of options:

Jīntiān fēicháng rè!  [It]’s really hot today!
Fēicháng hǎo!        [It]’s unusually good!

b) ADVs tǐng and mán ~ màn as intensifiers
Some mention needs to be made here of two adverbs that are very common in certain phrases in colloquial speech. One is tǐng, whose core meaning is actually ‘straight; erect’, but which, as an ADV, carries the force of English ‘very’ or ‘really’. The other is mán, which has a variant in low tone, mǎn. The variants may reflect confusion between two different roots, one, mán, with a core meaning of ‘fierce’ and an adverbial meaning of ‘entirely; utterly’; and the other mǎn, with a core meaning of ‘full’, extended to ‘very; full’ in the adverbial position. The distinction may have been obscured in part by the fact that the two merge to mǎn when the low-tone rule applies in common phrases such as
mán hǎo. For whatever reason, they seem to be treated as synonymous in colloquial speech by many speakers.

Exclamations with mán or tǐng often occur with a final de (written with the same character as possessive de, 的, and sometimes referred to as situational-de):

Tǐng hǎo de.     Perfect; great!
Mán hǎo de.      [That]’s great!

Here are some common collocations, roughly glossed to convey the tone of the Chinese; mán is given in rising tone, but you may find that speakers from Taiwan and parts of southern China tend to say mǎn in contexts where the low tone is permitted.

Tǐng bú cuò de.  Not bad!
Tǐng shūfu.       [It]’s quite comfortable.
Tǐng yǒu yìsi de! How interesting!

Mán hǎo chī de!  [It]’s delicious!
Mán piàoliang.   [She]’s real attractive.
Mán bú cuò de!   [That]’s pretty darn good!
Mán bú zāihu.    [He] doesn’t give a damn. (‘to care; be concerned’)

c)  -jíle ‘extremely’
Another option is the intensifying suffix -jíle, which follows SVs directly (and is therefore not an adverb). Jíle is a compound of jí ‘the extreme point’ or ‘axis’(cf. Běijí ‘North Pole’), plus le. It is quite productive and can follow almost any SV to mean ‘extremely SV’.

Hǎo jíle!        Excellent!
Tīānqì rè jíle! The weather’s extremely hot!

d)  Yǒu <yì>diānr  ‘kind of; a bit’
Rather than intensifying your answer, you may want to back off and answer ‘kind of; rather; a bit’. The construction is yǒu <yì>diānr + SV ‘(have a-bit SV)’, a phrase that appears in the adverbial slot and can be interpreted as a complex adverb. The yì of <yì>diānr is often elided (hence the < >). Taiwan and other southern Mandarin regions, where the final ‘r’ is not usual, say yǒu yīdiān SV, without the -r. Like the English ‘a bit’, this construction conveys some sort of inadequacy. So tā yǒu yīdiān gāo ‘he’s a bit tall’ suggests that his height is problematical. [Note the presence of yǒu ‘have’ in the Chinese, with no direct correspondence in the English equivalent!]

Wǒ jīntiān yǒu (yì)diānr máng.   I’m kind of busy today.
Jīntiān yǒu (yì)diānr rè.        It’s rather hot today.
Wǒmen yǒu (yì)diānr è.           We’re a bit hungry
Summary of Adverbs (and other expressions of degree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADV</th>
<th>~Eng equivalent</th>
<th>with SVs</th>
<th>with V_act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bú</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>bú lèi</td>
<td>bú shàngbān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yě</td>
<td>too; also</td>
<td>yě hěn lèi</td>
<td>yě chī le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hái ~</td>
<td>still</td>
<td>hái hǎo</td>
<td>hái méi zōu ne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>háishì</td>
<td></td>
<td>háishì hēn lèi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dōu</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>dōu hēn gāo</td>
<td>dōu shuǐjiào le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yǐjing</td>
<td>already</td>
<td></td>
<td>yǐjing zǒu le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tài</td>
<td>very; too</td>
<td>tài máng le;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bú tài máng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hěn</td>
<td>very</td>
<td>hěn lèi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tǐng, mān ~ mān</td>
<td>very; really</td>
<td>mān bú cuò</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gèng</td>
<td>even more</td>
<td>gèng rè</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bǐjiào ~ bǐjiào</td>
<td>rather; relatively</td>
<td>bǐjiào lèng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zōngshi</td>
<td>always</td>
<td>zōngshi hēn máng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fēicháng</td>
<td>extremely; very</td>
<td></td>
<td>fēicháng lèng</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SPECIAL CONSTRUCTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>~Eng equivalent</th>
<th>with SVs</th>
<th>with V_act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jíle</td>
<td>‘very; extremely’</td>
<td>hǎo jíle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yǒu&lt;yì&gt; diān&lt;r&gt;</td>
<td>‘kind of; rather; a bit’</td>
<td>yǒu diàn r guī</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.4 Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words that conjoin linguistic units, either as equal partners, as in the case of ‘and’ or ‘but’ (called ‘coordinating conjunctions’), or in a skewed partnership, as in the case of ‘if’ and ‘because’ (called ‘subordinating conjunctions’). In Chinese, there is no word quite comparable to English ‘and’ that connects sentences; that function is often served by the adverb, yě:

Zuótiān wǒ bú shūfu, jǐntiān yě bú tài hǎo. I wasn’t very well yesterday, and [I]’m not too well today, either.

Zuótiān hěn rè, jǐntiān yě hěn rè. It was hot yesterday, and it’s hot today, too.

As noted in §1.7.5, conjunctions kěshì and dànshì (the latter probably more common in non-northern regions) correspond to English ‘but’ or ‘however’. A third word, búguò, can also be mentioned here; though its range of meaning is broader than that of the other two, it has considerable overlap with them and can also often be translated as ‘but; however’.

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They haven’t eaten, but they aren’t hungry.
I’ve eaten, but I haven’t bathed yet.
She’s left, but she’s not going to work today.
She’s gone, but she didn’t go to work today.

2.3 More SVs

Here are some additional SVs that can be incorporated in the patterns introduced in the first two units.

Of people
- yán ‘strict’
- lihai ‘formidable; tough’

Of tasks
- nán ‘difficult’
- róngyì ‘easy’

Of things
- hǎochī ‘nice’
- hàotīng ‘nice [to eat]’
- guì ‘expensive’
- [sounding]’

Of people or things
- qīngchu ‘clear’
- hàokàn ‘nice [looking]’
- piàoliang ‘pretty’
- qíguài ‘strange; odd; surprising’

Of situations
- xíng ‘be okay; be satisfactory; [it’ll] do’

Several of these SVs can be applied to people such as lǎoshī ‘teachers’ and xuésheng ‘students’; others, as noted, are more like to apply to things such as Zhōngwén ‘Chinese language’ or dōngxi ‘[physical] things’.

2.3.1 Questions with zěnmeyàng ‘how is it?’

The question word zěnmeyàng (pronounced [zêmeyàng], without the first ‘n’) is used to ask questions corresponding to ‘how is X’. Zěnmeyàng is also used as an informal greeting, rather like English ‘how’s it going’.

Jǐntiān zěnmeyàng? How is [it] today?
Hěn rè. [It]’s hot.

Zhōngwén zěnmeyàng? How’s Chinese [class]?
Hěn nán! Lǎoshī hěn yán. [It]’s difficult. The teacher’s strict.

2.3.2 Examples

Lǎoshī zěnmeyàng? How’s the teacher?
Hěn lihai, tā fēicháng yán. [She]’s formidable; she’s really strict.
Tā zěnmeyàng?  How is he?
Hěn lèi, shuǐjiào le.  [He]’s tired, [he]’s gone to bed.

Tāmen zěnmeyàng?  How are they doing?
Bù shūfu, méi shàngkè.  [They] ’re not well, [they] weren’t in class.

Zhōngwén zěnmeyàng?  What’s Chinese like?
Bù nán yě bù róngyì.  [It]’s not difficult, nor is [it] easy.

Zěnmeyàng? Háochī ma?  How is [it]? Good?
Hái kěyǐ.  [It]’s okay.
Guì bu guì?  Is [it] expensive?
Bù tài guì, hái xíng.  Not too – [it]’s reasonable.

Tiānqì zěnmeyàng?  How’s the weather?
Zuótiān fēicháng lěng, kěshì jǐntiān hǎo le.  Yesterday was very cold, but today’s okay.

2.3.3 Juéde ‘feel; think’
Zěnmeyàng may be combined with, or may elicit the verb juéde ‘feel; think’ to form a more specific question about internal states:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Xiànzài nǐ juéde zěnmeyàng?</th>
<th>How do you feel now?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wǒ juéde bù shūfu.</td>
<td>I’m not feeling well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wǒ hěn jīnzhāng.</td>
<td>I’m nervous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wǒ juéde hěn lèi.</td>
<td>I feel quite tired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hái xíng.</td>
<td>Okay.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.4 Zěnmeyàng as a greeting
Responses to zěnmeyàng as an informal greeting include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zěnmeyàng?</th>
<th>Hái hǎo.</th>
<th>[I]’m fine.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hái xíng.</td>
<td>[I]’m okay.</td>
<td>(still alright)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hái kěyǐ.</td>
<td>Passable.</td>
<td>(still be+possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bù cuò.</td>
<td>Not bad.</td>
<td>(not be+erroneous)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Māma-hūhū.</td>
<td>So-so.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lāo yāngzi.</td>
<td>The usual.</td>
<td>(old way)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes
a) Kěyǐ is a verb meaning ‘may; be acceptable’.
b) Cuò is a SV meaning ‘be wrong; be mistaken’.
c) Māma-hūhū is a complex SV that is formed by repetition of the parts of the SV māhu ‘be casual; careless’.

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Exercise 1.

Perform a dialogue between the two students, Máo Dàwéi and Lǐ Lisān, along the following lines:

Máo Dàwéi
Hi, Lisān!
Tired. How about you?
No, I already ate.
It was okay. How’re your teachers? Strict?
But Japanese is even harder. They’re both hard! …Well, I must be off.
Okay, see you later.

Lǐ Lisān
Hello, Dàwéi. How’re you feeling today?
I’m a bit tired too – I still haven’t eaten. How about you – hungry?
Was it good?
Very, they’re formidable! Chinese is tough!
They’re both hard! …Well, I must be off.
Okay, bye, take it easy.

2.4 Nouns and modification

This section begins with some additions to your repertoire of inanimate nouns. You will have a chance to practice these in context later in this unit as well as subsequently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yàoshi</th>
<th>keys</th>
<th>yǎnjìng</th>
<th>glasses (eye-mirror)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shū</td>
<td>books</td>
<td>shūbāo</td>
<td>backpack (book-bundle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hùzhào</td>
<td>passport</td>
<td>xié</td>
<td>shoes [xiézi in the South]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xīnglí</td>
<td>luggage</td>
<td>&lt;yǔ&gt;sàn</td>
<td>[rain]umbrella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bǐ</td>
<td>pen</td>
<td>bījiěn</td>
<td>notebook (pen-note-book)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qīānbī</td>
<td>pencil (lead-pen)</td>
<td>shǒuǐjī</td>
<td>cell-phone (hand-machine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>màozi</td>
<td>cap; hat</td>
<td>xǐnyòngkǎ</td>
<td>credit card (credit-card)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pībāo</td>
<td>wallet (leather-pack)</td>
<td>dōngxi</td>
<td>[physical] things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiānqì</td>
<td>weather (sky-air)</td>
<td>yǐfū</td>
<td>clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>báo&lt;xī&gt;</td>
<td>newspaper (report-paper)</td>
<td>zhìdiǎn</td>
<td>dictionary (character-records)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zìxíngchē</td>
<td>bike (self-go-vehicle)</td>
<td>chēzi</td>
<td>small vehicle; car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dānchē</td>
<td>bike (unit-vehicle)</td>
<td>qíchē</td>
<td>car; automobile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4.1 Measure-words

Nouns lead to the subject of ‘measure-words’. In English, one can distinguish two kinds of nouns: those that can be counted directly, and those that can only be counted in terms of a container or amount.
countable
[can be counted directly]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>countable form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>book</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pen</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 pens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

non-countable:
[counted by way of a container, amount, etc.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>non-countable form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wine</td>
<td>10 bottles</td>
<td>10 bottles of wine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soup</td>
<td>4 bowls</td>
<td>4 bowls of soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tea</td>
<td>5 cups</td>
<td>5 cups of tea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is true that wine, soup and tea can also be counted directly if the meaning is ‘varieties of’: 10 wines; 4 soups; 5 teas. But otherwise, such nouns need to be measured out. In Chinese (as well as in many other languages in the region, including Thai, Vietnamese and Burmese), all nouns can be considered non-countable, and are counted through the mediation of another noun-like word. [The vocabulary in these examples is only for illustration – it need not be internalized yet.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shū</td>
<td>sì běn shū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>book 2</td>
<td>2 books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yú</td>
<td>yì tiáo yú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish 1</td>
<td>a fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bǐ</td>
<td>sān zhī bǐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pens 3</td>
<td>3 pens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Often a distinction is made between ‘measures’ and ‘classifiers’. The phrases on the right all involve measures, which serve to portion out a substance that is otherwise not naturally bound; all the examples are, in fact, liquids. Chinese often uses Measures where English would use them, as the examples show. Classifiers, on the other hand, are rare in English, though perhaps ‘block’ is an example, as in ‘block of apartments’. Classifiers serve to classify nouns along various physical dimensions. Tiáo for example is a classifier used typically for sinuous things, such as roads, rivers, and fish:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yì tiáo lǜ</td>
<td>‘a road’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sān tiáo hé</td>
<td>‘3 rivers’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lìng tiáo yú</td>
<td>‘2 fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sì tiáo tuǐ</td>
<td>‘4 legs’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, in many cases, the original impetus for a particular classifier has been obscured by cultural change. Items of news, for example, are still classified with tiáo (yì tiáo xīn wén ‘an item of news’) even though news is no longer delivered by way of a sinuous tickertape. The use of tiáo for watches may also be a relic of those days when people carried a fob watch on long, sinuous chains.

Rather than keep the notional distinction between classifiers and measures, both will be referred to as ‘Measure-words’, abbreviated as M’s. Before you encounter M’s in sentences, it will be useful to practice them in phrases. We begin with the default M, gé
(usually untoned). It appears with many personal nouns, including rèn ‘person’ and xuésheng ‘student’. Note that when combined with an M, the number ‘two’ (but not a number ending in ‘two’, such as 12 or 22) is expressed as liǎng (‘pair’) rather than ěr: liǎng ge ‘two [of them]’. And as that example shows, in context, the noun itself may be omitted.

Recall that the tone of yī ‘one’, level when counting or when clearly designating the number ‘1’, shifts to either falling or rising when yī is in conjunction with a following M. The basic tone of gè is falling (hence yí gè) and even though, as noted, gè is often toneless, it still elicits the shift before ‘losing’ its tone: yí ge.

The following sets can be recited regularly until familiar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>1 person</th>
<th>2 people</th>
<th>3 people</th>
<th>5 people</th>
<th>10 people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>多人</td>
<td>yí ge rén</td>
<td>liǎng ge rén</td>
<td>sān ge rén</td>
<td>wǔ ge rén</td>
<td>shí ge rén</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>学生</td>
<td>yí ge xuésheng</td>
<td>liǎng ge xuésheng</td>
<td>sān ge xuésheng</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>人</td>
<td>yí ge</td>
<td>liǎng ge</td>
<td>di-yī ge</td>
<td>di-èr ge</td>
<td>di-sān ge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of them</td>
<td>1 of them</td>
<td>2 of them</td>
<td>the 1st [one]</td>
<td>the 2nd [one]</td>
<td>the 3rd [one]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The particle le following phrases like these (as in the main dialogue below) underscores the relevance of the ‘new situation’: Sì ge rén le. ‘So that’s 4 [people].’

Another particularly useful M is kuài ‘lump; chunk; piece’, which in the context of money (qián), means yuan, generally translated as ‘dollar’. The yuán is a unit of the currency known as rénmínbi [MB] ‘people’s currency’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Money</th>
<th>1 yuan</th>
<th>2 yuan</th>
<th>3 yuan</th>
<th>5 yuan</th>
<th>10 yuan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>人民币</td>
<td>yí kuài qián</td>
<td>liǎng kuài qián</td>
<td>sān kuài qián</td>
<td>wǔ kuài qián</td>
<td>shí kuài qián</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yuán</td>
<td>yí kuài</td>
<td>liǎng kuài</td>
<td>sān kuài</td>
<td>wǔ kuài</td>
<td>shí kuài</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.4.2 Possessive pronouns

In English, possessive pronouns have quite a complicated relationship to ordinary pronouns (eg ‘I > my >mine’; ‘she > her >hers’), but in Chinese, they are formed in a perfectly regular fashion by the addition of the ‘possessive marker’, de: wǒ ‘I’ > wǒ de ‘my; mine’. The full system is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First person</th>
<th>Second person</th>
<th>Third person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>我的</td>
<td>我们/我们的</td>
<td>我的; 我的/我的</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>我的/我们的</td>
<td>你/你们的</td>
<td>你的; 你的/你的</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>我的/我们的</td>
<td>他/他们的</td>
<td>他的; 他们的</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These may combine with nouns, as follows:

- wǒ de zìdiǎn ‘my dictionary’
- tā de húzhào ‘her passport’
The possessive marker de may also link noun modifiers to other nouns:

- Xuésheng de shūbāo: students’ bags
- Lǎoshī de shū: teachers’ books
- Zhāng lǎoshī de yānjīng: Professor Zhang’s glasses
- Zuótíān de tiānqì: yesterday’s weather
- Jīntiān de báozhī: today’s newspaper

### 2.4.3 Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns (‘this’ and ‘that’) and locational pronouns (‘here’ and ‘there’) are shown in the chart below. Examples in context will follow later in the unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>proximate</th>
<th>distal</th>
<th>question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zhè ~ zhèi ‘this’</td>
<td>nà ~ nèi ‘that’</td>
<td>nà ~ nèi ‘which’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhèr ~ zhèlǐ ‘here’</td>
<td>nàr ~ nàlǐ ‘there’</td>
<td>nàr ~ nàlǐ ‘where’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**

a) The forms, zhè, nèi and něi, are generally found only in combination with a following M: zhè but zhèi ge ‘this one’; nà but nèi ge ‘that [one]’.

b) On the Mainland, where both forms of the locational pronouns occur, the r-forms are more colloquial, the lǐ-forms, more formal. Non-northern speakers of Mandarin, who tend to eschew forms with the r-suffix, either merge the locational pronouns with the demonstratives, pronouncing zhèr as zhè, nàr as nà, and nàr as nǎ, or [particularly in Taiwan] use zhēlǐ, nàlǐ and nǎlǐ (> nálǐ). Notice that in all cases, the distal forms differ from the question forms only in tone: nà / nà; nèi / něi, etc.

c) Before a pause, nà is often used in an extended sense, translated in English as ‘well; so; then; in that case’:

*Nà, wǒmen zǒu ba.*  Well, let’s go then. (so we leave BA)

*Nà, nǐ de xíngli ne?*  So how about your luggage then?

**Exercise 2.**

Provide Chinese equivalents for the following phrases and sentences:

- My wallet 3 teachers  their clothes
- Her glasses 2 people  the newspaper on July 4th
- His things 4 students  Prof. Zhang’s passport
- Yesterday’s paper 2 dollars  her bike
How’s Liáng Zhīfù doing today? / She’s better.
How was the weather yesterday? / It was ‘freezing’ cold!

2.5 Identity
Statements such as ‘Today’s Monday’ or ‘I’m Oliver’ or ‘She’s an engineer’ involve identity or category. In English, the primary verb that serves to identify or categorize is ‘be’ (whose forms include ‘is’, ‘are’, ‘was’, etc.). In Chinese, the relationship is sometimes expressed by simple juxtaposition, with no explicit linking verb. Dates, for example, can be linked to days, as follows:

Jīntiān jǐyuè bā hào.       Today’s the 8th of September.
Zhōuqiān qī hào.            Yesterday was the 7th.
Míngtiān jiǔ hào.           Tomorrow’s the 9th.

But the addition of an adverb, such bu, requires a verb, and in such cases, shì [usually untoned] must be expressed:

Jīntiān bú shì bā hào,      It’s not the 8th today, it’s the 9th.
shì jiǔ hào.

And an untoned shì can also be present in the positive sentences:

Jīntiān <shì> jǐyuè shì hào. Today’s September 10th.
Míngtiān <shì> Zhōngqíjié.  Tomorrow’s the ‘Mid-Autumn Festival’.
                          [ie the ‘Moon Festival’]

Naming and other kinds of identification sometimes omit shì in fast speech, but more commonly it can be heard as a toneless whisper, ‘sh’.

Tā shì Wáng Shuò, wǒ de lǎoshī. He’s Wang Shuo, my teacher.
Wǒmen shì xuésheng, tā shì lǎoshī. We’re students, he’s a teacher.
Zhè shì jīntiān de bào.      This is today’s paper.
Shì nǐ de yào shì ma?        Are [these] your keys?
Bú shì wǒ de sān, shì tā de. [That]’s not my umbrella, [it]’s his.
Tāmen dōu shì xuésheng.      They’re all students.

But don’t forget, shì is not required with SVs:

Xuéshèng zōngshì hěn lèi, The students are always tired, right?
duì bu duì?
2.5.1 Questions
Now we can introduce the question words shéi (or shuí) ‘who, whom’ and shénme ‘what’ (which, like zěnme, is pronounced [shéme], without the ‘n’). Unlike English, where question words generally appear at the head of the sentence, in Chinese, they remain in the position of the information supplied in the answer. Note the differences in word order between the English sentences and the Chinese:

Tā shì shéi?  Who’s that?
Tā shì wǒ de lǎoshī.  That’s my teacher.

Nà shì shénme?  What’s that?
Nà shì wǒ de hùzhào.  That’s my passport.

<Shì> shéi de yàoshi?  Whose keys are [these]?
<Shì> wǒ de – xièxiè.  [They]’re mine – thanks.

<Shì> shuí de xíngli?  Whose luggage?
<Shì> wǒmen de.  It’s ours.

Zhè shì shéi de?  Whose is this?
Shì wǒ de.  It’s mine.

Shéi shì dì-yī ge?  Who is the first [one]?
Tā shì dì-yī ge.  He’s the first.
Di-èr ge ne?  And the second?
Tā shì dì-èr ge.  She’s the second.

2.5.2 Hedging your answer
Frequently, when asked about identity, the answer is less than certain, so you may want to hedge your reply with a word like hǎoxiàng ‘seems like (good-resemble)’. The following short interchanges involve trying to guess the contents of a series of wrapped packages by feeling them:

Di-yī shì shénme?  What’s the first?
Di-yī hǎoxiàng shì yàoshi.  The first seems like keys.

Zhè shì shénme?  What’s this?
Hǎoxiàng shì shū.  Seems like a book.

Nà, zhè shì shénme?  Well, what’s this?
Hǎoxiàng shì xiézi.  Seems like shoes.

2.5.3 Naming
Naming is also a form of identification. And in fact, if you were to go round the classroom naming all your tóngxué ‘classmates’, you could do so with the verb shì as follows:
Exercise 3.
Provide Chinese for the interchanges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is it the 29th today?</td>
<td>No, it’s the 30th.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is this your umbrella?</td>
<td>No, that’s Prof. Zhang’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who’s first?</td>
<td>Seems like Wang Jié is 1st and Liú Guózhèng is 2nd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you all students?</td>
<td>Yes, we’re all Prof. Wèi’s students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is that your bike?</td>
<td>No, it’s Léi Fēng’s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6 Names and titles

Names need not be introduced by shì. In some contexts more specialized verbs must be used. One you encountered in Unit 1: xìng ‘be surnamed’ (which also functions as a noun meaning ‘surname’). Another is jiào ‘to be named; to call’. But before we illustrate their use, we should add to the brief remarks about names and titles made in §1.6.1 and §1.9.1.

2.6.1 Names

Some common English names are directly transliterated into Chinese: Yuēhàn Shimìsì ‘John Smith’, keeping the English word order of given name before surname. Students of Chinese are usually given Chinese names, based on their own (either their surnames if they have enough syllables, or their full names), and these conform to Chinese types of two or three syllables. In such cases, Chinese word order, with surname before given, is followed. (In all but the first example below, English surnames are reduced to single syllables in the Chinese, as shown by the highlighting.)

Wèi Délì Paul Wheatley
Táng Lìlì Lily Tomlin
Máo Xiān’ān Anne Maubourssin
Léi Hánbó Robert Leonhardt
Lǐ Dān David Lippmann

Such names are indistinguishable from names of actual Chinese, such as these:

Cuī Lín Kāng Yóuwèi Yuán Shào Zhèng Chènggōng
Zhèng Hé Máo Qìlíng Wáng Lì Bái Sūzhēn
2.6.2 Xìng
Chinese names consist of a surname, or xìng, in initial position, followed by a given name or míngzi, literally ‘name-characters’. Xìng are usually – but not always – single syllables. As a verb, xìng is almost always used when asking for, or responding with, someone’s surname:

- Tā xìng shénme?           What’s her surname?
- Tā xìng Huáng.             She’s surnamed Huang.
- Xìng Wáng?                 Wang?
- Bú shì xìng Wáng, tā xìng Huáng. No, not Wang, she’s named Huang.

When addressing someone directly, the honorific expression guìxìng ‘worthy-surname’ (cf. guì ‘expensive’), with or without a pronoun, is the usual question:

- <Nín> guìxìng?             May [I] ask your surname [please]?
- Wǒ xìng Wèi.               I’m surnamed Wei.

2.6.3 Jiào
In much of the English speaking world, where informality tends to be considered a virtue, the shift from surname to given name can proceed very quickly. However, in Chinese, address in a professional setting is likely to persist longer as xìng plus title. So under normal levels of politeness, you would question someone about their xìng, not about their míngzi. However, in the appropriate context, it is possible to seek someone’s full name (regardless of the number of syllables). In such cases, the verb jiào ‘be called’ is used. Jiào can take either the person or the word míngzi as its subject; and it takes as its object at least two syllables of a name, never a single syllable. Below are some options, first for Lǐ Xiāngjūn, a three-syllable name, then for Zhèng Hé, with only two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tā jiào shénme míngzi?</td>
<td>Tā jiào Lǐ Xiāngjūn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā de míngzi jiào shénme?</td>
<td>Tā &lt;de míngzi&gt; jiào &lt;Lǐ&gt; Xiāngjūn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā jiào shénme míngzi?</td>
<td>Tā jiào Zhèng Hé.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tā de míngzi jiào shénme?</td>
<td>Tā &lt;de míngzi&gt; jiào Zhèng Hé.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6.4 Asking and giving a name
Typically, in face-to-face interaction, one asks politely for a surname, and in many cases, the response will be just a surname. However, where statuses are more or less matched, once the surname is provided, it is often followed by the full name, and this is a good model for the foreign student to copy:

- <Nín> guìxìng?
  
  [Xú Xiān] Wǒ xìng Xú, jiào Xú Xiān.
2.6.5 Titles

Here is a short selection of titles to add to lǎoshī. All of them follow a xìng, though some may be used alone under certain conditions. Xiānshēng ‘mister (first-born)’ is the generic title for adult males. In Taiwan, or overseas communities, xiǎojie ‘Miss; Ms (small older-sister)’ is quite a common title for unmarried women up to a certain age or, still with the woman’s xìng, even for young married women. In the same communities, married women can be addressed, with the husband’s xìng, as tàitai (etymologically related to tài, the adverb). The latter term is hardly ever used on the Mainland, and even xiǎojie is used much less there. On the Mainland, if no professional title (such as lǎoshī) is available, the options are to use full name or mingzi, or simply to avoid direct address completely.

Shīfū, literally ‘craftsman’, but often translated as ‘master’, has shifted in its usage in the last few decades, but traditionally, it has been used to address blue-collar workers (male or female). Finally, jīnglǐ ‘manager’, is a professional title for males or females, of the sort that might appear on a business card. Note the order surname before title:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>surname</th>
<th>(given name)</th>
<th>title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wèi</td>
<td>&lt;Bóyáng&gt;</td>
<td>lǎoshī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shí</td>
<td>&lt;Jilóng&gt;</td>
<td>xiānshēng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chén</td>
<td>&lt;Yuè&gt;</td>
<td>xiǎojie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wáng</td>
<td>&lt;Guóbǎo&gt;</td>
<td>shīfū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhōu</td>
<td>&lt;Lǐ&gt;</td>
<td>jīnglǐ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6.6 Shì with names

As noted above, while surnames [alone] can only be introduced with the verb xìng, full names can be introduced by shì as well as jiào. In fact, unlike the other two verbs, shì can also introduce name and title. The shì option identifies one of a known group, and as such, is often appropriate to a classroom setting:

Tā shì Lǐ Guānghuǐ; tā shì Wáng Shuò; tā shì Táng Bīn; wǒ shì Wèi lǎoshī. Di-yī ge shì Xiāo Míngzuò, di-èr ge shì Li Míng, di-sān ge shì Xiè Jīng.

Nǐ shì bu shì Zhāng xiānshēng? Are you Mr. Zhang?
Zhāng jīnglǐ, hǎo. How are you, Manager Zhang?
Zhè shì Dū shīfū. This is Master Du.
Wǒ shì Wáng lǎoshī; tāmén dōu shì I’m Prof. Wang and these are my students.
wǒ de xuéshēng.
Chén xiǎojie shì Běijīng rén. Miss Chen is from Beijing.

Exercise 4.

a) Assuming you were an official of appropriate rank and eminence to address the question, write out how the following people might respond (in the modern world) to <Nín> guìxing?
1. Hú Shi, (20th C. philosopher and reformer, graduate of Cornell University):
   Wǒ xìng Hú, jiào Hú Shi.
2. Sīmā Qiān (the Han dynasty historian):
3. Zhāng Xuéliáng (Manchurian warlord):
4. Hán Yù (Tang dynasty scholar):
5. Yáng Guīfēi (courtesan, from the late Tang dynasty):
6. Cuī Jiàn (rock musician):

b) Translate the following, being careful to follow Chinese word order:

1. I’m a teacher.
2. Who’s she?
3. Her surname’s Sòng, her full name’s Sòng Měilíng.
4. Hi, my name’s Lǐ Dān.
5. Who’s he? / He’s my teacher.
6. That’s Zhōu Lì.
7. His surname’s Chén, full name, Chén Bó.
8. And him? / His surname’s Xù, full name, Xǔ Xiān.
11. This is master Wèi.
12. Her name’s Smith [Shǐmìsī].

2.7 Location and existence

In English, location is expressed with the same verb as identity (or category): the verb ‘to be’ (is, am, are, etc.). Chinese, however, uses entirely different verbs. Identity is signaled by shì; location, by zài ‘be at’:

| ID   | Tā shì xuésheng. | She’s a student. |
| LOC  | Tā zài Běijīng.  | She’s in Beijing. |

2.7.1 Some Chinese place names

China is called Zhōngguó, often given the literal gloss of ‘middle kingdom’, a name which goes back to the time when it designated the ruling principality among the many that owed it fealty. The Chinese are then Zhōngguó rén ‘Chinese-people’.

Administrative units of the People’s Republic include provinces (省 shěng), prefectures (地 dì), counties (县 xiàn), townships (乡 xiāng) and villages (村 cūn). Of these, the county (xiàn) is the unit with the longest historical continuity, dating back some 2500 years. In modern mainland China the highest, or provincial level contains 33 divisions: 22 provinces (with Taiwan considered a 23rd), 5 autonomous regions, 4 municipalities, which are cities ruled by the central government (Běijīng, Shānghǎi, Tiānjīn and Chóngqìng), and 2 special autonomous districts (Hong Kong [Xiāng Gǎng] and Macau [Aomén]).
Taiwan, which administers the island of Táiwān, the Pescadores Islands (Pēnghú), as well as 13 small, scattered offshore islands, has a slightly different administrative structure. It has two centrally administered cities, Taipei (Táibèi) and the south-western city of Kaohsiung (Gāoxiōng).

The chart below lists important cities. They can be located in terms of their province (using the verb zài), or in terms of their proximity to another place (using the lí pattern that follows in §2.7.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quadrant</th>
<th>The city of:</th>
<th>is in</th>
<th>the province (shēng) of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NW</td>
<td>Xīnìng</td>
<td>zài</td>
<td>Qǐnghǎi &lt;shēng&gt;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NW</td>
<td>Wūlūmùqì</td>
<td></td>
<td>Xīnjiāng.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Hūhēhāoté</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Nèiménggǔ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Shènyáng</td>
<td></td>
<td>Liáoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Chángchūn</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jílín.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Hā`èrbīn</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hēilóngjiāng.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Lāsā</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Xīzāng.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Xi`ān</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shānxī.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Nánjīng</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jiāngsū.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Guāngzhōu</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guǎngdōng.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Guǐlīn</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Guǎngxī.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Chéngdū</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sīchuān.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Kūnmíng</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yūnnán.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes
a) The asterisks (*) before Nèiménggǔ ‘Inner Mongolia’, Xīzāng ‘Tibet’ and Guǎngxī indicate that they are autonomous regions, zìzhīqū, not shēng.
b) Shènyáng was formerly called by its Manchu name, Mukden.
c) The names of two provinces are distinguished only by tone: Shānxī ‘mountains-west’ (which is west of the province of Shàndōng ‘mountains-east’), and Shānxī (‘pass-west’) – sometimes romanized as ‘Shaanxi’ or ‘Shenhsi’ to distinguish it, which is west again of Shānxī.

2.7.2 Proximity
Relative proximity of one place to another can be expressed by a construction that involves the word lǐ ‘[away] from’, and the SVs jìn ‘be close’ and yuǎn ‘be far’. Notice the difference in word order from English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place-1</th>
<th>lǐ place-2</th>
<th>proximity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Béijīng</td>
<td>lǐ Guāngzhōu</td>
<td>hěn yuǎn / hěn jìn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>from Canton</td>
<td>very far / close.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.7.3 zài ‘be at’

In certain contexts, zài may appear without a [following] object, typically when it means ‘be at home’, or as a euphemism for ‘be alive’: tā bù zài ‘he’s not at home’ or ‘he’s passed away’ (the latter meaning more often with le, bù zài le, since that is likely to be news). Otherwise, zài is followed by words or phrases that are locations. But just what constitutes a location is not always obvious. Place names are locations as the examples in §2.7.1 show. So are the locational pronouns:
Otherwise, most nouns need to be followed by one of a number of position words, such as shàng ‘on’ or lǐ ‘in’, before they can be locations and thereby act as objects to zài:

| zài | fēijī shàng       | on the plane |
| zài | shūbāo lǐ          | in [my] bookbag |

However, some common words for places do not always require following position words like shàng or lǐ. Sometimes additional position words are optional; sometimes they add a slight nuance of difference.

| zài | jiā <lǐ>               | at home |
|     | cānfēng <lǐ>           | in the cafeteria |
|     | jīchāng                | at the airport |

Before pronouns can act as objects of zài, they need support from one of the locational pronouns, such as zhèr ~ zhèlǐ: zài wǒ zhèr, literally ‘at me here’; zài tā nār ‘at her there’. English actually expresses the notion more naturally with the verb ‘have’:

Qǐngwèn, jǐntiān de bào   Excuse me, where’s today’s paper?
zài nār ~ nǎlǐ?             
Zài wǒ zhèr ~ zhèlǐ. I have it.
Xínglí ne?                  
Xínglí zài tā nār. He has the luggage.

2.7.4 Zài as a main verb; zài as a co-verb

Zài may be used as a main verb (as in §2.7.1 and below), but it can also introduce a location and appear prior to another verb, in which case it is called a co-verb in Chinese grammatical tradition (CV).

a) Examples of zài as a main verb

Qǐngwèn, Mǎ lāoshī zài ma? Excuse me, is Prof. Ma here?
Mǎ lāoshī xiànzài zài Yūnnán. Prof. Ma is currently in Yunnan.

Yáoshi zài nār? Where are the keys?
Zài nār. / Zài tā nār. [They]’re over there. / She has [them].

Nánjīng lǐ Héfēi bú tài yuǎn, Nanjing’s not far from Hefei, 
kēshí Nánjīng zài Jiāngsū,  but Nanjing’s in Jiangsu, [and]
Héfēi zài Ānhuǐ. Hefei’s in Anhui.
Wǒ de hùzhào zài nǐ nàr ma?  Do you have my passport?
Bú zài wǒ zhèr!   I don’t have [it].
Nǐ de xíngli zài nàr?  Where are your bags?
Hái zài fēijī shànɡ.   [They]’re still on the airplane.

b) Zài as a co-verb
Co-verbs are like verbs in allowing direct modification by adverbs, but they frequently correspond to prepositions in English.

| Xuéshèng zhōnɡshì zài cānɡtǐnɡ chīfàn. | Students always eat in the cafeteria. |
| Wǒmen zài fēijī shànɡ shuǐjiào le. | We slept on the plane. |
| Zài jiā lǐ chīfàn bǐjiào hǎo. | It’s better to eat at home. |

In such cases, the zài-phrase expresses the location of an action. Later, you will see that zài-phrases also follow certain verbs (where zài is usually untoned): shēnɡ zài BěiJīnɡ ‘born in Beijing’.

2.7.5 The verb yǒu ‘have’
The verb yǒu, with an ‘irregular’ negative méiyǒu or simply méi, was encountered in the previous unit as the negative counterpart of le with action verbs: Chīfàn le méiyǒu? Used alone, as a main verb, it conveys possession and existence:

| Possession   | Wǒ yǒu sān ge hùzhào. | I have 3 passports. |
|              | Wǒ méiyǒu sàn.         | I don’t have an umbrella. |
|              | Xuéshènɡ dōu yǒu zìdiǎn. | The students all have dictionaries. |
| Existence    | Wǒ méiyǒu xìnɡlì.      | I don’t have any baggage. |
|              | Nánjīnɡ méiyǒu dìtiē.   | There’s no underground railway in Nanjing. |
|              | Chēzī lǐ yǒu yīfú, yě yǒu shūbāo. | There are clothes and bookbags in the car. |
Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity; category</th>
<th>(bú) shì Nà shì jǐntiān de báo. Tā shì lǎoshī.</th>
<th>is</th>
<th>That’s today’s paper. She’s a teacher.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>(bú) zài Chéngdū zài Sīchuān.</td>
<td>is (in etc.)</td>
<td>Chengdu’s in Sichuan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence</td>
<td>(měi)you Xi’ān méiyou jīchāng.</td>
<td>[there] is /are</td>
<td>There’s no airport in Xi’an.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession</td>
<td>(měi)you Wǒ méiyou hūzhào.</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>I don’t have a passport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>lí…(bú) jìn / (bù) yuǎn Tiānjīn lí Běijīng bù yuǎn.</td>
<td>is close to / is far from</td>
<td>Tianjin’s close to Beijing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 5.
Render the following short exchanges in idiomatic Chinese. [Hint: Chinese would probably not make use of the verb yǒu ‘have’ in the A and C -dialogues.]

\[ Jiǎ \]
A. -Where’s the paper please?  
   -No, today’s.  
   -You had it earlier.  

\[ Yǐ \]
-Yesterday’s?  
-Sorry, I don’t have it.  
-But I don’t have it now.  

B. -Have you eaten yet?  
   -Oh, you’ve already eaten!  
   -Is your dorm far from here?  

-I have.  
-Yes, in the dorm.  
-It’s kind of far.  

C. -Whose bookbag?  
   -Is it Lǐ Dān’s?  
   -Is it ‘young’ Liú’s?  
   -Then it’s Sūn Hào’s.  

-Not mine, I don’t have a bookbag.  
-No, I have Li Dan’s.  
-No, he’s not up yet.  
-Is it?  

2.8 Miscellany

2.8.1 Welcome
The dialogue at the end of this unit contains an expression used for welcoming someone to a place. Explicit welcomes are probably more likely to be seen written on signs in shops than spoken, but they are not out of place with foreigners. The verbs are huānyíng ‘welcome’ and lái ‘come’. With the verb lái, destinations (rather than locations per se) can follow directly without any equivalent to the English preposition ‘to’: lái Běijīng, lái Guǎngzhōu. Notice that in English, the people being welcomed (‘you’) are not mentioned, while in Chinese, they are (nǐmen):
Huânyìng nǐmén lái Chéngdū! Welcome to Chengdu.

In Chinese settings, explicit thanks are usually reserved for favors that go beyond the expected. But given the airport context, an expression of gratitude as a response to the welcome is not inappropriate. This one involves the verbs xiè ‘to thank’ – frequently repeated as xièxiè – and the verb, jiē ‘to meet; join’. The order is like that of English, but Chinese eschews connective words like ‘to’ and ‘for’. (‘Thank you for coming to meet us’ appears in Chinese as simply ‘thank you come meet us’.)

Xièxiè nǐmén lái jiē wǒmén. Thanks for coming to meet us.

In China, shops and other business establishments often have a formal expression of welcome written near the entrance. This expression is: 欢迎光临 huânyìng guânglín, or xièxiè guânglín (both with the preferred four syllables). Guânglín, literally ‘illustrious presence’, is a fancy word for ‘guest’ or ‘visitor’. Sometimes, especially at openings or sales, ‘welcome hostesses’ (huânyìng xiâojie), stationed at the shop entrance wearing red costumes, will welcome or thank you with the same phrases.

2.8.2 Particles

In addition to ma and ne, there are two other common final particles which have been encountered in the first two units. One is the particle a, which among its diverse functions, gives a hearty tone to statements or exclamations, and which slightly softens the abruptness of questions:

- Lěng a! [Wow, it]’s cold!
- Máng a! Busy, huh?!
- Shéi a? [Knock, knock.] Who [is it]?
The other is *ba*, which is associated with *suggestion* or *consensus*:

- **Zhōu ba.** Let’s go.
- **Nà hǎo ba.** That’s fine then.
- **Shàngchē ba.** Let’s board the bus.

### 2.8.3 Praise

Chinese will praise your efforts to speak their language (called *Zhōngwén* or *Hànyǔ*), and will typically make use of an expression involving the verb *shuō* ‘speak’ (or, in southern Mandarin, *jiàng*) followed by the particle +de. If you wonder whether this +de is the same as the possessive de introduced earlier in this unit, the answer is that it is not. This +de is followed by SV expressions (e.g., an adverb plus a SV): *shuō+de hěn hǎo*. The other is either followed by a noun (*wǒ de shūbāo*) or has the potential to be followed by a noun (*wǒ de [shūbāo]*)). Were meaning and distribution not sufficient evidence for positing two different de’s, we should cite the fact that they are also written with different characters, 的 (*wǒ de*) and 得 (*shuō+de*), respectively. So in order to make the distinction clear (and prepare you for writing different characters), we write the former as de and the latter as +de. You should do the same.

*Zhōngwén* *shuō+de hěn hǎo.* [You] speak Chinese very well.

~ *jiàng+de hěn hǎo.*

To which you respond, modestly, that in fact you don’t speak at all well:

*Shuō+de bù hǎo* [I] speak very poorly.

~ *jiàng+de bù hǎo.*

The latter can be preceded by the expression *nǎlǐ* (often repeated), which is the [more formal] word for ‘where’, but which is also used to deflect praise, as if questioning its basis:

*Nǎlǐ, nǎlǐ, shuō+de bù hǎo.* Nah, I speak rather badly.

~ *jiàng+de bù hǎo.*

When you see more examples, you will find that nothing can intervene in the combination *shuō+de*. So if *Zhōngwén* (or *Hànyǔ*) is mentioned, it cannot directly follow *shuō*, but needs to be cited first, as shown in the examples above. Since Chinese are so gracious about praising one’s feeble efforts to speak their language, it is good to get used to this interchange early. For now, though, practice it only as it appears, and only with the verb *shuō* and its southern Mandarin counterpart, *jiàng*.
2.9 Dialogue: at the airport

Given the need to restrict vocabulary and structures, the following dialogue cannot be regarded as completely natural, but it serves as a good model for some of the material that has been introduced in the first two units.

Situation: Professor 王 (W) has come to the airport with a university driver to meet half a dozen international students who are arriving in China to continue their study of Chinese. The students all have Chinese names as well as their regular ones. One of them (Dàwéi [Dw]) spots 王 láoshi holding a sign and walks over to introduce himself; some of the others follow and introduce themselves too. [X designates any one, or a few.]

Dw  Nín hǎo, wǒ shì Máo Dàwéi.  How are you, I’m Mao Dawei.

W.  O, Máo Dàwéi, wǒ shì 王 láoshi.  Oh, Mao Dawei, I’m Prof. Wang.

An  Wáng láoshi, nín hǎo! Wǒ shì Lǐ Ānnà.  Prof. Wang, how are you? I’m Li Anna.

W.  Lǐ Ānnà, nǐ hǎo.  Li Anna, how are you?

Ym  Wáng láoshi, wǒ shì Xiāolín Yóumèi.  Professor Wang, I’m Xiaolin Youmei.


Ym  Hái yǒu tā – tā xìng Kǒng, jiào Kǒng Měi.  [pointing] And her too -- her name is Kong, she’s called Kong Mei.

W.  Hǎo, Kǒng Měi, nǐ hǎo! Si ge rén le. Nǐ ne?  Fine, how are you Kong Mei? [That’s] 4 then. And [ who are] you?

Jf  Wǒ shì Bái Jiéfēi.  I’m Bai Jiefei.

____________________________

W.  Bái Jiéfēi, nǐ hǎo....  Bai Jiefei, hi....  Nà hǎo, huānyìng nǐmen lái Běijīng! Okay, then, welcome to Beijing!

All  Xièxié, xièxié nǐmen lái jǐ wǒmen.  Thanks; thank you for coming to meet us.

W.  Zhè shì Gāo shīfù.  This is Mr. Gao.

All  Gāo shīfù, nín hǎo.  Mr. Gao, how are you?
Gāo  Ėi, nǐmen hǎo, nǐmen hǎo.  Ah, how are you, how are you?
Zhōngwén shuō+de hěn hǎo!  [You] speak Chinese very well!
All  Nǎlǐ, nǎlǐ, shuō+de bù hǎo!  Nah, we don’t speak very well.

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W.  Nǐmen hěn lèi ba.  You’re probably tired.
X.  Bù, bú tài lèi, hái hǎo.  No, not too, [we]’re okay.
X.  Bú è, zài fēijī shàng chī le.  No, [we]’re not, [we] ate on the airplane.
W.  Nà, nǐmen de xíngli ne?  And your bags?
X.  Zài zhèr: yī, èr, sān, sì, wǔ, liù. [They]’re here: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
Dōu zài zhèr.  [They]’re all here.

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W.  Nà hǎo, wǒmen zǒu ba. Shàng chē ba.  Fine, let’s go then. All aboard!
X.  Háo, háo.  Okay.
W.  Jīntiān yǒu diǎnr rè, nǐmen rè ma?  [Aboard the minibus.] [It]’s kind of hot today; are you hot?
X.  Bú, bú rè, hái hǎo. Wǒmen dōu hěn shūfū.  No, [we]’re not, [we]’re fine. We’re all comfortable.
W.  Xíngli, hūzhào, sān dōu yǒu ma?  [You] have [your] bags, [your] passports, umbrellas?
X.  Dōu yǒu, dōu yǒu, xièxiè.  [We] have them all, thanks.
W.  Hǎo, nà wǒmen zǒu ba.  Fine, so... let’s go then!
X.  Běijīng hěn yuǎn ma?  Is Beijing far?
W.  Bù, lì zhèr bù yuǎn – hěn jīn!  No, it’s not far from here – quite close!
This model conversation is quite ambitious. All its vocabulary is fairly new, of course, and it also introduces quite a few grammatical patterns and features. But a bold beginning has the advantage of giving you interesting material to work with from the start. To make it more manageable, it is divided into four sections. The first involves collecting all the people; the second, with welcoming them; the third, with finding out how they are; and the fourth, with getting to the minibus to drive to Beijing. Get familiar with the scenario first, then visualize the conversation. You should be able to re-enact it more or less as presented before trying it out with partners.

Exercise 6.
a) Translate the following

1. Okay, that’s three people.
2. Who’s the first person? The second?
3. That’s it then, I’m off.
4. It’s late, I should be going.
5. We’ve all eaten, we ate on the plane.
6. We’re not hungry, we’re fine.
7. Welcome to [….].
8. Thanks for coming to meet us.
9. That’s it then, see you tomorrow.
10. Okay, bye, take it easy.
11. How about you – you thirsty?
12. That looks like my umbrella.

b) Comment that

1. you haven’t eaten yet.
2. they haven’t left yet.
3. she hasn’t had her shower yet.
4. he hasn’t got out of class yet.
5. you haven’t read the day’s paper yet.
6. you were tired yesterday, but today you’re fine.
7. you’re not nervous anymore.
8. you’re cold on the plane, but you’re fine now.
9. they’ve already gone to bed.

2.9.1 Airports and airlines

China has invested heavily in infrastructure projects in the last few decades, including the construction of new airports (jīchǎng) and the reconstruction of old ones. An airport said to be the world’s largest is due to be completed near Beijing in time for the 2008 Olympics. Some of the better known airports are Capital (Shōudū) in Beijing, Báiyún (‘white clouds’) in Canton, and Hóngqiáo (the old airport) and Pǔdōng (the new) in Shanghai – the last two both named after districts. Pǔdōng, which like so many of the new airports is far out of town, is served by a German-built mag-lev (magnetic levitation) train (officially called a cīxuán-fūchē ‘magnet-suspend float-vehicle’, but colloquially
referred to as a diàncíchē ‘electromagnetic-vehicle’). It reaches a top speed of 430 kilometers an hour during its 7-8 minute run between the airport and its city terminus at an outlying subway station.

Airline companies are multiplying and consolidating in China. ‘Airline’ is hángkōng gōngsī, literally ‘aviation company’. Here is a list of some of the larger Chinese airlines for you to practice saying:

- Zhōngguó Hángkōng Gōngsī
- Zhōngguó Dōngfāng Hángkōng Gōngsī
- Zhōngguó Běifāng Hángkōng Gōngsī
- Zhōngguó Xīběi Hángkōng Gōngsī
- Zhōngguó Nánfāng Hángkōng Gōngsī
- Zhōngguó Xīnán Hángkōng Gōngsī
- Xīnjiāng Hángkōng Gōngsī
- Yúnnán Hángkōng Gōngsī
- Gānglóng Hángkōng Gōngsī

Arriving at Xīnīng, the capital of Qīnghǎi. [JKW 2005]

2.10 Reflections: What have you learned?

2.10.1 Words
Short words predominate. Most, but not all, Chinese words longer than a syllable are, historically at least, compounds: lǎoshī ‘old-teacher’ (with ‘old’ having the respectful connotations of ‘venerable’); xīzǎo ‘wash-bathe’; hǎoxiàng ‘good-likeness’.

2.10.2 Meaning
In learning a foreign language, particularly a language that is linguistically and culturally distant from one’s native tongue, you quickly learn about the difficulties of translation. This is true for sentences as well as words. Hái hào, for example, as a response to Lèi bu
lèi? is composed of two words which, in other contexts, mean ‘still’ and ‘be+good’. But ‘still good’ does not make sense as a translation. ‘Not too’ or ‘no, I’m fine’ are closer to the Chinese sense, a fact we can only know from understanding how the Chinese functions in its context, then seeking an English expression that serves the same function (or has the same meaning in the context). As translators will tell you, this can be difficult to do, and in some cases nearly impossible without extensive circumlocution.

For learners, it is not enough to know the meaning of the sentence in context; learners want, and need to understand the role of sentence parts – words – in the formation of that meaning. One reason for this is that word meanings, or glosses, being more abstract, are more stable. ‘Good’ (or ‘be good’) is abstracted from the meaning of the word in specific contexts (where it may be translated variously as ‘be well’, ‘be okay’, ‘hello’, ‘nice’). That is why, in addition to citing a meaning appropriate to the context, word meanings are also provided in parentheses: eg: Hái hǎo ‘[I]’m okay. (still be+good)’

Providing word-for-word glosses serves another purpose. It takes us into the world of the foreign language and reveals conceptual differences that help to define the other culture. The fact that chīfàn ‘have a meal’ (and, by extension, in other contexts ‘make a living’) is composed of chī ‘eat’ and fàn ‘cooked rice’, reveals the role of that staple in the Chinese diet. It is a moot point whether translators should try to capture that fact by translating chīfàn as ‘eat-rice’ rather than simply ‘eat’ or ‘have a meal’. What do you think?

2.11 Pinyin notes and practice

2.11.1 Toneless syllables

As you have observed, not all syllables in Mandarin have a tone, eg: the second syllables in xíngli and máng ma. In this respect, Mandarin contrasts with some of the regional languages such as Cantonese, in which most syllables are toned. There are several types of toneless syllable (called qǐngshēng ‘light-tone’) in standard Mandarin:

(i) Particles such as ma, ne and ba never appear with a full tone, and so we can only write them with qǐngshēng.

(ii) Many words show qǐngshēng in the final syllable: shūfū ‘comfortable’, or wǒmen ‘we; us’. On the evidence of compounds and other relatable expressions, these toneless syllables often turn out to have fully toned versions: shūfū has an adverbial form, shūshufūfū in which final fū appears with a rising tone. But dictionaries list words such as wǒmen and shūfū without tone on the second syllable, and we will do the same.

(iii) Certain words (syllables) are toned in some contexts, toneless in others: bú lèi (with bu toned) but háo bu háo (with bu toneless). We will follow pronunciation in such cases, writing the tone in citation in contexts where it is pronounced, but omitting it in appropriate grammatical contexts.
Finally, the incidence of qideng varies with the rate and formality of speech as well as the region (with the northeast being particularly susceptible to toneless syllables). Thus in fast speech, jintian ‘today’ may be pronounced jintian, without tone on tian. In these cases, we will still write the full tone, using current dictionaries as our guide.

For students’ purposes, the general rule is: you are always safe in writing the word in its lexical, careful, slow speech form, e.g.: women, shufu, haobuhao, jintian.

a) Writing changed tones
In this text, we do not write the changed tone for combinations of low tones; we write henhao, and apply the rule. This accords with the standard rules for writing Pinyin entries in dictionaries or in continuous text. We do make an exception in writing the changed tones for bu and yi, however: bugao but bulie; yizhang but yige.

2.11.2 A Pinyin quirk
Standard Pinyin writes shenme, zenme (‘how’) and zanmen (‘we [inclusive]’), all with a medial ‘n’ that is not reflected in the pronunciation. This compares to other systems of transcription, such as Yale which writes sheme, National Romanization, which writes sherme (with the ‘r’ representing the rising tone), and Zhuyin Fuhao which writes 爟ㄥ me – none of them with an internal ‘n’. The reason Pinyin writes a silent -n in these words has to do with the characters that represent them. The first syllable of shenme, zenme and zanmen are written with characters that are, in other contexts, pronounced shen (with falling tone), zen and zan respectively. While one is tempted to rectify the system and simply write sheme, zeme and zamen in conformity with actual pronunciations, Pinyin is now regarded as a standard transliteration in the Chinese speaking world and we should accept it as it is, if for no other reason than the fact that reference materials as well as computer input systems are based on it.

2.11.3 Tone combos (the next 6)
Recall the prototype examples of the six sets of tone combos presented in Unit 1: laoshihaihao, zajijian, burere, henhangmao, bugao. Now we add six more combos – the first three all beginning with level-toned syllables – for a total of 12 of the 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kunming</td>
<td>jichang</td>
<td>chifan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhongwen</td>
<td>Weiruan (Microsoft)</td>
<td>qihao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huanying</td>
<td>Qinghai</td>
<td>tianqi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hefei</td>
<td>qingwen</td>
<td>zidian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yunnan</td>
<td>haokan</td>
<td>dite (underground train)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongxue (classmate)</td>
<td>yanjing</td>
<td>Hanyu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 7.

a) Place the tone marks over the following words. (You may need to review the appropriate part of the lesson on sounds and symbols.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>Word 1</th>
<th>Word 2</th>
<th>Word 3</th>
<th>Word 4</th>
<th>Word 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>jie</td>
<td>qiao</td>
<td>nao</td>
<td>jiu</td>
<td>cui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>zei</td>
<td>pou</td>
<td>shao</td>
<td>xiao</td>
<td>bie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising</td>
<td>xue</td>
<td>bei</td>
<td>tuo</td>
<td>zhui</td>
<td>liao</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Now focus on the problematical initials – those found on lines 3, 4, 5 of our initial chart. Assign a tone, and the practice reading down:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Tonal</th>
<th>Word 1</th>
<th>Word 2</th>
<th>Word 3</th>
<th>Word 4</th>
<th>Word 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ti</td>
<td></td>
<td>ta</td>
<td>dang</td>
<td>dou</td>
<td>dao</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ci</td>
<td></td>
<td>ca</td>
<td>zang</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>zou</td>
<td>zao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chi!</td>
<td></td>
<td>cha</td>
<td>zhang</td>
<td>shi</td>
<td>zhou</td>
<td>zhao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qi</td>
<td></td>
<td>qia</td>
<td>jiang</td>
<td>xi</td>
<td>jiu</td>
<td>jiao</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

2.12 Summary

tài…le  Tài mànɡ le. (Bú tài mànɡ.)
Adverbs  Zōnɡshí hén mànɡ hén lèi; ɡēnɡ mànɡ; yǒu yìdiǎnr lèng; etc.
SVs  Hén nán; Bù hǎochǐ; Hén lìhài.
Zěnmeyàng  Jīntiān zěnmeyàng?  Nǐ juéde zěnmeyàng?
Nouns  yàoshi, xínɡlǐ, dōnɡxi, zìxínɡchē, etc.

M-words  èrshí ge <xuéshēnɡ>; sān kuài <qián>
DE  wǒ de zìdiàn; zuòtiān de báo
Demonstr.  zhè ~ zhě; zhèr ~ zhělǐ
Identity  Jīntiān qǐ hào; Dōu shí wǒ de xuěshèng.
QWs  shéi, shénme, nàr ~ nǎlǐ, guìxìnɡ, zěnmeyàng
Naming  Tā xìnɡ Zhānɡ, jiào Zhānɡ Dēmínɡ; tā shì Zhānɡ Dēmínɡ.
Titles  Wèi lǎoshī, Gāo shīfù; Zhōu jīnɡlǐ
Location  Xínɡlǐ dōu zài zhèr; Dōu zài wǒ zhèr.
Loc’n with V  Wǒmen zài fēijǐ shànɡ chǐ le.
Proximity  Tiānjīn lǐ Běijīnɡ hěn jìn.

Possession  Wǒ méiyǒu xínɡlǐ.
Existence  Nánjīnɡ méiyǒu dìtī.</>
2.13 Rhymes and rhythms

First a short rhyme that gives you practice with M-words: zhī (written with a different character from the zhī used with bǐ ‘pen’) is the M for animals such as chickens (yì zhī jī) and, as below, frogs; zhāng is a M for flat things such as tickets, tables, maps, lawns, as well as mouths; tiáo is a M for sinuous objects. Yānjīng ‘eye’ is tonally distinct from yānjīng ‘glasses’; eyes are counted by way of the default M, ge. Dàshēng, literally ‘big-sound’, is ‘loud’; xiāoshēng is the opposite.

Yì zhī qīngwā

Yì zhī qīngwā, yì zhāng zuǐ,
liàng ge yānjīng, si tiáo tuǐ.

Nǐ shuō:
Shuō dàshēng yidiānr:
Shuō xiāoshēng yidiānr:

You say it:
Say it louder:
Say it softer:

Dà jiāo

Dà jiāo dà, dà jiāo dà,
yīntiān xiāyǔ bú hàipà;
dà jiāo hǎo, dà jiāo hǎo,
yīntiān xiāyǔ shuāibùdāo.

Nursery rhyme (colloquial) ‘Big feet’ in contrast to bound feet, presumably.

Ràokǒuling ‘tongue twisters’

[Traditional] characters are included to show how the phonetic components of Chinese characters provide visual support for these two tongue twisters.

Māmā qímǎ, mǎ màn, māmā mà mà.
姆姆骑马，马慢，姆姆骂马。
Mum rides horse, horse slow, mum scolds horse.

Niūniū qiān niú, niú nìng, niūniū niú niú.
妞妞牵牛，牛佞，妞妞扭牛。
Little-girl leads ox, ox cunning, little-girl wrenches ox.
Resource: Learning Chinese: A Foundation Course in Mandarin
Dr. Julian K. Wheatley

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