

## Unit 5

Huó dào lǎo, xué dào lǎo, hái yǒu sān fēn xuébudào!  
live to old-age, study to old-age, still have 3 parts [of 10] study-not-reach

Said of a difficult course of study – like learning Chinese.  
*Often, only the first half of the saying is cited, with the second half left understood.*

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### 5.1 Tone contrasts

In reading the follow sets aloud, focus on the tones, as well as the occasional tone shift:

a)	Fēicháng mēn. Fēicháng máng. Fēicháng lěng. Fēicháng rè.	b)	Mēn jíle. Máng jíle. Lěng jíle. Rè jíle.	c)	Yǒu yìdiǎnr mēn. Yǒu yìdiǎnr máng. Yǒu yìdiǎnr lěng. Yǒu yìdiǎnr guì.
d)	Juéde hěn mēn. Juéde hěn nán. Juéde hěn lěng. Juéde hěn lèi.	e)	Mēn-sǐle. Máng-sǐle. Lěng-sǐle. Rè-sǐle.	f)	Hǎo mēn a! Hǎo máng a! Hǎo lěng a! Hǎo guì a!

#### Notes

- Mēn ‘stuffy; close’; cf. mēnrè ‘muggy’
- Sǐ ‘to die’; SV-sǐle ‘SV to death’, ie ‘extremely’; perhaps more used by females.
- Hǎo can function as an adverb with SVs, meaning ‘very; so’.

## 5.2 Or

### 5.2.1 Vocabulary

First some pairs of words (some of which have appeared earlier), and some verbs:

#### nouns

nánde nánrén nánháizi ~ nánháir <i>males man boys</i>	nǚde nǚrén nǚháizi ~ nǚháir <i>females woman girls</i>		
Zhōngguó cài <i>Chinese food</i>	wàiguó cài <i>foreign food</i>	Kěkǒukělè <i>palatable-pleasant Coca Cola</i>	Bǎishìkělè <i>100-things-pleasant Pepsi Cola</i>
yánjiūshēng <i>research-student grad. student</i>	běnkēshēng <i>root-categ.-student undergraduate</i>	kuàizi <i>chopsticks</i>	dāochā <i>knife and fork</i>

#### verbs

zhǎo <i>look for</i>	yào <i>want</i>	qù <i>go [to]</i>	xǐhuan <i>like; prefer</i>	yòng <i>use</i>	děi <i>must; have to</i>
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### 5.2.2 The two or's

In English, 'or' sometimes has an inclusive meaning similar to 'and':

I drink *tea or coffee* in the morning, beer in the evening. / Good for you!  
Do you have any classes on *Saturday or Sunday*? / No, none.

However, 'or' in English also appears in 'disjunctive questions', where it links alternatives. In the latter case, 'or' can be followed by a distinct pause:

Will you have *tea... or coffee*? / Tea please.  
Are you in the *morning class... or the afternoon*? / The afternoon.

In Chinese, the two 'ors', the inclusive, and the disjunctive, are expressed differently. The first is expressed with huòzhě (or huòshì or simply huò). As a conjunction, it can appear between nouns – or nounphrases:

Jīntiān huòzhě míngtiān dōu xíng.	Today or tomorrow are both okay.
Bǎishìkělè huò kěkǒukělè dōu kěyǐ.	Pepsi or Coke, either one is fine.
Wǒ zǎoshàng hē chá huòzhě kāfēi, wǎnshàng hē píjiǔ.	Mornings I drink tea or coffee, evenings I drink beer!

The second ‘or’ – the alternative ‘or’, which is typically (but not exclusively) found in questions – is expressed with háishi (which in other contexts, means ‘still’). Unlike huòzhě, háishi is an adverb, so it needs to be followed by a verb (as in ii below). However, where the verb would otherwise be shì (see i below), háishi alone suffices – \*háishi shì does not occur.

- |     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| i.  | Tā shì Měiguórén háishi Zhōngguó rén?<br>Yěxǔ shì Měiguórén.  | Is she American or Chinese?<br><i>Probably American.</i>   |
|     | Shì nǐ de háishi tā de?<br>Dāngrán shì tā de, wǒ nǎlǐ huì yǒu<br>zhème nánkàn de xiézi?!  | Are [these] yours or his [shoes]?<br><i>His of course, how[on earth] would<br/>I have such awful looking shoes?!</i>   |
|     | Nǐ shì běnkēshēng háishi<br>yánjiūshēng?<br>Wǒ shì èrniánjí de yánjiūshēng.   | Are you an undergraduate or a<br>graduate?<br><i>I’m a 2nd year grad.</i>  |
|     | Sì ge hái zi? Shi nán hái r háishi nǚ hái r?<br>Dōu shì nǚ hái r!   | 4 children? Are [they] boys or girls?<br><i>[They]’re all girls.</i>   |
| ii. | Hē chá háishi hē kāfēi?<br>Chá hǎo, xièxie.   | [You drinking] tea or coffee?<br><i>Tea’ll be fine, thanks.</i>  |
|     | Yào chī Zhōngguó cài háishi<br>chī wàiguó cài?<br>Wǒmen zài Zhōngguó yīnggāi chī<br>Zhōngguó cài!   | Do [you] want to eat Chinese food<br>or foreign food?<br><i>We’re in China [so we] should eat<br/>Chinese food.</i>  |
|     | Nǐmen qù Běijīng háishi qù Shànghǎi?<br>Xiān qù Běijīng.  | Are you going to Beijing or<br>Shanghai?<br><i>First to Beijing.</i>   |
|     | Zhǎo Wèi lǎoshī háishi zhǎo Zhāng<br>lǎoshī?<br>Zhǎo Zhāng lǎoshī.  | Are you looking for Prof. Wei or<br>Prof. Zhang?<br><i>[I]’m looking for Prof. Zhang.</i>  |
|     | Nà, chīfàn, nǐmen xǐhuan hē píjiǔ háishi<br>hē qìshuǐ.<br>Wǒmen bǐjiào xǐhuān hē chá.   | So, [with] a meal, do you prefer to<br>drink beer or soda?<br><i>We’d rather drink tea.</i>  |
|     | Chīfàn, nǐ píngcháng yòng kuàizi háishi<br>yòng dāochā?<br>Zài Zhōngguó, wǒ dāngrán yòng kuàizi,<br>kěshì zài zhèr, píngcháng dōu yòng<br>dāochā. | [When] eating, do you usually use<br>chopsticks or knife and fork?<br><i>In China, I use chopsticks of course,<br/>but here, I usually use a knife and<br/>fork.</i> |

Guìlín shì zài nánbiān hái shì zài běibiān?	Is Guilin in the south or the north?
<i>Guìlín zài Guǎngxī, zài nánbiān.</i>	<i>Guilin's in Guangxi, in the south.</i>

The response to an ‘or’ question may include a list of items. These may be juxtaposed, or they may be explicitly linked with huòzhě ~ huòshì ~ huò:

Chá kāfēi dōu xíng.	Tea or coffee are both fine.
Chá huòzhě kāfēi dōu xíng.	Either tea or coffee will be fine.
Lǐbàisān lǐbàisì dōu kěyǐ.	Wednesday or Thursday are both possible.
Lǐbàisān huò lǐbàisì dōu kěyǐ.	Either Wednesday or Thursday is fine.

### Exercise 1.

#### Paraphrase in Chinese:

1. Are you in the morning class or the afternoon?
2. Are you going today or tomorrow?
3. Either Coke or Pepsi is fine – it doesn't matter.
4. Do Koreans drink coffee...or tea in the morning?
5. Do you want to have a boy or a girl?
6. Do you prefer coffee or tea with breakfast. / Usually either is fine, but today I'm tired, [so] I'll have coffee.
7. Are you in school, or working? I was in school, but now I'm working.

## 5.3 At the beginning of class

To show respect, students quite naturally stand when the teacher enters and greet him or her appropriately: Wèi lǎoshī, hǎo. Then still standing, Wèi lǎoshī asks for a count off: yī, èr, sān, sì... And the conversation under §5.3.1 below ensues. But first, some more vocabulary:

shuāngshù ‘even number’	dānshù ‘odd number’
bànr ‘partner; mate’	zuò bàn ‘act as partner’
dàjiā ‘everyone (large family)’	zěnme bàn ‘what to do (how manage)’

#### Notes

- a) Shuāng means ‘a pair’, also used as an M in eg yì shuāng kuàizi ‘a pair of chopsticks’; dān ‘a unit’; shù shì shùxué de shù.
- c) Bànr ‘partner’ (a noun) is etymologically related to bàn ‘half’; however, it is not related to the homophonous bàn ‘do; manage’ (a verb), as in zěnme bàn.

## 5.3.1 Dialogues: At the beginning of class

- |     |                                      |   |                                      |
|-----|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
|     | <i>lǎoshī</i>                        |   | <i>xuésheng</i>                      |
| i.  | Jīntiān yígòng yǒu duōshao xuésheng? |   | Yǒu èrshísì ge.                      |
|     | Jǐ ge nánde, jǐ ge nǚde?             |   | Shí ge nánde, shísì ge nǚde.         |
|     | Èrshísì shì shuāngshù háishi dānshù? |   | Shì shuāngshù.                       |
|     | Dānshù hǎo háishi shuāngshù hǎo?     |   | Shuāngshù hǎo.                       |
|     | Wèishénme?                           |   | Yīnwèi shuāngshù, dàjiā dōu yǒu bàn. |
|     |                                      |   |                                      |
|     | <i>lǎoshī</i>                        | > | <i>xuéshēng</i>                      |
| ii. | Jīntiān yígòng yǒu duōshao xuéshēng? |   | Yǒu shíjiǔ ge.                       |
|     | Shíjiǔ shì shuāngshù háishi dānshù?  |   | Shì dānshù.                          |
|     | Shì dānshù hǎo háishi shuāngshù hǎo? |   | Shuāngshù hǎo.                       |
|     | Wèishénme dānshù bù hǎo.             |   | Yīnwèi dānshù, yí ge rén méiyǒu bàn. |
|     | Nà, zěnme bàn?                       |   | Méi guānxi, Wèi lǎoshī kěyǐ zuò bàn. |



Duōshao &lt;ge&gt; nánde, duōshao &lt;ge&gt; nǚde? [JKW 1982]

## 5.4 Food (2)

The Unit 4 introduced staples and other basic categories of food (miàntiáo, mǐfěn, tāng) and some common meats and vegetables (niúròu, xiārénr, dòufu). The next step is to try to collate these ingredients and name the dishes accordingly. Typically, this will mean combining a meat or vegetable – or both – with a basic category of food. Ordering in this way will not always result in a well formed menu item, for names can be idiosyncratic; but it should allow you to get meals with the ingredients you want while you continue to gain experience. In real life, it may be clearer to state the category first, then repeat it with the ingredients: chǎomiàn, chāshāo-chǎomiàn; tāng, dòufu-tāng. Recall that some of the basic food names lose syllables in combination: bāozi > chāshāobāo rather than chāshāobāozi.

*The basic categories of food from Unit 4:*

- (a) fàn, chǎofàn, mǐfěn, miàn, chǎomiàn, tāng, tāngmiàn, jiǎozi, bāozi, zhōu ~ xīfàn
- (b) zhūròu, niúròu, yáng ròu, yā, jī, jīdàn, yú, xiārénr, dòufu

*Containers (M-words):*

yì wǎn niúròu-tāng	liǎng pán<r>	xiārénr-chǎofàn	yì lóng ~ yì jīn bāozi
1 bowl beef soup	2 plate	shrimp fried rice	1 steamer ~ 1 catty bao
<i>a bowl of beef soup</i>	<i>2 plates of</i>	<i>shrimp fried rice</i>	<i>a basket ~ a catty of bao</i>

*Other items:*

yúpiàn	ròusī	báicài	jiǔcài	shícài
fish slices	pork shreds	white veg		seasonal
<i>slices of fish</i>	<i>shredded pork</i>	<i>cabbage</i>	<i>scallions</i>	<i>vegetables</i>
gālí	chāshāo	zhájiàng	shuǐjiǎo	
curry	roast [pork]	fried bean sauce	boiled dumplings	
	[Cantonese]			

*Models:*

- a) xiārénr, dòufu, tāngmiàn, yì wǎn  
~ yì wǎn xiārénr-dòufu-tāngmiàn      ‘bowl of shrimp beancurd noodle soup’
- b) bāozi, zhūròu, jiǔcài, yì lóng  
~ zhūròu-jiǔcài-bāo<zi>, yì lóng      ‘a steamer of pork scallion steamed buns’

*Some typical dishes:*

niúròu-miàn	beef noodles
ròusī-chǎomiàn	shredded pork and fried noodles
niúròu-tāngmiàn	beef noodle in soup
gālí-fàn	curry and rice
jīdàn-chǎofàn	egg and fried rice

niúròu-chǎofěn (~ -chǎomǐfěn)	beef and fried rice-noodles
jī-zhōu	chicken congee
qīngcài-tāng	vegetable soup
jiǔcài-shuǐjiǎo (jiǔcài jiǎozi)	leek dumplings
chāshāo-bāo	roast pork buns
zhájiàng-miàn	noodles with fried bean sauce (and pork)

**Exercise 2****Try ordering the following:**

1. a plate of curried fried rice.
2. a bowl of congee with fish slices.
3. a plate of roast pork and noodles; another of roast pork and fried noodles.
4. 2 bowls of cabbage and shredded pork soup.
5. a plate of beef with rice-noodles.
6. a bowl of tofu soup.
7. a steamer of cabbage and lamb dumplings
8. a plate of cabbage, shrimp and rice-noodles.
9. a bowl of shrimp and noodles in soup.
10. a plate of noodles with mixed ingredients.

**5.4.1 Dialogue: ordering dishes**

*F is a fúwùyuán ('a waiter'); G are four customers (gùkè) having dinner. Normally, the process of figuring out what to order would involve a perfunctory examination of the menu followed by discussion with the waiter about the specialties of the house, the types of fish in stock, what vegetables are fresh, etc. These customers have already decided what they want. They order the dishes by name rather than taking the descriptive approach seen in the last section.*

- F. Yào chī shénme? What'll [you] have?
- G. Yào yí ge yúxiāng-qiézi, [We] 'll have a 'fish-fragrant eggplant',  
yí ge shāo'èrdōng, [and] a 'cooked two-winter'; a  
yí ge huíguōròu, yí ge sùshíjǐn, 'double-cooked pork'; a 'mixed vegetables',  
zài yào yí ge suānlàtāng. and also a 'hot and sour soup'.
- F. Suānlàtāng nǐ yào dàwǎn háishi [For] the hot and sour soup, do you  
xiǎowǎn? want a big bowl or a little bowl?
- G. Dàwǎn duō dà? How big's the big bowl?
- F. Liù ge rén hē! [Enough] for 6 [to drink].
- G. Hǎo, yào dà de. Okay, a big one.
- F. Hē shénme? Hē yǐnliào háishi What'll [you] have to drink? A beverage  
hē píjiǔ? or beer?
- G. Chá jiù kěyǐ. Lǜchá. Tea'll be fine. Green tea.
- F. Hǎo, sì ge cài, yí ge tāng: Okay, 4 dishes and a soup:  
yúxiāng-qiézi, shāo'èrdōng, 'fish-flavor eggplant'; 'cooked 2 winter',  
huíguōròu, sùshíjǐn; dàwǎn 'double-cooked pork'; 'mixed vegetables'  
suānlàtāng. and a large bowl of 'hot and sour soup'.
- G. Hái yào bái fàn. And rice.
- F. Dàwǎn ma. A big bowl.
- G. Kěyǐ. That's fine.

## Notes

- shāo'èrdōng (cooked-2-winter) A vegetarian dish consisting of two winter vegetables such as dōnggū 'dried mushrooms' or dōngsǔn 'winter bamboo shoots'.
- huíguōròu (return-to-pan pork), ie 'double-cooked pork'
- sù plain; simple; vegetarian. Cf. chī sù 'eat vegetarian food'.
- shíjǐn N 'assortment of'; sùshíjǐn 'assorted vegetables'
- zài yào zài 'again', but here, 'in addition'.
- yǐnliào N 'drink-stuff' refers to non-alcoholic beverages – but not tea.
- bái fàn In China, rice is often ordered by the liǎng 'ounce'.



## 5.5 Expanding the V+de construction

### 5.5.1 Vocabulary

V+O	chàng[gē] sing [songs] <i>sing</i>	xiě[zì] write [characters] <i>write</i>	shuō[huà] say [speech] <i>speak; talk</i>	zuò[fàn] make [food] <i>cook</i>
N	Yīngyǔ <i>English</i>	Hànyǔ <i>Chinese language</i>	Zhōngguó huà <i>Chinese speech</i>	SV biāozhǔn <i>be proper; correct; standard</i>

#### Notes

a) Like chīfàn, when no other object is present or can be provided from the context, the verbs in the top row usually appear with the generic objects indicated in brackets.

b) Zuòfàn 'cook'. In the south, zhǔfàn 'boil-food' and shāofàn 'heat-food' are also used for 'cook'.

### 5.5.2 Commenting on abilities

Recall the earlier examples of the *V+de* construction:

Nǐ shuō+de hěn hǎo.	You speak very well
Nǐ jiǎng+de bú cuò.	You speak pretty well.

Nothing can intervene between the verb, shuō and +de, so an object has to be mentioned first, either alone, or with repetition of the verb:

Nǐ Zhōngwén shuō+de hěn biāozhǔn.  
Nǐ jiǎng Zhōngwén, jiǎng+de hǎo-jíle.  
Nǐ Hànyǔ shuō+de fēicháng hǎo.  
Zhōngguó huà jiǎng+de hěn biāozhǔn.

The same construction can be applied to other verbs:

Hànzì xiě+de hěn hǎo. <i>Nǎlǐ, xiě+de bù hǎo.</i>	You write characters well. <i>Nah, I don't write well.</i>
Tā chàng+de hěn hǎo. Tā chàng+de bú tài hǎo. Ta chànggē chàng+de zěnmeyàng?	She sings well. He doesn't sing very well. How does he sing?
Wǒ zuòfàn zuò+de hěn chà. <i>Nǐ zuò+de bú cuò!</i>	I'm a terrible cook. <i>You cook pretty well.</i>
Wǒ xǐhuan chànggē, dànshì chàng+de bù hǎo. <i>Nǐ tài kèqi, nǐ chàng+de bú cuò!</i>	I like to sing, but I don't sing well. <i>You're too 'modest', you sing well.</i>

Wǒ xǐhuan zuòfàn kěshi zuò+de bù hǎo. I like to cook, but I don't cook well.

Méi guānxi, wǒmen qù fānguǎnr chīfàn ba, *Never mind, let's go to a restaurant -*  
wǒ qǐngkè. *I'll treat.*

### 5.5.3 Huì 'be able'; yìdiǎnr 'a bit'

The response to someone praising your language ability is the modest:

Nǎlǐ, nǎlǐ <shuō+de bù hǎo>.

To this you can add a sentence with the modal verb huì 'be able to [of learned abilities]':

Wǒ zhǐ huì shuō yìdiǎnr. I only speak a little.  
Wǒ zhǐ huì shuō yìdiǎndiǎnr. I speak very little!

Yìdiǎnr 'a bit; a little' can appear between an action verb and its object:

Wǒmen chī yìdiǎnr fàn, hǎo bu hao? Let's have a bit to eat, okay?  
Hē yìdiǎnr qìshuǐ ba. Have a soft drink.  
Zài zhèr kěyǐ mǎi yìdiǎnr dōngxì. You can do a bit of shopping here.

Contrast the use of yìdiǎnr directly after a verb (as part of the object) with the yǒu yìdiǎnr pattern, that precedes SVs:

*V yìdiǎnr O*  
Hē yìdiǎnr chá ba. Why don't you have some tea.

*Subject yǒu yìdiǎnr SV*  
Zhè chá yǒu yìdiǎnr kǔ. This tea's a little bitter.

### 5.5.4 Huì, néng (~ nénggòu), kěyǐ and xíng

You have encountered a number of verbs all having to do with ability. Although usage varies between regions, particularly between the Mainland and Taiwan, the basic differences are illustrated below.

a) huì 'know how to; can', typically used for learned abilities

Wǒ bú huì jiǎng Shànghǎihuà. [I] can't speak Shanghainese.

'know about; be good at', ie used as a main verb

Tā huì hěn duō shǎoshù mínzú de yǔyán. She speaks a lot of languages of minority peoples.

*'possibility' (often with a final 'emphatic-de')*

Jintiān bú huì hěn lěng.	It won't be too cold today.
Bú huì de ba!	No way!
Tāmen huì yíng de!	They're bound to win!

b) néng ~ nénggòu: *'capable of; can' (ranging from physical ability to permission)*

Néng qù ma?	Can you go?
Wǒ bù néng hē báijiǔ.	I can't drink 'white spirits'.
Míngtiān wǒ bù néng lái shàngkè.	I can't come to class tomorrow.
Néng děng yíxià ma?	Can you wait a bit?
Néng hē yì jīn, hē bā liǎng....	[If] you can drink a 'jin' but only drink
duìbuqǐ rénmin, duìbuqǐ dǎng.	8 ounces, you won't be able to face the people, you won't be able to face the party!

c) kěyǐ *'all right to; can' (ranging from possibility to permission)*

Kěyǐ jìnqu ma?	Can [we] go in?
Kě bu kěyǐ mǎi bàn ge?	Can [one] buy a half?
Túshūguǎn <lǐ> bù kěyǐ shuōhuà.	[You] not supposed to talk in the library.

d) xíng *'be okay; to do; to work'*

Xíng has a meaning similar to kěyǐ or néng, but its grammatical behavior is different. Xíng is not a modal verb (ie cannot be followed by another verb); it is an ordinary verb that appears in predicate position (at the foot of the sentence).

Qǐngkè chīfàn méi jiǔ bù xíng. <i>Cf. Chīfàn bù néng méi jiǔ.</i>	You can't invite guests for a meal without [having] wine.
Xué Zhōngwén méiyǒu lǎoshī xíng ma? <i>Cf. Xué Zhōngwén méiyǒu lǎoshī, kěyǐ ma?</i>	Can you study Chinese without a teacher?

As the previous examples show, the expression bù xíng often corresponds to 'without' in English.

Qǐngkè chīfàn méi yú bù xíng.	Having guests for a meal without [serving] fish won't do!
Zài Měiguó chīfàn méi miànbāo bù xíng.	In the US, you can't have a meal without bread.
Zài Fǎguó chīfàn méi jiǔ bù xíng.	In France, you can't have a meal without wine.
Zài Tàiguó chīfàn méi làjiāo bù xíng.	In Thailand, you can't have a meal without chillies.

Qù lǚxíng méi dìtú bù xíng.

You can't go traveling without a map.

Guò shēngrì méi dànɡāo bù xíng.

You can't have a birthday without a cake.

Kàn yùndònghuì méi píjiǔ bù xíng.

You can't watch a sporting event without beer!

Méi jiǔ méi yú bù chéng xī.

It takes wine and fish to make a feast!  
[A saying.] (*chéng xī* 'become feast')

**Exercise 3.**

**Paraphrase in Chinese:**

1. She speaks very good Chinese.
  2. I'm a lousy cook, but I love to eat Chinese food.
  3. She speaks [Chinese] quite well, but she doesn't write very well.
  4. You sing well. / Nah, not so well!
  5. You speak [Chinese] very well. / No, I only speak a little!
  6. Have some tea. / Thanks.... This is great – what kind is it?
  7. I find coffee a little bitter; I prefer tea.
  
  8. You can't shop without money.
  9. You can't eat Chinese food without chopsticks. (*kuàizi* 'chopsticks')
  10. You can't drink coffee without milk.
  11. You can't drink beer without peanuts! (*huāshēng* 'peanuts')
- 



**Xiǎo péngyou, nǐ hǎo.** [JKW 1997]

## 5.6 Talking to children

In China, you will find yourself in situations where you have to talk to children. In the following dialogue, you strike up a conversation with the 5 year old child of some Chinese friends. You may have heard the name, but you can't recall it, so you begin as follows:

Dà	Xiǎo péngyou, nǐ hǎo.	Hi, little friend.
<i>Xiǎo</i>	(to female) Āyí hǎo. (to male) Shūshu, hǎo.	<i>Hello, auntie. Hello, uncle.</i>
Dà	Xiǎo péngyou chī shénme ne?	What are [you] eating?
<i>Xiǎo</i>	Chī táng ne!	<i>Candy.</i>
Dà	Hǎochī ma?	Is it good?
<i>Xiǎo.</i>	Hǎochī. Gěi shūshu yì kē, hǎo bu hao?	<i>Yes. [I]’ll give one to uncle, okay?</i>
Dà	O, xièxie. Xiǎo péngyou xǐhuan chànggē ma?	Ah, thank you. Do you like to sing?
<i>Xiǎo</i>	Xǐhuan.	<i>I do.</i>
Dà	Xǐhuan chàng shénme gē?	What song do you like to sing?
<i>Xiǎo</i>	Zài xuéxiào wǒmen chàng ‘Wǒmen shì Gòngchǎn-zhǔyì jiēbānrén.’	<i>At school we sing ‘We’re the ones who uphold Communism!’</i>
Dà	Èi, hǎo gē! Kěyǐ gěi wǒ chàngchang ma? (~ Kěyǐ chàng gěi wǒ tīngting ma?)	Hey, nice song! Can you sing it for me? (~ Can you let me hear it?)
<i>Xiǎo</i>	“Wǒmen shì Gòngchǎn-zhǔyì jiēbānrén....”	
Dà	Ng, nǐ chàng+de hěn hǎo.	You sing well!
<i>Xiǎo</i>	Chàng+de bù hǎo!	<i>No I don’t.</i>
Dà	Hǎo, xiǎo péngyou, zàijiàn.	Okay, goodbye.
<i>Xiǎo</i>	Āyí / Shūshu zàijiàn.	<i>Bye auntie/uncle.</i>
Dà	Zhēn kě’ài!	Cute!

## Notes:

chī...ne:	the final <u>ne</u> conveys a tone of engagement or concern that is associated with on-going actions otherwise marked with <u>zài</u> (cf. §4.7.4).
táng	cf. <u>tāng</u> ‘soup’ (‘soups stays <i>level</i> ’, ‘sugar <i>raises</i> the pulse’).
kē	a M for beads, beans, pearls and even meteors and satellites.
Wǒmen shì ...	S/he actually cites the first line. The title is ‘Zhōngguó shàonián xiānfēng duì gē’, ie ‘Song of the Chinese Young Pioneers’.
	Nowadays, children have a less interesting repertoire.
gòngchǎn	‘communist’, literally ‘common-production’.
-zhǔyì	corresponds to English ‘ism’; <u>zīběn-zhǔyì</u> ‘capitalism’; <u>kǒngbù-zhǔyì</u> ‘terrorism’.
jiēbānrén	‘successor’, literally, ‘meet-duty-person’.
gěi	Root meaning ‘give’, but also ‘for’; cf. §5.6.1 directly below.
chàngchang	Repetition of the verb (without tone) takes the edge off the request: ‘sing a little; just sing me a bit’.
zhēn	adverb ‘really; truly’; cp. <u>zhēn yǒuyìsì</u> ‘really interesting’ and <u>zhēn bàng</u> ‘really super’.
kě’ài	‘capable-love’; cf. <u>kěpà</u> ‘frightening’ and <u>kěchī</u> ‘edible’.

## 5.6.1 Verbs, coverbs, and serialization

jiāoshū	gàosu	mǎi	mài	wèn	wèntí
teach-books					
teach	tell	buy	sell	ask	a question
dǎ diànhuà	sòng			shì<qing>	
hit telephone	present s/t to s/o;				
to telephone	escort s/o s/w			things [to do]	

## Notes

- Jiāoshū ‘teach’, with the generic object shū present when no other object is cited; jiāoshū but jiāo Zhōngwén ‘teach Chinese’. Contrast jiāo ‘teach’ with the three distinct falling toned jiàos: jiào ‘be named; call’, bǐjiào, shuìjiào.
- Wèn ‘ask a question’ but qǐng ‘ask a favor’.
- Sòng parallels gěi in meaning ‘give [as a present]’; it also means to ‘see someone off’: sòng tā qù jīchǎng. Sòng and gěi also combine in the compound verb sònggei ‘send, present to’, illustrated in later units.
- Dōngxi are physical things, shì<qing>, abstract ‘items of business’.

The dialogue with the child in the previous section presents an opportunity to introduce several functions (or meanings) of gěi.

a) Gěi as a main verb.

Along with a number of other verbs involving transactions, gěi can take two objects, one that refers to the ‘item’ transferred (the direct object – DO) and the other, to the person who gains it (the indirect object – IO).

gěi	tā	yí ge lǐwù	give her a present
sòng	tā	yí ge lǐwù	present him with a gift
jiāo	tāmen	Zhōngwén	teach them Chinese
wèn	tā	yí ge wèntí	ask her a question
gàosu	tā	yí jiàn shìqǐng	tell him something

The same pattern is common in English:

V	IO [person]	DO [thing]
give	them	an opera mask
teach	them	Chinese opera
buy	her	a ticket
sell	him	your robes

But the pattern should not be extended on the basis of English. For example, mǎi ‘buy’, which allows two objects in English (‘buy her a ticket’), requires a different pattern in Chinese, introduced in (c) below. There are other differences, too. In English ‘teach’ and ‘tell’ can occur with single objects, but not ‘give’; in Chinese all three can occur with a single object:

	Wǒ jiāo tāmen.	I teach them; I’m their teacher.
	Bié gàosu tā.	Don’t tell him.
<i>But</i>	Wǒ gěi nǐ.	I give [it] [to] you; it’s yours!

b) Gěi as a co-verb meaning ‘for [the benefit of]’.

In Unit 4, you encountered the phrase gěi nǐ jièshào jièshào ‘introduce you to’, or more literally ‘introduce [someone] for you’. The main verb is jièshào; gěi precedes it, with the meaning ‘for your benefit’ rather than ‘give’. Similarly gěi wǒ chàngchang in the previous dialogue involves gěi functioning as a co-verb. Here are some typical examples – notice that gěi in its CV function always precedes the main verb.

Wǒ gěi nǐ zuò ba!	I’ll do it for you, okay?
Míngtiān gěi nǐ dǎ ge diànhuà, hǎo bu hao?	[I]’ll phone you tomorrow, okay?
Wǒ gěi nǐ xiě.	I’ll write it for you.
Wǒ gěi tā mǎi dōngxì, tā gěi wǒ zuòfàn.	I shop for her, and she cooks for me.

c) Gěi as the second verb in a series.

As noted above, mǎi ‘buy’ does not permit the (a) pattern, with two objects. Instead the purpose of the transaction has to be expressed by adding a phrase introduced by gěi:

mǎi lǐwù gěi tā  
buy present give her  
*buy her a present*

The two verbs, mǎi and gěi, appear sequentially – ‘buy and give’ – in a relationship that is sometimes called serialization. Here is a short dialogue that contrasts the coverb (b) and serialization patterns (c):

Jiǎ	Míngtiān shì tā de shēngri; wǒmen yīnggāi mǎi yí ge lǐwù gěi tā.	Tomorrow’s her birthday; we should buy her a present.
Yǐ	Mǎi shénme lǐwù?	What [sort] of present?
Jiǎ	Tā shì wàiguó lái de; mǎi ge xiǎo jìniànpǐn gěi tā, zěnmeyàng?	She’s a foreigner; how about we buy her a small memento? (‘buy a small memento to give to her’)
Yǐ	Bú cuò, wǒ kěyǐ gěi nǐ mǎi!	Okay, I’ll buy [it] for you.

Serialization is quite versatile in Chinese. When the adult in dialogue §5.6 asked the child to sing the song for him, he used sentence (a) below, with a co-verb construction to indicate that he would benefit from the action (‘sing for me’); but as noted, he could also have said sentence (b), using a serialization to emphasize the purpose or result (‘sing so I hear’). In the latter case, gěi might be translated as ‘let’ or ‘allow’.

<i>co-verb</i>	(a) Kěyǐ gěi wǒ chàngchang ma?	Can you sing [it] for me?
<i>serialization</i>	(b) Kěyǐ chàng gěi wǒ tīngting ma?	Can you let me hear [it]?

There are other cases in which both a co-verb construction and a serialization are possible:

<i>co-verb</i>	Wǒ gěi nǐ dǎ diànhuà, hǎo bu hǎo?	I’ll phone you, okay?
<i>serialization</i>	Wǒ dǎ diànhuà gěi nǐ, hǎo bu hǎo?	I’ll phone you, okay?



**Exercise 4**

Compose a Chinese conversation based on the English:

She's leaving (líkāi) Hong Kong next week (xià ge xīngqī). We should give her a memento. / Yes, we should buy her something. / What do you suggest? / How about a seal [chop]? (túzhāng) / She probably already has a chop. I think we should get her a fan (shànzi). / I've got to go to Xuānwúqū this afternoon - I'll get you one. / Oh, that would be great - I have class from 1 to 5. / No problem, I often buy fans there.

Summary of gěi patterns

Verb	Wōmen <b>gěi</b> tā yí ge lǐwù, zěnmeyàng?	Let's give her a present.
CV...V	Wōmen <b>gěi</b> tā <b>mǎi</b> yí ge lǐwù, zěnmeyàng?	Let's buy a present for her.
V-O V-O	Wōmen <b>mǎi</b> yí ge lǐwù <b>gěi</b> tā, zěnmeyàng?	Let's buy her a present.

## 5.7 Music and musicians

### 5.7.1 Singers, styles and other vocabulary:

gē	yì shǒu gē	gēshǒu	gēxīng	bǐjiào xǐhuan / zuì xǐhuan
song	a M song a song	song-hand singer	song-star star singer	quite like / most like prefer
Māo Wáng	Jiǎkéchóng	Jiékèxùn	Pàwǎluódi	Mài Dāngnà
cat king Elvis	armor-shell-insects The Beatles	M. Jackson	Pavorotti	Madonna
yáogǔn<yuè>	xīhā	juéshì<yuè>	xiāngcūn-yīnyuè	
rock 'n roll	hiphop	jazz	country-music	
gǔdiǎn-yīnyuè	míngē			
classical music	folksongs			

#### Notes

- a) Shǒu 'M for songs, poems' and gēshǒu de shǒu are homophones – pronounced the same – but are different words (written with different characters).
- b) Zuì 'most', eg: zuì dà 'biggest', zuì duō 'most', zuì nán 'hardest' etc.

### 5.7.2 Dialogue – musical preferences

Jiǎ	Nǐ zuì xǐhuan shénme yàng de yīnyuè?	What kinds of music do you prefer?
Yǐ	<i>Wǒ bǐjiào xǐhuan yáogǔnyuè hé xīhā.</i>	<i>I prefer rock and hip-hop.</i>
Jiǎ	Nēi ge gēshǒu?	Which singers?
Yǐ	<i>Zhōngguó de ma?</i>	<i>Chinese [ones]?</i>
Jiǎ	Shì.	Yes.
Yǐ	<i>Xǐhuan Zhōu Jiélún, Nà Yīng.</i>	<i>I like Zhou Jielun, Na Ying.</i>
Jiǎ	Nà, Xīfāng de ne?	And Western ones?
Yǐ	<i>Xīfāng de ne, zuì xǐhuan Māo Wáng!</i>	<i>Western ones, I like ‘the King’.</i>
Jiǎ	Nà nǐ yě xǐhuan juéshì ma?	Do you like jazz too?
Yǐ	<i>Juéshì ne, hái kěyǐ, kěshì wǒ bù cháng tīng, tīngbuguàn.</i>	<i>Jazz, [I] quite [like it], but I don’t often listen [to it], I’m not used [to it].</i>

### 5.7.3 Musical instruments

Talking about music often leads to questions about playing musical instruments. Traditional Chinese instruments include the shēng ‘a reed instrument’, the dí ‘flute’, the pípa ‘lute’, and various kinds of qín ‘stringed instruments’. Questions about traditional music or instruments can include the SV chuántǒng ‘traditional’:

Jiǎ	Nǐ xǐhuan Zhōngguó chuántǒng de yīnyuè ma?	Do you like traditional Chinese music?
Yǐ	<i>Nǐ shuō de shì shēng, dizi, pipa zhèi yàng de yīnyuè ma?</i>	<i>You mean (‘what you say is’) music such as the sheng [reed pipe], dizi [bamboo flute] and pipa [Chinese lute]?</i>
Jiǎ	Jiùshì a.	Precisely.
Yǐ	<i>Ng, hái kěyǐ. Wǒ bù cháng tīng nèi yàng de yīnyuè!</i>	<i>Yeah, it’s okay. I don’t listen to that kind of music much.</i>

Note:

- a) Note that nǐ shuō de shì, literally ‘you say thing is’, corresponds to English ‘you mean...’.



Chàng+de hǎo, lā+de yě hǎo! [JKW 2003]

Words for modern instruments are mostly based on the traditional names (though *jítā* is a loanword):

gāngqín	tíqín	héngdí	shùdí	jítā
metal-qín	lift-qín	horiz. flute	vert. flute	
<i>piano</i>	<i>violin family</i>	<i>flute</i>	<i>clarinet</i>	<i>guitar</i>

Chinese does not have a single verb comparable to English ‘play’ that can be used for any instrument (as well as football). Instead, verbs are chosen according to the particular musical gesture: *tán* ‘pluck’, for plucked instruments, such as guitar and piano; *lā* ‘pull’ for bowed instruments, such as violin or *pípa*; *chuī* ‘blow’ for wind instruments such as clarinet or bamboo flute [*dízi*]; etc. However, the Chinese verb *huì* ‘be able to [of learned abilities]’, unlike its English counterparts such as ‘can’ or ‘be able’, has the virtue of not requiring expression of the skill itself. The following sentence could, therefore, be literally translated as ‘Can I ask what instrument you are able in?’

Qǐngwèn, nǐ huì shénme yuèqì?

Can I ask what musical instrument you play?

Wǒ huì tán diǎnr jítā, kěshi tán+de bú tài hǎo.

*I can play some guitar, but I don’t play very well.*

Wǒ huì chuī lǎba, dànshi chuī+de bù hǎo. *I play trumpet a bit, but not well.*

### Exercise 5.

Hot lines in Kunming: Hot lines (*rèxiàn*), phone numbers which allow you to inquire about a subject for a small charge, are popular in China – or at least, they were in the year 2000. In the city of *Kūnmíng*, (*zài Yúnnán*), you could dial a hotline number to get an explanation of your personality based on your color preferences: those who like red, for example, are warm and enthusiastic (*rèqíng*) and uninhibited (*bēnfàng*).

Other lines allowed you to select a song and have it played over the telephone. (Such lines are less common now that the novelty has worn off.) Here are some of the selections. You can make your own choice, as well as initiate a brief discussion with the operator along the following lines:

Wéi, wǒ xiǎng tīng yì shǒu gē.	Hello, I'd like to listen to a song.
Něi ge gēxīng?	Which singer?
Wǒ yào tīng Cūi Jiàn de <gē>.	I'd like to listen to one of Cui Jian's.
Cūi Jiàn de nǐ shǒu gē?	Which one of Cui Jian's?
Cūi Jiàn de Huāfáng Gūniang ba. Èr líng jiǔ sān.	Cui Jian's 'Flower House Girl', is it? #2093.
Hǎo, #2093.	Okay, #2093.

#	singer		song
2093	Cūi Jiàn	男	Huāfáng Gūniang 'flower house girl'
2094	Cūi Jiàn		Yīwú suǒyǒu 'to have nothing at all'
2095	Cūi Jiàn		Cóng tóu zài lái 'Let's take it from the top again'
2096	Zhāng Xuéyǒu	男	Qíngwǎng 'Web of love'
2097	Zhāng Xuéyǒu		Nǐ lěng+de xiàng fēng! 'You're cold as the wind'
2098	Wáng Fēi	女	Wǒ yuànyì 'I'm willing'
2099	Wáng Fēi		Nǚrén 'Woman'
2100	Tián Zhèn	女	Yěhuā 'Wild flower'
2101	Tián Zhèn		Zìyóu zìzài 'Free and easy'
2102	Kē Yǐmǐn	女	Ài wǒ 'Love me'
2103	Dèng Lìjūn	女	Yè lái xiāng 'Fragrance in the night' = name of a flower

## 5.8 Verbs of cognition

### 5.8.1 Knowing

Knowledge of facts is expressed by the verb zhīdao (with the second syllable often fully toned in the negative, bù zhīdào). In southern Mandarin, xiǎode is the colloquial equivalent.

Nǐ zhīdao ma?	Nǐ xiǎode ma?	Do you know?
Bù zhīdào.	Bù xiǎode.	[I] don't.
Zhī bu zhīdào?	Xiǎo bu xiǎode?	Do [you] know (or not)?

Tā wèishénme hěn jǐnzhāng?      Wǒ bù zhīdào ~ wǒ bù xiǎode.

Knowing someone, or being acquainted with someone or something, is expressed by a different verb in Mandarin: rènshi. (The same distinction is made in the Romance languages.) Contrast the two usages in the examples below:

Tā shì bu shì Yáng Lán?      Is that Yang Lan?  
 Wǒ bù xiǎode! Shéi shì Yáng Lán?      I don't know. Who's Yang Lan?

Tā shì Yáng Lán ma?      Is that Yang Lan?  
 Wǒ bù xiǎode, wǒ bù rènshi tā.      I don't know, I don't know her.

Shì Zhōngguó rén ma?      Is [she] Chinese?  
 Bù zhīdao, wǒ bú rènshi tā.      [I] don't know, I don't know her.

[*Yáng Lán* used to work for CCTV as a newscaster; she came to the US to attend graduate school at Columbia University, then returned to China to become an immensely popular talk show host.]

### 5.8.2 Understanding

#### a) Dǒng 'understand'

Dǒng ma?	Dǒng.
Dǒng bu dǒng?	Duìbuqǐ, wǒ bù dǒng.

Another word, míngbai, composed of míng 'bright' (also seen in míngtiān) and bái 'white', means 'understand' in the sense of 'to get it'. Because 'understanding' often comes as a breakthrough, both dǒng and míngbai are associated with the 'new situation' le.

- |                |                           |                                     |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| i) Dǒng le ma? | Dǒng le.                  | <i>I understand [now].</i>          |
|                | Chàbuduō le!              | <i>Just about.</i>                  |
|                | Jīběnnshàng dǒng le!      | <i>Basically, I do.</i>             |
|                | Duìbuqǐ, hái shì bù dǒng! | <i>Sorry, I still don't get it.</i> |

- ii) Míngbai ma?                      *Míngbai le!*                      *[Now] I get it!*
- iii) Nǐ dǒng wǒ de yìsi ma?      *Dǒng.*  
Do you understand ‘my meaning’? *I do.*

**b) Kàndedǒng**

The dialogue in Unit 4 began with the question in which the verbs kàn ‘look; read’ and dǒng ‘understand’ are combined in a phrase mediated by de (which turns out to be written +de ‘so as to; get’, ie 得): Nǐ kàndedǒng ma? A positive response would be kàndedǒng; a negative one, kànbudǒng. Tīng ‘listen’ may substitute for kàn if the stimulus is aural rather than visual (see chart below).

The relationship between the two verbs is one of action (kàn) and result (dǒng). The presence of the internal de or bu makes the construction ‘potential’ rather than ‘actual’, so the translation of kàndedǒng is not just ‘understand’ but ‘manage to understand’; similarly, kànbudǒng is ‘not succeed in understanding’. The complete paradigm is as follows:

	<i>positive</i>		<i>negative</i>	
<i>actual</i>	Kàndǒng le. Tīngdǒng le.	[I] understood [it].	Méi kàndǒng. Méi tīngdǒng.	[I] didn’t understand[it].
<i>potential</i>	Kàndedǒng. Tīngdedǒng.	[I]’m able to understand [it].	Kànbudǒng. Tīngbudǒng.	[I]’m not able to understand [it].

Other examples of the potential construction encountered in earlier units include:

- duìbuqǐ                      ‘sorry (not worthy of facing)’
- shuāibudǎo                ‘manage not to fall down’
- chīdeguàn                ‘be in the habit of eating’
- chībuguàn                ‘not be in the habit of eating’
- tīngbuguàn               ‘not be in the habit of listening [to it]’
- xuébudào                 ‘not manage to learn it’

**5.8.3 Reporting on questions**

Verbs such as zhīdao, as well as wèn ‘ask’, are often used to report on questions. In English, this has some interesting grammatical consequences, as shown below:

- |   |                                     |  |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| <p><i>Direct speech (schematic)</i></p> <p>I asked: “Where are you going?”</p> <p>We don’t know: “Is he Chinese?”</p> <p>I don’t know: “Why is she so nervous?”</p> | <p>&gt;</p> <p>&gt;</p> <p>&gt;</p> | <p><i>Reported speech (actual)</i></p> <p>I asked where you were going.</p> <p>We don’t know whether/if he’s Chinese [or not].</p> <p>I don’t know why she’s so nervous.</p> |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|

In English, reporting speech involves grammatical features such as ‘agreement of tenses’ (‘were going,’ not ‘are going’ in the first example), non-question word order (‘where you were going’ rather than ‘where were you going’) and insertion of ‘if’ or ‘whether’ in *yes-no questions*. Chinese, fortunately, does not require such contortions, as the following examples show.

a) Zhīdao

*Direct speech*

Wǒ bù zhīdào: “Tā wèishénme hěn jǐnzhāng?”

I don’t know: “Why is he so nervous?”

*Reported speech*

Wǒ bù zhīdào tā wèishénme hěn jǐnzhāng.

I don’t know why he’s so nervous.

There is one constraint that needs to be noted, however: if the embedded question is a *yes-no* question, then it must have the *V-not-V* form; it cannot be a *ma-question*. The reason for this is that *ma* functions like the rising question intonation in English – it envelopes the whole sentence, not just a part of it. Some examples will make this clear:

Wǒmen bù zhīdào: “Tā shì Zhōngguó rén ma?”

We don’t know: “Is she Chinese?”

>

Wǒmen bù zhīdào tā shì bu shì Zhōngguó rén.

We don’t know if she’s Chinese (or not).

*Notice that the reported speech, the object of zhīdao, always contains a question-form, such as shénme, or a *V-not-V* question.*

There are times when ma does show up at the end of the sentence, but if it does, it goes with the ‘higher verb’, zhīdao, not with the internal question:

Nǐ zhī bu zhīdào {tā shì bu shì Zhōngguó rén}.

or

Nǐ zhīdào {tā shì bu shì Zhōngguó rén} ma?

b) Wèn ‘ask [a question]’

Wèn occurs in expressions such as qǐngwèn ‘may [I] ask; excuse me’ and wèntí ‘question; problem’. (Yǒu wèntí ma?) The root meaning of wèn is ‘ask [a question]’. Questions embedded after wèn have the same constraints as those after zhīdao, eg requiring the *V-not-V* form with *yes-no* questions:

Tā wèn wǒ: “Nǐ shì Zhōngguó rén ma?” > Tā wèn wǒ shì bu shì Zhōngguó rén.

Tā wèn wǒ: “Nǐ shì shénme dìfang rén?” > Tā wèn wǒ shì shénme dìfang rén.

Notice that Chinese does not require repetition of the pronoun in a sentence like the last: ‘He asked me if I were Chinese’ (with both ‘me’ and ‘I’ in the English) is usually expressed as: Tā wèn wǒ shì bu shì Zhōngguó rén (with only one wǒ).

### Exercise 6.

a) Translate the following:

1. Wǒ bù zhīdao tā de yàoshi zài nǎr.
2. Tā wèn wǒ yǒu méiyǒu hùzhào.
3. Wǒ bù xiǎode tā de guójí shì shénme.
4. Tāmen wèn wǒ xǐ bù xǐhuan Shìjiè Bēi.
5. Tā wèn wǒ jǐ diǎn chī zǎodiǎn.
6. Tā wèn wǒ shì bu shì běnkēshēng.

b) How would you say the following in Chinese? Recall that shì bu shì ‘is it the case that’ is often used to question certain assumptions.

1. Do you know who Bǎoyù is? / Sorry, I don’t.
2. I don’t know whether Bǎoyù is hungry (or not).
3. Do you know why Bǎoyù is nervous?
4. He’s nervous because he’s going to see Dàiyù.
5. Do you know if Bǎoyù likes [ài] Dàiyù?
6. We don’t know what Bǎoyù’s surname is.

[Jiǎ Bǎoyù and Lín Dàiyù are, respectively, male and female characters in the Chinese classic novel *Hóng Lóu Mèng* ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’.]

## 5.9 Destination

### 5.9.1 Going places: some vocabulary

huíjiā	chéng lǐ	xiāngxià	wàiguó	jīchǎng	Cháng Chéng
	town in		outside-country	airplane-area	Long Wall
return home	in town	the country	abroad	airport	Great Wall

### 5.9.2 Where to?

Destination may be expressed directly (i) after the motion verbs, lái ‘come’ and qù ‘go’: lái Běijīng ‘come to Beijing’; qù Běijīng ‘go to Beijing’. The same meaning can also be expressed prepositionally (ii), with the destination placed *before* lái or qù (both usually untoned) as the object of dào ‘to’, or in some cases, shàng ‘on’. So the options are as follows:

- |    |                      |                         |
|----|----------------------|-------------------------|
| i. | Nǐmen qù nǎr ~ nǎlǐ? | Where are you going?    |
|    | Wǒmen qù Běijīng.    | We’re going to Beijing. |



ii. Nǐmen dào nǎr ~ nǎlǐ qu? same  
 Wōmen dào Běijīng qu.

Nǐmen shàng nǎr ~ nǎlǐ qu? same  
 Wōmen shàng Běijīng qu.

Though there may be stylistic reasons for choosing the direct pattern over the prepositional, the two patterns are essentially synonymous. The direct pattern accords with the order of verb and destination in regional languages such as Cantonese and Hokkien and for that reason, is preferred by southern speakers (including Taiwanese). Of the two prepositional options, the shàng...qu pattern seems to carry a special nuance of ‘setting off for some place’ so it may be more common in the question than in the answer.

#### Other examples

Tāmen qù shénme dìfang? Whereabouts are they going to?

Wōmen dào chéng lǐ qu. We’re going into town.

Wōmen shàng jīchǎng qu – We’re off to the airport –  
 jiē péngyou. to meet some friends.

Wōmen huíjiā. We’re going home.

Notice that ‘go home’ is not expressed with qù but with huí ‘return’, huíjiā:

Jīntiān jǐ diǎn huíjiā? What time are you going home today?

#### 5.9.3 Going

Both qù and zǒu can be translated as ‘go’. They differ in that zǒu cannot take a specific object; qù can. Zǒu can often be translated as ‘leave’.

Wǒ gāi zǒu le. I should be off.

but Wǒ bāyuè sānhào qù Běijīng. I’m going to Beijing on August 8th.

To leave a place can be expressed by the verb, líkāi (with the first syllable identified with the lí associated with jìn or yuǎn):

Wōmen míngtiān líkāi Běijīng, We’re leaving Beijing tomorrow and going  
 qù Chángchūn. to Changchun.

#### 5.9.4 Nǎr ~ nǎlǐ as an indefinite

Like shénme, nǎr ~ nǎlǐ can also serve as an indefinite – in either the direct pattern, or the prepositional:

Nǐ qù nǎr ~ nǎlǐ?  
Wǒ bú qù nǎr ~ nǎlǐ.

Where are you going?  
I'm not going anywhere (in particular).

Nǐ dào nǎr ~ nǎlǐ qù ?  
Wǒ bú dào nǎr ~ nǎlǐ qù.

Where are you going?  
I'm not going anywhere (in particular).

### 5.9.5 Destination with other verbs.

With the verbs lái and qù, the destination either follows the verb immediately without any mediation (qù Běijīng), or it is governed by dào 'to' and placed before the verb (dào Běijīng qu). However, with other motion verbs, such as bān 'move [one's home]', zǒu in its meaning of 'walk', pǎo 'run', kāi 'drive', destination is placed *after* the verb, mediated by dào 'to; towards' (and sometimes followed ultimately by a toneless lái or qu to indicate direction to or away from the speaker):

Wǒmen bāyuè bān dào Tiānjīn <qu>.                      In August, we're moving to Tiānjīn.

Bù néng kāi dào Guǐlín, tài yuǎn.                      [You] can't drive to Guilin, it's too far.

Nǐmen pǎo dào nǎr <qu>?                      Where are you running to?

The saying at the beginning of this unit also fits the pattern: Huó dào lǎo, xué dào lǎo '[If] you live till old age, [and] study till old age'. However, the last part of the saying, xuébudào, uses dào to express success (in the sense of reaching a goal), a function of dào that be will discuss in a later unit.

### Summary

<i>lái and qù</i>		
qù nǎr	dào nǎr qu	shàng nǎr qu
qù chéng lǐ	dào chéng lǐ qu	(shàng chéng lǐ qu)
lái Běijīng	dào Běijīng lái	(shàng Běijīng lái)

<i>Not lái or qù (primarily)</i>		
<i>generic [non-spec.] object</i>	<i>spec. object, no dào</i>	<i>VERB-dào place &lt;lai/qu&gt;</i>
bānjiā 'moving'	líkāi Běijīng	zǒu dào nǎr <lai/qu>
kāichē 'driving'		bān dào Shànghǎi <lai/qu>
huíjiā 'going home'		kāi dào jīchǎng <lai/qu>

### 5.9.6 Specifying a time

With a comment about destination, you can mention a specific time, either a day of the week, or a date. Recall the placement of time words – before or after the subject (if present), but always before their associated verb:

Nǐ xiànzài qù shénme dìfang? Wǒ xiànzài qù shàngkè.	Where are you going now? I'm going to class now.
Bāyuè sān hào wǒ qù Běijīng; wǔ hào qù Shànghǎi.	I'm going to Beijing on Aug. 3rd; and to Shanghai on the 5th.
Wǒmen shíyuèfēn bānjiā. Bān dào nǎlǐ? Wǒmen bān dào Dōngchéng.	We're moving house in October. Where are you moving to? We're moving to 'East Town'.
Sān hào líkāi Zhènjiāng, wǔ hào dào Lìjiāng.	[We]'re leaving Zhenjiang [in Jiangsu] on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> , and [we]'ll get to Lijiang [in Yunnan] on the 5 <sup>th</sup> .
Wǒ shēng zài Shēnzhèn, zài nán biānr, kěshì shíjiǔ suì wǒ bān dào Běijīng lai le, xiànzài zhù zai Běijīng.	I was born in Shenzhen, in the south, but at 19, I moved here to Beijing, and now I live in Beijing.

### 5.9.7 Inserting foreign words

Particularly in the early stages of studying Chinese, it is acceptable to insert English *nouns* into your conversation: Wǒ qù library / cafeteria / airport, etc. Foreign verbs, however, resist insertion into Chinese; instead they are recast as nouns attached to a general Chinese verb such as zuò 'do; make'. So 'reserve' might appear as zuò yí ge reservation. The main thing is to establish your credentials by producing the grammatical framework of the sentence – which includes the verb - with confidence.

#### Exercise 7.

a) Explain that:

- they've gone home.
- they've already left Beijing.
- they're moving to the countryside.
- they're going abroad.
- they're going to the airport to meet someone.
- you should be leaving, it's late.
- you're not going anywhere this evening because you're so tired.
- you're driving to the airport this afternoon – to meet your classmates.
- they'll leave Chéngdū on the 8th and get to Lìjiāng the next day (dì-èr tiān).
- you were born in Chicago, but you moved to Paris at the age of 12.

## 5.10 Purpose

### 5.10.1 Kàn ‘look at’

The verb kàn, whose root meaning is ‘look at’, may, in combination with different objects, show a wide range of English translations:

kànshū	to read
kànbào	read the newspaper
kàn diànyǐng<r>	see a movie
kàn diànshì	watch TV
kàn Hóng Lóu Mèng	to read <i>The Dream of the Red Chamber</i>
kàn péngyou	visit friends
kàn qīnqi	visit relatives
kàn dìtú	look at a map
kànbìng	see a doctor; see a patient (look+at-illness)
kàn rènao	go where the excitement is (look+at-hubbub)

### 5.10.2 *Other things to do*

mǎi dōngxi	VO	shop (‘buy things’)
zuò gōngkè	VO	do homework
qǔ yīfu	VO	pick up [one’s] clothes (‘get; fetch-clothes’)
kāihuì	VO	hold / attend a meeting; conference (‘open-meeting’)
gōngzuò	V	to work [also N ‘a job’]
gànhuór	VO	to do things
zuò shìqing	VO	do things
duànliàn	V	to exercise; workout; train
yùndòng	V	to exercise; do sports
zuò yùndòng	VO	do sports

### 5.10.3 *Reasons for going somewhere*

The verb qù, with or without an explicit destination, may be followed by an expression of *purpose*; if the destination is present, then it precedes the purpose (as it does in English):

Wǒmen qù <Běijīng> kàn péngyou. We’re going <to Beijing> to visit friends.  
Tā qù <túshūguǎn> zuò gōngkè. He’s going <to the library> to do his hwk.

Purpose can be questioned by zuò shénme, gàn shénme, gànmá, all literally ‘do what’; the particle, ne, associated with close engagement, may also appear:

Nǐ qù túshūguǎn zuò shénme <ne>?  
Nǐ qù túshūguǎn gàn shénme <ne>?  
Nǐ qù túshūguǎn gànmá <ne>?

The verb gàn, common as the ordinary word for ‘do; make’ in northern China, is avoided in polite circles in Taiwan and overseas communities because of sexual overtones. Gànmá often carries overtones of disbelief, particularly when followed by ne: Gànmá ne? ‘What [on earth] are [you] doing?’ A safe strategy is to use zuò shénme but be prepared to hear other options.

#### 5.10.4 Qù and purpose

In purpose clauses, the verb qù ‘go’ may be repeated at, or postponed to the end of the sentence (where it is usually toneless).

Tā qù mǎi dōngxī.	She’s going shopping.
Tā qù mǎi dōngxī qu.	
Tā mǎi dōngxī qu.	

Qù kàn péngyou.	[He]’s going to see a friend.
Qù kàn péngyou qu.	
Kàn péngyou qu.	

Wǒ qù shàngkè.	I’m going to class.
Wǒ qù shàngkè qu.	
Wǒ shàngkè qu.	

Tā qù chéng lǐ mǎi dōngxī qu.	She’s going into town to shop.
Wǒmen qù Sūzhōu kàn péngyou qu.	We’re going to Suzhou to visit friends.

#### 5.10.5 *Intention*

You can assert your intention or resolution to go somewhere (or do something) with the following verbs:

yào	xiǎng	dǎsuàn	juéding
want	think > feel like	plan; intend	decide

#### *Usage*

<i>Q</i>	Nǐ	yào	qù nǎr?
		dǎsuàn	dào nǎlǐ qu?
		xiǎng	qù shénme dìfang?
		juéding	dào nǎlǐ qu le?

<i>A</i>	Wǒmen bāyuè dǎsuàn qù Shànghǎi mǎi dōngxī.	In August, we’re going shopping in Shanghai.
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	Wǒ yào dào Lúndūn qu kàn qīnqī.	I want to go to London to visit [my] relatives.
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Xiàwǔ, tāmen dǎsuàn qù chéng lǐ mǎi lǐwù gěi yéye.	They're planning to go into town this after- noon to buy [their] uncle a present.
Shí diǎn wǒ děi qù bàngōngshì kàn lǎoshī.	At 10, I have to go to the office to see [my] teacher.
Kěyǐ qù lóushàng zhǎo Chén lǎoshī.	[You] can go upstairs and look for Prof. Chen.
Zámen qù wàitou kàn fēijī ba!	Let's go out and look at the airplanes.
Tāmen juéding qù Táiwān kàn qīnqī.	They've decided to go to Taiwan to visit relatives.
Hěn duō rén dōu xiǎng qù Xiāng Gǎng zhǎo gōngzuò.	Lots of people would like to go to HK to find work.

### Summary

<i>Subject</i>	<i>intention</i>	<i>destination</i>	<i>purpose</i>	
Wǒmen	dǎsuàn	qù chéng lǐ dào chéng lǐ qu	mǎi dōngxi	<qu>.
Tāmen	xiǎng	qù túshūguǎn dào túshūguǎn qu	kàn bào	<qu>.
Tāmen	juéding	bān dào Běijīng qu	shàng dàxué	<qu> le.

## 5.11 In the past

### 5.11.1 Not having done something [yet]

As seen earlier, the non-occurrence of particular events scheduled or expected is regularly indicated by méi<you> before the verb:

I haven't washed yet.  
They haven't left yet.  
They haven't left Beijing yet.  
They haven't reached Shanghai yet.  
I haven't read today's paper yet.

Wǒ hái méi xǐzǎo.  
Tāmen hái méi zǒu ne.  
Tāmen hái méi líkāi Běijīng.  
Tāmen hái méi dào Shànghǎi.  
Hái méi kàn jīntiān de bào.

I didn't read the World Cup report.  
They haven't arrived [here] yet.  
They didn't go to Beijing.  
They haven't decided yet.  
They haven't gone home yet.

Méi kàn Shìjiè Bēi de xiāoxi.  
Tāmen hái méi lái ne.  
Tāmen méi qù Běijīng.  
Tāmen hái méi juéding ne.  
Tāmen hái méi huíjiā.

The negative with méiyou is generally only applicable to action verbs. Verbs such as juéde ‘feel’, zhīdao ‘know’, yào ‘want’, which express emotional or cognitive states, do not normally occur with preceding méi<you>. Whether a present or a past tense is appropriate for the English translation of such cases has to depend on context.

Wǒ zuótiān bù shūfu – wǒ méi qù. I didn’t feel well yesterday – I didn’t go.

Zuótiān méi qù ma?

Didn’t you go yesterday?

Méi qù, tài yuǎn, bù xiǎng qù  
nàme yuǎn.

No, I didn’t, it was too far; I didn’t  
want to go so far.

Qùnián, wǒ bù rènshi tā; wǒ yě bù  
zhīdao tā gēge shì shéi.

Last year, I didn’t know her; nor did  
I know who her brother was.

### 5.11.2 The position of le

Reporting the occurrence of an event, ie the positive version of sentences such as those cited above with méiyou, has also been shown in many earlier examples to involve the presence of le at the foot of the sentence:

Zhōumò nǐmen qù nǎlǐ le?

Where did you go over the weekend?

Wǒmen qù Cháng Chéng le.

We went to the Great Wall.

Jīntiān shàngwǔ nǐ dào nǎlǐ qu le?

Where did you go this morning?

Wǒmen dào chéng lǐ qù mǎi dōngxi  
qu le.

We went shopping in town.

However, le is not always sentence final. Under certain conditions, it is also found between an action verb and its object, where it underscores the completion of the action. The most concrete manifestation of this meaning is found in sequences where the second event is conditional on the completion of the first:

Nǐ jǐ diǎn huíjiā?

When are you going home?

Wǒ chīle fàn jiu huí jiā.

I’m going home after [I] eat.

Shénme shíhou mǎi piào?

When do we buy our tickets?

Shàng le chē jiu mǎi piào.

Buy your tickets after boarding.

Another manifestation involves the presence of what is often called a ‘quantified object’ after the verb. A quantified object is one containing a number and measure phrase, such as liǎng gē, or as below, yí tàng ‘a trip’. In such cases, if le is present, it will be placed after the verb and before the quantified object, not at the foot of the sentence.

Zhōumò nǐmen qù nǎlǐ le?                      Where did you go over the weekend?

Wǒmen qù Cháng Chéng le.                      We went to the Great Wall.

Wǒmen qùle yí tàng Cháng Chéng.              We took a trip to the Great Wall.

The difference in the meaning of the two options is subtle; but the grammatical choice is clear: if you choose yí tàng in your response, le follows the verb, if you do not – and if le appears – then it will be placed at the foot of the sentence. This quantified object rule is important, and you should retain it for future reference. However, at this point, you will not be burdened with examples in which le is placed between verb and object; the examples in this lesson can be expressed quite naturally *without* use of measure phrases that constitute quantified objects.

### 5.11.3 More time expressions

qùnián <i>last year</i>	shàng ge yuè <i>last month</i>	shàng ge xīnqī ~ lǐbài <i>last week</i>	zhōumò <i>weekend</i>
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jīnnián <i>this year</i>	zhèi ge yuè <i>this month</i>	zhèi ge lǐbài ~ xīngqī <i>this week</i>
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míngnián <i>next year</i>	xià ge yuè <i>next month</i>	xià ge xīngqī ~ lǐbài <i>next week</i>
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### 5.11.4 More examples of final le

Zuótiān shàng nǎr qu le?                      Where'd you go yesterday?

Shàng ge yuè, wǒmen dào  
Shànghǎi qù kàn shūshu qu le.              Last month, we went to Shanghai to see [my] uncle.

Zhōumò dào nǎlǐ qu le?                      Where'd you go over the weekend?

Xīngqīliù wǒmen qù chéng lǐ mǎi  
shǒujī qu le. Xīngqītiān qù jīchǎng  
jiē péngyou le.                      Saturday, we went into town to buy a  
cellphone. Sunday, we went to the airport  
to meet some friends.

Hùzhào yǐjīng qǔ le ma?  
Yǐjīng qǔ le.                      Have you already picked up your passport?  
Yes, I have. [Note qǔ vs qù.]

Zuótiān méiyǒu kè, dào nǎr qù le?  
Méi dào nǎr qù, wǒmen zài jiā lǐ  
zuò gōngkè ne.                      No class yesterday, where'd you go?  
Didn't go anywhere, we stayed at home  
and did homework.



The last sentence, in particular, serves to remind us that le, although associated with events that have happened, is not a past tense marker.

### Exercise 8.

#### a) Translate

1. On the weekend, we're going to visit the Great Wall; it's not far from Beijing.
2. No class tomorrow; we've decided to go to the country to visit Mǎ Róng's uncle.
3. Don't forget your keys. / My keys, I already have; but I don't know where my umbrella is.
4. Where have they gone? / They've gone upstairs to look for a phone.
5. I haven't gone to get my visa (qiānzhèng) yet; I'm planning to go tomorrow.

#### b) Provide biographical information containing all or some of the following information:

place of birth; place where you grew up; age when you moved to another place;  
where you live now; which university you are attending; which level; etc.

## 5.12 And

There is considerable disparity in the way English and Chinese express *coordination*. English makes broader use of coordinating conjunctions, such as 'and'; Chinese often uses the equivalent of 'and' in a narrower range of grammatical contexts, and even there, may leave the coordination unmarked.

Lìshǐ, shùxué dōu hěn nán!                      History and mathematics are both tough!

Wǒ kāfēi, píjiǔ dōu bù hē, zhǐ  
xǐhuan hē chá.                                      I don't drink coffee or beer, just tea.

Explicit coordination is expressed with gēn (with a range of meaning that includes 'heel; follow; with; and') or hé (often pronounced, non-standardly, hàn by people from Taiwan). Both are only used to join nouns, pronouns, or more generally, phrases:

Dàlǐ gēn Lìjiāng dōu zài Yúnnán de  
xīběi.    Dali and Lijiang are both in the north-  
west of Yunnan.

Míngtiān qù chéng lǐ kàn Wáng  
lǎoshī hé tā de xuéshēng.                      Tomorrow [I]'m going into town to  
see Professor Wang and her students.

Nán de gēn nǚ de dōu shuō+de  
hěn hǎo.    The males and females all speak [it] well.

Lǎoshī, fùmǔ gēn xuéshēng dōu  
děi qù.    Teachers, parents and students all have to go  
[there].

Regardless of whether a conjunction is present or not, Chinese tends to use the adverb dōu to support coordination. Dōu does occasionally anticipate upcoming material, but much more often it refers ‘back’ to support already mentioned or implied material, which accounts for the order in the sentence: Kāfēi píjiǔ wǒ dōu bù hē.

Gēn and hé are not even optional in settings that involve verbs or clauses, such as those illustrated below. If marked at all, such connections are indicated by adverbs such as yě:

The students are nervous, and so are the teachers.      Xuéshēng hěn jǐnzhāng, lǎoshī yě hěn jǐnzhāng.

They’re going to Beijing to visit friends and shop.      Tāmen qù Běijīng kàn péngyou mǎi dōngxi.

You should, therefore, be careful not to take your cue from English ‘and’. Here are some other examples where ‘and’ in English has no direct counterpart in the Chinese:

[I]’m fine – and you?      Hái hǎo; nǐ ne?  
 There are telephones next door and upstairs.      Gébì yǒu diànhuà, lóushàng yě yǒu.  
 I eat breakfast at 7 and start work at 8:00.      Wǒ qī diǎn chī zǎodiǎn, bā diǎn shàngbān.

### 5.13 Sports and scores

Pingpong, badminton, football (local clubs as well as European and other international clubs), basketball (Chinese and NBA), swimming, and track and field (particularly during the run up to the Olympics) are popular sports in China. If you choose your topics carefully, you can at least inquire about scores. More names of sports and related conversational material appear in later units.

Begin with the verbs yíng ‘win’ and shū ‘lose’; in order to avoid complications, we use them in only in the simplest of sentences, as shown. The final le indicates that the contest has already taken place.

Zhōngguó yíng le.      China won.  
 Bāxī shū le.      Brazil lost.

#### 5.13.1 Scores

Scores are indicated with bǐ ‘compare; than; to’: thus a basketball score might be 99 bǐ 98; football 2 bǐ 0. The scores of low scoring sports can be questioned with jǐ ‘how many’: jǐ bǐ jǐ; high scoring games with duōshao: duōshao bǐ duōshao. Finally, a simple way to mention the two relevant teams is to list them, separated by the conjunctions hé or gēn ‘and’:

Zhōngguó hé Bāxī, shéi yíng le?      China and Brazil, who won?  
 Rìběn hé Tàiguó, Tàiguó shū le.      Japan and Thailand, Thailand lost.

**Exercise 9.***a) Translate:*

1. How about the US and Mexico, who won?
2. The US won, 2:1.
3. Did England win? / Yes, 3:1.
4. What was the score? / 98 - 92. Boston won. Boston's pretty good ('strong')!
5. 95 to what? / I'm not sure.
6. In pingpong [pīngpāngqiú], China's #1; the US is #1 in basketball [lánqiú].

*b) Translate:*

1. The tests are hard, and there's lots of homework.
2. I'm taking 5 courses and they're all hard!
3. Today's class has 12 men and 12 women in.
4. Who won the Japan and Korea [match]? (Rìběn 'Japan', Hánguó 'Korea')
5. The library and cafeteria are air-conditioned, (yǒu kōngtiáo), so we like to study there.

**5.14 Dialogue: Who won?**

*Zhōu Shuǎng is a man in his 40s who works in the foreign student office; Zhāng Yīng is the Chinese name of a younger women, an undergraduate from abroad who has been studying at the university for a year. They run into each other just outside the cafeteria.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Zhāng. Zhōu lǎoshī, nín hǎo.                             | 'Teacher' Zhou, how are you?  |
| Zhōu. <i>Ei, Zhāng Yīng, nǐ hǎo.<br/>Nǐ zài lǐtōu a!</i> | <i>Ah, Zhang Ying, how are you?<br/>You were inside!</i>              |
| Zhāng. Shì a, gāng chīwán fàn.                           | Yes, we just finished.  |
| Zhōu. <i>Xiànzài shàng nǎr qu a?</i>                     | <i>Where are you off to right now?</i>                                |
| Zhāng. Túshūguǎn.  | [To the] library.   |
| Zhōu. <i>Túshūguǎn a. Zuò gōngkè qu ma?</i>              | <i>The library! [You]'re going [there] to do [your] homework?</i>     |
| Zhāng. <i>Bú shì zuò gōngkè qu, shì kànbào qu.</i>       | Not to do my homework, to read the paper.                             |
| Zhōu. <i>O, kànbào qu.</i>                               | <i>Oh, to read the paper!</i>   |
| Zhāng. <i>Shì, túshūguǎn yǒu kōngtiáo, bǐjiào shūfu.</i> | Yeah, there's airconditioning in the library, it's quite comfortable. |
| Zhōu. <i>Ng, jīntiān shì hěn rè!</i>                     | <i>Yes, it IS hot, today!</i>   |

- Zhāng. Hǎn rè, yě hǎn mēn. Hot and muggy.
- Zhōu. Zhōngwén bào nǐ kàndedǒng ma? Are you able to read Chinese newspapers?
- Zhāng. Néng kàndǒng yìdiǎnr. Shìjiè Bēi de xiǎoxi néng kàndǒng, méi wèntí. I can read some. I can read about the World Cup – no problem [there]!
- Zhōu. O, Shìjiè Bēi. Zuótiān shì Zhōngguó hé Hánguó, nǐ kàn le méiyóu? Oh, the World Cup! It was China and Korea, yesterday – did you see it?
- Zhāng. Kàn le, dāngrán kàn le. Sure, of course I did.
- Zhōu. Tài kěxī le, Zhōngguó shū le. It's too bad, China lost!
- Zhāng. Ng, tài kěxī le. Búguò Zhōngguó bú cuò. Xià cì. Yeah, a pity. But China's not bad! Next time!
- Zhōu. Nà, jīntiān shì Yīngguó hé Āgēntíng, shì bu shì? Today, it was England and Argentine, right?
- Zhāng. Shì, Yīngguó yíng le. That's right, England won.
- Zhōu. Shì ma? Jǐ bǐ jǐ? Is that right? What was the score?
- Zhāng. Yī bǐ líng. One - nil!
- Zhōu. Ei, bú cuò, Yīngguó hǎn qiáng. Hey, not bad, England's quite good.
- Zhāng. Hái kěyǐ, búguò Bāxī gèng qiáng, wǒ xiǎng. They're not bad, but Brazil's better, I feel.
- Zhōu. Yīngguó hé Bāxī shì xià ge lǐbài ba? England and Brazil are next week, right?
- Zhāng. Xià ge lǐbài'èr. Next Tuesday.
- Zhōu. Nà míngtiān lǐbàiliù, méi kè, nǐ shàng nǎr qu? Well, tomorrow's Saturday, no class; where are you going?
- Zhāng. Míngtiān bú dào nǎr qu, yěxǔ zài jiā lǐ xiūxi xiūxi, kàn yìdiǎnr. diànshì. Dànshì xīngqītiān dǎsuàn dào Tiānjīn qù kàn péngyou. I'm not going anywhere tomorrow, I'll probably just take it easy at home, and watch some TV. But on Sunday [we]'re planning to visit a friend in Tianjin.
- Zhōu. Nǐ zài Tiānjīn yě yǒu péngyou a!? You have friends in Tianjin, as well?!

Zhāng. Shì a, tā zài Nánkāi Dàxué dúshū.	Yes, she's studying at Nankai University.
Zhōu. Wàiguó lái de ma?	Is [she] foreign?
Zhāng. Jiānádà rén; Duōlúnduō lái de.	[She]'s Canadian; from Toronto.
Zhōu. Tā yě huì shuō Hànyǔ ma?	She speaks Chinese too?
Zhāng. Tā Hànyǔ shuō+de hěn bú cuò.	Her Chinese isn't bad!
Zhōu. Kāichē qu ma?	Are you driving [there]?
Zhāng. Bù, zuò huōchē qu....	No, I'm taking the train.
Hǎo, Zhōu lǎoshī, wǒ děi cóng zhèi biānr zǒu le.	Okay, Prof. Zhōu, I've got to go this way.
Zhōu. Hǎo, Zhāng Yīng, màn zǒu a.	Okay, Zhang Ying, take it easy!

**Notes**

gāng	ADV 'just'; <u>gāng dào</u> 'just arrived'; <u>Tā gāng chīguo wǎnfàn.</u>
chīwán	<u>wán</u> 'finish' may follow almost any action verb: <u>shuōwán le</u> ; <u>xiěwán le</u> ; <u>hái méi kǎowán ne</u> .
kǎixī	'a pity (able-pity)'
xià cì	<u>cì</u> 'time' is a verbal measure; cf. <u>zài shuō yí cì</u> 'say it again'.
qiáng	SV 'strong; powerful; better'
xiūxi	V 'rest', often reiterated as <u>xiūxi xiūxi</u> .
kāichē qu	with <u>kaiche</u> acting as an adverbial, 'go driving'; cf. <u>zǒulù qu</u> .
zuò huōchē	<u>zuò</u> 'sit' corresponding to English 'take'; cf. <u>zuò fēijī qu</u> .
cóng ... zǒu	'to go this way' is expressed with <u>cóng</u> in Chinese.

**Exercise 10.**

Explain that:

1. you are going to Beijing to visit friends.
2. you are not going anywhere tomorrow – you have a lot of homework.
3. you're off to class – Chinese class.
4. you have to go and pick up your [clean] clothes now.
5. you don't know what date they're going to China.
6. that's yesterday's [paper], today's is over here.
7. his wife's luggage is still on the plane.
8. you're going there to fetch the luggage.
9. your teacher's outside.
10. you have lots of friends but they don't understand Chinese.



Yǒu méiyǒu Ōuzhōu Bēi de xiǎoxi? [JKW 2004]

## 5.15 Pronunciation

### 5.15.1 Final-r in standard Mandarin

A very few words in standard Mandarin always occur with an *r-final*:

érzi	‘child’
èr	‘two’
ěrdūo	‘ear’

However, a large number of words occur with a suffix ‘r’ in the speech of Beijing and other parts of the northern Mandarin speaking area. Most of these are nouns: kòngr ‘spare time’, píng ‘bottle’, wányìr ‘toys’, diànyǐng ‘films’, ménkǒur ‘doorway’, xīnyǎnr ‘heart; cleverness’, wéizǔr ‘a bib’, xìngrénr ‘almonds’, etc. The suffix appears with a few non-nouns as well: shùnrshǒur ‘easily; without problem’ and wánr ‘have fun’.

One historical source for this, though probably not the only one, is suggested by the writing system, which writes the *r-suffix* with the ér of érzi ‘son’ (儿/兒). Supposedly, ér was originally attached to nouns in certain contexts as a ‘diminutive’, or expression of ‘familiarity’, but with time, it came to have a much more abstract meaning, ultimately ending up as little more than a marker of familiar nouns. As noted above, very few verbs appear with the *r-suffix*.

*In some cases, the forms with and without -r (which may also show a tonal shift) have distinct though relatable meanings*

mén	door	ménr	way; knack
kōng	empty	kòngr	empty space; spare time
dān	unit	dānr	bedsheet; on one's own
míng	name	míng r	reputation; fame

Southern speakers of Mandarin, who often regard the r-suffix as a northern affectation, can, and do, avoid using it: instead of yìdiǎnr ‘a bit’ they will say yìdiǎn, instead of kòngr ‘free time’ they will say kòng, relying on only the tone (and context) to distinguish it from the level-toned kōng ‘empty’. In reading, they will often treat the *r*-suffix as a separate syllable, reading mén-ér, for example, instead of ménr [mér].

#### a) Other cases of final-r

All the words cited above can be found with the r-pronunciation indicated in dictionaries; and for Beijing and other northern speakers, these r-pronunciations are standard. But not all r-usage can be considered standard. Some speakers in the Beijing region and in other parts of the north lard their speech with r's. The following nursery rhyme – rather dated to be sure – in which every last word has the *r*-suffix, illustrates. [*This rhyme is found in Chen Zishi, compiler, Beijing Tongyao Xuanji, Taipei: Da Zhongguo Guoshu Gongsi, 1969, p. 94.*]

	Qióng tàitai	
Qióng tàitair		poor wife
Bào zhe ge jiānr,		clutches [her] shoulders
chī wán le fàn		eat-finish LE food
rào le ge wānr,		go+round LE the corner
yòu mǎi bīngláng yòu mǎi yānr.		and buy betel and tobacco.

#### Note

Bīngláng (derived from the Indonesian/Malay word *pinang*) is the areca nut, the main ingredient in chewable betel quids that are popular in Taiwan, south China, and in Southeast Asia. Chewing betel cleans the teeth, helps with digestion, and provides a pleasant sensation in the mouth and head. It also makes your saliva red and viscous – and leads to excess expectoration.

#### b) Pronunciation

You will have observed that some of the *r*-words look quite unpronounceable, particularly those ending in ‘nr’ or ‘ngr’ (yìdiǎnr, yǐngr). It turns out they are not pronounced ‘as written’. As you already know, yìdiǎnr is actually pronounced yìdiǎr; similarly, píngnr is pronounced piér [pyúhr]. The pinyin convention is to leave the syllables to which the ‘r’ is added, intact. In that way, the original syllable can be easily identified, and both *r* and *r*-less versions can be listed together in a dictionary.

It would be difficult at this early stage to present all possible r-syllables in the way that was done for other rhymes. Because the *r*-words are often regional, colloquial or slangy, relatively few are encountered in beginning textbooks. Here is a selection, ordered by final consonant of the syllable:

zìr	[zèr]	huàr	gàir [gàr]	bànr [bàr]	píng <sup>n</sup> r
cír	[cér]	xià <sup>r</sup>	wèir [wèr]	ménr	chóng <sup>n</sup> r
shìr	[shèr]		kuàir [kuàr]	diǎnr	kòng <sup>n</sup> r
pír	[piér]		huìr [huèr]	guǎn [guǎr]	yàng <sup>n</sup> r
yìr	[yèr]			gùnr [guèr]	huáng <sup>n</sup> r

Note how the last two columns are pronounced. When *r* is applied to an *n-final* syllable, the n sound is lost completely: diǎn > diǎr; bàn > bàr. But when the *r* is applied to an *ng-final* syllable, the nasal endings survives as nasalization (indicated by the superscript -n), ie the vowels are pronounced nasally: kòng<sup>n</sup>r > [kò<sup>n</sup>r], etc. These rules are hard to apply, so for now, we will focus on *r-words* that are frequently encountered, like diǎnr, yàng<sup>n</sup>r, huìr and kuàir.

### 5.15.2 More than two low tones in a phrase

We have now gained enough low toned words to meet strings of more than two. Observe how the following are realized:

1. Yě hěn lěng.                      Yé hēn lěng    or    Yě | hén lěng.
2. Wǒ yě hěn kě.                      Wó yě | hén kě.
3. Lǎo Lǐ yě hěn hǎo.                      Láo Lī yě | hén hǎo.
4. Wǒ yě hěn xiǎng xǐzǎo!                      Wó yě | hén xiǎng | xǐzǎo.

The second and fourth examples both have an even number of words (syllables). In such cases, the phrasing tends to be in pairs (as indicated) and the familiar tone shift takes place. But in (1) and (3), where the number of syllables is odd, there may be several options (as seen in the first example): either the phrase is divided into two moras (yě | hén lěng), in which case the regular rule applies to the second. Or, especially in fast speech, the three form a tonal unit, with the first rising (normally), the second staying high, and the third, low: Yé hēn lěng.



## 5.16 Summary

OR	Chá <huòzhě> kāfēi dōu xíng. Nǐ shì guónèi hángbān háishi guójì de? Nǐ píngcháng yòng kuàizi háishi yòng dāochā chīfàn.
Q	Nà, zěnme bàn?
Food	Liǎng pán xiārénr-chǎofàn. Jiùcài-bāo, yì lóng.
Duō?	Dàwǎn duō dà? / Liù ge rén chī.
V+de	Tā chànggē chàng+de hǎo-jíle!
Huì	Zhǐ huì shuō yìdiǎndiǎn.
Predications	Jīntiān bú huì hěn lěng.
A bit	Hē yìdiǎnr chá ba. Zhè chá yǒu yìdiǎnr kǔ.
Xíng	Qǐngkè chīfàn méi jiǔ bù xíng.
Kids	Xiǎo péngyou chī shénme ne?
VOO	Wǒ xiǎng wèn tā yí ge wèntí.
Gěi as CV	Míngtiān gěi nǐ dǎ ge diànhuà, hǎo bu hǎo?
VOVO	Míngtiān shì tā de shēngri; wǒmen yīnggāi mǎi ge lǐwù gěi tā.
Music	Nǐ zuì xǐhuan shénme yàng de yīnyuè? Nǐ huì shénme yuèqì?
Know	Bù zhīdào ~ bù xiǎode, wǒ bù rènshi tā.
Dǒng	Dǒng wǒ de yìsi ma? Bù zhīdào tā shì bu shì Zhōngguó rén.
Go to	Nǐ dào nǎr qu? ~ Nǐ qù nǎlǐ?
Leave	Wǒmen sān hào líkāi Běijīng, wǒ hào dào Lìjiāng.
Move to	Wǒ shēng zài Shāntóu, shíjiǔ suì bān dào Běijīng lái le.
Purpose	Hěn duō rén xiǎng dào Běijīng qù zhǎo gōngzuò.
Go home	Tāmen hái méi huíjiā.
Sentence le	Zhōumò wǒmen qù Cháng Chéng le.
Verb-le	Shàngle chē jiù mǎi piào; Wǒmen qùle yí tàng Cháng Chéng.
Sports	Zhōngguó hé Bāxī, shéi yíng le?
Score	Jǐ bǐ jǐ?
Can read?	Zhōngwén bào nǐ kàndedǒng ma?

## 5.17 Rhymes and rhythms

### 1. Tiào shéng ‘skipping rope [rhymes]’

a) A tale of heart rending tale of betrayal:

	Jiāng Jiě, Jiāng Jiě, hǎo Jiāng Jiě,	Sister Jiang, good Sister Jiang,
	tā wèi rénmin sǎ xiān xiě.	she for people shed fresh blood.
and with feeling >	Pàntú, pàntú, Fǔ Zhìgāo,	Traitor, traitor, Fu Zhigao
	Nǐ shì rénmin de ‘dà cǎobāo’.	You are the people’s ‘great straw-bundle’. (‘good-for-nothing’)

The story of Jiang Jie is well known in China. Jiang Jie was a communist operative who not long before Mao’s victory, was captured by the Kuomintang as a result of the treachery of Fu Zhigao. Her story was the basis for a revolutionary opera (1964), which in turn is the basis of a film of the same name, directed by Zhang Yuan (2004).

b) More heroism:

Dǒng Cúnruì,	Dong Cunrui,
shíbā suì,	18 years of age,
cānjiā gémìng yóujīduì;	took part in a revolutionary guerilla force.
zhà diāobǎo, xīshēng liǎo,	blow+up blockhouses, sacrifice [self] LE,
gémìng de rènwu wánchéng liǎo!	revolution DE task complete-fulfill LE.

Note

- a) Yóujīduì ‘roving-attack-troops’
- b) Le is often given the fully toned pronunciation of liǎo in song and poetry.

### 2. *Something a little lighter:*

Yuèliang zǒu, wǒ yě zǒu,	Moon moves, I also move,
wǒ hé yuèliang jiāo péngyou,	I and moon make friends,
dài lǐ zhuāngzhe liǎng zhī dàn,	pocket in filled+with 2 M eggs,
sònggěi yuèliang dàng zǎofàn.	to present to moon as breakfast.

*Provided by Lǐ Yǒngyàn (Nanjing)*

Notes:

- a) Zhuāngzhe ‘be loaded with; to be packed with; install’; -zhe is a verb suffix that, among other functions, turns actions (‘to load’) into states (‘be loaded with’).
- b) Sònggěi ‘to present to’.
- c) Dàng ‘treat as; regard as; be’.

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21G.102 / 21G.152 Chinese II (Regular)  
Spring 2006

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