

Lesson 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.

I. One thing or another

1. Vocabulary

First some pairs of words (some of which you have encountered), and some verbs:

nouns

nánde	lóushàng	píjiǔ	Zhōngguó cài
nǚde	lóuxià	qìshuǐ<r>	wàiguó cài

<i>male</i>	<i>upstairs</i>	<i>beer</i>	<i>Chinese food</i>
<i>female</i>	<i>downstairs</i>	<i>beverages</i>	<i>foreign food</i>

yánjiūshēng	běnkēshēng	Kěkǒukělè	Báishikělè
grad. student	undergraduate	Coca Cola	Pepsi Cola

verbs

zhǎo	yào	qù	xǐhuan	zuì
look for	want	go [to]	like; prefer	most; very

2. Or

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

I drink tea or coffee in the morning, beer in the evening.

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, a distinct pause can appear before ‘or’:

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 (less often, 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 kékǒukělè
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. Hé Bó shì nán de háishi nǚ de?
Hé Bó ne, tā dāngrán shì nán de!

Is He Bo a man or a woman?
He Bo, he’s a man, of course!

Tā shì Měiguó rén háishi Zhōngguó rén?
Yěxǔ shì Měiguó rén.

Is she American or Chinese?
Probably American.

Shì nǐ de háishi tā de?
*Dāngrán shì tā de, wǒ nǎlǐ huì yǒu
zhème nánkàn de xiézi?!*

Are [these] yours or his?
*His of course, how would I have
such awful looking shoes?!*

Nǐ shì běnkēshēng háishi
yánjiūshēng?
Wǒ shì èrniánjí de yánjiūshēng.

Are you an undergraduate or a
graduate?
I’m a 2nd year grad.

ii. Hē chá háishi hē kāfēi?
Chá hǎo, xièxie.

[You drinking] tea or coffee?
Tea’ll be fine, thanks.

Yào chī Zhōngguó cài háishi
chī wàiguó cài?
*Wǒmen zài Zhōngguó yīnggāi chī
Zhōngguó cài!*

Do [you] want to eat Chinese food
or foreign food?
*We’re in China [so we] should eat
Chinese food.*

Nǐmen qù Běijīng háishi qù Shànghǎi?
Xiān qù Běijīng.

Are you going to Beijing or
Shanghai?
First to Beijing.

Zhǎo Wèi lǎoshī háishi zhǎo Zhāng
lǎoshī?
Zhǎo Zhāng lǎoshī.

Are you looking for Prof. Wei or
Prof. Zhang?
[I’m] looking for Prof. Zhang.

Nà, chīfàn, nǐmen xǐhuān hē píjiǔ háishi
hē qìshuǐ?
Wǒmen bǐjiào xǐhuān hē chá.

So, [with] a meal, do you prefer to
drink beer or soda?
We’d rather drink tea.

Guìlín shì zài nánbiānr hái shì zài
běibiānr?

Guìlín zài Guǎngxī, zài nánbiānr.

Is Guilin in the south or the north?

Guilin's in Guangxi, in the south.

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.

Chá huòzhě kāfēi dōu xíng.

Lǐbàisān lǐbàisì dōu kěyǐ.

Tea or coffee are both fine.

Either tea or coffee will be fine.

Wednesday or Thursday are both possible.

Exercise 1.

1. Are you in the morning class or the afternoon?
2. Are you going today or tomorrow?
3. Either Coke [Kěkǒu kělè] or Pepsi [Bǎishì kělè] is fine – it doesn't matter.
4. Do Koreans drink coffee...or tea in the morning?
5. Do you have Chinese class in the morning or in the afternoon?
6. Do you prefer coffee or tea with breakfast. / Usually either is fine, but today I'm tired, [so] I'll have coffee.

II. At the beginning of class

To show respect, students quite naturally stand when the teacher enters and greets him or her appropriately: Wèi lǎoshī, hǎo. Then still standing, Wèi lǎoshī asks for a count off: yī, èr, sān, sì... And the following conversation under #2 below ensues.

1. Vocabulary

shuāngshù 'even number'

dàjiā 'everyone'

zuò bàn 'act as partner'

dānshù 'odd number'

bàn 'partner; mate'

zěnmé bàn 'what to do?' ('how manage')

Note

a) Shuāng means 'a pair', dān 'a unit'; shù shì shùxué de shù.

b) Dàjiā, literally 'big house', figuratively 'all of us'.

c) Bàn 'partner' (a noun) is not related to bàn 'do; manage' (a verb); however, bàn is etymologically related to bàn 'half'.

2. Dialogues

- i. *lǎoshī* *xuéshēng*
Jǐntiān yígòng yǒu duōshao xuéshēng? Yǒu èrshísì ge.

Jǐ ge nán de, jǐ ge nǚ de?

Shí ge nán de, shísì ge nǚ de.

Èrshísì shì shuāngshù háishi dānshù?	Shì shuāngshù.
Dānshù hǎo háishi shuāngshù hǎo?	Shuāngshù hǎo.
Wèishénme?	Yīnwèi shuāngshù, dàjiā dōu yǒu bàn.
ii. <i>lǎoshī</i> Jīntiān yígòng yǒu duōshao xuéshēng?	<i>xuéshēng</i> 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, zěnmē bàn?	Méi guānxi, Wèi lǎoshī kěyǐ zuò bàn.

III. Expanding the V+de construction

1. Vocabulary

chàng[gē] sing [songs] sing	xiě[zì] write [characters] write	shuō[huà] say [lang.] speak; talk; say	zuò[fàn] do [food] cook
Zhōngwén Chinese	Hànyǔ Chinese lg	Zhōngguó huà Chinese speech	SV biāozhǔn be proper; correct; standard

Note

Like chīfàn, when no other object is present, the verbs in the top row appear with generic objects. More on this topic in lesson X.

2. Recall: praising language ability

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 hěn hǎo.

IV. Music and musicians

1. Singers, styles and other vocabulary:

gē	yì shǒu gē	gēshǒu	gēxīng	zuì xǐhuan
song	a M song a song	song-hand singer	song-star star singer	most like prefer
Māo Wáng	Jiǎbèichóng	Jiékèxùn	Pàwǎluódi	Mài Dāngnà
cat king Elvis	shell-shell-insects The Beatles	M. Jackson	Pavorotti	Madonna
yáogǔn<yuè>	xīhā	juéshìyuè	xiāngcūn-yīnyuè	
rocknroll	hiphop	jazz	country-music	
gǔdiǎn-yīnyuè	t			
classical music				

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.

2. Dialogue – musical preferences

Nǐ zuì xǐhuan shénme yàng de yīnyuè? What kinds of music do you prefer?

Wǒ bǐjiào xǐhuan yáogǔnyuè hé xīhā. I prefer rock and hiphop.

Něi ge gēshǒu? Which singers?
Zhōngguó de ma? *Chinese [ones]?*

Shì. Yes.
Xǐhuān Zhōu Jiélún, Nà Yīng. *I like Zhou Jielun, Na Ying.*

Nà, Xīfāng de ne? And Western ones?
Xīfāng de ne, zuì xǐhuan Māo Wáng! Western ones, I like ‘the King’.

Nà nǐ yě xǐhuan juéshì ma? Do you like jazz too?
Juéshì ne, hái kěyǐ. *Jazz, [I] quite [like it].*

Exercise 3: 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. In the city of Kūnmíng, (zài Yúnnán), you could (in the year 2000) 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:

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

#	singer	sex	song
2093	Cūi Jiàn	男	Huáfāng 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 Yīmǐn	女	Ài wǒ 'Love me'
2103	Dèng Lìjūn	女	Yè lái xiāng 'Fragrance in the night' = name of a flower

V. Verbs of cognition

1. Knowing

Asked a question, you might want to say that you do not know the answer. 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 ~ 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.

[*Yang Lan* 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.]

2. Understanding

Understanding is expressed by the verb dǒng:

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 situations' le.

Dǒng le ma?	Dǒng le.	I understand [now].
	Duìbuqǐ, háishi bù dǒng!	Sorry, I still don't get it.

Míngbai ma?

Míngbai le!

[Now] I get it!

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:

Direct speech (schematic)

I asked: “Where are you going?”

>

Reported speech (actual)

I asked where you were going.

We don’t know: “Is he Chinese?”

>

We don’t know whether/if he’s Chinese [or not].

I don’t know: “Why is she so nervous?”

I don’t know why she’s so nervous.

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?”

>

Reported speech

Wǒ bù zhīdào tā wèishénme hěn jǐnzhāng.

I don’t know: “Why is he so nervous?”

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?”

>

Wǒmen bù zhīdào tā shì bu shì Zhōngguó rén.

We don’t know: “Is she Chinese?”

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

Not: *Wǒmen bù zhīdào tā shì Zhōngguó rén ma.

Notice that the reported speech—the object of zhīdao -- always contains a question-form, like 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 bù zhīdào {tā shì bù 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?) Its root meaning is ‘ask [a question]’. Questions embedded after wèn have the same properties 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’) is usually expressed as: Tā wèn wǒ shì bu shì Zhōngguó rén (with only one wǒ).

Exercise 4.

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?

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 Dàiyú.
5. Do you know if Bǎoyù likes [ài] Dàiyú?
6. We don’t know what Bǎoyù’s surname is.

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

VI. Destination

1. Going places

huíjiā	chéng lǐ	xiāngxià	wàiguó	fēijīchǎng	Cháng Chéng
return home	into town	the country	abroad	airport	Great Wall

‘town in’

‘outside-country’

‘airplane-area’

‘Long Wall’

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 shàng ‘on’. So the options are as follows:

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

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 difang? | Whereabouts are they going to? |
| Wǒmen dào chéng lǐ qu. | We’re going into town. |
| Wǒmen shàng jīchǎng qu --
jiē péngyou. | We’re off to the airport --
to meet some friends. |
| Wǒmen huíjiā. | We’re going home. |

Notice that ‘go home’ is not expressed with qù but with huí ‘return’.

3. *Zǒu versus qù*

Zǒu can also be translated ‘go’, but ‘go’ in the sense of ‘leave’. Zǒu cannot take an object; qù can:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Wǒ bāyuè sānhào zǒu. | I’m leaving on August 8th. |
| Wǒ bāyuè sānhào qù Běijīng. | I’m going to Beijing on August 8th. |

4. *Nǎr ~ nǎlǐ as an indefinite*

Like shénme, nǎr ~ nǎlǐ can also serve as an indefinite:

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

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

5. Specifying a time

You can mention a specific time, either a day of the week, or a date. Or you can use the word xiànzài 'now'. Recall the placement of time words – before or after the subject (if present), but before their associated verb:

Nǐ xiànzài qù shénme dìfang?
Wǒ xiànzài qù shàng kè.

Where are you going now?
I'm going to class now.

Bāyuè sānhào wǒ qù Běijīng;
wǔhào qù Shànghǎi.

I'm going to Beijing on Aug. 3rd;
and to Shanghai on the 5th.

6. 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.

VII. Purpose

1. The verb kàn 'look at'

The verb kàn, whose root meaning is usually said to be 'look at', may, in combination with different objects, show a wide range of English translations:

kàn shū	to read (look+at books)
kàn bào	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
kàn bìng	see a doctor; see a patient (look+at illness)
kàn rènao	go where the excitement is (look+at hubbub)

2. Other things to do

mǎi dōngxi	shop ('buy things')
zuò gōngkè	do homework
duànliàn	exercise; workout; train
yùndong	exercise; do sports
qǔ yīfu	pick up [one's] clothes ('get; fetch clothes')
kāihuì	hold / attend a meeting; conference ('open-

Summary:

<i>subject</i>	<i>destination</i>		<i>purpose</i>	
Wōmen	dào chéng lǐ	qù	mǎi dōngxi	<qu>
Wōmen	qù chéng lǐ		mǎi dōngxi	qu

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

Examples of destination plus purpose

Nǐ	yào	qù nǎr?
	dǎsuàn	qù nǎlǐ?
	xiǎng	qù shénme dìfang?
	juéding	

Wōmen bā yuè dǎsuàn qù Shànghǎi mǎi dōngxi. We're going shopping in Shanghai in August. ~ We're going to go to Shanghai to shop in August.

Wǒ yào dào Lúndūn qu kàn qīnqī. I want to go to London to visit [my] relatives.

Tāmen qù túshūguǎn xuéxí. They're going to the library to study.

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.

VIII. In the past

1. Not having done something [yet]

The non-occurrence of events scheduled or expected is regularly indicated by méi<you> before the verb:

I haven't washed yet.	Wǒ hái méi xǐzǎo.
They haven't left yet.	Tāmen hái méi zǒu ne.
I haven't read the paper yet.	Hái méi kàn jīntiān de bào.
I didn't read the World Cup report.	Méi kàn Shìjiè Bēi de xiāoxi.
They haven't arrived yet.	Tāmen hái méi lái ne.
They didn't go to Beijing.	Tāmen méi qù Běijīng.
They haven't decided yet.	Tāmen hái méi juédìng.
They haven't gone home yet.	Tāmen hái méi huíjiā.

Notes

- Recall that hái is frequently accompanied by a final ne to indicate the situation is still unresolved or ongoing.
- The negative with méiyou and a plain verb is to be contrasted with another construction to be introduced in lesson 6, which involves méiyou and a verb suffixed with guò. The latter means 'have never [ever] done something', eg 'have never been to Beijing' rather than 'didn't go [as expected]'.

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.

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

Didn't you go yesterday?	Zuótiān méi qù ma?
No, I didn't, it was too far	Méi qù, tài yuǎn, bù xiǎng qù
I didn't want to go so far.	nàme yuǎn.

Last year, I didn't know her.	Qùnián, wǒ bù rènshi tā.
Nor did I know who her brother was.	Wǒ yě bù zhīdao tā gēge shì shéi.

2. The role of le

Reporting the occurrence of an event – ie the positive version of sentences such as those cited above with méiyou – involves a number of grammatical options, which are better introduced over several lessons. As the following examples show, notionally past events are often associated with the presence of a final le:

Zhōumò nǐmen qù nǎlǐ le?
Wǒmen qù Cháng Chéng le.

Where did you go over the weekend?
We went to the Great Wall.

Jīntiān shàngwǔ nǐ dào nǎlǐ qù le?
Wǒmen dào chéng lǐ qù mǎi dōngxi
qu le.

Where did you go this morning?
We went shopping in town.

3. The position of le

Earlier, you saw sentence-final le with SVs signaling ‘new situation’: Zuótiān bù shūfu, jīntiān hǎo le. ‘[I] wasn’t well yesterday, but [I]’m okay today.’ And you have seen it with V_{act} in association with events that have happened: Wǒ xǐzǎo le. ‘I’ve bathed.’ The le of qù Cháng Chéng le belongs to the V_{act} type. However, le is not always final. Under certain conditions, it is also found between a verb and its object. One concrete manifestation of such conditions is 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 ge, 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 qù le yí tàng Cháng Chéng. We went took a trip to the Great Wall.

Notice that there is little difference in meaning between the two options; if you choose yí tàng in your response, le follows the verb, if you do not, it is placed at the end 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.

A caveat: With action verbs, it is easy to get the idea that le is simply an expression of past tense. However, you will find that it is actually used quite selectively. Just as with SVs, a new situation may be highlighted with le or not, so with V_{act} , the presence of le conveys a heightened relevance. For this reason, in complex sentences, le is often delayed to the final clause.

Wǒmen dào chéng lǐ qù mǎi dōngxi qu le.

Le cannot appear after the statement of the destination (dào...qu); it is held off until the expression of purpose (mǎi...qu).

4. Time expressions (and one adverb)

qùnián

shàng ge yuè shàng ge xīnqī ~lǐbài

zhōumò

adv
yǐjīng

last year last month last week weekend already

5. Examples, past events

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

Shàng ge yuè, wǒmen dào Shànghǎi qu kàn wǒ 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? Have you already picked up your passport?
Yǐjīng qǔ le. Yes, I have. [Note qǔ vs qù.]

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

Exercise 5

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.

IX. And

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

Lìshǐ, shùxué dōu hěn nán!
Wǒ kāfēi, píjiǔ dōu bù hē, zhǐ
xǐhuan hē chá.

History and maths are both tough!
I don't drink coffee or beer, just tea.

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

Dàlǐ hé Lǐjiāng dōu hěn měilì.
Míngtiān qù chéng lǐ kàn Wáng
lǎoshī hé tā de xuéshēng.

Dali and Lijiang are both quite beautiful.
Tomorrow [I'] going into town to
see Professor Wang and her students.

Nánde gēn nǚde dōu shuō+de
hěn hǎo.
Lǎoshī, fùmǔ hé xuéshēng dōu
děi qù.

The males and females all speak [it] well.
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 the coordination. Dōu does occasionally anticipate upcoming material, but much more often it refers 'back' confirms already mentioned or implied material, which accounts for the order in the earlier sentence: Wǒ kāfēi píjiǔ dōu bù hē.

Hé and gēn 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 shàng bān.

X. SPORTS

Chinese especially enjoy playing pingpong, badminton and football (soccer), and they enjoy watching 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). If you choose your topics carefully, you can at least inquire about scores; later you will learn the names of some sports.

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

Zhōngguó yíng le.
Bāxī shū le.

China won.
Brazil lost.

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 with the conjunctions hé or gēn ‘and’:

Zhōngguó hé Bāxī, shéi yíng le?
Riběn hé Tàiguó, Tàiguó shū le.

China and Brazil, who won?
Japan and Thailand, Thailand lost.

Exercise 6.

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 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]? (Riběn ‘Japan’, Hánguó ‘Korea’)
5. The library and airport are both air-conditioned. (N. kōngtiáo)

XI. Dialogue

Zhōu Shuǎng is a man in his 30s who works in the foreign student office; Zhāng Yīng is the Chinese name of a younger woman, an undergraduate from abroad who has been studying at the university for a year.

Zhāng. Zhōu xiānshēng, hǎo.

Hello Mr. Zhou.

Zhōu. Eī, Zhāng Yīng, nǐ hǎo.
Nǐ qù nǎr? ~ Nǐ qù nǎlǐ?

Ah, Zhang Ying, how are you? Where
are you going?

Zhāng. Túshūguǎn.

[To the] library.

Zhōu. Qù túshūguǎn zuò gōngkè ma?	<i>[You] going to the library to do [your] homework?</i>
Zhāng. Bù, kàn bào qu.	No, [I'] going to read the paper.
Zhōu. O, kàn bào qu?	<i>Oh, you're going [there] to read the paper?</i>
Zhāng. Shì, yīnwèi nàr yǒu kōngtiáo.	Yes, because it's air conditioned [there].
Zhōu. Ng, jīntiān zhēn rè!	<i>Right, it's hot today!</i>
Zhāng. Túshūguǎn hěn shūfu. Wǒmen qù kànkàn Shìjiè Bēi de xiāoxi.	The library's comfortable. We can take a look at the World Cup news.
Zhōu. O, Shìjiè Bēi. Zhōngguó shū le!	<i>Oh, the World Cup. China lost!</i>
Zhāng. Shì a, tài kěxī le.	Yes – such a pity!
Zhōu. Yīngguó ne?	<i>What about England?</i>
Zhāng. Yīngguó hé Āgēntíng, Yīngguó yíng le.	[With] England and Argentine, England won.
Zhōu. Jǐ bǐ jǐ?	<i>What was the score</i>
Zhāng. Yī bǐ líng.	One- nil!
Zhōu. Nà Yīngguó yě hěn qiáng! ...Dùì le, míngtiān xīngqīliù; nǐ shàng nǎr qu?	<i>Well, England's quite strong too! ...Well, tomorrow's Saturday, where are you off to?</i>
Zhāng. Míngtiān qù chéng lǐ mǎi dōngxī. Xīngqītiān dǎsuàn dào Tiānjīn qù kàn pēngyou.	Tomorrow we're going shopping downtown. On Sunday, [I'] going to Tianjin to visit a friend.
Zhōu. Bú cuò.... Hǎo, sān diǎn le, wǒ gāi zǒu le.	<i>Great!.... Well, it's 3:00, I should get going.</i>
Zhāng. Hǎo, Zhōu xiānshēng, zài jiàn, zài jiàn.	Yes, well Mr. Zhou, I'll be seeing you.
Zhōu. Hǎo, zài jiàn.	<i>Right, so long!</i>

Exercise 7.

Yé hēn lěng.

3. The *r*-suffix

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

érzi	‘child’
èr	‘two’
ěrduō	‘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’; píngr ‘bottle’, wányìr ‘toys’, diànyǐngr ‘films’, ménkǒur ‘doorway’, xīnyǎnr ‘heart; cleverness’, wéizǔir ‘a bib’, xìngrénr ‘almonds’, xìnpír ‘envelope’ etc. The suffix appears with a few non-nouns as well: shùnshǒur ‘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

Southern speakers of Mandarin, who often regard the *r*-suffix as a northern affectation, can - and do - avoid using it in all but those cases like èr ‘two’ where there is no choice: 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]. But all the words cited above can be found with the *r*-pronunciation indicated in dictionaries; and for Beijing and other northern speakers, the *r*-pronunciations are standard.

Speakers in the Beijing region in the northeast make far more extensive use of the *r*-flavoring than other Mandarin speakers. And these *r*’s are often not to be found in standard dictionaries. The following nursery rhyme, in which every last word has the *r*-suffix, illustrates. (*This rhyme is found in Chen Zishi, compiler, Beijing Tongyao Xuanji, Taipei: Dà Zhongguo Guoshu Gongsì, 1969, p. 94.*)

Qióng tàitai

Qióng tàitair	poor wife
Bào zhe ge jiānr,	holds [her] shoulders
chīwán 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.

a) Pronunciation

You will have observed that some of the *r-words* look quite unpronounceable, particularly those ending in ‘nr’ (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]	píngnr [pié ⁿ r]
cír	[cér]	xiàr	wèir [wèr]	ménr	chóngnr [chó ⁿ r]
shìr	[shèr]		kuàir [kuàr]	diǎnr	kòngr [kò ⁿ r]
pír	[piér]		huìr [huèr]	guǎnr [guǎr]	yàngnr [yà ⁿ r]
yìr	[yèr]			gùnr [guèr]	huángnr [huá ⁿ r]

Note how the last two columns are pronounced. When *r* is applied to an *n-final* syllable, the n sound is lost completely: diǎnr > diǎr; bànr > 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: kòngr > [kòⁿr], etc. These rules are hard to apply, so for now, we will focus on *r-words* that are frequently encountered, like diǎnr, yàngnr, huìr and kuàir.

XIII. Rhymes

1. Tiào shéng ‘skipping rope [rhymes]’

a) A tale of betrayal and heartbreak:

	Jiāngjiě, Jiāngjiě, hǎo Jiāngjiě, nǐ shì rénmin de hǎo Jiāngjiě.	Sister Jiang, good Sister Jiang, You are the people’s good SJ.
<i>and with feeling ></i>	Pàntú, pàntú, Fǔ Zhìgāo, Nǐ shì rénmin de ‘dà cǎobāo’.	Traitor, traitor, Fu Zhigao You are the people’s ‘great straw- bundle’ (‘good-for-nothing’).

Fǔ Zhìgāo, a young man, and Jiāngjiě, a young woman, served the people together, but Fǔ Zhìgāo betrayed her to the Guómíndǎng (Kuomintang, KMT), who had her executed; later Fǔ Zhìgāo was caught by the Communists (Gōngchǎndǎng, CCP) and put to death himself. Not a happy story, but a salubrious one. (The addition of jiě ‘sister’ to a xìng is a form of address between young females.)

b) A heroic beginning; ask your Chinese friends if they know other verses (or other skipping rhymes.)

Dōng Cúnruì, shíbā suì, cānjiā géming yóujīduì.	Dong Cunrui, 18 years of age, took part in a revolutionary guerilla force. (‘take+part revolution roving-attack-troops’)
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Provided by Huáng Fēiyǎ (MIT)

2. And something a little lighter, from the repertoire of nursery rhymes:

Yuèliang zǒu, wǒ yě zǒu, wǒ hé yuèliang jiāo péngyou, dài lǐ zhuāngzhe liǎng zhī dàn, sònggěi yuèliang dàng zǎofàn.	moon goes, I also go I and moon make friends pocket in filled+with 2 M eggs to present to moon as breakfast.
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Provided by Lǐ Yǒngyàn (Nanjing)

Notes:

- Zhuāngzhe ‘be loaded with; to be packed with; install’; -zhe is a verb suffix that, among other functions, turns actions (‘to put in’) into states (‘be in’).
- Sònggěi ‘to present to’, made up of two verbs, sòng ‘present’ and gěi ‘give’.
- Dàng ‘treat as; regard as; be’; cf. dàng kùzi ‘pawn [your] trousers’ in the first rhyme in lesson 1.