

COMMUNICATIVE EXCHANGES



LESSON 7

Mǎi Shū - Buying Books

Two DLI students are on a field trip in San Francisco's Chinatown.

FRAME 1

1 A: Zhèr yǒu yíjiā Zhōngguó
shūdiàn. Wǒmen kànkàn tāmen
mài shénme shū.

There is a Chinese bookstore here. Let's take a look and see what books they are selling.

2 B: Nǐ kàn, dōu shì Táiwān
chū de shū. Dōu shì fántǐzì.
Nǐ xiǎng mài shénme?

Look! All these books were published in Taiwan. They are all long-form characters. What do you intend to buy?

Notes:

1. Reduplicated Verbs. Kànkàn, "take a look," is an abbreviation of kànyikàn, "take one look." Chinese verbs are sometimes repeated, with or without yì between them. This duplication tends to give them a more casual meaning. Xiǎngxiang, "think it over," is another example. As you can see, the repeated verb loses its tone.

Subject-Verb-Object Pattern. The sentence Wǒmen kànkàn tāmen mài shénme shū is a Subject-Verb-Object pattern.

S V O
Wǒmen kànkàn tāmen mài shénme shū.

The object above can also be a S-V-O pattern in its own right:

S V O
Tāmen mài shénme shū?

What books are they selling?

2. Modification of Nouns by Clauses with -de. The phrase Táiwān chū de shū, "books published in Taiwan," is an example of the modification of nouns by clauses with the particle -de. There are three basic parts:

1	2	3
Modifying Clauses	de	Noun

- | | | |
|-----------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. Táiwān | chū de shū | books (which are) published in Táiwān |
| b. Tāmen | xiě de zì | the characters (which) they wrote |
| c. wǒ | yòng de zìdiǎn | the dictionary (which) I use |

The components within the modifying clause may be different: subject+verb (as in example a, b, and c), and verb+object (as in examples d, e, and f.)

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| d. mài shū de rén | the person (who is) selling books |
| e. yòng zìdiǎn de xuésheng | the students (who are) using dictionaries |
| f. mǎi dìtú de xiānsheng | the gentleman (who is) buying a map. |

In examples a, b, and c, the nouns are inanimate objects, and -de is translated as "the...which." In examples, d, e, and f the nouns are individuals, and -de is translated as "the...who." Remember this as a rule of thumb. Note that the English translation picks up from the end, then goes back to the beginning of the sentence.

Clausal Expressions Becoming Nouns. In certain frequently used expressions where the noun modified is understood, the modifying clause plus -de will itself become a noun as in (d) above. Compare:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| màishū de rén | the person selling books |
| màishūde | bookseller |

Xiǎng Followed by a Noun. In this case xiǎng is a verb meaning "to think about," or "to think of." Sometimes it is used in the sense of "missing," "longing for," or "being homesick."

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|----------------|-------------------|
| Tā xiǎng nǐ. | She misses you. |
| Tā xiǎng jiā. | He is homesick. |
| Wǒ bùxiǎng tā. | I don't miss her. |

Xiǎng Followed by a Sentence. When followed by a sentence, this verb means "to think (that) ..."

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|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Wǒ xiǎng tā xìng Wú. | I think (that) his surname is Wú. |
| Wǒ bùxiǎng mǎi shū. | I don't want to buy a book. |

Xiǎng Followed by a Verb. In this case xiǎng becomes an auxiliary verb meaning "to think of doing something" or "intend to do something." Sometimes it is used interchangeably with yào. As an auxiliary verb, it must precede the main verb of the sentence. Compare:

Wǒ yào mǎi (yì)běn shū.

I want to buy a book.

Wǒ xiǎng mǎi (yì)běn shū

I intend to buy a book.

FRAME 2

3 A: Wǒ xiǎng mǎi yìbēn xiǎo zìdiǎn. Tāmen zhèr yǒu Hàn-Yīng zìdiǎn, hěn piányi.

I intend to buy a small dictionary. They (here) have Chinese-English dictionaries. They are very inexpensive.

4 B: Duōshao qián yìbēn?

How much is it for a copy?

5 A: Zhèibēn yíkuài jiǔmǎowǔ. Bú guì.

This one is \$1.95. It's not expensive.

Notes

3. Tāmen zhèr "here, at their place" is a common compound form used as a place word. Other examples are nǐmen nèr, "there, at your place;" wǒmen zhèr, "here, at our place;" and tā jiějie nèr, "over there, at his older sister's place."

Hàn-Yīng zìdiǎn, "Chinese-English dictionary." Hàn is the name of a dynasty (206 B.C. - 220 A.D.), the earliest period when the Chinese came into contact with Western nations. Since then Hàn has been used to refer to the Chinese race. Example: Hànrén, "the Chinese race."

4. Asking for prices. The sentence Duōshao qián yìbēn? "How much it is for a copy?" is one way to ask about or give a price. Others are:

Zhèige mài duōshao qián?

How much money does this sell for?

Zhèige shì duōshao qián?

How much money is this?

Zhèige duōshao qián?

How much [is] this? (verb left out)

The price per unit pattern in Chinese can be either the unit first and then the price, or the price first and then the unit:

liǎngběn wǔkuài qián
wǔkuài qián liǎngběn

two copies for \$5.00
\$5.00 for two copies

Pronoun-Specifier-Number-Measure-Noun Pattern

PN	SP	NU	M	N
		sānběn		
		sānběn	shū	
	něi	sānběn	shū?	
	nèi	sānběn	shū	
wǒ	nèi	sānběn	shū	
tāmen	nèi	sānběn	shū	

three volumes
three books
which three books?
those three books
those three books of mine
those three books of theirs

Frame 3

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|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 | C: Wǒmen zhèrde shū dōu shì Dàlù chū de. Yòng jiǎntǐzì. Wǒmen yě yǒu hǎo dìtú. | All of our books here were published on the Mainland (China). Simplified characters are used. We also have nice maps. |
| 7 | B: Wǒ yào mǎi yìzhāng Zhōngguó dìtú. Duōshao qián yìzhāng? | I want to buy a map of China. How much is it for each copy? |
| 8 | C: Zhèizhāng dà dìtú mǎi liǎngkuài qīmáo-wǔ(fēn qián). Zhèr yǒu yìběn jiǎntǐzì(de) Yīng-Hàn zìdiǎn. Nín yào buyào? | This large map sells for \$2.75. Here is an English-Chinese Dictionary in simplified characters. Do you want it? |
| 9 | B: Dìtú hé zìdiǎn wǒ dōu yào. Yígòng duōshao qián? | I want both the map and the dictionary. How much are they altogether? |
| 10 | C: Zìdiǎn shíjiǔkuài jiǔmáo-sī. Dìtú liǎngkuài qīmáo-wǔ. Yígòng èrshìèrkuài liùmáo jiǔ-fēn qián. | The dictionary is \$19.94. The map is \$2.75. Altogether \$22.69. |

Notes

6. Cultural Background. When comparing books published in Taiwan with those published on the Mainland of China, notice the difference between the full-form characters and the simplified

ones. However, the full-form characters still used on the Mainland are the same as those used in Taiwan. The first group of officially adopted simplified characters on the Mainland was announced in 1956 by the Language Reform Committee.

Caution. Under no circumstances can simplified characters (jiǎntǐzì) and Pinyin be used in Taiwan; nor may such materials be imported into Taiwan.

8. Liǎngkuài qīmáowǔ (fēn qián), "\$2.75." There are three possible ways to say this:

liǎngkuài qīmáowǔ	two dollars, seventy-five
liǎngkuài qīmáowǔfēn	two dollars, seventy-five cents
liǎngkuài qīmáowǔfēn qián	two dollars, seventy-five cents

9. Transposed Objects: The sentence Dìtú hé zìdiǎn wǒ dōu yào, "I want both the map and dictionary," literally means "map and dictionary, I want both of them." This is an inverted sentence with transposed objects dìtú hé zìdiǎn at the beginning of the sentence. The dōu, refers to the transposed objects dìtú hé zìdiǎn, and not to the subject wǒ.

Gēge hé jiějie wǒ dōu yǒu.	I have both older brothers and older sisters.
Máobǐ hé qiānbǐ wǒ dōu mǎi.	I will buy both a brush pen and a pencil.
Fántǐzì hé jiǎntǐzì wǒ dōu huì xiě.	I can write both long-form and short-form characters.

Yìgòng, "Altogether," is a movable adverb. Like other movable adverbs, it can be placed before or after the subject.

Yìgòng wǒmen yǒu sānkuài qián.	Altogether we have three dollars (between us).
Wǒmen yìgòng yǒu sānkuài qián.	We altogether have three dollars.

FRAME 4

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|----|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 11 | B: Wǒ xiǎng mǎi yìzhī máobǐ. | I would like to buy a brush-pen. |
| 12 | C: Nín huì xiě Zhōngguó zì ma? | Can you write Chinese characters? |
| 13 | B: Huì. | Yes, I can. |
| 14 | C: Nín huì xiě duōshao Zhōngguó zì? | How many Chinese characters can you write? |

Frame 4 (Continued)

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|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 15 B: Wǒ huì xiě <u>jībǎige</u>
Zhōngguó zì. | I can write several hundred
Chinese characters. |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|

Notes

12. Nǐn huì xiě Zhōngguó zì ma? "Can you write Chinese characters?" No rudeness is intended in this question.

15. Another Use of Jǐ-. Wǒ huì xiě jībǎige Zhōngguó zì, "I can write several hundred Chinese Characters." This is the same jǐ-, "how many," you learned in Lesson 5. Here it is used as "some," "several," or "a few" (usually fewer than ten). Had the speaker used jǐge instead of duōshao in question 14 it might have been impolite, implying that the foreigner could not possibly write more than a few.

-jǐ carries the same meaning when it follows a unit of number. Examples: sānqiānji "three thousand and some," wǔkuàiji "\$5.00 and some" (usually between \$5.00 and \$6.00).