

*China Perspectives*

**PRACTICAL GRAMMAR OF  
MODERN CHINESE I**  
**OVERVIEW AND NOTIONAL WORDS**

Liu Yuehua, Pan Wenyu, and Gu Wei



# Practical Grammar of Modern Chinese I

Chinese grammar is characterized by its simple structure, lack of inflections, and wide use of monosyllabic morphemes. With the increased popularity of learning Chinese as a second language, there is a demand for a guide to Chinese grammar that's targeted at second language learners.

This four-volume set is one of the earliest and most influential works of Chinese grammar, with a special focus on teaching and learning Chinese as a second language. Drawing on rich teaching experience, the authors analyze a myriad of real-world examples to describe Chinese grammatical phenomena and rules while introducing the general grammar system of Chinese. In addition, the use of notional words in modern Chinese grammar is demonstrated, including nouns, pronouns, numerals, quantifiers, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

Since the first edition came out in 1983, this set has been revised twice and has remained one of the best sellers in the field. Practitioners and scholars of teaching Chinese as a second language, as well as students with a basic knowledge of Chinese, will find it to be a handy reference.

**Liu Yuehua** (1937–2019) was a distinguished Chinese linguist, winner of the Walton Lifetime Achievement Award of the Chinese Language Teachers Association of USA, a professor at the Beijing Language and Culture University, and a leading author of the well-known Integrated Chinese textbook series. She also taught at Wellesley College, MIT, and Harvard University.

**Pan Wenyu** graduated from Peking University and taught Chinese as a foreign language for more than 50 years. She specialized in Chinese grammar and teaching techniques.

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# **Practical Grammar of Modern Chinese I**

Overview and Notional Words

**Liu Yuehua, Pan Wenyu, and Gu Wei**

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# Preface to the first edition (I)

In recent years, I have read several books on modern Chinese grammar, which disappointed me for having neither clear target readers, nor practical nor theoretical benefits. Lately, Liu Yuehua gave me the manuscript of *The Practical Grammar of Modern Chinese*, co-edited with Pan Wenyu and Gu Wei. After reading it, I have been very pleasantly impressed by it and believe it will be beneficial for readers.

This book is written for the teachers of Chinese as a second language, and the students who have a basic knowledge of Chinese. In the preface, the author says, “it is characterized by its applicability. That is to say, it shows how to use Chinese properly through describing grammatical phenomena and grammar rules in detail.” And, “considering the differences of learning Chinese between foreign students and Chinese students, this book particularly explains the grammatical problems and difficulties which cannot be easily understood or solved by foreign students.” They match word to deed by many detailed examples as well as characteristic content in the book, which is often neglected by other grammar books.

In addition, the conclusive tables for usage of different grammar functions are also very remarkable.

The significance of this book results from the teaching experience of many years and it will be continuously improved further in its teaching, through revising those unsatisfactory interpretations about some words or grammar structures in the book.

I take the aforementioned as the introduction to this book.

Lü Shuxiang  
June 1st, 1982

# Preface to the third edition

It has been 35 years since *The Practical Grammar of Modern Chinese* was first published in 1983. Since its publication, it has been well received by a large number of readers. Therefore, the revised edition was published in 2001. The editions in other languages have also been published, such as those in Japanese, Korean, as well as in traditional Chinese characters.

Based on the original structure and theoretical system of the edition in 2001, the third revision began in 2016, with improvements in the following aspects:

- 1 Some explanations have been improved for the sake of accuracy;
- 2 Some expressions have been improved for the sake of professional correctness;
- 3 Some original examples have been substituted and more have been added for the sake of argumentation;
- 4 The original Appendix II has been deleted.

Hopefully, the third edition of *The Practical Grammar of Modern Chinese* can benefit more readers in learning and researching. Any critical opinions are honestly welcome for further revision.

The authors  
June, 2018



## Preface to the first edition (II)

This book is mainly written for the teachers engaged in teaching Chinese as a second language, the foreign students who have acquired a basic understanding of Chinese, and the scholars who are interested in this field. It can also serve as a Chinese grammar reference book for the ethnic minority students in national colleges and universities, as well as the students majoring in Chinese and foreign languages.

As a “practical grammar book,” it is characterized by its applicability. That is to say, it shows how to use Chinese properly through describing grammatical phenomena and grammar rules in detail. Therefore, besides explaining structural features and different grammar rules, it purposely emphasizes their semantic characteristics in use, so that the learners can understand what are the proper expressions in certain situations and what should be the right expressions within the use limits. Considering the differences of learning Chinese between foreign students and Chinese students, this book particularly explains the grammatical problems and difficulties which cannot be easily understood or solved by foreign students. Also, this book compares the grammar phenomena frequently confused by foreign students, and introduces the different grammar phenomena in both written and spoken forms. Therefore, it is more impressive for its content and explanative ways, compared with other grammar books.

The whole process of compilation involves the following three stages: the first one is to analyze a lot of collected examples; the second one is to arrange content and their sequences based on the first stage; the third one is to decide the focus of each content by observing the wrong sentences made by foreign students and the teachers’ rich teaching experience. Moreover, the achieved research results in the linguistic field are also taken into account in explaining language phenomena.

The first draft started in April 1978 and ended in 1979. The first revise was from September 1979 to August 1980; the second revision was from September 1980 to January 1981; the exercises were added since March 1981, and then the third revision was finished. The syntactic content in the book was once mimeographed for teaching in the Beijing Language and Culture University in August 1978, and then was sent to other colleges or research institutions for further opinions.

The book is collectively finished by Liu Yuehua, Pan Wenyu, and Gu Wei.

Zhao Jingzhen once participated in some parts of the first draft and then quit due to her job transfer.

It is a grammar book, which is systematically written based on the characteristics of foreign students in learning Chinese. There may be some unavoidable errors or shortcomings in the book due to less experience in writing, insufficient research to some grammar phenomena, and incomprehensive understanding to others' research achievements. Therefore, any critical opinions are honestly welcome for further revision.

Here, many thanks are sincerely expressed to those who have helped or supported this book. Some of them are mentioned in particular. Mr. Lǚ Bisong offered many suggestions since he began reading the draft; Mr. Lǚ Shuxiang wrote the foreword for this book and offered his opinions after revising it; Mr. Zhou Zumo created the title for the book. Again, heartfelt gratitude is expressed to all for what they have done for this book.

Authors  
Beijing Language and Culture University

## Preface to the revised edition (2001)

As a grammar reference book, *The Practical Grammar of Modern Chinese* has greatly improved the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language and the study of Chinese grammar in the past two decades.

The revise to this book began in 1998.

Grammar rules and their usage are the key in language learning, which has been particularly emphasized in this book, especially for syntactic rules and grammar phenomena. The revised edition has followed this direction in order to make further improvement.

Grammar is a very complex phenomenon, which tends to be influenced by many factors of lexics and syntax; language environment and context are definitely unavoidable. Therefore, “Discourse” as a chapter has been added. And in other chapters, “discourse” as a factor is also taken into consideration when discussing some concrete issues.

Other factors have also been discussed comprehensively, such as thinking modes, culture, gender, social status, age, register, deep meaning, and co-occurrence or exclusion of similar information.

Both the abstract and roundabout interpretations about grammar rules have been purposely avoided; the concrete and relevant explanations of grammar rules are particularly chosen for the sake of practicibility. As it is said that “going beyond the limits is as bad as falling short,” a proper “balance” between simplicity and complexity has been effectively kept in this edition.

The present revise has taken the advantages of the teaching experience of many years as well as the academic achievements in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. The references of this edition listed at the end of this book mainly come from the grammar books in the 1980s or after that, since remarkable progress has been made in this field since then; a few articles are also listed as references at the end of some chapters or sections.

The framework and system of the revised edition are basically unchanged, considering the stability of the grammar system and continuity of teaching Chinese as a foreign language, which have been followed in the relevant fields for many years. “Unchanged” doesn’t mean “cannot be changed,” but reveals a fact that a better or more efficient grammar system has not been found yet. For this issue, Mr. Zhu Dexi once stressed the practicibility of the grammar system instead of

its variety. Furthermore, English teaching has been developing quickly but its system has been stably followed many years, let alone the teaching Chinese as a foreign language which has a shorter history. Consequently, a prudent policy for the grammar system is adopted in this edition.

Mr. Lü Shuxiang wrote a preface to the first edition in 1982, in which he sincerely pointed out some shortcomings and hoped for improvement. We deeply feel sorry for his passing before our revise. Thus, we pray his wish will be granted in this edition.

Liu Yuehua is in charge of the added parts, including “classifications of sentence function,” “word order of Chinese sentences,” “imperative sentences,” and “discourses”; the revised parts include “是 . . . 的” sentences, “了 [le]” as dynamic auxiliary word, “directional complements,” and other parts; Pan Wenyu is in charge of “word formation in Chinese.” Except for the aforementioned, Liu Yuehua, Pan Wenyu, and Gu Wei are in charge of the remaining parts. Liu Yuehua is the final editor.

Here, many thanks are sincerely expressed to the readers and friends for their long-term support and help, which has greatly encouraged us in re-editing this book. Also, the heartfelt gratitude is expressed to the friends from the Commercial Press for what they have done for this book.

The Authors  
February, 2000



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# 1 Overview

This part introduces the grammar system, the grammatical items and issues of Chinese grammar not included in the remaining parts of this book.

## Section one: grammar units

Grammar units consist of morphemes, words, phrases, and sentences.

### I. Morphemes

A morpheme is the smallest unit of pronunciation and meaning in a language as well as the smallest grammatical unit. For example, “人 [rén] (people),” “民 [mín] (people),” “作 [zuò] (do),” “用 [yòng] (use),” “桌 [zhuō] (table),” “葡萄 [pú táo] (grape),” and “玻璃 [bō lí] (glass)” are the smallest meaningful and inseparable units. “人 [rén] (people)” and “民 [mín] (people)” are monosyllabic morphemes, which cannot be further segmented. “葡萄 [pú táo] (grape)” and “玻璃 [bō lí] (glass)” are disyllabic morphemes and they cannot be segmented either, because they would become meaningless if they were separated into “葡[pú],” “萄[táo],” “玻[bō],” or “璃[lí].”

Most morphemes in Chinese are monosyllabic; a few of them are disyllabic and tri-syllabic. Quadri-syllabic morphemes are much fewer. Since the Chinese character is syllabic, a monosyllabic morpheme is identical to a Chinese character in the written form, and most Chinese characters correspond to morphemes. Of course, there are some exceptions, such as “玛 [mǎ],” “瑙 [nǎo],” “唠 [láo],” “叨 [dāo],” “葡 [pú],” and “萄 [táo].” They are just segmented as single and meaningless syllables from those disyllabic morphemes, such as “玛瑙 [mǎ nǎo] (agate),” “唠叨 [láo dāo] (chatter),” and “葡萄 [pú táo] (grape),” so they are not morphemes.

Some Chinese characters can correspond to several morphemes at the same time, indicating different meanings, such as “把 [bǎ]” in “一把尺子 [yī bǎ chǐ zi] (a ruler),” “把守 [bǎ shǒu] (guard),” “把门开开 [bǎ mén kāi kai] (open the door),” “个把月 [gè bǎ yuè] (one or two months),” “把儿 [bǎ er] (handle);” and “生 [shēng]” in “生长 [shēng zhǎng] (grow),” “一生 [yī shēng] (a lifetime),” “生炉子 [shēng lú zi] (light the stove),” “生病 [shēng bing] (fall ill),” “生瓜

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[shēng guā] (unripe melon),” “生疼 [shēng téng] (extremely painful),” and “学生 [xué sheng] (student).” Thus it can be seen that the relationship between Chinese characters and morphemes is very complicated.

### II. Words

A word is the smallest meaningful language unit that can be used independently. This function of independence can occur in the following two ways. One way is when a word is used alone, such as “工人 [gōng rén] (worker).”

#### Example 1

A: 他哥哥是干什么的? [tā gē ge shì gàn shén me de?]

(What does his brother do?)

B: 工人。 [gōng rén.]

(A worker.)

“工人 [gōng rén] (worker)” is a word used alone as the response to the question. It cannot be divided into “工 [gōng]” and “人 [rén]” because neither of them is identical to “工人 [gōng rén] (worker).”

The other way is when a word is used by itself without being bound with other constituents in a sentence, such as “的 [de].”

Example 2 我的家在北京。 [wǒ de jiā zài běi jīng.]

(My home is in Beijing.)

Example 3 明明是一个可爱的孩子。 [míng míng shì yī gè kě ài de hái zi.]

(Ming Ming is a lovely boy.)

“的 [de]” is a word because it is of a certain grammatical meaning and can be used by itself without being bound with other constituents in a sentence. Furthermore, it is the smallest meaningful unit.

“民 [mín] (people)” in “人民 [rén mín] (people)” is not a word because it doesn't have the same grammatical function as “人民 [rén mín] (people)” in a sentence. “民 [mín]” should be bound with other morphemes, such as “人 [rén],” “公 [gōng],” “居 [jū]” to form the words “人民 [rén mín] (people),” “公民 [gōng mín] (citizen),” and “居民 [jū mín] (resident),” when used independently in a sentence.

### III. Phrases

A phrase is a group of words grammatically combined, carrying a certain meaning. It is a unit that constructs a sentence. For example, “他的学生 [tā de xué sheng] (his students),” “大部分 [dà bù fèn] (most),” “非洲人 [fēi zhōu rén] (Africans)” are phrases in the sentence “他的学生大部分是非洲人。 [tā de xué sheng dà bù fèn shì fēi zhōu rén.] (Most of his students are Africans).”

A morpheme is a smaller language unit compared with a word; a phrase is a bigger one compared with a word. Therefore, it is not easy to identify a

language unit theoretically or practically, due to the fact that most words in Chinese lack morphological marks and a fair number of ancient Chinese constituents still remain in the written form of modern Chinese. However, the parsing of language units (a morpheme, a word, or a phrase) doesn't influence its practical application too much in reality, nor cause much difficulty for foreign students in learning Chinese, if some rules of parsing sentences are defined in Chinese teaching.

#### IV. Sentences

A sentence is a language unit, carrying a complete meaning with proper pauses and a certain intonation. A sentence is considered the smallest unit of language application. That is to say, when we talk, we speak a sentence at least.

Example 4 你去不去? [nǐ qù bú qù?]  
(Will you go or not?)

Example 5 去。[qù.]  
(Go.)

Example 6 小心! [xiǎo xīn!]  
(Watch out!)

Example 7 每想到这些, 我对未来就充满了希望。[měi xiǎng dào zhè xiē, wǒ duì wèi lái jiù chōng mǎn le xī wàng.]  
(I am confident about the future when thinking about these.)

When a group of sentences are connected, a sentence group or a discourse is formed as a bigger unit, which decides the whole arrangement of sentences inside.

### Section two: classifications of parts of speech

In Chinese, the criterion of classifying parts of speech is mainly based on the grammatical functions of words as well as their lexical meanings.

Generally speaking, words can be classified into two main categories: notional words and function words, based on their grammatical functions. Notional words can function as sentence constituents, often carrying the concrete lexical meanings. They can be subdivided into seven types, such as nouns (including time word and locational word), verbs, adjectives, numerals, quantifiers, pronouns, and adverbs. Function words express various grammatical meanings, moods, or emotions but they cannot function as sentence constituents independently. They can be subdivided into the following types, such as prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary words, onomatopoeic words, and interjections.

Some examples of notional words are as follows:

Nouns:

桌子 [zhuō zi] (table), 国家 [guó jiā] (nation), 科学 [kē xué] (science),  
明天 [míng tiān] (tomorrow), 外 [wài] (outside), 里面 [lǐ miàn] (inside),



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### Verbs:

走 [zǒu] (walk), 动 [dòng] (move), 喜欢 [xǐ huān] (like), 是 [shì] (yes), 醒 [xǐng] (wake up), 可以 [kě yǐ] (may), 应该 [yīng gāi] (should).

### Adjectives:

红 [hóng] (red), 伟大 [wěi dà] (great), 胖 [pàng] (fat), 对 [duì] (right), 高兴 [gāo xìng] (happy), 自由 [zì yóu] (free).

### Numerals:

一 [yī] (one), 三 [sā] (three), 十 [shí] (ten), 百 [bǎi] (hundred), 千 [qiān] (thousand), 万 [wàn] (ten thousand), 亿 [yì] (a hundred million).

### Quantifiers:

个 [gè] (used before nouns that have no specific quantifier), 件 [jiàn] (piece), 斤 [jīn] (a unit of weight = 1/2 kilogram), 双 [shuāng] (pair), 副 [fù] (set), 次 [cì] (time), 遍 [biàn] (time).

### Pronouns:

我 [wǒ] (I), 你们 [nǐ men] (you), 每 [měi] (every), 这 [zhè] (this), 那 [nà] (that), 怎么样 [zěnmeyàng] (how).

### Adverbs:

很 [hěn] (quite), 又 [yòu] (again), 都 [dōu] (all), 永远 [yǒng yuǎn] (forever), 渐渐 [jiàn jiàn] (gradually), 亲自 [qīn zì] (personally).

Some examples of function words are as follows:

### Prepositions:

在 [zài] (at/in), 从 [cóng] (from), 自 [zì] (from), 向 [xiàng] (toward), 于 [yú] (at/in), 给 [gěi] (for).

### Conjunctions:

和 [hé] (and), 与 [yǔ] (and), 因为 [yīn wéi] (because), 虽然 [suī rán] (although), 因此 [yīn cǐ] (therefore), 即使 [jí shǐ] (even though).

### Auxiliary words (structural auxiliary words):

的 [de], 地 [dì/de] (-ly), 得 [de], 等 [děng] (and so on), 所 [suǒ], 了 [le], 着 [zhe], 过 [guò], 来着 [lái zhe].

### Auxiliary words (dynamic auxiliary words):

啊 [ā], 呢 [ne], 吧 [ba], 的 [de], 了 [le], 吗 [ma].

### Onomatopoeic words:

砰 [pēng] (bang), 咚咚 [dōng dōng] (drumming), 轰 [hōng] (boom), 噼里啪啦 [pī lǐ pā lā] (cracking sound), 哗哗 [huá huá] (sound of gurgling water).

Interjections:

唉 [āi] (alas), 哼 [hēng] (humph).

Nouns, pronouns, numerals, and quantifiers are regarded as nominals so they don't mainly function as predicates; verbs and adjectives are regarded as predicates so they mainly function as predicates.

In Chinese, some words have different grammatical functions. For example, “锁 [suǒ] (lock)” has both the grammatical function of a noun and a verb, so it can be categorized as a noun and a verb. Similarly, “端正 [duān zhèng] (upright/correct)” has the grammatical function of an adjective and a verb, so it can be categorized as an adjective and a verb. Such multi-category words exist commonly in Chinese as one of characteristics of Chinese grammar.

### Section three: types of syntactic structures and phrases

#### I. Types of syntactic structures

According to certain rules, a group of words can be formed into a phrase, such as “红花 [hóng huā] (red flower).” Similarly, a larger phrase can be formed if words and phrases are combined together based on certain rules, such as “我的红花 [wǒ de hóng huā] (my red flower).” In other words, these rules reflect a certain syntactic relation among words and phrases, named a syntactic construction relation. For example, “红 [hóng] (red)” modifies “花 [huā] (flower)” in “红花 [hóng huā] (red flower).” There are five syntactic structure relations in Chinese.

#### 1 Coordinate relation

It refers to an equal relation among words and phrases. For example:

工人和农民 [gōng rén hé nóng mín]

(worker and peasant)

愉快而幸福 [yú kuài ér xìng fú]

(pleasure and happiness)

语文老师、体育老师 [yǔ wén lǎo shī, tǐ yù lǎo shī]

(Chinese teacher and PE teacher)

又团结又斗争 [yòu tuán jié yòu dòu zhēng]

(unite and struggle)

#### 2 Structure consisting of a modifier and the word it modifies

It means a relation of modifying and being modified between the former word (or phrase) and the latter one. The one being modified is called the headword; the one modifying the headword is called the modifier. For example:

伟大的祖国 [wěi dà de zǔ guó]

(the great motherland)

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妹妹的书籍 [mèi mèi de shū jí]  
(sister's book)  
一件衣服 [yī jiàn yī fu]  
(a dress)  
很大的房子 [hěn dà de fáng zi]  
(a very big house)  
勇敢地斗争 [yǒng gǎn de dòu zhēng]  
(bravely struggle)  
艰苦地工作 [jiān kǔ de gōng zuò]  
(working very hard)  
很多 [hěn duō]  
(a lot of)  
不成熟 [bù chéng shú]  
(immature)

## 3 Verb-object relation

It refers to the relation between an action or judgment and what is involved by this action or judgment. For example:

开汽车 [kāi qì chē]  
(drive a car)  
学汉语 [xué hàn yǔ]  
(learn Chinese)  
是学生 [shì xué sheng]  
(being a student)  
当老师 [dāng lǎo shī]  
(being a teacher)  
进教室 [jìn jiào shì]  
(step into a classroom)  
去上海 [qù shàng hǎi]  
(go to Shanghai)  
晒太阳 [shài tài yáng]  
(bask in the sunshine)  
挖坑 [wā kēng]  
(dig holes)

## 4 Complementary relation

It refers to the relation between an action or state and then its result. Usually, the former is functioned by a predicate verb or adjective and the latter by a complement. For example:

走进去 [zǒu jìn qù]  
(step into)  
听清楚 [tīng qīng chǔ]  
(hear clearly)

看得见 [kàn de jiàn]  
 (see clearly)  
 干净得很 [gān jìng de hěn]  
 (very clean)  
 气得说不出话 [qì de shuō bù chū huà]  
 (too angry to speak)  
 去一下 [qù yī xià]  
 (go out for a while)  
 住几天 [zhù jǐ tiān]  
 (stay for several days)  
 走向光明 [zǒu xiàng guāng míng]  
 (turn to bright prospects)

## 5 Subject-predicate relation

It refers to the relation between the doer, or the recipient of an action, and the description or narration about it. For example:

小张是工人 [Xiǎo Zhāng shì gōng rén]  
 (Xiao Zhang is a worker.)  
 你看 [nǐ kàn]  
 (have a look)  
 头疼 [tóu téng]  
 (headache)  
 学习好 [xué xí hǎo]  
 (study well)  
 世界和平 [shì jiè hé píng]  
 (world peace)  
 房子大 [fáng zi dà]  
 (the house is big)  
 他是上海人 [tā shì shàng hǎi rén]  
 (He is a Shanghainese.)  
 小王看画报 [Xiǎo Wáng kàn huà bào]  
 (Xiao Wang is reading a pictorial.)

Since these relations commonly exist in or among words, phrases, sentences, and even the words compounded by morphemes, it is very necessary and helpful to grasp them in understanding Chinese and analyzing grammatical structures.

## II. Phrase types

A phrase is a group of words grammatically combined, carrying a certain meaning, such as “很大 [hěn dà] (very big),” “吃苹果 [chī píng guǒ] (eat apple),” “我的书 [wǒ de shū] (my book),” “看清楚 [kàn qīng chǔ] (see clearly),” and “老师和学生 [lǎo shī hé xué sheng] (teacher and student).” A phrase can be reformed into a more complex one when combined with another phrase or other words, such as “很有意义的工作 [hěn yǒu yì yì de gōng zuò]

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(meaningful work),” “写完作业的学生 [xiě wán zuò yè de xué sheng] (the student who has finished the homework).” Phrases are very practical in making a sentence. There are three types of phrases. They are the phrases consisting of notional words, the phrases consisting of notional words and function words, and the fixed phrases.

### 1 Phrases consisting of notional words

This type is also called a word group. If there is a headword in it, the headword identifies the type and the grammatical function of the entire phrase, such as both “红花 [hóng huā] (red flower)” and “花 [huā] (flower)” belong to the noun or both “高喊 [gāo hǎn] (shout loudly)” and “喊 [hǎn] (shout)” belong to the verb. Therefore, the property of the headword decides that of the entire phrase. Usually, the phrases consisting of notional words can be further classified into the following four sub-types.

#### (1) Noun phrase

我们的班 [wǒ men de bān] (our class)  
他的父亲 [tā de fù qīn] (his father)  
长头发 [cháng tóu fà] (long hair)  
干净的教室 [gān jìng de jiào shì] (clean classroom)  
可爱的祖国 [kě ài de zǔ guó] (lovely motherland)  
一本书 [yī běn shū] (a book)  
这三种因素 [zhè sān zhǒng yīn sù] (these three factors)  
正确的观点 [zhèng què de guān diǎn] (correct opinion)

#### (2) Verb phrase

认真地学习 [rèn zhēn de xué xí] (learn seriously)  
唱得很好 [chàng de hěn hǎo] (sing well)  
去买书 [qù mǎi shū] (buy book)  
写完 [xiě wán] (finish writing)  
写汉字 [xiě hàn zì] (write Chinese characters)  
喜欢看电影 [xǐ huān kàn diàn yǐng] (like seeing a film)  
请他来 [qǐng tā lái] (invite him)  
看得懂 [kàn de dǒng] (understand well)

#### (3) Adjective phrase

很大 [hěn dà] (very big)  
暖和起来 [nuǎn hé qǐ lái] (get warm)  
急得不得了 [jí de bù dé liǎo] (in a big hurry)  
非常高兴 [fēi cháng gāo xìng] (very happy)  
暗下去 [àn xià qù] (get darker)  
高兴地跳了起来 [gāo xìng de tiào le qǐ lái] (jump with joy)

## (4) Subject-predicate phrase

我去 [wǒ qù] (I go)  
 学习努力 [xué xí nǚ lì] (work hard)  
 头疼 [tóu téng] (headache)  
 个子高 [gè zi gāo] (tall)

## 2 The phrase consisting of notional words and function words

## (1) Prepositional phrase

在学校里(学习) [zài xué xiào lǐ (xué xí)] (learn in the school)  
 从东边(来) [cóng dōng biān (lái)] (come from east)  
 跟他(谈话) [gēn tā (tán huà)] (talk with him)  
 给他(写信) [gěi tā (xiě xìn)] (write a letter to him)  
 向前(走) [xiàng qián (zǒu)] (walk forward)  
 为他(高兴) [wèi tā (gāo xìng)] (feel happy for him)

## (2) “的” phrase (without being followed by a noun)

红的 [hóng de] (red)  
 卖菜的 [mài cài de] (a person of selling vegetables)  
 中文的 [zhōng wén de] (in Chinese)  
 写字用的 [xiě zì yòng de] (something for writing)

“的 [de]” phrase is nominal. Here are more similar examples. “蓝的 [lán de] (blue)” may refer to something in blue, such as “衣服 [yī fu] (clothes)” and “纸 [zhǐ] (paper).” “铁的 [tiě de] (iron)” may refer to something made of iron, such as “箱子 [xiāng zi] (case)” and “盒子 [hé zi] (box).” “写字用的 [xiě zì yòng de] (for writing)” may refer to stationery or furniture, such as “纸 [zhǐ] (paper),” “笔 [bǐ] (pen),” “桌子 [zhuō zi] (desk).” However, not all the phrases with nouns followed by “的” can be found.

## (3) The fixed phrase 成语 [chéng yǔ]

It refers to a fixed combination, consisting of notional words (or function words sometimes). Its parts are fixed in a certain order and its meaning is widely accepted. The literal meaning of each word inside doesn't necessarily decide the meaning of the entire phrase. Sometimes, it may reflect a certain figurative meaning. Here are some examples. “头面人物 [tóu miàn rén wù] (bigwig)” indicates a derogatory sense, referring to someone who is influential and prestigious in society. “山穷水尽 [shān qióng shuǐ jìn] (be at one's last shift)” describes someone at bay; “一不做，二不休 [yī bú zuò, èr bù xiū] (in for a penny, in for a pound)” means that since it begins, it should be done; “一棍子打死 [yī gùn zi dǎ sǐ] (knock someone down at one stroke)” refers to repudiate something/someone totally. In this book, those fixed phrases and idioms defined by other grammar books are also included.

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Usually the fixed phrase is the four-word phrase named as “four-word case.” It can be formed in various ways which are listed as follows.

### a The fixed phrase mainly formed by a noun

Here are examples indicating the structure that consists of a modifier and the word it modifies.

千山万水 [qiān shān wàn shuǐ] (numerous hills and streams)  
山珍海味 [shān zhēn hǎi wèi] (a feast of fat things)  
行云流水 [xíng yún liú shuǐ] (floating clouds and flowing water)  
千方百计 [qiān fāng bǎi jì] (make every attempt to do something)

Next is an example indicating the coordinate relation.

子虚乌有 [zǐ xū wū yǒu] (pure imagination)

### b The fixed phrase mainly formed by a verb

Here are examples indicating verb-object relation.

有条不紊 [yǒu tiáo yǒu lǐ] (properly and logically arranged)  
指手画脚 [zhǐ shǒu huà jiǎo] (make gestures)  
发号施令 [fā hào shī lìng] (issue orders)  
避重就轻 [bì zhòng jiù qīng] (evade the crucial point)

Next are examples indicating the structure that consists of a modifier and the word it modifies.

深思熟虑 [shēn sī shú lǜ] (careful consideration)  
不屈不挠 [bù qū bù náo] (unyielding)  
左顾右盼 [zuǒ gù yòu pàn] (look right and left)  
一曝十寒 [yī pù shí hán] (work by fits and starts)

Next are examples indicating the verb-object relation modified by an adverbial.

井井有条 [jǐng jǐng yǒu tiáo] (be arranged in a good order)  
历历可数 [lì lì kě shù] (can be counted one by one)  
巧立名目 [qiǎo lì míng mù] (concoct various pretexts)  
对牛弹琴 [duì niú tán qín] (to play the lute to a cow—choose the wrong audience)

### c The fixed phrase mainly formed by an adjective

Here are examples indicating the coordinate relation.

光明磊落 [guāng míng lěi luò] (be open and aboveboard)  
 光怪陆离 [guāng guài lù lí] (lustrous and dazzling)  
 华而不实 [huá ér bù shí] (be flashy without substance)

Next is an example indicating the structure that consists of a modifier and the word it modifies.

洋洋得意 [yáng yáng dé yì] (tread on air)

Next is an example indicating the complementary relation.

轻于鸿毛 [qīng yú hóng máo] (lighter than a goose feather)

d The fixed phrase mainly formed by a subject-predicate phrase

Here are examples indicating the subject-predicate relation.

心直口快 [xīn zhí kǒu kuài] (frank and outspoken)  
 天长地久 [tiān cháng dì jiǔ] (everlasting and unchanging)  
 头破血流 [tóu pò xuè liú] (head broken and bleeding)  
 天衣无缝 [tiān yī wú féng] (flawless)  
 毛遂自荐 [máo suì zì jiàn] (volunteer one's own services)  
 江郎才尽 [jiāng láng cái jìn] (The inspiration has dried up.)  
 愚公移山 [yú gōng yí shān] (the Foolish Old Man, who removed the mountains)

The grammatical function of a fixed phrase is not always identical to that of its headword, such as “大刀阔斧 [dà dāo kuò fǔ] (boldly and resolutely).” “刀 [dāo] (knife)” and “斧 [fǔ] (axe)” are nouns and function as the headwords in “大刀阔斧 [dà dāo kuò fǔ] (boldly and resolutely).” The entire phrase can function as an adverbial in a sentence, such as “他大刀阔斧地工作起来。[tā dà dāo kuò fǔ de gōng zuò qǐ lái.] (He begins to work boldly and resolutely.)” Generally speaking, the grammatical function of a fixed phrase tends to get closer to a certain part of speech but impossibly possesses all grammatical functions of this part of speech. For example, some fixed phrases are narrative, almost similar to verbs, so they mainly function as predicates, such as “求全责备 [qiú quán zé bèi] (demand perfection),” “弃暗投明 [qì àn tóu míng] (forsake darkness for light),” “声东击西 [shēng dōng jī xī] (make a feint to the east but attack in the west).” Some are descriptive, similar to adjectives so they mainly function as predicates and attributes, such as “好大喜功 [hǎo dà xǐ gōng] (like to do grandiose things to impress people),” “年富力强 [nián fù lì qiáng] (be in the full vigor of life),” “光明磊落 [guāng míng lěi luò] (open and straightforward).” Some mainly function as predicates and adverbials, such as “同甘共苦 [tóng gān gòng kǔ] (share happiness and woe),” “同舟共济 [tóng zhōu gòng jì] (pull together in times of trouble),” “有条不紊 [yǒu tiáo bù wěn] (in perfect order).” Some mainly function as predicates and adverbials, such as “目瞪口呆 [mù dèng kǒu dāi] (stand aghast),”



“龙飞凤舞 [lóng fēi fèng wǔ] (exquisite calligraphy),” “头破血流 [tóu pò xuè liú] (head broken and bleeding).” Some mainly function as adverbials, such as “千方百计 [qiān fāng bǎi jì] (make every attempt),” “依依不舍 [yī yī bù shě] (reluctant to part).” Some are very similar to nouns, mainly functioning as subject and object, such as “丰功伟绩 [fēng gōng wěi jì] (tremendous contribution),” “阳春白雪 [yáng chūn bái xuě] (a Spring Snow—a highbrow song),” “害群之马 [hài qún zhī mǎ] (a black sheep).”

There are many fixed phrases in Chinese, which are very productive and flexible in sentence-making. Proficiency in fixed phrases can improve one’s reading ability and display a high level of Chinese ability as well.

## Section four: word formation in Chinese

Based on how they are formed, Chinese words can be divided into three types, namely single-morpheme words, words combined by morphemes, and blend words (or blends).

### I. *Single-morpheme words*

As its name implies, a single-morpheme word consists of a morpheme, mostly with a syllable, such as “天 [tiān] (sky),” “地 [dì] (ground),” “人 [rén] (people),” “你 [nǐ] (you),” “我 [wǒ] (I),” “他 [tā] (he),” “高 [gāo] (high),” “大 [dà] (big),” “来 [lái] (come),” “看 [kàn] (look),” “才 [cái] (only just),” “就 [jiù] (in respect of),” “把 [bǎ] (handle),” “被 [bèi] (by).” Sometimes, a single-morpheme word is disyllabic, whose two syllables are completely identical, such as “奶奶 [nǎi nai] (grandma),” “蚱蚱 [qū qu] (cricket),” “宝宝 [bǎo bǎo] (baby),” “纷纷 [fēn fēn] (one after another).” Or two syllables have the same initial consonant or compound vowel, such as “辗转 [zhǎn zhuǎn] (toss about),” “参差 [cēn cī] (irregular),” “伶俐 [líng lì] (clever),” “绵延 [mián yán] (extending),” “逍遥 [xiāo yáo] (free and unfettered),” “彷徨 [páng huáng] (hesitate).” Or two syllables are totally different, such as “玻璃 [bō lí] (glass),” “葡萄 [pú táo] (grape),” “琥珀 [hǔ pò] (amber),” “咖啡 [kā fēi] (coffee).” For those tri-syllabic single-morpheme words, most of them are loanwords or transliterated words, such as “奥林匹克 [ào lín pǐ kè] (Olympics),” “麦克风 [mài kè fēng] (microphone).” Besides, an onomatopoeic word is also regarded as a single-morpheme word, such as “砰 [pēng] (bang),” “轰隆 [hōng long] (rumble),” “稀里哗啦 [xī lǐ huá lā] (rustling sound).”

### II. *Words combined by morphemes*

As its name implies, a word combined by morphemes consists of two or more than two morphemes. A word combined by morphemes in Chinese can be constructed through three forms, namely an overlapped form, a derivative form (or affixed form), and a compounded form.

#### 1 Overlapped form

Some words combined by morphemes are formed through repeating all or some of the morphemes inside. Generally speaking, the overlapped morphemes

produce the new grammatical meaning, which can be considered a special affix. According to the sequence of syllables and morphemes, the overlapped form can be subdivided into many forms, four of which are commonly used.

(1) Overlapping the same morpheme (e.g., AA) to form a word

Here are examples of nouns in this form, such as “妈妈 [mā ma] (mom),” “爷爷 [yé ye] (grandpa),” “蝈蝈 [guō guo] (grasshopper),” and the second syllable is with weak pronunciation (the light tone 轻声); but the second syllables in “悄悄儿 [qiāo er] (quietly)” and “微微 [wēi wēi] (slight)” as adverbs should be stressed.

(2) Two overlapped morphemes plus another one in front (e.g., BAA) to form a word

Usually, the morpheme in front is a morpheme with the property of an adjective, such as “干巴巴 [gān bā bā] (dull and dry),” “红彤彤 [hóng tóng tóng] (bright red),” “亮晶晶 [liàng jīng jīng] (sparkling),” “乐呵呵 [lè hē hē] (happy),” “乐滋滋 [lè zī zī] (contented),” “乱哄哄 [luàn hōng hōng] (in noisy disorder),” “香喷喷 [xiāng pēn pēn] (sweet-smelling),” “雄赳赳 [xióng jiū jiū] (valiantly),” “羞答答 [xiū dā dā] (shy),” “阴森森 [yīn sēn sēn] (gloomy),” “直挺挺 [zhí tǐng tǐng] (straight).” Besides, it can also be a morpheme with the property of a noun or verb, such as “眼睁睁 [yǎn zhēng zhēng] (helplessly),” “眼巴巴 [yǎn bā bā] (eagerly),” “毛茸茸 [máo róng róng] (hairy),” “毛哄哄 [máo hōng hōng] (reckless),” or “笑眯眯 [xiào mī mī] (smiling),” “笑嘻嘻 [xiào xī xī] (grinning),” “笑哈哈 [xiào hā hā] (laughing).” However, they are not very common and generally function as adverbials and attributes.

(3) Two overlapped morphemes plus another one in the rear (e.g., AAB) to form a word

Usually, the words constructed by this form are mainly nouns, such as “毛毛虫 [máo máo chóng] (caterpillar)” and “毛毛雨 [máo máo yǔ] (drizzle).” In modern Chinese, this form is not qualified to produce a new word.

(4) Incomplete-overlapped form

The first syllable of an adjective is repeated with a meaningless syllable in the middle, such as “里 [lǐ]” in “傻里傻气 [shǎ lǐ shǎ qì] (foolish looking),” “慌里慌张 [huāng lǐ huāng zhāng] (in a hurried and confused manner),” “啰里啰嗦 [luō lǐ luō suō] (verbose),” or “了 [le]” in “晃了晃荡 [huàng le huàng dāng] (swing to and fro).” “里 [lǐ]” or “了 [le]” is added in the middle to form a four-syllable word. Usually, the word constructed by this form indicates disgust or contempt.

## 2 Derivative form

In a word combined by morphemes, a morpheme with lexical meaning is called a root morpheme and a morpheme without lexical meaning is an affix morpheme.

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When a root morpheme and an affix morpheme are combined together, a derivative is produced. Such a way of deriving a derivative is called a derivative method.

The meaning of a derivative depends on the entire meaning of a root morpheme and affix morpheme, such as “读者 [dú zhě] (reader),” which refers to a person who reads books or articles. “读 [dú] (read)” is the main part of the word meaning, expressing the written works read by a person; “者 [zhě] (-er)” indicates a person. Thus it can be seen that an affix morpheme not only indicates the property of the entire word, but also limits or complements the meaning of a root morpheme. A derivative in Chinese can be formed by the following three ways.

### (1) Prefixed form

An affix before a root morpheme is named a prefix. There are a few prefixes in Chinese. Some common prefixes are “阿 [ā],” “老 [lǎo],” “第 [dì],” “初 [chū],” “小 [xiǎo].” The examples with these prefixes are “阿姨 [ā yí] (aunt),” “老师 [lǎo shī] (teacher),” “老虎 [lǎo hǔ] (tiger),” “初一 [chū yī] (the beginning of New Year),” “第五 [dì wǔ] (the fifth),” “小孩 [xiǎo hái] (child).”

### (2) Suffixed form

A morpheme after a root morpheme is a suffix. Most derivatives in Chinese are formed by a suffix, and the common suffixes are “子 [zǐ],” “头 [tóu],” “儿 [ér],” “着 [zhe],” “巴 [bā],” “然 [rán],” “性 [xìng],” “化 [huà].” The words formed by them are “刀子 [dāo zi] (knife),” “瘦子 [shòu zi] (a lean person),” “木头 [mù tóu] (wood),” “苦头 [kǔ tóu] (hardship),” “尖儿 [jiān er] (tip),” “花儿 [huā er] (flower),” “盖儿 [gài er] (cover),” “拐棍儿 [guǎi gùn er] (walking stick),” “作者 [zuò zhě] (author),” “读者 [dú zhě] (reader),” “旁观者 [páng guān zhě] (onlooker),” “忽然 [hū rán] (suddenly),” “偶然 [ǒu rán] (by chance),” “弹性 [tán xìng] (elasticity),” “可靠性 [kě kào xìng] (reliability),” “绿化 [lǜ huà] (afforest),” “现代化 [xiàn dài huà] (modernization).”

There are some suffixes named quasi-suffixes, due to their incomplete grammaticalization. For example, “家 [jiā]” in “歌唱家 [gē chàng jiā] (singer)” and “画家 [huà jiā] (painter),” “员 [yuán]” in “教员 [jiào yuán] (instructor)” and “公务员 [gōng wù yuán] (civil servant),” and “主义 [zhǔ yì] (-ism)” in “拜金主义 [bài jīn zhǔ yì] (money worship)” and “集体主义 [jí tǐ zhǔ yì] (collectivism).”

### (3) Complex combination of prefix and suffix

#### a (root+root)+affix:

大力士 [dà lì shì] (man of unusual strength)  
劳动者 [láo dòng zhě] (laborer)  
思想家 [sī xiǎng jiā] (thinker)

#### b root+(root+affix):

肉包子 [ròu bāo zi] (meat bun)  
新娘子 [xīn niáng zi] (bride)

c affix+[(root+affix)+affix]:

老娘们儿 [lǎo niáng men er] (old women)

### 3 Compounded form

A compounded form consists of two or more than two root morphemes, which is one of the main ways of constructing a word. A word constructed in compounded form is called a compound word (or a compound). For example, “理 [lǐ]” and “想 [xiǎng]” are two root morphemes of “理想 [lǐ xiǎng] (ideal)”; two root morphemes “合 [hé]” and “理 [lǐ]” produce “合理 [hé lǐ] (reasonable).” Similar examples are “英雄 [yīng xióng] (hero)” and “牛皮纸 [niú pí zhǐ] (kraft paper),” consisting of three root morphemes.

Based on the relationship between root morphemes inside, a compound word can be divided into a coordinate compound, a compound consisting of a modifier and a morpheme it modifies, a verb-complement compound, a verb-object compound, a subject-predicate compound, and a complex-compound.

#### (1) Coordinate compound

A coordinate compound consists of two root morphemes which are identical, opposite, or relative. All morphemes have equal roles in a coordinate compound. For example, “道路 [dào lù] (road),” “人民 [rén mín] (people),” “国家 [guó jiā] (nation),” “声音 [shēng yīn] (sound),” “群众 [qún zhòng] (general public),” “友谊 [yǒu yì] (friendship),” “团结 [tuán jié] (unite),” “清洁 [qīng jié] (clean),” “优秀 [yōu xiù] (outstanding),” “帮助 [bāng zhù] (help),” “学习 [xué xí] (learn),” “始终 [shǐ zhōng] (all the time).”

#### (2) Compound consisting of a modifier and a morpheme it modifies

The relationship between these two morphemes is modifying (the former) and being modified (the latter as a key component). For example, in “手表 [shǒu biǎo] (wrist watch),” “手 [shǒu] (hand)” modifies “表 [biǎo] (watch)” and “表 [biǎo] (watch)” is a key component. More examples are “学校 [xué xiào] (school),” “家长 [jiā zhǎng] (parents),” “工人 [gōng rén] (worker),” “电车 [diàn chē] (trolley),” “京剧 [jīng jù] (Beijing opera),” “雪白 [xuě bái] (snowy white),” “笔者 [bǐ zhě] (writer),” “滚烫 [gǔn rè] (burning hot),” “移植 [yí zhí] (transplant),” “游击 [yóu jī] (guerrilla warfare),” “笔谈 [bǐ tán] (conversation by writing),” “鸟瞰 [niǎo kàn] (look down from above).”

#### (3) Verb-complement compound (or complementary compound or postpositive compound)

A verb-complement compound is formed by “a verbal morpheme/an adjective morpheme+complementary morpheme.” For example, “扩大 [kuò dà] (enlarge),” “埋没 [mái mò] (bury),” “提高 [tí gāo] (improve),” “推翻 [tuī fān] (overthrow),” “压缩 [yā suō] (condense),” “摧毁 [cuī huǐ] (destroy),” “说明 [shuō míng]

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(explain),” “发动 [fā dòng] (launch),” “延长 [yán cháng] (prolong),” “改进 [gǎi jìn] (advance),” “立正 [lì zhèng] (stand at attention),” “推动 [tuī dòng] (push).” Based on the relation between morphemes inside, a verb-complement compound can be further divided into two types.

### a a verb-complement compound indicating a result

Here are examples: “改善 [gǎi shàn] (perfect),” “改良 [gǎi liáng] (innovate),” “打倒 [dǎ dào] (overthrow),” “推翻 [tuī fān] (overthrow),” “推迟 [tuī chí] (postpone),” “推出 [tuī chū] (launch).”

### b a verb-complement compound indicating a tendency

There are a few of such compounds in Chinese, such as “展开 [zhǎn kāi] (spread).”

## (4) Verb-object compound

A verb-object compound is formed by “a verbal morpheme+a nominal morpheme as an object of the verbal morpheme.” Here are examples: “主席 [zhǔ xí] (chairman),” “命令 [mìng lìng] (order),” “司仪 [sī yí] (master of wedding ceremony),” “司令 [sī lìng] (commander),” “理事 [lǐ shì] (director),” “顶针 [dǐng zhēn] (thimble),” “动员 [dòng yuán] (mobilize),” “干事 [gàn shì] (officer),” “司机 [sī jī] (driver),” “鼓掌 [gǔ zhǎng] (applaud),” “革命 [gé mìng] (revolution),” “出席 [chū xí] (attend).” Sometimes, the latter morpheme could be another verbal morpheme or an adjective morpheme, such as “挨骂 [āi mà] (get a scolding),” “挨批 [āi pī] (be criticized),” “上算 [shàng suàn] (worthwhile),” “认输 [rèn shū] (give up),” “放飞 [fàng fēi] (released),” “起早 [qǐ zǎo] (get up early),” “搁浅 [gē qiǎn] (stranded),” “耐久 [nài jiǔ] (durable),” “人迷 [rén mí] (attracting),” “认真 [rèn zhēn] (conscientious).”

## (5) Subject-predicate compound

The relation between two morphemes in a subject-predicate compound is very similar to that of the subject and predicate in syntax. Here are examples: “年轻 [nián qīng] (young),” “心疼 [xīn téng] (love dearly),” “地震 [dì zhèn] (earthquake),” “月蚀 [yuè shí] (eclipse),” “霜降 [shuāng jiàng] (First Frost),” “夏至 [xià zhì] (the Summer Solstice),” “民主 [mín zhǔ] (democracy),” “自觉 [zì jué] (conscientious),” “花红 [huā hóng] (red flower),” “月亮 [yuè liàng] (moon),” “胆小 [dǎn xiǎo] (timid),” “性急 [xìng jí] (impatient).”

## (6) Complex-compound

Sometimes, a compound may consist of three or more than three morphemes, which is called a complex-compound. Its structural relationship and sub-classification

are much similar to those of disyllabic compounds, except for the difference in morpheme sequence. The common morpheme sequences are as follows:

- a adjective morpheme+[nominal morpheme+nominal morpheme]  
 纸老虎 [zhǐ lǎo hǔ] (paper tiger), 小家庭 [xiǎo jiā tíng] (small family)  
 熟石灰 [shú shí huī] (slaked lime), 生石灰 [shēng shí huī] (unslaked lime)  
 大篷车 [dà péng chē] (caravan)
- b [adjective morpheme+nominal morpheme]+nominal morpheme  
 幼儿园 [yòu ér yuán] (kindergarten), 热水瓶 [rè shuǐ píng] (thermos)  
 博物馆 [bó wù guǎn] (museum), 双簧管 [shuāng huáng guǎn] (oboe)  
 总务处 [zǒng wù chù] (office of general services)  
 青年报 [qīng nián bào] (Youth Daily)  
 少年宫 [shǎo nián gōng] (Children's Palace)  
 老人院 [lǎo rén yuàn] (nursing home), 孤儿院 [gū ér yuàn] (orphanage)
- c [verbal morpheme+verbal morpheme]+nominal morpheme  
 检察官 [jiǎn chá guān] (procurator), 计算机 [jì suàn jī] (computer)  
 计算尺 [jì suàn chǐ] (slide rule), 练习本 [liàn xí běn] (exercise book)  
 医疗队 [yī liáo duì] (medical corps), 看守所 [kàn shǒu suǒ] (house of  
 detention) 歌舞厅 [gē wǔ tīng] (dance hall), 派出所 [pài chū suǒ] (local  
 police station)
- d [verbal morpheme+adjective morpheme]+nominal morpheme  
 养老金 [yǎng lǎo jīn] (old-age pension)  
 养老院 [yǎng lǎo yuàn] (nursing home)
- e [verbal morpheme+adjective morpheme (verb-complement relation)]+  
 nominal morpheme  
 放大镜 [fàng dà jìng] (magnifying glass)  
 漂白粉 [piāo bái fěn] (bleaching powder)
- f [verbal morpheme+nominal morpheme (verb-object relation)]+nominal  
 morpheme  
 降压药 [jiàng yā yào] (hypotensor)  
 见面礼 [jiàn miàn lǐ] (a gift presented to somebody. At the first meeting)  
 顶梁柱 [dǐng liáng zhù] (backbone), 朝阳花 [cháo yáng huā] (sunflower)  
 定音鼓 [dìng yīn gǔ] (timpani), 守财奴 [shǒu cái nú] (miser)  
 看家狗 [kàn jiā gǒu] (watchdog), 报警器 [bào jǐng qì] (alarm)  
 售票员 [shòu piào yuán] (ticket seller), 健身房 [jiàn shēn fǎng] (gymnasium),  
 敞篷车 [chǎng péng chē] (convertible), 输卵管 [shū luǎn guǎn] (fallopian  
 tube), 起重船 [qǐ zhòng chuán] (heavy pontoon),  
 连环画 [lián huán huà] (picture-story book)
- g [nominal morpheme+verbal morpheme]+nominal morpheme

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手提包 [shǒu tí bāo] (handbag), 手提箱 [shǒu tí xiāng] (suitcase)  
地震仪 [dì zhèn yí] (seismic detector)

### h [nominal morpheme+nominal morpheme]+nominal morpheme

书生气 [shū shēng qì] (bookishness), 书名号 [shū míng hào] (book title mark)  
江米酒 [jiāng mǐ jiǔ] (fermented glutinous rice)  
人力车 [rén lì chē] (a two-wheeled vehicle drawn by man)  
人工湖 [rén gōng hú] (artificial lake)

## III. Blend words (blend)

A blend is formed by several morphemes chosen from the entire phrase according to their original sequence. A blend is also called a word in short form and it is very popular in news reports. There are four methods to form a blend.

### 1 To keep the headword only

大楼 [dà lóu] (building)  
王府井百货大楼 [wáng fǔ jǐng bǎi huò dà lóu] (Wang Fu Jing Building)  
教育部 [jiào yù bù] (Ministry of Education)  
中华人民共和国教育部 [zhōng huá rén mín gòng hé guó jiào yù bù] (The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China)  
总工会 [zǒng gōng huì] (Federation of Trade Unions)  
中华全国总工会 [zhōng huá quán guó zǒng gōng huì] (All China Federation of Trade Unions)

The definite meaning of a blend depends on the context.

### 2 To keep the modifiers of the entire nouns plus a key component

工农业 [gōng nóng yè] (industry and agriculture)  
工业、农业 [gōng yè, nóng yè] (industry and agriculture)  
农副产品 [nóng fù chǎn pǐn] (industrial and sideline products)  
农业产品、副业产品 [nóng yè chǎn pǐn, fù yè chǎn pǐn] (industrial and sideline products)  
大中小学生 [dà zhōng xiǎo xué shēng] (students of primary school, middle school, and university)  
大学生、中学生、小学生 [dà xué shēng, zhōng xué shēng, xiǎo xué shēng] (students of primary school, middle school, and university)  
中青年 [zhōng qīng nián] (young and middle-aged)  
中年青年 [zhōng nián qīng nián] (young and middle-aged)

### 3 To combine the first morpheme of each word selected from the entire phrase together

初中 [chū zhōng] (junior high school)  
初级中学 [chū jí zhōng xué] (junior high school)

高中 [gāo zhōng] (senior high school)  
 高级中学 [gāo jí zhōng xué] (senior high school)  
 大专 [dà zhuān] (junior college)  
 大学专科 [dà xué zhuān kē] (junior college)  
 北大 [běi dà] (Peking University)  
 北京大学 [běi jīng dà xué] (Peking University)  
 消协 [xiāo xié] (China Consumers Association)  
 消费者协会 [xiāo fèi zhě xié huì] (China Consumers Association)  
 人代会 [rén dài huì] (People's Congress)  
 人民代表大会 [rén mín dài biǎo dà huì] (People's Congress)  
 地铁 [dì tiě] (metro)  
 地下铁路 [dì xià tiě lù] (metro)  
 妇代会 [fù dài huì] (Congresswoman representative)  
 妇女代表大会 [fù nǚ dài biǎo dà huì] (Congresswoman representative)  
 科技大学 [kē jì dà xué] (university of science and technology)  
 科学技术大学 [kē xué jì shù dà xué] (university of science and technology)  
 农研所 [nóng yán suǒ] (agricultural research institute)  
 农业研究所 [nóng yè yán jiū suǒ] (agricultural research institute)

#### 4 To summarize the entire phrase by a number

四会 [sì huì] (four “ables”)  
 会听、会说、会读、会写 [huì tīng, huì shuō, huì dú, huì xiě] (be able to listen, talk, read, write)  
 三好 [sān hǎo] (three “wells”)  
 身体好、学习好、工作好 [shēn tǐ hǎo, xué xí hǎo, gōng zuò hǎo] (feel well, work well, and learn well)  
 三伏 [sān fú] (three periods of the hot season)  
 初伏、中伏、末伏 [chū fú, zhōng fú, mò fú] (the first, second, and last ten-day periods of the hot season)  
 四季 [sì jì] (four seasons)  
 春、夏、秋、冬 [chūn, xià, qiū, dōng] (Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter)

## Section five: classifications of sentence structures

### I. *Subject-predicate sentences and non-subject-predicate sentences*

Based on how it is constructed, a sentence can be generally either a subject-predicate sentence or a non-subject-predicate sentence.

#### 1 Subject-predicate sentence

A subject-predicate sentence consists of a subject part and a predicate part, due to which it is also called double-part sentence.



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Example 1 麦克在北京语言文化大学学习汉语。[mài kè zài běi jīng yǔ yán wén huà dà xué xué xí hàn yǔ.]

(Michael is learning Chinese in Beijing Language and Culture University.)

Example 2 中国人民是勤劳勇敢的。[zhōng guó rén mín shì qín láo yǒng gǎn de.]

(Chinese people are industrious and brave.)

The subject and the predicate in a subject-predicate sentence can be omitted in a certain context.

### Example 3

A: 小刘呢? [xiǎo liú ne?]

(Where is Xiao Liu?)

B: 去上海了。[qù shàng hǎi le.]

(He is in Shanghai.)

### Example 4

A: 谁找他? [shuí zhǎo tā?]

(Who wants to see him?)

B: 小张。[Xiǎo Zhāng.]

(Xiao Zhang.)

Based on the predicate property, a subject-predicate sentence can be divided into a sentence with a verb as predicate, a sentence with an adjective as predicate, a sentence with a subject-predicate as predicate, and a sentence with a noun as predicate.

### (1) A sentence with a verb as predicate

This refers to when a verb functions as a predicate in the sentence.

Example 5 小马在工厂工作。[xiǎo mǎ zài gōng chǎng gōng zuò.]

(Xiao Ma works in a factory.)

Example 6 我姐姐是二年级学生。[wǒ jiě jiě shì èr nián jí xué shēng.]

(My sister is a student in the second grade.)

Example 7 我有一本新画报。[wǒ yǒu yī běn xīn huà bào.]

(I have a new pictorial.)

Example 8 你把这本书还给他。[nǐ bǎ zhè běn shū huán gěi tā.]

(You can return this book to him.)

Example 9 我下午去北京站接朋友。[wǒ xià wǔ qù běi jīng zhàn jiē péng yǒu.]

(I will pick up a friend in Beijing Station this afternoon.)

Example 10 你请老张来一下。[nǐ qǐng Lǎo Zhāng lái yí xià.]

(You invite Lao Zhang to come here.)

### (2) A sentence with an adjective as predicate

It refers to when an adjective functions as predicate in the sentence.

Example 11 今天很热。[jīn tiān hěn rè.]

(It is very hot today.)

Example 12 苹果快熟了。[píng guǒ kuài shú le.]

(The apple is almost ripe.)

Example 13 他急得满头大汗。[tā jí dé mǎn tóu dà hàn.]

(He became covered with sweat in a hurry.)

### (3) A sentence with subject-predicate as predicate

This is when a subject-predicate phrase functions as a predicate in the sentence.

Example 14 他学习很努力。[tā xué xí hěn nǔ lì.]

(He studies very hard.)

Example 15 我头疼。[wǒ tóu téng.]

(I have a headache.)

Example 16 山上红旗飘扬。[shān shàng hóng qí piāo yáng.]

(The red flag is fluttering on the mountain.)

### (4) A sentence with a noun as predicate

This is when a noun or noun phrase functions as predicate in the sentence.

Example 17 今天星期一。[jīn tiān xīng qī yī.]

(Today is Monday.)

Example 18 他高个子，大眼睛。[tā gāo gè zi, dà yǎn jīng.]

(He is tall and has big eyes.)

Example 19 阿里伊拉克人。[ā lǐ yī lā kè rén.]

(A Li is Iraqi.)

Example 20 小刘二十多岁。[xiǎo liú èr shí duō suì.]

(Xiao Liu is over 20 years old.)

## 2 Non subject-predicate sentence

As its name implies, it consists of neither subject nor predicate. It is also called a single-part sentence but that is not to say that either the subject or predicate is omitted. In fact, neither the definite subject nor predicate exists here. A non-subject-predicate sentence is a complete sentence but not an elliptical one. Here are two types of non-subject-predicate sentence.

### (1) Sentence with no subject

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It means that there is no subject in the sentence. It can also be called a verbal sentence.

Example 21 下雨了。 [xià yǔ le.]

(It rains.)

Example 22 小心火车! [xiǎo xīn huǒ chē!]

(Watch out for the train!)

Example 23 注意! [zhù yì!]

(Watch out!)

### (2) Single-word/phrase sentence

It simply consists of a word or a phrase. If this word is a noun, the sentence is called a nominal sentence.

Example 24 好可爱的孩子! [hǎo kě ài de hái zi!]

(How lovely the boy is!)

Example 25 多美的花! [duō měi de huā!]

(How beautiful the flower is!)

If this word is an adjective, the sentence is called an adjective sentence.

Example 26 好冷! [hǎo lěng!]

(How cold!)

If this word is an interjective, the sentence is called an interjective sentence.

Example 27 唉! [ài!]

(Alas!)

## II. Simple sentences and compound sentences

Based on sentence structure, a sentence can be classified into the simple sentence and the compound sentence. A simple sentence simply consists of a subject-predicate phrase (or a predicate) so both the subject-predicate sentence and the non-subject-predicate sentence are all simple sentences. A compound sentence consists of two or more than two simple sentences whose meanings are related. Here the simple sentence in a compound sentence is called a clause and there is a phonetic pause between each clause.

Example 28 如果明天不下雨，我们就去长城。 [rú guǒ míng tiān bú xià yǔ, wǒ men jiù qù cháng chéng.]

(If it doesn't rain, we'll go to the Great Wall tomorrow.)

Example 29 这个电影我看过，今天晚上不去看了。[zhè gè diàn yǐng wǒ kàn guò, jīn tiān wǎn shàng bú qù kàn le.]

(I won't go to the cinema because I have seen the movie before.)

Example 30 你不去，我也不去。[nǐ bú qù, wǒ yě bú qù.]

(If you won't go, I won't go, either.)

Each clause in a compound sentence is separate and independent. The sentence “我期望着，这一天早日到来。[wǒ qī wàng zhe, zhè yī tiān zǎo rì dào lái.] (I hope that this day will come soon.)” is not a compound sentence because “这一天早日到来 [zhè yī tiān zǎo rì dào lái] (this day will come soon)” functions as the object of “我期望着 [wǒ qī wàng zhe] (I hope).”

## Section six: sentence constituents and analysis of sentence structures

### I. Sentence constituents

Generally speaking, a sentence doesn't simply consist of a word. The words in a sentence are related in different ways. Some are related directly; some have to be related by being combined with other words to form a phrase. For example, in the sentence “小组讨论整整进行了一天。[xiǎo zǔ tāo lùn zhěng zhěng jìn xíng le yī tiān.] (The group has been discussing for a whole day),” “小组 [xiǎo zǔ] (group)” and “进行 [jìn xíng] (have been)” are not related directly; neither are “整整 [zhěng zhěng] (a whole)” nor “讨论 [tāo lùn] discuss.” “小组 [xiǎo zǔ] (group)” and “讨论 [tāo lùn] (discuss)” are related directly, forming a verbal phrase to indicate a relation that one is modifying and the other is being modified. The same is true for “整整 [zhěng zhěng] (a whole)” and “进行了一天讨论 [jìn xíng le yī tiān tāo lùn] (discuss for a day).” Two phrases “小组讨论 [xiǎo zǔ tāo lùn] (the group have been discussing)” and “整整进行了一天 [zhěng zhěng jìn xíng le yī tiān] (for a whole day)” are related directly, forming a subject-predicate sentence. Each word or phrase in the sentence functions differently. Take the previous sentence for instance. “小组讨论 [xiǎo zǔ tāo lùn] (the group has been discussing)” is what the sentence narrates, in which “小组 [xiǎo zǔ] (group)” modifies “讨论 [tāo lùn] (discuss);” “整整进行了一天 [zhěng zhěng jìn xíng le yī tiān] (for a whole day)” narrates “小组讨论 [xiǎo zǔ tāo lùn] (the group have been discussing)” further, in which “整整 [zhěng zhěng] (for a whole)” modifies “进行了一天 [jìn xíng le yī tiān] (for a whole day),” and “一天 [yī tiān] (a day)” complements the duration of discussion in the sentence. Following this analysis, a sentence can be divided into several parts. Take the same sentence for instance; first, it is divided into two parts and they are subject part “小组讨论 [xiǎo zǔ tāo lùn] (the group has been discussing)” and predicate part “整整进行了一天 [zhěng zhěng jìn xíng le yī tiān] (for a whole day).” And then, these two parts are subdivided into five smaller parts: “小组 [xiǎo zǔ] (group),” “讨论 [tāo lùn] (discuss),” “整整 [zhěng zhěng] (for a whole),” “进行 [jìn xíng] (have been),”

and “一天 [yī tiān] (a day).” Each part parsed in this way is named a sentence constituent. Based on how they function and what roles they play in a sentence, sentence constituents include subject, predicate, object, adverbial, complement, and attribute.

The subject part is the object of predication; the predicate part is the predication to the subject part. All double-part sentences can be divided into the subject part and the predicate part.

In the predicate part, a word or phrase mainly functioning as a key is predicate. The predicate in a sentence with the verb as predicate is functioned by a verb, also named “predicative verb” for the sake of convenience. The same is true for “predicative adjectives.” A noun or noun phrase functions as a predicate in a sentence with a noun as a predicate; a subject-predicate phrase functions as a predicate in a sentence with the subject-predicate as a predicate.

In the predicate part of a sentence with a verb as predicate, the nominal word that the verb involves is the object. For example, in the sentence “我写字。[wǒ xiě zì.] (I am writing Chinese characters.),” “字 [zì] (Chinese characters)” is the object of “写 [xiě] (writing).”

The complementary constituents after a predicate verb and a predicate adjective are regarded as complements, most of which are mainly qualified by predicative words. Sometimes, a numeral-quantifier phrase can also function as a complement. For example, in sentences such as “她唱得很好。[tā chàng de hěn hǎo.] (She sings well.),” “这朵花红极了。[zhè duǒ huā hóng jí le.] (This flower is very red.),” and “我去了三次。[wǒ qù le sān cì.] (I went there three times.),” “很好 [hěn hǎo] (well),” “极[jí] (very),” and “三次 [sān cì] (three times)” are complements.

The constituent before the predicate is adverbial. For example, in the sentences “小组讨论整整进行了一天。[xiǎo zǔ tāo lùn zhěng zhěng jìn xíng le yī tiān.] (The group has been discussing for a whole day.)” and “他很高兴。[tā hěn gāo xìng.] (He is very happy.),” “整整 [zhěng zhěng] (for a whole)” and “很 [hěn] (very)” are adverbs. Sometimes, an adverb can come before the subject, such as “昨天 [zuó tiān] (yesterday)” in the sentence “昨天我看了一场电影。[zuó tiān wǒ kàn le yī chǎng diàn yǐng.] (Yesterday we watched a film.)”

If the subject part is a noun phrase with the relationship of modifying and being modified, the modifying item is an attribute, such as “我 [wǒ] (I),” as the attribute in the sentence “我弟弟是学生。[wǒ dì dì shì xué shēng.] (My brother is a student.)” Also, the modifier before an object is an attribute. For example, in the sentences “他是我的老师。[tā shì wǒ de lǎo shī.] (He is my teacher.)” and “他们对我们表示热烈的欢迎。[tā men duì wǒ men biǎo shì rè liè de huān yíng.] (They gave us a warm welcome.),” “我的 [wǒ de] (my)” and “热烈的 [rè liè de] (warm)” are attributes.

These six sentence constituents are not at the same level. The subject part and the object part are related at the same level; the object is only related to the predicative verb; the complement is only related to the predicative verb or the predicative adjective. Sometimes, the adverb modifies the whole predicate part and sometimes it only modifies the predicate. The attribute modifies the subject and object.

To take a sentence with a verb as the predicate, for example, the basic sequence of sentence constituents in Chinese is as follows:

attribute+subject|adverb+predicate+complement+attribute+object

The names of these sentence constituents also embody the grammatical relation among them. For example, an attribute is the modifier for a noun, no matter whether this noun is the subject or the object of a sentence. More examples are listed in the following.

Example 1 (小刘)北京(attribute)人(noun)。[(xiǎo liú) běi jīng rén]  
(Xiao Liu is from Beijing.)

Example 2 (大家不要乱,)一个(attribute)人(noun)一个(attribute)人(noun)  
说。[(dà jiā bú yào luàn,) yī gè rén yī gè rén shuō]  
(Don't chip in! Let's talk one by one!)

Adverb modifies verb or adjective.

Example 3 热烈地(adverb)讨论(verb)进行了很(adverb)久(adjective)。[rè liè de tāo lùn jìn xíng le hěn jiǔ.]  
(The heated discussion has lasted for a long time.)

Example 4 (孩子们)很(adverb)早(adjective)就起来了。[hái zi men hěn zǎo jiù qǐ lái le.]  
(The children got up very early.)

The object is what a verb involves.

Example 5 学(verb)汉语(object)是比较困难的。[xué hàn yǔ shì bǐ jiào kùn nán de.]  
(Learning Chinese is rather difficult.)

Example 6 (他急得)吃(verb)不下(complement)饭(object)。[tā jí dé chī bù xià fàn.]  
(He is too worried to eat anything.)

The noun after preposition is the object

Example 7 (他)从(preposition)南方(object)来。[tā cóng nán fāng lái.]  
(He comes from the south.)

The complement mainly complements verbs and adjectives.

Example 8 考(verb)上(complement)大学(object)是他的愿望。[kǎo shàng dà xué shì tā de yuàn wàng.]  
(To learn in university is his pursuit.)

## II. Sentence parsing

To parse a sentence, the first step is to parse the subject part and the predicate part with a “|” in the middle, and then to identify its sentence type.

Example 9 我|学习汉语。[wǒ xué xí hàn yǔ.]  
(I learn Chinese.) (a sentence with verb as predicate)

Example 10 今天|很热。[jīn tiān hěn rè.]  
(It is very hot today.) (a sentence with adjective as predicate)

Example 11 北京的春天|一般风沙很大。[běi jīng de chūn tiān yī bān fēng shā hěn dà.]  
(It is very windy and dusty in Beijing in Spring.) (a sentence with subject-predicate as predicate)

Example 12 明天|星期三。[míng tiān xīng qī sān.]  
(Tomorrow is Wednesday.) (a sentence with noun as predicate)

Based on the characteristics of these sentence types, the second step is to go on parsing further.

Generally, the structure of the sentence with verb as predicate is more complex. For example, first, to identify the subject and the object and underline them with “=” and “-” respectively; then to identify the predictive verb and underline it with “\_”; and then to identify the complement and adverb and enclose them with “[ ]” and “<>” separately; at last to identify the object and enclose it with “(.)”

Example 13 (王刚的)弟弟|<去年><在北京语言文化大学>学了[一年]的汉语。[Wáng Gāng de dì dì qù nián zài běi jīng yǔ yán wén huà dà xué xué le yī nián de hàn yǔ.]  
(Wang Gang’s brother has learned Chinese for a whole year in Beijing Language and Culture University since last year.)

For the sentence with an adjective as the predicate, identification of the subject and the predicate goes first, and then followed by other constituents.

Example 14 (我们班的)同学|<今天>高兴[极]了。[wǒ men bān de tóng xué jīn tiān gāo xìng jí le.]  
(The students of our class are very happy today.)

The structure of the sentence with a subject-predicate as the predicate is comparatively simple, whose predicate part only consists of an adverb and predicate.

Example 15 哥哥|<一直>学习很好。[gē gē yī zhí xué xí hěn hǎo.]  
(The brother always studies well.)

The structure of the sentence with a noun as predicate is simple, too.

Example 16 (我们班的)小张|高个子，宽肩膀。[wǒ men bān de Xiǎo Zhāng gāo gè zi, kuān jiān bǎng.]  
(Xiao Zhao in our class is tall and broad-shouldered.)

The sentence parsing won't go further when all sentence constituents are identified. Usually, a sentence constituent consists of a word or a phrase containing several words; no further parsing is needed for a phrase. if necessary, it needs parsing as an individual. Take Example 15 and Example 16 for instance again:

Example 17 哥哥<一直>学习很好。 [gē gē yī zhí xué xí hěn hǎo.]

(The brother always studies well.)

学习很好: 学习<很>好 [xué xí hěn hǎo]

(studies well)

Example 18 (我们班的)小张高个子, 宽肩膀。 [wǒ men bān de Xiǎo Zhāng gāo gè zi, kuān jiān bǎng.]

(Xiao Zhao in our class is tall and broad-shouldered.)

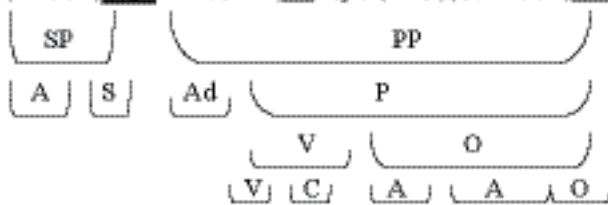
高个子, 宽肩膀: (高)个子, (宽)肩膀 [gāo gè zi, kuān jiān bǎng]

(tall and broad-shouldered)

Or a constituent hierarchy is also accepted.

Example 19

(小李的)朋友 || <昨天> 买[到]了(一本)(新出版的)杂志。



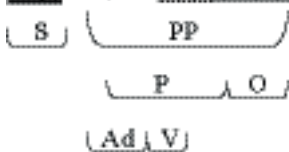
[Xiǎo Lǐ de péng yǒu zuó tiān mǎi dào le yī běn xīn chū bǎn de zá zhì.]

(The friend of Xiao Li bought a newly published magazine yesterday.)

(Note: SP=subject part, PP=predicate part, A=attribute, S=subject, Ad=adverb, P=predicate, V=verb, O=object, C=complement)

Example 20

小明 || <很> 喜欢学外语。



[xiǎo míng hěn xǐ huān xué wài yǔ.]

(Xiao Ming likes math very much.)

(Note: S=subject, PP=predicate part, P=predicate, O=object, Ad=adverb, V=verb)

It should be pointed out that the purpose of parsing sentences is to help students understand a sentence well. Therefore, it depends on whether a sentence structure



is complex or not. It is not necessary to parse a sentence in a simple structure; however when it is complex, to identify the main items (subject, verb, object) helps students fully understand the entire sentence, such as its structure, its constituents, and the relations among them. Usually in Chinese teaching, if unnecessary, parsing just stops at the sentence constituent.

## **Section seven: classifications of sentence functions**

A sentence is the unit of a language as well as the unit of an utterance. We communicate thoughts and emotions through talking. Therefore, we can classify sentences into different types, according to their communicative functions and grammatical structures.

Based on different communicative functions, sentences can be classified into declarative sentences, interrogative sentences, imperative sentences, exclamatory sentences, and greeting-responding sentences. Interrogative sentences, imperative sentences, and greeting-responding sentences usually occur in conversations where both the speaker and the listener are present. Exclamatory sentences often appear in conversation and in non-conversational situations. Declarative sentences always appear in non-conversational situations and in conversation at times.

### ***I. Declarative sentences***

A declarative sentence expresses a statement, description, exposition, or argumentation, transmitting information to readers or listeners. Most declarative sentences occur in non-conversational situations. When a person continues talking in a conversation, declarative sentences may occur.

A declarative sentence can be classified into several modes, also named rhetorical modes. They are the narrative mode, descriptive mode, expository mode, and argumentative mode.

#### **1 Narrative mode**

The narrative mode expresses what is going on about an action or an event. There is always a time word to indicate its duration, which mainly helps distinguish the narrative mode from others.

Example 1 第二天，他们就坐飞机从北京去了上海了。[dì èr tiān, tā men jiù zuò fēi jī cóng běi jīng qù le shàng hǎi le.]  
(They flew from Beijing to Shanghai the next day.)

Example 2 他刚想欠起身去看看讲话的是谁，忽然小李一蹦一跳地过来了。[tā gāng xiǎng qiǎn qǐ shēn qù kàn kàn jiǎng huà de shì shuí, hū rán Xiǎo Lǐ yí bèng yí tiào de guò lái le.]  
(As soon as he was about to stand up, attempting to see who was talking, Xiao Li skipped toward him.)

Example 3 女演员抱着琵琶下车，腰肢扭摆，美目流盼，高跟鞋嘎嘎几声，便消失在书场的珠帘里。[nǚ yǎn yuán bào zhe pí pá xià chē, yāo zhī niū bǎi, měi mù liú pàn, gāo gēn xié gā gā jǐ shēng, biàn xiāo shī zài shū chǎng de zhū lián lǐ.]

(With a pipa in her hands, she got out of the car and walked in high-heel shoes for several steps, twisting her slim waist and glancing with her bewitching eyes. And then she disappeared behind the curtain door of the reading room.)  
(Note: the time word has been mentioned in the context)

Example 4 天黑以后，他才从学校回到家。进门以后，他先打开灯，然后放下手里的书包开始做饭。[tiān hēi yǐ hòu, tā cái cóng xué xiào huí dào jiā. jìn mén yǐ hòu, tā xiān dǎ kāi dēng, rán hòu fàng xià shǒu lǐ de shū bāo kāi shǐ zuò fàn.]

(He came back from the school when it got dark. Entering the room, he turned on the light, put down his book, and then began to cook dinner.)

Example 5 她说够了，这时屋里顿时安静下来。[tā shuō gòu le, zhè shí wū lǐ dùn shí ān jìng xià lái.]

(After finishing her words, the room went quiet at once.)

Example 6 卢嘉川的神色突然严肃起来。[lú jiā chuān de shén sè tū rán yán sù qǐ lái.]

(Lu Jiachuan began to get tense immediately.)

(Note: the time word has been mentioned in the context)

The big difference between the narrative mode and non-narrative modes (descriptive mode, expository mode, and argumentative mode) exists in the occurrence time of action. In Example 2, “wanted to stand up” goes first and then “skipped toward” follows. In Example 3, “got off the car” goes first, then “twisting” and “glancing,” and then “disappeared.” In Example 4, five behaviors are listed by time: “回来 [huí lái] (come back),” “进门 [jìn mén] (enter),” “打开 [dǎ kāi] (turn on),” “放下 [fàng xià] (put down),” “做饭 [zuò fàn] (cook dinner).”

Narrative mode is very popular in genres such as novels, fairy tales, stories, and news reports, mainly represented by sentences with verbs as their predicates, fixed phrases, or sometimes sentences with adjectives as predicates. Compared with others, the narrative mode is more complicated due to its various grammatical phenomena.

## 2 Descriptive mode

The descriptive mode describes the appearance or features of a person or a thing, mainly represented by some syntactic structures, such as a sentence with an adjective as predicate, a modal complement followed by “得 [de],” a fixed phrase, an existential clause, a dynamic auxiliary “着 [zhe].” Sometimes, verbal phrases or subject-predicate phrases are also acceptable.

Example 7 天山的蘑菇又大又肥厚，鲜嫩无比。[tiān shān de mó gū yòu dà yòu féi hòu, xiān nèn wú bǐ.]

(Mushrooms in the Tian Mountains are big and fleshy, fresh and tender.)

Example 8 青的萝卜，紫的茄子，红的辣椒，又红又黄的西红柿，真是五彩斑斓，耀眼争光。[qīng de luó bo, zǐ de qié zi, hóng de là jiāo, yòu hóng yòu huáng de xī hóng shì, zhēn shì wǔ cǎi bān lán, yào yǎn zhēng guāng.]

(A lot of vegetables in different colors are displayed, such as pale green turnips, dark purple eggplants, red chilies, reddish yellow tomatoes.)

Example 9 被浓云衬托着，大坝好像是一只泊在海里的大军舰，更加雄伟了。[bèi nóng yún chèn tuō zhe, dà bà hǎo xiàng shì yī zhī bó zài hǎi lǐ de dà jūn jiàn, gèng jiā xióng wěi le.]

(Shadowed by the thick clouds, the dam looks like a huge warship imposingly berthing in the sea.)

Example 10 街道在月光雪影下朦朦胧胧，像罩上了一层烟雾。[jiē dào zài yuè guāng xuě yǐng xià méng méng lóng long, xiàng zhào shàng le yī céng yān wù.]

(The street is submerged by the snow and the hazy moonlight, seemingly enclosed in smog.)

Example 11 我家门前有一条小河，河边栽着两行垂柳。小河上架着一座小桥，桥那边是一个小村庄。村庄掩映在红的桃花绿的白杨中。[wǒ jiā mén qián yǒu yī tiáo xiǎo hé, hé biān zāi zhe liǎng xíng chuí liǔ. xiǎo hé shàng jià zhe yī zuò xiǎo qiáo, qiáo nà biān shì yī gè xiǎo cūn zhuāng. cūn zhuāng yǎn yìng zài hóng de táo huā lǜ de bái yáng zhōng.]

(In front of my house is a small river with willows on both sides. A foot bridge crosses it, leading to a small village shaded by the red peach blossoms and the green aspens.)

Example 12 她不过二十来岁，头发梳得光光的，身上穿着一件新潮的短衫，下边一条超短裙，脚上的皮鞋的鞋底足有五寸厚。我们这个小山村的人像看西洋镜一样都跑出来看她。[tā bú guò èr shí lái suì, tóu fà shū de guāng guāng de, shēn shàng chuān zhe yī jiàn xīn cháo de duǎn shān, xià biān yī tiáo chāo duǎn qún, jiǎo shàng de pí xié de xié dǐ zú yǒu wǔ cùn hòu. wǒ men zhè gè xiǎo shān cūn de rén xiàng kàn xī yáng jìng yí yàng dōu pǎo chū lái kàn tā.]

(She was about twenty. With neat hair, she was in a fashionable shirt, a miniskirt, and a pair of leather shoes with a thick sole. Our villagers ran out to see her, just like watching a peepshow.)

Usually, the descriptive mode describes a static thing, so there is no word to indicate a particular time.

### 3 Expository mode

The expository mode explains characteristics and functions of a thing, mainly represented by the sentence with a noun as predicate, the “是 [shì]” sentence, and the sentence with “过 [guò].”

Example 13 一根冰棍两块五。[yī gēn bīng gùn liǎng kuài wǔ.]  
(An ice-lolly costs 2.5 yuan.)

Example 14 新来的英语老师是澳大利亚人。[xīn lái de yīng yǔ lǎo shī shì ào dà lì yà rén.]  
(The new English teacher is from Australia.)

Example 15 他是我妹妹的先生，大兴公司总经理。[tā shì wǒ mèi mèi de xiān shēng, dà xīng gōng sī zǒng jīng lǐ.]  
(He is my sister's husband, the manager of Xia Xing Company.)

Example 16 这所房子我已经买下了，下个月就可以搬进去了。[zhè suǒ fáng zi wǒ yǐ jīng mǎi xià le, xià gè yuè jiù kě yǐ bān jìn qù le.]  
(I have bought this house and plan to move in next month.)

Example 17 他在非洲住过很多年，很了解那里的风土人情，你请他介绍吧。[tā zài fēi zhōu zhù guò hěn duō nián, hěn le jiě nà lǐ de fēng tǔ rén qíng, nǐ qǐng tā jiè shào ba.]  
(He has lived in Africa for many years, so he is very familiar with its local customs and practices. Please let him make an introduction.)

Since the expository mode stresses explanation, there is no word to indicate a particular time.

#### 4 Argumentative mode

The argumentative mode discusses a view or an opinion.

Example 18 “现代汉语八百词”指出：“从”能表示过去、现在和将来的时间起点，“自从”限于表示过去的时间起点。这无疑是非常正确的。但除此之外，“自从”和“从”还有一些区别。[“xiàn dài hàn yǔ bā bǎi cí” zhǐ chū: “cóng” néng biǎo shì guò qù, xiàn zài hé jiāng lái de shí jiān qǐ diǎn, “zì cóng” xiàn yú biǎo shì guò qù de shí jiān qǐ diǎn. zhè wú yí shì fēi cháng zhèng què de. dàn chú cǐ zhī wài, “zì cóng” hé “cóng” hái yǒu yī xiē qū bié.]  
(In the book *800 Words in Modern Chinese*, it says: “‘从(from)’ indicates time that starts from the past, the present, and the future; ‘自从(since from)’ only means the time that starts from the past. The aforementioned are definitely right, but there are some differences between two.”)

Example 19 这个现象说明了两个事实，一是篇章单位与句法单位的不一致性，二是篇章结构与句法结构的不一致性。[zhè gè xiàn xiàng shuō míng le liǎng gè shì shí, yī shì piān zhāng dān wèi yǔ jù fǎ dān wèi de bù yī zhì xìng, èr shì piān zhāng jié gòu yǔ jù fǎ jié gòu de bù yī zhì xìng.]  
(This phenomenon proves two facts. One is that a text unit is different from a syntactic unit; the other is that a text structure is different from a syntactic structure.)

Usually there is no word to indicate a particular time.

A mode decides its own grammatical structure and further regulates how the sentences or sentence groups are arranged, which is shown very clearly between the narrative mode and the non-narrative mode.

In reality, a continuous flow of speech consists of more than one mode. For instance, narration, description, and argumentation are very popular in novels.

## **II. Interrogative sentences**

An interrogative sentence poses a question to obtain information from the other side. It mainly appears in conversation. A typical interrogative sentence neither affirms nor denies anything.

Example 20 你去上海吗? [nǐ qù shàng hǎi mā?]  
(Will you go to Shanghai?)

Example 21 他是不是你们班的学生? [tā shì bú shì nǐ men bān de xué shēng?]  
(Is he your classmate?)

Example 22 今天星期几? [jīn tiān xīng qī jǐ?]  
(What day is today?)

Example 23 你喜欢看电影还是喜欢看打球? [nǐ xǐ huān kàn diàn yǐng hái shì xǐ huān kàn dǎ qiú?]  
(Do you like watching a film or watching a football match?)

Usually, an interrogative sentence is short and simple. Most grammatical constituents can function here, only excluding modal complements. For example, “好 [hǎo] (good)” doesn’t appear in an interrogative sentence, except when it decides an action, such as “他唱的好不好? [tā chàng de hǎo bù hǎo?] (Does he sing well or not?).” Conjunctions are not commonly used in interrogative sentences.

## **III. Imperative sentences**

An imperative sentence expresses an order, a request, dissuasion, or prohibition.

Example 24 请你给我一个明确的答复。[qǐng nǐ gěi wǒ yī gè míng què de dá fù.]  
(Please give me a definite answer.)

Example 25 别吵了! [bié chǎo le!]  
(Be quiet!)

Example 26 场内禁止吸烟! [chǎng nèi jìn zhǐ xī yān!]  
(No smoking inside!)

An imperative sentence has its own rules regarding verbs, adjectives and other grammatical structures.

#### IV. Exclamatory sentences

Instead of transmitting information, an exclamatory sentence expresses different emotions or feelings, such as happiness, admiration, anger, sadness, disgust, surprise, and so on.

Example 27 呸! [pēi!]

(Bah!)

Example 28 多美的夜晚啊! [duō měi de yè wǎn ā!]

(What a beautiful night!)

Example 29 啊呀，风筝飞得真高! [ā ya, fēng zhēng fēi dé zhēn gāo!]

(Oh, how high the kite flies!)

Example 30 好棒啊! [hǎo bàng ā!]

(How great!)

Example 31 人民万岁! [rén mín wàn suì!]

(Long live the Chinese people!)

Example 32 祝朋友们身体健康! [zhù péng yǒu men shēn tǐ jiàn kāng!]

(Best wishes for my friends' health!)

Example 33 为我们的友谊干杯! [wèi wǒ men de yǒu yì gān bēi!]

(To toast for our friendship!)

The exclamatory sentence is simple in structure. Some adverbs are commonly used, such as “多 [duō] (much),” “多么 [duō me] (how),” “真 [zhēn] (really),” “好 [hǎo] (well),” “太 [tài] (too),” “极了 [jí le] (extremely).”

#### V. Greeting-responding sentence

As its name implies, this type of sentence refers to greeting and responding. It has two types: greeting sentences and responding sentences.

##### 1 Greeting sentence

Its function is to draw attention.

Example 34 老张! [Lǎo Zhāng!]

(Lao Zhang!)

Example 35 王刚! [Wáng Gāng!]

(Wang Gang!)

Example 36 孙大夫! [Sūn dài fū!]

(Doctor Sun!)

## 34 Overview

Example 37 张先生! [Zhāng xiān shēng!]  
(Mr. Zhang!)

Example 38 妈! [mā!]  
(Mum!)

Example 39 喂! [wèi/wéi!]  
(Hello!)

## 2 Responding sentence

It refers to the response to the greeting, such as “唉 [ài] (yes).”

### Section eight: word order of Chinese sentences

The words or the phrases of a sentence need arranging by a certain order which is called word order. A sentence has its own inner order; the order of sentences in a flow of speech will be influenced by what is known and unknown as well as textual factors. Moreover, the Chinese thinking pattern and cultural factors can influence this order, too. Therefore, word order involves different levels of a language.

#### I. Natural word order of a Chinese sentence

A natural word order refers to an order existing alone without any contextual influence. Since the structure of a sentence with verb as predicate is the most complex, let's see how its constituents are arranged by a natural order. These constituents include behavior verbs, doers, objects of doers, and adverbs indicating time, location, and manners of behavior. A natural word order is as follows:

subject (doer)-adverb-verb-complement-object (of doer)

If a modifier exists in the middle between the subject and the object, the natural word order would be:

subject (attribute+noun)-adverb-verb-complement-object(attribute+noun)

Example 1 “徐华北给我写了一篇评论，(评论)和作品一块儿发表。”她还是兴高采烈地说着，(她)抬起手擦了擦汗。[“xú huá běi gěi wǒ xiě le yī piān píng lùn, (píng lùn) hé zuò pǐn yī kuài er fā biǎo.” tā hái shì xìng gāo cǎi liè de shuō zhe, (tā) tái qǐ shǒu cā le cā hàn.]

(“Xu Huabei wrote a comment for me and it will be published with my works,” she said happily and wiped the sweat with her arm at the same time.)

This sentence is in natural order. More similar examples are as follows:

Example 2 田汉小时候不仅看过罗元德的戏以及那些由农民们演出的乡野气息更浓的花鼓戏，而且还看过湘剧名老生陈绍益的“取成都”、“铁

冠园”等戏。[tián hàn xiǎo shí hòu bù jìn kàn guò luó yuán dé de xì yǐ jí nà xiē yóu nóng mǐn men yǎn chū de xiāng yè qì xī gèng nóng de huā gǔ xì, ér qiě hái kàn guò xiāng jù míng lǎo shēng chén shào yì de “qǔ chéng dū”, “tiē guān yuán” děng xì.]

(When he was a child, Tian Han watched many traditional operas, such as the operas played by Luo Yuande, typical rural flower-drum operas by those peasants and Hunan operas named “Qu Chengdu” and “Tie Guan Yuan” played by the famous old actor Chen Shaoyi.)

Example 3 那个红脸膛的陕北小伙子突然站了起来，朝他憨憨地一笑。[nà gè hóng liǎn táng de shǎn běi xiǎo huǒ er tū rán zhàn le qǐ lái, cháo tā hān hān de yí xiào.]

(That young man who came from the north of Shannxi, with a reddish face, stood up and smiled to him kindly.)

Example 4 这时，三个漂亮的小女孩跑上台向得奖的演员献上了一束束花。[zhè shí, sān gè piào liàng de xiǎo nǚ hái pǎo shàng tái xiàng dé jiǎng de yǎn yuán xiàn shàng le yí shù shù huā.]

(At this moment, three beautiful girls stepped on the stage and presented a bouquet of flowers to the award-winning actor.)

In Example 4, “这时 [zhè shí] (at this moment)” is put at the head of the sentence in order to continue the preceding paragraphs.

## II. Influence of information structure and discourse on word order

### 1 Known information and unknown information

Usually, known information is arranged in the front and unknown information in the rear in a sentence. In the flow of speech, the word order of the rear sentence will be influenced by the sentence in front. Therefore, the natural word order of a sentence will be changed consequently.

Example 5 平心而论，那确实是一首漂亮的好诗，他心悦诚服地想，可是海涛却气愤地把那首诗撕得粉碎。[píng xīn ér lùn, nà què shí shì yī shǒu piào liàng de hǎo shī, tā xīn yuè chéng fú de xiǎng, kě shì hǎi tāo què qì fèn de bǎ nà shǒu shī sī dé fěn suì.]

(Honestly speaking, he was completely convinced that it was a good poem. However, Hai Tao tore up it angrily.)

In this example, “诗 [shī] (poem)” has been mentioned in the beginning so it is put before the verb “撕 [sī] (tore up)” by “把 [bǎ]” when mentioned the second time.

Example 6 我向狮子头借钱，狮子头懒洋洋地说：“那倒不会，咱一向够哥儿们意思，不过，这钱，可不好弄，要多少？”[wǒ xiàng shī zǐ tóu



jiè qián, shī zǐ tóu lǎn yáng yáng de shuō: “nà dào bú huì, zán yī xiàng gòu gē er men yì sī, bú guò, zhè qián, kě bù hǎo nòng, yào duō shǎo?”]  
 (When I told Shi Zi Tou that I wanted to borrow money from him, he said unwillingly: “Of course I will lend you money because I am always your good friend. But, it is not easy for me, so how much do you want?”)

“钱 [qián] (money)” is put before “可不好弄 [kě bù hǎo nòng] (it is not easy for me)” because it has been mentioned in the context.

Example 7 “白糖水，快！” [“bái táng shuǐ, kuài!”]  
 (“Sugar water! Hurry!”)

糖水刚放在老车夫的嘴边，他哼哼了两声。[táng shuǐ gāng fàng zài lǎo chē fū de zuǐ biān, tā hēng hēng le liǎng shēng.]  
 (As soon as the sugar water was served to the mouth of the old carter, he groaned twice.)

“糖水 [táng shuǐ] (sugar water)” is arranged before the verb “放 [fàng] (be served)” because it is the known information.

Example 8 见事不好的话，你灭了灯，从大后院跳到王家去。王家的人你认得？对，在王家藏会儿再走。[jiàn shì bù hǎo de huà, nǐ miè le dēng, cóng dà hòu yuàn tiào dào Wáng jiā qù. Wáng jiā de rén nǐ rèn dé? duì, zài Wáng jiā cáng huì er zài zǒu.]

(If something unexpected happened, you could turn off the light and escape to Wang’s house from the backyard. You know the family members of Wang, don’t you? Right, you’d better hide there for a while before you leave.)

Since “王家 [Wáng jiā] (Wang’s)” appears in the first sentence, it is the known information. Therefore, it is arranged before “王家的人你认得 [Wáng jiā de rén nǐ rèn dé] (You know the family members of Wang).”

## 2 The constituents connecting the sentence group

The constituents that connect the sentence group in a written discourse should be arranged at the head of sentence.

Example 9 他先在急诊室里，后来又在病房里守着母亲，整整守了四天四夜。这四天里，他没有做日语习题，也没有温习地理讲义。[tā xiān zài jí zhěn shì lǐ, hòu lái yòu zài bìng fáng lǐ shǒu zhe mǔ qīn, zhěng zhěng shǒu le sì tiān sì yè. zhè sì tiān lǐ, tā méi yǒu zuò rì yǔ xí tí, yě méi yǒu wēn xí de lǐ jiāng yì.]

(He accompanied his mother in the emergency room first and then in the sickroom for four days. During these days, he neither did the Japanese exercises nor reviewed the geography teaching materials.)

“这四天里 [zhè sì tiān lǐ] (during these four days)” connects the sentences before and after it, so it is arranged at the head of the sentence.

Example 10 他从存车处推出自行车来，走出医院大门。这时，他看见她正急急忙忙迎面跑来。[tā cóng cún chē chù tuī chū zì xíng chē lái, zǒu chū yī yuàn dà mén. zhè shí, tā kàn jiàn tā zhèng jí jí máng máng yíng miàn pǎo lái.] (He went out from the bicycle park with his bike, heading to the hospital gate. At this moment, he saw her running toward him in a hurry.)

“这时 [zhè shí] (at this moment)” functions as a connection, so it is arranged at the head of sentence.

Example 11 通向首都西郊的大道上车轮滚滚，他瞧见她的黑发在晨风中飘得高高的。[tōng xiàng shǒu dū xī jiāo de dà dào shàng chē lún gǔn gǔn, tā qiáo jiàn tā de hēi fà zài chén fēng zhōng piāo de gāo gāo de.] (There was heavy traffic on the avenue to the western suburb of Beijing, where he saw her, with her black hair waving lively in the morning breeze.)

In the sentence, the locational phrase “通向首都西郊的大道上 [tōng xiàng shǒu dū xī jiāo de dà dào shàng] (on the avenue to the western suburb of Beijing)” helps connect the following sentence, so it is arranged in front.

### III. Other factors

There are other factors that influence word order.

#### 1 Thinking patterns

Due to Chinese thinking patterns, the word order can be changed.

#### 2 Temporal sequences

There is a rule for Chinese word order: what goes first should go first, according to the temporal sequence.

Examples of these factors are as follows:

Example 12 我推开房门看见外面站着一个老人。[wǒ tuī kāi fáng mén kàn jiàn wài miàn zhàn zhe yī gè lǎo rén.] (I opened the door and saw an old man outside.)

Example 13 我正在走着，突然看见一只兔子从树洞里跳出来。[wǒ zhèng zài zǒu zhe, tū rán kàn jiàn yī zhī tù zǐ cóng shù dòng lǐ tiào chū lái.] (When I was walking, I suddenly saw a rabbit jumping out from a tree hole.)

Example 14 我发现对面的数上有一个洞，突然洞里跳出来一只兔子。[wǒ fā xiàn duì miàn de shù shàng yǒu yī gè dòng, tū rán dòng lǐ tiào chū lái yī zhī tù zǐ.] (I found a hole in the opposite tree and then a rabbit suddenly jumped out from it.)

The natural order of observing a person is from a general impression (tall, short, thin, or fat) to detailed appearance (hairstyle, clothes, face).

Example 15 我仔细打量进来的客人，只见她身上穿着一件黑色的T恤，下面是一条牛仔裤，脚上穿着一双耐克旅游鞋，梳着短短的运动头，皮肤黑黑的，眼睛不大，可是叫人一眼难忘。她是谁呢？[wǒ zǐ xì dǎ liàng jìn lái de kè rén, zhǐ jiàn tā shēn shàng chuān zhe yí jiàn hēi sè de T-xù, xià miàn shì yī tiáo niú zǎi kù, jiǎo shàng chuān zhe yì shuāng nài kè lǚ yóu xié, shū zhe duǎn duǎn de yùn dòng tóu, pí fū hēi hēi de, yǎn jīng bú dà, kě shì jiào rén yī yǎn nán wàng. tā shì shuí ne?]

(I looked up and down at the guest who came in. She wore a black T-shirt, a pair of jeans, and Nike shoes. She had short hairstyle, dark skin, and small eyes. She was really unforgettable at the first sight. Who on earth was she?)

Example 16 我们一起进了院子。院子不大，很干净。周围种了几棵丁香，正在开花，所以满园芳香。院子正中是一条甬道，甬道通向一幢两层的楼房，正中有一个大玻璃门。门前种了五颜六色的花。甬道的两旁满是绿绿的草地。[wǒ men yī qǐ jìn le yuàn zi. yuàn zi bú dà, hěn gān jìng. zhōu wéi zhòng le jǐ kē dīng xiāng, zhèng zài kāi huā, suǒ yǐ mǎn yuán fāng xiāng. yuàn zi zhèng zhōng shì yī tiáo yǒng dào, yǒng dào tōng xiàng yī zhuàng liǎng céng de lóu fang, zhèng zhōng yǒu yī gè dà bō lí mén. mén qián zhòng le wǔ yán liù sè de huā. yǒng dào de liǎng páng mǎn shì lǜ lǜ de cǎo dì.]

(We went into the yard. It was not big but very clean, enclosed with several lilac bushes in blossom. They filled the air with a pleasant fragrance. There was a paved path leading to a building of two floors with a big glass door in the middle. The front was filled with colorful flowers and it was covered with grassland on both sides.)

The natural order of expressing a number, a location, or a date is generally from the biggest (the farthest) to the smallest (the nearest) in Chinese.

Example 17 一百二十八亿六千五百四十三万九千七百三十三 [yī bǎi èr shí bā yì liù qiān wǔ bǎi sì shí sān wàn jiǔ qiān qī bǎi sān shí sān]

(128, 65, 43, 733)

中国北京市海淀区学院路15号 [zhōng guó běi jīng shì hǎi diàn qū xué yuàn lù shí wǔ hào]

(No. 15 Xueyuan Road, Beijing Haidian District, China)

1999年7月2日 [yī jiǔ jiǔ nián qī yuè èr rì]

(July 2, 1999)

### 3 Cultural factors and social conventions

Due to Chinese cultural factors as well as social conventions, some word orders cannot be changed, such as “父亲、母亲 [fù qīn, mǔ qīn] (father and mother),” “爸爸、妈妈 [bà bà, mā mā] (dad and mum),” “男女老少 [nán nǚ lǎo shào] (men and women, old and young),” “城市、农村 [chéng shì, nóng cūn] (city and country),” “工商 [gōng shāng] (industry and agriculture),” “文教 [wén jiào] (culture and education),” and “医疗、卫生 [yī liáo, wèi shēng] (medical treatment and public health).”

## 2 Nouns

A noun is a word that functions as the name of a person or a thing (including space, location, and time). A noun can be divided into four sub-types. They are as follows:

Common nouns:

手 [shǒu] (hand), 床 [chuáng] (bed), 字典 [zì diǎn] (dictionary), 自行车 [zì xíng chē] (bicycle), 专家 [zhuān jiā] (expert), 工程师 [gōng chéng shī] (engineer), 售票员 [shòu piào yuán] (conductor), 学生 [xué shēng] (student), 阿姨 [ā yí] (aunt), 水 [shuǐ] (water), 空气 [kōng qì] (air), 铁 [tiě] (iron).

Proper nouns:

中国 [zhōng guó] (China), 北京 [běi jīng] (Beijing), 长城 [cháng chéng] (the Great Wall), 欧洲 [ōu zhōu] (Europe), 联合国 [lián hé guó] (the United Nations), 鲁迅 [lǔ xùn] (Lu Xun), “红楼梦” [hóng lóu mèng] (“A Dream of Red Mansions”).

Collective nouns:

人类 [rén lèi] (humans/humanity), 人口 [rén kǒu] (population), 书本 [shū běn] (book), 纸张 [zhǐ zhāng] (paper), 车辆 [chē liàng] (vehicle), 物资 [wù zī] (supplies), 河流 [hé liú] (river), 树木 [shù mù] (tree).

Abstract nouns:

概念 [gài niàn] (concept), 气氛 [qì fēn] (atmosphere), 原则 [yuán zé] (principle), 意识 [yì shì] (consciousness), 成就 [chéng jiù] (achievement), 水平 [shuǐ píng] (level), 道德 [dào dé] (morality), 品质 [pǐn zhì] (quality).

The nouns that describe location, space, and time are respectively named locative words, locational words and time words. Their grammatical features and functions are different from those of general nouns, which will be explained in Section Four of this chapter in detail.

**Section one: word-formation marks of nouns**

Generally speaking, Chinese is a language without morphological marks, except for a small group of words whose morphological marks can help identify their parts of speech. There are two types of morphological marks of nouns in Chinese, one of which is prefix before a root morpheme, and the other of which is suffix after a root morpheme.

**I. Prefixes**

## 1 阿 [ā]

阿姨 [ā yí] (aunt), 阿爹 [ā diē] (dad), 阿爸 [ā bà] (dad), 阿毛 [ā máo] (a person's nickname).

A word formed with a prefix “阿 [ā]” mainly functions as the name of a person. For example, a person whose name is 王新 [Wáng Xīn] (Wang Xin) can be called “阿新 [Ā Xīn] (A Xin).” It is an informal form of address for a person of the same generation or a younger generation, indicating a sense of intimacy. Such words with prefix “阿 [ā]” are very popular in the dialects of the south of China but “阿姨 [ā yí] (aunt)” is commonly accepted as a common word in Mandarin.

## 2 老 [lǎo]

- A: 老汉 [lǎo hàn] (old man), 老板 [lǎo bǎn] (boss), 老婆 [lǎo pó] (wife)  
 B: 老张 [Lǎo Zhāng] (a person whose surname is Zhang), 老乡 [lǎo xiāng] (fellow-villager), 老兄 [lǎo xiōng] (brother), 老总 [lǎo zǒng] (general manager), 老外 [lǎo wài] (foreigner)  
 C: 老虎 [lǎo hǔ] (tiger), 老鹰 [lǎo yīng] (eagle), 老鼠 [lǎo shǔ] (mouse)  
 D: 老大 [lǎo dà] (the eldest), 老二 [lǎo èr] (the second child), 老几 [lǎo jǐ] (the order of seniority among brothers or sisters)

The meanings of the prefix “老 [lǎo]” in the previous four groups of examples differ greatly. “老 [lǎo]” in A group indicates a sense of informality, known as a casual form of address; “老 [lǎo]” in B group indicates a close relation to a person of the same generation or an elder generation. “老外 [lǎo wài] (foreigner)” of this group refers to adult foreigners and expresses a more friendly feeling, compared to “外国人 [wài guó rén] (foreigners).” It cannot be used as a direct greeting. “老 [lǎo]” in C group reflects a sense of disgust or fear and “老 [lǎo]” in D group represents the number in the rank. Here, “老 [lǎo]” as a morpheme in “老人 [lǎo rén] (the aged)” or “老朋友 [lǎo péng yǒu] (old friends)” is different from the prefix “老 [lǎo],” which needs particular attention.

## 3 小 [xiǎo]

- A: 小朋友 [xiǎo péng yǒu] (children), 小人书 [xiǎo rén shū] (picture-story book), 小商品 [xiǎo shāng pǐn] (small wares), 小市 [xiǎo shì] (bazaar)

- B: 小店 [xiǎo diàn] (a small store), 小女 [xiǎo nǚ] (little daughter), 小弟 [xiǎo dì] (younger brother)  
 C: 小名 [xiǎo míng] (childhood name), 小费 [xiǎo fèi] (tip), 小意思 [xiǎo yì sī] (small gift)  
 D: 小姐 [xiǎo jiě] (miss), 小伙子 [xiǎo huǒ zi] (young fellow), 小鬼 [xiǎo guǐ] (imp)

Also, the meanings of the prefix “小 [xiǎo]” in this four groups of examples differ greatly. “小 [xiǎo]” in A group indicates a thing of small size or less importance, carrying an informal or humble sense. “小 [xiǎo]” in B group decreases standards of things, known as a humble form of address. “小 [xiǎo]” in C group reflects an informal, unofficial, or additional sense. “小姐 [xiǎo jiě] (miss)” in D group shows esteem and “小伙子 [xiǎo huǒ zi] (young fellow)” and “小鬼 [xiǎo guǐ] (imp)” intimacy.

## II. Suffixes

### 1 子 [zi]

- A(1): 桌子 [zhuō zi] (table), 椅子 [yǐ zi] (chair), 筷子 [kuài zi] (chopsticks), 镜子 [jìng zi] (mirror)  
 A(2): 路子 [lù zi] (approach), 票子 [piào zi] (paper money), 脑子 [nǎo zi] (brain), 刀子 [dāo zi] (knife)  
 B(1): 刷子 [shuā zi] (brush), 剪子 [jiǎn zi] (scissor), 夹子 [jiá zi] (clip), 铲子 [chǎn zi] (shovel)  
 B(2): 骗子 [piàn zi] (liar), 探子 [tàn zi] (scout), 戏子 [xì zi] (actor or actress)  
 B(3): 挑子 [tiāo zi] (shoulder pole), 摊子 [tān zi] (booth), 架子 [jià zi] (shelf)  
 C(1): 胖子 [pàng zi] (fat person), 瞎子 [xiā zi] (blind person), 聋子 [lóng zi] (deaf person), 呆子 [dāi zi] (idiot)  
 C(2): 辣子 [là zi] (chili), 乱子 [luàn zi] (trouble)  
 D(1): 大伯子 [dà bó zi] (one's husband's elder brother), 大姨子 [dà yí zi] (one's wife's elder sister), 大舅子 [dà jiù zi] (one's wife's elder brother), 新娘子 [xīn niáng zi] (bride)  
 D(2): 马贩子 [mǎ fàn zi] (horse dealer), 票贩子 [piào fàn zi] (ticket scalper), 电滚子 [diàn gǔn zi] (electric motor), 鞋拔子 [xié bá zi] (shoehorn)

The original meaning of “子 [zǐ]” refers to “孩子 [hái zi].” “子 [zǐ]” is used as a suffix due to nominalization, so it doesn't indicate any sense of small size or disdain. The nouns in A(1) group consist of noun morphemes and the suffix “子 [zǐ],” in which “子 [zǐ]” cannot be omitted otherwise the whole noun would be left as a morpheme. However, if these nouns are combined with other relative noun morphemes, “子 [zǐ]” here can be omitted, such as “桌子 [zhuō zi] (table/desk)” and “椅子 [yǐ zi] (chair)” in “桌椅板凳 [zhuō yǐ bǎn dèng] (tables/desks and chairs),” and “蚊子 [wén zi] (mosquito)” in “消灭蚊蝇 [xiāo miè wén yíng] (kill mosquitos and flies).” The similar example is “筷(子) [kuài (zi)] (chopsticks)”

in “碗筷要勤洗 [wǎn kuài yào qín xǐ] (to wash dishes and chopsticks often).” The examples in A(2) consist of free morphemes and the suffix “子 [zǐ].” As its name implies, a free morpheme is free in word-making, therefore its meaning is maybe changed when it is with and without “子 [zǐ].” For example, “路子 [lù zǐ] (approach)” is different to “路 [lù] (road),” the form of which means “approach” or “channel” as abstract nouns and the latter of which refers to a concrete meaning of “road.” Here is another example: “脑子 [nǎo zi] (brain)” is an abstract noun but “脑 [nǎo] (brain)” is a concrete one. Nevertheless, “尺 [chǐ] (ruler)” and “尺子 [chǐ zi] (ruler)” are the same and “刀 [dāo] (knife)” and “刀子 [dāo zi] (knife)” are the same, too. For this reason, it is necessary to keep a clear mind to decide whether to use “子 [zǐ]” or not.

The nouns in the groups of B(1), B(2), and B(3) consist of verb morphemes mainly for monosyllabic verbs for actions and the suffix “子 [zǐ].” The examples in B(1) group refer to the tools for certain actions; the examples in B(2) group are doers of certain actions, and the examples in B(3) group indicate the objects of certain actions.

The nouns in the groups of C(1) and C(2) consist of adjective morphemes and the suffix “子 [zǐ].” The examples in C(1) group refer to people and those in C(2) group mean general things or specific things sometimes, such as the concrete noun “辣子 [là zi] (chili)” and the abstract noun “乱子 [luàn zi] (trouble).”

The nouns in the groups of D(1) and D(2) consist of three morphemes. The examples in D(1) group are formed in [morpheme+(morpheme+“子 [zǐ]”)]. The examples in D(2) group are formed in [(morpheme+morpheme)+“子 [zǐ]”].

There is one thing to notice. When “子 [zǐ]” is used as a suffix, it is in weak pronunciation, the light tone (轻声 [qīng shēng]). When “子 [zǐ]” is used as a root morpheme in some words, such as “鱼子 [yú zǐ] (roe),” “虾子 [xiā zǐ] (shrimp roe),” “原子 [yuán zǐ] (atom),” “分子 [fēn zǐ] (molecule),” it should be pronounced with stress, the third tone (三声 sān shēng). The word “妻子 [qī zǐ] (wife)” means wife and son when “子 [zǐ]” is stressed, otherwise it only means the spouse of a man (qī zi). Moreover, the frequently used nouns with the suffix “子 [zǐ]” are accepted culturally, so “子 [zǐ]” cannot be added at random after a morpheme or a word in order to make a new word. For example, the adjective “笨 [bèn] (stupid/silly)” cannot be added with “子 [zǐ]” to form a new word “\*笨子 [bèn zi].” Thus, it is not right to say: “\*老师, 我很笨, 是个笨子。 [lǎo shī, wǒ hěn bèn shì gè bèn zǐ].”

## 2 儿 [ér]

A(1): 伴儿 [bàn er] (companion), 盒儿 [hé er] (box), 门儿 [mén er] (door)

A(2): 鸟儿 [niǎo er] (bird), 勺儿 [sháo er] (spoon), 根儿 [gēn er] (root), 盘儿 [pán er] (dish)

A(3): 板儿 [bǎn er] (board), 洞儿 [dòng er] (hole), 词儿 [cí er] (word)

B(1): 画儿 [huà er] (picture), 包儿 [bāo er] (bag), 响儿 [xiǎng er] (bang), 捻儿 [niǎn er] (twist)

B(2): 盖儿 [gài er] (lid), 塞儿 [sāi er] (plug), 扣儿 [kòu er] (button)

- B(3): 亮儿 [liàng er] (bright), 空儿 [kòng er] (free), 弯儿 [wān er] (turn), 方儿 (药方) [fāng er (yào fāng)] (prescription)
- C(1): 冰棍儿 [bīng gùn er] (ice-pop), 针鼻儿 [zhēn bí er] (the eye of a needle), 耳朵眼儿 [ěr duo yǎn er] (earhole), 门脸儿 [mén liǎn er] (store front)
- C(2): 杏仁儿 [xìng rén er] (almond), 项链儿 [xiàng liàn er] (necklace), 水饺儿 [shuǐ jiǎo er] (boiled dumpling)

The nouns in the groups of A(1) and A(2) consist of monosyllabic noun morphemes and the suffix “儿 [ér].” “儿 [ér]” cannot be omitted, otherwise the whole word will become meaningless, such as “侄儿 [zhí er] (nephew)” in which “儿 [ér]” is necessary. Or the meaning of the whole word will be changed. For example, “信 [xìn] (letter)” refers to a letter but “信儿 [xìn er] (news).” The meanings of nouns in A(2) group wouldn’t be changed whether “儿 [ér]” is added or not. “儿 [ér]” in the A(3) group is flexible too, but it will influence the meaning of the whole word with or without it. For example, “板儿 [bǎn er]” refers to a thin and small board but “板 [bǎn]” indicates a thick and broad one.

The nouns in the groups of B(1), B(2), and B(3) consist of verb morphemes or adjective morphemes with the suffix “儿 [ér].” The examples in B(1) group refer to results or objects of certain actions; the examples in B(2) group mean the tools for certain actions; the nouns in B(3) group are simply formed by adjective morphemes and the suffix “儿 [ér].”

The nouns in the groups of C(1) and C(2) are multisyllabic. “儿 [ér]” in C(1) group is necessary, so “冰棍 [bīng gùn] (ice-pop)” and “针鼻 [zhēn bí] (eye of a needle)” are not accepted if they are without “儿 [ér].” Such words are not in a big quantity in Chinese. On the contrary “儿 [ér]” can be omitted in most words in the C(2) group.

Some individual quantifiers can be changed into nouns with the suffix “儿 [ér],” such as “个儿 [gè er] (height),” “块儿 [kuài er] (chunk),” “串儿 [chuàn er] (string),” “条儿 [tiáo er] (strip),” “粒儿 [lì er] (granule).”

Also, numerals can be changed into nouns with “儿 [ér],” such as “三儿 [sān er] (the third child)” and “五儿 [wǔ er] (the fifth child).” These re-formed nouns are often used to indicate seniority among sisters and brothers. For example, the third child of a family is called “三儿 [sān er]” and “四儿 [sì er]” refers to the fourth child and all that.

Nouns with “儿 [ér]” are very popular in the north of China, especially in the Beijing dialect.

In phonetics, the pronunciation of “儿 [ér]” is not accepted as an independent syllable, but combined into the syllable before it, also losing its tone.

Some morphemes with “子 [zǐ]” or “儿 [ér]” indicate different meanings. “子 [zǐ]” refers to something big in size or it indicates a sense of disgust, such as “棍子 [gùn zi] (stick),” “管子 [guǎn zi] (pipe),” “老头子 [lǎo tóu zi] (old fogey),” “瓶子 [píng zi] (bottle),” while “儿 [ér]” refers to something of small size or a favorite, such as “棍儿 [gùn er] (stick),” “管儿 [guǎn er] (pipe),” “老头儿 [lǎo tóu er] (old man),” “瓶儿 [píng er] (bottle).”



## 3 头 [tóu]

- A(1): 木头 [mù tóu] (wood), 石头 [shí tóu] (stone), 砖头 [zhuān tóu] (brick), 骨头 [gǔ tóu] (bone)
- A(2): 前头 [qián tóu] (the front), 后头 [hòu tóu] (the rear), 上头 [shàng tóu] (the above), 下头 [xià tóu] (the bottom)
- B(1): 说头 [shuō tóu] (worthy of talking), 看头 [kàn tóu] (worthy of watching), 听头 [tīng tóu] (worthy of listening), 吃头 [chī tóu] (worthy of tasting)
- B(2): 甜头 [tián tóu] (pleasant flavor), 苦头 [kǔ tóu] (hardship), 准头 [zhǔn tóu] (accuracy)

The nouns in the A(1) group consist of noun morphemes and the suffix “头 [tóu].” The nouns in A(2) group are locational words, consisting of the morphemes indicating certain locations and “头 [tóu].” The nouns in the B(1) group are formed by verb morphemes, and “头 [tóu]” and the nouns in the B(2) group are formed by adjective morphemes and “头 [tóu].” All the examples in these two big groups indicate an abstract sense. Nouns in the B(1) group are often put after “有 [yǒu] (have)” or “没有 [méi yǒu] (don’t have).” Sometimes in this case, a retroflexion (卷舌音 [juǎn shé yīn]) of “头 [tóu]” in pronunciation is triggered.

## 4 者 [zhě]

- A: 读者 [dú zhě] (reader), 作者 [zuò zhě] (author), 记者 [jì zhě] (reporter), 编者 [biān zhě] (editor)
- B: 领导者 [lǐng dǎo zhě] (leader), 参加者 [cān jiā zhě] (participant), 演唱者 [yǎn chàng zhě] (singer), 受害者 [shòu hài zhě] (victim)
- C: 强者 [qiáng zhě] (the stronger), 弱者 [ruò zhě] (the weaker), 老者 [lǎo zhě] (the aged), 长者 [zhǎng zhě] (the elder)
- D: 前者 [qián zhě] (the former), 后者 [hòu zhě] (the latter)
- A group: verb morpheme+the suffix “者 [zhě]”
- B group: verb (or verb phrase)+the suffix “者 [zhě]”
- C group: adjective morpheme+the suffix “者 [zhě]”
- D group: noun morpheme for location+the suffix “者 [zhě]”

The suffix “者 [zhě]” is a bound morpheme due to its remaining property of the root morpheme. Therefore, “者 [zhě]” mainly refers to a person who is of this property. “前者 [qián zhě] (the former)” and “后者 [hòu zhě] (the latter)” can be used to indicate a certain thing.

**III. Quasi-prefixes and quasi-suffixes**

In Chinese, some language constituents are regarded as quasi-prefixes or quasi-suffixes due to their weaker grammaticalization, compared to those prefixes or suffixes mentioned earlier. That is to say, they still, more or less, retain their practical meanings. For example, “士 [shì] (person)” in “护士 [hù shì] (nurse)” is a

quasi-suffix while “士 [shì]” in “有志之士 [yǒu zhì zhī shì] (people with lofty ideals)” is a word. For another example, “大 [dà] (big)” in “大陆 [dà lù] (mainland)” is a quasi-prefix while “大 [dà] (big)” in “大面积 [dà miàn jī] (large area)” is a word. More quasi-prefixes are as follows.

The quasi-prefixes:

- 半 [bàn]: 半导体 [bàn dǎo tǐ] (semiconductor), 半成品 [bàn chéng pǐn] (semi-finished product), 半封建 [bàn fēng jiàn] (semi-feudal)
- 次 [cì]: 次级 [cì jí] (secondary), 次大陆 [cì dà lù] (subcontinent)
- 亚 [yà]: 亚军 [yà jūn] (silver medal winner), 亚热带 [yà rè dài] (subtropics), 亚硫酸 [yà liú suān] (sulphurous acid)
- 准 [zhǔn]: 准将 [zhǔn jiàng] (brigadier), 准宾语 [zhǔn bīn yǔ] (pseudo-object), 准量词 [zhǔn liàng cí] (pseudo-quantifier), 准平原 [zhǔn píng yuán] (quasi-plain)
- 类 [lèi]: 类人猿 [lèi rén yuán] (ape), 类语缀 [lèi yǔ zhuì] (category suffix)
- 非 [fēi]: 非金属 [fēi jīn shǔ] (nonmetal), 非陈列品 [fēi chén liè pǐn] (non-exhibition), 非导体 [fēi dǎo tǐ] (non-conductor), 非条件反射 [fēi tiáo jiàn fǎn shè] (non-conditional reflex)
- 伪 [wěi]: 伪钞 [wěi chāo] (counterfeit bank note), 伪军 [wěi jūn] (puppet army), 伪政府 [wěi zhèng fǔ] (bogus government), 伪政权 [wěi zhèng quán] (bogus political power)
- 反 [fǎn]: 反义词 [fǎn yì cí] (antonym), 反作用 [fǎn zuò yòng] (retroaction), 反科学 [fǎn kē xué] (anti-science)
- 全 [quán]: 全自动 [quán zì dòng] (full-automatic), 全集 [quán jí] (universal set), 全民 [quán mín] (the whole people)
- 多 [duō]: 多边 [duō biān] (multilateral), 多媒体 [duō méi tǐ] (multimedia), 多晶体 [duō jīng tǐ] (polycrystal), 多义词 [duō yì cí] (polyseme)
- 超 [chāo]: 超音速 [chāo yīn sù] (supersonic speed), 超低频 [chāo dī pín] (ultralow frequency), 超高压 [chāo gāo yā] (ultrahigh pressure), 超大型 [chāo dà xíng] (ultra-large type)
- 大 [dà]: 大海 [dà hǎi] (ocean), 大兵 [dà bīng] (common soldier), 大街 [dà jiē] (main street), 大地 [dà dì] (the ground)
- 单 [dān]: 单间 [dān jiān] (single room), 单身汉 [dān shēn hàn] (a single man), 单行线 [dān xíng xiàn] (one-way street), 单晶体 [dān jīng tǐ] (monocrystal)

The quasi-suffixes (referring to a certain person):

- 员 [yuán]: 教员 [jiào yuán] (teacher), 学员 [xué yuán] (student), 采购员 [cǎi gòu yuán] (buyer), 理发员 [lǐ fà yuán] (barber)

“员 [yuán]” are often put after verb/verb phrase or noun. Here “员 [yuán]” refers to a member of a certain organization or group, or a person with a certain occupation.

长 [zhǎng]: 船长 [chuán zhǎng] (captain), 列车长 [liè chē zhǎng] (conductor), 护士长 [hù shì zhǎng] (head nurse), 班长 [bān zhǎng] (monitor)  
 士 [shì]: 战士 [zhàn shì] (soldier), 护士 [hù shì] (nurse), 学士 [xué shì] (bachelor), 硕士 [shuò shì] (master)

家 [jiā]: 作家 [zuò jiā] (writer), 画家 [huà jiā] (painter), 歌唱家 [gē chàng jiā] (singer), 书法家 [shū fǎ jiā] (calligrapher)

Here, “家 [jiā]” indicates an expert so “. . . 家 [jiā]” refers to a person who is an expert in a certain field.

师 [shī]: 导师 [dǎo shī] (supervisor), 教师 [jiào shī] (teacher), 医师 [yī shī] (physician), 厨师 [chú shī] (chef)

生 [shēng]: 医生 [yī shēng] (doctor), 学生 [xué shēng] (student), 留学生 [liú xué shēng] (overseas student), 研究生 [yán jiū shēng] (graduate student)

工 [gōng]: 木工 [mù gōng] (carpenter), 电工 [diàn gōng] (electrician), 钳工 [qián gōng] (bench worker), 瓦工 [wǎ gōng] (brick layer)

匠 [jiàng]: 花匠 [huā jiàng] (gardener), 铁匠 [tiě jiàng] (blacksmith), 石匠 [shí jiàng] (stonemason), 油漆匠 [yóu qī jiàng] (painter)

手 [shǒu]: 舵手 [duò shǒu] (helmsman), 水手 [shuǐ shǒu] (sailor), 打手 [dǎ shǒu] (hatchet man), 拖拉机手 [tuō lā jī shǒu] (tractor driver)

星 [xīng]: 明星 [míng xīng] (celebrity), 歌星 [gē xīng] (star singer), 舞星 [wǔ xīng] (star dancer), 影星 [yǐng xīng] (movie star)

友 [yǒu]: 工友 [gōng yǒu] (workmate), 票友 [piào yǒu] (amateur performer), 棋友 [qí yǒu] (fellow chess player), 牌友 [pái yǒu] (card partner)

迷 [mí]: 财迷 [cái mí] (moneygrubber), 戏迷 [xì mí] (theater fan), 棋迷 [qí mí] (chess fan), 球迷 [qiú mí] (soccer fan)

汉 [hàn]: 好汉 [hǎo hàn] (brave man), 懒汉 [lǎn hàn] (idler), 英雄汉 [yīng xióng hàn] (hero), 男子汉 [nán zi hàn] (man)

(referring to a certain group)

界 [jiè]: 文艺界 [wén yì jiè] (circle of literature and art), 教育界 [jiào yù jiè] (educational circles), 妇女界 [fù nǚ jiè] (women’s circle), 政界 [zhèng jiè] (political circles)

队 [duì]: 军队 [jūn duì] (army), 部队 [bù duì] (troop), 考察队 [kǎo chá duì] (expedition team), 考古队 [kǎo gǔ duì] (archaeological team)

族 [zú]: 打工族 [dǎ gōng zú] (working class), 工薪族 [gōng xīn zú] (wage-earners), 追星族 [zhuī xīng zú] (star fan), 上班族 [shàng bān zú] (office worker)

The following examples carry a derogatory sense.

佬 [lǎo]: 乡下佬 [xiāng xià lǎo] (country cousin), 阔佬 [kuò lǎo] (rich man)

鬼 [guǐ]: 烟鬼 [yān guǐ] (chainsmoker), 酒鬼 [jiǔ guǐ] (drunkard), 色鬼 [sè guǐ] (flirt), 懒鬼 [lǎn guǐ] (do-nothing)

棍 [gùn]: 赌棍 [dǔ gùn] (hardened gambler), 恶棍 [è gùn] (villain), 党棍 [dǎng gùn] (dirty politician)

The following examples refer to academic opinions, theories, thoughts, or views.

主义 [zhǔ yì]: 社会主义 [shè huì zhǔ yì] (socialism), 资本主义 [zī běn zhǔ yì] (capitalism), 改良主义 [gǎi liáng zhǔ yì] (reformism), 现实主义 [xiàn shí zhǔ yì] (realism)

学 [xué]: 哲学 [zhé xué] (philosophy), 数学 [shù xué] (mathematics), 文学 [wén xué] (literature), 社会学 [shè huì xué] (sociology)

论 [lùn]: 无神论 [wú shén lùn] (atheism), 进化论 [jìn huà lùn] (evolutionism), 唯物论 [wéi wù lùn] (materialism), 相对论 [xiāng duì lùn] (relativity theory)

The following examples refer to features or characteristics of things.

气 [qì]: 热气 [rè qì] (hot-gas), 冷气 [lěng qì] (cool air), 暖气 [nuǎn qì] (heating), 名气 [míng qì] (reputation)

风 [fēng]: 文风 [wén fēng] (style of writing), 学风 [xué fēng] (style of study), 作风 [zuò fēng] (style of work), 党风 [dǎng fēng] (working style of the Party)

性 [xìng]: 主动性 [zhǔ dòng xìng] (initiative), 能动性 [néng dòng xìng] (activity), 普遍性 [pǔ biàn xìng] (universality), 特殊性 [tè shū xìng] (particularity)

度 [dù]: 温度 [wēn dù] (temperature), 湿度 [shī dù] (humidity), 高度 [gāo dù] (height)

率 [lǜ]: 效率 [xiào lǜ] (efficiency), 出勤率 [chū qín lǜ] (attendance rate), 成活率 [chéng huó lǜ] (rate of survival), 圆周率 [yuán zhōu lǜ] (Pi)

型 [xíng]: 微型 [wēi xíng] (minitype), 流线型 [liú xiàn xíng] (streamline), 轻便型 [qīng biàn xíng] (handiness), 模型 [mó xíng] (model)

形 [xíng]: 扇形 [shàn xíng] (sector), 球形 [qiú xíng] (sphere), 工字形 [gōng zì xíng] (H-shaped), 矩形 [jǔ xíng] (rectangle)

式 [shì]: 中式 [zhōng shì] (Chinese style), 西式 [xī shì] (Western style), 盒式 [hé shì] (cassette), 青年式 [qīng nián shì] (youth style)

The following examples refer to location and unit.

厅 [tīng]: 客厅 [kè tīng] (living room), 饭厅 [fàn tīng] (dining room), 餐厅 [cān tīng] (dining room), 办公厅 [bàn gōng tīng] (General Office)

行 [háng]: 商行 [shāng háng] (trading company), 银行 [yín háng] (bank), 五金行 [wǔ jīn háng] (hardware shop), 车行 [chē háng] (a place where carts may be bought or hired)

厂 [chǎng]: 炼钢厂 [liàn gāng chǎng] (steel works), 纺织厂 [fǎng zhī chǎng] (textile mill), 发电厂 [fā diàn chǎng] (power station), 制造厂 [zhì zào chǎng] (manufacturer)

场 [chǎng]: 操场 [cāo chǎng] (playground), 剧场 [jù chǎng] (theater), 跑马场 [pǎo mǎ chǎng] (racecourse), 滑冰场 [huá bīng chǎng] (ice rink)  
 站 [zhàn]: 汽车站 [qì chē zhàn] (bus station), 火车站 [huǒ chē zhàn] (railway station), 维修站 [wéi xiū zhàn] (maintenance station), 服务站 [fú wù zhàn] (service station)

The following examples refer to devices, tools, and goods.

具 [jù]: 工具 [gōng jù] (instrument), 器具 [qì jù] (appliance), 雨具 [yǔ jù] (rain gear), 玩具 [wán jù] (toy)  
 器 [qì]: 机器 [jī qì] (machine), 量角器 [liàng jiǎo qì] (protractor), 扫描器 [sǎo miáo qì] (scanner), 计时器 [jì shí qì] (timer)  
 件 [jiàn]: 零件 [línɡ jiàn] (parts), 部件 [bù jiàn] (assembly units), 构件 [gòu jiàn] (components), 配件 [pèi jiàn] (fittings of a machine)  
 机 [jī]: 录音机 [lù yīn jī] (recorder), 发电机 [fā diàn jī] (electric generator), 打字机 [dǎ zì jī] (typewriter), 复印机 [fù yìn jī] (copying machine)  
 仪 [yí]: 水平仪 [shuǐ píng yí] (gradienter), 地球仪 [dì qiú yí] (tellurion), 经纬仪 [jīng wěi yí] (theodolite), 绘图仪 [huì tú yí] (mapper)  
 品 [pǐn]: 产品 [chǎn pǐn] (product), 成品 [chéng pǐn] (finished product), 陈列品 [chén liè pǐn] (exhibits), 次品 [cì pǐn] (inferior-quality product)

The following examples refer to rules, regulations, methods, and ways.

则 [zé]: 法则 [fǎ zé] (rules), 准则 [zhǔn zé] (criterion), 细则 [xì zé] (detailed rules and regulations), 总则 [zǒng zé] (general principles)  
 法 [fǎ] (law): 婚姻法 [hūn yīn fǎ] (law of marriage), 劳资法 [láo zī fǎ] (labor and capital), 刑事诉讼法 [xíng shì sù sòng fǎ] (criminal procedure law)  
 法 [fǎ] (method): 速成法 [sù chéng fǎ] (speed-up method), 合成法 [hé chéng fǎ] (synthesis method), 体育疗法 [tí yù liáo fǎ] (physical exercise therapy), 构词法 [gòu cí fǎ] (word-building)  
 法 [fǎ] (opinion): 说法 [shuō fǎ] (way of saying), 想法 [xiǎng fǎ] (idea), 看法 [kàn fǎ] (view)

Most quasi-suffixes mentioned have gradually been grammaticalized from their practical meanings. Some of them have completely lost their original meanings, such as “手 [shǒu] (hand)”;

some are not totally grammaticalized and still keep their original meanings when combined with other morphemes, such as “师 [shī] (expert)” and “匠 [jiàng] (craftsman).” Some individual morphemes can stand alone as a word, such as “主义 [zhǔ yì] (-ism).”

Some prefixes, suffixes, or quasi-suffixes can be used to form new words, such as “者 [zhě] (person)” and “性 [xìng] (property),” but some are not, such as “家 [jiā] (expert)” and “员 [yuán] (member).” For example, “钢琴家 [gāng qín jiā] (pianist)” is acceptable but “\*篮球家 [lán qiú jiā]” is not; “医生 [yī shēng] (doctor)” is acceptable but “\*医员 [yī yuán]” is not. Therefore, it is better to remember them carefully rather than to imitate at will.

## Section two: grammatical features of nouns

Most nouns can be modified by a numeral-quantifier phrase. Usually a quantifier is between a numeral and noun to indicate the quantity of persons or things. For example, “三本书 [sān běn shū] (three books)” and “一个学生 [yī gè xué shēng] (a student)” are correct but “\*三书 [sān shū]” and “\*一学生 [yī xué shēng]” are not. A noun cannot be simply modified by a quantifier alone, such as “\*本书 [běn shū]” and “\*个学生 [gè xué shēng].” However, for some idioms or in the works of science and technology, there are some exceptions that numerals and nouns can be directly connected to each other, such as the idioms “一箭双雕 [yī jiàn shuāng diāo] (kill two birds with one stone),” “三心二意 [sān xīn èr yì] (half-hearted),” “七嘴八舌 [qī zuǐ bā shé] (all talking at once),” “五湖四海 [wǔ hú sì hǎi] (from all corners of the country),” and the phraseologies of science and technology “一直线 [yīzhí xiàn] (a straight line),” “一圆柱体 [yī yuán zhù tǐ] (a cylinder),” “四发动机飞机 [sì fā dòng jī fēi jī] (four-engine aircraft),” “八管半导体收音机 [bā guǎn bàn dǎo tǐ shōu yīn jī] (eight-tube semiconductor receiver).” Besides, there are some remaining from ancient Chinese, such as “一草一木 [yī cǎo yī mù] (every tree and bush),” “一针一线 [yī zhēn yī xiàn] (a single needle or a piece of thread),” and “一夫一妻 [yī fū yī qī] (monogamy).”

Generally speaking, a noun cannot be modified by an adverb so it is not right to say “\*不人 [bù rén],” “\*不时间 [bù shí jiān],” “\*我有不朋友 [wǒ yǒu bù péng yǒu],” “\*很桌子 [hěn zhuō zi],” “\*都书 [dōu shū],” “\*都老师是中国人 [dōu lǎo shī shì zhōng guó rén].” However, there still exists a small group of nouns that can be modified by adverbs when they function as the predicate.

Nouns can be modified by pronouns, adjectives, verbs, and different phrases. Usually a noun can be directly modified by another noun.

Nouns modified by pronouns:

你妈妈 [nǐ mā mā] (your mother), 他的书 [tā de shū] (his book), 别人的东西 [bié rén de dōng xī] (belongings of others), 谁的笔 [shuí de bǐ] (whose pen)

Nouns modified by adjectives:

红砖 [hóng zhuān] (red brick), 袖珍字典 [xiù zhēn zì diǎn] (pocket dictionary), 老实人 [lǎo shí rén] (honest man), 灿烂的阳光 [càn làn de yáng guāng] (bright sunshine)

Nouns modified by verbs:

生产计划 [shēng chǎn jì huà] (production plan), 奋斗目标 [fèn dòu mù biāo] (objective of the struggle), 比赛项目 [bǐ sài xiàng mù] (competition item), 出版日期 [chū bǎn rì qī] (publication date)

Nouns modified by different phrases:

做实验的步骤 [zuò shí yàn de bù zhòu] (steps of conducting an experiment), 解决问题的方法 [jiě jué wèn tí de fāng fǎ] (methods of solving a

problem), 我说的话 [wǒ shuō de huà] (what I have said), 妈妈买的衣服 [mā mā mǎi de yī fu] (the clothes bought by mama)

Nouns modified by another noun:

语法书 [yǔ fǎ shū] (grammar book), 布鞋 [bù xié] (cloth shoes), 体育老师 [tǐ yù lǎo shī] (physical education teacher), 玻璃杯 [bō lí bēi] (glass)

Nouns in Chinese don't have the grammatical category of number, that is to say, they lack a singular or plural form. For example, “桌子 [zhuō zi] (table)” in “五张桌子 [wǔ zhāng zhuō zi] (five tables)” and “一张桌子 [yī zhāng zhuō zi] (a table)” keep the same form. The same is true for “学生 [xué shēng] (student)” in “一个学生 [yī gè xué shēng] (a student)” and “十个学生 [shí gè xué shēng] (ten students)” and “书 [shū] (book)” in “这本书 [zhè běn shū] (this book)” and “那些书 [nà xiē shū] (those books).” “们 [men] (the plural form of people)” can be added after a noun to indicate a quantity of more than one, such as “同学们 [tóng xué men] (students),” “朋友们 [péng yǒu men] (friends),” “同志们 [tóng zhì men] (comrades),” “伙伴们 [huǒ bàn men] (fellows).” There is one thing to be noticed. “们 [men]” cannot be used after a noun when there is a numeral-quantifier phrase before the noun or there is a word indicating a quantity of more than one in a sentence. For example, it is not right to say: “\*九个学生们 [jiǔ gè xué shēng men]” or “\*学生们很多 [xué shēng men hěn duō]” because “九个 [jiǔ gè] (nine)” and “很多 [hěn duō] (many)” have appeared in these sentences.

Several nouns can be overlapped, denoting the same meaning of overlapped quantifiers.

Example 1 人人都应该保护自然环境。[rén rén dōu yīng gāi bǎo hù zì rán huán jìng]

(Everyone should protect the natural environment.)

Example 2 你一个人出门在外, 要事事小心。[nǐ yī gè rén chū mén zài wài, yào shì shì xiǎo xīn.]

(You should be careful when you go out alone.)

Example 3 他时时刻刻不忘自己的责任。[tā shí shí kè kè bú wàng zì jǐ de zé rèn.]

(He never forgets his duty.)

Moreover, similar overlapped nouns are “瓶瓶罐罐 [píng píng guàn guàn] (bottles and cans),” “山山水水 [shān shān shuǐ shuǐ] (mountains and rivers),” “风风雨雨 [fēng fēng yǔ yǔ] (ups and downs),” “头头脑脑 [tóu tóu nǎo nǎo] (leaders and heads),” and so on. However, nouns of such kind are very limited in Chinese. Therefore, blind imitation of this form is not allowed.

### Section three: grammatical functions of nouns

The noun mainly functions as a subject, object (including the object of a preposition) and attribute. Only a small group of nouns can function as a predicate.



A noun seldom serves as an adverb but time words or locational words mainly function as adverbs.

### ***I. As a subject and object***

To function as a subject:

Example 1 北京是中国的首都。[běi jīng shì zhōng guó de shǒu dū.]  
(Beijing is the capital of China.)

Example 2 春天到了，天气暖和了。[chūn tiān dào le, tiān qì nuǎn hé le.]  
(It gets warmer when the spring approaches.)

Example 3 路窄，行人多，车走不快。[lù zhǎi, xíng rén duō chē zǒu bú kuài.]  
(Cars cannot run fast due to heavy pedestrians and narrow roads.)

To function as object:

Example 4 昨天我们访问了一位老画家。[zuó tiān wǒ men fǎng wèn le yī wèi lǎo huà jiā.]  
(We visited an old painter yesterday.)

Example 5 我叫木村，是留学生，来中国学习中文。[wǒ jiào mù cūn, shì liú xué shēng, lái zhōng guó xué xí zhōng wén.]  
(My name is Kimura. I am an overseas student and I came to China to learn Chinese.)

Example 6 我给朋友写了一封信。[wǒ gěi péng yǒu xiě le yī fēng xìn.]  
(I wrote a letter to my friend.)

Example 7 方先生，您对美学很有研究啊！[fāng xiān shēng, nín duì měi xué hěn yǒu yán jiū ā!]  
(Mr. Fang, you do have a good knowledge of aesthetics!)

Example 8 关于价格，我们再商量。[guān yú jià gé, wǒ men zài shāng liàng.]  
(As for the price, we could discuss it later.)

### ***II. As an attribute***

Most nouns can function as attributes to modify another noun.

Example 9 星期六，我们常去工人俱乐部跳舞。[xīng qī liù, wǒ men cháng qù gōng rén jù lè bù tiào wǔ.]  
(On Saturdays, we often dance at the workers' club.)

Example 10 电话铃响了，屋里的人们立刻安静下来。[diàn huà líng xiǎng le, wū lǐ de rén men lì kè ān jìng xià lái.]  
(All the people in the room got quiet when the telephone rang.)

Example 11 他们每天都到王大爷家来看他，帮助他做饭、洗衣服。[tā men měi tiān dōu dào Wáng dà yé jiā lái kàn tā, bāng zhù tā zuò fàn xǐ yī fú.]  
(They come to see Mr. Wang everyday and help him in cooking and washing.)



Example 12 我们检查员的职责不应该是光检查产品质量。[wǒ men jiǎn chá yuán de zhí zé bù yīng gāi shì guāng jiǎn chá chǎn pǐn zhì liàng.]  
(The responsibility of our inspectors should not be only confined to checking the quality of products.)

### III. *As a predicate*

When functioning as a predicate, a noun only refers to a native place, time, or weather, and often follows a modifier in front.

Example 13 王老师北京人。[wáng lǎo shī běi jīng rén.]  
(Prof. Wang comes from Beijing.)

Example 14 现在九点钟。[xiàn zài jiǔ diǎn zhōng.]  
(It's nine o'clock.)

Example 15 玛丽黄头发，蓝眼睛。[mǎ lì huáng tóu fà, lán yǎn jīng.]  
(Mary has yellow hair and blue eyes.)

### IV. *As an adverb*

When functioning as an adverb, “地 [de] (-ly)” should be added after the noun.

Example 16 实现祖国四个现代化的任务历史地落在我们这一代人的肩上。[shí xiàn zǔ guó sì gè xiàn dài huà de rèn wù lì shǐ de luò zài wǒ men zhè yī dài rén de jiān shàng.]  
(Historically speaking, the task of realizing the four modernizations of our motherland has fallen on the shoulders of this generation.)

Example 17 他站在那里，深情地望着我，没有说一句话。[tā zhàn zài nà lǐ, shēn qíng de wàng zhe wǒ, méi yǒu shuō yī jù huà.]  
(He stood there, looking at me affectionately without saying a word.)

Usually a noun seldom functions as an adverb alone. A noun phrase consisting of a numeral-quantifier phrase and a noun can function as an adverb.

Example 18 你老人家一个人走路，我不放心。[nǐ lǎo rén jiā yī gè rén zǒu lù, wǒ bú fàngxīn.]  
(I'll be worried when you, as an old man, walk alone.)

Example 19 这本小说太有意思了，他一口气看了一大半。[zhè běn xiǎo shuō tài yǒu yì sī le, tā yī kǒu qì kàn le yī dà bàn.]  
(This novel is so interesting that he read most of it in one sitting.)

Example 20 他几句话就把弟弟说服了。[tā jǐ jù huà jiù bǎ dì dì shuō fú le.]  
(He won his brother over with a few words.)

Usually time words and locational words (phrases) frequently function as adverbs to modify verbs or verb phrases.

Example 21 下星期我就离开北京了。[xià xīng qī wǒ jiù lí kāi běi jīng le.]  
(I will leave Beijing next week.)

Example 22 我明天下午不在家，学校里有事。[wǒ míng tiān xià wǔ bú zài jiā, xué xiào lǐ yǒu shì.]  
(I won't be at home tomorrow afternoon due to school affairs.)

Example 23 咱们上海见。[zán men shàng hǎi jiàn.]  
(See you in Shanghai.)

Example 24 您屋里坐。[nín wū lǐ zuò.]  
(Please take a seat in the room.)

Example 25 您说的话我基本上都能听懂。[nín shuō de huà wǒ jī běn shàng dōu néng tīng dǒng.]  
(I can basically understand what you say.)

## Section four: locatives, locational words, and time words

Different from general nouns, the nouns referring to position, location, and time have different grammatical functions; therefore, it is necessary to make a separate introduction for them.

### I. Locatives

A locative indicates a direction and a relative positional relation. Based on how it is constructed, it can be divided into a pure locative and a compound locative.

#### 1 Pure locative

Pure locatives are the most basic locatives in the monosyllabic form. They are as follows:

东 [dōng] (east), 南 [nán] (south), 西 [xī] (west), 北 [běi] (north), 上 [shàng] (above), 下 [xià] (below), 前 [qián] (front), 后 [hòu] (rear), 左 [zuǒ] (left), 右 [yòu] (right), 里 [lǐ] (inside), 外 [wài] (outside), 内 [nèi] (inside), 中间 [zhōng jiān] (middle), 旁 [páng] (nearby)

Next is introducing how to use pure locatives.

(1) Usually pure locatives seldom function alone, except for the following cases.

First, they are used in some idioms or fixed phrases, and most of them appear in pairs.

前仆后继 [qián pú hòu jì]  
(take up the positions of the fallen and rise to fight one after another)  
惩前毖后 [chéng qián bì hòu]  
(learn from past mistakes to avoid future ones)

勇往直前 [yǒng wǎng zhí qián]

(advance bravely)

东鳞西爪 [dōng lín xī zhǎo]

(fragments of a historical record)

南腔北调 [nán qiāng běi diào]

(speak in different dialects)

欺上瞒下 [qī shàng mán xià]

(conceal the true state of affairs from above and below oneself)

左右逢源 [zuǒ yòu féng yuán]

(be able to achieve success one way or another)

外强中干 [wài qiáng zhōng gān]

(outwardly strong and inwardly weak)

上有老下有小 [shàng yǒu lǎo xià yǒu xiǎo]

(There are old and young at home.)

Second, they are used in the written language.

Example 1 非本单位工作人员请勿入内。[fēi běn dān wèi gōng zuò rén yuán qǐng wù rù nèi.]

(Staff only)

Example 2 成昆铁路，北起四川成都，南至云南昆明。[chéng kūn tiě lù, běi qǐ sì chuān chéng dōu, nán zhì yún nán kūn míng.]

(The Chengdu-Kunming railway runs from Chengdu in Sichuan province in the north to Kunming in Yunnan province in the south.)

Example 3 万里长城西起甘肃嘉峪关，东至山海关。[wàn lǐ cháng chéng xī qǐ gān sù jiā yù guān, dōng zhì shān hǎi guān.]

(The Great Wall stretches from Jia Yu Guan pass in Gansu province in the west to Shan Hai Guan pass in the east.)

Example 4 这里藏瓷颇丰，上起北宋，下迄于清，两代名窑皆有精品。[zhè lǐ cáng cí pō fēng, shàng qǐ běi sòng, xià qì yú qīng, liǎng dài míng yáo jiē yǒu jīng pǐn.]

(Many porcelains, from the Northern Song Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty, have been discovered here. Some of them are well-known for their high quality, produced by the official kilns of these two dynasties.)

Third, they function as objects of certain verbs or prepositions, such as “朝 [cháo] (toward),” “向 [xiàng] (toward),” “往 [wǎng] (to),” “在 [zài] (in/at),” “从 [cóng] (from),” “对 [duì] (to/for).”

Example 5 汽车在大雨中不停地往前跑，我们很快就到达了目的地。[qì chē zài dà yǔ zhōng bù tíng de wǎng qián pǎo, wǒ men hěn kuài jiù dào dá le mù dì dì.]

(The car kept running through the heavy rain, and we soon reached our destination.)

Example 6 为了牵制敌人，我们的部队第二天就向外转移了。[wèi le qiān zhì dí rén, wǒ men de bù duì dì èr tiān jiù xiàng wài zhuǎn yí le.]  
(In order to contain the enemy, our troops moved outward the next day.)

Example 7 咱们应该永远朝前看。[zán men yīng gāi yǒng yuǎn cháo qián kàn.]  
(We should always look forward.)

Example 8 到了胡同口我往东，他往西，我们就分手了。[dào le hú tóng kǒu wǒ wǎng dōng, tā wǎng xī, wǒ men jiù fēn shǒu le.]  
(At the entrance of the alley, we separated. I went east and he went west.)

Example 9 新盖的这几座单元楼都是坐北朝南的。[xīn gài de zhè jǐ zuò dān yuán lóu dōu shì zuò běi cháo nán de.]  
(These new apartment buildings face south with the back to the north.)

Fourth, they can function as adverbials to modify verbs alone.

Example 10 1945年秋，我和爸爸妈妈随军南下了。[1945 nián qiū, wǒ hé bà bà mā mā suí jūn nán xià le.]  
(In the autumn of 1945, my parents and I went south with the army.)

Example 11 在街上雷锋东打听西打听，最后终于帮助老大娘找到了她的儿子。[zài jiē shàng léi fēng dōng dǎ tīng xī dǎ tīng, zuì hòu zhōng yú bāng zhù lǎo dà niáng zhǎo dào le tā de ér zǐ.]  
(Lei Feng inquired about everyone in the street and finally found the son of the old woman.)

Example 12 为我们的事，您左跑一趟，右跑一趟，我们感到很不安。[wèi wǒ men de shì, nín zuǒ pǎo yī tàng, yòu pǎo yī tàng, wǒ men gǎn dào hěn bù ān.]  
(We felt uneasy when you ran about for our business.)

Fifth, when they function as subject, they often appear in pairs.

Example 13 玉兰姐上有公婆，下有一儿一女，还是个街道干部，整天没有空闲的时候。[yù lán jiě shàng yǒu gōng pó, xià yǒu yī ér yī nǚ, hái shì gè jiē dào gàn bù, zhěng tiān méi yǒu kōng xián de shí hòu.]  
(Ms. Yulan has to take care of her parents-in-law as well as her son and daughter. Besides, she is a street cadre and has no free time all day.)

Example 14 我搞的这项改革，上有领导的指点，下有群众的支持，成功是有把握的。[wǒ gǎo de zhè xiàng gǎi gé, shàng yǒu lǐng dǎo de zhǐ diǎn, xià yǒu qún zhòng de zhī chí, chéng gōng shì yǒu bǎ wò de.]  
(With guidance from leaders and support from the masses, I am sure of success in this reform.)

(2) Some pure locatives used in pairs have already changed into words.

First, “上下 [shàng xià] (above and below), “前后 [qián hòu] (front and back),” and “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (left and right)” are often used in front of numeral-quantifier

phrases or after some phrases for time or space. In this case, they usually denote the approximate numbers.

四十岁上下 [sì shí suì shàng xià]  
(about forty years old)  
两点钟前后 [liǎng diǎn zhōng qián hòu]  
(around two o'clock)  
三点钟左右 [sān diǎn zhōng zuǒ yòu]  
(around three o'clock)

“内外 [nèi wài] (inside and outside)” can be used after a locational word.

长城内外 [cháng chéng nèi wài]  
(the inside and the outside of the Great Wall)  
场院内外 [chǎng yuàn nèi wài]  
(the inside and the outside of the yard)  
京城内外 [jīng chéng nèi wài]  
(the inside and the outside of Beijing)

Second, some pure locatives used in pairs indicate abstract positions or ranges.

左右摇摆 [zuǒ yòu yáo bǎi]  
(vacillate to the left and right)  
前后矛盾 [qián hòu máo dùn]  
(inconsistent)  
举国上下 [jǔ guó shàng xià]  
(the whole nation)  
内外有别 [nèi wài yǒu bié]  
(distinction between inside and outside)  
转战南北 [zhuǎn zhàn nán běi]  
(fight north and south)

Third, some paired pure locatives can be matched with “一[yī]” respectively, to indicate the manner of ongoing action when modifying a verb in a sentence.

一前一后地走 [yī qián yī hòu de zǒu]  
(walking in tandem)  
一上一下地晃动 [yī shàng yī xià de huǎng dòng]  
(wagging up and down)  
一左一右地摇摆 [yī zuǒ yī yòu de yáo bǎi]  
(swinging between left to right)

Fourth, some paired pure locatives are used in the overlapped form to express “everywhere.”

Example 15 敌人闯进他的家里，上上下下，里里外外翻了个够，可是他们连一粒粮食也没有找到。[dí rén chuǎng jìn tā de jiā lǐ, shàng shàng xià xià, hàn hàn wài wài fān le gè gòu, kě shì tā men lián yī lì liáng shí yě méi yǒu zhǎo dào.]

(The enemy broke into his house and searched inside and outside, but they did not find any grain.)

Example 16 虎子对田大叔家里里外外都非常熟悉。[hǔ zǐ duì tián dà shū jiā lǐ lǐ wài wài dōu fēi cháng shú xī.]

(Huzi is very familiar with everything in Uncle Tian's house.)

Example 17 吃过午饭，张楠坐在那里，把刚刚发生的事前前后后又想了一遍。[chī guò wǔ fàn, Zhāng Nán zuò zài nà lǐ, bǎ gāng gāng fā shēng de shì qián qián hòu hòu yòu xiǎng le yī biàn.]

(After lunch, Zhang Nan sat there and thought over what had just happened.)

- (3) Some pure locatives can form the phrases to indicate a location or time, when they are used before or after a noun or a noun phrase. “个 [gè]” can be added between a pure locative and a noun or noun phrase to form a new phrase for time.

(pure locative before noun or noun phrase to indicate time)

上(个)星期 [shàng (gè) xīng qī]

(last week)

上上个星期 [shàng shàng gè xīng qī]

(the week before the last)

下(个)星期 [xià (gè) xīng qī]

(next week)

下下个星期 [xià xià gè xīng qī]

(the week after the next)

(pure locative before noun or noun phrase to indicate position)

东/西半球 [dōng/xī bàn qiú]

(the Eastern/Western Hemisphere)

南/北城 [nán/běi chéng]

(South/North City)

前/后院 [qián/hòu yuàn]

(front/backyard)

里/外院 [lǐ/wài yuàn]

(inner/outer yard)

(pure locative after noun or noun phrase to indicate time)

三天前(后) [sān tiān qián (hòu)]

(three days later/ago)

十年后 [shí nián hòu]

(ten years later)

三个月内 [sān gè yuè nèi]

(in three months)

本世纪中 [běn shì jì zhōng]

(in this present century)

(pure locative after a noun or a noun phrase to indicate location)

地上 [dì shàng]

(on the ground)

地下 [dì xià]

(under the ground)

地里 [dì lǐ]

(in the ground)

窗前 [chuāng qián]

(in front of the window)

窗外 [chuāng wài]

(outside the window)

屋外 [wū wài]

(outside the house)

路旁 [lù páng]

(wayside)

“上 [shàng] (above)” and “里 [lǐ] (inside)” after noun should have weak pronunciation.

When a common noun is used to indicate a location, a locative should be added in the rear.

Example 18

屋里在开会。[wū lǐ zài kāi huì.]

(There is a meeting in the room.)

\*屋子在开会。[wū zi zài kāi huì.]

Example 19

他把书放在桌子上了。[tā bǎ shū fàng zài zhuō zi shàng le.]

(He put the book on the table.)

\*他把书放在桌子了。[tā bǎ shū fàng zài zhuō zi le.]

Example 20

姑娘们愉快地从山上走下来。[gū niáng men yú kuài de cóng shān shàng zǒu xià lái.]

(The girls came down the hill happily.)

\*姑娘们愉快地从山走下来。[gū niáng men yú kuài de cóng shān zǒu xià lái.]

“里 [lǐ]” cannot be used after the name of a country or a place.

Example 21 他在法国学习。[tā zài fǎ guó xué xí.]

(He studies in France.)

\*他在法国里学习。[tā zài fǎ guó lǐ xué xí.]

Example 22 小王在天津工作。[xiǎo wáng zài tiān jīn gōng zuò.]  
(Xiao Wang works in Tianjing.)

\*小王在天津里工作。[xiǎo wáng zài tiān jīn lǐ gōng zuò.]

Among pure locatives, “里 [lǐ] (inside),” “前 [qián] (front),” “后 [hòu] (back),” “上 [shàng] (above),” “下 [xià] (below)” are very flexible in connecting with a noun. “旁 [páng] (beside),” “左 [zuǒ] (left),” “右 [yòu] (right)” are relatively weaker. No matter how they are combined, there should be no “的 [de]” between them, such as “前门 [qián mén] (the front door),” “门前 [mén qián] (in front of the door),” “里屋 [lǐ wū] (back room),” “屋里 [wū lǐ] (inside the room).”

“前 [qián] (front)” and “后 [hòu] (back)” can be used before the numeral-quantifier phrase to indicate a relative position in order or time. “前 [qián]” refers to the beginning and “后 [hòu]” refers to the ending, such as “前/后四章 [qián/hòu sì zhāng] (previous/following four chapters),” “前/后五行文字 [qián/hòu wǔ xíng wén zì] (the first/last five lines).”

(4) Some pure locatives can be used before or after non-nominal words or phrases.

“前 [qián] (front)” and “后 [hòu] (back)” can be used after verbs, verb phrases, and subject-predicate phrases to indicate time.

毕业前 [bì yè qián]  
(before the graduation)  
结婚后 [jié hūn hòu]  
(after the marriage)  
死后 [sǐ hòu]  
(after the death)  
做试验后 [zuò shì yàn hòu]  
(after the experiment)

“上 [shàng] (above),” “下 [xià] (below),” “前 [qián] (front),” “后 [hòu] (back)” can be used before verb-quantifier phrases to indicate time and order.

上次 [shàng cì] (last time)  
下次 [xià cì] (next time)  
前两次 [qián liǎng cì] (the first two times)  
下一步 [xià yī bù] (next step)

When a pair of “左 [zuǒ] (left)” and “右 [yòu] (right)” or a pair of “东 [dōng] (east)” and “西 [xī] (west)” is used before a numeral-quantifier phrase, they function as adverbials, expressing a sense of irregularity.

Example 23 他左一封信右一封信地催我快去。[tā zuǒ yī fēng xìn yòu yī fēng xìn de cuī wǒ kuài qù.]  
(He urged me to go, letter after letter.)



Example 24 小李左一趟右一趟地来看我，不知有什么事。[Xiǎo Lǐ zuǒ yī tàng yòu yī tàng de lái kàn wǒ, bù zhī yǒu shén me shì.]

(Xiao Li keeps coming to see me and I don't know what's the matter.)

Example 25 这几天老王东一趟西一趟地往外地跑，忙个不停。[zhè jǐ tiān lǎo wáng dōng yī tàng xī yī tàng de wǎng wài dì pǎo, máng gè bù tíng.]

(Lao Wang has been on the run outside these days.)

Example 26 他东一句西一句，回答得语无伦次。[tā dōng yī jù xī yī jù, huí dá de yǔ wú lún cì.]

(He rambled in his statements.)

Example 27 你别东一堆西一堆到处乱摆！[nǐ bié dōng yī duī xī yī duī dào chù luàn bǎi!]

(Do not make a mess with your stuff!)

## 2 Compound locatives

### (1) Formation of a compound locative

When “以 [yǐ]” or “之 [zhī]” is added before a pure locative or when “边 [biān],” “面 [miàn],” or “头[tóu]” is added after a pure locative, a compound locative is formed to indicate position, location, or time. Here, “边 [biān],” “面 [miàn],” and “头 [tóu]” should be in weak pronunciation. (See the table illustrating the various combinations in Appendix One.)

Beside the compound locatives mentioned in the table in Appendix One, there are more, such as “中间 [zhōng jiān] (in the middle),” “当中 [dāng zhōng] (in the middle),” “底下 [dǐ xià] (below).” Moreover, some pure locatives can be combined in pairs to form different locatives, such as “东北 [dōng běi] (north-east)” as the combination of “东 [dōng] (east)” and “北 [běi] (north).” The same is true for “东南 [dōng nán] (southeast),” “西北 [xī běi] (northwest)” and “西南 [xī nán] (southwest).” There is one thing to be noticed. “\*南东 [nán dōng],” “\*南西 [nán xī],” “\*北东 [běi dōng],” “\*北西 [běi xī]” are not acceptable in Chinese.

Here are other compound locatives formed by combinations of pure locatives:

上下 [shàng xià] (top and bottom), “前后 [qián hòu] (front and back),” “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (right and left),” “内外 [nèi wài] (inside and outside),” “内中 [nèi zhōng] (among),” “当间儿 [dāng jiān ér] (in the middle),” “左前方 [zuǒ qián fāng] (front-left),” “右前方 [yòu qián fāng] (front-right),” “左上方 [zuǒ shàng fāng] (upper left),” “右上方 [yòu shàng fāng] (upper right),” “左下方 [zuǒ xià fāng] (bottom left),” “右下方 [yòu xià fāng] (bottom right).”

### (2) Usage of compound locatives and their grammatical functions

First, a compound locative is more flexible than a pure locative in use. A compound locative can stand alone in a sentence, serving as a subject, object, attribute, and adverbial.

When functioning as a subject, a compound locative frequently appears in the “是 [shì] (is)” sentence, the “有 [yǒu] (have)” sentence, the existential sentence, or other descriptive sentences.

Example 28 那所大学周围的环境很优美，西边是一个天然湖，东边是一座小山，后边还有一片松林。[nà suǒ dà xué zhōu wéi de huán jìng hěn yōu měi, xī biān shì yī gè tiān rán hú shì yī zuò xiǎo shān, hòu biān hái yǒu yī piàn sōng lín.]

(The surroundings of that university is very beautiful, with a natural lake in the west, a hill in the east and a pine forest in the back.)

Example 29 前边开过来一列国际列车。[qián biān kāi guò lái yī liè guó jì liè chē.]

(An international train is coming up ahead.)

Example 30 外边冷，请到屋里坐。[wài biān lěng, qǐng dào wū lǐ zuò.]

(It's cold outside. Please sit inside the house.)

Compound locatives often function as objects of verbs or some prepositions, such as “在 [zài] (at),” “向 [xiàng] (toward),” “朝 [cháo] (toward),” “往 [wǎng] (to),” “从 [cóng] (from),” “自 [zì] (from),” “由 [yóu] (from).”

Example 31 中文杂志都在上头，外文的都在下头。[zhōng wén zá zhì dōu zài shàng tóu, wài wén de dōu zài xià tóu.]

(Chinese magazines are at the top, and the foreign ones are at the bottom.)

Example 32 这张画从左边看是一个画面，从右边看是另一幅画面。[zhè zhāng huà cóng zuǒ biān kàn shì yī gè huà miàn, cóng yòu biān kàn shì lìng yī fú huà miàn.]

(This painting presents one view from the left and another one from the right.)

Example 33 那时候，这儿的小孩子经常走在前边给我们带路。[nà shí hòu, zhè er de xiǎo hái zi jīng cháng zǒu zài qián biān gěi wǒ men dài lù.]

(At that time, the children here often walked in front to show us the way.)

Example 34 一切都在意料之中，一切又都出于意料之外。[yī qiè dōu zài yì liào zhī zhōng, yī qiè yòu dōu chū yú yì liào zhī wài.]

(Everything was expected as well as unexpected.)

A compound locative often functions as an attribute to modify a noun, while there should be a “的 [de]” between a compound locative and a head word.

Example 35 前边的楼都是新建的。[qián biān de lóu dōu shì xīn jiàn de.]

(The buildings in front are all newly built.)

Example 36 下边的书都不怕压，上边的仪器怕压。[xià biān de shū dōu bú pà yā, shàng biān de yí qì pà yā.]

(The books below are not afraid of pressure, but the instrument above is.)

Example 37 东头(的)那一片楼房是工人宿舍。[dōng tóu (de) nà yī piàn lóu fáng shì gōng rén xiǔ shě.]

(The buildings in the east are workers' dormitories.)

Example 38 中间(的)那张油画是他的处女作。[zhōng jiān (de) nà zhāng yóu huà shì tā de chù nǚ zuò.]

(The painting in the middle is his first work.)

Example 39 以上的论述说明了三个问题。[yǐ shàng de lùn shù shuō míng le sān gè wèn tí.]

(The above statements illustrate three problems.)

When functioning as an adverbial, a compound locative cannot be followed by auxiliary word “地 [de] (-ly).”

Example 40 王阿姨，您请里边坐一会儿。[wáng ā yí, nín qǐng lǐ biān zuò yī huì er.]

(Auntie Wang, please sit inside for a while.)

Example 41 以前我不太了解他。[yǐ qián wǒ bú tài li jiě tā.]

(I didn't know him well before.)

Example 42 我们以后应加强联系，增进了解。[wǒ men yǐ hòu yīng jiā qiáng lián xì, zēng jìn liǎo jiě.]

(We should strengthen contact and increase understanding in the future.)

Example 43 以上我们讨论了产品质量的问题，下面再谈谈数量问题。[yǐ shàng wǒ men tāo lùn le chǎn pǐn zhì liàng de wèn tí, xià miàn zài tán tán shù liàng wèn tí.]

(After the discussion on the quality of our products, let us talk about the quantity now.)

Example 44 你们快走吧，约翰和玛丽已经前头走了。[nǐ men kuài zǒu ba, yuē hàn hé mǎ lì yǐ jīng qián tóu zǒu le.]

(You've got to hurry up. John and Mary are already ahead of you.)

However, a few compound locatives are not free, such as “之间 [zhī jiān] (between),” “之中 [zhī zhōng] (among),” “之内 [zhī nèi] (within),” “之外 [zhī wài] (outside).” They can only be used after nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and numeral-quantifier phrases.

朋友之间 [péng yǒu zhī jiān] (among friends)

我们之中 [wǒ men zhī zhōng] (among us)

三天之内 [sān tiān zhī nèi] (in three days)

Also, these locatives cannot function as attributes alone. For example, “\*之间的关系 [zhī jiān de guān xì]” is not correct, but “你和我之间的关系 [nǐ hé wǒ zhī jiān de guān xì] (the relation between you and me),” “这之间的关系 [zhè zhī jiān de guān xì] (the relation between),” “二者之间的关系 [èr zhě zhī jiān de guān xì] (the relation between two sides)” are acceptable.

Second, compound locatives can be used after nouns, pronouns, and numeral-quantifier phrases. Some of them can also follow verbs or verb phrases to form the phrases for position, location, and time.

If a noun is put before certain compound locatives, such as “~边 [biān],” “~头 [tóu],” “~面 [miàn],” “的 [de]” doesn’t necessarily appear in the middle and these compound locatives are weak in pronunciation. In this case, the meaning of “noun+compound locative” is equal to that of “noun+pure locative,” such as “桌子里边 [zhuō zǐ lǐ biān] (in the desk)/桌子里 [zhuō zǐ lǐ] (in the desk)” and “墙上边 [qiáng shàng biān] (on the wall)/墙上 [qiáng shàng] (on the wall).” However, the compound locatives consisting of “上 [shàng] (on)” and “里 [lǐ] (in)” can be pronounced with stress, so “的 [de]” can appear in the middle sometimes. If so, the meaning of “noun+compound locative” may not be equal to that of “noun+pure locative” because at times the importance is put on the compound locative instead of the pure one.

‘墙上边 [qiáng shàng biān] (on the wall)

墙(的)‘上边 [qiáng de shàng biān] (the upper part of the wall)

‘报上边 [bào shàng biān] (in the newspaper)

报(的)‘上边 [bào de shàng biān] (the upper part of the newspaper)

‘屋子里面 [wū zǐ lǐ miàn] (inside the room)

屋子(的)‘里面 [wū zǐ de lǐ miàn] (the inner side of the room)

In this example, the first phrase of each group refers to any part of the location indicated by the noun inside. For example, “‘墙上边 [qiáng shàng biān]” refers to any part of the wall surface; “‘屋子里边 [wū zǐ lǐ biān]” refers to any inside part of the room. Therefore, they are equal to “noun+pure locative” in meaning. The second phrase of each group expresses a certain part of a location represented by the noun inside. For example, “‘屋子的‘里面 [wū zǐ de lǐ miàn]” means a certain part inside the room; “‘报的‘上边 [bào de shàng biān]” refers to the upper part of the newspaper. Thus they are different from “noun+pure locative” in meaning. There is one thing to be mentioned. Such a difference only exists in the compound locatives consisting of “上 [shàng]” and “里 [lǐ],” but not in others.

In pronunciation, the stress should be put on the compound locatives of the following phrases.

工厂(的)‘东边 [gōng chǎng (de)‘dōng biān] (the east of the factory)

墙(的)‘后边 [qiáng (de)‘hòu biān] (the back of the school)

学校(的)‘旁边 [xué xiào (de)‘páng biān] (beside the school)

“Noun+之(以) [zhī(yǐ)]~” mainly refers to a region or a district and “的 [de]” cannot be added in the middle.

黄河以南 [huáng hé yǐ nán] (in the south of the Yellow River)

长江以北 [cháng jiāng yǐ běi] (in the north of the Yangtze River)

北京与天津之间 [běi jīng yǔ tiān jīn zhī jiān] (between Beijing and Tianjing)

The meaning of “noun+~边 [biān] (~头 [tóu], ~面 [miàn])” is different from that of “noun+之(以) [zhī (yǐ)]~.” The former covers to a narrow range and the latter covers a broader one. For example, “黄河南边 [huáng hé nán biān]” indicates the district nearby the south of the Yellow River while “黄河以南 [huáng hé yǐ nán]” means the large area of the south of China, with the Yellow River as a dividing line.

Some compound locatives can be added after a numeral-quantifier phrase to indicate range or time. Here are examples: “十里以外 [shí lǐ yǐ wài] (ten miles away),” “一百元以内 [yī bǎi yuán yǐ nèi] (no more than one hundred yuan),” “十八岁以下 [shí bā suì yǐ xià] (under ten years old).”

Without “的 [de]” in the middle, some compound locatives can be put after a verb (phrase) and subject-predicate phrase to form a phrase for time which mainly serves as an adverbial or attribute. Such compound locatives are “以前 [yǐ qián] (previous),” “以后 [yǐ hòu] (afterwards),” “之前 [zhī qián] (before),” “之后 [zhī hòu] (later),” “中间 [zhōng jiān] (middle),” “当中 [dāng zhōng] (in the middle).” The examples formed by these locatives are “解放以前 [jiě fàng yǐ qián] (before the liberation),” “下课以后 [xià kè yǐ hòu] (after class),” “来中国之前 [lái zhōng guó zhī qián] (before coming to China),” “我们毕业以后 [wǒ men bì yè yǐ hòu] (after our graduation),” “谈话中间 [tán huà zhōng jiān] (during the talk),” “教育改革当中 [jiào yù gǎi gé dāng zhōng] (in the education reform),” “闲谈之间 [xián tán zhī jiān] (during the chat).” The words before “以前 [yǐ qián] (previous)” can be either affirmative or negative, which doesn’t influence the meaning of the whole phrase. For example, the meaning of “来中国以前 [lái zhōng guó zhī qián] (before coming to China)” is equal to that of “没来中国以前 [méi lái zhōng guó yǐ qián] (before coming to China),” both of which show that “coming to China” hasn’t happened yet. The same is true for the examples of “毕业以前 [bì yè yǐ qián] (before the graduation)” and “没毕业以前 [méi bì yè yǐ qián] (before the graduation).” However, the words before “以后 [yǐ hòu] (afterwards)” should be affirmative, like “学习中文以后 [xué xí zhōng wén yǐ hòu] (after learning Chinese)” and “回国以后 [huí guó yǐ hòu] (after returning home).”

Generally speaking, an adverb doesn’t modify a noun but it can modify some compound locatives, such as “最前边 [zuì qián biān] (foremost),” “紧里头 [jǐn lǐ tóu] (innermost),” “顶后边儿 [dǐng hòu biān ér] (backmost)” and some pure ones, such as “稍后 [shāo hòu] (a little back).”

Third, generally speaking, a locative shows a position, a location, or time, but sometimes it can be extended to express a certain aspect, range, condition, situation, or process. For example, some pure locatives, like “上 [shàng],” “中 [zhōng],” and “下 [xià],” frequently appear in the phrases of “. . . 上 [shàng] (on),” “. . . 中 [zhōng] (during)” and “. . . 下 [xià] (under).”

The phrase of “. . . 上 [shàng]” means “in a certain aspect.”

Example 45 经济上的损失一定要补回来。[jīng jì shàng de sǔn shī yī dìng yào bǔ huí lái.]

(The economic losses must be made up for.)

Example 46 他主观上很努力，但客观条件比较差。[tā zhǔ guān shàng hěn nǔ lì, dàn kè guān tiáo jiàn bǐ jiào chà.]

(He works hard subjectively, but his objective conditions are relatively poor.)

Example 47 最近，我们的企业技术上又领先了一步。[zuì jìn, wǒ men de qǐ yè jì shù shàng yòu lǐng xiān le yī bù.]

(Recently, our enterprise has taken another step forward in technology.)

Example 48 导演实际上想让我演主角，可又有些为难。[dǎo yǎn shí jì shàng xiǎng ràng wǒ yǎn zhǔ jiǎo, kě yòu yǒu xiē wéi nán.]

(The director actually wanted to give me the leading role, but he was still hesitant more or less.)

Example 49 领导上也同意我们的做法。[lǐng dǎo shàng yě tóng yì wǒ men de zuò fǎ.]

(The leader also agrees with our approach.)

The phrase of“... 下 [xià] (under)” means “under a certain condition.”

Example 50 这种金属高温下也不易熔化。[zhè zhǒng jīn shǔ gāo wēn xià yě bú yì róng huà.]

(This metal does not melt easily at high temperature.)

Example 51 在我们的坚持下，对方还是接受了我们的条件。[zài wǒ men de jiān chí xià, duì fāng hái shì jiē shòu le wǒ men de tiáo jiàn.]

(At our insistence, the other side accepted our terms finally.)

Example 52 在老师傅的帮助下，抽水机很快就修好了。[zài lǎo shī fu de bāng zhù xià, chōu shuǐ jī hěn kuài jiù xiū hǎo le.]

(With the help of the experienced instructor, the pump was soon repaired.)

The phrase of“... 中 [zhōng] (during)” means “in a certain process.”

Example 53 病中，她还坚持工作，不肯休息。[bìng zhōng, tā hái jiān chí gōng zuò, bù kěn xiū xi.]

(Although she was ill, she kept on working and refused to rest.)

Example 54 闲谈中，我发现他对京剧很有研究。[xián tán zhōng, wǒ fā xiàn tā duì jīng jù hěn yǒu yán jiū.]

(In a chat with him, I found that he knew a lot about Beijing Opera.)

Example 55 忙乱中，他连眼镜也忘了戴就走了。[máng luàn zhōng, tā lián yǎn jìng yě wàng le dài jiù zǒu le.]

(In the rush, he left without putting on his glasses.)

Example 56 辩论中，说几句过于激烈的话是难以避免的。[biàn lùn zhōng, shuō jǐ jù guò yú jī liè de huà shì nán yǐ bì miǎn de.]

(In the debate, saying something drastic is inevitable.)

Example 57 假期中，他为大家做了不少好事。[jià qī zhōng, tā wèi dà jiā zuò le bù shǎo hǎo shì.]

(During the vacation, he did a lot of good things for people.)

**II. Locational words**

Nouns or noun phrases indicating location in space are named locational words. They include:

- 1 locatives
- 2 proper nouns of place, like “中国 [zhōng guó] (China),” “北京 [běi jīng] (Beijing),” “天安门广场 [tiān ān mén guǎng chǎng] (Tiananmen Square)”
- 3 general nouns or pronouns of location, like “图书馆 [tú shū guǎn] (library),” “学校 [xué xiào] (school),” “门口 [mén kǒu] (doorway)”
- 4 noun phrases of location mainly consist of nouns and some locatives, like “心里 [xīn lǐ] (in the heart),” “报上 [bào shàng] (in the newspaper),” “身旁 [shēn páng] (beside)”

Locational words can function as subjects, objects, attributes, and adverbials.

## 1 As subject

They are put at the head of a sentence as the subject to describe certain locations. They can appear in the following types of sentences.

- (1) The sentence with an adjective as the predicate and the sentence with a subject-predicate as the predicate

Example 58 市中心十分繁华。[shì níng xīn shí fèn fán huá.]  
(The downtown is very prosperous.)

Example 59 会场上安静极了。[mìng chǎng shàng ān jìng jí le.]  
(It is extremely quiet in the assembly room.)

Example 60 城楼上锣鼓喧天，红旗飘扬。[chéng lóu shàng luó gǔ xuān tiān, hóng qí piāo yáng.]  
(On the gate tower, gongs and drums roar and red flags flutter.)

Example 61 这里街道路面宽阔，房屋整齐。[zhè lǐ jiē dào lù miàn kuān kuò, fáng wū zhěng qí.]  
(Here, the streets are wide and the houses are tidy.)

The first two examples are the sentences with adjectives as predicate and the last two examples are the sentences with subject-predicates as predicate.

- (2) The existential sentence of “是 [shì] (is)” structure and the existential sentence of “有 [yǒu] (have)” structure

Example 62 北京的北面是连绵不断的山，北京的南面是绿色的大平原。[běi jīng de běi miàn shì lián mián bú duàn de shān, běi jīng de nán miàn shì lǜ sè de dà píng yuán.]  
(In the north of Beijing are continuous mountains, and in the south of Beijing is the great green plain.)



Example 63 从车窗向外望去，远处是一株株墨绿的柑橘树。[cóng chē chuāng xiàng wài wàng qù, yuǎn chù shì yī zhū zhū mò lǜ de gān jú shù.]  
(From the train window, I saw darkish green citrus trees in the distance.)

Example 64 杭州是有名的花园城市。[háng zhōu shì yǒu míng de huā yuán chéng shì.]  
(Hangzhou is a famous garden city.)

Example 65 你身上、脸上都是泥？摔跤了？[nǐ shēn shàng, liǎn shàng dōu shì ní? shuāi jiāo le?]  
(You got muddy all over your body and face. Did you fall?)

Example 66 我家的后面有一个大花园。[wǒ jiā de hòu miàn yǒu yī gè dà huā yuán.]  
(There is a big garden behind my house.)

### (3) Other existential sentences

Example 67 楼梯的两旁摆着一盆盆鲜花。[lóu tī de liǎng páng bǎi zhe yī pén pén xiān huā.]  
(There were pots of flowers on both sides of the stairs.)

Example 68 她的眼睛里涌满了泪水，脸色白得像纸一样。[tā de yǎn jīng hàn yǒng mǎn le lèi shuǐ, liǎn sè bái de xiàng zhǐ yī yàng.]  
(Her eyes were full of tears and her face was pale like paper.)

Example 69 天空上挂着一轮皎洁的明月。[tiān kōng shàng guà zhe yī lún jiǎo jié de míng yuè.]  
(A bright moon appears in the sky.)

Example 70 远处传来姑娘们银铃般的欢笑声。[yuǎn chù chuán lái gū niang men yín líng bān de huān xiào shēng.]  
(In the distance came the ringing laughter of the girls.)

Example 71 天上飞过去一群大雁。[tiān shàng fēi guò qù yī qún dà yàn.]  
(A flock of wild geese flew through the sky.)

### (4) The sentence describing an ongoing action in a certain place

Example 72 台上唱着戏。[tái shàng chàng zhe xì.]  
(A play is being performed on the stage.)

Example 73 外面刮着风。[wài miàn guā zhe fēng.]  
(The wind is blowing outside.)

### (5) The sentence introducing the purpose of a certain location

Example 74 屋里住人，屋外放东西。[wū lǐ zhù rén, wū wài fàng dōng xī.]  
(To live in the house and to put things outside.)

Example 75 山顶上种树，山坡种庄稼。[shān dǐng shàng zhòng shù, shān pō zhòng zhuāng jià.]  
(To grow trees on the hilltops and to grow crops on the hillsides.)



## 2 As object

Locational words frequently function as the objects of verbs or prepositions, such as “在 [zài] (at),” “到 [dào] (to),” “朝 [cháo] (toward),” “向 [xiàng] (toward),” “往 [wǎng] (to),” “从 [cóng] (from).”

Example 76 你要的那本书在这儿呢。[nǐ yào de nà běn shū zài zhè ér ne.]  
(Here is the book you want.)

Example 77 刘先生和他的太太半年前就去澳洲了。[liú xiān shēng hé tā de tài tài bàn nián qián jiù qù ào zhōu le.]  
(Mr. Liu and his wife went to Australia six months ago.)

Example 78 夏天，人们常在这棵古老的大树下乘凉，休息。[xià tiān, rén men cháng zài zhè kē gǔ lǎo de dà shù xià chéng liáng, xiū xi.]  
(In summer, people often enjoy the shade and rest under the old tree.)

Example 79 小保和几个孩子到山坡上放牛去了。[xiǎo bǎo hé jǐ gè hái zǐ dào shān pō shang fàng niú qù le.]  
(Xiao Bao and several children went to herd cattle on the hillside.)

Example 80 代表团已经离开北京去南方参观访问了。[dài biǎo tuán yǐ jīng lí kāi běi jīng qù nán fāng cān guān fǎng wèn le.]  
(The delegation has left Beijing for a visit to the south.)

## 3 As attribute

Locational words modify nouns as attributes and are often followed by the structural auxiliary “的 [de].”

Example 81 北京的春天很暖和。[běi jīng de chūn tiān hěn nuǎn hé.]  
(It's very warm in the springtime in Beijing.)

Example 82 屋里的空气实在令人窒息。[wū lǐ de kōng qì shí zài lìng rén zhì xī.]  
(The air in the room is really suffocating.)

Example 83 这里的一切似乎都变了样子。[zhè hàn de yī qiē sì hū dōu biàn le yàng zi.]  
(Everything here seems different.)

Example 84 户外生活逐渐对他成了巨大的诱惑。[hù wài shēng huó zhú jiàn duì tā chéng le jù dà de yòu huò.]  
(The outdoor life gradually became a great temptation to him.)

Example 85 她家门口的绿色栅栏门总是紧关着的。[tā jiā mén kǒu de lǜ sè zhà lán mén zǒng shì jǐn guān zhe de.]  
(The green gate of her house is always closed.)

## 4 As adverbial

Locational words seldom function as adverbials alone, and yet, if they do, they are qualified in the following three situations.

- (1) They are put at the head of sentence in which the doers cannot be omitted. The whole sentence describes an ongoing action in a certain place.

Example 86 老槐树下，社员们正在开生产会。[lǎo huái shù xià, shè yuán men zhèng zài kāi shēng chǎn huì.]

(Under the old pagoda tree, the commune members are having a production meeting.)

Example 87 台上，老队长在讲生产计划。[tái shàng, lǎo duì zhǎng zài jiǎng shēng chǎn jì huà.]

(On the platform, the old teamleader is introducing the production plan.)

- (2) They can appear in the spoken sentence with a simple or short verb as the predicate.

Example 88 你坐飞机去，我坐火车去，咱们后天上海见。[nǐ zuò fēi jī qù, wǒ zuò huǒ chē qù, zán men hòu tiān shàng hǎi jiàn.]

(You go by plane and I go by train. I'll see you in Shanghai the day after tomorrow.)

Example 89 这几天，他们地里吃，地里睡。[zhè jǐ tiān, tā men dì lǐ chī, dì lǐ shuì.]

(These days they eat and sleep in the field.)

- (3) They can appear in the sentence in which they are used in pairs.

Example 90 他终日楼上、楼下地跑着，轻易不出门。[tā zhōng rì lóu shàng, lóu xià de pǎo zhe, qīng yì bù chū mén.]

(He is on the run upstairs and downstairs in the building all day, not often going out.)

Example 91 小安风里来，雨里去，坚持给王大爷看病，从不间断。

[xiǎo ān fēng lǐ lái, yǔ lǐ qù, jiān chí gěi wáng dà yé kàn bìng, cóng bù jiān duàn.]

(Doctor Ann keeps on taking care of Uncle Wang, never interrupted by unpleasant weather.)

Example 92 彩排时，导演台上台下忙个不停。[cǎi pái shí, dǎo yǎn tái shàng tái xià máng gè bù tíng.]

(The director was very busy around the stage during the rehearsal.)

### III. Time words

Nouns or noun phrases indicating time are named time words. There are two types of time words. One is time point to identify the time position, such as “2000年 [2000 nián] (in year 2000),” “下午 [xià wǔ] (in the afternoon),” “昨天晚上 [zuó tiān wǎn shàng] (last night).” The other is time interval to express the time duration, such as “十年 [shí nián] (ten years),” “一个晚上 [yī gè wǎn shàng] (one night),” “两分钟 [liǎng fēn zhōng] (two minutes).”

70 *Nouns*

Time points:

- 1 月 [yī yuè] (January), 2月 [èr yuè] (February)  
周一 [zhōu yī] (Monday), 周二 [zhōu èr] (Tuesday)  
一点(钟) [yī diǎn (zhōng)] (a quarter), 三点一刻 [sān diǎn yī kè] (a quarter past three o'clock), 四点半(钟) [sì diǎn bàn (zhōng)] (half past four o'clock).  
去年 [qù nián] (last year), 今年 [jīn nián] (this year), 明年 [míng nián] (next year)  
春季 [chūn jì] (spring), 夏季 [xià jì] (summer), 秋季 [qiū jì] (autumn), 冬季 [dōng jì] (winter)

Time intervals:

- 一周 [yī zhōu] (a week), 两周 [liǎng zhōu] (two weeks), 两周半 [liǎng zhōu bàn] (two-and-a-half weeks)  
一秒 [yī miǎo] (a second), 半分钟 [bàn fēn zhōng] (half a minute), 半个钟头 [bàn gè zhōng tóu] ([half an hour])  
一天 [yī tiān] (a day), 十个月 [shí gè yuè] (ten months), 一个世纪 [yī gè shì jì] (a century)

The grammatical functions of time words are as follows.

1 As adverbs

The words for time points mainly function as adverbs alone.

Example 93 小王, 你星期日有事吗? [xiǎo wáng, nǐ xīng qī rì yǒu shì ma?] (Xiao Wang, are you busy on Sunday?)

Example 94 一天晚上, 我和爷爷在灯下下棋, ... [yī tiān wǎn shàng, wǒ hé yé yé zài dēng xià xià qí. . .] (One night, my grandfather and I played chess under the lamp, . . .)

Example 95 早上我去看他时候, 他跟朋友说话呢。[zǎo shàng wǒ qù kàn tā de shí hòu, tā gēn péng yǒu shuō huà ne.] (When I went to see him this morning, he was talking to his friends.)

Sometimes the words for time intervals can function as adverbials, expressing the speed and the frequency of actions in a certain time interval.

Example 96 阿里一分钟能写二十个汉字。[ā lǐ yī fēn zhōng néng xiě èr shí gè hàn zì.] (A Li can write twenty Chinese characters in a minute.)

Example 97 你爱人找你一定有急事, 一早上来了三四次电话。[nǐ ài rén zhǎo nǐ yī dìng yǒu jí shì, yī zǎo shàng lái le sān sì cì diàn huà.] (Your wife must have had an urgent need, for she called you three or four times in the morning.)

Also, the words for time intervals can function as adverbials in the negative sentence, in which no action occurs during this interval.

Example 98 老王这几天身体不太好，已经两天没来上班了。[lǎo wáng zhè jǐ tiān shēn tǐ bú tài hǎo, yǐ jīng liǎng tiān méi lái shàng bān le.]  
(Lao Wang is not in good health these days. He hasn't come to work for two days.)

## 2 As complement

“Numeral-quantifier phrase+time noun” can be used to indicate a certain time interval, and often functions as a complement.

Example 99 他曾在农村住过十几年。[tā céng zài nóng cūn zhù guò shí jǐ nián.]  
(He once lived in the countryside for more than ten years.)

Example 100 毕业后，他当编辑就当了一半辈子。[bì yè hòu, tā dāng biān jí jiù dāng le bàn bèi zi.]  
(After graduation, he worked as an editor for half his life.)

Example 101 我要在中国学习三个月。[wǒ yào zài zhōng guó xué xí sān gè yuè.]  
(I'm going to study in China for three months.)

## 3 As a predicate

Some time words can function alone as a predicate to indicate time and date.

Example 102 明天中秋节了。[míng tiān zhōng qiū jié le.]  
(Tomorrow is Mid-Autumn festival.)

Example 103 现在四点一刻。[xiàn zài sì diǎn yī kè.]  
(It's a quarter past four.)

Example 104 今天3月3号，星期六。[jīn tiān 3 yuè 3 hào, xīng qī liù.]  
(Today is Saturday, March 3rd.)

## 4 As an attribute

When time words function as attributes, there should be a “的 [de]” between time words and nouns.

Example 105 五月的夜风，暖煦煦的。[wǔ yuè de yè fēng, nuǎn xù xù de.]  
(The night wind in May is warm.)

Example 106 我在昨天的招待会上认识了一个新朋友。[wǒ zài zuó tiān de zhāo dài huì shàng rèn shí le yī gè xīn péng yǒu.]  
(I made a new friend at the reception yesterday.)

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Example 107 早晨的空气格外清新。[zǎo chén de kōng qì gé wài qīng xīn.]  
(The air is very fresh in the morning.)

Example 108 3月8号的报纸借出去了。[sān yuè bā hào de bào zhǐ jiè chū qù le.]

(The newspaper on March 8th was lent out.)

Example 109 四年的大学生活就要结束了。[sì nián de dà xué shēng huó jiù yào jié shù le.]

(Four years of college life is coming to an end.)

5 *As subject*

When time words function as subjects, all predicates are confined to further explain time.

Example 110 新年快要到了。[xīn nián kuài yào dào le.]  
(The New Year is coming.)

Example 111 春天给人们带来了希望。[chūn tiān gěi rén men dài lái le xī wàng.]

(Spring brings about hope for people.)

Example 112 严冬已经过去，春天还会远吗！[yán dōng yǐ jīng guò qù, chūn tiān hái huì yuǎn ma!]

(If winter is over, can spring be far behind?)

Example 113 昨天是我一生中最难忘的一天。[zuó tiān shì wǒ yī shēng zhōng zuì nán wàng de yī tiān.]

(Yesterday was the most unforgettable day in my life.)

Example 114 前几天那么冷，今天暖和了。[qián jǐ tiān nà me lěng, jīn tiān nuǎn huo le.]

(It was pretty cold a few days ago, and it became warm today.)

6 *As object*

Example 115 他的生日正好是农历大年三十。[tā de shēng rì zhèng hǎo shì nóng lì dà nián sān shí.]

(His birthday happens to be on the 30th day of the lunar New Year.)

Example 116 我碰到他是在国庆节那天中午。[wǒ pèng dào tā shì zài guó qìng jié nà tiān zhōng wǔ.]

(It was at noon on National Day that I met him.)

Example 117 中小学从一月底到二月中旬放寒假。[zhōng xiǎo xué cóng yī yuè dǐ dào èr yuè zhōng xún fàng hán jià.]

(Middle and primary schools start winter holidays from the end of January to the middle of February.)

Example 118 他们的婚期推迟到明年二月份了。[tā men de hūn qī tuī chí dào míng nián èr yuè fèn le.]

(Their wedding has been put off until next February.)

# Appendix one

## Formation of compound locatives

	东 [dōng]	南 [nán]	西 [xī]	北 [běi]	上 [shàng]	下 [xià]	前 [qián]	后 [hòu]	左 [zuǒ]	右 [yòu]	里 [lǐ]	外 [wài]	内 [nèi]	中 [zhōng]	间 [jiān]	旁 [páng]
before	以 [yǐ]	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-
	之 [zhī]	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-
after	边 [biān]	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+
	面 [miàn]	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-
	头 [tóu]				+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-

(Note: “+” means “be able to be combined”, “-” means “be unable to be combined”.)

### Note

- 1 “头儿[tóu ér](a certain direction/location)” in “东头儿[dōng tóu ér](east direction/location)”, “南头儿[nán tóu ér](south direction/location)”, “西头儿[xī tóu ér](west direction/location)”, “北头儿[běi tóu ér](north direction/location)”, is different from the suffix “头[tóu](the end)”, the latter of which should be pronounced with stress and in retroflexion as well. It means “顶端[dǐng duān](top)” or “末梢[mò shāo](end)”.

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### 3 Pronouns

The words that are of referential functions are named pronouns.

Example 1 喂，阿里，这个网球拍子是你的吗？[wèi, ā lǐ, zhè gè wǎng qiú pāi zǐ shì nǐ de ma?]

(Hi, A Li, is this your tennis racket?)

Example 2 老王是一个正直的人，我们也应该做那样的人。[lǎo wáng shì yī gè zhèng zhí de rén, wǒ men yě yīng gāi zuò nà yàng de rén.]

(Lao Wang is an upright man and we should be like that.)

Example 3 李明得了单打冠军，这是他刻苦练习的结果。[Lǐ Míng dé le dān dǎ guàn jūn, zhè shì tā kè kǔ liànxí de jié guǒ.]

(Li Ming won the singles championship, which was attributed to his hard practice.)

“这 [zhè] (this)” in Example 1 is a demonstrative, distinguishing a target; “你 [nǐ] (you)” substitutes a preceding noun “阿里 [Ā Lǐ] (A Li)” here. The referent of “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” in Example 2 includes speakers and listeners; “那样 [nà yàng] (like that)” refers to “正直 [zhèng zhí] (upright)” here. “这 [zhè] (this)” in Example 3 substitutes “李明得了单打冠军。[lǐ míng dé le dān dǎ guàn jūn.] (Li Ming won the singles championship.)”; the referent of “他 [tā] (he)” is “李明 [Lǐ Míng] (Li Ming).” The concrete referents of pronouns much depend on the sentence context. For example, the third personal pronoun “他 [tā] (he)” can substitute any single male but “李明 [Lǐ Míng] (Li Ming)” is its only referent in Example 3. Thus it can be seen here that pronoun is characterized by its high generalization.

The grammatical functions of pronouns are identical to the words or phrases they substitute. That is to say, they can function as subjects, objects (or objects of prepositions) and as attributes when substituting nouns or noun phrases; similarly, they can perform as predicates when substituting verbs, verb phrases, or some adjectives. Also, when they replace adjectives or numerals in a sentence, they function as attributes or complements.

Example 4 老爷爷对他的小孙子说：“我给你讲一个故事吧。”[lǎo yé yé duì tā de xiǎo sūn zǐ shuō, wǒ gěi nǐ jiǎng yī gè gù shì ba.]

(The grandfather said to his little grandson: “I tell you a story.”) (“我 [wǒ] (I)” as the subject to replace “老爷爷 [lǎo yé yé] (grandfather)”)



Example 5 “德民，你别难过。” 德民的妈说。[dé mín, nǐ bié nán guò, dé mín de mā shuō.]

(“Demin, don’t feel sad,” said Demin’s mother.) (“你 [nǐ] (you)” as the subject to replace “德民 [dé mín] (Demin)”)

Example 6

A: “这次听写，你写错了几个字？” [zhè cì tīng xiě, nǐ xiě cuò le jǐ gè zì.]  
(How many words have you misspelled in this dictation?)

B: “我写错了八个”。[wǒ xiě cuò le bā gè.]

(I misspelled eight.) (“几 [jǐ] (how many)” as the attribute to replace “八 [bā] (eight)”)

Pronouns cannot be modified by other words, except for “被人尊敬的他 [bèi rén zūn jìng de tā] (He is respected by others.)” in the written language, and yet, such use seldom occurs in reality.

Based on their meanings and functions, pronouns can be categorized into three: personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, interrogative pronouns.

### Section one: personal pronouns

Personal pronouns refer to people, single or plural. The common personal pronouns are as follows:

Single:

我 [wǒ] (I), 你 [nǐ] (you), 您 [nín] (you), 他 [tā] (he), 她 [tā] (she), 它 [tā] (it), 咱 [zán] (I)

Plural:

我们 [wǒ men] (we), 你们 [nǐ men] (you), 您们 [nín men] (you), 他们 [tā men] (they), 她们 [tā men] (they), 它们 [tā men] (they), 咱们 [zán men] (we)

Single and plural:

人家 [rén jiā] (other/others), 别人 [bié rén] (other/others), 旁人 [páng rén] (other/others), 自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself), 自家 [zì jiā] (oneself), 自个儿 [zì gè er] (oneself), 大家 [dà jiā] (we), 大伙儿 [dà huǒ er] (we)

Personal pronouns can function as subjects, objects, and attributes in sentences.

Example 7 大家应该互相关心，互相爱护。[dà jiā yīng gāi hù xiāng guān xīn, hù xiāng ài hù.]

(We should care for and love each other.) (“大家 [dà jiā] (we)” as the subject)

Example 8 她从来不愿意麻烦别人。[tā cóng lái bú yuàn yì má fan bié rén.]  
(She hates to bother others.) (“她 [tā] (she)” as the subject and “别人 [bié rén] (others)” as the object.)

Example 9 咱们不要干涉人家的自由。[zán men bú yào gān shè rén jiā de zì yóu.]

(We should not interfere with others' freedom.) (“咱们 [zán men] (we) as the subject and “人家 [rén jiā] (others)” as the attribute)

Example 10 我自己做的事情怎么能让您来替我承担责任呢？[wǒ zì jǐ zuò de shì qing zěn me néng ràng nín lái tì wǒ chéng dān zé rèn ne?]

(How could I trouble you to take responsibility for what I have done?)

In the last example, “我 [wǒ] (I)” is the subject; “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” refers to “我 [wǒ] (I),” which is also the subject. “您 [nín] (you)” is the bi-constituent; “我 [wǒ] (I)” is the object of the preposition “替 [tì] (replace).”

Example 11 这个小组又自己设计、自己制作了一个飞机模型。[zhè gè xiǎo zǔ yòu zì jǐ shè jì, zì jǐ zhì zuò le yī gè fēi jī mó xíng.]

(The team designed and made a plane model by themselves again.) (“自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” as adverbial)

Next is the introduction to some common personal pronouns.

### I. 我 [wǒ] (I), 你 [nǐ] (you), 他 [tā] (he), 她 [tā] (she), 它 [tā] (it)

“我 [wǒ] (I)” is the first personal pronoun in the single form, referring to the speaker him- or herself. “你 [nǐ] (you)” is the second personal pronoun in the single form, referring to the listener called by the speaker. “您 [nǐng] (you)” is an honorific of “你 [nǐ] (you).” “他 [tā] (he), 她 [tā] (she), 它 [tā] (it)” are the third personal pronouns in the single form, referring to people or things involved in the conversation, excluding the speaker and the listener. When “他 [tā] (he)” and “你 [nǐ] (you)” occur at the same time in the conversation, the former refers to the indirect listener and the latter refers to the direct one. It is improper and impolite to use “他 [tā] (he)” or “她 [tā] (she)” to address the elder generation. “它 [tā] (it)” refers to a single object or thing. The pronunciation of “他 (he),” “她 (she),” or “它 (it)” is [tā].

“我们 [wǒ men] (we)” is the plural form of the first personal pronoun; “你们 [nǐ men] (you)” is the plural form of the second pronoun. In the written language, “他们 [tā men] (they)” refers to males and “她们 [tā men] (they)” females. They have the same pronunciation [tā men]. “他们 [tā men] (they)” can refer to males and females if both sides are included in the conversation. “它 [tā] (it)” is seldom used as an object and its plural form is seldom used, too.

Example 12 有人说，它（赵州桥）像刚刚升起的月亮，也有人说它像天上的长虹。[yǒu rén shuō, tā (zhào zhōu qiáo) xiàng gāng gāng shēng qǐ de yuè liàng, yě yǒu rén shuō tā xiàng tiān shàng de cháng hóng.]

(Some people say that it (Zhao Zhou Bridge) looks like a rising moon; some say it is like a rainbow in the sky.)

Example 13 毛料衣服要用温水洗，轻揉，洗好后不要拧，让它自然干。[máo liào yī fú yào yòng wēn shuǐ xǐ, qīng róu, xǐ hǎo hòu bú yào nǐng, ràng tā zì rán gān.]

(Woolen clothes should be washed gently in warm water. Don't twist them after washing and let them dry gradually.)

Example 14 我得天天照管它们（花儿），像好朋友似的关心它们。[wǒ děi tiān tiān zhào guǎn tā men (huā er), xiàng hǎo péng yǒu sì de guān xīn tā men.]

(I have to look after them (the flowers) every day, like taking care of my friends.)

Here are some specific usages for “我 [wǒ] (I),” “我们 [wǒ men] (we),” “你 [nǐ] (you),” and “你们 [nǐ men] (you).”

First, “我 [wǒ] (I)” and “你 [nǐ] (you)” can substitute “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” and “你们 [nǐ men] (you)” respectively when serving as attributes.

Example 15 我厂王建同志前往你处联系工作，请协助。[wǒ chǎng wáng jiàn tóng zhì qián wǎng nǐ chù lián xì gōng zuò, qǐng xié zhù.]

(Wang Jian from our factory will contact you for business. Please give him assistance.)

Example 16 我校订于7月15日开始放暑假。[wǒ xiào dìng yú 7 yuè 15 rì kāi shǐ fàng shǔ jià.]

(The summer vacation of our school will begin on July 15th.)

Example 17 我军昨晚攻克了三八二〇高地。[wǒ jūn zuó wǎn gōng kè le sān bā èr líng gāo dì.]

(Our army captured the Height 3820 last night.)

Example 18 你方代表提出的方案是可以考虑的。[nǐ fāng dài biǎo tí chū de fāng àn shì kě yǐ kǎo lǜ de.]

(The proposal put forward by your representative is open to consideration.)

“我厂 [wǒ chǎng] (our factory)” is as same as “我们工厂 [wǒ men gōng chǎng] (our factory)” in Example 15; “你处 [nǐ chù]” means “你们那儿 [nǐ men nà er] (your factory)” or your working place. The same is true for “我校 [wǒ xiào] (our school),” “我军 [wǒ jūn] (our army),” “你方 [nǐ fāng] (your representative)” in Example 16, Example 17, and Example 18. Such usage is very popular in the written language, especially in letters, documents, or news report. Sometimes, “你们俩 [nǐ men liǎng] (you two)/你俩 [nǐ liǎng] (you two)” can substitute each other in the spoken language but this doesn't occur frequently as it does in the written language.

Second, the speaker uses “我们 [wǒ men] (we) to replace “我 [wǒ] (I)” in order to show modesty or avoid outshining others.

Example 19 上周我们讲完了第九课，现在我们讲第十课。[shàng zhōu wǒ men jiǎng wán le dì jiǔ kè, xiàn zài wǒ men jiǎng dì shí kè.]

(We finished Lesson 9 last week and now we are going to do Lesson 10.)

Example 20 以上我们向大家介绍了这种机器的工作原理，下面再介绍一下具体的操作方法。[yǐ shàng wǒ men xiàng dà jiā jiè shào le zhè zhǒng jī qì de gōng zuò yuán lǐ, xià miàn zài jiè shào yī xià jù tǐ de cāo zuò fāng fǎ.]

(Just now we introduced the working principle of this machine; next we want to introduce its operation methods in detail.)

Example 21 上次的作业我们已经讲过了，现在我们讲这一次的。[shàng cì de zuò yè wǒ men yǐ jīng jiǎng guò le, xiàn zài wǒ men jiǎng zhè yī cì de.]  
(We have commented on the last assignment and now we do this one.)

“我们 [wǒ men] (we)” in these examples actually refer to “我 [wǒ] (I)” or the speaker because the action in each of these examples is performed by the speaker.

Third, the speaker can use “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” to substitute “你们 [nǐ men] (you)” in order to become one of the listeners for the sake of closeness.

Example 22 老师说：“希望我们每个同学都勇于攀登科学高峰。”[lǎo shī shuō: “xī wàng wǒ men měi gè tóng xué dōu yǒng yú pān dēng kē xué gāo fēng.”]

(Our teacher said to the students: “I hope all of us should be brave to climb the peak of science.”)

Example 23 辅导员说：“同学们，我们要为祖国的‘四化’建设而努力学习啊！”[fǔ dǎo yuán shuō: “tóng xué men, wǒ men yào wèi zǔ guó de ‘sì huà’ jiàn shè ér nǚ lì xué xí ā!”]

(The instructor said: “Classmates, we should study hard for the construction of the four modernizations of the motherland!”)

Fourth, “你 [nǐ] (you)” and “他 [tā] (he)” are sometimes used to indicate anyone instead of the listener or the third person.

Example 24 困难像弹簧，你硬它就软，你软它就强。[kùn nán xiàng dàn huáng, nǐ yìng tā jiù ruǎn, nǐ ruǎn tā jiù qiáng.]

(Difficulties are like springs, the stronger you are, the weaker they are, vice versa.)

Example 25 有时候，你越怕，他就越欺负你。[yǒu shí hòu, nǐ yuè pà, tā jiù yuè qī fù nǐ.]

(Sometimes, the more scared you are, the more overbearing he is.)

Example 26 对在工作中做出突出贡献的人，应该给他们适当的奖励。[duì zài gōng zuò zhōng zuò chū tū chū gòng xiàn de rén, yīng gāi gěi tā men shì dāng de jiǎng lì.]

(People who have made outstanding contributions to their work, should be appropriately rewarded.)

Fifth, in order to make the expression vivid in talking, two different pronouns can be used side by side, referring to an uncertain person.

Example 27 伙计们你一言，我一语，正在商量对付周东家的办法。[huǒ jì men nǐ yī yán, wǒ yī yǔ, zhèng zài shāng liàng duì fù zhōu dōng jiā de bàn fǎ.] (The guys are talking about how to deal with Boss Zhou.)

Example 28 在生产竞赛中，大家你追我赶，一个比一个干劲大。[zài shēng chǎn jìng sài zhōng, dà jiā nǐ zhuī wǒ gǎn, yī gè bǐ yī gè gàn jìng dà.] (In the production competition, everyone performed more energetically than usually, unwilling to fall behind.)

Example 29 孩子们你唱一个歌，他跳一个舞，玩得高兴极了。[hái zǐ men nǐ chàng yī gè gē, tā tiào yī gè wǔ, wán dé gāo xìng jí le.] (Children are enjoying themselves to the full, singing and dancing.)

“你...我...[nǐ...wǒ...](you...I...)” and “你...他...[nǐ...tā...](you...he...)” in these examples are indefinite, similar to “这一个...那一个...[zhè yī gè...nà yī gè...](this one...that one...)”

## II. 咱们 [zán men] (we), 咱 [zán] (we)

“咱们 [zán men] (we)” and “咱 [zán] (we)” are popular oral expressions in the north of China, both of which include the speakers and the listeners. Generally speaking, “咱们 [zán men] (we)” and “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” differ in use. “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” simply refers to the speakers, usually excluding the listeners; and yet, it can refer to both sometimes. “咱们 [zán men] (we)” includes both. For example, when the monitor says to the classmates: “同学们，王老师病了，请假不能来上课了，咱们自习吧”。[tóng xué men, wáng lǎo shī bìng le, qǐng jià bù néng lái shàng kè le, zán men zì xí ba.] (Classmates, Prof. Wang is sick and can't come to class. Let's study by ourselves.)” Here “咱们 [zán men] (we)” refers to the speaker (monitor) and the listeners (the classmates). Although “咱们 [zán men] (we)” and “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” are different, there is an exception. “咱们 [zán men] (we)” can be substituted by “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” without causing any misunderstanding; “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” cannot replace “咱们 [zán men] (we)” when only speakers are involved in the conversation. For example, when the host invites the guest to have a walk in the yard, the host can say to the guest: “咱们走吧！[zán men zǒu ba!]/我们走吧！[wǒ men zǒu ba!] (Let's have a walk together!).” Yet, when the guest is ready to leave, he, she (or they) must say: “我们走了。[wǒ men zǒu le.] (we have to leave now.)” instead of “\*咱们走了。[zán men zǒu le.]”

“咱们 [zán men] (we)” refers to not only both sides (the speaker and the listener in the single or plural form) but also the third side (he/she, they).

Example 30 这件事您问我，我也不清楚。等经理回来后，咱们一块儿商量怎么办。[zhè jiàn shì nín wèn wǒ, wǒ yě bù qīng chǔ. děng jīng lǐ huí lái hòu, zán men yī kuài er shāng liàng zěn me bàn.]

(You ask me about this matter but I have no idea at all. Let's discuss it together with the manager when he comes back.)

“咱们 [zán men] (we)” can function as the subject, object, or attribute in the sentence.

Example 31 同学们，咱们应该遵守学校的作息时间表。[tóng xué men, zán men yīng gāi zūn shǒu xué xiào de zuò xī shí jiān.]

(Classmates, we should observe the school hours.) (as the subject)

Example 32 老师让咱们明天早点来。[lǎo shī ràng zán men míng tiān zǎo diǎn lái.]

(The teacher requires us to come earlier tomorrow.) (as the bi-constituent)

Example 33 咱们要互相帮助，共同进步。[zán men yào hù xiāng bāng zhù, gòng tóng jìn bù.]

(We should help each other and make progress together.) (as the subject)

Example 34 楼下有人在叫咱们，看看是谁。[lóu xià yǒu rén zài jiào zán men, kàn kàn shì shuí.]

(Someone is calling us downstairs. Let's see who it is.) (as the object)

Example 35 老师劝咱们努力学习，是为咱们好。[lǎo shī quàn zán men nǚ lì xué xí, shì wèi zán men hǎo.]

(The teacher advised us to study hard for our own good.) (first one as the bi-constituent and the second one as the object)

Example 36 明天是咱们学校的校庆。[míng tiān shì zán men xué xiào de xiào qìng.]

(Tomorrow is our school's anniversary.) (as the attribute)

“咱 [zán] (we)” can be substituted by “我 [wǒ] (I),” “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” or “咱们 [zán men] (we)” sometimes, but it depends on the context. “咱 [zán] (we)” in the following examples implies an informal or casual sense.

Example 37 修理收音机，可别找我，咱是个外行。[xiū lǐ shōu yīn jī, kě bié zhǎo wǒ, zán shì gè wài háng.]

(Don't ask me how to fix the radio. I'm a layman.) (“咱 [zán]” refers to “我 [wǒ] (I)”) (I)

Example 38 登台表演？哪儿有咱的份儿啊？不会唱，又不会跳的。[dēng tái biǎo yǎn? nǎ er yǒu zán de fèn er ā? bú huì chàng, yòu bú huì tiào de.]

(To perform on the stage? Are you kidding me? I cannot sing nor dance.) (“咱 [zán]” refers to “我 [wǒ] (I)” or “我们 [wǒ men] (we),” “咱们 [zán men] (we)”) (we)

Example 39 要是他不同意咱的意见，咱几个就给他摆摆事实，讲讲道理。[yào shì tā bù tóng yì zán de yì jiàn, zán jǐ gè jiù gěi tā bǎi bǎi shì shí, jiǎng jiǎng dào lǐ.]

(If he doesn't agree with us, we can show him facts and reasons.) (“咱 [zán]” refers to “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” or “咱们 [zán men] (we)”) (we)

Example 40 这点小事儿你别放在心上，咱哥们儿没说的。[zhè diǎn xiǎo shì er nǐ bié fàng zài xīn shàng, zán gē menr méi shuō de.]

(Do not take this little thing to heart. It is not a big deal for our fellowship.) (“咱 [zán]” refers to “咱们 [zán men] (we)”)

Example 41 二班和三班都表演节目了，咱怎么办？也来个小合唱吧。[èr bān hé sān bān dōu biǎo yǎn jié mù le, zán zěn me bàn? yě lái gè xiǎo hé chàng ba.]

(Class Two and Class Three have done their performances. What shall we do? Shall we have a chorus?) (“咱 [zán]” refers to “我们 [wǒ men] (we)” or “咱们 [zán men] (we)”)

### III. 人家 [rén jiā] (others), 别人 [bié rén] (others), 旁人 [páng rén] (others)

These three personal pronouns refer to the people excluding the speaker and the listener. “别人 [bié rén] (others)” and “旁人 [páng rén] (others)” refer to someone in general and “人家 [rén jiā] (others)” refers to someone in general as well as someone in particular.

#### 1 人家 [rén jiā] (others)

##### (1) It is used as the third personal pronoun in general

Example 42 我听人家说你们搬家了，是吗？[wǒ tīng rén jiā shuō nǐ men bān jiā le, shì ma?]

(I heard that you moved away and is that true?)

Example 43 人家能搞出成绩来，咱们就不能？[rén jiā néng gǎo chū chéng jì lái, zán men jiù bù néng?]

(Why can't we do well, if others do?)

Example 44 我们不能只看到人家的缺点，看不到人家的优点。[wǒ men bù néng zhǐ kàn dào rén jiā de quē diǎn, kàn bú dào rén jiā de yōu diǎn.]

(We should not only observe the shortcomings of others, but also the advantages of others.)

Example 45 你这样大声叫嚷不影响人家休息吗？[nǐ zhè yàng dà shēng jiào rǎng bù yǐng xiǎng rén jiā xiū xi ma?]

(Don't you think you have disturbed other people's rest by shouting so loudly?)

##### (2) It is used as the third personal pronoun to refer to the person(s) mentioned in the context. Sometimes, it can be combined with a noun or noun phrase for people, to form a double-referent constituent.

Example 46 一班的同学团结得很好，我们应该向人家学习。[yī bān de tóng xué tuán jié dé hěn hǎo, wǒ men yīng gāi xiàng rén jiā xué xí.]

(The students in Class One are united very well. We should learn from them.)

Example 47 看人家小华多有礼貌啊! [kàn rén jiā xiǎo huá duō yǒu lǐ mào ā.]  
(Look! How polite Xiao Hua is.)

Example 48 人家王大叔南征北战几十年, 什么地方没去过! [rén jiā wáng dà shū nán zhēng běi zhàn jǐ shí nián, shén me dì fāng méi qù guò.]  
(Mr. Wang has been fighting here and there for decades. There is no place where he hasn't been.)

Example 49 主人不在, 咱们不能随便动人家的东西。[zhǔ rén bú zài, zán men bù néng suí biàn dòng rén jiā de dōng xī.]  
(When the host is not at home, we cannot touch anything here.)

- (3) It refers to the first personal pronoun (the speaker itself), carrying a sense of pretended grumbling or intimacy. It is welcome among young women and can only be used in the spoken language.

Example 50 人家都急死了, 你们还开玩笑, 快告诉我吧! [rén jiā dōu jí sǐ le, nǐ men hái kāi wán xiào, kuài gào sù wǒ ba.]  
(I'm worried to death but you're still joking. Just tell me!)

Example 51 你别再说了, 人家不愿意听么! 你再说, 我就堵起耳朵来了。[nǐ bié zài shuō le, rén jiā bú yuàn yì tīng me! nǐ zài shuō, wǒ jiù dǔ qǐ ěr duǒ lái le.]  
(Don't talk about it any more. I hate to hear it! I will cover my ears if you keep on talking.)

Example 52 你们不来帮忙, 还站在旁边笑人家, 真讨厌! [nǐ men bù lái bāng máng, hái zhàn zài páng biān xiào rén jiā, zhēn tǎo yàn!]  
(I hate to see that you're standing around and laughing when I need your help!)

## 2 别人 [bié rén] (others), 旁人 [páng rén] (others)

- (1) They are frequently used as the third personal pronoun in general in the spoken language.

Example 53 别人有了困难, 咱们应该热情帮助。[bié rén yǒu le kùn nán, zán men yīng gāi rè qíng bāng zhù.]  
(When others are in trouble, we should help them warmly.)

Example 54 我们不能只顾自己, 不考虑旁人。[wǒ men bù néng zhǐ gù zì jǐ, bù kǎo lǜ páng rén.]  
(We can't only think of ourselves without thinking of others.)

Example 55 王师傅向来是关心别人胜于关心他自己。[wáng shī fù xiàng lái shì guān xīn bié rén shèng yú guān xīn tā zì jǐ.]  
(Mr. Wang always cares more for others than for himself.)

Example 56 别人去可以, 他去不行。[bié rén qù kě yǐ, tā qù bù xíng.]  
(Others can go, but he cannot.)



## (2) They also refer to “others”

Example 57 我家只有我和我爱人，没有别人，你来玩吧！[wǒ jiā zhǐ yǒu wǒ hé wǒ ài rén, méi yǒu bié rén, nǐ lái wán ba.]

(Only my wife and I are at home, and come to visit us whenever you want.)

Example 58 他见人很害羞，只是不怕我，没有旁人的时候便和我说话，于是不到半日，我们便熟识了。[tā jiàn rén hěn hài xiū, zhǐ shì bú pà wǒ, méi yǒu páng rén de shí hòu biàn hé wǒ shuō huà, yú shì bú dào bàn rì, wǒ men biàn shú shí le.]

(He was shy with people, but wasn't with me. He would talk to me when there were no others, so we got to know each other in less than half a day.)

“旁人 [páng rén] (others)” is more popular than “别人 [bié rén] (others)” in the spoken language.

## IV. 大家 [dà jiā] (everyone), 大伙儿 [dà huǒ er] (everyone)

These are the general pronouns for all. They are used in the following ways.

## 1 Both the speaker and the listener are included.

Example 59 班长说：“请大家安静，现在老师开始上课了。”[bān zhǎng shuō: “qǐng dà jiā ān jìng, xiàn zài lǎo shī kāi shǐ shàng kè le.”]

(The monitor said: “Please be quiet, everyone. Now the teacher starts the class.”)

Example 60 大家的事要由大家作主。[dà jiā de shì yào yóu dà jiā zuò zhǔ.]

(Our business is in our hands.)

Example 61 听到这个消息后，大家议论了好久。[tīng dào zhè gè xiāo xī hòu, dà jiā yì lùn le hǎo jiǔ.]

(After hearing the news, we talked about it for a long time.)

Example 62 明天上午八点，大家都到这儿来集合，咱们一起走。[míng tiān shàng wǔ bā diǎn, dà jiā dōu dào zhè er lái jí hé, zán men yì qǐ zǒu.]

(Come here at eight o'clock tomorrow morning. Let's depart from here together.)

## 2 Either the speaker or the listener is included. Sometimes neither of them is included.

Example 63 我代表全厂工人感谢大家对我们的热情支持。[wǒ dài biǎo quán chǎng gōng rén gǎn xiè dà jiā duì wǒ men de rè qíng zhī chí.]

(On behalf of all the factory workers, I'd like to thank for their warm support.) (not including the speaker)

Example 64 这次短跑比赛，大家的成绩都很好，我也为你们高兴。  
[zhè cì duǎn pǎo bǐ sài, dà jiā de chéng jì dōu hěn hǎo, wǒ yě wèi nǐ men gāo xìng.]

(You all did well in the sprint and I am happy for all of you.) (not including the speaker)

Example 65 大家都很喜欢读您的作品。[dà jiā dōu hěn xǐ huān dú nín de zuò pǐn.]

(Everyone enjoys reading your work.) (not including the listener)

Example 66 大家向你们祝贺，祝愿你们永远幸福。[dà jiā xiàng nǐ men zhù hè, zhù yuàn nǐ men yǒng yuǎn xìng fú.]

(Congratulations and best wishes for your happiness forever.) (not including the speaker)

Example 67 看，大家还向我们招手呢！[kàn, dà jiā hái xiàng wǒ men zhāo shǒu ne!]

(Look! They are waving to us!) (not including the listener nor the speaker)

- 3 They are used as the double-referent constituents after “我们 [wǒ men] (we),” “你们 [nǐ men] (you),” and “他们 [tā men] (they).”

Example 68 这点儿活，我们大家一起动手，一会儿就干完。[zhè diǎn er huó, wǒ men dà jiā yī qǐ dòng shǒu, yī huì er jiù gàn wán.]

(We can finish this light task quickly if we do it together.)

Example 69 你们大家的干劲是有目共睹的。[nǐ men dà jiā de gàn jīng shì yǒu mù gòng dǔ de.]

(Your enthusiasm in work is obvious to all.)

Example 70 他们大家都说小王的功课最好。[tā men dà jiā dōu shuō xiǎo wáng de gōng kè zuì hǎo.]

(They all agree that Xiao Wang is the best at his lessons.)

“大伙儿 [dà huǒ er] (everyone)” and “大家 [dà jiā] (everyone)” are similar in meaning, and they are only used in the spoken language.

#### V. 自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself), 自家 [zì jiā] (oneself), 自个儿 [zì gè er] (oneself)

“自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” refers to a certain person oneself or a certain thing itself rather than a certain person in particular. When “自身 [zì shēn] (oneself)” refers to a person, it means “本人 [běn rén] (oneself).” It can stand alone, or is used as the double-referent of the personal pronoun or the noun for a person or a thing. The concrete uses are as follows.

- 1 “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” can be used as the double-referent after other personal pronouns or nouns, to emphasize a person oneself or a thing itself.

Example 71 他自己生活十分俭朴，却经常把钱用来帮助周围的同志。  
[tā zì jǐ shēng huó shí fēn jiǎn pǔ, què jīng cháng bǎ qián yòng lái bāng zhù zhōu wéi de tóng zhì.]

(He lived in a frugal way, but often used his money to help his comrades around him.)

Example 72 这件事情怪我自己做得不对。[zhè jiàn shì qíng guài wǒ zì jǐ zuò dé bú duì.]

(It was my fault for this matter.)

Example 73 对这篇文章作者自己也发表了评论。[duì zhè piān wén zhāng zuò zhě zì jǐ yě fā biǎo le píng lùn.]

(The author himself commented on the article, too.)

Example 74 我的小孙女宁宁现在已经能照顾她自己了。[wǒ de xiǎo sūn nǚ níng níng xiàn zài yǐ jīng néng zhào gù tā zì jǐ le.]

(My little granddaughter Ning Ning can take care of herself now.)

Example 75 这种机器自己有控制机构，会自动停机。[zhè zhǒng jī qì zì jǐ yǒu kòng zhì jī gòu, huì zì dòng tíng jī.]

(This machine has its own control mechanism and can stop automatically.)

- 2 Together with other personal pronouns or nouns in the sentence, “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” often refers to the personal pronoun in the position of the subject. Here, “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” functions as an object or attribute.

Example 76 小王要求自己很严格。[xiǎo wáng yāo qiú zì jǐ hěn yán gé.]  
(Xiao Wang is very strict with himself.) (“自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” replacing “小王 [Xiǎo Wáng] (Xiao Wang)” as the object.)

Example 77 白求恩大夫用自己的血把那个八路军战士救活了。[Bái qiú ēn dài fū yòng zì jǐ de xuè bǎ nà gè bā lù jūn zhàn shì jiù huó le.]

(Dr. Bethune saved the Eighth Route Army soldier with his own blood.) (“自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” replacing “白求恩大夫 [Bái qiú ēn dài fū] (Dr. Bethune)” as the attribute.)

Example 78 他总是把别人的困难当作自己的困难，尽力帮助别人解决。[tā zǒng shì bǎ bié rén de kùn nán dāng zuò zì jǐ de kùn nán, jìn lì bāng zhù rén jiā jiě jué.]

(He always takes others' difficulties as his own and tries his best to help them.) (“自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” replacing “他 [tā] (he)” as the attribute.)

Example 79 李力表示要到最艰苦的地方去锻炼自己。[lǐ lì biǎo shì yào dào zuì jiǎn kǔ de dì fang qù duàn liàn zì jǐ.]

(Li Li said he would like to be tempered his will in the hardest place.) (“自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” replacing “李力 [lǐ lì] (Li Li)” as the object.)

Example 80 张兰给自己订了一个学习外语的计划。[zhāng lán gěi zì jǐ dīng le yī gè xué xí wài yǔ de jì huà.]

(Zhang Lan made herself a plan of learning a foreign language.) (“自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” replacing “张兰 [zhāng lán] (Zhang Lan)” as the object of the preposition.)

Example 81 他们不告诉我，自己就签字了。[tā men bú gào sù wǒ, zì jǐ jiù qiān zì le.]

(They signed without telling me.) (“自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself) referring to “他们 [tā men] (they) and functioning as the subject.)

There is one thing to be noticed. When the subject of sentence is a doer who happens to be same person that the object or the modifier of the object refers to, “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” should be used here to replace the original subject. Like Example 76, it cannot be changed into “\*小王要求小王很严格。[xiǎo wáng yāo qiú xiǎo wáng hěn yán gé.]” or “\*小王要求他很严格。[xiǎo wáng yāo qiú tā hěn yán gé.]”

Similarly, Example 78 cannot be changed into “\*他总是把别人的困难当作他的困难，尽力帮助人家解决。[tā zǒng shì bǎ bié rén de kùn nán dāng zuò tā de kùn nán, jìn lì bāng zhù rén jiā jiě jué.]”

3 “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” can function as an adverbial to modify a verb or an adjective.

Example 82 王老师别客气，要吃什么您自己拿。[wáng lǎo shī bié kè qì, yào chī shén me nín zì jǐ ná.]

(Please help yourself, Prof. Wang.)

Example 83 我们小组自己制定了一个施工方案。[wǒ men xiǎo zǔ zì jǐ zhì dìng le yī gè shī gōng fāng àn.]

(Our team made a construction plan by ourselves.)

Example 84 今年我厂工人又自己设计、自己制造了一条新型生产流水线。[jīn nián wǒ chǎng gōng rén yòu zì jǐ shè jì, zì jǐ zhì zào le yī tiáo xīn xíng shēng chǎn liú shuǐ xiàn.]

(This year our factory workers designed and manufactured a new production line by themselves.)

Example 85 枫树的叶子一到深秋就自己红了。[fēng shù de yè zǐ yī dào shēn qiū jiù zì jǐ hóng le.]

(Maple leaves turn red in late autumn.)

Example 86 电灯怎么自己亮了？[diàn dēng zěn me zì jǐ liàng le?]

(How did the light turn on by itself?)

When “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” modifies a verb or an adjective, it can be put after some adverbials, such as “还 [hái] (also),” “又 [yòu] (again),” “可 [kě] (but),” “就 [jiù] (but),” “常常 [cháng cháng] (often).”

Example 87 昨天张丽又自己去河边游泳了，老师批评了她一顿。[zuó tiān zhāng lì yòu zì jǐ qù hé biān yóu yǒng le, lǎo shī pī píng le tā yī dùn.]

(Yesterday, Zhang Li went swimming in the river by herself again. Her teacher criticized her seriously.)

Example 88 墙上的画儿突然自己掉下来了? [qiáng shàng de huà er tū rán zì jǐ diào xià lái le?]

(Did the picture on the wall suddenly fall off by itself?)

Example 89 你们还自己做饭吃? 怎么不请个人帮忙? [nǐ men hái zì jǐ zuò fàn chī? zěn me bù qǐng gè rén bāng máng.]

(You cook by yourself? Why don't you ask someone for help?)

But those adverbials mentioned cannot be put before “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself),” when it is used as the double-referent. For example, it is not right to say like this: “\*他又自己十分俭朴。[tā yòu zì jǐ shí fēn jiǎn pǔ.]” or “\*这件事怪我还自己做得不对。[zhè jiàn shì guài wǒ hái zì jǐ zuò dé bú duì.]”

- 4 Sometimes, “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” can substitute the first personal pronoun “我 [wǒ] (I)” in the formal oral expressions.

Example 90 领导的表扬对自己是一个鞭策。[lǐng dǎo de biǎo yáng duì zì jǐ shì yī gè biān cè.]

(The leader's praise is a spur to me.)

Example 91 这次的先进经验交流大会对大家、对自己都有深刻的教育意义。[zhè cì de xiān jìn jīng yàn jiāo liú dà huì duì dà jiā, duì zì jǐ dōu yǒu shēn kè de jiào yù yì yì.]

(The conference for advanced experience exchange has a profound educational significance for everyone, including myself.)

- 5 “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” can refer to anyone in general.

Example 92 自己动手, 丰衣足食。[zì jǐ dòng shǒu, fēng yī zú shí.]

(Let's produce ample food and clothing with our own hands.)

Example 93 自己的事应该自己做, 不能依靠别人。[zì jǐ de shì yīng gāi zì jǐ zuò, bù néng yī kào bié rén.]

(You should take care of your own business rather than rely on others.)

- 6 “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself)” also carries a sense of closeness.

Example 94 到我家来做客的都是自己人, 大家都不必客气。[dào wǒ jiā lái zuò kè de dōu shì zì jǐ rén, dà jiā dōu bù bì kè qì.]

(Those who visit me are all welcome as my guests. Please help yourselves.)

Example 95 你有什么事就说吧, 在座的都是咱们自己人。[nǐ yǒu shén me shì jiù shuō ba, zài zuò de dōu shì zán men zì jǐ rén.]

(Tell me what you want without any hesitation. We are all in-group members.)

Example 96 我在这里生活就像在我自己的国家、自己的家里一样，很自由，很方便，一切都很自然。[wǒ zài zhè lǐ shēng huó jiù xiàng zài wǒ zì jǐ de guó jiā, zì jǐ de jiā lǐ yī yàng, hěn zì yóu, hěn fāng biàn, yī qiē dōu hěn zì rán.]

(I live here as if I were at home and in my country. I feel very free, convenient and comfortable.)

“自个儿 [zì gè er] (oneself)” and “自家 [zì jiā] (oneself)” are totally identical to “自己 [zì jǐ] (oneself).” “自个儿 [zì gè er] (oneself)” is an oral expression in the north of China; “自家 [zì jiā] (oneself)” is often used in the dialects of the south of China.

## Section two: demonstrative pronouns

The basic demonstrative pronouns refer to “这 [zhè] (this)” (proximal) and “那 [nà] (that)” (distal). Others are derived from them. According to their features and usages, demonstrative pronouns can be subdivided as follows.

Nearby references for person, thing, location, time, property, manner, degree are as follows:

这 [zhè] (this), 这里 [zhè lǐ]/这儿 [zhè er] (here), 这会儿 [zhè huì er] (this moment), 这么 [zhè me]/这样 [zhè yàng]/这么样 [zhè me yàng] (like this)

Distant references for person, thing, location, time, property, manner, degree are as follows:

那 [nà] (that), 那里 [nà lǐ]/那儿 [nà er] (there), 那会儿 [nà huì er] (that moment), 那么 [nà me]/那样 [nà yàng]/那么样 [nà me yàng] (like that)

The main function of demonstrative pronouns is to refer to people or entities, and they can substitute nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs of degree in a sentence. Thus they can be employed as subjects, attributes, and adverbials. Demonstrative pronouns not only substitute the entities the speaker indicates but also distinguish themselves from others.

Example 1 这是丁力的房间，那是阿里的房间。[zhè shì dīng lì de fáng jiān, nà shì ā lǐ de fáng jiān.]

(This is Ding Li's room and that is Ali's room.) (referent)

Example 2 这里气候变化无常。[zhè lǐ qì hòu biàn huà wú cháng.]

(The climate here is changeable.) (referent)

Example 3 这支钢笔和那支钢笔都是张老师的。[zhè zhī gāng bǐ hé nà zhī gāng bǐ dōu shì zhāng lǎo shī de.]

(Both this pen and that pen are Prof. Zhang's.) (demonstrative)

Example 4 他对待工作总是这么认真负责。[tā duì dài gōng zuò zǒng shì zhè me rèn zhēn fù zé.]  
(He always takes his work so seriously.) (demonstrative)

“这 [zhè] (this)” in Example 1 refers to a room closer to the speaker; “那 [nà] (that)” refers to a room farther from the speaker. Both of them function as subjects respectively in two clauses of the sentence. “这里 [zhè lǐ] (here)” as the subject in Example 2 refers to the place or physical location where the speaker is. “这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” in Example 3 function as attributes to modify two pens, one of which is closer to the speaker and the other of which is farther from the speaker. “这么 [zhè me] (so)” in Example 4 functions as an adverbial to modify “认真负责 [rèn zhēn fù zé] (seriously)” to indicate a certain degree.

Sometimes, demonstrative pronouns can function as objects.

Example 5 他躺在床上，想想这，想想那，很晚才睡着。[tā tǎng zài chuáng shàng, xiǎng xiǎng zhè, xiǎng xiǎng nà, hěn wǎn cái shuì zhāo.]  
(Lying in bed, he let his mind wander, and then fell asleep very late.)

The following is the introduction to their sub-types.

### I. 这 [zhè] (this), 那 [nà] (that)

“这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” can stand alone in the sentence and also can be combined with other words, such as numeral-quantifier phrases, numerals, and nouns.

- 1 “这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” refer to the people or the thing involved when being used independently.

Example 6 这是王院长，那是外科主任。[zhè shì wáng yuàn zhǎng, nà shì wài kē zhǔ rèn.]  
(This is the dean Wang and that is the chief of surgery.)

Example 7 这是集邮本，那是相册。[zhè shì jí yóu běn, nà shì xiàng cè.]  
(This is a stamp album and that is a photo album.)

Next are the details about this usage.

First, when functioning as subject, “这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” mainly refer to a thing, such as “这是我的照相机。[zhè shì wǒ de zhào xiàng jī.] (This is my camera.)” and “那不算什么帮助。[nà bú suàn shén me bāng zhù.] (That’s not very helpful.)” When they refer to people, they frequently appear in “是 [shì] (is)” sentences, such as “这是我们车间主任。[zhè shì wǒ men chē jiān zhǔ rèn.] (This is our workshop director.)” “这是我弟弟，那是我爱人。[zhè shì wǒ dì dì, nà shì wǒ ài rén.] (This is my younger brother and that is my wife.)”

Second, “这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” rarely function as objects of verb alone but sometimes they can be objects of preposition, such as “您把这都交给我吧! [nín bǎ zhè dōu jiāo gěi wǒ ba!] (Please let me do this!)” and “他对那根本不感兴趣。[tā duì nà gēn běn bù gǎn xìng qù.] (He is totally not interested in that).” Yet, they can be objects of verbs only if they are followed by a quantifier, such as “我看这本, 你看那本。[wǒ kàn zhè běn, nǐ kàn nà běn.] (I read this book and you read that one.)” and “我找这位(同志)。[wǒ zhǎo zhè wèi (tóng zhì).] (I want to see this person.)”

Third, “这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” can substitute phrases and even sentences, especially for “这 [zhè] (this)” which is widely used in this case.

Example 8 “不要再跟他来往。” 兰兰听了立刻回答说: “那办不到!” [bú yào zài gēn tā lái wǎng, lán lán tīng le lì kè huí dá shuō, nà bàn bú dào.] (“Don’t associate with him anymore.” After hearing it, Lan Lan replied at once: “That’s impossible!”)

Example 9 孩子的父亲感动地说: “. . . 这在过去是连想也不敢想的。” [hái zǐ de fù qīn gǎn dòng de shuō: “. . . zhè zài guò qù shì lián xiǎng yě bù gǎn xiǎng de.”] (The father was moved and said: “. . . this was unthinkable in the past.”)

Example 10 有喜有忧, 有笑有泪, 有花有实, 有香有色。既须劳动, 又长见识, 这就是养花的乐趣。[yǒu xǐ yǒu yōu, yǒu xiào yǒu lèi, yǒu huā yǒu shí, yǒu xiāng yǒu sè. jì xū láo dòng, yòu cháng jiàn shí, zhè jiù shì yǎng huā de lè qù.] (Joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, flowers and fruits, fragrance and color. This is the fun of growing flowers, exerting energy on one side and gaining knowledge on the other side.)

- 2 When “这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” combine with a noun or “numeral-quantifier phrase+noun,” they can distinguish the people or the things they refer to from others. The phrase order is “这 [zhè] (this)/那 [nà] (that)+numeral-quantifier phrase+noun.”

Example 11 这人真有意思。[zhè rén zhēn yǒu yì sī.] (This person is very interesting.)

Example 12 那个办法快, 我们就用那个办法吧。[nà gè bàn fǎ kuài, wǒ men jiù yòng nà gè bàn fǎ ba.] (That method is more effective, and let’s take it.)

Example 13 这三张桌子都是新的。[zhè sān zhāng zhuō zǐ dōu shì xīn de.] (All three desks are new.)

Example 14 那几条意见提得好, 我完全接受。[nà jǐ tiáo yì jiàn tí de hǎo, wǒ wán quán jiē shòu.] (Those suggestions put forward are really beneficial and I fully accept them.)



They can combine with indefinite quantifiers, such as “些 [xiē] (some),” “点儿 [diǎn er] (a few/little),” to form “这些 [zhè xiē] (these),” “那些 [nà xiē] (those),” “这几点儿 [zhè diǎn er] (a few of/a little of),” “那几点儿 [nà diǎn er] (a few of/a little of).” “这/那些 [zhè/nà xiē] (these/those)” indicates more than two persons or things; “这/那点儿 [zhè/nà diǎn er] (a few of/a little of)” expresses a small amount. The following are examples about this usage.

这些人 [zhè xiē rén] (these people)  
 那些水 [nà xiē shuǐ] (some water)  
 这几点儿人 [zhè diǎn er rén] (a few people)  
 这几点儿粮食 [zhè diǎn er liáng shí] (a few grains)  
 那几点儿水 [nà diǎn er shuǐ] (a little water)

Also, they can be used with verb quantifiers, like the following examples.

这次 [zhè cì] (this time)  
 这遍 [zhè biàn] (this time)  
 那次 [nà cì] (that time)  
 那遍 [nà biàn] (that time)

- 3 When “这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” both occur in one sentence, they correspond to each other to express an indefinite meaning. In this case, they can function as subjects or objects.

Example 15 两个人见面后，说说这，说说那，高兴极了。[liǎng gè rén jiàn miàn hòu, shuō shuō zhè, shuō shuō nà, gāo xìng jí le.]

(When these two people met, they had a happy chat about this or that.)

Example 16 小明在玩具店时，这也想摸摸，那也想动动。[xiǎo míng zài wán jù diàn shí, zhè yě xiǎng mō mō, nà yě xiǎng dòng dòng.]

(When Xiao Ming was in the toy shop, he wanted to touch everything.)

Example 17 你小孩子不懂事，别问这问那的。[nǐ xiǎo hái zǐ bù dǒng shì, bié wèn zhè wèn nà de.]

(Being a child who doesn't know better, don't ask any questions.)

- 4 Sometimes, “这 [zhè] (this)” or “那 [nà] (that)” stands at the head of sentence to connect the preceding part.

Example 18 哦，那你就叫他进来吧。[ò, nà nǐ jiù jiào tā jìn lái ba.]

Example 19 那我把那复工的合同给你瞧瞧。[nà wǒ bǎ nà fù gōng de hé tóng gěi nǐ qiáo qiáo.]

(Well, I'll show you that reinstatement contract.)

- 5 In the spoken language, “这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” can be put before verbs or adjectives to express a higher degree.

Example 20 站在领奖台上，我那激动啊，都说不出话来了。[zhàn zài lǐng jiǎng tái shàng, wǒ nà jī dòng ā, dōu shuō bù chū huà lái le.]  
(Standing on the medal podium, I was too excited to speak.)

Example 21 得知小明考取了理想的大学，全家人这高兴啊，就别提了。[dé zhī xiǎo míng kǎo qǔ le lǐ xiǎng de dà xué, quán jiā rén zhè gāo xìng ā, jiù bié tí le.]  
(The whole family was greatly happy after hearing the news that Xiao Ming was admitted by an ideal university.)

## II. 这里 [zhè lǐ]/这儿 [zhè er] (here), 那里 [nà lǐ]/那儿 [nà er] (there)

“这里 [zhè lǐ]/这儿 [zhè er] (here)” or “那里 [nà lǐ]/那儿 [nà er] (there)” refers to the physical location closer to or farther from the speaker. Comparatively speaking, “这儿 [zhè er] (here)” and “那儿 [nà er] (there)” sound more oral.

- 1 “这里 [zhè lǐ]/这儿 [zhè er] (here), 那里 [nà lǐ]/那儿 [nà er] (there)” can be used independently as the subject, object, attribute, and adverbial, basically similar to locational words. For example, they can function as the subject in “是 [shì] (is)” sentences, “有 [yǒu] (have)” sentences, and existential sentences. Moreover, they can function as objects after verbs, such as “来 [lái] (come),” “看 [kàn] (look),” “挂 [guà] (hang),” “到 [dào] (arrive),” or after prepositions, such as “朝 [cháo] (toward),” “向 [xiàng] (toward),” “往 [wǎng] (to),” “到 [dào] (at),” “在 [zài] (in).”

Example 22 这儿有树荫，我们在这儿休息吧。[zhè er yǒu shù yīn, wǒ men zài zhè er xiū xī ba.]  
(There is the tree shade. Let's take a rest under it.)

Example 23

A: 你们的教室在这里吗？[nǐ men de jiào shì zài zhè hàn ma?]

(Is your classroom here?)

B: 不，在那里。[Bù, zài nà hàn.]

(No, it's over there.)

Example 24 那里的阳光充足，走，到那儿去晒太阳。[nà lǐ de yáng guāng chōng zú, zǒu, dào nà er qù shài tài yáng.]  
(There's plenty of sunshine over there. Let's go there and bask in it.)

Example 25 来，这儿坐。[lái, zhè er zuò.]

(Come and sit here.)

Example 26 小虎子，你这儿来。[xiǎo hǔ zǐ, nǐ zhè er lái.]

(Xiao Huzi, come here please.)

In Example 22, “这儿 [zhè er] (here)” functions as the subject of the preceding clause led by “有 [yǒu] (you)” as well as the object of preposition “在 [zài] (under)” in the following clause. In Example 23, “这里 [zhè lǐ] (here)” and “那

里 [nà lǐ] (there)” function as the objects of verb “在 [zài] (is)” respectively. In example 24, “那里 [nà lǐ] (over there)” functions as an attribute to modify “阳光 [yáng guāng] (sunshine)”;

“那儿 [nà er] (over there)” functions as the object of the verb “到 [dào] (go).” In example 25, “这儿 [zhè er] (here)” functions as an adverbial to modify the verb “坐 [zuò] (sit).” In Example 26, “这儿 [zhè er] (here)” functions as an adverbial to modify the verb “来 [lái] (come).”

- 2 “这里 [zhè lǐ]/这儿 [zhè er] (here)” or “那里 [nà lǐ]/那儿 [nà er] (there)” can be added after a personal pronoun, an interrogative pronoun “谁 [shuí] (who),” and a noun for a certain person or thing, to refer to a physical location. In Chinese, some verbs or some prepositions should be followed by locational words as objects. These verbs include “来 [lái] (come),” “去 [qù] (go),” “到 [dào] (arrive),” “上 [shàng] (go),” “回 [huí] (return),” “在 [zài] (is);” the prepositions are “从 [cóng] (from),” “在 [zài] (at),” “往 [wǎng] (toward).” However, if their objects are not locational words, but personal pronouns or nouns for certain persons or things, “这里 [zhè lǐ]/这儿 [zhè er] (here)” or “那里 [nà lǐ]/那儿 [nà er] (there)” is required.

Example 27 我从朋友那儿来。[wǒ cóng péng yǒu nà er lái.]  
(I came from my friend's.)

Example 28 我的练习本子在老师那儿。[wǒ de liànxí běn zǐ zài lǎo shī nà er.]  
(My exercise book is at the teacher's.)

Example 29 丁力去谁那儿了? [dīng lì qù shuí nà er le?]  
(Where did Ding Li go?)

Example 30 沙发那里光线不好, 你到桌子这儿来看书吧。[shā fā nà hàn guāng xiàn bù hǎo, nǐ dào zhuō zǐ zhè er lái kàn shū ba.]  
(Come and read at the desk here; the light is weaker for you to read on the sofa over there.)

Example 31 下星期天, 我想回我妈妈那儿去看看。[xià xīng qī tiān, wǒ xiǎng huí wǒ mā mā nà er qù kàn kàn.]  
(I want to go back and visit my mother next Sunday.)

The objects in these examples are personal pronouns or nouns rather than locational words or phrases. Yet, with “这里 [zhè lǐ]/这儿 [zhè er] (here)” or “那里 [nà lǐ]/那儿 [nà er] (there)” following, they become locational words temporarily.

### III. 这会儿 [zhè huì er] (at this moment/now), 那会儿 [nà huì er] (at that time/then)

“这会儿 [zhè huì er]” means “at this moment,” usually referring to “now” or “the present.” It may refer to a certain time in the past or in the future if it is used with the relative time words. For example, “昨天这会儿, 我们正在考试。[zuó tiān zhè huì er, wǒ men zhèng zài kǎo shì.] (We were having an examination at this moment yesterday.)” and “明天这会儿, 我们就放假了。[míng tiān zhè huì er,

wǒ men jiù fàng jià le.] (By this time tomorrow, our vacation starts.)” “那会儿 [nà huì er]” means “at that time” and it may refer to a certain time in the past as well as in the future. Thus what time it exactly means depends on the context. For example, in the sentence “记得那会儿他还是个不懂事的孩子。[jì dé nà huì er tā hái shì gè bù dǒng shì de hái zǐ.] (I still remember that he was a naive boy at that time.)” “那会儿 [nà huì er]” means the past; in the sentence “到那会儿，我们都大学毕业了，那才美呢。[dào nà huì er, wǒ men dōu dà xué bì yè le, nà cái měi ne.] (By that time, we all will have graduated from college. How happy it will be.)” “那会儿 [nà huì er]” means the future. “这会儿 [zhè huì er] (at this moment/now)” and “那会儿 [nà huì er] (at that time/then)” can function as the subject, attribute, and adverbial, which is basically similar to time words or phrases.

- 1 “这会儿 [zhè huì er] (at this moment/now)” and “那会儿 [nà huì er] (at that time/then)” can be used independently.

Example 32 早晨有点儿冷，这会儿暖和了。[zǎo chén yǒu diǎn er lěng, zhè huì er nuǎn hé le.]

(It was a bit cold in the morning, but it's warm now.) (as the subject)

Example 33 跟那会儿比，这会儿的日子是甜的。[gēn nà huì er bǐ, zhè huì er de rì zǐ shì tián de.]

(Compared to that time, our life is happier now.)

In this example, “那会儿 [nà huì er] (at that time/then)” functions as the object of the preposition “跟 [gēn] (to)” and “这会儿 [zhè huì er] (at this moment/now)” functions as the attribute to modify “日子 [rì zǐ] (our life).”

Example 34 那会儿，我还是个孩子，什么也不懂。[nà huì er, wǒ hái shì gè hái zǐ, shén me yě bù dǒng.]

(As a kid, I knew nothing at that time.) (as the adverbial to indicate time)

Example 35 鬼天气，中午上学时，还好好，这会儿阴得一条小缝都不剩。[guǐ tiān qì, zhōng wǔ shàng xué shí, hái hǎo hǎo de, zhè huì er yīn dé yī tiáo xiǎo féng dōu bù shèng.]

(The weather was really changeable. When I went to school at noon, it was still fine. But now it became heavily overcast.) (as the adverbial to indicate time)

Example 36 这会儿人们的想法跟那会儿相比，可不一样了。[zhè huì er rén men de xiǎng fǎ gēn nà huì er xiāng bǐ, kě bù yī yàng le.]

(What people think now is different from what they thought in the past.)

- 2 Following some words, “这里 [zhè lǐ]/这儿 [zhè er] (here)” or “那里 [nà lǐ]/那儿 [nà er] (there)” indicates a certain time in particular.

Example 37 明年这会儿我们就大学毕业，参加祖国的“四化”建设了。[míng nián zhè huì er wǒ men jiù dà xué bì yè, cān jiā zǔ guó de “sì huà” jiàn shè le.]

(By this time next year we will have graduated from university and taken part in four modernizations for our motherland.)

Example 38 去年这会儿，这儿刚开始破土，今年这会儿两座楼已经建成了。[qù nián zhè huì er, zhè er gāng kāi shǐ pò tǔ, jīn nián zhè huì er liǎng zuò lóu yǐ jīng jiàn chéng le.]

(At this time last year, the ground had just been broken for a new building, and now two buildings have been completed.)

Example 39 你等她这会儿先看看报吧！[nǐ děng tā zhè huì er xiān kàn kàn bào ba.]

(You can read newspaper for a while when you are waiting for her.)

Example 40 每天上下班那会儿，来往的车辆最多。[měi tiān shàng xià bān nà huì er, lái wǎng de chē liàng zuì duō.]

(Traffic is at its peak during the commute.)

Example 41 我上大学那会儿，女同学很少。[wǒ shàng dà xué nà huì er, nǚ tóng xué hěn shǎo.]

(When I was in college, there were very few female classmates.)

“明年这会儿 [míng nián zhè huì er]” in Example 37 means “this time next year.” Both of “这会儿 [zhè huì er]” in Example 38 means “at this moment.” “这会儿 [zhè huì er]” in Example 39 means “the period of time when you are waiting for her.” “那会儿 [nà huì er]” in Example 40 means “the period of commuting time.” “那会儿 [nà huì er]” in Example 41 means “when I was in college.”

#### IV. 这么 [zhè me] (like this), 那么 [nà me] (like that)

- 1 “这么 [zhè me] (like this)” or “那么 [nà me] (like that)” mainly function as adverbials to modify verbs and adjectives to indicate a certain manner or degree.

Example 42 这个字应该这么写，那么写就错了。[zhè gè zì yīng gāi zhè me xiě, nà me xiě jiù cuò le.]

(This word should be written like this, not like that.) (a certain manner)

Example 43 你不应该那么对待一个犯了错误的同志。[nǐ bù yīng gāi nà me duì dài yī gè fàn le cuò wù de tóng zhì.]

(You shouldn't treat this comrade like that, although he made a mistake.) (a certain manner)

Example 44 这么重的石头，古代的人是怎么运到山上去的呢？[zhè me zhòng de shí tóu, gǔ dài de rén shì zěn me yùn dào shān shàng qù de ne?]

(How did the ancient people carry such heavy stones up the mountain?) (a certain degree)

Example 45 他说话的语气那么坚定、那么有力。[tā shuō huà de yǔ qì nà me jiān dìng, nà me yǒu lì.]

(His tone was so firm and powerful.) (a certain degree)

Example 46 北京的夏天没有上海那么热。[běi jīng de xià tiān méi yǒu shàng hǎi nà me rè.]

(Beijing is not as hot as Shanghai in summer.) (a certain degree)

Example 47 这件事不像你说的那么严重。[zhè jiàn shì bú xiàng nǐ shuō de nà me yán zhòng.]

(It's not as serious as you described.) (a certain degree)

Usually, “这么 [zhè me] (like this)” or “那么 [nà me] (like that)” frequently refers to a certain degree when they are put before adjectives and verbs for psychological activities; or they refer to a certain manner when they appear before behavioral verbs.

2 “这么 [zhè me] (like this)” or “那么 [nà me] (like that)” can function as subjects, predicates, or attribute to refer to a certain action or manner.

(1) As subject

Example 48 这么行，那么也行。[zhè me xíng, nà me yě xíng.]

(It works this way, so does it in that way.)

Example 49 这么（点头）表示同意，那么（摇头）表示不同意。[zhè me (diǎn tóu) biǎo shì tóng yì, nà me (yáo tóu) biǎo shì bù tóng yì.]

(Nodding like this means agreement; nodding like that means disagreement.)

Example 50 这么是顺时针方向，那么是逆时针方向。[zhè me shì shùn shí zhēn fāng, xiàng nà me shì nì shí zhēn fāng xiàng.]

(Going this way is clockwise; going that way is counterclockwise.)

(2) As predicate

“这么 [zhè me] (like this)” and “那么 [nà me] (like that)” are often followed by “着 [zhe].”

Example 51 咱们就这么着吧，先到小王家集合，然后一起出发。[zán men jiù zhè me zhe ba, xiān dào xiǎo wáng jiā jí hé, rán hòu yī qǐ chū fā.]

(Let's do this way. We meet at Aiao Wang's house first and then set out together.)

Example 52 她总是这么着，自己有困难从不去麻烦别人。[tā zǒng shì zhè me zhe, zì jǐ yǒu kùn nán cóng bú qù má fan bié rén.]

(She always behaves like this, never bothering anyone else when she's in trouble.)

(3) As object

Also, “这么 [zhè me] (like this)” or “那么 [nà me] (like that)” can function as attributes but they cannot modify nouns directly, unless there is a numeral-quantifier phrase in the middle. In this case, their referents should be mentioned in the following or are unnecessarily mentioned.

Example 53 这篇文章里还表达了这么个意思，就是... [zhè piān wén zhāng lǐ hái biǎo dá le zhè me gè yì sī, jiù shì...]  
(This article also expressed a meaning like this:...)

Example 54 这种花总有那么一股香味，闻起来叫人心醉。[zhè zhǒng huā zǒng yǒu nà me yī gǔ xiāng wèi, wén qǐ lái jiào rén xīn zuì.]  
(This flower always has such a fragrance that makes people enchanted.)

Example 55 这个人有那么一股劲儿，怎么说呢？[zhè gè rén yǒu nà me yī gǔ jīn er, zěn me shuō ne.]  
(The energy that the man has is just beyond words.)

“这么 [zhè me] (like this)” and “那么 [nà me] (like that)” need pronouncing with stress when they are followed by a numeral-quantifier phrase.

Example 56 ‘这么几天，他就接到三封家信。[zhè me jǐ tiān, tā jiù jiē dào sān fēng jiā xìn.]  
(Within a few days he received three family letters.)

Example 57 张老师家里有‘那么一屋子书。[zhāng lǎo shī jiā lǐ yǒu ‘nà me yī wū zǐ shū.]  
(Prof. Zhang possesses a roomful of books.)

And, when they are in weak pronunciation, they express an estimated number.

Example 58 昨天参加大会的有那么五六千人。[zuó tiān cān jiā dà huì de yǒu nà me wǔ liù qiān rén.]  
(There were about five or six thousand people at the meeting yesterday.)

Example 59 从这儿到机场有那么七八十里地。[cóng zhè er dào jī chǎng yǒu nà me qī bā shí lǐ dì.]  
(It's about seven or eight miles from here to the airport.)

Example 60 他到上海去有这么半个月了。[tā dào shàng hǎi qù yǒu zhè me bàn gè yuè le.]  
(He has been in Shanghai for about half a month.)

V. **这样 [zhè yàng] (in this way), “那样 [nà yàng] (in that way),” “怎么样 [zhè me yàng] (like this),” “怎么样 [nà me yàng] (like that)”**

- 1 All of them can refer to property, status, and situation, and function as attribute, predicate, complement, subject, and object.

Example 61 这样的民族，永远不会倒下去。[zhè yàng de mín zú, yǒng yuǎn bú huì dào xià qù.]  
(A nation like this will never be defeated.) (as the attribute)

Example 62 这样的痛苦生活，她在马戏团里整整过了七年。[zhè yàng de tòng kǔ shēng huó, tā zài mǎ xì tuán lǐ zhěng zhěng guò le qī nián.]

(She has lived such a miserable life in the circus for seven years.) (as the attribute)

Example 63 古时候, 传说有这样一件事情 . . . [gǔ shí hòu, chuán shuō yǒu zhè yàng yī jiàn shì qing . . .]

(In ancient times, it was said that . . .) (as the attribute)

Example 64 你不应该对他那样, 他还小, 不懂事。[nǐ bù yīng gāi duì tā nà yàng, tā hái xiǎo, bù dǒng shì.]

(You shouldn't treat him like that because he's too young to know better.) (as the predicate)

Example 65 他很勤奋, 他的这本英汉字典都用得这样了。[tā hěn qín fèn, tā de zhè běn yīng hàn zì diǎn dōu yòng dé zhè yàng le.]

(He is so diligent that his English-Chinese dictionary has been well-worn.) (as the complement)

Example 66 这样就行, 不必改了。[zhè yàng jiù xíng, bù bì gǎi le.]

(It is O.K. like this. There's no need to change.) (as the subject)

Example 67 实际情况并不是那样。[shí jì qíng kuàng bìng bú shì nà yàng.]

(The truth is not like that.) (as the object)

## 2 They function as adverbials to express a certain degree or manner.

Example 68 原来你这样没良心。[yuán lái nǐ zhè yàng méi liáng xīn.]

(You are so ungrateful.)

Example 69 那位姑娘是那样热情, 那样爱帮助人。[nà wèi gū niáng shì nà yàng rè qíng, nà yàng ài bāng zhù rén.]

(That girl is so warm and helpful.)

Example 70 你这样写字, 姿势对吗? [nǐ zhè yàng xiě zì, zī shì duì ma?]

(Do you think you are writing in the right way?)

Example 71 这句话在汉语里不能这样说。[zhè jù huà zài hàn yǔ lǐ bù néng zhè yàng shuō.]

(You can't say it like this in Chinese.)

When functioning as adverbials, “这样 [zhè yàng] (this way)” and “那样 [nà yàng] (that way)” can be substituted by “这么 [zhè me] (like this)” and “那么 [nà me] (like that)” without any changes in meaning. However, there is a difference between the sentence “这样 (这么) 痛苦的生活 [zhè yàng (zhè me) tòng kǔ de shēng huó] (Such a miserable life)” and the sentence “这样的痛苦生活 [zhè yàng de tòng kǔ shēng huó] (to live miserably).” The latter emphasizes the way of living; the former highlights the degree of pain, and then “这样 (这么) 痛苦 [zhè yàng (zhè me) tòng kǔ] (such a miserable . . .)” as a whole modifies “生活 [shēng huó] (life).”

## 3 When they stand side by side in a sentence, “这样 [zhè yàng] (this way)” and “那样 [nà yàng] (that way)” function as empty reference, frequently serving as attributes or adverbials.



Example 72 这部电影虽然有这样那样的缺点，但还算得上是一部佳作。[zhè bù diàn yǐng suī rán yǒu zhè yàng nà yàng de quē diǎn, dàn hái suàn dé shàng shì yī bù jiā zuò.]

(This film could be a good one, though it has the shortcomings of this kind or that kind.)

Example 73 这段话尽管可以这样或那样地理解，但从上下文来看，只能这样理解。[zhè duàn huà jìn guǎn kě yǐ zhè yàng huò nà yàng de lǐ jiě, dàn cóng shàng xià wén lái kàn, zhǐ néng zhè yàng lǐ jiě.]

(Although this passage can be understood this way or that way, the context decides that it should be understood in this way.)

Moreover, “这样 [zhè yàng] (this way)” and “那样 [nà yàng] (that way)” can serve as a link in the sentence. The former refers to the aforementioned and the latter refers to what is to be mentioned.

Example 74 我问了老师后又做了几道题，这样，才把这个原理搞清楚。[wǒ wèn le lǎo shī hòu yòu zuò le jǐ dào tí, zhè yàng, cái bǎ zhè gè yuán lǐ gǎo qīng chǔ.]

(I consulted the teacher and then solved several problems. In this way, I finally made myself clear about this principle.)

Example 75 如果大家同意这个方案，那么，咱们就干起来吧。[rú guǒ dà jiā tóng yì zhè gè fāng àn, nà me, zán men jiù gàn qiǎ lái ba.]

(If everyone agrees to the plan, then let's do it now.)

### Section three: interrogative pronouns

An interrogative pronoun is used to ask a question and to form an interrogative question as well. For example, “谁 [shuí] (who)” is for people; “什么 [shén me] (what)” and “哪 [nǎ] (where)” are for things; “怎么 [zěnmē] (how),” “怎么样 [zěnmē yàng] (how),” and “怎样 [zěnmē yàng] (how)” are for manners or features; “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)” and “哪里 [nǎ lǐ] (where)” are for locations; “什么时候 [shén me shí hòu] (when)” and “多会儿 [duō huì er] (how long)” are for time; “几 [jǐ] (how many)” and “多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)” are for number.

The common interrogative pronouns can be divided into the following five groups.

For persons or things:

谁 [shuí] (who), 什么 [shén me] (what), 哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)

For location:

哪里 [nǎ lǐ] (where), 哪儿 [nǎ er] (where), 什么地方 [shén me dì fāng] (where)

For time:

多会儿 [duō huì er] (when), 哪会儿 [nǎ huì er] (when), 几时 [jǐ shí] (when), 什么时候 [shén me shí hòu] (when)

For property, manner, state, degree:

怎么 [zěn me] (how), 怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how), 怎样 [zěn yàng] (how)

For quantity:

几 [jǐ] (how many), 多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)

### I. 谁 [shuí] (who), 什么 [shén me] (what), 哪 [nǎ] (which)

“谁 [shuí] (who)” and “什么 [shén me] (what)” are identical to the nouns they refer to, serving as subject, object, and attribute.

Example 1

A: 谁是你们的老师? [shuí shì nǐ men de lǎo shī? ]

(Who is your teacher?)

B: 张先生是我们的老师。[zhāng xiān shēng shì wǒ men de lǎo shī.]

(Mr. Zhang.)

Example 2

A: 他找谁? [tā zhǎo shuí?]

(Who is he looking for?)

B: 他找张老师。[tā zhǎo zhāng lǎo shī.]

(He's looking for Prof. Zhang.)

Example 3

A: 这是谁的本子? [zhè shì shuí de běn zǐ?]

(Whose book is this?)

B: 这是我的本子。[zhè shì wǒ de běn zǐ]

(This is mine.)

Example 4

A: 你在看什么? [nǐ zài kàn shén me? ]

(What are you watching?)

B: 我在看足球比赛。[wǒ zài kàn zú qiú bǐ sài.]

(A football match.)

Example 5

A: 您做什么工作? [nín zuò shén me gōng zuò?]

(What do you do?)

B: 我教书。[wǒ jiāo shū.]

(I am a teacher.)

“哪 (where)” has two pronunciations: [nǎ] or [něi]. It is often followed by a quantifier or numeral.

Example 6 哪位是新来的学生? [nǎ wèi shì xīn lái de xué shēng?]

(Who is the new student?)

Example 7 这三种颜色, 你喜欢哪种? [zhè sān zhǒng yán sè, nǐ xǐ huān nǎ zhǒng?]

(Which of these three colors do you prefer?)

Example 8 您在哪个大学教书? [nín zài nǎ gè dà xué jiāo shū?]  
(At which university do you teach?)

Generally speaking, the noun after a numeral-quantifier phrase can be omitted. Similarly, the nouns after interrogative pronouns and numeral-quantifier phrases (or quantifiers) can be omitted, too, such as “哪位 [nǎ wèi] (who)” in Example 6.

There is something to be noticed when using “谁 [shuí] (who),” “哪 [nǎ] (which),” and “什么 [shén me] (what).”

- 1 Neither “谁 [shuí] (who)” nor “什么 [shén me] (what)” has the form of single or plural. Actually, they can refer to both. “哪个 [nǎ gè] (which one)” refers to a single number and “哪些 [nǎ xiē] (which)” refers to a plural number, such as “哪个人 [nǎ gè rén] (which person)” and “哪些人 [nǎ xiē rén] (which persons).”
- 2 When functioning as an attribute, “谁 [shuí] (who)” is usually followed by the structural auxiliary word “的 [de]” to express a possessive relation.

Example 9 这是谁的书? [zhè shì shuí de shū?]  
(Whose book is this?)

Example 10 谁的身体最好? [shuí de shēn tǐ zuì hǎo?]  
(Who is in the best health?)

The expression without “的 [de],” like “谁家来客人啦? [shuí jiā lái kè rén lā?]  
(Which family has a visitor?),” occurs infrequently.

“什么 [shén me] (what)” is used as an attribute to ask about the feature or type of things. Here, “的 [de]” is not necessary.

Example 11 这是什么书? [zhè shì shén me shū?]  
(What is this book about?)

Example 12 那是什么树? [nà shì shén me shù?]  
(What kind of tree is that?)

Example 13 铁生锈是什么原因? [tiě shēng xiù shì shén me yuán yīn?]  
(What causes iron to rust?)

Example 14 报考艺术学校需要什么条件? [bào kǎo yì shù xué xiào xū yào shén me tiáo jiàn?]  
(What qualifications do we need to apply for an art school?)

“的 [de]” is required to express a possessive relation, such as “这是什么的味道? [zhè shì shén me de wèi dào?]  
(What’s that smell?)” and “这是什么的声音? [zhè shì shén me de shēng yīn?]  
(What’s that sound?).” Actually, a noun after “什么 [shén me] (what)” is often omitted.

- 3 When “什么 [shén me] (what)” stands alone in a sentence, it refers to a thing, action, feature, or status.

## Example 15

A: 你喜欢什么? [nǐ xǐ huān shén me?]

(What do you like?)

B: 我喜欢书。[wǒ xǐ huān shū.]

(I like books.)

## Example 16

A: 游泳和打球你喜欢什么? [yóu yǒng hé dǎ qiú nǐ xǐ huān shén me?]

(Which do you like, swimming or playing a ball game?)

B: 我喜欢游泳。[wǒ xǐ huān yóu yǒng.]

(I like swimming.)

As an attribute, “什么 [shén me] (what)” can modify the noun for a person, name, or an occupation, such as “什么人 [shén me rén] (who),” “什么大夫 [shén me dài fū] (what kind of doctor),” “什么工程师 [shén me gōng chéng shī] (what kind of engineer).”

“什么人 [shén me rén] (who)” and “谁 [shuí] (who)” are basically the same in meaning and both of them can be used to ask about a person’s name, occupation, and status, such as “他是谁? [tā shì shuí?] (Who is he?)” and “他是什么人? [tā shì shén me rén?] (Who is he?).” However, “什么人 [shén me rén] (who)” does not sound very polite. Besides, “他是你什么人? [tā shì nǐ shén me rén?] (Who is he for you?)” is to ask about the relation between “他 [tā] (he)” and “你 [nǐ] (you).” Here, it cannot be changed into “\*他是你的谁? [tā shì nǐ de shuí?].”

- 4 “的 [de]” is not required when “什么 [shén me] (what)” modifies nouns for time or place, such as “什么时候 [shén me shí hòu] (when)” and “什么地方 [shén me dì fāng] (where),” to ask about time and location.

Example 17 现在什么时候了? [xiàn zài shén me shí hòu le?]

(What time is it now?)

Example 18 这是什么时候的报纸? [zhè shì shén me shí hòu de bào zhǐ?]

(When was this newspaper published?)

Example 19 这是什么地方的土产? [zhè shì shén me dì fāng de tǔ chǎn?]

(Where does this local product come from?)

Example 20 这次出差到什么地方去? [zhè cì chū chà dào shén me dì fāng qù?]

(Where will you go on the business trip this time?)

- 5 To combine “什么 [shén me] (what)” with “为 [wéi/wèi],” a verb-object phrase “为什么 [wèi shén me] (why)” is formed. It can be put before a verb, adjective, or the head of sentence as adverbial to inquire a cause or a reason.

Example 21 你为什么来晚了? [nǐ wèi shén me lái wǎn le?]

(Why did you come late?)

Example 22 为什么你拒绝了他的请求? [wèi shén me nǐ jù jué le tā de qǐng qiú?]

(Why did you refuse his request?)

Example 23 你今天为什么这样烦躁? [nǐ jīn tiān wèi shén me zhè yàng fān zào?]

(Why are you so upset today?)

Also, it can function as the object.

Example 24 这是为什么? [zhè shì wèi shén me?]

(Why is this?)

- 6 “哪 [nǎ] (where)” is seldom used alone; but if it is, it mainly functions as a subject to refer to a person (persons) or a thing (things).

Example 25 哪是你的书包? [nǎ shì nǐ de shū bāo?]

(Where is your bag?)

Example 26 哪是你的行李? [nǎ shì nǐ de xíng lí?]

(Where is your baggage?)

Example 27 哪是你的妹妹? [nǎ shì nǐ de mèi mèi?]

(Who is your younger sister?)

“哪 [nǎ] (where)” is often connected with a quantifier.

Example 28 哪位是新来的学生? [nǎ wèi shì xīn lái de xué shēng?]

(Who is the new student?)

Example 29 这三种颜色, 你最喜欢哪种? [zhè sān zhǒng yán sè, nǐ zuì xǐ huān nǎ zhǒng?]

(Which of these three colors do you like best?)

Example 30 这些书, 你需要哪本借哪本。[zhè xiē shū, nǐ xū yào nǎ běn jiè nǎ běn?]

(You may borrow any of these books that you need.)

As an attribute before a noun, “哪 [nǎ] (where)” distinguishes the noun it refers to from others.

Example 31 哪位老师教你们? [nǎ wèi lǎo shī jiāo nǐ men?]

(Which teacher teaches you?)

Example 32 哪个问题你还不明白? [nǎ gè wèn tí nǐ hái bù míng bái?]

(Which question don't you understand?)

Example 33 您在哪个学校教书? [nín zài nǎ gè xué xiào jiāo shū?]

(In which school do you teach?)

“哪 [nǎ] (where)” is used before “year,” “month,” and “day” to inquire about a date.

Example 34 你哪年来中国的? [nǐ nǎ nián lái zhōng guó de?]

(In which year did you come to China?)

Example 35 你哪天有时间? 我们去旅游好吗? [nǐ nǎ tiān yǒu shí jiān? wǒ men qù lǚ yóu hǎo ma?]

(When are you free? Shall we go on a trip?)

Example 36 你的生日是哪天? [nǐ de shēng rì shì nǎ tiān?]

(Which day is your birthday?)

Example 37 这是哪天的报纸? [zhè shì nǎ tiān de bào zhǐ?]

(On which day was the newspaper published?)

“哪些 [nǎ xiē]” and “哪几个 [nǎ jǐ gè]” refer to plural numbers, such as “哪些人 [nǎ xiē rén] (which persons),” “哪些书 [nǎ xiē shū] (which books),” “哪些城市 [nǎ xiē chéng shì] (which cities),” “哪几个人 [nǎ jǐ gè rén] (which persons),” “哪几本书 [nǎ jǐ běn shū] (which books),” “哪几座城市 [nǎ jǐ zuò chéng shì] (which cities).”

## II. 哪里 [nǎ lǐ] (where), 哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)

“哪里 [nǎ lǐ] (where)” and “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)” have an identical meaning when used. Comparatively speaking, “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)” is more popular in the spoken language. Both of them are used to inquire about a certain location, very similar to a locational word. Usually, they function as subjects, objects, and attributes.

Example 38 哪儿出产这种苹果? [nǎ er chū chǎn zhè zhǒng píng guǒ.]  
(Where does this kind of apple come from?) (as the subject)

Example 39 哪儿写错了? [nǎ er xiě cuò le?]  
(Where did it go wrong?) (as the subject)

Example 40 哪里是你们的实验室? [nǎ lǐ shì nǐ men de shí yàn shì?]  
(Where is your laboratory?) (as the subject)

Example 41 人的正确思想是从哪里来的? [rén de zhèng què sī xiǎng shì cóng nǎ lǐ lái de?]

(Where do the people get their right ideas?) (as the object of the preposition “从 [cóng] (from)”) )

Example 42 你是哪儿的人? [nǐ shì nǎ er de rén?]  
(Where do you come from?) (as the attribute)

Generally, a preposition appears before “哪里 [nǎ lǐ] (where)” or “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)” when a location is inquired, such as “你在哪儿工作? [nǐ zài nǎ er

gōng zuò?) (Where do you work?)” and “他从哪里来? [tā cóng nǎ lǐ lái?] (Where does he come from?).” Sometimes, it can be directly put before the verb as an adverbial.

Example 43 人都哪儿去了? [rén dōu nǎ er qù le?]  
(Where are all the people?)

Example 44 你哪儿买的这么大的西瓜? [nǐ nǎ er mǎi de zhè me dà de xī guā?]  
(Where did you get such a big watermelon?)

### III. 多会儿 [duō huì er] (when), 哪会儿 [nǎ huì er] (when)

Both of them are popular in the spoken language with the same meanings and functions. They are used to ask about time. For example, “多会儿 [duō huì er]” is for “when.” “哪会儿 [nǎ huì er] (when)” is the interrogative form of “那会儿 [nà huì er] (at that time)” and “这会儿 [zhè huì er] (at this time).” Both of them function as adverbials, attributes, and objects.

Example 45 你多会儿动身? 明天下午? [nǐ duō huì er dòng shēn? míng tiān xià wǔ?]  
(When are you leaving? Tomorrow afternoon?) (as the adverb)

Example 46 她哪会儿离开这儿的? 我没注意。[tā nǎ huì er lí kāi zhè er de? wǒ méi zhù yì.]  
(When did she leave here? I didn't know.) (as the adverbial)

Example 47 这是多会儿的报纸? [zhè shì duō huì er de bào zhǐ?]  
(When was the newspaper published?) (as the attribute)

Example 48 那是哪会儿的事了? 好多细节我都忘了。[nà shì nǎ huì er de shì le? hǎo duō xì jié wǒ dōu wàng le.]  
(When was that? I forgot many details about it.) (as the attributive)

Example 49 您从哪会儿开始改行搞创作的? [nín cóng nǎ huì er kāi shǐ gǎi xíng gǎo chuàng zuò de?]  
(When did you start your creative writing?) (as the object of the preposition)

In the Beijing dialect, “多会儿 [duō huì er] (when)” can function as predicate to ask about a date.

Example 50 今儿多会儿了? 快春节了吧? [jīn er duō huì er le? kuài chūn jié le ba?]  
(What is the date today? Is Spring Festival approaching?)

Example 51 小姑结婚的那天是多会儿来的? [xiǎo gū jié hūn de nà tiān shì duō huì er lái de?]  
(When did my sister-in-law get married?)

IV. 怎么 [zěn me] (how), 怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how), 怎样 [zě yàng] (how)

They are interrogative pronouns with adverb properties, due to which they are named “pronoun-adverbs.” They have similarities as well as differences in use.

### 1 怎么 [zěn me] (how)

(1) “怎么 [zěn me] (how)” is used to inquire about a manner of behavior.

Example 52 小赵，这个汉字怎么写？ [Xiǎo Zhào, zhè gè hàn zì zěn me xiě?]

(Xiao Zhao, how do you write this Chinese character?)

Example 53 你是怎么来的，坐车来的还是骑车来的？ [nǐ shì zěn me lái de, zuò chē lái de hái shì qí chē lái de?]

(How did you come, by car or by bike?)

Example 54 怎么做好，去好还是不去好？ [zěn me zuò hǎo, qù hǎo hái shì bú qù hǎo?]

(What should I do, go or not go?)

Example 55 他怎么对待你？客气吗？ [tā zěn me duì dài nǐ? kè qì ma?]

(How did he treat you? Is he polite to you?)

(2) “怎么 [zěn me] (how)” is used to inquire about a reason.

Example 56 你眼睛怎么红了？ [nǐ yǎn jīng zěn me hóng le?]

(Why did you get the red eyes?)

Example 57 你怎么这么晚才来？ [nǐ zěn me zhè me wǎn cái lái?]

(Why are you so late?)

Example 58 你怎么没去看电影？ [nǐ zěn me méi qù kàn diàn yǐng?]

(Why didn't you go to the cinema?)

Example 59 你怎么还去参加比赛？ [nǐ zěn me hái qù cān jiā bǐ sài?]

(Why did you insist on taking part in the game?)

Example 60 这封信怎么又退回来了？ [zhè fēng xìn zěn me yòu tuì huí lái le?]

(Why was this letter returned again?)

“怎么 [zěn me] (how)” can appear before the subject.

Example 61 怎么你又迟到了？ [zěn me nǐ yòu chí dào le?]

(Why are you late again?)

Example 62 怎么大家都不说话？ [zěn me dà jiā dōu bù shuō huà?]

(Why does nobody talk?)

The following compares “怎么 [zěn me] (how)” and “为什么 [wèi shén me] (why).”



“怎么 [zěn me] (how)” indicates a sense of surprise or puzzlement while “为什么 [wèi shén me] (why)” is mainly for a reason, or even an unexpected one. Thus, when a simple reason is inquired about, “为什么 [wèi shén me] (why)” is the only choice. For example, a teacher is much likely to pose a question “物体在水中为什么会有浮力? [wù tǐ zài shuǐ zhōng wèi shén me huì yǒu fú lì?] (Why does an object have buoyancy in water?)” from a textbook of physics, instead of “物体在水中怎么会有浮力? [wù tǐ zài shuǐ zhōng zěn me huì yǒu fú lì?] (How can an object float in water?).” Here is another example. Seeing a bird flying, a girl may be curious about why she cannot fly as it does. Consequently, a question “妈妈, 鸟儿怎么会飞呀? [mā mā, niǎo er zěn me huì fēi ya?] (Mom, how can birds fly?)” or “妈妈, 我怎么不会飞呀? [wǒ zěn me bú huì fēi ya?] (Mom, how can't I fly?)” may be asked.

Sometimes, “怎么 [zěn me] (how)” is just for curiosity.

Example 63 怎么, 你不同意? [zěn me, nǐ bù tóng yì?]  
(What? Don't you agree?)

Example 64 怎么, 你后悔了? [zěn me, nǐ hòu huǐ le?]  
(What? You regretted it?)

(3) “怎么 [zěn me] (how)” can be used to ask about the situation.

Example 65 这是怎么回事? [zhè shì zěn me yī huí shì?]  
(What's going on here?)

Example 66 你说说, 他姐姐是怎么一个人? [nǐ shuō shuō, tā jiě jiě shì zěn me yī gè rén?]  
(Do you know what your sister is like?)

Example 67 那次实验是怎么一种情况, 你给大家说说? [nà cì shí yàn shì zěn me yī zhǒng qíng kuàng, nǐ gěi dà jiā shuō shuō.]  
(How was about that experiment? Can you tell us something about it?)

In this case, a numeral-quantifier phrase should follow “怎么 [zěn me] (how),” between which there may be a “一 [yī]” or not.

(4) “不怎么 [bù zěn me]+verb/adjective” expresses a degree which is not very high.

Example 68 这次我考得不怎么好, 下次一定努力。[zhè cì wǒ kǎo dé bù zěn me hǎo, xià cì yī dìng nǔ lì.]  
(I didn't do well this time. I'll try my best next time.)

Example 69 我觉得学汉语不怎么难, 特别是会话。[wǒ jué de xué hàn yǔ bù zěn me nán, tè bié shì huì huà.]  
(I don't find it difficult to learn Chinese, especially for the conversation.)

Example 70 我不怎么认识路, 我一边开车, 你一边给我指路好吗? [wǒ bù zěn me rèn shí lù, wǒ yī biān kāi chē, nǐ yī biān gěi wǒ zhǐ lù hǎo ma?]  
(I don't know the way better. Can you direct me the way while I'm driving?)

## 2 怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how), 怎样 [zěn yàng] (how)

“怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how)” and “怎样 [zěn yàng] (how)” have the same meanings and functions. The former is more popular than the latter in the spoken language.

## (1) to ask about a manner of behavior

Example 71 写毛笔字怎么样拿笔? [xiě máo bǐ zì zěn me yàng ná bǐ?]  
(How do you hold a brush in writing Chinese characters?)

Example 72 你们是怎样找到他的? [nǐ men shì zěn me yàng zhǎo dào tā de?]  
(How did you find him?)

Example 73 钢铁是怎样炼成的? [gāng tiě shì zěn yàng liàn chéng de?]  
(How is steel made?)

Here, “怎么 [zěn me] (how)” is more frequently used than “怎样 [zěn yàng] (how)” and “怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how).”

## (2) To ask about a situation

“怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how)” and “怎样 [zěn yàng] (how)” can function as a predicate or complement to ask about a situation.

Example 74 我累了, 走不动了, 你怎么样(怎样)? [wǒ lèi le, zǒu bú dòng le, nǐ zěn me yàng (zěn yàng)?]  
(I'm too tired to walk, and how about you?)

Example 75 旅行的路线就这样安排, 怎么样? [lǚ xíng de lù xiàn jiù zhè yàng ān pái, zěn me yàng?]  
(How do you think about the itinerary of the tour arranged like this?)

Example 76 奶奶的病怎么样了? 好点儿了吧? [nǎi nǎi de bìng zěn me yàng le? hǎo diǎn er le ba?]  
(How is the grandma's illness? Does she feel better now?)

Example 77 明天去参加汉语水平测试, 你准备得怎么样了? [míng tiān qù cān jiā hàn yǔ shuǐ píng cè shì, nǐ zhǔn bèi dé zěn me yàng le?]  
(Are you ready for tomorrow's Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK)?)

Example 78 这里的环境你认为怎么样? [zhè lǐ de huán jìng nǐ rèn wéi zěn me yàng?]  
(What do you think of the environment here?)

In this case, “怎么 [zěn me] (how)” can also be used here, but it implies a sense of curiosity or puzzlement.

Example 79 小红你怎么了, 哪儿不舒服? [Xiǎo Hóng nǐ zěn me le, nǎ er bù shū fú?]  
(What's wrong with you, Xiao Hong?)

Example 80 他怎么啦? 为什么不让他参加这个会? [tā zěn me lā? wèi shén me bú ràng tā cān jiā zhè gè huì?]

(What happened to him? Why not let him attend the meeting?)

Example 81 我怎么你了, 你这么不高兴? [wǒ zěn me nǐ le, nǐ zhè me bù gāo xìng?]

(What on earth have I done to you? And why are you so upset?)

Example 82 你怎么着? 别的人都表态了, 就剩你了。[nǐ zěn me zhe? bié de rén dōu biǎo tài le, jiù shèng nǐ le.]

(How about you? Except you, others have shown their opinions.)

Also, “怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how)” and “怎样 [zěn yàng] (how)” can function as attributes in asking about a situation.

Example 83 你在那里过的是怎样 (怎么样) 的一种生活? [nǐ zài nà lǐ guò de shì zěn yàng (zěn me yàng) de yī zhǒng shēng huó?]

(What kind of a life did you have there?)

Example 84 新来的小伙子是怎样 (怎么样) 的一个人? [xīn lái de xiǎo huǒ zǐ shì zěn yàng (zěn me yàng) de yī gè rén?]

(How is the new young fellow?)

Example 85 你在现场看到的是怎样 (怎么样) 的一种情况? [nǐ zài xiàn chǎng kàn dào de shì zěn yàng (zěn me yàng) de yī zhǒng qíng kuàng?]

(What was the situation you saw on the scene?)

Example 86 唉, 你这话会引起别人怎么样的议论呢? [āi, nǐ zhè huà huì yǐn qǐ bié rén zěn me yàng de yì lùn ne?]

(Well, how will your words be discussed?)

“怎么 [zěn me] (how)” can also function as an attribute to describe a situation.

Example 87 这是怎么一回事? [zhè shì zěn me yī huí shì?]

(What's going on here?)

Example 88 你说说, 他姐姐是怎么一个人? [nǐ shuō shuō, tā jiě jiě shì zěn me yī gè rén?]

(How do you think his sister is like?)

Example 89 当时到底是怎么一种情况, 我现在记不清楚了。[dāng shí dào dǐ shì zěn me yī zhǒng qíng kuàng, wǒ xiàn zài jì bù qīng chǔ le.]

(How was it like then? I can't remember now.)

Here are the differences among these three in describing a situation.

First, “怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how)” and “怎样 [zěn yàng] (how)” are more frequently used than “怎么 [zěn me] (how).”

Second, a quantifier is necessary after these three; “一[yī]” is necessary after “怎么 [zěn me] (how)” but it is not always true after “怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how)” or “怎样 [zěn yàng] (how).” Sometimes, a numeral-quantifier phrase is

often omitted after “怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how)” or “怎样 [zěn yàng] (how).” (See Example 86.)

Third, “怎么样 [zěn me yàng] (how)” doesn’t express interrogation sometimes but indicates the speaker’s opinion to a certain person or thing. It functions as a predicate, complement, and attribute in the negative form, carrying a meaning of “not good/well,” “unable to reach a standard or unsatisfactory.”

Example 90 这里的天气真不怎么样，变化无常。[zhè lǐ de tiān qì zhēn bù zěn me yàng, biàn huà wú cháng.]

(The weather here is terribly bad. It’s so changeable.) (as the predicate)

Example 91 那个人是不怎么样，太自私，一事当前，总先为自己打算。[nà gè rén shì bù zěn me yàng, tài zì sī, yī shì dāng qián, zǒng xiān wèi zì jǐ dǎ suàn.]

(That man is anything but selfish. He always thinks of himself first, instead of others.) (as the predicate)

Example 92 晚会上，有几个节目演得不怎么样。[wǎn huì shàng, yǒu jǐ gè jié mù yǎn dé bù zěn me yàng.]

(Some performances at the evening party were not good enough.) (as the complement)

Example 93 这篇文章写得不怎么样。[zhè piān wén zhāng xiě dé bù zěn me yàng.]

(This article is not well written.) (as the complement)

Example 94 那次，我们住在一个不怎么样的小旅店。[nà cì, wǒ men zhù zài yī gè bù zěn me yàng de xiǎo lǚ diàn lǐ.]

(That time, we stayed in a bad inn.) (as the attribute)

#### IV. 几 [jǐ] (how many), 多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)

Both of “几 [jǐ] (how many)” and “多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)” can be used to inquire about a quantity but they differ in use.

- “几 [jǐ] (how many)” is used to ask about a number from one to ten; “多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)” is to ask about any number. If the answer is a number less than ten, “几 [jǐ] (how many)” is better.

Example 95 一个星期有几天? [yī gè xīng qī yǒu jǐ tiān?]  
(How many days are there in a week?)

Example 96 你有几个孩子? [nǐ yǒu jǐ gè hái zǐ?]  
(How many children do you have?)

Example 97 世界有几大洋? [shì jiè yǒu jǐ dà yáng?]  
(How many oceans are there in the world?)

Example 98 这个城市有几座大桥? [zhè gè chéng shì yǒu jǐ zuò dà qiáo?]  
(How many bridges are there in this city?)

The numbers in the answers to these questions are supposed to be fewer than ten.

Example 99 天上有多少颗星星? [tiān shàng yǒu duō shǎo kē xīng xīng?] (How many stars are there in the sky?)

Example 100 你们班有多少学生? [nǐ men bān yǒu duō shǎo xué shēng?] (How many students are there in your class?)

Example 101 那个幼儿园有多少个孩子? [nà gè yòu ér yuán yǒu duō shǎo gè hái zǐ?] (How many children are there in that kindergarten?)

Example 102 那件行李有多少公斤? [nà jiàn xíng lǐ yǒu duō shǎo gōng jīn?] (How many kilograms is that luggage?)

The answers to these questions are supposed to be more than ten.

- 2 A proper quantifier is necessary between “几 [jǐ] (how many)” and a noun but it is not always the same between “多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)” and a noun.

Example 103 这是几吨煤? [zhè shì jǐ dūn méi?] (How many tons of coal are there?)

Example 104 你买了几斤苹果? [nǐ mǎi le jǐ jīn píng guǒ?] (How many catties of apples did you buy?)

Example 105 这种稿纸一页有多少(个)字? [zhè zhǒng gǎo zhǐ yī yè yǒu duō shǎo (gè) zì?] (How many words can be written on this kind of paper?)

Example 106 那个剧场里一共有多少(个)座位? [nà gè jù chǎng lǐ yī gòng yǒu duō shǎo (gè) zuò wèi?] (How many seats are there in that theater?)

Also, “几 [jǐ] (how many)” and “多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)” can be used with a verb-quantifier.

Example 107 刚才时钟敲了几下儿? [gāng cái shí zhōng qiāo le jǐ xià er?] (How many times did the clock ring just now?)

Example 108 你来过几次中国? [nǐ lái guò jǐ cì zhōng guó?] (How many times have you been to China?)

Example 109 你跳绳一分钟能跳多少次? [nǐ tiào shéng yī fēn zhōng néng tiào duō shǎo cì?] (How many times can you do rope skipping in a minute?)

However, “几 [jǐ] (how many)” and “多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)” cannot be used with an indefinite quantifier, such as “些 [xiē] (some)” and “点儿 [diǎn er] (a few).”

- 3 “几 [jǐ] (how many)” can be put before digital numbers, such as “个 [gè] (a single digit),” “十 [shí] (ten),” “百 [shí] (hundred),” “千 [qiān] (thousand),” “万 [wàn] (ten thousand),” “十万 [shí wàn] (one hundred thousand),” “百万 [bǎi wàn] (million),” “千万 [qiān wàn] (ten million);” “多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)” can be only put before three digital numbers. They are “亿 [yì] (a hundred million),” “万 [wàn] (ten thousand),” and “个 [gè] (a single digit).”

Example 110 你有几个兄弟姐妹? [nǐ yǒu jǐ gè xiōng dì jiě mèi?]  
(How many brothers and sisters do you have?)

Example 111 您这个村子有几十户人家? [nín zhè gè cūn zǐ yǒu jǐ shí hù rén jiā?]  
(How many families are there in your village?)

Example 112 这种放大机能放大几十倍? [zhè zhǒng fàng dà jī néng fàng dà jǐ shí bèi?]  
(Is this amplifier capable of magnifying dozens of times?)

Example 113 新盖的礼堂能容纳几千人? [xīn gài de lǐ táng néng róng nà jǐ qiān rén?]  
(How many people can be held in the newly built auditorium?)

Example 114 那座新兴的城市有多少万人? [nà zuò xīn xīng de chéng shì yǒu duō shǎo wàn rén?]  
(How many thousands of people live in that new city?)

- 4 The interrogative pronoun “哪 [nǎ] (where)” can be put before “几 [jǐ] (how many)” but cannot stand before “多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much).”

Example 115 你喜欢学习哪几门课程? [nǐ xǐ huān xué xí nǎ jǐ mén kè chéng?]  
(Which subjects do you like to learn?)

Example 116 这篇短文里, 哪几个字你不认识? [zhè piān duǎn wén lǐ, nǎ jǐ gè zì nǐ bú rèn shí?]  
(Which words don't you recognize in this essay?)

Example 117 这个星期, 你哪几天比较空闲? [zhè gè xīng qī, nǐ nǎ jǐ tiān bǐ jiào kōng xián?]  
(On which days are you free this week?)

Besides, “几 [jǐ] (how many)” also refers to an uncertain quantity.

Example 118 横幅上写着“汉语演讲比赛”几个大字。[héng fú shàng xiě zhe “hàn yǔ yǎn jiǎng bǐ sài” jǐ gè dà zì.]  
(The large characters in the banner are “Chinese Speech Contest.”)

Example 119 街上, 几个小伙子在练长跑。[jiē shàng, jǐ gè xiǎo huǒ zǐ zài liàn cháng pǎo.]  
(On the street, some young men were practicing long-distance running.)

Example 120 因为下午来了几十个人支援我们，任务很快就完成了。[yīn wéi xià wǔ lái le jǐ shí gè rén zhī yuán wǒ men, rèn wù hěn kuài jiù wán chéng le.]

(Since dozens of men came to aid us in the afternoon, the task was quickly completed.)

Sometimes, “多少 [duō shǎo] (how many/much)” can refer to an uncertain quantity.

Example 121 为了这一天，他付出了多少代价啊。[wèi le zhè yī tiān, tā fù chū le duō shǎo dài jià ā.]

(How much did he pay for this day!) (with much effort)

Example 122 他的试卷每一次多少也得有点错误。[tā de shì juàn měi yī cì duō shǎo yě dé yǒu diǎn cuò wù.]

(Every time, he made more or fewer mistakes in the examination.) (some mistakes)

## VI. *The flexible use of interrogative pronouns*

### 1 To form a rhetorical question

Besides expressing interrogation, an interrogative pronoun can be used to form a rhetorical question. Two questions share the same form but they function differently. The interrogative pronoun in a rhetorical question doesn't ask for a direct answer. If a rhetorical question is negative, it functions as a positive assertion; on the contrary, it functions as a negative assertion.

Example 123 谁不知道老张是个忠实可靠的同志？[shuí bù zhī dào Lǎo Zhāng shì gè zhōng shí kě kào de tóng zhì?]

(Everyone knows that Lao Zhang is a faithful comrade.) (a well-known fact.)

Example 124 老李一生走南闯北，人家什么苦没吃过，什么人没见过？[Lǎo Lǐ yī shēng zǒu nán chuǎng běi, rén jiā shén me kǔ méi chī guò, shén me rén méi jiàn guò.]

(Lao Li has traveled extensively in his life, during which he has bore many hardships as well as made contact with different people.) (a person having seen much of the world)

Example 125 你着什么急？有话慢慢说嘛！[nǐ zhāo shén me jí? yǒu huà màn màn shuō ma!]

(Take it easy and take your time.) (no need to worry)

Example 126 今天是你俩大喜的日子，我们哪能不来祝贺呢？[jīn tiān shì nǐ men liǎng dà xǐ de rì zǐ, wǒ men nǎ néng bù lái zhù hè ne?]

(Today is your wedding day. How could we miss it to express our congratulations?)

Example 127 王师傅是一位老司机，整个北京城哪儿没去过？[Wáng shī fù shì yī wèi lǎo sī jī, zhěng gè běi jīng chéng nǎ er méi qù guò?]  
(Mr. Wang is an experienced driver and in Beijing there is no place he has never been to.)

Sometimes, “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)” or “哪里 [nǎ lǐ] (where)” in the rhetorical question doesn’t ask a location.

Example 128

A: 小王，你好像不太高兴。[Xiǎo Wáng, nǐ hǎo xiàng bú tài gāo xìng.]  
(Xiao Wang, you look unhappy.)”

B: 我哪儿不高兴了？[wǒ nǎ er bù gāo xìng le?]  
(What makes you think so?) (the opposite fact)

Example 129 事情不是他经手的，他哪里了解情况。[shì qíng bù shì tā jīng shǒu de, tā nǎ lǐ liǎo jiě qíng kuàng.]  
(He didn’t handle it so he knew anything about it.) (no idea about it)

Example 130 狼着急地说：“先生，能不能快一点？像你这样慢，哪儿是救我，简直是让他们来捉我。”[láng zhāo jí de shuō: “xiān shēng, néng bù néng kuài yī diǎn? xiàng nǐ zhè yàng màn, nǎ er shì jiù wǒ, jiǎn zhí shì ràng tā men lái zhuō wǒ.”]

(The Wolf said in a hurry: “Sir, can’t you hurry up? Slow as you are, how can you save me? You seem to help them catch me.”) (the opposite fact)

In the spoken language, “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)+呀 [ya]” (哪呀 [nǎ ya]) or “哪里哪里 [nǎ lǐ nǎ lǐ] (where)” expresses a negative meaning or functions as a response to a compliment in a modest way.

Example 131

A: 你汉语说得不错嘛。[nǐ hàn yǔ shuō dé bú cuò ma.]  
(Your Chinese is good.)

B: 哪儿呀（哪里哪里），我才学了一年多，还差得远呢。[nǎ er ya (nǎ lǐ nǎ lǐ), wǒ cái xué le yī nián duō, hái chà dé yuǎn ne.]  
(Well, I’ve only been learning it for over a year, and there is still a long way for me to go.) (a manner of modesty)

Example 132

A: 你比我念的书多，知道的多。[nǐ bǐ wǒ niàn de shū duō, zhī dào de duō.]  
(You read more books than I do, so you are more knowledgeable than me.)

B: 哪里哪里。[nǎ lǐ nǎ lǐ.]  
(Oh, I’m flattered.) (a manner of modesty)

It is better to use such expressions for a negative assertion among the people of the same generation. Otherwise, it sounds impolite, especially used by the younger generation to the elder generation.



## 2 To make a general reference

- (1) “谁 [shuí] (who),” “什么 [shén me] (what),” “哪 [nǎ] (which),” “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)” can be used to make a general reference. For example, “谁 [shuí] (who)” refers to anyone in general and “什么 [shén me] (what)” to anything in general. Such a general reference doesn’t require an answer and can be further emphasized by some common adverbs after them, such as “都 [dōu] (all)” and “也 [yě] (also),” or by some conjunctions at the head of sentence such as “无论 [wú lùn] (no matter what)” and “不管 [bù guǎn] (no matter).”

Example 133 谁都懂得这个道理。[shuí dōu dǒng dé zhè gè dào lǐ.]  
(Everyone knows that.)

Example 134 你什么时候来都可以。[nǐ shén me shí hòu lái dōu kě yǐ.]  
(You can come at any time.)

Example 135 他第一次来中国，哪儿他都想去看看。[tā dì yī cì lái zhōng guó, nǎ er tā dōu xiǎng qù kàn kàn.]  
(This is his first time in China, so he wants to see everywhere)

Example 136 他第一次来中国，他哪儿都想去看看。[tā dì yī cì lái zhōng guó, tā nǎ er dōu xiǎng qù kàn kàn.]  
(It is his first time to China. He wants to see everywhere.)

Example 137 这个汉字有两种念法，你怎么念都可以。[zhè gè hàn zì yǒu liǎng zhǒng niàn fǎ, nǐ zěn me niàn dōu kě yǐ.]  
(There are two ways to pronounce this Chinese character. You can choose either of them.)

Example 138 无论什么意见都可以提。[wú lùn shén me yì jiàn dōu kě yǐ tí.]  
(Any opinions are welcome.)

Example 139 不管你怎么问他，他也不嫌烦。[bù guǎn nǐ zěn me wèn tā, tā yě bù xián fán.]  
(No matter what you ask about him, he is patient to reply.)

Interrogative pronouns also can be used after prepositions to make a general reference, such as “谁 [shuí] (who)” and “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where).”

Example 140 在哪儿工作都可以发挥自己的光和热。[zài nǎ er gōng zuò dōu kě yǐ fā huī zì jǐ de guāng hé rè.]  
(You can give play to your ability wherever you work.)

Example 141 你从哪儿走都可以，距离一样。[nǐ cóng nǎ er zǒu dōu kě yǐ, jù lí yī yàng.]  
(You can depart from anywhere considering the same distance.)

Example 142 她对谁都那么热情。[tā duì shuí dōu nà me rè qíng.]  
(She is warm like that to everyone.)

- (2) Another way to make a general reference is to repeat the same interrogative pronoun twice. The first time is for a general reference; the second time is to convert the general one into a certain one. The repeated pronouns correspond to each other in a sentence and identically refer to the same person, thing, manner, time, or location. Such a use is common in the compound sentence or the contracted sentence. In this case, “无论 [wú lùn] (no matter what)” or “不管 [bù guǎn] (no matter)” cannot be used before the repeated interrogative pronouns, and sometimes there permits a “就 [jiù]” to connect two clauses or two phrases where the repeated pronouns are used.

Example 143 谁知道谁就回答。[shuí zhī dào shuí jiù huí dá.]

(Who knows, who answers.) (the repeated “谁 [shuí] (who)” as the subjects of two clauses)

Example 144 你喜欢哪个，我送你哪个。[nǐ xǐ huān nǎ gè, wǒ sòng nǐ nǎ gè.]

(Whichever you like, I'll give it to you.) (the repeated “哪个 [nǎ gè] (whichever)” as the objects of two clauses)”

Example 145 你哪会儿有空儿，我哪会儿来。[nǐ nǎ huì er yǒu kòng er, wǒ nǎ huì er lái.]

(I will come when you are free.) (the repeated “哪会儿 [nǎ huì er] as the adverbials of two clauses)

Example 146 哪个书包好，我就买哪个书包。[nǎ gè shū bāo hǎo, wǒ jiù mǎi nǎ gè shū bāo.]

(I'll buy the schoolbag that is good in quality.) (the repeated “哪个 [nǎ gè]” as the attributes of two clauses)

Example 147 你愿意怎么去就怎么去。[nǐ yuàn yì zěn me qù jiù zěn me qù.]

(Go as you like.)

In these examples, the repeated interrogative pronouns in two clauses of one sentence function identically.

Example 148 谁学习好，我就向谁学习。[shuí xué xí hǎo, wǒ jiù xiàng shuí xué xí.]

(I will learn from whoever studies well.) (the first “谁 [shuí] (who)” as the subject; the second one as the object of the preposition “向 [xiàng]”)

Example 149 哪里有困难，他就出现在哪里。[nǎ lǐ yǒu kùn nán, tā jiù chū xiàn zài nǎ lǐ.]

(He will appear wherever the trouble is.) (the first “哪里 [nǎ lǐ] (wherever)” as the subject; the second one as the object of the preposition “在 [zài]”)

Example 150 你喜欢哪个，哪个就送给你。[nǐ xǐ huān nǎ gè, nǎ gè jiù sòng gěi nǐ.]

(Whichever you like, I'll give it to you.) (the first “哪个 [nǎ gè] (whichever)” as the object and the second one as the topic)

Example 151 哪种便宜就买哪种。[nǎ zhǒng pián yí jiù mǎi nǎ zhǒng.]  
(Buy whichever is cheaper.) (the first “哪种 [nǎ zhǒng] (which kind)” as the subject and second one as the object)

Example 152 这个演员演什么像什么。[zhè gè yǎn yuán yǎn shén me xiàng shén me.]

(This actor is really good at playing various roles.) (“什么 [shén me] (what)” as the objects of “演 [yǎn] (play)” and “像 [xiàng] (alike)”

In these examples, the repeated interrogative pronouns in two clauses of one sentence function differently.

In addition, when the first interrogative pronoun “谁 [shuí] (who)” refers to a general reference, the second “谁 [shuí] (who)” can be substituted by a personal pronoun.

Example 153 今后，谁再提为河神娶亲，就让他去见河神。[jīn hòu, shuí zài tí wèi hé shén qǔ qīn, jiù ràng tā qù jiàn hé shén.]

(From now on, whoever mentioned to offer a wife for the river god, let him go to see the river god by himself.) (“他 [tā] (him)” as a third personal pronoun)

- (3) The third way to make a general reference is to repeat the same interrogative pronoun in a single sentence. They correspond to each other but refer to different persons or things.

Example 154 我们已经廿年没见了，见了面后谁也不认识谁了。[wǒ men yǐ jīng niàn nián méi jiàn le, jiàn le miàn hòu shuí yě bú rèn shí shuí le.]  
(We haven't seen each other for 20 years and neither of us recognized the other one when we met.)

Example 155 这些零件尺码型号都一样，哪件跟哪件配在一起都装得上。[zhè xiē líng jiàn chǐ mǎ xíng hào dōu yī yàng, nǎ jiàn gēn nǎ jiàn pèi zài yī qǐ dōu zhuāng dé shàng.]

(These parts are all the same size, so they can be matched with each other and be installed together.)

Example 156 他是搞无线电的，这个仪器的哪条线路通哪条线路他都一清二楚。[tā shì gǎo wú xiàn diàn de, zhè gè yí qì de nǎ tiáo xiàn lù tōng nǎ tiáo xiàn lù tā dōu yī qīng èr chǔ.]

(As a radio operator, he knows well about the lines in this instrument.)

Example 157 敌人进了地道也不知道哪儿通着哪儿，哪儿连着哪儿。[dí rén jìn le dì dào yě bù zhī dào nǎ er tōng zhe nǎ er, nǎ er lián zhe nǎ er.]

(When entering the tunnel, the enemy would be confused about where and how it led to.)

### 3 To make an empty reference

If an interrogative pronoun is used in this case, no answer is needed. The interrogative pronoun implies a person or thing that is unknown, unclear, impossible, or unnecessary to mention.

Example 158 这件事情好像谁告诉过我。[zhè jiàn shì qíng hǎo xiàng shuí gào sù guò wǒ.]

(Someone must have told me about it.)

Example 159 我应该在中国买点儿什么送给我的朋友。[wǒ yīng gāi zài zhōng guó mǎi diǎn er shén me sòng gěi wǒ de péng yǒu.]

(I should buy my friends some gifts in China.)

Example 160 咱们哪天到颐和园去玩儿。[zán men nǎ tiān dào yí hé yuán qù wán wán er.]

(Let's go to the Summer Palace some day.)

Example 161 我看你很面熟，咱们好像在什么地方见过面。[wǒ kàn nǐ hěn miàn shú, zán men hǎo xiàng zài shén me dì fang jiàn guò miàn.]

(You look familiar to me. We must have met somewhere before.)

Example 162 你坐哪儿等我一下儿，我就来。[nǐ zuò nǎ er děng wǒ yī xià er, wǒ jiù lái.]

(Sit and wait for me for a while. I will come back soon.)

Example 163 多会儿你们放暑假，咱们去海滨游泳。[duō huì er nǐ men fàng shǔ jià, zán men qù hǎi bīn yóu yǒng.]

(When your summer holiday starts, let's go swimming at the beach.)

Example 164 我的腰不知怎么扭了一下儿。[wǒ de yāo bù zhī zěn me niǔ le yī xià er.]

(I've twisted my waist somehow.)

“谁 [shuí] (who)” in Example 158 refers to a person whom the speaker forgets or is unwilling to point out. “什么 [shén me] (what)” in Example 159 means that the speaker wants to buy something but is not certain about what to buy. “哪 [nǎ] (which)” in Example 160 refers to an uncertain day. “什么地方 [shén me dì fang] (a certain place)” in Example 161 means a certain place but the speaker forgets its concrete location. “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where)” in Example 162 refers to a place in general. “多会儿 [duō huì er] (when)” in Example 163 indicates the summer vacation. Example 164 means that the waist was hurt under a certain situation or by a certain behavior.

#### Section four: special pronouns: 每 [měi] (every), 各 [gè] (each), 某 [mǒu] (certain)

##### I. 每 [měi] (every), 各 [gè] (each)

“每 [měi] (every)” and “各 [gè] (each)” refer to any individual of a group and a group as well.

Example 1 老校长对全校每一个教师的情况都很清楚。[lǎo xiào zhǎng duì quán xiào měi yī gè jiào shī de qíng kuàng dōu hěn qīng chǔ.]

(The old headmaster knows well about every teacher in the school.)

Example 2 他现在每天早晨锻炼，身体开始好起来了。[tā xiàn zài měi tiān zǎo chén duàn liàn, shēn tǐ kāi shǐ hǎo qǐ lái le.]

(Now he exercises every morning and his health is beginning to be better.)

Example 3 请把这个通知传达给每个单位。[qǐng bǎ zhè gè tōng zhī chuán dá gěi měi gè dān wèi.]

(Please inform this notice to each unit.)

Example 4 生产上用的各种原材料都已备齐了。[shēng chǎn shàng yòng de gè zhǒng yuán cái liào dōu yǐ bèi qí le.]

(All kinds of raw materials for production have been prepared.)

Example 5 在这所大学，来自世界各国的学生都在这个餐厅吃饭。[zài zhè suǒ dà xué, lái zì shì jiè gè guó de xué shēng dōu zài zhè gè cān tīng chī fàn.]

(In this university, students from all over the world have their meals in this restaurant.)

Yet, “每 [měi] (every)” and “各 [gè] (each)” differ in meaning and function.

### 1 Generality or differences

“每 [měi] (every)” refers to any individual of a group, emphasizing generality; thus, the adverb “都 [dōu] (all)” is required to express a scope in the sentence with “每 [měi] (every)” in it.

Example 6 这位老人每天都到果园里来劳动。[zhè wèi lǎo rén měi tiān dōu dào guǒ yuán lǐ lái láo dòng.]

(The old man labors in the orchard every day.)

Example 7 你说的每一句话我都听懂了。[nǐ shuō de měi yī jù huà wǒ dōu tīng dǒng le.]

(I understand every word you said.)

Example 8 会上每位代表都发了言。[huì shàng měi wèi dài biǎo dōu fā le yán.]

(Every representative spoke at the meeting.)

“各 [gè] (each)” emphasizes differences by paying particular attention to each individual.

Example 9 我们主张各国的事务应当由各国人民自己来管。[wǒ men zhǎng zhāng gè guó de shì wù yīng dāng yóu gè guó rén mín zì jǐ lái guǎn.]

(We propose that the affairs of each country should be governed by its own people.)

Example 10 当前，环境保护问题引起了社会各方面的不同的反应。[dāng qián, huán jìng bǎo hù wèn tí yǐn qǐ le shè huì gè fāng miàn de bù tóng de fǎn yìng.]

(At present, the issue of environmental protection has aroused different responses from all aspects of society.)

Example 11 起义军占领陈县以后，陈胜请各方面的代表来开会。[qǐ yì jun zhàn lǐng chén xiàn yǐ hòu, Chén Shèng qǐng gè fāng miàn de dài biǎo lái kāi huì.]

(After having captured Chen County, Chen Sheng invited various representatives of the rebels to have a meeting.)

Example 12 希望大家把我所讲的加以考虑，加以分析，同时也分析各人自己的情况。[xī wàng dà jiā bǎ wǒ suǒ jiǎng de jiā yǐ kǎo lǜ, jiā yǐ fēn xī, tóng shí yě fēn xī gè rén zì jǐ de qíng kuàng.]

(I hope you will take what I have said into account, and analyze it as well as your own situation at the same time.)

## 2 Flexible use of “每 [měi] (every)”

Generally speaking, “每 [měi] (every)” cannot be directly connected with a noun and there needs to be a quantifier or a numeral-quantifier phrase in the middle. Here are examples: “每张桌子 [měi zhāng zhuō zi]/每一张桌子 [měi yī zhāng zhuō zi] (each table)” is right but “\*每桌子 [měi zhuō zi]” is not; “每本书 [měi běn shū]/每一本书 [měi yī běn shū] (each book)” is right but “\*每书 [měi shū]” is wrong.

Some time words are multi-categories of nouns and quantifiers, such as “年 [nián] (year),” “日 [rì] (day),” “天 [tiān] (day),” “分钟 [fēn zhōng] (minute),” “秒 [miǎo] (second).” Thus they can be directly connected with “每 [měi] (every),” such as “每年 [měi nián] (every year),” “每日 [měi rì] (every day),” “每天 [měi tiān] (every day),” “每分钟 [měi fēn zhōng] (every minute),” “每秒 [měi miǎo] (every second).”

The quantifier “个 [gè] (each)” is flexible in connecting “每 [měi] (every)” with “月 [yuè] (month),” “星期 [xīng qī] (week),” “小时 [xiǎo shí] (hour)” and “人 [rén] (person).” Here are examples: “每个月(每月) [měi gè yuè (měi yuè)] (every month),” “每个星期(每星期) [měi gè xīng qī (měi xīng qī)] (every week),” “每小时(每小时) [měi gè xiǎo shí (měi xiǎo shí)] (every hour).” Besides, “钟头 [zhōng tóu] (hour)” can substitute “小时 [xiǎo shí] (hour)” in the expression of “每小时 [měi gè xiǎo shí] (every hour),” like “每个钟头 [měi gè zhōng tóu] (every hour)” but not in “每小时 [měi xiǎo shí] (every hour),” like “\*每钟头 [měi zhōng tóu].”

## 3 Flexible use of “各 [gè] (each)”

“各 [gè] (each)” can stand alone and also can be connected with a noun under some conditions.

Here are some examples of “各 [gè] (each)” used independently in sentences.

Example 13 血液是由什么构成的？各有什么功能？[xuè yè shì yóu shén me gòu chéng de? gè yǒu shén me gōng néng?]

(What are the constituents in blood? And what are the functions?)

Example 14 既然我们不能继续合作下去，就各走各的路吧。[jì rán wǒ men bù néng jì xù hé zuò xià qù, jiù gè zǒu gè de lù ba.]  
(Since we can't continue our cooperation, then let us finish it separately.)

“各 [gè] (each)” can be directly connected with a monosyllabic noun, such as “各国 [gè guó] (each country),” “各省 [gè shěng] (each province),” “各县 [gè xiàn] (each county),” “各地 [gè dì] (each region).” Also it can be connected with a disyllabic noun with a quantifier or not, such as “各民族 [gè mín zú] (each nationality),” “各部门 [gè bù mén] (each department),” “各单位 [gè dān wèi] (each unit),” “各工厂 [gè gōng chǎng] (each factory).” From these examples, it can be seen that these nouns are names of organizations or institutions. Moreover, “人 [rén] (person)” can connect “各 [gè] (each)” to form the phrase “各人 [gè rén] (each person).”

Example 15 交通部要求铁路各部门、各单位必须把安全工作放在第一位。[jiāo tōng bù yāo qiú tiě lù gè bù mén, gè dān wèi bì xū bǎ ān quán gōng zuò fàng zài dì yī wèi.]  
(The Ministry of Communications has required all the railway departments and units pay the greatest attention to safety.)

Example 16 他每到一处，各地的报纸都欢迎这位新闻界老前辈的到来。[tā měi dào yī chù, gè dì de bào zhǐ dōu huān yíng zhè wèi xīn wén jiè lǎo qián bèi de dào lái.]  
(Wherever he went, the local newspapers welcomed this old-timer of journalism.)

Example 17 各级领导干部要树立安全第一的思想。[gè jí lǐng dǎo gàn bù yào shù lì ān quán dì yī de sī xiǎng.]  
(The leading cadres at all levels should put safety in the most important position.)

Some nouns cannot be connected with “各 [gè] (each)” directly, only if there is a quantifier in the middle. Such quantifiers are very limited in Chinese. They are “个 [gè] (each),” “种 [zhǒng] (kind),” “样 [yàng] (type),” “位 [wèi],” “条 [tiáo] (item),” “类 [lèi] (sort),” “门 [mén] (sort),” “届 [jiè] (period),” “项 [xiàng] (item),” “级 [jí] (level),” 界 [jiè] (circle).”

Example 18 人们可以利用各种手段来确定鱼群的动向，发出鱼情预报，指导安排捕捞作业。[rén men kě yǐ lì yòng gè zhǒng shǒu duàn lái què dìng yú qún de dòng xiàng, fā chū yú qíng yù bào, zhǐ dǎo ān pái bǔ lǎo zuò yè.]  
(People can use a variety of means to seek the movement of fish, to forecast the fish situation, and to guide the arrangement of fishing operations.)

Example 19 我住过各式各样的房屋，交过各式各样的房东朋友。[wǒ zhù guò gè shì gè yàng de fáng wū, jiāo guò gè shì gè yàng de fáng dōng péng yǒu.]

(I've lived in all kinds of houses and made friends with all kinds of landlords.)

Example 20 各行各业的专家对自己业务上的事情都非常敏感。[gè háng gè yè de zhuān jiā duì zì jǐ yè wù shàng de shì qíng dōu fēi cháng mǐn gǎn.] (Experts in all walks of life have keen sight to the affairs of their own business.)

#### 4 To modify verb

Both “每 [měi] (every)” and “各 [gè] (each)” can modify verbs independently.

Example 21 每到夏天，他就去北方旅行。[měi dào xià tiān, tā jiù qù běi fāng lǚ xíng.]

(Every summer, he travels north.)

Example 22 每当我遇到困难的时候，我就想到了你。[měi dāng wǒ yù dào kùn nán de shí hòu, wǒ jiù xiǎng dào le nǐ.]

(Whenever I meet with difficulties, I will think of you.)

Example 23 我们每前进一步，都要付出一定的代价。[wǒ men měi qián jìn yī bù, dōu yào fù chū yī dìng de dài jià.]

(Every step forward has a price to pay.)

Example 24 每逢节日和双休日，小程都去小许家陪伴她，照顾她。[měi féng jié rì hé shuāng xiū rì, Xiǎo Chéng dōu qù Xiǎo Xǔ jiā péi bàn tā, zhào gù tā.]

(On holidays and weekends, Xiao Cheng goes to Xiao Xu's home to accompany her and take care of her.)

Example 25 桂林、杭州各有特点。[guì lín, háng zhōu gè yǒu tè diǎn.]

(Guilin and Hangzhou have their own characteristics.)

## II. 某 [mǒu] (certain)

### 1 Referring to a certain person or thing when connected with a noun

“某 [mǒu] (certain)” in front of a noun refers to a certain person or thing that the speaker is unwilling to mention, or that is unnecessary or impossible to point out.

Example 26 代表团已于昨晚乘专机前往我国西北某地参观访问。[dài biǎo tuán yǐ yú zuó wǎn chéng zhuān jī qián wǎng wǒ guó xī běi mǒu de cān guān fǎng wèn.]

(The delegation left by a private plane for a visit to a certain place in the northwest of China last night.)

Example 27 我国石油工人又在华北某省发现了一个大油田。[wǒ guó shí yóu gōng rén yòu zài huá běi mǒu shěng fā xiàn le yī gè dà yóu tián.]



(Chinese oil workers have discovered another large oil field in a certain province of North China.)

Example 28 几年前，这位学者曾在某大学作过两次学术报告。[jǐ nián qián, zhè wèi xué zhě céng zài mǒu dà xué zuò guò liǎng cì xué shù bào gào.]

(A few years ago, the scholar gave two academic lectures in a certain university.)

Example 29 这个地区在某年某月某日曾发生过一次大地震。[zhè gè dì qū zài mǒu nián mǒu yuè mǒu rì céng fā shēng guò yī cì dà dì zhèn.]

(There once was a big earthquake in this area on a certain day.)

“某 [mǒu] (certain)” can be overlapped, such as “某某单位 [mǒu mǒu dān wèi] (a certain unit),” “某某学校 [mǒu mǒu xué xiào] (a certain school).” Sometimes, there can be a quantifier between “某 [mǒu] (certain)” and a noun, such as “某种原因 [mǒu zhǒng yuán yīn] (a certain reason),” “某项规定 [mǒu xiàng guī dìng] (a certain rule),” “某个事件 [mǒu gè shì jiàn] (a certain event).”

Also, “某 [mǒu] (certain)” can be connected with the indefinite quantifier “些 [xiē] (some).”

Example 30 这个工厂的某些产品的质量有了明显提高。[zhè gè gōng chǎng de mǒu xiē chǎn pǐn de zhì liàng yǒu le míng xiǎn tí gāo.]

(The quality of certain products in this factory has markedly improved.)

Example 31 社会上某些腐败现象虽说是个别的，但是不可饶恕的。[shè huì shàng mǒu xiē fǔ bài xiàn xiàng suī shuō shì gè bié de, dàn shì bù kě ráo shù de.]

(Certain corruption in society cannot be unforgivable, although it doesn't occur frequently.)

Or, “某 [mǒu] (certain)” can be followed by a numeral or a numeral-quantifier phrase.

Example 32 他讲课两眼向上翻，看的好像是天花板上的某一块地方。[tā jiǎng kè liǎng yǎn xiàng shàng fān, kàn de hǎo xiàng shì tiān huā bǎn shàng de mǒu yī kuài dì fang.]

(He looked up as if he were looking somewhere on the ceiling when he was giving a lecture.)

Example 33 对某一种花的喜爱，与各人心中的感触有关系。[duì mǒu yī zhǒng huā de xǐ ài, yǔ gè rén xīn zhōng de gǎn chù yǒu guān xì.]

(The affection for a certain kind of flower results from the feeling of the flower lover.)

## 2 Referring to an uncertain person or thing when connected with a noun

Such use is only common in the written language.

Example 34 这个故事发生在南方的某个县城[zhè gè gù shì fā shēng zài nán fāng de mǒu gè xiàn chéng.]

(The story took place in a certain county in the south.)

Example 35 在实验中，如发生某种不正常现象，请保持镇静。[zài shí yàn zhōng, rú fā shēng mǒu zhǒng bú zhèng cháng xiàn xiàng, qǐng bǎo chí zhèn jìng.]

(If a certain abnormal phenomenon happens during the experiment, please keep calm.)

Example 36 某班有学生五十人，男生三十人，问女生有多少？[mǒu bān yǒu xué shēng wǔ shí rén, nán shēng sān shí rén, wèn nǚ shēng yǒu duō shǎo?]

(There are fifty students in a certain class. Among them, thirty are boys and how many girls are left?)

Or “某 [mǒu] (certain)” indicates a form of addressing oneself.

Example 37 我张某向来视荣华富贵如粪土。[wǒ zhāng mǒu xiàng lái shì róng huá fù guì rú fèn tǔ.]

(I, as Mr. Zhang, always see glory and rank as nothing.)

Example 38 我王某绝不会背信弃义，出卖朋友。[wǒ wáng mǒu jué bú huì bèi xìn qì yì, chū mài péng yǒu.]

(I, as Mr. Wang, will never break faith and betray a friend.)

Such a use frequently occurs in the conversational setting, carrying a sense of self-assurance.

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## 4 Numerals and quantifiers

A numeral is a word representing a number; a quantifier is a word indicating a unit of quantity for things or behaviors. They are often used together in Chinese.

### Section one: numerals

Numerals consist of cardinal numbers and ordinal numbers, the former of which include integers, fractions, decimals, and multiples.

#### I. Numeration of integers

A cardinal number refers to a number value. It consists of a coefficient word and a digital word in Chinese. The coefficient words of an integer include: 零 [líng] (zero), 一 [yī] (one), 二 [èr] (two), 三 [sān] (three), 四 [sì] (four), 五 [wǔ] (five), 六 [liù] (six), 七 [qī] (seven), 八 [bā] (eight), 九 [jiǔ] (nine), 十 [shí] (ten), and 两 [liǎng] (two). The digital words of an integer include: 个 [gè] (a single digit), 十 [shí] (ten), 百 [bǎi] (hundred), 千 [qiān] (thousand), 万 [wàn] (ten thousand), 十万 [shí wàn] (one hundred thousand), 百万 [bǎi wàn] (million), 千万 [qiān wàn] (ten million), 亿 [yì] (one hundred million). In Chinese, a number less than ten thousand is represented with the decimal system. For example, ten “十 [shí] (ten)” is equal to “百 [bǎi] (a hundred)”;

ten “百 [bǎi] (hundred)” is equal to “千 [qiān] (a thousand)”;

ten “千 [qiān] (thousand)” is equal to “万 [wàn] (ten thousand).”

“亿 [yì] (one hundred million)” is made of ten thousand “万 [wàn] (ten thousand).”

The number less than ten (including ten itself) is numerated by a coefficient word. For example, 5 is read as “五 [wǔ] (five)”;

8 is read as “八 [bā] (eight)”;

10 is read as “十 [shí] (ten).”

A number larger than ten is numerated by the combination of a coefficient word in front and a digital word in the rear. For example:

3	5	1	2	6	(coefficient words)
万	千	百	十	(个)	(digital words)

This example is numerated as “三万五千一百二十六 [sān wàn wǔ qiān yī bǎi èr shí liù] (35126).” “个 [gè] (a single digit)” in the example says two facts. One

is that “个 [gè] (a single digit)” is omitted in reading; the other is that “6” has a position in the entire number but it has no digital word here in numeration.

The relationship among these coefficient words and digital words are shown in the following:

3(coefficients word)×万 [wàn] (digital word)+5(coefficients word)×千 [qiān]  
(digital word)+1(coefficients word)×百 [bǎi] (digital word)+2(coefficients  
word)×十 [shí] (digital word)+6(coefficients word)×(no digital  
word)

More examples are illustrated as follows:

13:  $1 \times 10 + 3$  十三 [shí sān]

22:  $2 \times 10 + 2$  二十二 [èr shí èr]

364:  $3 \times 100 + 6 \times 10 + 4$  三百六十四 [sān bǎi liù shí sì]

7212:  $7 \times 1000 + 2 \times 100 + 1 \times 10 + 2$  七千二百一十二 [qī qiān èr bǎi yī shí èr]

83651:  $8 \times 10000 + 4 \times 1000 + 6 \times 100 + 5 \times 10 + 1$  八万三千六百五十一 [bā wàn sān qiān liù bǎi wǔ shí yī]

“万 [wàn] (ten thousand)” is usually taken as a unit for the number larger than “万 [wàn] (ten thousand)” in numeration. The digital words less or larger than “万” are still numerated as their own Chinese pronunciations, instead of being read as “十万 [shí wàn] (one hundred thousand),” “百万 [bǎi wàn] (million),” or “千万 [qiān wàn] (ten million).” For example:

3    7    8    6    4    2    1    6  
千   百   十   万   千   百   十

The above example should be read as 三千七百八十六万四千二百一十六: [sān qiān qī bǎi bā shí liù wàn sì qiān èr bǎi yī shí liù] (37864216).

The number larger than “亿 [yì] (a hundred million)” takes “亿 [yì] (a hundred million)” as the unit, similar to “万 [wàn] (ten thousand)” as the unit in numeration. For example:

3    5    6    7    4    3    2    1    3    3    1    9  
千   百   十   亿   千   百   十   万   千   百   十

This example should be read as 三千五百六十七亿四千三百二十一万三千三百一十九 [sān qiān wǔ bǎi liù shí qī yì sì qiān sān bǎi èr shí yī wàn sān qiān sān bǎi yī shí jiǔ] (356743213319).

A Chinese number takes a four-digital degree in numeration.

A four-digital degree: X千 [qiān] X百 [bǎi] X十 [shí] X亿 [yì]

A four-digital degree: X千 [qiān] X百 [bǎi] X十 [shí] X万 [wàn]

A four-digital degree: X千 [qiān] X百 [bǎi] X十 [shí] X个 [gè]

Thus it can be seen that numeration in Chinese is strictly regulated. For the sake of convenience, a number can be numerated from the leftmost unit to the rightmost unit, with a comma to divide each four-digital degree in a sequence of “(个) [gè] (a single digit),” “万 [wàn] (ten thousand),” “亿 [yì] (a hundred million).” For example:

3216,9473 (三千二百一十六万九千四百七十三) [sān qiān èr bǎi yī shí liù wàn jiù qiān sì bǎi qī shí sān]  
 138,8612,3116 (一百三十八亿八千六百一十二万三千一百一十六) [yī bǎi sān shí bā yì bā qiān liù bǎi yī shí èr wàn sān qiān yī bǎi yī shí liù]

Some special numerals in numeration are as follows:

First, for “11–19,” the number “1/一 [yī] (one)” is often omitted in reading. For example, “18” should be read as “十八 [shí bā] (eighteen)” rather than “一十八 [yī shí bā] (eighteen).” However, if “1/一 [yī] (one)” follows a certain digital word or appears in a series of numbers, it should be read out. For instance, 1315 (一千三百一十五) [yī qiān sān bǎi yī shí wǔ] and 123112 (十二万三千一百一十二) [shí èr wàn sān qiān yī bǎi yī shí èr].

Second, if some “0s” (no coefficient word before the digital word) appear inside a series of numbers, they are supposed to be replaced by one “零 [líng] (zero)” in reading. One thing to be noticed is that “万 [wàn] (ten thousand)” and “亿 [yì] (a hundred million)” as the units should be read out. For example, “1800,0000,0021” is read as “一千八亿零二十一 [yī qiān bā bǎi yì líng èr shí yī]”; “3003” as “三千零三 [sān qiān líng sān]”; “5,8012” as “五万八千零一十二 [wǔ wàn bā qiān líng yī shí èr]”; 6050,0099 as 六千零五十万零九十九 [liù qiān líng wǔ shí wàn líng jiù shí jiǔ].

Third, if “0” appears at the end of a series of numbers, no matter how many “0s” there are, they can be omitted in reading, except for “亿 [yì] (a hundred million)” and “万 [wàn] (ten thousand).” For example, “360” is read as “三百六(十) [sān bǎi liù (shí)]”; “3500” as “三千五(百) [sān qiān wǔ (bǎi)]”; “2,0400,0000” as “两亿(零)四百万 [liǎng yì (líng) sì bǎi wàn].”

## II. Numeration of fractions, decimals, and multiples

### 1. Fractions

The first “~” in “~分之 [fèn zhī]~” refers to the denominator and the second “~” in “~分之~” refers to the numerator. “2/3” is numerated as “三分之二 [sān fèn zhī èr].” If there is an integer in the front of a fraction, such as “3又4/25 [3 yòu 4/25],” it is numerated as “三又二十五分之四 [sān yòu èr shí wǔ fèn zhī sì] (3 and 4/25).”

If the denominator is 100, it is numerated as “百分之 [bǎi fèn zhī]~(%)” For example, 70% is read as “百分之七十 [bǎi fèn zhī qī shí] (%)”; “201%” as “百分之二百零一 [bǎi fèn zhī èr bǎi líng yī].”

If the denominator is 1000, it is numerated as “千分之 [qiān fèn zhī]~(‰).” For example, 10‰ is read as “千分之十 [qiān fèn zhī shí wǔ],” 5‰ is read as “千分之五 [qiān fèn zhī wǔ].”

“分 [fèn]” or “成 [chéng]” refers to “十分之一 [shí fèn zhī yī] (1/10).” For example, “三分(利息) [sān fèn (lì xī)]” means “十分之三(的利息) [shí fèn zhī sān (de lì xī)] (3/10)”; for example, “今年的蔬菜比去年增加了三成。 [jīn nián de shū cài bǐ qù nián zēng jiā le sān chéng.] (The vegetable yield of this year is 30% more than that of last year.),” in which “三成 [sān chéng]” means that “十分之三 [shí fèn zhī sān] (3/10).”

## 2. Decimals

“.” in a decimal is read as “点 [diǎn] (point).” The numbers after “.” are simply numerated with coefficient words; the numbers before can be either numerated routinely or represented simply with coefficient words. For example, “0.6” is read as “零点六 [líng diǎn liù]”; “3.1416” as “三点一四一六 [sān diǎn yī sì yī liù]”; “138.45” as “一百三十八点四五 [yī bǎi sān shí bā diǎn sì wǔ]” or “一三八点四五 [yī sān bā diǎn sì wǔ].”

## 3. Multiples

A multiple is numerated by being added to a quantifier “倍 [bèi] (times),” implying “more than” or “increasing” such as “(34 is two times of 17.)” There is one thing to be notice. “是 . . . ~倍 [shì . . . ~bèi]” is different from “增加了~倍 [zēng jiā le ~bèi].” The former indicates “ $A \div B = \sim$ times”; the latter means “ $(A-B) \div B = \sim$ times.” For example, the output of last year in a certain factory was 2000, 0000 tons and the output of this year is 6000, 0000 tons. Thus it can be said that the output of this year is 3 times of that in the last year, or the output of this year increases two times than that of last year.

Generally speaking, a multiple is not qualified for “less/fewer than” or “decreasing,” but a fraction is. For example, when a father is 36 years old and his son is 12 years old, it is allowed to say that the age of the son is 1/3 of his father’s. For another example, there were 3000 students in the school and this year there are 2000. Consequently, the number of students of this year is 2/3 of that of last year, or the students of this year decreased 1/3 of that of last year.

## III. Approximate numbers

An approximate number is expressed when the speaker is unclear about or unwilling, or even doesn’t think it is necessary, to mention a concrete number. There are several ways of expressing an approximate number.

### 1 To connect two contiguous numbers together

These numbers are usually coefficient words with the smaller one in front and the bigger one in the rear, such as “八九千 [bā jiǔ qiān] (around eight or nine thousand),” “七八岁 [qī bā suì] (about seven or eight years old).” There are two ways to use “两 [liǎng] (two)” and “三 [sān] (three)” to express an approximate

number. One is “两三 [liǎng sān] (two or three),” such as “两三天 [liǎng sān tiān] (about two or three days)” and “两三千人 [liǎng sān qiān rén] (around two or three thousand people);” the other is “三两 [sān liǎng] (three or two),” which is only confined to the expression of “三两天 [sān liǎng tiān] (about two or three days),” indicating “few,” “九 [jiǔ] (nine),” and “十 [shí] (ten)” cannot be used in such a way, though they are neighbors. This is an exception.

“三 [sān] (three)” and “五 [wǔ] (five)” can be, although they are discontinuous coefficient words, connected as an approximate number, such as “来了三五百人 [lái le sān wǔ bǎi rén] (around three or five hundred people coming),” “去三五天就回来 [qù sān wǔ tiān jiù huí lái] (coming back in three or five days).”

## 2 To add some words or phrases for approximation

These words or phrases always carry a sense of approximation, such as “来 [lái] (around),” “多 [duō] (around),” “把 [bǎ] (around),” “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (around),” “前后 [qián hòu] (around),” “上下 [shàng xià] (around).”

### (1) [来] [lái] (around)

“来 [lái] (around)” indicates a number closer to the numeral before it, more or less, but not too much. This numeral is only confined to an integer. For example, “十来个 [shí lái gè] (around ten)” refers to a number between 8 or 9 and 11 or 12. “一百来个 [yī bǎi lái gè] (around one hundred)” means several ones more or fewer than one hundred. There is something more about “来 [lái] (around).”

First, “来 [lái] (around)” limits the meaning of the entire numeral-quantifier phrase, if following a quantifier. For example, “来 [lái] (around)” in “十斤来肉 [shí jīn lái ròu] (around ten catties of meat)” indicates one or two liang (50g) more or fewer than 10 catties. If “来 [lái] (around)” is in the middle of this phrase, such as “十来斤肉 [shí lái jīn ròu],” it only limits the numeral in front of it, expressing a weight from 8 or 9 catties to 11 or 12 catties.

Second, the category of noun quantifier decides where “来 [lái] (around)” should be put. There are two categories of noun quantifier. One indicates a continuous quantity that can be subdivided into smaller units, such as “斤 [jīn] (catty),” “两 [liǎng] (liang),” “尺 [chǐ] (a unit of length equal to 1/3 meter),” “寸 [cùn] (a unit of length equal to 1/3 centimeters)” as measurement units; “年 [nián] (year),” “月 [yuè] (month),” “天 [tiān] (day)” as time units; and “连 [lián] (company),” “排 [pái] (platoon),” “班 [bān] (squad)” as names of organizations or institutions. For instance, “一斤有十两。 [yī jīn yǒu shí liǎng.] (There are ten liang in a catty.)” and “一年有十二个月。 [yī nián yǒu shí èr gè yuè.] (There are twelve months in a year.)” The other category refers to a discontinuous quantity which cannot be further divided, represented by an individual quantifier, such as “个 [gè],” “只 [zhī],” “把 [bǎ].” When “来 [lái] (around)” is connected with the quantifier for a continuous quantity, there are two forms: A form and B form.

A form is “numeral+‘来 [lái] (around)’+quantifier/noun.” Here are examples: “五十来里(路) [wǔ shí lái lǐ (lù)] (around fifty miles),” “三百来斤(米) [sān bǎi

lái jīn (mǐ)] (around three hundred catties of rice),” “四千来尺(布) [sì qiān lái chǐ (bù)] (around four thousand chi of cloth),” “三十来年(时间) [sān shí lái nián (shí jiān)] (around thirty years).” The numeral in this form is only limited among the numbers ending with “0,” such as 10, 20, 100.

B form is “numeral+quantifier+‘来 [lái] (around)’+noun.” Here are examples: “五里来路 [wǔ lǐ lái lù] (around five miles),” “六斤来肉 [liù jīn lái ròu] (around six catties of meat),” “十尺来布 [shí chǐ lái bù] (around ten chi of cloth).” The numeral in this form is only limited among the numbers ending with 1, 2, . . . 9, and 10.

The noun in A form can be omitted. The numerals in B form are mainly from 1 to 10. Sometime the number above 10 can be used in this form. For example, the sentence “二十五里来路，一会儿就到了。[èr shí wǔ lǐ lái lù, yī huì er jiù dào le.] (It is around twenty-five miles and it will be there soon.)” is correct but rarely used in reality. When the numeral is 10, there are two positions for “来 [lái] (around),” such as “十来斤米 [shí lái jīn mǐ] (around ten catties of rice)” and “十斤来米 [shí jīn lái mǐ] (around ten catties of rice).” They differ in meaning, as what has been mentioned before in B form earlier.

“来 [lái] (around)” can only be put after numeral when connected with a discontinuous quantifier. This numeral as mentioned in A form usually ends with “0.” Here are examples: “十来个人 [shí lái gè (rén)] (around ten persons),” “三十来本(书) [sān shí lái běn (shū)] (around thirty books),” “三千来棵(树) [sān qiān lái kē (shù)] (around three thousand trees).” Here, the nouns can be omitted.

Third, when the number is above “十万 [shí wàn] (a hundred thousand),” “来 [lái] (around)” is unnecessarily required after “万 [wàn] (ten thousand)” and “亿 [yì] (a hundred million).” Therefore, it is not right to say “一百三十万来人 [yī bǎi sān shí wàn lái rén] (around 1.3 million people)” or “十二亿来人口 [shí èr yì lái rén kǒu] (around 1.2 billion people).” Before “万 [wàn] (ten thousand)” or “亿 [yì] (a hundred million),” “来 [lái] (around)” is required, such as “一百三十来万人 [yī bǎi sān shí lái wàn rén] (around 1.3 million people)” and “十来亿美元 [shí lái yì měi yuán] (around a billion dollars).”

Fourth, “来 [lái] (around)” is frequently used in the spoken form.

## (2) [多] [duō] (over)

“多 [duō] (over)” refers to a number more than what the numeral indicates in front of it, such as “二十多个人 [èr shí duō gè (rén)] (over 20 people)” and “五百多斤(米) [wǔ bǎi duō jīn (mǐ)] (over 500 catties of rice).” “多 [duō] (over)” and “来 [lái] (around)” share identical uses.

## (3) [把] [bǎ]

“把 [bǎ]” shares the same meaning with “来 [lái] (around),” but it can be only put after the digital words “百 [bǎi] (hundred),” “千 [qiān] (thousand),” “万 [wàn] (ten thousand),” and some quantifiers. Although no coefficient word is allowed before a digital word or quantifier, the meaning is identified as “一 [yī] (one).”



For example, “百把人 [bǎi bǎ rén]” means “一百来人 [yī bǎi lái rén] (around 100 persons);” “万把亩地 [wàn bǎ mǔ dì]” means “一万来亩(地) [yī wàn lái mǔ (dì)] (a land around 10000 mu).” “个把人 [gè bǎ rén]” refers to “一两个人 [yī liǎng gè rén] (around one or two persons),” implying a few people; “个把月 [gè bǎ yuè]” refers to “一个来月 [yī gè lái yuè] (around one month),” referring to a short period of time.

“来 [lái] (around)” is common in the north of Chinese and “把 [bǎ]” is popular in the south.

#### (4) [左右] [zuǒ yòu] (about)

Usually put after a numeral-quantifier phrase, “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (about)” indicates a number very close to an actual number value, a little bit more or less than it, such as “一年左右 [yī nián zuǒ yòu] (about a year),” “三天左右 [sān tiān zuǒ yòu] (about three days),” “十五个左右 [shí wǔ gè zuǒ yòu] (about fifteen).” When the number is above 10 for age or date in a certain context, it can be followed by “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (about)” with the quantifier omitted, such as “十五(岁)左右 [shí wǔ (suì) zuǒ yòu] (about fifteen years old)” and “二十(号)左右 [èr shí (hào) zuǒ yòu] (around the day of the twentieth).” “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (about)” for the approximate time can refer to either a time point or a time period, such as “十二点左右 [shí èr diǎn zuǒ yòu] (about 12 o’clock)” and “三天左右 [sān tiān zuǒ yòu] (about 3 days).” The time words followed by “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (about)” are only limited among numeral-quantifier phrases, instead of nouns. Thus, it is not proper to say “\*春节左右 [chūn jié zuǒ yòu]” or “\*天亮左右 [tiān liàng zuǒ yòu].”

#### (5) [前后] [qián hòu] (around)

“前后 [qián hòu] (around)” only refers to an approximate number for a time point, so it is improper to say “\*三天前后 [sān tiān qián hòu].” Except for those similarities to “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (about)” in use, “前后 [qián hòu] (around)” can be put after the noun for time, such as “春节前后 [chūn jié qián hòu] (around the Spring Festival),” “停战前后 [tíng zhàn qián hòu] (around before and after the armistice).” It is rarely used after a numeral-quantifier phrase, thus “十号前后 [shí hào qián hòu] (around the day of the tenth)” is admitted but “\*星期一前后 [xīng qī yī qián hòu]” or “\*五月前后 [wǔ yuè qián hòu]” is not acceptable.

#### (6) [上下] [shàng xià] (about)

“上下 [shàng xià] (about)” is basically similar to “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (about)” in meaning as well as in use, but they refer to different scopes. With a narrow scope, “上下 [shàng xià] (about)” is for an approximate age of an adult, such as “二十(岁)上下 [èr shí (suì) shàng xià] (about 20 years old)” or “七十(岁)上下 [qī shí (suì) shàng xià] (about 70 years old),” rather than “\*五岁上下 [wǔ suì shàng xià]”; “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (about)” is qualified for the quantifiers in various scopes, that is to say, it is proper for different ages.

## (7) [以上] [yǐ shàng] (over)

Used after a numeral or numeral-quantifier phrase, it refers to an approximate number which is bigger than what the numeral indicates. It is basically similar to “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (about)” in use, such as “一年以上(的时间) [yī nián yǐ shàng (de shí jiān)] (over one year)” and “一万(人)以上 [yī wàn (rén) yǐ shàng] (over 10000 persons).” Sometimes, it performs a limitation instead of an approximation. For example, “十六岁以上的公民有选举权。[shí liù suì yǐ shàng de gōng mín yǒu xuǎn jǔ quán.] (Citizens of over sixteen have the right to vote.)” means “十六岁和超过十六岁的公民都有选举权。[shí liù suì hé chāo guò shí liù suì de gōng mín dōu yǒu xuǎn jǔ quán.] (All citizens of sixteen and over have the right to vote.)” Usually, “~以上 [~yǐ shàng]” includes “~,” such as “二十岁以上的青年 [èr shí suì yǐ shàng de qīng nián] (young people over twenty years old),” which includes “二十岁的青年 [èr shí suì de qīng nián] (young men of twenty).” “满~的 [mǎn ~de]” is frequently in official documents.

## (8) [以下] [yǐ xià] (under)

“以下 [yǐ xià] (under)” refers to an approximate number which is smaller than what the numeral indicates, similar to “以上 [yǐ shàng] (over)” in use. “~以下 [~yǐ xià]” doesn’t include “~.” Usually, “二十岁以下的青年 [èr shí suì yǐ xià de qīng nián] (young persons under the age of twenty)” excludes “二十岁的青年 [èr shí suì de qīng nián] (young men of twenty).” “不足~的 [bù zú ~de]” is frequently in the official documents.

## (9) [成] [chéng]

“成 [chéng]” is only confined to the digital words above a hundred. It implies a number value big enough to approach a larger unit. For example, “成千的人 [chéng qiān de rén]” means there is a large number of people that they can be counted by the unit of “thousand.” Also, “成 [chéng]” can be borrowed and put before a quantifier and quasi-quantifier, such as “成车地往外拉 [chéng chē de wǎng wài lā] (pulling out by carload)” and “成年地劳动 [chéng nián de láo dòng] (year-round labor).” It can be used before “倍 [bèi] (times),” such as “成倍地增长 [chéng bèi de zēng zhǎng] (to increase by times).”

## (10) [上] [shàng] (over)

Also, “上 [shàng] (over)” is only for the digital words over a hundred, carrying a meaning that “bigger/larger to . . .” For example, “上万(的)人 [shàng wàn (de) rén] (over tens of thousands of people)” means that the number of people approaches is more than ten thousand. Here are more examples: “上百辆(的)车 [shàng bǎi liàng (de) chē] (over a hundred cars)” and “上千亩(的)地 [shàng qiān mǔ (de) dì] (over thousands of acres).” Inside of them, “的 [de]” emphasizes the large number further.

## (11) [近] [jìn] (nearly)

Used before a numeral-quantifier phrase, it means “it approaches but has not reached . . .” Although it is qualified for many quantifiers, it implies a big/large number, such as “近千人 [jìn qiān rén] (nearly one thousand people),” “近五亿元 [jìn wǔ yì yuán] (nearly five hundred million yuan),” “近三年的时间 [jìn sān nián de shí jiān] (nearly three years).”

## (12) [约] [yuē] (about)

Used before a numeral-quantifier phrase, it implies a small difference from what the phrase indicates in number value. It is very similar to “左右 [zuǒ yòu] (about)” in use. “约 [yuē] (about)” is qualified for a large scope of numerals and quantifiers, such as “约三天时间 [yuē sān tiān shí jiān] (about three days)” and “约十人 [yuē shí rén] (about ten persons).”

Comparatively speaking, “来 [lái] (about),” “把 [bǎ] (about),” “成 [chéng] (over),” “上 [shàng] (over)” are more oral than “左右 [zuǒ yòu zuǒ yòu] (about),” “上下 [shàng xià] (around),” “以上 [yǐ shàng] (over),” “以下 [yǐ xià] (under),” “近 [jìn] (nearly),” “约 [yuē] (about).”

## 3 Flexible use of “几 [jǐ] (how many)” and “两 [liǎng] (two)”

## (1) [几] [jǐ] (how many)

“几 [jǐ] (how many)” is an interrogative pronoun but sometimes it functions as an approximate number, such as “你去拿几本书来。[nǐ qù nà jǐ běn shū lái.] (Fetch some books.),” “我还有几个字没写完。[wǒ hái yǒu jǐ gè zì méi xiě wán.] (I have a few words left to write).” The number value referred by “几 [jǐ] (how many)” is less than “10.” But it is probably intended to be used by the speaker for the sake of politeness or due to other reasons, to decrease the value which is actually larger than “10.” Here are examples: “我没读过几本书，知道的东西很少。[wǒ méi dú guò jǐ běn shū, zhī dào de dōng xī hěn shǎo.] (I haven’t read many books so I don’t know much.)” and “敌人坚持不了几天了。[dí rén jiān chí bù liǎo jǐ tiān le.] (The enemy will not hold out for a few days.)” “几 [jǐ] (how many)” can substitute a coefficient in a series of numbers, referring to an approximate number larger than ten, such as “十几本书 [shí jǐ běn shū] (more than a dozen books),” “几十个人 [jǐ shí gè rén] (dozens of people),” “几百人 [jǐ bǎi rén] (hundreds of people),” “几万人 [jǐ wàn rén] (thousands of people).”

## (2) [两] [liǎng] (two)

“两 [liǎng] (two)” is basically similar to “几 [jǐ] (how many)” in use. For example, “两 [liǎng] (two)” can be substituted with “几 [jǐ] (how many)” in “过两天我再去看你。[guò liǎng tiān wǒ zài qù kàn nǐ.] (I’ll see you in a couple of days.)” and “都八点了，才来这么两个人。[dōu bā diǎn le, cái lái zhè me liǎng gè rén.]

(It's eight o'clock now and why did just a few people come?).” Differently, “两 [liǎng] (two)” is commonly for affirmation while “几 [jǐ] (how many)” is for affirmation and negation. Since “两 [liǎng] (two)” is a coefficient word itself, it cannot replace another one in a series of numbers.

#### IV. Ordinal words

An ordinal word refers to the order of numerals, mainly represented with “第 [dì]+cardinal words,” such as “第一天 [dì yī tiān] (the first day),” “第七名 [dì qī míng] (the seventh place),” “第二十八行 [dì èr shí bā háng] (the 28th line).”

There are some other special cases in which a cardinal word is simply used as an ordinal word.

The cardinal words for year: “1978年” is often read like “一九七八年 [yī jiǔ qī bā nián]” or “一千九百七十八年 [yī qiān jiǔ bǎi qī shí bā nián]”

The cardinal words for month: 一月 [yī yuè]/元月 [yuán yuè] (January), 正月 [zhēng yuè] (January in the lunar calendar), 二月 [èr yuè] (February) . . . 十二月 [shí èr yuè] (December)

The cardinal words for date: 一号 [yī hào] (the 1st day), 二号 [èr hào] (the 2nd day) . . . 三十一号 [sān shí yī hào] (the 31th day). “一号 [yī hào] (the 1st day).” “十号 [shí hào] (the tenth day)” also reads as “初一 [chū yī].” “初十 [chū shí]”

The cardinal words for seniority among brothers and sisters: 大哥 [dà gē] (the eldest brother), 二哥 [èr gē] (the elder brother), 三弟 [sān dì] (the third brother), 大伯 [dà bó] (the eldest uncle), 三叔 . . . [sān shū] (the third uncle), 长子 [zhǎng zǐ] (the eldest son), 次子 [cì zǐ] (the second son), 小儿子 [xiǎo ér zi] (the third son)

The cardinal words for rank: 头等 [tóu děng] (the first-class), 二等 [èr děng] (the second-class), 三等 [sān děng] (the third-class) . . . 末等 [mò děng] (the last-class).

The cardinal words for the number of floors: 一楼 [yī lóu] (the first floor), 二楼(层) [èr lóu (céng)] (the second floor) . . .

The cardinal words for bus shift: 头班车(第一班) [tóu bān chē (dì yī bān)] (the first train/bus), 末班车(最后一班) [mò bān chē (zuì hòu yī bān)] (the last train/bus)

The cardinal words for book volume: 第一卷 [dì yī juàn] (the first volume), 第二卷 . . . [dì èr juàn] (the second volume)

The cardinal words for organization: 一班 [yī bān] (Class One), 二班 [èr bān] (Class Two) . . . , (第)一组 [(dì) yī zǔ] (the first group), (第)二组 [(dì) èr zǔ] (the second group) . . .

If the noun after the cardinal word is multisyllabic, “第 [dì]” is necessary for the sake of balance in pronunciation. Here are examples: “第一教研室 [dì yī jiāo yán shì] (the first teaching section),” “第二机械工业部 [dì èr jī xiè gōng yè bù] (the second ministry of machine building).” “第 [dì]” can be omitted in their short

forms, such as “一教 [yī jiāo] (the first teaching section)” and “二机部 [èr jī bù] (the second ministry of machine building).”

Used after a quantifier, a cardinal word can express the order, which often occurs in the written language. The examples are as follows:

In textbook: 练习一 [liàn xí yī] (Exercise One), 练习二 [liàn xí èr] (Exercise Two) . . .

In works or articles: 图一 [tú yī] (Figure 1), 图二 [tú èr] (Figure 2) . . . , 注一 [zhù yī] (Note 1), 注二 [zhù èr] (Note 2)

In collected books: 卷一 [juàn yī] (Volume one), 卷二 [juàn èr] (Volume two)

Heavenly Stems as the names of ten days of the week in a traditional Chinese calendar can be used for a certain order.

For scores: 甲 [jiǎ] (A), 乙 [yǐ] (B), 丙 [bǐng] (C), 丁 [dīng] (D) . . .

For roles in a play: 甲 [jiǎ] (Player A), 乙 [yǐ] (Player B), 丙 [bǐng] (Player C), 丁 [dīng] (Player D) . . .

For ranks: 甲等 [jiǎ děng]/甲级 [jiǎ jí] (the first-class), 乙等 [yǐ děng]/乙级 [yǐ jí] (the second class) . . .

For organizations: 甲班 [jiǎ bān] (Class One), 乙班 [yǐ bān] (Class Two), 丙班 [bǐng bān] (Class Three), 丁班 [dīng bān] (Class Four) . . .

Earthly Branches as one Chinese system of reckoning time in a traditional Chinese calendar can be used for a certain order, such as “子时 [zǐ shí] (11 p.m. to 1 a.m.), 丑时 [chǒu shí] (1 a.m. to 3 a.m.), 寅时 [yín shí] (3 a.m. to 5 a.m.), 卯时 [mǎo shí] (5 a.m. to 7 a.m.) . . .

Earthly Branches are usually used with Heavenly Stems as a way of numbering years, “甲子年 [jiǎ zǐ nián] (the year of Jia zi), 乙丑年 [yǐ chǒu nián] (the year of Yi Chou), 辛亥年 [xīn hài nián] (the year of Xin Hai), 丙辰年 [bǐng chén nián] (the year of Bin Chen), 甲午年 [jiǎ wǔ nián] (the year of Jia Wu), 辛丑年 [xīn chǒu nián] (the year of Xin Chou).

## V. *Special uses of several numerals*

1 [二] [èr] (two) and [两] [liǎng] (two)

Although both refer to “2,” they differ in use.

(1) Before a quantifier

“二 [èr] (two)” and “两 [liǎng] (two)” are qualified before measurement units, the former of which is commonly used before the traditional Chinese measurement units and the latter of which is more popular before the modern ones. The traditional units include: 分 [fēn] (fen), 亩 [mǔ] (mu), 顷 [qǐng] (qing), 合 [gě]

(he), 升 [shēng] (liter), 斗 [dǒu] (dou), 石 [dàn] (a unit of dry measure for grain), 钱 [qián] (qian), 两 [liǎng] (liang), 斤 [jīn] (catty) and the modern include: “米 [mǐ] (meter), 公里 [gōng lǐ] (kilometer), 公顷 [gōng qǐng] (hectare), 平方米 [píng fāng mǐ] (square meter), 立方米 [lì fāng mǐ] (cubic meter). For instance, 二(两)亩 [èr (liǎng) mǔ] (two liang or mu), 二(两)斤 [èr (liǎng) jīn] (two liang or catties), 两公斤 [liǎng gōng jīn] (two kilos), 两公里 [liǎng gōng lǐ] (two kilometers).

Before the general measurement units, “两 [liǎng] (two)” is more acceptable. For instance, 两件衣服 [liǎng jiàn yī fú] (two articles of clothing), 两个房间 [liǎng gè fáng jiān] (two rooms), 两本书 [liǎng běn shū] (two books).

## (2) Before digital words

Before the digital words less than “10 [shí] (ten)” (including 10 itself), “二 [èr] (two)” is required. It is also commonly accepted when “百 [bǎi] (hundred),” “千 [qiān] (thousand),” “万 [wàn] (ten thousand),” “亿 [yì] (a hundred million)” are among a series of numbers. Before “百 [bǎi] (hundred),” both “二 [èr] (two)” and “两 [liǎng] (two)” can be chosen; only “两 [liǎng] (two)” is frequently used before “千 [qiān] (thousand),” “万 [wàn] (ten thousand),” “亿 [yì] (a hundred million).” Here are examples: “二十 [èr shí] (twenty),” “二(两)百 [èr (liǎng) bǎi] (two liang or hundred),” “两千二百万 [liǎng qiān èr bǎi wàn] (twenty-two million).”

## (3) Used as a single digit of a number

Only “二 [èr] (two)” can be used to numerate the single digits for ordinal words, fractions, decimals, and cardinal words. Here are examples: “第二 [dì èr] (the second),” “二月 [èr yuè] (February),” “零点二 [líng diǎn èr] (0.2),” “二分之一 [èr fēn zhī yī] (1/2),” 一百零二 [yī bǎi líng èr] (102).

## (4) Before “半 [bàn] (half)” and “倍 [bèi] (times)”

“两 [liǎng] (two)” is used before “半 [bàn] (half),” such as “两半儿 [liǎng bàn er] (in half);” before “倍 [bèi] (times),” “两 [liǎng] (two)” and “二 [èr] (two)” are acceptable, such as “两倍 [liǎng bèi] (two times),” “二倍 [èr bèi] (two times).”

## 2 [liǎ] [liǎ] (two)

“俩 [liǎ] (two)” means “两个 [liǎng gè] (two), orally popular in the north of China. “两个 [liǎng gè] (two)” and “俩 [liǎ] (two)” can substitute each other, such as “他们俩 [tā men liǎ] (two of them),” “两人 [liǎng rén] (two persons),” “姐妹俩 [jiě mèi liǎ] (the elder sister and younger sister),” “俩包子 [liǎ bāo zi] (two steamed stuffed buns).” In other words, if either of them is not accepted, the other is not permitted, either. For example, “俩 [liǎ] (two)” is not proper in “\*俩兄弟 [liǎ xiōng dì]” or “\*俩天 [liǎ tiān].”

## 3 [仨] [sā] (three)

“仨 [sā] (three)” means “三个 [sān gè] (three),” which is basically similar to “俩 [liǎ] (two)” in use, but it is as popular as “俩 [liǎ] (two).”

## 4 [半] [bàn] (half)

“半 [bàn] (half)” means 1/2. If there isn't any integer in front, it can be used before a quantifier, such as “半斤 [bàn jīn] (half a catty),” “半个 [bàn gè] (half),” “半尺 [bàn chǐ] (half a chi),” “半天 [bàn tiān] (half a day).” If there is, “半 [bàn] (half)” is put after a quantifier and then is followed by a noun which can be omitted, such as “一斤半(肉) [yī jīn bàn (ròu)] (one and half jin of meat),” “一里半(地) [yī lǐ bàn (dì)] (a distance of one-and-a-half miles),” “两天半 [liǎng tiān bàn] (two-and-a-half days).”

“半 [bàn] (half)” is basically similar to “来 [lái] (around)” or “多 [duō] (over)” in use when it is connected with a numeral or numeral-quantifier phrase.

## 5 [一] [yī] (one)

When “一 [yī] (one)” modifies the object of sentence, it can be omitted, such as “昨天来了个客人。[zuó tiān lái le gè kè rén.] (A visitor came yesterday.)” and “我送你件礼物吧。[wǒ sòng nǐ jiàn lǐ wù ba.] (Let me give you a present.)”

“一 [yī] (one)” can be extended in use in different ways. If so, it doesn't refer to a number any more and its property is changed, also.

## (1) Referring to everyone

“一 [yī] (one)” is similar to “每 [měi] (every)” when referring to everyone. A numeral-quantifier is required after it, such as “一个人三个苹果。[yī gè rén sān gè píng guǒ.] (Three apples for one person.),” “一个人一个想法。[yī gè rén yī gè xiǎng fǎ.] (One person, one idea.)”

## (2) Referring to the whole or the overall

It indicates “满 [mǎn] (whole)” and “整个 [zhěng gè] (overall)” in description. Here are examples: “他跑得一头汗。[tā pǎo dé yī tóu hàn.] (He was sweating after running.),” “一路上车马络绎不绝。[yī lù shàng chē mǎ luò yì bù jué.] (An endless stream of carriages and horses passed along the street.),” “我们一个学期都没有见面。[wǒ men yī gè xué qī dōu méi yǒu jiàn miàn.] (We haven't seen each other for a whole semester.)”

## (3) Used before a verb or adjective

Before a verb or adjective, it usually implies a temporal behavior or change. After it, there might follow another verb phrase or clause. For example, “他一



抬头，看见一个陌生的人。[tā yī tái tóu, kàn jiàn yī gè mò shēng de rén.] (He raised his head and saw a strange man.)” “他把门一关就走了。[tā bǎ mén yī guān jiù zǒu le.] (He shut the door and left.)” “小芳听了脸一红，不再说什么了。[Xiǎo Fāng tīng le liǎn yī hóng, bú zài shuō shén me le.] (Hearing that, Xiao Fang flushed and stopped her talking.)” Usually, the behavior indicated by the verb after “一[yī] (one)” has already happened or finished.

#### (4) Fixed expressions

Some expressions with “一[yī] (one)” are fixed, such as “写一笔好字 [xiě yī bǐ hǎo zì] (good handwriting),” “做一手好活 [zuò yī shǒu hǎo huó] (be good at crafts),” “学了一身本领 [xué le yī shēn běn lǐng] (well-trained).”

### VI. Flexible use of numerals

Instead of indicating the real numbers, some numerals actually imply other meanings related to these numbers. They are as follows:

#### 1 Single numbers

Some single numbers can be used flexibly.

##### (1) [三] [sān] (three)

“三[sān] (three)” suggests “many,” such as “再三斟酌 [zài sān zhēn zhuó] (think over)” and “一问三不知 [yī wèn sān bù zhī] (utterly ignorant).” Or it may suggest “few,” such as “三句话不离本行 [sān jù huà bù lí běn háng] (talk shop all the time)” and “三天打鱼，两天晒网 [sān tiān dǎ yú, liǎng tiān shài wǎng] (go fishing for three days and dry the nets for two).”

##### (2) [九] [jiǔ] (nine)

“九[jiǔ] (nine)” implies “many,” such as “九天云外 [jiǔ tiān yún wài] (beyond the highest heaven)” and “九霄 [jiǔ xiāo] (nine heavens).”

##### (3) [十] [shí] (ten)

“十[shí] (ten)” shows a great variety, such as “十样锦(一种食品) [shí yàng jīn (yī zhǒng shí pǐn)] (Shi Yang Jin, referring to a kind of food),” “十全十美 [shí quán shí měi] (the peak of perfection),” “十全大补丸(一种药) [shí quán dà bǔ wán(yī zhǒng yào)] (herbal tonics).”

##### (4) [百] [bǎi] (hundred)

“百[bǎi] (hundred)” means “many,” such as “百感交集 [bǎi gǎn jiāo jí] (a whirlpool of emotion),” “百病丛生 [bǎi bìng cóng shēng] (all kinds of diseases and ailments break out),” “百废待举 [bǎi fèi dài jǔ] (Everything is waiting to be done.),” “百思不解 [bǎi sī bù jiě] (remaining puzzled after pondering over something),” “百看不厌 [bǎi kàn bú yàn] (never tired of seeing).”



(5) [千] [qiān] (thousand)

“千 [qiān] (thousand)” expresses “many,” such as “千里马 [qiān lǐ mǎ] (a thorough-bred horse),” “千重浪 [qiān chóng làng] (layers of waves).”

(6) [万] [wàn] (ten thousand)

“万 [wàn] (ten thousand)” indicates a great variety, such as “万头攒动 [wàn tóu cuán dòng] (move in a crowd of thousands of people),” “万箭齐发 [wàn jiàn qí fā] (ten thousand arrows shot at once),” “万籁俱寂 [wàn lài jù jì] (all sounds are still).”

2 Combined with other words of different parts of speech

Here are examples for “few/less.”

一知半解 [yī zhī bàn jiě] (have a superficial knowledge of), 一时半会儿 [yī shí bàn huì er] (a little while)

The following examples indicate “frequent.”

三天两头 [sān tiān liǎng tóu] (every two or three days), 接二连三 [jiē èr lián sān] (one after another)

The following examples suggest a derogatory sense.

丢三落四 [diū sān luò sì] (miss this or that), 挑三拣四 [tiāo sān jiǎn sì] (choosy)

The following examples suggest a sense of mass.

乱七八糟 [luàn qī bā zāo] (in a mess), 杂七杂八 [zá qī zá bā] (mixed)

The following examples imply “many/much.”

千疮百孔 [qiān chuāng bǎi kǒng] (in a disastrous state), 千言万语 [qiān yán wàn yǔ] (thousands of words)

The following examples imply a sharp difference.

九死一生 [jiǔ sǐ yī shēng] (be a close shave), 百里挑一 [bǎi lǐ tiāo yī] (only one in a hundred is chosen.)

The flexible use of numerals is often represented with fixed phrases or idioms, thus, it is better to carefully learn them by heart, instead of making them up at random.

## Section two: quantifiers

Quantifiers denote units of quantity for things or behaviors. They are categorized into noun quantifiers and verbal quantifiers.

### I. Noun quantifiers

Noun quantifiers refer to the units of quantity for an amount of something. Except for idioms or some special uses in Chinese, numerals cannot be connected with nouns directly and a quantifier is required to be in the middle.

There are two types of noun quantifiers.

#### 1. Proper noun quantifiers

They can be divided into the following.

##### (1) INDIVIDUAL QUANTIFIERS

As a feature in Chinese, it is also named the classifier (量词 [liàng cí]) for an individual thing. That is to say, nouns for individual things require particular quantifiers appropriate to match with them. There are more than one hundred individual quantifiers in Chinese, among which the following ones are commonly used.

个 [gè], “把 [bǎ],” “张 [zhāng],” “本 [běn],” “间 [jiān],” “根 [gēn],” “件 [jiàn],” “条 [tiáo],” “节 [jié],” “口 [kǒu],” “棵 [kē],” “粒 [lì],” “块 [kuài],” “名 [míng],” “匹 [pǐ],” “篇 [piān],” “首 [shǒu],” “所 [suǒ],” “台 [tái],” “支 [zhī],” “门 [mén],” “样 [yàng],” “项 [xiàng],” “份 [fèn]”

Many individual quantifiers are inherently related with the corresponding nouns. For example, “条 [tiáo]” is usually qualified for something in a long narrow shape, such as “一条带子 [yī tiáo dài zi] (a strip of tape),” “一条路 [yī tiáo lù] (a road).” “张 [zhāng]” is related to something unfolded, such as “一张纸 [yī zhāng zhǐ] (a piece of paper),” “一张床 [yī zhāng chuáng] (a bed).” “颗 [kē]” or “粒 [lì]” is for something small and round, such as “一颗珍珠 [yī kē zhēn zhū] (a pearl),” “一颗子弹 [yī lì zǐ dàn] (a bullet).” “个 [gè]” can be used for a wide scope of individual nouns. Generally speaking, a noun is simply matched with an individual quantifier, such as “把 [bǎ]” for “伞 [sǎn] (umbrella)” and “件 [jiàn]” for “衣服 [yī fú] (clothing).” Sometimes, a noun can share different quantifiers, carrying different implications. For example, the quantifiers for “枪 [qiāng] (gun)” can be “一把(手)枪 [—bǎ (shǒu) qiāng] (a pistol),” “一支(步)枪 [yī zhī (bù) qiāng] (a rifle),” “一杆枪 [yī gǎn qiāng] (a rifle);” the quantifiers for “药 [yào] (medicine)” can be “一粒仁丹 [yī lì rén dān] (a pill of Rendan),” “三丸中药 [sān wán zhōng yào] (three herbal pills),” “一帖膏药 [yī tiē gāo yào] (a piece of plaster);” the quantifiers for “门

[mén] (door)” can be “一扇门 [yī shàn mén] (a door),” “这个门 (this door).” Or sometimes, the different quantifiers for the same noun just differ in language style or due to local practices, rather than the meaning. For example, “一辆汽车 [yī liàng qì chē] (a car)” is common in the north of China while “一部汽车 [yī bù qì chē] (a car)” is popular in the south.

A demonstrative pronoun can be put before an individual quantifier, such as “这张纸 [zhè zhāng zhǐ] (this piece of paper),” “那条河 [nà tiáo hé] (that river).”

Thus it can be seen that learning carefully and patiently is strongly suggested for foreign students, since learning Chinese quantifiers is not easy for them.

#### (2) COLLECTIVE QUANTIFIERS

They are used to represent things numbering more than two, such as “一副对联 [yī fù duì lián] (a duilian couplet),” “一双筷子 [yī shuāng kuài zi] (a pair of chopsticks),” “一套房子 [yī tào fáng zi] (a house).” Also, a demonstrative pronoun can appear before a collective quantifier.

#### (3) MEASUREMENT QUANTIFIERS

They are used as units to calculate weights and measures. For example:

For length: (市)分 [(shì) fēn] (fen), (市)寸 [(shì) cùn] (cun), (市)尺 [(shì) chǐ] (chi), 丈 [zhàng] (zhang), (华)里 [(huá) lǐ] (mile), 厘米(公分) [lí mǐ (gōng fēn)] (centimeter), 米(公尺) [mǐ(gōng chǐ)] (meter), 公里 [gōng lǐ] (kilometer), 海里 [hǎi lǐ] (sea mile)

For capacity: 合 [gě] (ge), 升 [shēng] (liter), 斗 [dǒu] (dou), 公升 [gōng shēng] (liter), 石/十斗 [dàn/shí dǒu] (ten dou)

For weight: 钱 [qián] (qian), (市)两 [(shì) liǎng] (liang), (市)斤 [(shì) jīn] (catty), 克 [kè] (gram), 公斤 [gōng jīn] (kilo), 吨 [dūn] (ton)

For area: 分 [fēn] (fen), 亩 [mǔ] (mu), 顷 [qǐng] (qing), 平方寸 [píng fāng cùn] (square inch), 平方尺 [píng fāng chǐ] (square foot), 平方米 [píng fāng mǐ] (square meter), 公顷 [gōng qǐng] (hectare)

For volume: 立方寸 [lì fāng cùn] (cubic inch), 立方尺 [lì fāng chǐ] (cubic foot), 立方米 [lì fāng mǐ] (cubic meter), 立升 [lì shēng] (cubic liter), 加仑 [jiā lún] (gallon), 品脱 [pǐn tuō] (pint)

#### (4) UNIDENTIFIED QUANTIFIERS

There are two: “些 [xiē] (some)” and “点儿 [diǎn er] (little/few).” Generally, only the numeral “一 [yī] (one)” is qualified before them, such as “一些 [yī xiē] (some)” and “一点儿 [yī diǎn er] (a few/little).” The former means more than what the latter indicates. Also, some pronouns can be put before them, such as “这 [zhè] (this),” “那 [nà] (that),” “这么 [zhè me] (like this),” “那么 [nà me] (like that).” “这么些 [zhè me xiē] (so many/much)” or “那么些 [nà me xiē] (so many/

much)” indicates more in amount; “这么点儿 [zhè me diǎn er] (so few/little)” or “那么点儿 [nà me diǎn er] (so few/little)” refers to less in quantity.

## 1 Use of “(一)些 [(yī) xiē] (some)”

Before a noun, it denotes an unidentified quantity.

Example 1 你去上街买些吃的吧，我饿了。[nǐ qù shàng jiē mǎi xiē chī de ba, wǒ è le.]

(Please go out and buy some food. I'm hungry.)

Example 2 你刚才都说了些什么呀？太没有礼貌了！[nǐ gāng cái dōu shuō le xiē shén me ya? tài méi yǒu lǐ mào le.]

(What did you say just now? It's so rude!)

Example 3 这些书你快拿走吧，放在这儿太碍事了。[zhè xiē shū nǐ kuài ná zǒu ba, fàng zài zhè er tài ài shì le.]

(Take these books away because they're in the way here.)

“好 [hǎo]” can be added before “些 [xiē] (some)” to indicate “many/much,” such as “好些(个)人 [hǎo xiē (gè) rén] (quite a lot of),” “好些(间)房子 [hǎo xiē (jiān) fáng zi] (quite a lot of rooms),” “好些(本)书 [hǎo xiē (běn) shū] (quite a lot of books).” Quantifiers after “些 [xiē] (some)” are usually omitted.<sup>1</sup>

After an adjective or verb, “(一)些 [(yī) xiē] (some)” expresses a degree not very high, such as “他的病好(一)些了。[tā de bìng hǎo (yī) xiē le.] (He feels better now.)” “说话小声些。[shuō huà xiǎo shēng xiē.] (speak in a low voice).” In this case, “(一)点儿 [(yī) diǎn er] (a few/little)” is more frequently used than “(一)些 [(yī) xiē] (some)” in the spoken language.

When referring to a degree, “(一)些 [(yī) xiē] (some)” is also allowed to be used in the comparative sentence.

Example 4 他比我瘦一些。[tā bǐ wǒ shòu yī xiē.]

(He is a little thinner than me.)

Example 5 小张花钱比以前注意一些了。[Xiǎo Zhāng huā qián bǐ yǐ qián zhù yì yī xiē le.]

(Xiao Zhang is more careful with his money than before.)

## 2 Use of “(一)点儿 [(yī) diǎn er] (a few/little)”

Before a noun, it denotes a small amount of something.

Example 6

A: 你刚才上街买什么了？[nǐ gāng cái shàng jiē mǎi shén me le.]  
(What did you buy in the shopping?)

B1: 买了点儿水果。[mǎi le diǎn er shuǐ guǒ] (A few pieces of fruit)

B2: 买了些水果。[mǎi le xiē shuǐ guǒ] (Some fruit)

“(一)点儿 [(yī) diǎn er] (a few/little)” may function in easing up the manner of speaking and make it more polite, when it is used in the imperative sentence or after some volitive auxiliaries, such as “想 [xiǎng] (would like),” “要 [yào] (would like).” “(一)些 [yī xiē] (some)” is not qualified for this use.

Example 7 你喝点儿什么? [nǐ hē diǎn er shén me?]

(What would you like to drink?)

Example 8 我饿了, 想吃点儿什么, 你有吃的吗? [wǒ è le, xiǎng chī diǎn er shén me, nǐ yǒu chī de ma?]

(I'm hungry. I want something to eat. Do you have anything to eat?)

Besides “一 [yī] (one),” “半 [bàn] (half)” is another choice before “点儿 [diǎn er] (a few/little),” implying an amount far less than “一点儿 [yī diǎn er] (a few/little),” such as “你半点儿本事都没有, 还想跟人家比? [nǐ bàn diǎn er běn shì dōu méi yǒu, hái xiǎng gēn rén jiā bǐ?] (You don't have any skills and how could you compete with others?)”

After an adjective or verb, “(一)点儿 [(yī) diǎn er] (a few/little)” denotes a degree of “a little bit,” such as “好(一)点儿了 [hǎo (yī) diǎn er le] (a little bit better),” “多(一)点儿 [duō (yī) diǎn er] (a little bit more),” “高(一)点儿 [gāo (yī) diǎn er] (a little bit higher),” “注意点儿 [zhùyì diǎn er] (be careful),” “小声点儿 [xiǎo shēng diǎn er] (in a low voice).”

In comparison between A and B, “(一)点儿 [(yī) diǎn er] (a few/little)” is supposed to be put after an adjective or stative verb, without “有 [yǒu] (have)” added.

Example 9 你妹妹好像比你高一点儿。[nǐ mèi mèi hǎo xiàng bǐ nǐ gāo yī diǎn er.]

(Your sister seems a little taller than you.)

Example 10 你以后花钱得省一点儿了。[nǐ yǐ hòu huā qián dé shěng yī diǎn er le.]

(You have to cut back a bit.)

Example 11 她们姐儿俩, 我更喜欢妹妹一点儿。[tā men jiě er liǎng, wǒ gèng xǐ huān mèi mèi yī diǎn er.]

(Of the two sisters, I prefer the younger one.)

### 3 Use of “有(一)点儿 [yǒu (yī) diǎn er] (a few/little)”

As mentioned, “(一)点儿 [(yī) diǎn er] (a few/little)” denotes a lower degree in comparison when put after an adjective or stative verb; however, if it is not used for comparison and the adjective implies a negative feeling, “(一)点儿 [(yī) diǎn er] (a few/little)” should be moved to the head of the adjective or stative verb with “有 [yǒu]” added in front, such as “有(一)点儿 . . . [yǒu (yī) diǎn er] (a few/little).”

Example 12 今天有一点儿冷, 你多穿点儿衣服吧。[jīn tiān yǒu yī diǎn er lěng, nǐ duō chuān diǎn er yī fu ba.]

(It's a bit cold today. Put on more clothes.)

Example 13 她好像有点儿不高兴，怎么了？[tā hǎo xiàng yǒu diǎn er bù gāo xìng, zěn me le?]

(She seems a little upset. What's wrong?)

Example 14 我有点儿累了，先走了。[wǒ yǒu diǎn er lèi le, xiān zǒu le.]

(I'm a little tired and I want to leave now.)

Example 15 这个人有点儿不讲理，你不要跟他说了。[zhè gè rén yǒu diǎn er bù jiǎng lǐ, nǐ bú yào gēn tā shuō le.]

(This man is a bit unreasonable, so you'd better stop talking to him.)

Example 16 这儿的灯光有点儿暗，你要注意眼睛。[zhè er de dēng guāng yǒu diǎn er àn, nǐ yào zhù yì yǎn jīng.]

(The light here is a little dim. You should pay attention to your eyes.)

#### (5) QUASI-QUANTIFIERS

Some nouns can be directly connected with numerals with the grammatical functions the same as those of quantifiers. These nouns are named “quasi-quantifiers,” such as “年 [nián] (year),” “天 [tiān] (day),” “小时 [xiǎo shí] (hour),” “分(钟) [fēn (zhōng)] (minute),” “秒 [miǎo] (second),” “国 [guó] (country),” “省 [shěng] (province),” “市 [shì] (city),” “县 [xiàn] (county).” Here are examples with quasi-quantifiers: “三年 [sān nián] (three years),” “五天 [wǔ tiān] (five days),” “一小时 [yī xiǎo shí] (one hour),” “两国 [liǎng guó] (two countries),” “四省 [sì shěng] (four provinces).” If necessary, there could be other nouns after numerals and quasi-quantifiers, such as “三年的时间 [sān nián de shí jiān] (three years),” “五天的工作 [wǔ tiān de gōng zuò] (a five-day work week),” “两县的情况 [liǎng xiàn de qíng kuàng] (conditions of two counties).” Most quasi-quantifiers don't allow other quantifiers to appear between them and nouns, thus it is not correct to say “\*五个年 [wǔ gè nián],” “\*四个天 [sì gè tiān].” However, “个 [gè]” is allowed in front of “月 [yuè] (month)” and “小时 [xiǎo shí] (hour),” such as “四个月 [sì gè yuè] (four months)” and “一个小时 [yī gè xiǎo shí] (an hour).” “国 [guó] (country)” differs from “省 [shěng] (province),” “市 [shì] (city),” “县 [xiàn] (county)” in use. For example, the expressions “中美两国 [zhōng měi liǎng guó] (China and America)” and “两国人民 [liǎng guó rén mín] (people of two countries)” are acceptable but “\*中美两个国 [zhōng měi liǎng gè guó]” and “\*两个国的人民 [liǎng gè guó de rén mín]” are not; “东北三省 [dōng běi sān shěng] (three provinces in the northeast of China)” and “三省的农民 [sān shěng de nóng mín] (peasants in three provinces)” can be substituted with “东北三个省 [dōng běi sān gè shěng] (three provinces in the northeast of China)” and “三个省的农民 [sān gè shěng de nóng mín] (peasants in three provinces).” The reason for these differences is because “市 [shì] (city),” “县 [xiàn] (county),” “与省 [shěng] (province)” can stand alone respectively in use, but “国 [guó] (country)” cannot.

#### (6) COMPOUND QUANTIFIERS

A compound quantifier consists of two or more than two quantifiers, representing a compound unit, such as “架次 [jià cì] (sortie for plane),” “人次 [rén cì]

(person-time),” “秒立方米 [miǎo lì fāng mǐ] (cubic meter per second for water-carrying capacity).”

## 2. *Borrowed quantifiers*

They are nouns borrowed temporarily from those referring to containers, such as “三碗饭 [sān wǎn fàn] (three bowls of rice),” “一杯水 [yī bēi shuǐ] (a glass of water),” “两壶酒 [liǎng hú jiǔ] (two pots of wine),” “一身新衣服 [yī shēn xīn yī fú] (a new suit of clothes),” “一桌菜 [yī zhuō cài] (dishes at the table),” “一盆花 [yī pén huā] (a potted flower),” “三车货 [sān chē huò] (three carloads of goods).” A retroflexion in pronunciation sometimes exists among these examples, such as “一桌儿(zhuōr)菜 [yī zhuō er cài] (dishes at the table),” “一身儿(shēnr)衣服 [yī shēn er yī fú] (a suit of clothes).”

Some nouns allow “的 [de]” after them when connected with “一 [yī] (one)” in use, expressing a sense of being filled/full, such as “一桌子(的)菜 [yī zhuō zi (de) cài] (dishes at the table),” “一手(的)泥 [yī shǒu (de) ní] (muddy hands),” “一屋子(的)人 [yī wū zi (de) rén] (a houseful of people),” “一肚子(的)坏主意 [yī dù zi (de) huài zhǔ yì] (a belly completely full of bad ideas),” “一脸(的)汗 [yī liǎn (de) hàn] (a face covered with sweat).” In this case, a retroflexion in pronunciation is not acceptable.

## II. *Verbal quantifiers*

Verbal quantifiers refer to units of behavior or changes. There are two types of verbal quantifiers: proper verbal quantifiers and borrowed verbal quantifiers.

### 1. *Proper verbal quantifiers*

There are not many proper verbal quantifiers in Chinese, such as “次 [cì],” “下 [xià],” “回 [huí],” “顿 [dùn],” “阵 [zhèn],” “场 [chǎng],” “趟 [tàng],” “遍 [biàn],” “番 [fān].” Besides the main function as one of the quantifiers, a verbal quantifier still retains its lexical meaning. Thus, the use of verbal quantifiers is involved in verbs as well as related nouns.

#### 1 次 [cì]

“次 [cì]” denotes the times of repeated behavior, such as “这个问题我们讨论了三次。[zhè gè wèn tí wǒ men tāo lùn le sān cì.] (We’ve discussed the question three times.),” “这个电影他看了两次，都没看完。[zhè gè diàn yǐng tā kàn le liǎng cì, dōu méi kàn wán.] (He has watched the film twice but hasn’t finished it yet.)” “次 [cì]” is the most common verbal quantifier.

#### 2 下 [xià]

“下 [xià]” expresses the times of ongoing behavior in a short period of time, such as “老李拍了小刘一下。[Lǎo Lǐ pāi le Xiǎo Liú yī xià.] (Lao Li

patted Xiao Liu once.),” “他摇了几下旗子。[tā yáo le jǐ xià qí zǐ.] (He waved the flag several times.),” “他敲了桌子一下。[tā qiāo le zhuō zi yī xià.] (He made a rap on the table.)” Instead of calculating times, “一下 [yī xià]” mainly eases up the manner of speaking when used after a verb, such as “你来一下。[nǐ lái yī xià.] (Come here, please),” “喂, 你给我找一下小李。[wéi, nǐ gěi wǒ zhǎo yī xià xiǎo lǐ.] (Hello, can I speak to Xiao Li?),” “你详细介绍一下事情的经过。[nǐ xiáng xì jiè shào yī xià shì qing de jing guò.] (Can you elaborate on what happened?)” Here, if “下 [xià]” is omitted in the preceding examples, they would sound impolite more or less.

### 3 回 [huí]

“回 [huí]” indicates the times of behavior, including those repeated ones. Here are examples: “他家我去过三回。[tā jiā wǒ qù guò sān huí.] (I’ve been to his house three times.),” “这件事他问过我一回, 我没告诉他。[zhè jiàn shì tā wèn guò wǒ yī huí, wǒ méi gào sù tā.] (He asked me once about it, but I told him nothing.),” “一回生, 两回熟。[yī huí shēng, liǎng huí shú.] (Once fresh, twice ripe).” “回 [huí]” in these examples sounds more oral, compared with “次 [cì].” In addition, “回 [huí]” can be used as a noun quantifier for “a thing,” such as “这是怎么回事? [zhè shì zěn me yī huí shì?] (What’s going on here?),” “你们说的是一回事, 别争了。[nǐ men shuō de shì yī huí shì, bié zhēng le.] (You’re talking about the same thing. Stop arguing.)”

### 4 顿 [dùn]

“顿 [dùn]” shows the times of the behaviors related to eating, reprimanding, beating, and scolding, such as “每天吃三顿饭。[měi tiān chī sān dùn fàn.] (Eating three meals a day.),” “他训斥了那个流氓一顿。[tā xùn chì le nà gè liú máng yī dùn.] (He gave the rascal a dressing down),” “他昨天叫人打了一顿。[tā zuó tiān jiào rén dǎ le yī dùn.] (He was beaten up yesterday.)”

### 5 阵 [zhèn]

“阵 [zhèn]” implies a period of time, unexpected but shortly lasting, such as “下了一阵雨。[xià le yī zhèn yǔ.] (It rained for a while.),” “响了一阵枪声。[xiǎng le yī zhèn qiāng shēng.] (There was a burst of gunfire.),” “台下爆发了一阵热烈的掌声。[tái xià bào fā le yī zhèn rè liè de zhǎng shēng.] (There was a burst of applause by the offstage audience.),” “她觉得身上一阵冷, 一阵热。[tā jué de shēn shàng yī zhèn lěng, yī zhèn rè.] (She felt hot and cold every now and then.)”

### 6 场 [chǎng]

“场 [chǎng]” refers to a certain behavior, performance, or activity which has been completely finished, such as “上午打了一场球。[shàng wǔ dǎ le yī chǎng qiú.] (He played a game of ball in the morning.)”



chǎng qiú.] (There was a game played in the morning.),” “明天有两场电影。[míng tiān yǒu liǎng chǎng diàn yǐng.] (There are two movies tomorrow.),” “她大哭了一场。[tā dà kū le yī chǎng.] (She burst into tears.)”

## 7 趟 [tàng]

“趟 [tàng]” means making a round trip, such as “我刚进了一趟城。[wǒ gāng jìn le yī tàng chéng.] (I just went into town.),” “去年我去了欧洲一趟。[qù nián wǒ qù le ōu zhōu yī tàng.] (I went to Europe last year.),” “他今天来了三趟都没有看到你。[tā jīn tiān lái le sān tàng dōu méi yǒu kàn dào nǐ.] (He came here three times to see you today but he missed you at last.)”

## 8 遍 [biàn]

“遍 [biàn]” denotes an entire process of behavior from the beginning to the end, such as “这个电影我看了三遍，每遍都很感动。[zhè gè diàn yǐng wǒ kàn le sān biàn, měi biàn dōu hěn gǎn dòng.] (I have seen this movie three times, and I am very touched every time.),” “你把课文从头到尾念一遍。[nǐ bǎ kè wén cóng tóu dào wěi niàn yī biàn.] (Please read the text from the beginning to the end.)”

## 9 番 [fān]

“番 [fān]” implies those behaviors consuming time and energy, such as “他又调查了一番。[tā yòu diào chá le yī fān.] (He investigated it again.),” “这件事你得好好动一番脑筋才能想出解决的办法。[zhè jiàn shì nǐ dé hǎo hǎo dòng yī fān nǎo jīn cái néng xiǎng chū jiě jué de bàn fǎ.] (You’ll have to use your head to work out a solution to this matter.),” “他们昨天较量了一番，结果不分胜负。[tā men zuó tiān jiào liàng le yī fān, jié guǒ bù fēn shèng fù.] (They had a match yesterday and ended in a tie.)” Only “一 [yī] (one)” is qualified before “番 [fān]” and it is seldom used in the spoken language.

2. *Borrowed verbal quantifiers*

It refers to the tools involved in a certain behavior, or it is expressed by five sense organs and four limbs, such as “砍了一斧子 [kǎn le yī fǔ zi] (a stroke of the axe),” “切了一刀 [qiē le yī dāo] (make a cut by knife),” “放了一枪 [fàng le yī qiāng] (fire a round),” “踢了一脚 [tī le yī jiǎo] (give a kick),” “咬了一口 [yǎo le yī kǒu] (have a bite),” “看了一眼 [kàn le yī yǎn] (throw one’s eye on),” “打了一拳 [dǎ le yī quán] (give a punch).”

### Section three: grammatical functions of numeral-quantifier phrases

Numerals are seldom used alone, except for being declared as subject or object, such as “一加一等于二。[yī jiā yī děng yú èr.] (One plus one is two.)” and “十

六是八的两倍。[shí liù shì bā de liǎng bèi.] (Sixteen is twice as many as eight.)” Sometimes, a numeral can, when it consists of a coefficient word and ordinal word, function as the predicate, such as “这个孩子十二了。[zhè gè hái zǐ shí èr le.] (The child is twelve years old.)” and “今天十五了。[jīn tiān shí wǔ le.] (Today is fifteen.)” Besides functioning as a predicate to express age and date, a numeral can perform as a referent of a preceding noun that is usually omitted in the following.

Generally speaking, quantifiers don't function alone in the sentence. Sometimes, their ability to be attributes results from the omission of “一[yī] (one)” before them, such as “他有个姐姐在北大学习。[tā yǒu gè jiě jiě zài běi dà xué xí.] (He has an elder sister studying in Peking University),” “我上街买了本书。[wǒ shàng jiē mǎi le běn shū.] (I went shopping for a book),” “你写篇文章吧。[nǐ xiě piān wén zhāng ba.] (You may write an article).” Such an omission only occurs before the noun as an object rather than as a subject. Thus, it is not correct to say “\*这时个女孩子从房间里走了出来。[zhè shí gè nǚ hái zǐ cóng fáng jiān lǐ zǒu le chū lái.]”

As its name implies, a numeral-quantifier phrase consists of a numeral and a quantifier. When the demonstrative pronouns “这 [zhè] (this)” and “那 [nà] (that)” or the interrogative pronoun “哪 [nǎ] (which)” is added in front of a numeral or a quantifier, a demonstrative numeral-quantifier phrase is formed, whose grammatical functions are basically similar to those of a numeral-quantifier phrase. For instance, 这三本(书) [zhè sān běn (shū)] (these three books),” “那件(衣服) [nà jiàn (yī fú)] (those clothes),” “哪两个(人) [nǎ liǎng gè (rén)] (which two persons). In the following, the introduction to a numeral-quantifier phrase also includes those demonstrative ones.

## ***1. Grammatical functions of numeral-quantifiers phrases formed by noun quantifiers***

### *1. To function as an attribute*

These phrases mainly place restrictions on nouns and function as attributes.

Example 1 接着，他给我讲了一个故事。[jiē zhe, tā gěi wǒ jiǎng le yī gè gù shì.]

(Then he told me a story.)

Example 2 那个商店大不大? [nà gè shāng diàn dà bú dà?]

(Is that shop big or not?)

Example 3 杨白劳身上落了一层雪。[yáng bái láo shēn shàng luò le yī céng xuě.]

(A layer of snow fell on Yang Bailao.)

Example 4 老任这着棋走得好，有心胸，有眼力。[lǎo rén zhè zhuó qí zǒu de hǎo, yǒu xīn xiōng, yǒu yǎn lì.]

(Lao Ren's good move shows his broad mind and keen eyes.)

Usually, no other constituents are allowed to appear in the middle of the numeral-quantifier phrase. Therefore, it is not acceptable to express like this “\*一件新衣服 [yī jiàn xīn yī fu]” or “\*两高座楼 [liǎng gāo zuò lóu].” On the contrary, “一件新衣服 [yī jiàn xīn yī fu] (a new dress)” or “两座高楼 [liǎng zuò gāo lóu] (two high buildings)” is permitted.

If the things referred by the nouns after individual quantifiers can be subdivided, two adjectives “大 [dà] (big)” and “小 [xiǎo] (small)” can be put in the middle, such as “三大块蛋糕 [sān dà kuài dàn gāo] (three big pieces of cake),” “五大张纸 [wǔ dà zhāng zhǐ] (five large pieces of paper),” “一小条布 [yī xiǎo tiáo bù] (a small strip of cloth).” Also, these two can be used before those collective quantifiers indicating unidentified quantity, such as “两小把米 [liǎng xiǎo bǎ mǐ] (two small handfuls of rice),” “一大群人 [yī dà qún rén] (a large group of people),” “一小批货 [yī xiǎo pī huò] (a small quantity of goods).” However, some collective quantifiers are excluded, such as “打 [dǎ] (dozen)” for a concrete amount and “对 [duì] (pair),” “副 [fù] (set),” “双 [shuāng] (pair)” for a pair. For those descriptive adjectives for the features of things, such as “厚 [hòu] (thick),” “薄 [báo] (thin),” “长 [cháng] (long),” they can be put in the middle of “numeral quantifier phrase+noun,” such as “一长排桌子 [yī cháng pái zhuō zǐ] (a long row of tables),” “三厚册书 [sān hòu cè shū] (three thick volumes of books),” “一薄片饼干 [yī báo piàn bǐng gān] (a thin slice of biscuits).” Unfortunately, such phrases are very limited in Chinese.

Since the inherent property of a borrowed quantifier is a noun, it can be modified by an adjective in front, such as “一满壶酒 [yī mǎn hú jiǔ] (a full pot of wine),” “一平碗饭 [yī píng wǎn fàn] (a shallow bowl of rice),” “三大锅汤 [sān dà guō tāng] (three big pots of soup),” “一小铁盒白糖 [yī xiǎo tiě hé bái táng] (a small tin of white sugar).”

## 2. *To function as a subject or object*

If the noun modified by a numeral-quantifier phrase has been mentioned in the preceding, the phrase can substitute this noun in the following. As a result, this numeral-quantifier phrase becomes a subject or object.

Example 5 我从图书馆借来两本书，一本是英文的，一本是中文的。  
[wǒ cóng tú shū guǎn jiè lái liǎng běn shū, yī běn shì yīng wén de, yī běn shì zhōng wén de.]

(I borrowed two books from the library. One is in English and the other in Chinese.)

### Example 6

A: 你这个学期都选了什么课? [nǐ zhè gè xué qī dōu xuǎn le shén me kè?]  
(What courses have you taken this semester?)

B: 一门是中国历史，一门是中文写作，一门是中国文学。[yī mén shì zhōng guó lì shǐ, yī mén shì zhōng wén xiě zuò, yī mén shì zhōng guó wén xué.]

(One is Chinese history, one is Chinese writing, and one is Chinese literature.)

Example 7 昨天我们去商店买衣服，我买了两件，小李买了一件。[zuó tiān wǒ men qù shāng diàn mǎi yī fú, wǒ mǎi le liǎng jiàn, Xiǎo Lǐ mǎi le yī jiàn.]

(Yesterday we went shopping for clothes. I bought two and Xiao Li bought one.)

### 3. *To function as a predicate*

Example 8 小刘今年十八岁了。[xiǎo liú jīn nián shí bā suì le.]

(Xiao Liu is eighteen this year.)

Example 9 明天十五号。[míng tiān shí wǔ hào.]

(Tomorrow is the fifteenth.)

Example 10 现在发书，每人五本。[xiàn zài fā shū, měi rén wǔ běn.]

(It's time to hand out the books, five per person.) (“书 [shū]” after “本 [běn]” is omitted.)

### 4. *To function as an adverbial when formed by ordinal words*

Example 11 他第一次上街买东西就没有翻译陪着。[tā dì yī cì shàng jiē mǎi dōng xī jiù méi yǒu fān yì péi zhe.]

(His first shopping was accomplished without an interpreter.)

Example 12 这是我第三次来中国了。[zhè shì wǒ dì sān cì lái zhōng guó le.]

(This is my third visit to China.)

Example 13 他第三次结婚时，才二十五岁。[tā dì sān cì jié hūn shí, cái èr shí wǔ suì.]

(He was twenty-five when he married for the third time.)

## II. *Grammatical functions of numeral-quantifier phrases formed by verbal quantifiers*

### 1. *To function as a complement of verbal quantifiers*

Example 14 老师傅把头轻轻点了一下。[lǎo shī fù bǎ tóu qīng qīng diǎn le yī xià.]

(The old master craftsman nodded his head gently.)

Example 15 他朝敌人狠狠踢了两脚。[tā cháo dí rén hěn hěn tī le liǎng jiǎo.]

(He gave his enemy two heavy kicks.)

### 2. *To function as an adverbial*

Example 16 为了保障人民群众的身体健康，最近药品几次降价。[wèi le bǎo zhàng rén mín qún zhòng de shēn tǐ jiàn kāng, zuì jìn yào pǐn jǐ cì jiàng jià.]

(In order to safeguard people's health, the price of drugs has been lowered several times recently.)

Example 17 你看过“水浒”吗？谁三拳打倒了镇关西？[nǐ kàn guò shuǐ hǔ ma? shuí sān quán dǎ dào le zhèn guān xī?]

(Have you seen “All Men Are Brothers”? Who knocked down Zhen Guanxi with three blows?)

Example 18 他一把把我拉住，问我为什么昨天没给他打电话。[tā yī bǎ bǎ wǒ lā zhù, wèn wǒ wèi shén me zuó tiān méi gěi tā dǎ diàn huà.]

(He grabbed me and asked why I hadn't called him yesterday.)

### 3. To function as an attribute

It depends on two cases. One is in the affirmative sentence.

Example 19 这场电影演的时间真长。[zhè chǎng diàn yǐng yǎn de shí jiān zhēn cháng.]

(This movie lasted a long time.)

Example 20 这趟上海去得很值得，收获不少。[zhè tàng shàng hǎi qù dé hěn zhí dé, shōu huò bù shǎo.]

(It was a rewarding trip to Shanghai.)

Example 21 他这一顿打挨得太冤枉了。[tā zhè yī dùn dǎ āi de tài yuān wǎng le.]

(He was unjustly beaten.)

Usually, a verbal quantifier appears in front of the subject when functioning as an attribute or turns up before the object when functioning as a complement, as shown in the phrase “verbal quantifier+noun.” Such a phrase structure doesn't widely exist in Chinese.

The other one is in the sentence “一 . . . 也 [yī . . . yě]/都 [dōu]/不 [bù/bù]/没 [méi] . . . ,” focusing on comparison.

Example 22 我一次京剧也没看过。[wǒ yī cì jīng jù yě méi kàn guò.]

(I have never seen Beijing Opera before.)

Example 23 他连一遍课文都没念完就跑了。[tā lián yī biàn kè wén dōu méi niàn wán jiù pǎo le.]

(He ran away without finishing reading the text once.)

## III. Grammatical functions of numerals, quantifiers, and numeral-quantifier phrases in the overlapped form

### 1. Overlapped numeral “一 [yī] (one)”

The numeral “一 [yī] (one)” can be overlapped as an adverbial, referring to “one by one.”

Example 24 代表们和大家一一握手。[dài biǎo men hé dà jiā yī yī wò shǒu.]

(The delegates shook hands with everyone.)

Example 25 他把参观的情况向大家一一做了介绍。[tā bǎ cān guān de qíng kuàng xiàng dà jiā yī yī zuò le jiè shào.]

(He gave everyone a detailed introduction of the visit.)

## 2. Overlapped quantifiers

A quantifier can also be overlapped but it seems more complex in use.

### (1) THE INDIVIDUAL OR THE WHOLE

When a noun quantifier is overlapped, it stresses “the whole, consisting of parts” instead of emphasizing each individual part of the whole, carrying a sense of “no exception.” Differently, “每 [měi] (every)” can refer to the individual as well as the whole.

Example 26 他们班在学习方面每个人都很努力。[tā men bān zài xué xí fāng miàn měi gè rén dōu hěn nǔ lì.]

(Everyone in their class studies very hard.)

他们班在学习方面人人都很努力。[tā men bān zài xué xí fāng miàn rén rén dōu hěn nǔ lì.]

(Everyone in their class studies very hard.)

Example 27 他们班在学习方面每个人努力的程度不一样。[tā men bān zài xué xí fāng miàn měi gè rén nǔ lì de chéng dù bù yī yàng.]

(Everyone in their class puts in different effort in studying.)

\*他们班在学习方面人人努力的程度不一样。[tā men bān zài xué xí fāng miàn rén rén nǔ lì de chéng dù bù yī yàng.]

Example 28 这个孩子每月都生病。[zhè gè hái zǐ měi yuè dōu shēng bìng.]

(This child falls ill every month.)

这个孩子月月都生病。[zhè gè hái zǐ yuè yuè dōu shēng bìng.]

(This child falls ill every month.)

Example 29 这个孩子每个月病一次。[zhè gè hái zǐ měi gè yuè bìng yī cì.]

(The child falls ill once a month.)

\*这个孩子月月病一次。[zhè gè hái zǐ yuè yuè bìng yī cì.]

The overlapped noun quantifier can function as a subject (or double-reference subject) and attribute.

Example 30 我们班的男生个个都英俊。[wǒ men bān de nán shēng gè gè dōu yīng jùn.]

(All the boys in our class are handsome.)

Example 31 条条大路通罗马。[tiáo tiáo dà lù tōng luó mǎ.]  
(All roads lead to Rome.)

Example 32 朵朵葵花向太阳。[duǒ duǒ kuí huā xiàng tài yáng.]  
(All sunflowers turn to the sun.)

As for serving as an attribute, the overlapped noun quantifier can only function as the subject's rather than the object's. For example, it is not correct to express it like this: “\*他的话打动了人人之心。[tā de huà dǎ dòng le rén rén de xīn.]” but “他的话打动了每个人的心。[tā de huà dǎ dòng le měi gè rén de xīn.]” (His words touched everyone's heart.)” is acceptable.

The overlapped quasi-quantifier for time can function as an adverb.

Example 33 他天天做早操。[tā tiān tiān zuò zǎo cāo.]  
(He does morning exercises every day.)

Example 34 这个大队年年量超额完成生产任务。[zhè gè dà duì nián nián liàng chāo é wán chéng shēng chǎn rèn wù.]  
(This production team overfulfilled its task every year.)

Quantifiers, such as “重 [chóng]” and “层 [céng],” express “layer by layer.” On one hand, they can function as an attribute and adverb; on the other hand, they can modify the subject and object as well.

Example 35 他们冲破了“四人帮”设置的重重障碍。[tā men chōng pò le “sì rén bāng” shè zhì de chóng chóng zhàng ài.]  
(They broke through the obstacles set by the Gang of Four.)

Example 36 虽然重重困难摆在他们面前，但他们并没有退缩。[suī rán chóng chóng kùn nán bǎi zài tā men miàn qián, dàn tā men bìng méi yǒu tuì suō.]  
(They did not flinch from the difficulties in front of them.)

Example 37 敌人层层设防，但仍然阻挡不住侦察英雄们。[dí rén céng céng shè fáng, dàn réng rán zǔ dǎng bú zhù zhēn chá yīng xióng men.]  
(The enemy set up layers of defenses, but they could not stop the scout heroes.)

Example 38 飞机穿过层层云雾，高度不断下降。[fēi jī chuān guò céng céng yún wù, gāo dù bú duàn xià jiàng.]  
(The plane descended through the clouds.)

## (2) OVERLAPPED VERBAL QUANTIFIERS

Verbal quantifiers can be overlapped as a subject, carrying a sense of “no exception.”

Example 39 看电影，回回都少不了他。[kàn diàn yǐng, huí huí dōu shǎo bù liǎo tā.]  
(Each time, he never misses a movie.)

Example 40 他家顿顿吃米饭。[tā jiā dùn dùn chī mǐ fàn.]  
(His family eats rice at every meal.)

### 3. Overlapped numeral-quantifier phrases

When a numeral-quantifier phrase is overlapped as an attribute, it's required that “的 [de]” comes after it. The numeral inside the phrase is just limited to “一 [yī] (one).”

Example 41 桌子上摆着一盘一盘的水果。[zhuō zi shàng bǎi zhe yī pán yī pán de shuǐ guǒ.]  
(There are plates of fruit on the table.)

Example 42 山下，一条一条的小路通往各个生产队。[shān xià, yī tiáo yī tiáo de xiǎo lù tōng wǎng gè gè shēng chǎn duì.]  
(Every path at the foot of the mountain leads to each production team.)

Example 43 院子里堆着一堆一堆的柴火。[yuàn zǐ lǐ duī zhe le duī le duī de chái huǒ.]  
(There were piles of firewood in the yard.)

The second “一 [yī] (one)” in these examples can be omitted and the same is true for “的 [de].” Here are more similar examples.

Example 44 他看着眼前一张张熟悉的面孔，感到无比亲切。[tā kàn zhe yǎn qián yī zhāng zhāng shú xī de miàn kǒng, gǎn dào wú bǐ qīn qiè.]  
(He looked at every familiar face in front of him and felt rather at home.)

Example 45 这时一件件往事又涌上心头。[zhè shí yī jiàn jiàn wǎng shì yòu yǒng shàng xīn tóu.]  
(Now all the things of the past occur in the mind.)

Actually, the form with “一 [yī] (one)” and “的 [de]” is more descriptive than the form without “一 [yī] (one)” and “的 [de].”

Such overlapped phrases are mainly used to describe appearances of different things displayed by the individual, such as the examples from 41–45. Therefore they differ from “很多 [hěn duō] (many)” in use. In other words, if the intention of the speaker is to narrate rather than to describe, “一个一个 [yī gè yī gè] (every)” and “一本一本 [yī běn yī běn] (every book)” in the following two sentences should be changed into “很多 [hěn duō] (many)”; otherwise, they are not acceptable.

Example 46 \*看到这里，一个一个的孩子笑了起来。[kàn dào zhè lǐ, yī gè yī gè de hái zi xiào le qǐ lái.]

Example 47 \*我很喜欢看小说，我想买一本一本的小说。[wǒ hěn xǐ huān kàn xiǎo shuō, wǒ xiǎng mǎi yī běn yī běn de xiǎo shuō.]



When a numeral-quantifier phrase is overlapped to function as an adverbial, it indicates the manner of behavior, emphasizing “one by one.”

Example 48 孩子们排着队，两个两个地走进教室。[hái zi men pái zhe duì, liǎng gè liǎng gè de zǒu jìn jiāo shì.]

(The children lined up and walked into the classroom two by two.)

Example 49 她把糖水一勺一勺地喂给老大娘喝。[tā bǎ táng shuǐ yī sháo yī sháo de wèi gěi lǎo dà niáng hē.]

(She fed the old woman a spoonful of sugar water every time.)

The second “一 [yī] (one)” and “的 [de]” can be omitted in these examples.

Example 50 天气一天天（地）暖和起来了。[tiān qì yī tiān tiān (de) nuǎn hé qǐ lái le.]

(The weather is getting warmer day by day.)

Example 51 我们要把动摇的人一步步（地）争取过来。[wǒ men yào bǎ dòng yáo de rén yī bù bù (de) zhēng qǔ guò lái.]

(We must win over the waverers step by step.)

The numeral-quantifier phrase formed by a verbal quantifier can be overlapped too, similar to those formed by noun quantifiers. It can function as an attribute and adverb as well.

Example 52 一次次（的）失败，并没有吓倒他。[yī cì cì (de) shī bài, bìng méi yǒu xià dào tā.]

(Failure after failure did not daunt him.) (as the attribute)

Example 53 一场一场的比赛，搞得他精疲力竭。[yī chǎng yī chǎng de bǐ sài, gǎo dé tā jīng pí lì jié.]

(He was worn out game after game.) (as the attribute)

Example 54 （老栓）提着大铜壶，一趟一趟（地）给客人冲茶。[(lǎo shuān) tí zhe dà tóng hú, yī tàng yī tàng (de) gěi kè rén chōng chá.]

(Holding a large copper pot, (Lao Shuan) made tea for the guests from time to time.) (as the adverb)

Example 55 铁锤一下一下准确地落在钢钎上。[tiě chuí yī xià yī xià zhǔn què de luò zài gāng qiān shàng.]

(Every time the hammer knocked exactly at the bitsteel chisel.) (as the adverb)

Example 56 他觉得身上一阵一阵地发冷，大概是发烧了。[tā jué de shēn shàng yī zhèn yī zhèn de fā lěng, dà gài shì fā shāo le.]

(He felt a chill running through him and he might have a fever.) (as the adverb)

Example 57 为了纠正我的发音，老师一遍一遍地叫我念课文。[wèi le jiū zhèng wǒ de fā yīn, lǎo shī yī biàn yī biàn de jiào wǒ niàn kè wén.]

(In order to correct my pronunciation, the teacher asked me to repeat the text again and again.) (as the adverbial)

The usage in these examples highlights frequency on one side and outshines description on the other side.

In conclusion, these overlapped forms mentioned are quite qualified to make vivid descriptions in Chinese. It is also true for verbs and adjectives when they are overlapped. Therefore, it is necessary to keep a clear mind when learning these overlapped forms, especially for their different expressive functions.

#### **IV. Pragmatic functions of numeral-quantifier phrases in syntax**

The relation between the referent of a noun and the actual thing it indicates in reality is very complex. For example, “一[yī] (one)” in “一个 [yī gè] (a/an)” and “一本 [yī běn] (a book)” doesn’t definitely refer to a concrete number. Or some nouns without any numeral-quantifier phrase in front may possibly express a concrete “一 [yī] (one).” Of course, for the second possibility, there exist some limitations.

##### *1. General reference, single reference, definite reference, and indefinite reference*

General reference denotes that the noun it refers to expresses things in a certain category; single reference means that the noun it refers to represents an individual thing existing in reality.

Example 58 我很喜欢花。[wǒ hěn xǐ huān huā.]  
(I like flowers very much.) (general reference)

Example 59 学生的主要任务应该是学习。[xué shēng de zhǔ yào rèn wù yīng gāi shì xué xí.]  
(The main task of a student should be to study.) (general reference)

Example 60 一个国家经济发展快慢与政治制度不能说没有关系。[yī gè guó jiā jīng jì fā zhǎn kuài màn yǔ zhèng zhì dù bù néng shuō méi yǒu guān xi.]  
(The development of a country cannot be isolated from its political system.) (general reference)

Example 61 我最近认识了一个去过南极的人。[wǒ zuì jìn rèn shí le yī gè qù guò nán jí de rén.]  
(Recently I met a man who has been to the South Pole.) (single reference)

Example 62 这时一个青年人站起来要求发言。[zhè shí yī gè qīng nián rén zhàn qǐ lái yāo qiú fā yán.]  
(Then a young man stood up and asked to speak.) (single reference)

Example 63 桌子上的笔是谁的？[zhuō zi shàng de bǐ shì shuí de?]  
(Whose pen is it on the table?) (single reference)

Example 64 这篇文章写得很好。[zhè piān wén zhāng xiě de hěn hǎo.]  
(This article is well written.) (single reference)

Example 65 票! [piào!]  
(Ticket, please!) (single reference)

“Numeral-quantifier phrase+noun” is the form to indicate general reference, such as Example 60; while it is more frequently represented by a single noun without any modifier before, such as Example 58 and Example 59. “一[yī] (one)+quantifier+noun” cannot be used to refer to general references, unless it is only permitted to appear as a subject or as a theme of a sentence. Single references can adopt many forms, such as proper nouns, pronouns, “numeral-quantifier phrase+nouns,” and single nouns. It should be pointed out that the single noun is only confined to the known information for the speaker and depends much on the context, such as Example 65.

Definite reference means that the noun it refers to is very definite in a certain context for both the speaker and the listener. Especially, the speaker takes it for granted that the listener understands what is being talked and can distinguish it from other ones. Indefinite reference denotes something the speaker understands but the listener doesn't. Therefore, “indefinite” is just for the listeners.

Example 66 我最近认识了个去过南极的人。[wǒ zuì jìn rèn shí le gè qù guò nán jí de rén.]  
(I recently met a man who had been to the South Pole.) (indefinite reference)

Example 67 这时一个青年人站起来要求发言。[zhè shí yī gè qīng nián rén zhàn qǐ lái yāo qiú fā yán.]  
(Then a young man stood up and asked to speak.) (indefinite reference)

Example 68 我家来客人了，不能跟你去看电影了。[wǒ jiā lái kè rén le, bù néng gēn nǐ qù kàn diàn yǐng le.]  
(I have a visitor. I can't go to the cinema with you.) (indefinite reference)

Example 69 你认识我们班一个叫约翰的美国学生吗？[nǐ rèn shí wǒ men bān yī gè jiào yuē hàn de měi guó xué shēng ma?]  
(Do you know an American student named John in our class?) (definite reference)

Example 70 关上窗户! [guān shàng chuāng hù!]  
(Close the window!) (definite reference)

Example 71

A: 昨天发给你们五十道复习题，你复习多少了？[zuó tiān fā gěi nǐ men wǔ shí dào fù xí tí, nǐ fù xí duō shǎo le?]  
(You were given fifty revision questions yesterday. How many have you done?)

B1: 五十道题我都复习了。[wǔ shí dào tí wǒ dōu fù xí le.]  
(I've done all of them.) (definite reference)

B2: 我只复习了一半。[wǒ zhǐ fù xí le yī bàn.]  
(I've done a half.) (definite reference)

Also, definite reference mainly adopts the forms, such as the “demonstrative pronoun+noun,” pronoun, proper noun. When a single noun is used as a definite reference, the context in which it appears should be clear, such as in Example 69; when “numeral-quantifier phrase+noun” is used, other constituents as attributes are allowed to appear in the middle, such as Example 70, or the known information after the numeral-quantifier phrase, such as Example 71B1. For the second situation, “都 [dōu] (all)” is often added to indicate that what are referred to are all included.

“Numeral-quantifier phrase+noun” is the common form for indefinite reference. The single noun is just confined to the existential sentence when it is used for indefinite reference, such as Example 68.

Nouns can be used to refer to something or someone that is identified or unidentified in reality. For example, “一个阿姨 [yī gè ā yí] (a family nurse)” in the sentence “我们家最近换了一个阿姨。[wǒ men jīn zuì jìn huàn le yī gè ā yí.] (We changed a family nurse recently.)” is a person who is identified to exist in reality; “一个人 [yī gè rén] (a person)” in the sentence “我想找一个人聊聊天。[wǒ xiǎng zhǎo yī gè rén liáo liáo tiān.] (I want to talk to someone.)” is a person who is just in a general sense and without any identified meaning. To simplify, nouns can be generally used in two situations when referring to something or someone. One is for something or someone that exists in talk and the other is for something or someone that doesn't really exist in talk. Therefore, the former situation includes a definite/indefinite reference, general/single reference, and identified/non-identified reference. The latter situation can be represented by “他在大学当老师。[tā zài dà xué dāng lǎo shī.] (He teaches at the university).” Here, “老师 [lǎo shī] (teacher)” in the sentence actually indicates an occupation rather than a real person in talk.

## 2. *Use of a numeral-quantifier phrase before a noun as a subject or an object*

The following is to talk about the use of numeral-quantifier phrases before nouns as subjects or objects, according to definite/indefinite reference and general/single reference.

### (1) KNOWN/UNKNOWN INFORMATION AND NUMERAL-QUANTIFIER PHRASES

As far as we know, the unknown information goes after the known in Chinese sentences. The known information can distinguish itself from the other information so it is a definite reference. Usually, a Chinese sentence starts with the known information or definite general reference in the forms, such as “demonstrative pronoun+noun,” pronoun, and proper noun.

Example 72 朱自治如果吃下一碗有面汤气的面，他会整天精神不振，总觉得有点什么事儿不如意。[zhū zì yě rú guǒ chī xià yī wǎn yǒu miàn tāng qì de miàn, tā huì zhěng tiān jīng shén bú zhèn, zǒng jué de yǒu diǎn shén me shì er bù rú yì.]

(If Zhu Zizhi took a bowl of tasteless noodles, he would be depressed all day and always feel that something unlucky would happen.) (definite reference)

Example 73 如果这些地方都吃腻了，他们也结伴远行，每人雇上一辆黄包车，或者是四人合乘一辆马车，浩浩荡荡，马蹄声碎。[rú guǒ zhè xiē dì fang dōu chī nì le, tā men yě jié bàn yuǎn xíng, měi rén gù shàng yī liàng huáng bāo chē, huò zhě sì rén hé chéng yī liàng mǎ chē, hào hào dàng dàng, mǎ tí shēng suì.]

(If they were tired of eating at these places, they would travel together to other places for foods, hiring a rickshaw or taking a carriage for four people, in a mighty formation accompanied by the bursts of hoofbeats.) (definite reference)

Example 74 会议一结束便要转入正题，为了慎重起见，还不得不抽出一段时间来讨论今日去向何方？[huì yì yī jié shù biàn yào zhuǎn rù zhèng tí, wèi le shèn zhòng qǐ jiàn, hái bù dé bù chōu chū yī duàn shí jiān lái tāo lùn jīn rì qù xiàng hé fāng.]

(As soon as the meeting was over, the main topic would be discussed immediately. For the sake of prudence, it is necessary to take some time off to discuss where we were going today.) (definite reference)

However, not all the sentences have their own known information, thus in the sentence the unknown information as the beginning is acceptable, such as the declarative sentence in “有 [yǒu] (there be)” structure.

Example 75 从前有一个老人，住在大森林里。[cóng qián yǒu yī gè lǎo rén, zhù zài dà sēn lín lǐ.]

(Once upon a time there was an old man living in a big forest.)

“有 [yǒu] (there be)” is put before “一个老人 [yī gè lǎo rén] (an old man)” so as to make the unknown information become the head of this sentence, which is permitted in Chinese.

The noun as indefinite reference also can be put at the beginning of sentence.

Example 76 这时三个戴着红领巾的孩子跑上台向获奖者献上了鲜花。[zhè shí sān gè dài zhe hóng líng jīn de hái zi pǎo shàng tái xiàng huà jǐng huò zhě xiàn shàng le xiān huā.]

(Three children with red scarves ran onto the stage and presented flowers to the winners.)

Example 77 突然一个人站了起来，要求发言。[tū rán yī gè rén zhàn le qǐ lái, yāo qiú fā yán.]

(Suddenly a man stood up and asked to speak.)

Such use usually occurs with time words in the narrative mode, such as news reports and fairy tales in the written language. It cannot appear in the spoken language or in sentences for argumentation, description, or exposition.

The unknown information is usually put in the rear of a sentence and after the verb as an indefinite reference. The common form is “numeral-quantifier phrase+noun.”

Example 78 那片大茶楼上有几个和一般茶客隔开的房间，摆着木桌、大藤椅，自成一个新天地。[nà piàn dà chá lóu shàng yǒu jǐ gè hé yī bān chá kè gé kāi de fáng jiān, bǎi zhe mù zhuō, dà téng yǐ, zì chéng yī gè xiǎo tiān dì.] (There are several rooms in that big teahouse. As the small private space, they are separated from those for the ordinary tea guests, in which the wooden desks and the big cane chair are placed.) (indefinite reference)

Example 79 眼睛一睁，他的头脑里便跳出一个念头：“快和朱鸿兴去吃头汤面！”[yǎn jīng yī zhēng, tā de tóu nǎo lǐ biàn tiào chū yī gè niàn tóu: “kuài hé Zhū Hóng xīng qù chī tóu tāng miàn!”] (As his eyes opened, an idea came to his mind: “I need to hurry up for Head Soup Noodle with Zhu Hongxing.”) (indefinite reference)

The known information as a definite reference can be used as objects in the forms, such as proper nouns, pronouns, and “demonstrative pronoun+nouns.”

Example 80 我刚才看见张老师了。[wǒ gāng cái kàn jiàn zhāng lǎo shī le.] (I saw Prof. Zhang just now.) (definite reference)

Example 81 你念一下这个句子。[nǐ niàn yī xià zhè gè jù zì.] (Read aloud this sentence, please.) (definite reference)

Example 82 你下午能见到小王吗？请你把这本书交给他。[nǐ xià wǔ néng jiàn dào Xiǎo Wáng ma? qǐng nǐ bǎ zhè běn shū jiāo gěi tā.] (Will you see Xiao Wang this afternoon? Please give him this book.) (definite reference)

## (2) GENERAL/SINGLE REFERENCE AND NUMERAL-QUANTIFIER PHRASES

Here is an example and its analysis is followed.

Example 83

A: 你去哪儿？[nǐ qù nǎ er?]  
(Where are you going?)

B1: 我去买书。[wǒ qù mǎi shū.]  
(I will go out for books.)

B2: 我去买一本书。[wǒ qù mǎi yī běn shū.]  
(I am going to buy a book.)

A single noun “书[shū] (book)” in B1 is regarded as a general/indefinite reference, and it indicates that the speaker is aware or unaware of which book to buy

or how many books to buy. “一本书 [yī běn shū] (a book)” in B2 is a single/indefinite reference, and it means that the speaker is very clear about how many books to buy and also may know which book to buy.

Example 84 我觉得有点冷，去买件衣服，很快就回来。[wǒ jué de yǒu diǎn lěng, qù mǎi jiàn yī fú, hěn kuài jiù huí lái.]

(I feel a little cold and want to buy some clothes. I will be back soon.)

“件衣服 [jiàn yī fú] (clothes)” in this example is single/indefinite reference as the unknown information. But, the speaker clearly knows what exactly the clothes refer to.

Example 85

A: 你的职业? [nǐ de zhí yè?]

(What is your occupation?)

B: 大夫。[dài fū]

(Doctor.)

Example 86 我是研究生，今年25岁。[wǒ shì yán jiū shēng, jīn nián 25 suì.]  
(I am a graduate student. I am 25 years old.)

“大夫 [dài fū] (doctor)” and “研究生 [yán jiū shēng] (graduate student)” are actually occupations rather than real persons in talk, thus it is improper to add a numeral-quantifier phrase before either of them.

Example 87 他父亲是一个大夫，在北京协和医院工作，医术很高明，远近闻名。[tā fù qīn shì yī gè dài fū, zài běi jīng xié hé yī yuàn gōng zuò, yī shù hěn gāo míng, yuǎn jìn wén míng.]

(His father was a doctor who worked in Peking Union Medical College Hospital. His medical skills are very good and known far and wide.)

Here, “大夫 [dài fū] (doctor)” is similar to “一个大夫 [yī gè dài fū] (a doctor).” “一个 [yī gè] (a)” before it makes it more concrete in description. Therefore, whether “一[yī] (one)+quantifier” should be added much depends on whether such a description is needed or not.

## Note

- 1 Also, “好 [hǎo]” can be added before “几 [jǐ] (how many)” for “many/much,” such as “他买了好几本书。[tā mǎi le hǎo jǐ běn shū.] (He bought several books.)” However, “好 [hǎo]+“几 [jǐ] (how many)” implies a number less than ten and it requires a quantifier to follow. “好 [hǎo]” can also be added before “多 [duō] (many/much),” similar to “好些 [hǎo xiē] (quite a lot)” in use. “好些 [hǎo xiē] (quite a lot)” is more common than “好多 [hǎo duō] (quite a lot)” in the spoken language.

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# 5 Verbs

## Section one: grammatical features of verbs

The verb mainly conveys an action or behavior. It is very complicated in use because verbs of different types possess different grammatical features. Besides, they share something in common with adjectives in function. Thus it is not easy to categorize the grammatical features that are simply appropriate to all verbs. The following is the general introduction to most grammatical features for the majority of verbs.

First, verbs mainly function as the predicate and some of them can function as a result complement, direction complement, and modal complement. Sometimes, verbs can function as attributes and subjects. A small number of verbs can function as adverbials.

Second, verbs can generally be modified by “不 [bù/bù]” to indicate negation; “没 [méi] (no)” also is qualified to negate most verbs in the sentence.

Third, “了 [le],” “着 [zhe],” “过 [guò]” as dynamic auxiliaries can be put after most verbs.

Fourth, most verbs can be followed by an object.

## Section two: categories of verbs

According to different standards, verbs can be divided into different categories and each category possesses its own usage. The following is about the main categories.

### *1. Transitive verbs and intransitive verbs*

Verbs can be divided into transitive verbs and intransitive verbs, depending on whether they take objects and what objects they can take.

Transitive verbs mainly refer to those that can take an acceptor of behavior, object of behavior, and a result of behavior as their objects, such as “看(书) [kàn (shū)] (read a book),” “写(字) [xiě (zì)] (write the Chinese character),” “发动(群众) [fā dòng (qún zhòng)] (mobilize the masses),” “打(球) [dǎ (qiú)] (play basketball).”

Some transitive verbs can be followed by objects indicating a causative sense. For example, “去皮 [qù pí] (remove the peel)” means “使皮去掉 [shǐ pí qù diào] (remove the peel).” Similar examples are “下(蛋) [xià (dàn)] (lay eggs),” “上(颜色) [shàng (yán sè)] (color),” “出(汗) [chū (hàn)] (sweat),” “平(地) [píng (dì)] (level the ground).”

The objects of most verbs can be omitted in certain contexts, such as in response.

Example 1 你听录音吗? [nǐ tīng lù yīn ma?]

(Did you listen to the tape recording?)

听。[tīng.]

(Yes, I did.)

Example 2 他昨天看过这部电影了，今天怎么又去看? [tā zuó tiān kàn guò zhè bù diàn yǐng le, jīn tiān zěn me yòu qù kàn?]

(He watched the film yesterday. Why does he watch it again today?)

However the objects of some transitive verbs cannot be omitted, such as “姓 [xìng] (surname),” “叫 [jiào] (name),” “属于 [shǔ yú] (belong to),” “具有 [jù yǒu] (possess),” “成为 [chéng wéi] (become),” “等于 [děng yú] (equal to).”

Intransitive verbs refer to those that have no object, or cannot take accepters of behavior as their objects, such as “着想 [zhuó xiǎng] (consider),” “相反 [xiāng fǎn] (opposite),” “斡旋 [wò xuán] (mediate),” “问世 [wèn shì] (appear),” “通航 [tōng háng] (be open to navigation or air traffic),” “休息 [xiū xi] (have a rest),” “指正 [zhǐ zhèng] (correct),” “毕业 [bì yè] (graduate),” “送行 [sòng xíng] (see off).” Many intransitive verbs can take a non-accepter of behavior as their objects, and these objects can be divided in several types.

### 1 Location of behavior

Some objects refer to locations of behavior, such as “上山 [shàng shān] (go up the mountain),” “回家 [huí jiā] (go home),” “去上海 [qù shàng hǎi] (go to Shanghai),” “出国 [chū guó] (go abroad),” “下乡 [xià xiāng] (go to the countryside),” “出院 [chū yuàn] (check out from the hospital).”

### 2 Tool involved in behavior

Some objects refer to the tools involved in behavior, such as “睡床 [shuì chuáng] (berth)” and “过筛子 [guò shāi zǐ] (sieve).”

### 3 Existential object

Some objects refer to those things that exist, appear, or disappear, such as “来了两个人。[lái le liǎng gè rén.] (Two persons came.),” “蹲着一个石狮子。[dūn zhe yī gè shí shī zǐ.] (There sat a stone lion.),” “死了一头牛。[sǐ le yī tóu niú.] (A cow died.)”

There is one thing to be noticed. Some verb-object phrases are tightly fixed as a word, which is regarded as a detachable word in some grammar books, such as “见面 [jiàn miàn] (meet),” “握手 [wò shǒu] (shake hands),” and “结婚 [jié hūn] (marry).” These verb-object phrases cannot be followed by objects any more. Therefore, it is improper to express like “\*见面他 [jiàn miàn tā],” “\*握手你 [wò shǒu nǐ],” or “\*结婚她 [jié hūn tā].” In the middle of these phrases, some words can be added, such as “了 [le]” and “过 [guò]” and numeral-quantifier phrases.

Some verbs can be transitive and intransitive at the same time. For example “去 [qù] (go)” in “去(南京) [qù (nán jīng)] (go to Nanjing)” is intransitive; “去 [qù] (go)” in “去(皮) [qù (pí)] (to remove the peel)” is transitive; “笑 [xiào] (laugh)” in “笑了 [xiào le] (laughed)” is intransitive; “笑 [xiào] (laugh)” in “笑(他) [xiào (tā)] (laugh at him)” is transitive.

## II. Action verbs, state verbs, relation verbs, and volitive verbs

### 1 Action verbs

An action verb refers to a verb that conveys an action, whose quantity is large in Chinese, such as “吃 [chī] (eat),” “看 [kàn] (look),” “听 [tīng] (listen),” “说 [shuō] (speak),” “试验 [shì yàn] (experiment),” “辩论 [biàn lùn] (argue),” “收集 [shōu jí] (collect),” “表演 [biǎo yǎn] (perform),” “通知 [tōng zhī] (inform),” and so on. The action verb is the most typical verb with the following grammatical features:

- (1) They can be overlapped.
- (2) They can be followed by “了 [le],” “着 [zhe],” “过 [guò].”
- (3) They can be negated by 不 [bù/bù] (not) and “没 [méi] (no).”
- (4) They can be followed by verbal quantifiers and time intervals.
- (5) They are able to form the imperative sentence, such as “来! [lái!] (come here!)” or “走! [zǒu] (leave now!).”
- (6) They are able to pose affirmative-negative questions.
- (7) They are unable to be modified by adverbs of degree. It is improper to express like this: “\*很吃 [hěn chī]” or “\*非常跑 [fēi cháng pǎo].” Yet, “很看了一阵子 [hěn kàn le yī zhèn zǐ] (look at it for a while)” and “很解决问题 [hěn jiě jué wèn tí] (efficient problem-solving)” are acceptable because “很 [hěn]” in both modifies the entire verb phrase rather than a single verb.

### 2 State verbs

A state verb describes a mental, psychological, or physiological state for a person or an animal. For example, “爱 [ài] (love),” “恨 [hèn] (hate),” “喜欢 [xǐ huān] (like),” “讨厌 [tǎo yàn] (sick of),” “想(念) [xiǎng (niàn)] (miss),” “希望 [xī wàng] (hope)” are for a psychological state; “聋 [lóng] (deaf),” “瞎 [xiā] (blind),” “瘸 [qué] (limp),” “饿 [è] (hungry),” “醉 [zuì] (drunk),” “病 [bìng] (fall ill),” “困 [kùn] (sleepy)” are for a physiological state. State verbs possess the following grammatical features:

- (1) Most of them can be modified by adverbs of degree, such as “很饿 [hěn è] (very hungry),” “特别喜欢 [tè bié xǐ huān] (be particularly fond of),” “十分讨厌 [shí fēn tǎo yàn] (be fully sick of)”; yet, neither “病 [bìng] (fall ill)” nor “醒 [xǐng] (wake up)” can be modified by adverbs of degree.
- (2) They are unable to form an imperative sentence.
- (3) Those for a psychological state are transitive verbs and those for a physiological state are intransitive verbs.

### 3 Relation verbs

A relation verb is characterized by its abstract lexical meaning. It mainly connects a subject with an object in the sentence, implying a certain relation between them. Therefore, objects after most relation verbs cannot be omitted. There are three types of relation verbs.

- (1) The first type is “是 [shì] (is).”
- (2) The second type includes “叫 [jiào] (name),” “姓 [xìng] (surname),” “当作 [dāng zuò] (regard as),” “成为 [chéng wéi] (become),” “像 [xiàng] (seem),” “等于 [děng yú] (equal to).”

The main grammatical features of the second type are as follows.

First, “不 [bù/bù] (not)” is frequently used to express negation and “没 [méi] (no)” can be used occasionally.

Second, except for “像 [xiàng] (seem),” they can neither be modified by an adverb of degree nor omit an object.

Third, most of them cannot be overlapped, especially for those such as “成为 [chéng wéi] (become),” “叫 [jiào] (name),” “等于 [děng yú] (equal to),” “像 [xiàng] (seem).”

Fourth, they are rarely followed by “了 [le]” or “着 [zhe].”

Fifth, they cannot be predicate verbs in “把 [bǎ]” sentences.

Sixth, they are unable to form an imperative sentence.

- (3) The third type is “有 [yǒu] (have).”

### 4 Volitive verbs

## III. Categories of verbs based on object followed

### 1 Notional verbs

A notional verb takes notional words as its object, such as nouns, pronouns, numeral-quantifier phrases. There are a large quantity of these verbs in Chinese, such as “打(电话) [dǎ (diàn huà)] (make a call),” “买(东西) [mǎi (dōng xi)] (go shopping),” “开(汽车) [kāi (qì chē)] (drive a car),” “缝(衣服) [féng (yī fu)] (sew a dress).”

## 2 Predicate-object verbs

A predicate-object verb only takes a predicate (verb, adjective) as its object, such as “进行(动员) [jìn xíng (dòng yuán)] (conduct mobilization),” “加以(指责) [jiā yǐ (zhǐ zé)] (find fault with),” “开始(研究) [kāi shǐ (yán jiū)] (begin to research),” “继续(讨论) [jì xù (tǎo lùn)] (continue to discuss),” “喜欢(跳舞) [xǐ huān (tiào wǔ)] (like dancing).” More verbs of this category are “希望 [xī wàng] (hope),” “从事 [cóng shì] (work on),” “给予 [gěi yǔ] (give),” “装作 [zhuāng zuò] (pretend),” “声明 [shēng míng] (declare),” “值得 [zhí dé] (deserve),” “受 [shòu] (suffer),” “敢于 [gǎn yú] (dare to),” “企图 [qǐ tú] (attempt),” “受(到) [shòu (dào)] (receive),” “觉得 [jué de] (think).”

Some verbs are able to take a notional object as well as a predicate object, such as “记得 [jì de] (remember),” “通知 [tōng zhī] (inform),” “肯定 [kěn dìng] (affirm),” “表示 [biǎo shì] (express),” “研究 [yán jiū] (research),” “准备 [zhǔn bèi] (prepare),” “同意 [tóng yì] (agree),” “看(见) [kàn (jiàn)] (see),” “听 [tīng] (listen),” “引起 [yǐn qǐ] (cause).”

## 3 Verbs followed by subject-predicate phrases as their object

It takes a subject-predicate phrase as its object, such as “我希望你明天早一点来。 [wǒ xī wàng nǐ míng tiān zǎo yī diǎn lái.] (I wish you would come earlier tomorrow.),” “刚才我看见有一个人从这儿出去了。 [gāng cái wǒ kàn jiàn yǒu yī gè rén cóng zhè er chū qù le.] (I saw a man go out of here just now.),” “他认为事业是最重要的，家庭不那么重要。 [tā rèn wéi shì yè shì zuì zhòng yào de, jiā tíng bú nà me zhòng yào.] (He thinks a career is more important than family.).” Many of them accept a predicate phrase as an object as well, such as “希望 [xī wàng] (hope),” “觉得 [jué de] (think),” “怕 [pà] (fear).” Besides, these objects, sometimes, are probably as long as a sentence or even a paragraph.

## 4 Double-object verbs

As its name implies, a double-object verb takes two objects, such as “张老师教我们中文。 [zhāng lǎo shī jiāo wǒ men zhōng wén.] (Prof. Zhang teaches us Chinese.),” “他给了我一本新书。 [tā gěi le wǒ yī běn xīn shū.] (He gave me a new book).” More verbs of this category are “给 [gěi] (give),” “教 [jiāo] (teach),” “交 [jiāo] (hand in),” “送 [sòng] (give).”

**IV. Action verbs of continuity and action verbs of non-continuity**

An action verb of continuity implies that the action itself is continuous or repeated continuously, such as “看 [kàn] (look),” “写 [xiě] (write),” “听 [tīng] (listen),” “说 [shuō] (speak),” “跳 [tiào] (jump),” “拍 [pāi] (pat),” “敲 [qiāo] (knock),” “坐 [zuò] (sit),” “批评 [pī píng] (criticize),” “挂 [guà] (hang),” “放 [fàng] (put),” “租 [zū] (rent).” It can be followed by “着 [zhe],” such as “听着 [tīng zhe] (be listening),” “他在纸上写着什么，我看不清楚。 [tā zài zhǐ shàng xiě zhe shén me,

wǒ kàn bù qīng chǔ.] (I couldn't see clearly what he was writing on the paper.)” “教室里坐着一些学生。[jiāo shì lǐ zuò zhe yī xiē xué shēng.] (There are some students sitting in the classroom.)” Also, it can be overlapped in use, such as “你去看看。[nǐ qù kàn kàn.] (You go and have a look.),” “他把自己的意见说了说，大家都表示同意。[tā bǎ zì jǐ de yì jiàn shuō le shuō, dà jiā dōu biǎo shì tóng yì.] (He expressed his opinion and everyone agreed.),” “进来坐坐吧。[jìn lái zuò zuò ba.] (Come in and have a seat.)”

An action verb of non-continuity indicates that the action itself is instantaneous rather than continuous, such as “死 [sǐ] (die),” “散 [sàn] (scatter),” “懂 [dǒng] (understand),” “完 [wán] (finish),” “结婚 [jié hūn] (marry),” “成立 [chéng lì] (establish),” “出现 [chū xiàn] (appear),” “消失 [xiāo shī] (disappear),” “来 [lái] (come).” Such verbs cannot be followed by “着 [zhe].”

#### ***V. Action verbs of volitional conduct and action verbs of non-volitional conduct***

An action verb of volitional conduct denotes the intention of the actor towards a certain action, such as “说 [shuō] (speak),” “唱 [chàng] (sing),” “学 [xué] (learn),” “买 [mǎi] (buy),” “打 [dǎ] (beat),” “骂 [mà] (curse),” “教 [jiāo] (teach),” “吃 [chī] (eat),” “喝 [hē] (drink),” “帮助 [bāng zhù] (help).” It is able to form an imperative sentence.

An action verb of non-volitional conduct implies unwillingness of the actor towards a certain action, such as “病 [bìng] (fall ill),” “死 [sǐ] (die),” “完 [wán] (finish),” “知道 [zhī dào] (know),” “怕 [pà] (fear),” “塌 [tā] (collapse),” “漏 [lòu] (leak).” It is unable to form an imperative sentence.

### **Section three: sentence-formations based on the verb**

The verb is key in a sentence with a verb as a predicate. In languages, verbs are complex with their own inflected changes of different grammatical meanings, especially those in Indo-European languages. The Chinese verb is not inflected, which tends to take it for granted that it can be used alone as an individual in a sentence, without any addition of grammatical meaning. In fact, there are many limitations to Chinese verbs when functioning alone in a sentence, especially for action verbs. Although Chinese verbs have no inflected changes, they have their own ways to connect themselves with the actions they convey, to express a certain grammatical meaning. For example, the dynamic auxiliary “了 [le]” after a verb indicates a finished action or a state of occurrence; similarly, “着 [zhe]” refers to an ongoing action, and “过 [guò]” expresses experience. Besides, the complements after a verb are various, such as result complements or directional complements for the state of a result. Therefore, these additions greatly help verbs in sentence formation.

There are many factors that influence sentence formation based on the verb. In the following situations, verbs can stand alone in the sentence without any auxiliary words or complements added.

**I. To narrate an upcoming (or unfinished) action**

Example 1 明天我们学新课。[míng tiān wǒ men xué xīn kè.]  
(We are going to learn a new lesson tomorrow.)

Example 2 同学，你借什么书？[tóng xué, nǐ jiè shén me shū?]  
(Hello classmate, what book do you want to borrow?)

Example 3

A: 明天你去颐和园吗？[míng tiān nǐ qù yí hé yuán ma?]  
(Are you going to the Summer Palace tomorrow?)

B: 去。[qù]  
(Yes.)

The imperative sentence is permitted in this situation.

Example 4 走！[zǒu!]  
(Go!)

Example 5 说！[shuō!]  
(Speak!)

**II. To narrate a frequent action or an action without a particular time**

Example 6 小王每天来。[Xiǎo Wáng měi tiān lái.]  
(Xiao Wang comes here every day.)

Example 7 文化宫常常举办各种展览。[wén huà gōng cháng cháng jǔ bàn gè zhǒng zhǎn lǎn.]  
(The palace of culture often holds various exhibitions.)

Example 8 这个队伍我当家。[zhè gè duì wǔ wǒ dāng jiā.]  
(I'm in charge of this team.)

Example 9 阿里住这个房间吗？[ā lǐ zhù zhè gè fáng jiān ma?]  
(Is this A Li's room?)

Example 10 我妹妹喜欢你。[wǒ mèi mèi xǐ huān nǐ.]  
(My younger sister likes you.)

Also, article titles and headline slogans are qualified in this situation.

Example 11 虎穴追踪。[hǔ xué zhuī zōng.]  
(track the tiger to its lair)

Example 12 预防流感！[yù fáng liú gǎn!]  
(to prevent the flu!)

From these, two points are clearly shown.

One is that relation verbs or verbs for emotional expression can function alone in the sentence. The same is true for the volitive verbs before verbs and the verbs followed by objects.

The other is that the action verb can function alone as the response to the interrogative sentence or the imperative sentence. But it requires a time noun or an adverb to function normally in a declarative sentence.

### III. To explain or describe a state of occurrence

In literary works or others in the written language, state verbs or four-character phrases are capable of making sentences for exposition or description, rather than narrating the whole process of action, event, or state. Actually, the actions in these sentences have no definite time.

Example 13 马志民一向热爱集体。[Mǎ Zhì mín yī xiàng rè ài jí tǐ.]  
(Ma Zhimin has always loved the collective.)

Example 14 我珍惜彼得的礼物，更珍惜彼得对中国人民的友谊。[wǒ zhēn xī Bǐ dé de lǐ wù, gèng zhēn xī Bǐ dé duì zhōng guó rén mín de yǒu yì.]  
(I cherish Peter's gift and especially his friendship to the Chinese people.)

Example 15 几年来，这个地区发生了巨大的变化，工农业生产蒸蒸日上。[jǐ nián lái, zhè gè dì qū fā shēng le jù dà de biàn huà, gōng nóng yè shēng chǎn zhēng zhēng rì shàng.]

(In the past few years, great changes have taken place in this area, and industrial and agricultural production has developed flourishingly.)

Example 16 我哥哥在大学教书。[wǒ gē gē zài dà xué jiāo shū.]  
(My brother teaches at a university.)

Example 17

A: 你在这个戏里演什么？[nǐ zài zhè gè xì lǐ yǎn shén me?]  
(What's your role in this play?)

B: 演一个工人。[yǎn yī gè gōng rén.]  
(I play a worker.)

Four-character phrases (成语 [chéng yǔ]) in Chinese are greatly effective in sentence formation, especially in the written language or in formal situations.

### IV. To emphasize the introduction of an event or a situation

The sentence formed by an action verb emphasizes a fact or a situation, rather than the process of an action. The actions conveyed by verbs don't necessarily agree with the time sequence; instead, they are paralleled in the time sequence. Therefore, sentences of this type consist of several clauses.

Example 18 昨天，一班参观纺织厂，二班参观人民公社，我们班参观幼儿园。[zuó tiān, yī bān cān guān fǎng zhī chǎng, èr bān cān guān rén mín gōng shè, wǒ men bān cān guān yòu ér yuán.]

(Yesterday, Class One visited the textile factory; Class Two visited the people's commune, and our class visited the kindergarten.)



Example 19 英雄的筑路工人和工程技术人员破除迷信，解放思想，精心设计，精心施工。[yīng xióng de zhù lù gōng rén hé gōng chéng jì shù rén yuán pò chú mí xìn, jiě fàng sī xiǎng, jīng xīn shè jì, jīng xīn shī gōng.] (Through breaking down blind faith and emancipating the mind, the road builders and engineers adopted an elaborate way of designing and constructing.)

Example 20 去年市里召开模范教师代表大会。会上给模范教师戴红花，表彰先进事迹。市里主要领导还和教师们促膝谈心，倾听他们的意见。[qù nián shì lǐ zhào kāi mó fàn jiāo shī dài biǎo dà huì. huì shàng gěi mó fàn jiāo shī gēi hóng huā, biǎo zhāng xiān jìn shì jì. shì lǐ zhǔ yào lǐng dǎo hái hé jiāo shī men cù xī tán xīn, qīng tīng tā men de yì jiàn.] (A model teacher congress was held by the city government last year, in which the model teachers with red honor flowers introduced their advanced deeds and exchanged their opinions with the city's main leaders in a heart-to-heart talk.)

Example 21 昨天下午在八宝山公墓开追悼会。市委第三书记XXX同志主持追悼会，市委书记XX同志致悼词。[zuó tiān xià wǔ zài bā bǎo shān gōng mù kāi zhuī dào huì. shì wěi dì sān shū jì XXX tóng zhì zhǔ chí zhuī dào huì, shì wěi shū jì XX tóng zhì zhì dào cí.] (A memorial service was held at the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery yesterday afternoon. XXX, the third secretary of the municipal Party committee, presided over the memorial service. XX, the secretary of the municipal Party committee, delivered a eulogy.)

The finished actions in these sentences are narrated by a certain logic or status but not time sequence.

Usually, “了 [le]” doesn't appear in the headline because the headline generalizes the article rather than narrating it.

#### V. About “了 [le],” “着 [zhe],” “过 [guò]”

Some verbs cannot be followed by “了 [le],” “着 [zhe],” “过 [guò],” or complements. They are as follows.

- 1 Relation verbs, such as “是 [shì] (is),” “作为 [zuò wéi] (serve as)”
- 2 Causative verbs, such as “使 [shǐ] (make),” “叫 [jiào] (make),” “让 [ràng] (let)”
- 3 Volitive verbs
- 4 Other words, such as “觉得 [jué de] (feel),” “显得 [xiǎn de] (seem),” “以为 [yǐ wéi] (think),” “知道 [zhī dào] (know),” “认识 [rèn shí] (recognize),” “明白 [míng bái] (understand),” “承认 [chéng rèn] (admit),” “有 [yǒu] (have).”

Next is the comparison between the sentences with and without “了 [le].”

Example 22 他又有了一个新的女朋友。[tā yòu yǒu le yī gè xīn de nǚ péng yǒu.] (He has a new girlfriend again.)

To compare: 他有女朋友, 我没有女朋友。[tā yǒu nǚ péng yǒu, wǒ méi yǒu nǚ péng yǒu.]

(He has a girlfriend and I don't.)

Example 23 昨天在晚上他认识了很多。[zuó tiān zài wǎn huì shàng tā rèn shí le hěn duō rén.]

(He met a lot of people at the party yesterday.)

To compare: 这个人我认识。[zhè gè rén wǒ rèn shí.]

(I know this man.)

Example 24 他刚才承认了这件事是他干的。[tā gāng cái chéng rèn le zhè jiàn shì shì tā gàn de.]

(He just admitted that he did it.)

To compare: 他承认这件事是他干的。[tā chéng rèn zhè jiàn shì shì tā gàn de.]  
(He admits that he has done it.)

“了 [le]” in these sentences implies a process from being unaware to being aware of something or from not having to having something.

## Section four: overlapped verbs

Overlapped verbs denote that verbs are overlapped in use. When used in this way, they indicate a certain meaning and possess special expressive functions.

### I. Overlapped forms

When a monosyllabic verb is overlapped in the form of “AA,” it should be pronounced slightly on the second syllable (the light tone: 轻声 [qīng shēng]), such as “听听 [tīng ting] (listen),” “看看 [kàn kan] (look),” “想想 [xiǎng xiang] (think).” If this verb is pronounced in the third tone, it would be changed into the second tone, such as “讲讲 [jiǎng jiang] (talk),” “洗洗 [xǐ xi] (wash).” “一[yī]” can appear in the middle of them, such as “看一看 [kàn yī kàn] (have a look),” “想一想 [xiǎng yī xiǎng] (give a thought to).”

When a disyllabic verb is overlapped in the form of “ABAB,” it should be pronounced in this way: the first A is stressed; the second A is sub-stressed; both Bs are in slight pronunciation, such as “讨论讨论 [tǎo lun tǎo lun] (discuss),” “研究研究 [yán jiu yán jiu] (study).”

### II. Grammatical meaning of overlapped verbs

Overlapped verbs indicate that the actions conveyed by verbs are ongoing in a short period of time, or do not frequently happen. Even if these verbs are of continuity, they still carry a sense of short duration.

Example 1 老四不好意思地笑笑, 退回到墙根去了。[Lǎo Sì bù hǎo yì sī de xiào xiào, tuì huí dào qiáng gēn qù le.]

(Lao Si smiled shyly and retreated to the foot of a wall.)

Example 2 祥子咽了口气，咬了咬嘴唇，推门走出来。[Xiáng zǐ yān le kǒu qì, yǎo le yǎo zuǐ chún, tuī mén zǒu chū lái.]

(Xiangzi bit his lips with a sigh, then opened the door and went out.)

Example 3 我向窗外看了看，一个人也没有。[wǒ xiàng chuāng wài kàn le kàn, yī gè rén yě méi yǒu.]

(I looked out of the window, but no one was there.)

If the actions conveyed by verbs are not continuous but can be repeated, the overlapped verbs imply a sense of low frequency.

Example 4 他用力扯了扯衣角。[tā yòng lì chě le chě yī jiǎo.]

(He tugged at the corner of his coat.)

Example 5 听了我的话，他点了点头，没说话。[tīng le wǒ de huà, tā diǎn le diǎn tóu, méi shuō huà.]

(After hearing my words, he nodded but said nothing.)

Example 6 老师敲了敲桌子，叫大家注意听。[lǎo shī qiāo le qiāo zhuō zǐ, jiào dà jiā zhùyì tīng.]

(The teacher rapped on the table to attract our attention to his speaking.)

### III. *Expressive functions of overlapped verbs*

The overlapped verb possesses special expressive functions which are from, rather than equal to, its grammatical meanings. Therefore, it requires attention in using overlapped verbs.

Expressive functions of overlapped verbs are closely related to occurrence times of action.

#### 1 To express the action that doesn't happen yet in a euphemistic manner

When expressing an action that hasn't happened yet, overlapped verbs mainly function as a euphemistic manner of speaking for a subjective willingness. This is the most common usage.

Example 7 你看看，这样写对不对？[nǐ kàn kàn, zhè yàng xiě duì bú duì?] (Could you have a look and tell me if I can write it this way?)

Example 8 我的钢笔不见了，你帮我找找。[wǒ de gāng bǐ bú jiàn le, nǐ bāng wǒ zhǎo zhǎo.]

(My pen is missing. Please help me look for it.)

Example 9 你等我一下，我去去就来。<sup>1</sup> [nǐ děng wǒ yī xià, wǒ qù qù jiù lái.] (Please wait for me for a while, and I'll be right back soon.)

Example 10 没办法，只好暂时挤一挤。[méi bàn fǎ, zhǐ hǎo zàn shí jǐ yī jǐ.] (There is no choice but to squeeze in for a moment.)

Example 11 你叫他在外边等一等。[nǐ jiào tā zài wài biān děng yī děng.] (Tell him to wait outside for a while.)

Some verbs indicating a wish share the same function, such as “想 [xiǎng] (want),” “打算 [dǎ suàn] (intend),” “希望 [xī wàng] (hope).”

Example 12 我想出去走走。[wǒ xiǎng chū qù zǒu zǒu.]

(I want to go out for a while.)

Example 13 我希望详细听听那儿的的情况。[wǒ xī wàng xiáng xì tīng tīng nà er de qíng kuàng.]

(I'd like to hear more about it.)

This function helps the speaker express what he or she wants, wishes, demands, or requires, and tends to make the listener easily accept what the speaker asks for. Besides, the slight (light-tone) pronunciation of overlapped syllables softens the manner of speaking further. Let's compare the following two sentences.

Example 14 老师，这个字很难，你给我们写写。[lǎo shī, zhè gè zì hěn nán, nǐ gěi wǒ men xiě xiě.]

(Professor, this word is very difficult to write; you could show us how to do it.)

老师，这个字很难，你给我们写。[lǎo shī, zhè gè zì hěn nán, nǐ gěi wǒ men xiě.]

(Professor, you wrote this word for us because it is very difficult to write.)

Comparatively speaking, the first sentence in the example sounds more polite than the second one.

Also, overlapped verbs can show those casual or unserious actions, like Example 10 and 11.

One more pair of sentences for comparison is as follows:

Example 15 我想跟你谈谈。[wǒ xiǎng gēn nǐ tán tán.]

(I want to have a talk with you.)

我想跟领导谈，不想跟你谈。[wǒ xiǎng gēn lǐng dǎo tán, bù xiǎng gēn nǐ tán.]

(I want to talk to my leader, but not you.)

The first sentence in this example sounds casual and informal in the manner of speaking; on the contrary the second one reflects a serious tone, implying an upcoming formal talk.

“看 [kàn] (look)” can be added after overlapped verbs to express a try.

Example 16 这个电视机我修不好，你来修修看。[zhè gè diàn shì jī wǒ xiū bù hǎo, nǐ lái xiū xiū kàn.]

(I can't fix this TV set. You could have a try.)

## 2 To express the action that has happened

“了 [le]” is required in the middle to indicate an action of a short duration. There are two situations for such usage.

## (1) To be accepted as body language

Some body behaviors conveyed by overlapped verbs are culturally accepted as body language. For example, shaking one's head indicates negation or regret; nodding one's head means affirmation, compliment, or greeting. Patting one's shoulder implies a close relation but shrugging one's shoulders expresses helplessness. Frowning shows dissatisfaction and scratching one's head declares having no choice. These body behaviors last for a short duration.

Example 17 小宁伸了伸舌头，不觉摸了一下脑袋，又嘻嘻笑了起来。[Xiǎo Níng shēn le shēn shé tóu, bù jué mō le yī xià nǎo dai, yòu xī xī xiào le qǐ lái.]

(Xiao Ning stretched out his tongue, touched his head unconsciously, and then laughed again.)

Example 18 祥子摇摇头：“不要紧。”[Xiáng zǐ yáo yáo tóu: “bú yào jǐn.”]

(Xiangzi shook his head and said: “Never mind.”)

Example 19 他见了我只点点头，没说话。[tā jiàn le wǒ zhǐ diǎn diǎn tóu, méi shuō huà.]

(He nodded when he saw me, but said nothing.)

## (2) To express a continuous action

Some actions conveyed by overlapped verbs can last for a while but cannot continue for a long time.

Example 20 欧阳海看了看停在旁边的火车，又看了看从火车上下来的人，微笑了一下，就闭上了眼睛。[Ou yáng Hǎi kàn le kàn tíng zài páng biān de huǒ chē, yòu kàn le kàn cóng huǒ chē shàng xià lái de rén, wēi xiào le yī xià, jiù bì shàng le yǎn jīng.]

(Ouyang Hai looked at the train which parked next to him and then at the people getting off the train. He smiled and closed his eyes.)

Example 21 徐书记又给他讲了讲酒厂的前途，摆了摆条件。[Xú shū jì yòu gěi tā jiǎng le jiǎng jiǔ chǎng de qián tú, bǎi le bǎi tiáo jiàn.]

(Secretary Xu told him again about the future of the winery and introduced the conditions as well.)

Example 22 善良的铁人羞怯地笑笑，眨巴眨巴眼睛，红了脸。[shàn liáng de tiě rén xiū qiè de xiào xiào, zhǎ bā zhǎ bā yǎn jīng, hóng le liǎn.]

(The kind-hearted iron man smiled shyly, winked his eyes and blushed.)

Example 23 祥子更上了火，他故意把车停住了，掸了掸身上的雪。[Xiáng zǐ gèng shàng le huǒ, tā gù yì bǎ chē tíng zhù le, dǎn le dǎn shēn shàng de xuě.]

(Xiangzi became more angry. He rested his rickshaw on purpose and dusted the snow off his body.)

The actions conveyed by these verbs carry a sense of casualness. For example, if Example 21 is changed into “徐书记又给他讲了酒厂的前途，并摆了有利条件和不利条件。[xú shū jì yòu gěi tā jiǎng le jiǔ chǎng de qián tú, bìng bǎi le yǒu lì tiáo jiàn hé bú lì tiáo jiàn.] (Xu told him again about the future of the winery, and introduced favorable and unfavorable conditions),” it would sound more formal.

A verb cannot be used in the overlapped form if it conveys a finished action that requires duration. For example, it is improper to express like this: “\*我昨天晚上看了看电影。[wǒ zuó tiān wǎn shàng kàn le kàn diàn yǐng.]” or “\*老师上课的时候给我们讲了讲故事。[lǎo shī shàng kè de shí hòu gěi wǒ men jiǎng le jiǎng gù shì.]”

Similarly, those verbs of no continuity cannot be overlapped, either. For example, it is improper to express like this: “\*我去年夏天去中国玩了玩！[wǒ qù nián xià tiān qù zhōng guó wán le wán!]”

### 3 To express an action that frequently happens or an action without a definite occurrence time

An overlapped verb can express an action that frequently happens or an action without a definite occurrence time. Usually, such usage carries a sense of casualness or relaxation, being represented by several sentences combined.

Example 24 他退了休以后，平常看看书，下下棋，和老朋友聊聊天，倒也不寂寞。[tā tuì le xiū yǐ hòu, píng cháng kàn kàn shū, xià xià qí, hé lǎo péng yǒu liáo liáo tiān, dào yě bú jì mò.]

(After retirement, he often reads, plays chess, and chats with old friends, which keeps him away from aloneness.)

Example 25 会议已经开完，这几天他看看电影，买买东西，收拾收拾行李，就等着回家了。[huì yì yǐ jīng kāi wán, zhè jǐ tiān tā kàn kàn diàn yǐng, mǎi mǎi dōng xī, shōu shí shōu shí xíng lí, jiù děng zhe huí jiā le.]

(During these days after the conference, he relaxed himself through watching movies, shopping, packing his suitcase, and then he waited to go home.)

Example 26 打打球，跑跑步，就不会失眠了。[dǎ dǎ qiú, pǎo pǎo bù, jiù bú huì shī mián le.]

(Playing a ball game and going out for a run helps in avoiding insomnia.)

For overlapped verbs that don't imply a short duration, adverbs indicating a long time can be added in front of them.

Example 27 为了全面了解情况，他要多听听，多看看，深入调查调查。[wèi le quán miàn le jiě qíng kuàng, tā yào duō tīng tīng, duō kàn kàn, shēn rù diào chá diào chá.]

(In order to get a comprehensive understanding of the situation, he should hear more, see more, and investigate more.)

Example 28 我要好好回忆回忆那天的情况。[wǒ yào hǎo hǎo huí yì huí yì nà tiān de qíng kuàng.]

(I want to think about what happened that day.)

Example 29 你要彻底挖一挖思想根源。[nǐ yào chè dǐ wā yī wā sī xiǎng gēn yuán.]

(You need to dig deep into the roots of your thoughts.)

Example 30 经常打打球，游游泳，对身体有好处。[jīng cháng dǎ dǎ qiú, yóu yóu yǒng, duì shēn tǐ yǒu hǎo chù.]

(It is good for the health to play a ball game and go out for a swim frequently.)

#### IV. *Features of overlapped verbs*

Whether a verb can be overlapped depends on its features; which verbs can be overlapped are decided by different contexts as well as different expressive functions.

- 1 Most action verbs can be overlapped, especially for those of volitional conduct and those of continuity. For example, “看 [kàn] (look),” “笑 [xiào] (smile/laugh),” “歇 [xiē] (rest),” “等 [děng] (wait),” “摇 [yáo] (shake),” “拍 [pāi] (pat),” “跳 [tiào] (jump),” “躺 [tǎng] (lie),” “坐 [zuò] (sit)” are action verbs possessing volitional conduct and continuity at the same time.

When the verbs of non-volitional conduct are overlapped, they convey volitional actions that can be controlled.

Example 31 不要管我，你让我哭哭吧！[bú yào guǎn wǒ, nǐ ràng wǒ kū kū ba.]

(Leave me alone and let me cry.)

Usually, “哭 [kū] (cry)” is regarded as a non-volitional action but it is changed into a volitional one because of “让 [ràng] (let)” in the sentence.

Example 32 姨夫，你醒醒！[yí fū, nǐ xǐng xǐng.]

(Uncle, wake up!)

“醒 [xǐng] (wake up)” is uncontrollable but it is changed into an action verb of volitional conduct in the example.

Example 33 你咳嗽咳嗽，没准儿能咳嗽出来。[nǐ ké sòu ké sòu, méi zhǔn er néng ké sòu chū lái.]

(Try to make several coughs and you may force out a cough.)

Similarly, “咳嗽 [ké sòu] (cough)” is non-volitional but it is changed into a volitional action in this example.

Action verbs of non-volitional conduct cannot be overlapped. For example, it is improper to say: “\*刚才他睡了睡，很快就醒了。[gāng cái tā shuì le shuì, hěn kuài jiù xǐng le.]” unless it is re-expressed like this: “刚才他睡了一会儿，很快就醒了。[gāng cái tā shuì le yī huì er, hěn kuài jiù xǐng le.] (He slept for a while and woke up soon.)”

- 2 For those action verbs of non-volitional conduct or of no continuity, when they make an effort, they can be overlapped.

Example 34 你摔摔这个瓶子，看结实不结实。[nǐ shuāi shuāi zhè gè píng zǐ, kàn jié shí bù jié shí.]

(Try to break this glass bottle and check whether it is unbreakable.)

Example 35 杀鸡并不可怕，不信你杀学试试。[shā jī bìng bù kě pà, bú xìn nǐ shā xué shì shì.]

(It is not as terrible as you expect to kill a chicken. If you do not believe, you could have a try.)

Example 36 你叫他生生孩子，他就知道做母亲的甘苦了。[nǐ jiào tā shēng shēng hái zǐ, tā jiù zhī dào zuò mǔ qīn de gān kǔ le.]

(If he could have a chance to give birth to a child, he would know the joys and sorrows of motherhood.)

Example 37 你敢爱她，你爱爱她试试，有你的苦头吃。[nǐ gǎn ài tā, nǐ ài ài tā shì shì, yǒu nǐ de kǔ tóu chī.]

(How dare you love her? If you fell in love with her, you would suffer a lot.)

- 3 Some adjectives and verbs for a psychological state can be used in the overlapped form, carrying a sense of causing something to happen.

Example 38 我一定可以把小东西还是活蹦乱跳地找回来，叫你高兴高兴。[wǒ yī dìng kě yǐ bǎ xiǎo dōng xī hái shì huó bèng luàn tiào de zhǎo huí lái, jiào nǐ gāo xìng gāo xìng.]

(I'm sure I can find the little thing alive, and make you happy again.)

Example 39 你们下来凉快凉快吧。[nǐ men xià lái liáng kuài liáng kuài ba.]

(Come down and enjoy the pleasant coolness.)

Example 40 我就是要让你知道知道我的厉害。[wǒ jiù shì yào jiào nǐ zhī dào zhī dào wǒ de lì hài.]

(I just want you to know how powerful I am.)

- 4 Many monosyllabic verbs and verbs frequently used in the spoken language can be overlapped; most disyllabic verbs and verbs in the written language cannot be overlapped. Overlapped verbs mainly appear in the spoken language and seldom occur in the written language.



**V. Syntactic features of overlapped verbs**

- 1 Verbs indicating ongoing actions cannot be overlapped, such as “\*我正在看看书。[wǒ zhèng zài kàn kàn shū.]” “\*他们听一听音乐呢。[tā men tīng yī tīng yīn lè ne.]” Or together with “过 [guò]” or “着 [zhe],” they cannot be used in the overlapped form, either.
- 2 Overlapped verbs mainly function as the predicate, and they can function as the subject and object as well. Yet, they rarely serve as either adverbials or complements.

Example 41 看看是必要的。[kàn kàn shì bì yào de.]

(It's necessary to have a look.)

Example 42 他总喜欢多看看，多听听，不喜欢下车伊始哇啦哇啦地发议论。[tā zǒng xǐ huān duō kàn kàn, duō tīng tīng, bù xǐ huān xià chē yǐ shǐ wā lā wā lā de fā yì lùn.]

(He always prefers to see more, hear more, instead of making comments immediately when getting off the car.)

- 3 Few overlapped verbs appear in the negative sentence, except in the following situations.

- (1) In interrogative sentences and rhetorical sentences

In this situation, they carry a sense of complaint.

Example 43 你也不想想，他的话还有真的？[nǐ yě bù xiǎng xiǎng, tā de huà hái yǒu zhēn de?]

(Why don't you have a second thought about the truth of his words?)

Example 44 他怎么没等我？[tā zěnmé děng wǒ?]

(Why didn't he wait for me?)

- (2) In the compressed sentence for an assumption or condition

Example 45 对这种人，不教训教训不行。[duì zhè zhǒng rén, bù jiào xùn jiào xùn bù xíng.]

(Such a person deserves a good lesson.)

Example 46 这个问题不调查调查就弄不清楚。[zhè gè wèn tí bú diào chá diào chá jiù bù qīng chǔ.]

(This problem cannot be clarified without an investigation.)

Usually, a negative sentence with overlapped verbs indicates the meaning of “应该 [yīng gāi] (should).”

**VI. Other overlapped forms**

- 1 “V来 [lái] (come) V去 [qù] (go)”

Some verbs can be followed by some directional complements, such as “V来[lái] (come) V去 [qù] (go),” to form an overlapped form, which means that the actions conveyed by verbs are repeated in turn.

Example 47 在公园里，我看见蝴蝶在花丛中飞来飞去，孩子们在旁边跑来跑去。[zài gōng yuán lǐ, wǒ kàn jiàn hú dié zài huā cóng zhōng fēi lái fēi qù, hái zǐ men zài páng biān pǎo lái pǎo qù.]  
(In the park, I saw butterflies flying among the flowers and children running around.)

Example 48 他焦急地在房间里走来走去，不知道怎么办好。[tā jiāo jí de zài fáng jiān lǐ zǒu lái zǒu qù, bù zhī dào zěn me bàn hǎo.]  
(He walked around the room anxiously, not knowing what to do.)

Example 49 我想来想去想出来一个好办法。[wǒ xiǎng lái xiǎng qù xiǎng chū lái yī gè hǎo bàn fǎ.]  
(I thought it over and over, and then a good idea occurred.)

Example 50 大家讨论来讨论去，最后决定比赛推迟到下周举行。[dà jiā tāo lùn lái tāo lùn qù, zuì hòu jué dìng bǐ sài tuī chí dào xià zhōu jǔ xíng.]  
(After several discussions, it was finally decided that the match should be put off to the next week.)

“V来 [lái] (come) V去 [qù] (go)” can be combined with two different verbs of simultaneous occurrence and related meanings.

Example 51 他念诗的时候头不停地摇来摆去，非常可笑。[tā niàn shī de shí hòu tóu bù tíng de yáo lái bǎi qù, fēi cháng kě xiào.]  
(He kept shaking his head as he read the poem, which made him very ridiculous.)

Example 52 他们两个推来挡去，这个回合一直打了有两分钟，最后小白把乒乓球打出了界外。[tā men liǎng gè tuī lái dǎng qù, zhè gè huí hé yī zhí dǎ le yǒu liǎng fēn zhōng, zuì hòu Xiǎo Bái bǎ ping pāng qiú dǎ chū le jiè wài.]  
(The two played this round neck to neck for two minutes, and finally Xiao Bai hit the table tennis ball out of bounds.)

Example 53 我们在上课，你怎么老是出来进去的。[wǒ men zài shàng kè, nǐ zěn me lǎo shì chū lái jìn qù de.]  
(We're having a class. Why do you keep coming in and out?)

“V+过来 [guò lái] (come over)+V过去 [guò qù] (go over)” is also acceptable.

Example 54 夜已经很深了，还有人在我的窗前走过来走过去，害得我睡不着觉。[yè yǐ jīng hěn shēn le, hái yǒu rén zài wǒ de chuāng qián zǒu lái zǒu qù, hài dé wǒ shuì bù zháo jiào.]  
(It was very late at night, and someone walked around my window, which kept me awake.)

Example 55 这件事她说过来说过去不知说了多少遍了。[zhè jiàn shì tā shuō guò lái shuō guò qù bù zhī shuō le duō shǎo biàn le.]  
(She has talked about this matter over and over many times.)

## 2 The form of “V1V1V2V2”

Some verbs, especially for those of related meanings, can be overlapped in this form, such as “说说笑笑 [shuō shuō xiào xiào] (laughing and chatting),” “打闹闹 [dǎ dǎ nào nào] (fighting for fun),” “嘻嘻哈哈 [xī xī hā hā] (laughing and joking),” “蹦蹦跳跳 [bèng bèng tiào tiào] (bouncing vivaciously).” Such a form functions similarly to an adjective.

Followed by “的 [de],” the verb phrase of this form can function as predicate.

Example 56 孩子们整天蹦蹦跳跳的，非常活泼可爱。[hái zi men zhěng tiān bèng bèng tiào tiào de, fēi cháng huó pō kě ài.]  
(The children are very lively and lovely, bouncing vivaciously all day long.)

Example 57 你办事老是拖拖拉拉的，真急死人了。[nǐ bàn shì lǎo shì tuō tuō lā lā de, zhēn jí sǐ rén le.]  
(You are always dragging your feet in dealing with things, which really gets on my nerves!)

Example 58 他们俩一天到晚嘻嘻哈哈的，老是无忧无虑的样子。[tā men liǎng yī tiān dào wǎn xī xī hā hā de, lǎo shì wú yōu wú lǜ de yàng zi.]  
(Laughing and joking, they always remained carefree all day long.)

Followed by “地 [de],” the verb phrase of this form can function as an adverb.

Example 59 他们两个人说说笑笑地走进了教室。[tā men liǎng gè rén shuō shuō xiào xiào de zǒu jìn le jiào shì.]  
(The two walked into the classroom, chatting and laughing.)

Example 60 他推推搡搡地把犯人带了进来。[tā tuī tuī sāng sāng de bǎ fàn rén dài le jìn lái.]  
(He hustled the prisoner in.)

Example 61 他们一伙人游游逛逛地来到了一条热闹的大街上。[tā men yī huǒ rén yóu yóu guàng guàng de lái dào le yī tiáo rè nào de dà jiē shàng.]  
(A group of them strolled about onto a busy street.)

## Section five: multi-category of verbs and nouns

In Chinese, some verbs possess similar grammatical features or functions of nouns at the same time. Thus they are named multi-category words of verbs and nouns. They are divided into the following types:

- 1 Some verbs can refer to a certain action as well as a concrete entity, both of which are closely related in meaning. That is to say, they function as

verbs for an action; they serve as nouns for an entity. Such verbs are as follows:<sup>2</sup>

摆 [bǎi] (display), 包 [bāo] (package), 保管 [bǎo guǎn] (reserve), 报道 [bào dào] (report), 报告 [bào gào] (report), 笔译 [bǐ yì] (translate/translation), 病 [bìng] (ill/fall ill), 裁判 [cái pàn] (judge), 参谋 [cān móu] (give advice/adviser), 残废 [cán fèi] (cripple), 陈设 [chén shè] (display), 称呼 [chēng hū] (address), 代办 [dài bàn] (commission), 刺 [cì] (stab), 代表 [dài biǎo] (delegate), 导演 [dǎo yǎn] (direct/director), 点 [diǎn] (spot), 垛 [duǒ] (stack), 调度 [diào dù] (dispatch), 雕塑 [diāo sù] (sculpture), 对话 [duì huà] (dialogue), 堆 [duī] (pile), 俘虏 [fú lǔ] (capture), 规划 [guī huà] (project), 合唱 [hé chàng] (chorus), 合奏 [hé zòu] (give an instrumental ensemble/ensemble), 汇报 [huì bào] (report), 贿赂 [huì lù] (bribe), 祸害 [huò hài] (harm), 计划 [jì huà] (plan), 记录 [jì lù] (record), 鉴定 [jiàn dìng] (appraise/appraisal), 剪辑 [jiǎn jī] (editing), 检讨 [jiǎn tǎo] (give a self-criticism/self-criticism), 间隔 [jiàn gé] (space), 建筑 [jiàn zhù] (build), 警卫 [jǐng wèi] (guard), 看守 [kān shǒu] (watch), 口译 [kǒu yì] (interpret/interpretation), 练习 [liàn xí] (practice), 领导 [lǐng dǎo] (lead), 埋伏 [mái fú] (ambush), 命令 [mìng lìng] (order), 陪同 [péi tóng] (escort), 批示 [pī shì] (instruct/instruction), 批注 [pī zhù] (comment), 设计 [shè jì] (design), 声明 [shēng míng] (declare/declaration), 说明 [shuō míng] (explain/explanation), 速记 [sù jì] (take something down in shorthand/shorthand), 随从 [suí cóng] (accompany/attendants), 通报 [tōng bào] (notice), 通告 [tōng gào] (announce/announcement), 通令 [tōng lìng] (order), 通知 [tōng zhī] (notice), 统计 [tǒng jì] (count), 统帅 [tǒng shuài] (command), 写生 [xiě shēng] (sketch), 展览 [zhǎn lǎn] (exhibit), 侦探 [zhēn tàn] (detect/detective), 证明 [zhèng míng] (prove/proof), 指挥 [zhǐ huī] (command), 指示 [zhǐ shì] (indicate/indication), 主编 [zhǔ biān] (edit/editor-in-chief), 主演 [zhǔ yǎn] (act in the leading role/the leading role), 注解 [zhù jiě] (note), 注释 [zhù shì] (note), 装备 [zhuāng bèi] (equip/equipment), 装置 [zhuāng zhì] (install/installation), 组合 [zǔ hé] (combine/combination), 组织 [zǔ zhī] (organize/organization) . . .

- 2 Some verbs can be modified by numeral-quantifier phrases or adjectives of feature and quantity, such as “好 [hǎo] (good),” “大 [dà] (big),” “多 [duō] (many).”

Example 1 他有一个爱好。[tā yǒu yī gè ài hào.]  
(He has a hobby.)

Example 2 上级给了他一个很严重的处分。[shàng jí gěi le tā yī gè hěn yán zhòng de chù fèn.]  
(The superior gave him a severe punishment.)

Example 3 通过学习，我们有很大收获。[tōng guò xué xí, wǒ men yǒu hěn dà shōu huò.]  
(We get a lot by learning.)

The verbs in these examples have been changed into nouns, without possessing verbal features any more. Therefore they cannot be negated by “不 [bù/bù],” or followed by objects and dynamic auxiliaries, such as “了 [le],” “着 [zhe],” “过 [guò].” They are multi-category words of verbs and nouns. More similar verbs are as follows:

爱好 [ài hào] (interest), 爱护 [ài hù] (care), 安排 [ān pái] (plan), 保障 [bǎo zhàng] (guarantee), 保证 [bǎo zhèng] (guarantee), 报复 [bào fù] (revenge), 帮助 [bāng zhù] (help), 比喻 [bǐ yù] (make a metaphor/metaphor), 变化 [biàn huà] (change), 标志 [biāo zhì] (mark), 表示 [biǎo shì] (show), 表演 [biǎo yǎn] (perform/performance), 部署 [bù shǔ] (deploy), 参考 [cān kǎo] (refer to/reference), 尝试 [cháng shì] (try), 惩罚 [chéng fá] (punish/punishment), 成就 [chéng jiù] (achieve/achievement), 刺激 [cì jī] (stimulate/stimulation), 处分 [chǔ fèn] (punish/punishment), 触动 [chù dòng] (touch), 创造 [chuàng zào] (create/creation), 答复 [dá fù] (reply), 打击 [dǎ jī] (hit), 打算 [dǎ suàn] (plan), 调查 [diào chá] (investigate/investigation), 锻炼 [duàn liàn] (exercise), 对比 [duì bǐ] (compare/comparison), 发明 [fā míng] (invent/invention), 发现 [fā xiàn] (discover/discovery), 反复 [fǎn fù] (repeat), 反映 [fǎn yìng] (reflect/reflection), 反应 [fǎn yìng] (react/reaction), 飞跃 [fēi yuè] (leap), 分析 [fēn xī] (analyze/analysis), 讽刺 [fěng cì] (satirize/sarcasm), 负担 [fù dān] (load), 改变 [gǎi biàn] (change), 改革 [gǎi gé] (reform), 改进 [gǎi jìn] (ameliorate/amelioration), 改善 [gǎi shàn] (improve/improvement), 干扰 [gān rǎo] (disturb/disturbance), 感受 [gǎn shòu] (feel), 革新 [gé xīn] (innovate/innovation), 更正 [gēng zhèng] (correct), 工作 [gōng zuò] (work), 贡献 [gòng xiàn] (contribute/contribution), 构思 [gòu sī] (conceive/conception), 估计 [gū jì] (estimate), 顾虑 [gù lǜ] (worry), 关怀 [guān huái] (care), 规定 [guī dīng] (stipulate/stipulation), 号召 [hào zhào] (appeal), 幻想 [huàn xiǎng] (fantasy), 回答 [huí dá] (answer), 会战 [huì zhàn] (fight), 活动 [huó dòng] (exercise), 纪念 [jì niàn] (commemorate/commemoration), 寄托 [jì tuō] (trust), 记载 [jì zǎi] (record), 假定 [jiǎ dīng] (assume/assumption), 建议 [jiàn yì] (suggest/suggestion), 奖励 [jiǎng lì] (reward), 教导 [jiào dǎo] (instruct/instruction), 教训 [jiào xùn] (lesson), 教育 [jiào yù] (educate/education), 揭发 [jiē fā] (expose/exposure), 结合 [jié hé] (combine/combination), 解释 [jiě shì] (explain/explanation), 借鉴 [jiè jiàn] (use for reference/using for reference), 决定 [jué dīng] (decide/decision), 警告 [jǐng gào] (warn), 开始 [kāi shǐ] (begin/beginning), 抗议 [kàng yì] (protest), 考查 [kǎo chá] (inspect/inspection), 考虑 [kǎo lǜ] (consider/consideration), 考验 [kǎo yàn] (test), 拉拢 [lā lǒng] (draw somebody over to one's side/drawing somebody over to one's side), 捏造 [niē zào] (fabricate/fabrication), 判断 [pàn duàn] (judge/judgement), 判决 [pàn jué] (adjudge/judgment), 批判 [pī pàn] (criticize/criticism), 批评 [pī píng] (blame), 陪衬 [péi chèn] (set off by contrast/setting off by contrast), 偏向 [piān xiàng] (deviate/deviation), 评价 [píng jià] (evaluate/evaluation), 评论 [píng lùn] (comment), 迫害 [pò hài] (persecute/persecution), 欺骗 [qī piàn] (cheat), 启发 [qǐ fā] (illuminate/illumination), 企图 [qǐ tú] (attempt), 迁就 [qiān jiù] (accommodate oneself to/accommodation), 牵

制 [qiān zhì] (restrain/restraint), 谴责 [qiǎn zé] (censure), 倾向 [qīng xiàng] (incline), 区别 [qū bié] (distinguish/distinguishment), 曲解 [qū jiě] (misunderstand/misunderstanding), 欠缺 [quē qiàn] (lack), 认识 [rèn shí] (cognize/cognition), 声援 [shēng yuán] (support), 胜利 [shèng lì] (win), 失败 [shī bài] (lose/failure), 失算 [shī suàn] (misjudge/misjudgment), 实验 [shí yàn] (experiment), 示范 [shì fàn] (demonstrate/demonstration), 试探 [shì tàn] (probe), 试验 [shì yàn] (test), 收获 [shōu huò] (gain), 束缚 [shù fù] (tie), 探索 [tàn suǒ] (explore/exploration), 提高 [tí gāo] (improve/improvement), 体会 [tǐ huì] (taste), 体现 [tǐ xiàn] (embody/embodiment), 体验 [tǐ yàn] (experience), 挑衅 [tiǎo xìn] (provoke/provocation), 突变 [tū biàn] (mutate/mutation), 突破 [tū pò] (break), 推测 [tuī cè] (guess), 退步 [tuì bù] (backslide), 歪曲 [wāi qū] (distort/distortion), 妄想 [wàng xiǎng] (vain hope/wishful thinking), 威胁 [wēi xié] (threaten/threat), 诬蔑 [wū miè] (smear), 污辱 [wū rǔ] (humiliate/humiliation), 侮辱 [wǔ rǔ] (insult), 误会 [wù huì] (misunderstand/misunderstanding), 希望 [xī wàng] (hope), 习惯 [xí guàn] (get used to/habit), 限制 [xiàn zhì] (limit), 象征 [xiàng zhēng] (symbolize/symbol), 消遣 [xiāo qiǎn] (entertain/entertainment), 信任 [xìn rèn] (trust), 行动 [xíng dòng] (act), 休息 [xiū xi] (rest), 宣传 [xuān chuán] (publicize/publicity), 演说 [yǎn shuō] (give a speech/speech), 演习 [yǎn xí] (drill), 要求 [yāo qiú] (demand), 优待 [yōu dài] (give preferential treatment/giving preferential treatment), 预感 [yù gǎn] (presage), 援助 [yuán zhù] (assist), 运动 [yùn dòng] (exercise), 折磨 [zhé mó] (torment), 诊断 [zhěn duàn] (diagnose/diagnosis), 震动 [zhèn dòng] (vibrate/vibration), 支援 [zhī yuán] (assist), 转折 [zhuǎn zhé] (turn), 作用 [zuò yòng] (function).

## Section six: volitive verbs

Volitive verbs belong to a closed category and are confined to a limited number. They possess complicated meanings and their own grammatical features differ from those of general verbs. Thus, they need discussing in a separate section.

Volitive verbs can be semantically divided into two types. One includes the verbs that express will and subjective judgment for reason, logic, subjective/objective condition or value. The other includes the verbs that indicate judgment for possibility of occurrence.

The volitive verbs to express will are as follows:

要想 [yào xiǎng] (would like)  
 愿意 [yuàn yì] (be willing to)  
 肯 [kěn] (be willing to)  
 敢 [gǎn] (dare)

The volitive verbs to express judgment for reason and logic are as follows:

应该 [yīng gāi] (should)  
 应当 [yīng dāng] (ought to)

应 [yīng] (should)  
该 [gāi] (ought to)  
得 [děi] (have to)

The volitive verbs to express judgment for subjective/objective conditions are as follows:

能 [néng] (be able to)  
能够 [néng gòu] (be capable of)  
可以 [kě yǐ] (can)

The volitive verbs to express permission are as follows:

能 [néng] (can)  
可以 [kě yǐ] (may)  
可 [kě] (may)  
准 [zhǔn] (permit)  
许 [xǔ] (permit)  
得 [děi] (have to)

The volitive verbs to express evaluation are as follows:

配 [pèi] (deserve)  
值得 [zhí dé] (deserve)

The volitive verbs to express possibility are as follows:

可能 [kě néng] (be likely to/may)  
会 [huì] (be likely to)  
要 [yào] (be going to)  
得 [děi] (have to)  
能 [néng] (possible)

### ***I. Grammatical features of volitive verbs***

Volitive verbs, especially for those indicating a certain will, are very similar to non-action verbs in the aspects of grammatical features and grammatical functions.

- 1 Most volitive verbs can function alone as the predicate in the sentence and serve as the response to a question.

#### **Example 1**

A: 明天你能去看电影吗? [míng tiān nǐ néng qù kàn diàn yǐng ma?]  
(Can you go to the cinema tomorrow?)

B: 能。 [néng.]  
(Yes, I can.)

## Example 2

A: 这儿可以吸烟吗? [zhè er kě yǐ xī yān ma?]

(Is smoking permitted here?)

B: 可以。[kě yǐ]

(Yes.)

Besides, some volitive verbs function alone as predicates, without serving as a response.

Example 3 你去可以, 他去也可以。[nǐ qù kě yǐ, tā qù yě kě yǐ.]

(You can go, so can he.)

Example 4 这样做应该。[zhè yàng zuò yīng gāi.]

(This should be done.)

- 2 Volitive verbs can pose a question in the form of paralleling affirmation and negation together.

Example 5 你想不想看这本书? [nǐ xiǎng bù xiǎng kàn zhè běn shū?]

(Would you like to read this book?)

Example 6 他今天能不能打球? [tā jīn tiān néng bù néng dǎ qiú?]

(Can he play a ball game today?)

Example 7 一天到晚白看书, 会不会遭人家的白眼? [yī tiān dào wǎn bái kàn shū, huì bú huì zāo rén jiā de bái yǎn?]

(If you only read but do nothing else all day long, would you be scorned by others?)

- 3 Volitive verbs can be modified by some adverbs, yet it depends sometimes.

Example 8 那伙人对他这么好, 从此以后他更得铁了心跟他们在一起。[nà huǒ rén duì tā zhè me hǎo, cóng cǐ yǐ hòu tā gèng dé tiě le xīn gēn tā men zài yī qǐ.]

(Those people treated him so well that he became more determined to stay with them.)

Example 9 硬让我去, 一定得捅出乱子来。[yìng ràng wǒ qù, yī dìng děi tōng chū luàn zǐ lái.]

(If you forced me to go, you would stir up trouble.)

Example 10 我去可以, 你去也可以。[wǒ qù kě yǐ, nǐ qù yě kě yǐ.]

(I can go, and you can go, too.)

Example 11 他这样说话很不应该。[tā zhè yàng shuō huà hěn bù yīng gāi.]

(It is wrong of him to speak like that.)

Example 12 没问题, 明天他当然会来。[méi wèn tí, míng tiān tā dāng rán huì lái.]

(No problem. He will come tomorrow.)



- 4 Volitive verbs simply accept certain words as objects, such as verbs (phrases), adjectives (phrases), subject-predicate phrases. Nouns or pronouns are not acceptable as their objects, except for some idioms.

Example 13 可能遇到什么大事呢? 能够把江姐救出来么? [kě néng yù dào shén me dà shì ne? néng gòu bǎ Jiāng jiě jiù chū lái me?]

(How will the emergency be met? Can Sister Jiang be rescued out?)

Example 14 对, 不会错, 这个纪延风一定是老纪的女儿。[duì, bú huì cuò, zhè gè Jì Yán fēng yī dìng shì Lǎo Jì de nǚ ér.]

(No doubt about it, and it can't be wrong; this Ji Yanfeng must be Lao Ji's daughter.)

Example 15 今天应该小张值班。[jīn tiān yīng gāi Xiǎo Zhāng zhí bān.]

(Xiao Zhang is supposed to be on duty today.)

Example 16 在这场斗争中, 要立场坚定, 旗帜鲜明。[zài zhè chǎng dòu zhēng zhōng, yào lì chǎng jiān dìng, qí zhì xiān míng.]

(In this struggle, we should have an unwavering and clear stand.)

- 5 Volitive verbs cannot be overlapped or followed by “了 [le],” “着 [zhe],” “过 [guò].”
- 6 Volitive verbs mainly function as predicates, but sometimes they can serve as attributes, such as “应该的事多着呢, 可不一定能实现。[yīng gāi de shì duō zhe ne, kě bù yī dìng néng shí xiàn.] (There are many things that should be done, but they cannot always be done).”

## II. *Structural features of sentences consisting of volitive verbs*

- 1 If the sentence makes sense, volitive verbs can be used side by side.

Example 17 明天我可能要去天津。[míng tiān wǒ kě néng yào qù tiān jīn.]

(I may go to Tianjin tomorrow.)

Example 18 我想他会答应我们的要求的。[wǒ xiǎng tā huì dā yìng wǒ men de yāo qiú de.]

(I think he will agree to our request.)

Example 19 他应该能做到这一点。[tā yīng gāi néng zuò dào zhè yī diǎn.]

(He should be able to do that.)

- 2 Volitive verbs can be followed by the object in the negative form.

Example 20 能不去就不去。[néng bú qù jiù bú qù.]

(You'd better not go, if you can.)

Example 21 你可以不理他。[nǐ kě yǐ bù lǐ tā.]

(You may ignore him.)

Also the volitive verbs in the negative form can take the objects in the negative form.

Example 22 你不会不同意吧? [nǐ bú huì bù tóng yì ba?]

(You can't disagree, can you?)

Example 23 他不应该不来。[tā bù yīng gāi bù lái.]

(He should have come.)

“(不)配 [(bú) pèi] (be not qualified to)” and “(不)值得 [(bù) zhí de] (be unworthy of)” cannot be followed by the object in the negative form; otherwise the sentence would make no sense.

- 3 Objects of volitive verbs can include all the words followed, except for modal particles. Sometimes, verb-object structures probably function as their objects.

Example 24 你能解决这个问题。[nǐ néng jiě jué zhè gè wèn tí.]

(You can solve this problem.)

The object of the action conveyed by the verb in the sentence can be moved forward to the head of the sentence as a topic.

Example 25 这个问题你能解决。[zhè gè wèn tí nǐ néng jiě jué.]

(You can solve the problem.)

With “关于 [guān yú] (with regard to/about),” and “对于 [duì yú] (with regard to/about)” in front, the object of sentence can be changed into an adverb as a topic. Let's compare the following two examples.

Example 26 我们要认真地解决人民群众的生活问题。[wǒ men yào rèn zhēn de jiě jué rén mín qún zhòng de shēng huó wèn tí.]

(We must earnestly solve the problems of the people's livelihoods.) (“人民群众的生活问题 [rén mín qún zhòng de shēng huó wèn tí] (the “problems of the people's livelihoods” as the object of the sentence))

‘对于人民群众的生活问题，我们要认真地解决。[duì yú rén mín qún zhòng de shēng huó wèn tí, wǒ men yào rèn zhēn de jiě jué.]

(With regard to the problem of the people's livelihoods, we must earnestly solve them.) (“人民群众的生活问题 [rén mín qún zhòng de shēng huó wèn tí] (the problems of the people's livelihood)” as the topic of the sentence)

- 4 Generally, volitive verbs can be modified by adverbs simply.

Example 27 父亲也快要睡了。[fù qīn yě kuài yào shuì le.]

(My father was going to the bed.)

Example 28 你这样做很不应该。[nǐ zhè yàng zuò hěn bù yīng gāi.]  
(It is very wrong of you to do so.)

Volitive verbs cannot function as predicates in the “把 [bǎ]” sentence or in the “被 [bèi]” sentence. That is to say, they cannot be put after the adverbs consisting of prepositions, such as “把 [bǎ],” “被 [bèi].” For example, it is improper to say “\*你今天把这本书应该看完。[nǐ jīn tiān bǎ zhè běn shū yīng gāi kàn wán.]” Yet, it is correct to say “你今天应该把这本书看完。[nǐ jīn tiān yīng gāi bǎ zhè běn shū kàn wán.] (You should finish reading the book today.)” because “把这本书看完 [bǎ zhè běn shū kàn wán] (finish the book)” can, as a whole, function as the object of “应该 [yīng gāi] (should).” Besides, before volitive verbs, descriptive adverbs, or those consisting of prepositions, such as “跟 [gēn],” “给 [gěi],” “向 [xiàng],” are not allowed to appear.

The entire predicate of the sentence consisting of a volitive verb can be modified by the adverb, which generally denotes time, location, purpose, or which is led by “关于 [guān yú] (with regard to/about)” or “对于 [duì yú] (with regard to/about).” Such an adverb can either be put before a volitive verb or stand in front of the sentence.

Example 29 我今天要处分你呢? [wǒ jīn tiān yào chù fèn nǐ ne?]  
(I am going to punish you today.)

Example 30 你在家应该多学习学习。[nǐ zài jiā yīng gāi duō xué xí xué xí.]  
(You should study more at home.)

Example 31 今天，我们要在这里建设起人造平原。[jīn tiān, wǒ men yào zài zhè lǐ jiàn shè qǐ rén zào píng yuán.]  
(Today, we will build an artificial plain here.)

Example 32 我们主张，对发展中国家的经济援助，应当尊重受援国的主权。[wǒ men zhǔ zhāng, duì fā zhǎn níng guó jiā de jīng jì yuán zhù, yīng dāng zūn zhòng shòu yuán guó de zhǔ quán.]  
(We maintain that we should respect the sovereignty of recipient countries when we offer economic aid to these developing countries.)

Sometimes, the object of a volitive verb can include adverbs, but as for which type of adverb can be included, it depends on the property of the word functioning as the object. For example, if the head word is a verb, its adverb functions just as it usually does in the sentence with a verb as a predicate, referring to time, location, purpose, object, or description.

Example 33 这样，我就不得不把游湖的计划延长一天了。[zhè yàng, wǒ jiù bù dé bù bǎ yóu hú de jì huà yán zhǎng yī tiān le.]  
(If so, I have to extend my trip to the lake for another day.)

Example 34 有时，一天要给几百人看病。[yǒu shí, yī tiān yào gěi jǐ bǎi rén kàn bìng.]

(Sometimes, there are hundreds of people seeing a doctor.)

Example 35 但是, 他一定得来, 而且一定得早来。[dàn shì, tā yī dìng děi lái, ér qiě yī dìng dé zǎo lái.]

(However, he must come, and he must come early.)

Example 36 你应该痛痛快快地玩几天。[nǐ yīng gāi tòng tòng kuài kuài de wán jǐ tiān.]

(You should really have a few relaxing days.)

However, the type of adverb must be restricted to time, scope, mood, when the object is functioned by an adjective or subject-predicate phrase.

In a sentence, the adverbs for different constituents, such as volitive verbs, predicates, objects, have their own functions that cannot be replaced with one another.

Example 37 工资也要做适当地调整。[gōng zī yě yào zuò shì dāng de tiáo zhěng.]

(Wages should also be adjusted appropriately.)

Example 38 你不要光写他救人的事。[nǐ bú yào guāng xiě tā jiù rén de shì.]

(Don't just write about how he saved lives.)

Example 39 部队明天就要走了。[bù duì míng tiān jiù yào zǒu le.]

(The troops are leaving tomorrow.)

However, the function or the meaning of the same adverb varies by position.

Example 40 你能明天走吗? [nǐ néng míng tiān zǒu ma?]

(Can you leave tomorrow?) (to imply that “today” or “other days” is not expected.)

你明天能走吗? [nǐ míng tiān néng zǒu ma?]

(Can you leave tomorrow?) (to inquire whether it is possible to leave tomorrow)

Example 41 你应该在北大学一门外语。[nǐ yīng gāi zài běi dà xué yī mén wài yǔ.]

(You should learn a foreign language at Peking University.) (to imply that Peking University is the best choice.)

你在北大应该学一门外语。[nǐ zài běi dà yīng gāi xué yī mén wài yǔ.]

(You should learn a foreign language at Peking University.) (to imply that a foreign language should be learned here.)

Example 42 我在家里总想睡觉。[wǒ zài jiā lǐ zǒng xiǎng shuì jiào.]

(I always feel sleepy at home.) (It emphasizes “feel sleepy.”)

我总想在家里睡觉。[wǒ zǒng xiǎng zài jiā lǐ shuì jiào.]

(I always want to sleep at home.) (It emphasizes “at home.”)

Before a volitive verb, the adverb indicates that when, where, or for what purpose the speaker is willing or is probably going to do something; after a volitive

verb, it refers to the speaker intending to or probably planning to do something somewhere or at some time.

### III. Introductions to fifteen volitive verbs

1 要 [yào] (want to)

(1) “要 [yào] (want to)” expresses a will to do something.

Example 43 他看我年纪大了，每月都把我要买的东西送来。[tā kàn wǒ nián jì dà le, měi yuè dōu bǎ wǒ yào mǎi de dōng xī sòng lái.]  
(Considering my old age, he helps me do my shopping and sends them for me every month.)

Example 44 毕业以后，我还要回到农村来。[bì yè yǐ hòu, wǒ hái yào huí dào nóng cūn lái.]  
(After graduation, I will come back to the countryside.)

Example 45 你们要把馊方怎么样？[nǐ men yào bǎ Sù Fāng zěn me yàng?]  
(What are you going to do with Su Fang?)

Example 46 这个孩子，今天非要去动物园不可。[zhè ge hái zi, jīn tiān fēi yào qù dòng wù yuán bù kě.]  
(This boy is desperately eager to go to the zoo today.)

People in the north of China prefer to use “不想 [bù xiǎng] (be unwilling to)” or “不打算 [bù dǎ suàn] (have no intention of),” instead of “不要 [bú yào] (don't want to),” to express negation.

Example 47 他要去东北，你呢？[tā yào qù dōng běi, nǐ ne?]  
(He's going to the northeast. How about you?)  
我不想去东北。[wǒ bù xiǎng qù dōng běi.]  
(I don't want to go there.)

Example 48 今天晚上我要看电影，你看不看？[jīn tiān wǎn shàng wǒ yào kàn diàn yǐng, nǐ kàn bù kàn?]  
(I'm going to see a movie tonight. Would you like to see it?)  
我不打算看。[wǒ bù dǎ suàn kàn.]  
(I don't want to.)

People in the south of China prefer to use “不要 [bú yào] (don't want to)” to express negation.

Example 49 这种滥电影我不要看。[zhè zhǒng làn diàn yǐng wǒ bú yào kàn.]  
(I don't want to watch such a bad movie.)

Example 50 我不要吃这么甜的东西。[wǒ bú yào chī zhè me tián de dōng xī.]  
(I don't want to eat something so sweet.)

- (2) “要 [yào] (want to)” denotes a need in fact or by reason, carrying a sense of “应该 [yīng gāi] (should),” “须要 [xū yào] (need)” for a possibility.

Example 51 这么好的青年，当然要表扬了。[zhè me hǎo de qīng nián, dāng rán yào biǎo yáng le.]

(Such a nice young man should be praised.)

Example 52 你不要送了，把大娘交给我吧。[nǐ bú yào sòng le, bǎ dà niáng jiāo gěi wǒ ba.]

(Don't worry about this aged woman, and I will help you send her back.)

Example 53 这个方法也要介绍到老百姓那里去。[zhè gè fāng fǎ yě yào jiè shào dào lǎo bǎi xìng nà lǐ qù.]

(This method should also be introduced to the common people.)

Example 54 要建立和健全合理的规章制度。[yào jiàn lì hé jiàn quán hé lǐ de guī zhāng zhì dù.]

(Reasonable rules and regulations should be established and improved.)

Example 55 干活的时候可要用脑子好好想一想。[gàn huó de shí hòu kě yào yòng nǎo zǐ hǎo hǎo xiǎng yī xiǎng.]

(Use your head when you work.)

- (3) “要 [yào] (want to)” means “be likely to” or “would,” but it sounds more affirmative than “可能 [kě néng] (be likely to)” or “会 [huì] (would).”

Example 56 你这样自以为是是要栽跟头的。[nǐ zhè yàng zì yǐ wéi shì shì yào zāi gēn tóu de.]

(You consider yourself always right, which tends to make you suffer failures.)

Example 57 脱离群众，十个有十个要失败。[tuō lí qún zhòng, shí gè yǒu shí gè yào shī bài.]

(Breaking off from the masses makes everything unsuccessful.)

“不会 [bú huì] (be unlikely to),” or “不可能 [bù kě néng] (impossible)” is used to express negation.

Example 58 你这样固执是要出问题的！[nǐ zhè yàng gù zhí shì yào chū wèn tí de!]

(Such stubbornness will get you into trouble.)

你放心，不会（不可能）出问题。[nǐ fàng xīn, bú huì (bù kě néng) chū wèn tí.]

(Take it easy, and there won't be any problem.)

- (4) “要 [yào] (want to)” indicates an opinion or estimate in the comparative sentence.

Example 59 天气预报说今天气温上升，我怎么觉得今天比昨天要冷一点呢？[tiān qì yù bào shuō jīn tiān qì wēn shàng shēng, wǒ zěn me jué de jīn tiān bǐ zuó tiān yào lěng yī diǎn ne?]

(The weather forecast says the temperature is rising today. Why do I still feel it's a little colder than yesterday?)

Example 60 报告说明年的经济形势要比今年好。[bào gào shuō míng nián de jīng jì xíng shì yào bǐ jīn nián hǎo.]

(The report shows that the economic situation next year is better than this year's.)

Example 61 我觉得姐姐要比妹妹聪明。[wǒ jué de jiě jiě yào bǐ mèi mèi cōng míng.]

(I think the elder sister is smarter than the younger sister.)

Besides, “要 [yào] (want to)” implies other meanings, such as “索取 [suǒ qǔ] (ask for)” and “要求 [yāo qiú] (require)” as verbs, “将要 [jiāng yào] (be going to)” as an adverb, “如果 [rú guǒ] (if)” and “要么 [yào me] (either . . . or . . .)” as conjunctions.

## 2 想 [xiǎng] (be willing to)

It means “愿望 [yuàn wàng] (wish)” or “打算 [dǎ suàn] (intend).”

Example 62 他尽可能了解他们，然后再做他们的思想工作。[tā xiǎng jìn kě néng le jiě tā men, rán hòu zài zuò tā men de sī xiǎng gōng zuò.]  
(He wanted to know about them as much as he could and then did their ideological work.)

Example 63 甫志高几次想问，却不好启齿。[Fù Zhì gāo jǐ cì xiǎng wèn, què bù hǎo qǐ chǐ.]

(Fu Zhigao made several tries to ask, but he felt it was hard to open his mouth.)

Example 64 除了我，谁也别想打败他。[chú le wǒ, shuí yě bié xiǎng dǎ bài tā.]

(Nobody can defeat him but me.)

Example 65 小刘，我想跟你聊聊。[Xiǎo Liú, wǒ xiǎng gēn nǐ liáo liáo.]  
(Xiao Liu, I want to talk to you.)

Example 66 今天的活动我不想参加了。[jīn tiān de huó dòng wǒ bù xiǎng cān jiā le.]

(I don't want to take part in today's activity.)

Compared with “想 [xiǎng] (be willing to),” “要 [yào] (want to)” expresses a desire, stronger than “想 [xiǎng] (be willing to).” Thus “一定 [yī dìng] (must)” or “非 . . . 不可 [fēi . . . bù kě] (must)” can be added before “要 [yào] (want to)” to reinforce its semantic meaning. On the contrary, “有 (一) 点儿 [yǒu (yī) diǎn er] (a little)” indicating a low degree is allowed to stand before “想 [xiǎng] (be willing to).”

Example 67 这个孩子非要抽烟不可，你说怎么办？[zhè gè hái zi fēi yào chōu yān bù kě, nǐ shuō zěn me bàn?]

(The child insists on smoking. What should do I?)

Example 68 如果你一定要去，我也拦不住你。[rú guǒ nǐ yī dìng yào qù, wǒ yě lán bú zhù nǐ.]

(If you must go, I won't stop you.)

Example 69 我有点儿想去游泳，你去吗？[wǒ yǒu diǎn er xiǎng qù yóu yǒng, nǐ qù ma?]

(I just want to go out for a swim. Do you want to go with me?)

“很 [hěn] (very much)” is only accepted before “想 [xiǎng] (be willing to).”

Example 70 听说那个地方很有意思，我很想去看看。[tīng shuō nà ge dì fang hěn yǒu yì si, wǒ hěn xiǎng qù kàn kan.]

(I overheard that place was very interesting. I'd like to see it very much.)

“想 [xiǎng] (be willing to)” can be used as a verb, referring to “思念 [sī niàn] (miss),” “思索 [sī suǒ] (ponder).”

### 3 愿意 [yuàn yì] (wish)

It indicates a subjective wish, carrying a sense of “乐意 [lè yì] (willing),” “喜欢 [xǐ huān] (like).”

Example 71 今天下午有一个学术报告，谁愿意去听？[jīn tiān xià wǔ yǒu yī gè xué shù bào gào, shuí yuàn yì qù tīng?]

(There is an academic lecture this afternoon, and who would like to go?)

Example 72 我愿意和你一起去，不愿意一个人去。[wǒ yuàn yì hé nǐ yì qǐ qù, bú yuàn yì yī gè rén qù.]

(I would rather go with you than alone.)

Example 73 给人家当保姆你愿意吗？[gěi rén jiā dāng bǎo mǔ nǐ yuàn yì ma?]

(Are you willing to be a baby-sitter?)

Example 74

A: 小梅答应跟我结婚了吗？[Xiǎo Méi dā yìng gēn wǒ jié hūn le ma?]

(Did Xiaomei promise to marry me?)

B: 我劝了半天，她还是不愿意。[wǒ quàn le bàn tiān, tā hái shì bú yuàn yì.]

(I tried to persuade her, but she still refused.)

### 4 肯 [kěn] (be ready to)

(1) Besides expressing a subjective wish, “肯 [kěn] (be ready to)” implies “try best to do something” or “to overcome difficulties to do something.”

Example 75 只要你肯帮忙，工厂就撑得起来。[zhǐ yào nǐ kěn bāng máng, gōng chǎng jiù chēng de qǐ lái.]

(If you are ready to help, the factory will be saved.)



Example 76 遇到困难，他最肯动脑筋、想办法。[yù dào kùn nán, tā zuì kěn dòng nǎo jīn, xiǎng bàn fǎ.]

(When faced with difficulties, he is very ready to use his wits to solve them.)

Example 77 在学习方面，小李是肯下功夫的。[zài xué xí fāng miàn, Xiǎo Lǐ shì kěn xià gōng fū de.]

(About learning, Xiao Li is willing to work hard.)

- (2) “肯 [kěn] (be ready to)” means “would like to offer interests or advantages to others.” It is often used in declarative sentences in the negative form.

Example 78 大家都渴，但这杯水谁都不肯喝。[dà jiā dōu hěn kě, dàn zhè bēi shuǐ shuí dōu bù kěn hē.]

(Everyone was thirsty, but no one would drink the water.)

Example 79 还有这么多工作要做，她怎么肯先走？[hái yǒu zhè me duō gōng zuò yào zuò, tā zěn me kěn xiān zǒu?]

(With so much work to do, how could she be willing to leave first?)

- (3) “肯 [kěn] (be ready to)” expresses agreement with others' requests.

Example 80 你答应我的条件我才肯去。[nǐ dā ying wǒ de tiáo jiàn wǒ cái kěn qù.]

(I won't go without your agreement with my terms.)

Example 81 无论敌人怎么威胁利诱，小虎子始终不肯说出八路军的住处。[wú lùn dí rén zěn me wēi xié lì yòu, Xiǎo Hǔ zi shǐ zhōng bù kěn shuō chū bā lù jun1 de zhù chù.]

(No matter how the enemy intimidated and induced him, the Little Tiger refused to tell them the residence of the Eighth Route Army.)

Example 82 工人们坚持所提出的条件，一点也不肯让步。[gōng rén men jiān chí suǒ tí chū de tiáo jiàn, yī diǎn yě bù kěn ràng bù.]

(The workers insisted on their terms and refused to give in.)

## 5 敢 [gǎn] (dare)

- (1) “敢 [gǎn] (dare)” declares having courage or daring to do something.

Example 83 这主意，多少辈人都在想，就是不敢动手。[zhè zhǔ yì, duō shǎo bèi rén dōu zài xiǎng, jiù shì bù gǎn dòng shǒu.]

(Many generations of people have kept this idea in their minds but don't have confidence to carry it out.)

Example 84 你挺起腰杆来，看他敢怎么样你！[nǐ tǐng qǐ yāo gǎn lái, kàn tā gǎn zěn me yàng nǐ!]

(Be brave to challenge what he will do to you!)

Example 85 他不敢不答应大家的要求。[tā bù gǎn bù dā ying dà jiā de yāo qiú.]

(He dared not refuse our demands.)

- (2) “敢 [gǎn] (dare)” shows assurance of a certain judgment.

Example 86 我敢保证，明天一定能完成任务。[wǒ gǎn bǎo zhèng, míng tiān yī dìng néng wán chéng rèn wù.]

(I can promise that I will finish the task tomorrow.)

Example 87 我不敢肯定他会不会同意这个意见。[wǒ bù gǎn kěn dìng tā huì bú huì tóng yì zhè gè yì jiàn.]

(I'm not sure if he will agree with this idea.)

Example 88 事情能不能办好我不敢说，但是我一定会尽力。[shì qíng néng bù néng bàn hǎo wǒ bù gǎn shuō, dàn shì wǒ yī dìng huì jìn lì.]

(I'm not sure if it can be done well, but I will try my best.)

- 6 应该 [yīng gāi] (should), 应当 [yīng dāng] (should), 应 [yīng] (should), 该 [gāi] (ought to)

- (1) They show a need in fact or by reason, which has been satisfied or will be satisfied.

Example 89 我们应该为人民做出更多的贡献。[wǒ men yīng gāi wèi rén mín zuò chū gèng duō de gòng xiàn.]

(We should make more contributions to the people.)

Example 90 他没有什么困难，你不应该给他这么多钱。[tā méi yǒu shén me kùn nán, nǐ bù yīng gāi gěi tā zhè me duō qián.]

(He has no difficulty with his finances. You should not give him so much money.)

Example 91 这种情况应当结束了。[zhè zhǒng qíng kuàng yīng dāng jié shù le.]

(This situation should come to an end.)

Example 92 这是一个革命者应有的品质。[zhè shì yī gè gé mìng zhě yīng yǒu de pǐn zhì.]

(This is the quality that a revolutionary should possess.)

Example 93 明天该种麦子了。[míng tiān gāi zhòng mài zi le.]

(The wheat should be planted tomorrow.)

- (2) They indicate a guess or estimate in fact or by reason.

Example 94 都六点了，他该来了。[dōu liù diǎn le, tā gāi lái le.]

(It's six o'clock. He should have been here.)

Example 95 此项决议顺利贯彻应无问题。[cǐ xiàng jué yì shùn lì guàn chè yīng wú wèn tí.]

(There should be no problem in implementing this resolution smoothly.)

Example 96 他是个聪明人，应该明白我的意思。[tā shì gè cōng míng rén, yīng gāi míng bái wǒ de yì sī.]

(He is a clever man and should know what I mean.)

“应该 [yīng gāi] (should)” and “应当 [yīng dāng] (ought to)” are similar in use. They can be used alone as the response or be followed by a subject-predicate phrase as the object in both spoken and written language. “应 [yīng] (should)” and “该 [gāi] (ought to)” cannot function the same as what “应该 [yīng gāi] (should)” and “应当 [yīng dāng] (ought to)” do. “应 [yīng] (should)” mainly appears in the written language; “该 [gāi] (ought to)” in the spoken language.

“该 [gāi] (ought to)” can be used as a verb, referring to “轮到 [lún dào] (in turn),” such as “我唱完了，该你了 [wǒ chàng wán le, gāi nǐ le.] (I’m done with my singing. It’s your turn.)”

## 7 得 [děi] (have to/must)

- (1) “得 [děi] (have to/must)” sounds more affirmative and oral than “应该 [yīng gāi] (should),” indicating a need in fact or by reason.

Example 97 以后可得小心点儿。[yǐ hòu kě děi xiǎo xīn diǎn er.]  
(Be careful from now on.)

Example 98 咱们还得赶紧想办法，找到鸡蛋的主人。[zán men hái děi gǎn jǐn xiǎng bàn fǎ, zhǎo dào jī dàn de zhǔ rén.]  
(We still have to find a way to find out the owner of the egg.)

Example 99 崔治国是革命干部，他回来也得跟群众站在一条线儿上！  
[Cuī Zhì guó shì gé mìng gàn bù, tā huí lái yě děi gēn qún zhòng zhàn zài yī tiáo xiàn er shàng.]

(Cui Guozhi is a revolutionary cadre, and he must stand in line with the masses when he comes back.)

“得 [děi] (have to/must)” can be replaced by “不用 [bú yòng] (need not)” or “不必 [bú bì] (not necessary)” or “甭 [béng] (needn’t)” in the oral expression, when negation is indicated.

Example 100 你不用/不必/甭道歉，这不是你的错。[nǐ bú yòng/bú bì/béng dào qiàn, zhè bú shì nǐ de cuò.]  
(You needn’t apologize. It’s not your fault.)

Example 101 这次去上海没有他了，你不用/不必/甭通知他了。[zhè cì qù shàng hǎi méi yǒu tā le, nǐ bú yòng/bú bì/béng tōng zhī tā le.]  
(You needn’t inform him because he is excluded from the trip to Shanghai this time.)

Example 102 告诉他，不必/不用/甭不好意思，这是他该得到的。[gào sù tā, bú bì/bú yòng/béng bù hǎo yì sī, zhè shì tā gāi dé dào de.]  
(Tell him that there is no need to feel shame because he deserves it.)

- (2) “得 [děi] (have to/must)” sounds more affirmative than “会 [huì] (willing)” in expressing a guess or estimate.

Example 103 你一回来，小兰准得高兴。[nǐ yī huí lái, Xiǎo Lán zhǔn děi gāo xìng.]  
(Xiao Lan will be happy when you come back.)

Example 104 这个丫头啊，我看早晚得当了我的儿媳妇。[zhè gè yā tóu ā, wǒ kàn zǎo wǎn dēi dāng le wǒ de ér xí fù.]

(I can tell that this little girl, sooner or later, will be predestined to be my daughter-in-law.)

Example 105 她那泼辣劲儿一上来，还不得经常吵架呀！[tā nà pō là jìn er yī shàng lái, hái bù dēi jīng cháng chǎo jià ya!]

(As soon as she becomes rude and unreasonable, she will quarrel with you all the time!)

Example 106 这件衣服得好几百块吧？[zhè jiàn yī fú dēi hǎo jǐ bǎi kuài ba?]

(This clothing must cost hundreds of dollars, doesn't it?)

“得 [děi] (have to/must)” can be replaced by “不会 [bú huì] (will not)” or “不可能 [bù kě néng] (impossible)” when negation is indicated.

## 8 能 [néng] (be able to), 能够 [néng gòu] (be able to)

### (1) They indicate a subjective ability to do something.

Example 107 刚来中国的时候，我连一个汉字也不认识，怎么能看中文书呢？[gāng lái zhōng guó de shí hòu, wǒ lián yī gè hàn zì yě bú rèn shí, zěn me néng kàn zhōng wén shū ne?]

(When I first came to China, I didn't know any Chinese characters. How could I read Chinese books?)

Example 108 这个机器的马达坏了，不能开动了。[zhè gè jī qì de mǎ dá huài le, bù néng kāi dòng le.]

(The motor of this machine is out of order, so it cannot work normally.)

Example 109 打猎的越来越远，都能听见马跑的声音了。[dǎ liè de yuè lái yuè yuǎn, dōu néng tīng jiàn mǎ pǎo de shēng yīn le.]

(The hunting team approaches and their hoofbeats of horses can be heard clearly.)

### (2) They show a certain objective condition.

Example 110 今天气温低，水能结成冰。[jīn tiān qì wēn dī, shuǐ néng jié chéng bīng.]

(The temperature is low enough today to turn water into ice.)

Example 111 时间还早，九点钟以前能赶回。[shí jiān hái zǎo, jiǔ diǎn zhōng yǐ qián néng gǎn huí.]

(It's still early. We can be back by nine o'clock.)

### (3) In the interrogative or the negative sentence, they emphasize permission by reason.

Example 112 天这么晚了，我不能让你走！[tiān zhè me wǎn le, wǒ bù néng ràng nǐ zǒu!]

(It's so late. I can't let you go.)

Example 113 陈胜对吴广说：“我们不能去渔阳送死，应该起义反抗。”  
[Chén Shèng duì Wú Guǎng shuō: “wǒ men bù néng qù yú yáng sòng sǐ, yīng gāi qǐ yì fǎn kàng.”]

(Chen Sheng said to Wu Guang, “we cannot go to Yuyang to die and we should revolt.”)

Example 114 病人病情危急，不能坐等。[bìng rén bìng qíng wēi jí, bù néng zuò děng.]

(The patient is too ill to delay.)

- (4) They mainly appear in interrogative or negative sentences to indicate permission.

Example 115 没有我的命令你不能动！[méi yǒu wǒ de mìng lìng nǐ bù néng dòng!]

(You can't move it without my orders.)

Example 116 那是集体的财产，我怎么能让你随意破坏？[nà shì jí tǐ de cái chǎn, wǒ zěn me néng ràng nǐ suí yì pò huài?]

(That's the collective property. How can I let you destroy it.)

“可以 [kě yǐ] (can/may)” can be used to express affirmation in the declarative sentence.

- (5) They indicate a guess or estimate.

Example 117 今天小刘能到北京吗？[jīn tiān Xiǎo Liú néng dào běi jīng ma?]

Example 118 电影已经演了一半了，他不能来了。[diàn yǐng yǐ jīng yǎn le yī bàn le, tā bù néng lái le.]

(He is not allowed to come in, for the movie is halfway through.)

- (6) They indicate being good at doing something.

Example 119 他能说会道，能写会算。[tā néng shuō huì dào, néng xiě huì suàn.]

(He is capable of everything.)

Example 120 老师傅可真能睡。[lǎo shī fù kě zhēn néng shuì.]

(That old master worker really likes sleeping.)

9 可以 [kě yǐ] (may/can)

- (1) “可以 [kě yǐ] (may/can)” means a subjective ability to do something.

Example 121 他可以说三种外语。[tā kě yǐ shuō sān zhǒng wài yǔ.]

(He can speak three foreign languages.)

Example 122 这本书我今天可以看完。[zhè běn shū wǒ jīn tiān kě yǐ kàn wán.]

(I can finish the book today.)

(2) 可以 [kě yǐ] (may/can) shows a certain objective condition.

Example 123 天气热了，可以游泳了。[tiān qì rè le, kě yǐ yóu yǒng le.]

(It's warm enough to go out for a swim.)

Example 124 这个房间很大，可以住三个人。[zhè gè fáng jiān hěn dà, kě yǐ zhù sān gè rén.]

(This room is spacious enough for three persons to stay.)

“不能 [bù néng] (cannot)” or the complement of possibility can be used to express negation in these examples.

Example 125 他不能说三种外语，只能说两种。[tā bù néng shuō sān zhǒng wài yǔ, zhǐ néng shuō liǎng zhǒng.]

(He cannot speak three foreign languages, but two.)

他说不了三种外语，只能说两种。[tā shuō bù liǎo sān zhǒng wài yǔ, zhǐ néng shuō liǎng zhǒng.]

(He cannot speak three foreign languages, but two.)

Example 126 这本书我今天看不完。[zhè běn shū wǒ jīn tiān kàn bù wán.]

(I can't finish this book today.)

(3) 可以 [kě yǐ] (may/can) expresses a permission by reason

Example 127 可以把石头扔到海里去！[kě yǐ bǎ shí tóu rēng dào hǎi lǐ qù!]

(The stones are permitted to be thrown into the sea.)

Example 128 休息室里可以吸烟。[xiū xi shì lǐ kě yǐ xī yān.]

(Smoking is allowed in the lounge.)

“不能 [bù néng] (cannot/may not)” can be used here to indicate negation in the declarative sentence.

Example 129 不能把石头扔到海里去！[bù néng bǎ shí tóu rēng dào hǎi lǐ qù!]

(The stones are not allowed to be thrown into the sea.)

Example 130 休息室里不能吸烟。[xiū xi shì lǐ bù néng xī yān.]

(Smoking is not allowed in the lounge.)

“不行 [bù xíng] (be not allowed)” or “不成 [bù chéng] (won't do)” can perform as the response alone.

Example 131

A: 这儿可以吸烟吗？[zhè er kě yǐ xī yān ma?]

(Is it O.K. to smoke here?)

B: 不行。[bù xíng.]

(No, it is not allowed here.)

(4) 可以 [kě yǐ] (may/can) means a permission.

Example 132 狼听见马跑的声音渐渐地远了，就在口袋里喊：“先生，可以放我出去了吗？” [láng tīng jiàn mǎ pǎo de shēng yīn jiàn jiàn de yuǎn le, jiù zài kǒu dài lǐ hǎn: “xiān shēng, kě yǐ fàng wǒ chū qù le ma?”]

(Then the Wolf heard the horse running away, and cried in his pocket, “Sir, may you let me out?”)

Example 133 可以进来吗？ [kě yǐ jìn lái ma?]

(May I come in?)

Example 134 你已经不是小孩子了，怎么可以这样胡闹。 [nǐ yǐ jīng bú shì xiǎo hái zi le, zěn me kě yǐ zhè yàng hú nào.]

(You are no longer a child. How can you behave like this?)

“不可以 [bù kě yǐ] (cannot/may not)” and “不能 [bù néng] (should not)” can be used to express negation in a declarative sentence; “不行 [bù xíng] (be not allowed)” or “不成 [bù chéng] (won't do)” can perform as the response alone.

(5) 可以 [kě yǐ] (may/can) indicates being worth doing something.

Example 135 这本书写得不错，你可以看看。 [zhè běn shū xiě de bú cuò, nǐ kě yǐ kàn kàn.]

(This book is well written and deserves reading.)

Example 136 颐和园风景优美，很可以去游览游览。 [yí hé yuán fēng jǐng yōu měi, hěn kě yǐ qù yóu lǎn yóu lǎn.]

(The Summer Palace is a beautiful place to visit.)

“不值(得) [bù zhí (de)] (be unworthy of)” can be used to express negation here.

Example 137

A: 你昨天的演讲真是棒极了。 [nǐ zuó tiān de yǎn jiǎng zhēn shì bàng jí le.]

(The speech you made yesterday was really great.)

B: 哦，不值一提，不值一提。 [ò, bú zhí yī tí, bù zhí yī tí.]

(Oh, well, I am very flattered.)

10 准 [zhǔn] (permit), 许 [xǔ] (allow)

They indicate “permission” in fact and are often negated in the declarative sentence.

Example 138 剧场里不准吸烟。[jù chǎng lǐ bù zhǔn xī yān.]  
(Smoking is not allowed in the theatre.)

Example 139 你发烧了，不准出去乱跑。[nǐ fā shāo le, bù zhǔn chū qù luàn pǎo.]

(You have a fever. You're not allowed to go out.)

Example 140 我不许你们这样议论他。[wǒ bù xǔ nǐ men zhè yàng yì lùn tā.]

(I won't permit you to talk about him like that.)

“可以 [kě yǐ] (may)” is adopted to show affirmation.

Example 141

A: 可以进来吗? [kě yǐ jìn lái ma?]

(May I come in?)

B: 可以。[kě yǐ]

(Yes.)

## 11 得 [dé] (have to)

Usually, it denotes “permission” in the written language and its negative form is simply accepted in the declarative sentence.

Example 142 不得随地吐痰。[bù dé suí dì tǔ tán.]  
(No spitting.)

Example 143 每只船不得超过五人。[měi zhī chuán bù dé chāo guò wǔ rén.]

(Each boat shall have no more than five persons.)

“可以 [kě yǐ] (may)” is adopted to show affirmation.

“不得不 [bù dé bù] (have to)” means “只好 [zhǐ hǎo] (have to).”

Example 144 这样，我就不得不把游湖计划延长一天了。[zhè yàng, wǒ jiù bù dé bù bǎ yóu hú jì huà yán zhǎng yī tiān le.]

(If so, I have to extend my trip to the lake for another day.)

## 12 配 [pèi] (be qualified)

It means “be qualified to do something” and often appears in the spoken language. Only the adverbs, such as “只 [zhǐ], “才 [cái],” “最 [zuì],” “不 [bù/bù],” can be put before 配 [pèi] (be qualified) in the sentence, except for the interrogative one.

Example 145 他最配当我们的代表。[tā zuì pèi dāng wǒ men de dài biǎo.]  
(He is most qualified to be our representative.)



Example 146 这种人不配在学校里工作。[zhè zhǒng rén bú pèi zài xué xiào lǐ gōng zuò.]

(Such people are not qualified to work in school.)

Example 147 说这种话，他配吗？[shuō zhè zhǒng huà, tā pèi ma?]

(Is he worthy of such words?)

### 13 值得 [zhí de] (be worthy of)

“值得 [zhí de] (be worthy of)” refers to “be worth doing something.” “不值得 [bù zhí de] (unworthy)” or “不值 [bù zhí] (unworthy)” is used to express negation in the declarative sentence.

Example 148 这本书值得一读。[zhè běn shū zhí de yī dú.]

(This book is worthy of reading.)

Example 149 这个观点不值（得）一搏。[zhè gè guān diǎn bù zhí (de) yī bó.]

(This view is unworthy of discussion.)

### 14 可能 [kě néng] (possible)

“可能 [kě néng] (possible)” implies an objective probability of prediction or supposition.

Example 150 这个工程很大，不可能那么快完工。[zhè gè gōng chéng hěn dà, bù kě néng nà me kuài wán gōng.]

(This project is too large to be finished so soon.)

Example 151 我看今天天气不错，不可能下雨。[wǒ kàn jīn tiān tiān qì bú cuò, bù kě néng xià yǔ.]

(I don't think it's likely to rain today in such weather.)

Example 152 在这次行动中，可能遇到什么事呢？[zài zhè cì xíng dòng zhōng, kě néng yù dào shén me shì ne?]

(What could possibly happen in this action?)

Also 可能 [kě néng] (possible) can function as a noun referring to “possibility.”

### 15 会 [huì] (can)

(1) “会 [huì] (can)” means a possession of an ability after learning or being trained.

Example 153 你会说几种外语？[nǐ huì shuō jǐ zhǒng wài yǔ?]

(How many foreign languages can you speak?)

Example 154 我会开车了。[wǒ huì kāi chē le.]

(I can drive a car.)

Example 155 他不会游泳。[tā bú huì yóu yǒng.]  
(He is unable to swim.)

“会 [huì] (can)” differs from “能 [néng] (be capable of),” the former of which indicates a possession of an ability after learning or being trained, and the latter of which refers to “be able to do something without learning or being trained.”

Example 156 我能把你举起来，你信不信？[wǒ néng bǎ nǐ jǔ qǐ lái, nǐ xìn bú xìn?]  
(Believe it or not, I can lift you up.)

This example cannot be changed into the following expression.

\*我会把你举起来，你信不信？[wǒ huì bǎ nǐ jǔ qǐ lái, nǐ xìn bú xìn?]

Example 157 老师，我病了，不能去考试。[lǎo shī, wǒ bìng le, bù néng qù kǎo shì.]  
(Prof., I am sick and can't go to the exam.)

Similarly, this example cannot be changed into the following expression.

\*老师，我病了，不会去考试。[lǎo shī, wǒ bìng le, bú huì qù kǎo shì.]

“能 [néng] (be capable of)” can be used to show certain efficiency.

Example 158 他一分钟能游二十米。[tā yī fēn zhōng néng yóu èr shí mǐ.]  
(He can swim 20 meters a minute.)

Speaking of Chinese learning, it is proper to express it like this: “会说汉语 [huì shuō hàn yǔ] (. . . can speak Chinese)” or “会写汉字 [huì xiě hàn zì] (. . . can write Chinese characters).” However, it is improper to say it like this: “\*会看中国电影 [huì kàn zhōng guó diàn yǐng]” or “\*会听中文 [huì tīng zhōng wén].”

(2) “会 [huì] (can)” indicates “realization” in reality or in predication.

Example 159 在建设社会主义社会的道路上，一定会遇到许许多多的困难。[zài jiàn shè shè huì zhǔ yì shè huì de dào lù shàng, yī dìng bú yù dào xǔ xǔ duō duō de kùn nán.]  
(There are bound to be many difficulties on the road of building a socialist society.)

Example 160 明天早晨我会把准确的数字拿出来。[míng tiān zǎo chén wǒ huì bǎ zhǔn què de shù zì ná chū lái.]  
(I'll show you the exact figures tomorrow morning.)

Example 161 我真没想到你今天会来。[wǒ zhēn méi xiǎng dào nǐ jīn tiān huì lái.]  
(I didn't expect your coming today.)

Example 162 过去，我是不会同意这样做的。[guò qù, wǒ shì bú huì tóng yì zhè yàng zuò de.]

(In the past, I would not have agreed to do so.)

Also “会 [huì] (can)” can be used as a verb, indicating “be good at doing something.”

Example 163 这个孩子很会说话，见什么人说什么话。[zhè gè hái zi hěn huì shuō huà, jiàn shén me rén shuō shén me huà.]

(This child is really a skilled talker.)

Example 164 你真会开玩笑，我哪里是什么百万富翁啊！[nǐ zhēn huì kāi wán xiào, wǒ nǎ lǐ shì shén me bǎi wàn fù wēng ā!]

(You’re kidding. How could I be a millionaire?)

The usage of main volitive verbs is illustrated in Appendix Two.

## Appendix two

### Usage of main volitive verbs<sup>3</sup>

Meaning Volitive words	Possibility		Willingness		Necessity		Allowance		Permission		Assessment	
	A	N	A	N	A	N	A	N	A	N	A	N
可能 [kě néng]	可能 [kě néng]	不可能 [bù kě néng]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
会 [huì]	会 [huì]	不会 [bù huì]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
要 [yào]	要 [yào]	不要 [bù yào]	要 [yào]	不要 [bù yào]	要 [yào]	不要 [bù yào]	—	—	—	—	—	—
想 [xiǎng]	—	—	想 [xiǎng]	不想 [bù xiǎng]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
打算 [dǎ suàn]	—	—	打算 [dǎ suàn]	不打算 [bù dǎ suàn]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
愿意 [yuàn yì]	—	—	愿意 [yuàn yì]	不愿意 [bù yuàn yì]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
肯 [kěn]	—	—	肯 [kěn]	不肯 [bù kěn]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

(Continued)

(Continued)

Meaning Vollitive words	Possibility		Willingness		Necessity		Allowance		Permission		Assessment	
	A	N	A	N	A	N	A	N	A	N	A	N
应该 [yīng gāi]	—	—	—	—	应该 [yīng gāi]	不应该 [bù yīng gāi]	—	—	—	—	—	—
得 [děi]	得 [děi]	不会 [bú huì]	—	—	得 [děi]	不用 [bú yòng]	—	—	—	—	—	—
能 [néng]	能 [néng]	不能 [bù néng]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
可以 [kě yǐ]	—	—	—	—	—	—	可以 [kě yǐ]	不能 [bù néng]	可以 [kě yǐ]	不能 [bù néng]	可以 [kě yǐ]	不值得 [bù zhí dé]
可 [kè]	—	—	—	—	—	—	可 [kè]	不可 [bù kè]	可 [kè]	不可 [bù kè]	可 [kè]	—
准 [zhǔn]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	可以 [kě yǐ]	不准 [bù zhǔn]	—	—
许 [xǔ]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	可以 [kě yǐ]	不许 [bù xǔ]	—	—
得 [dé]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	可以 [kě yǐ]	不得 [bù dé]	—	—
值得 [zhí dé]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	值得 [zhí dé]	不值得 [bù zhí dé]
配 [pèi]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	配 [pèi]	不配 [bù pèi]

(Note: A for “affirmation”; N for “negation”)

## Notes

- 1 “去 [qù] (go)” represents an uncontinuous action and this example shows a special usage of “去 [qù] (go).”
- 2 The verbs included in the book are collected from “Little Chinese-English Dictionary” published by Beijing Language and Culture University.
- 3 In the table, usage only involves in the declarative sentence. For some of verbs here, such as “要[yào] (want)”, “能[néng] (be capable to)”, “可以[kě yǐ] (may)”, “准[zhǔn] (permit)”, “许[xǔ] (be allowed to)”, both of their affirmative form and negative form are qualified in the interrogative sentence and the rhetorical question.

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# 6 Adjectives

## Section one: formation of adjectives

In Chinese, the adjective possesses a variety of forms and its grammatical features vary in formation. The following are four forms of adjectives:

### 1 Monosyllabic adjectives

大 [dà] (big), 多 [duō] (a lot), 红 [hóng] (red), 白 [bái] (white), 真 [zhēn] (real), 假 [jiǎ] (false), 对 [duì] (right), 错 [cuò] (wrong)

### 2 Disyllabic adjectives in general

伟大 [wěi dà] (great), 美丽 [měi lì] (beautiful), 干净 [gān jìng] (clean), 庄严 [zhuāng yán] (solemn), 清楚 [qīng chǔ] (clear), 重要 [zhòng yào] (important)

### 3 Adjectives with affixes

Some adjectives are added with a prefix or suffix and these adjectives can be divided into three types.

#### (1) With an overlapped monosyllabic suffix

绿油油 [lǜ yóu yóu] (shiny green), 红通通 [hóng tōng tōng] (bright red), 黑黢黢 [hēi qū qū] (pitch-dark), 阴森森 [yīn sēn sēn] (spooky)

#### (2) With a suffix consisting of two different syllables

Usually, between the adjective and its suffix appears “里 [lǐ],” “不 [bú/bù],” or “了 [le],” which should be pronounced slightly (with the light tone). Such adjectives imply a sense of disgust.

黑不溜秋 [hēi bù liū qiū] (swarthy), 白不吡咧 [bái bù cǐ liē] (pale), 脏了咕叽 [zāng le gū jī] (soiled), 傻了吧唧 [shǎ le bā jī] (silly)

#### (3) With a prefix

滴流圆 [dī liú yuán] (conglobate), 稀巴烂 [xī ba làn] (broken to bits)

The location of affixes is inherently fixed to adjectives. Most of them are related in meaning, such as “冷 [lěng] (cold)” and “清 [qīng]” in “冷清清 [lěng qīng qīng] (cold and cheerless),” “孤 [gū] (alone)” and “零零 [líng líng]” in “孤零零 [gū líng líng] (solitary),” “亮 [liàng] (bright)” and “晶晶 [jīng jīng]” in “亮晶晶 [liàng jīng jīng] (glittering),” but some are not. The characters that affixes adhere to have gradually become more normative, compared with the previous situation. Nowadays, affixes make adjectives more vivid in description.

#### 4 Compound adjectives

It consists of a noun/verb morpheme and an adjective morpheme. The entity that a noun/verb morpheme refers to is connected to the meaning of the adjective morpheme.

雪白 [xuě bái] (snow-white), 漆黑 [qī hēi] (pitch-dark), 冰凉 [bīng liáng] (ice-cold), 滚热 [gǔn rè] (burning hot)

“雪白 [xuě bái] (snow-white)” means that something is as white as snow; “冰凉 [bīng liáng] (ice-cold)” refers to that something is as cold as ice.

### Section two: classifications of adjective

#### I. Common adjectives and non-predicate adjectives

According to how they function in a sentence, adjectives can be divided into common adjectives and non-predicate adjectives.

##### 1 Common adjectives

Common adjectives refer to those that can function as both predicates and attributes. Most adjectives belong to this type. Generally speaking, common adjectives function as attributes, predicates, adverbs, complements, subjects, and objects. Most of them can be modified by adverbs of degree, such as “很红 [hěn hóng] (very red),” “很好看 [hěn hǎo kàn] (very nice),” “非常漂亮 [fēi cháng piào liàng] (very beautiful),” “十分可爱 [shí fēn kě ài] (very lovely).”

##### 2 Non-predicate adjectives

Non-predicate adjectives refer to those that simply modify nouns as attributes. They cannot function as predicates or complements, nor can they be followed by “的 [de].” In some grammar books, they are named distinctive words. For example:

男 [nán] (male), 女 [nǚ] (female), 雌 [cí] (female), 雄 [xióng] (male), 正 [zhèng] (chief), 副 [fù] (secondary), 横 [héng] (horizontal), 竖 [shù] (vertical), 棉 [mián] (cotton), 夹 [jiá] (clamped), 单 [dān] (alone), 金 [jīn] (golden), 银 [yín] (silver), 彩色 [cǎi sè] (colorful), 纯粹 [chún cuì] (pure),



黑白 [hēi bái] (monochrome), 多项 [duō xiàng] (multinomial), 单项 [dān xiàng] (monomial), 个别 [gè bié] (individual), 共同 [gòng tóng] (collective), 主要 [zhǔ yào] (primary), 次要 [cì yào] (secondary), 急性 [jí xìng] (acute), 慢性 [màn xìng] (chronic), 新式 [xīn shì] (modern), 老式 [lǎo shì] (ancient), 天然 [tiān rán] (natural), 人工 [rén gōng] (artificial), 高频 [gāo pín] (frequent), 低频 [dī pín] (low frequency), 西式 [xī shì] (western), 中式 [zhōng shì] (Chinese), 有限 [yǒu xiàn] (limited), 无限 [wú xiàn] (unlimited), 军用 [jūn yòng] (military), 民用 [mín yòng] (civil), 相对 [xiāng duì] (relative), 绝对 [jué duì] (absolute), 国营 [guó yíng] (state), 私营 [sī yíng] (private), 长期 [cháng qī] (long-term), 短期 [duǎn qī] (short-term), 袖珍 [xiù zhēn] (vest-pocket), 同步 [tóng bù] (synchronous), 大型 [dà xíng] (large-scale), 中型 [zhōng xíng] (middle-sized), 小型 [xiǎo xíng] (small-sized), 初级 [chū jí] (elementary), 中级 [zhōng jí] (intermediate), 高级 [gāo jí] (high-ranking), 根本 [gēn běn] (radical), 基本 [jī běn] (basic), 一切 [yī qiè] (all), 四方 [sì fāng] (square)

Non-predicate adjectives differ from common adjectives in several aspects.

- (1) They can combine with “的 [de]” to form a “的 [de]” phrase, such as “男的 [nán de] (male),” “大型的 [dà xíng de] (large-scale),” “国营的 [guó yíng de] (state-run).” “的 [de]” phrases can function as objects in a sentence, such as “新来的老师是男的。[xīn lái de lǎo shī shì nán de.] (The new teacher is a male.),” “这个商店是国营的。[zhè ge shāng diàn shì guó yíng de.] (This shop is state-owned.)”
- (2) They are negated by “非 [fēi] (non)” rather than by “不 [bù/bù] (not),” such as “非大型 [fēi dà xíng] (non-large scale),” “非主要 [fēi zhǔ yào] (non-main),” “非个别 [fēi gè bié] (non-individual).”
- (3) Most of them cannot be modified by “很 [hěn] (very).” For example, it is improper to say “\*很男 [hěn nán],” “\*很副 [hěn fù],” “\*很大型 [hěn dà xíng],” “\*很四方 [hěn sì fāng],” except for “很个别 [hěn gè bié] (quite individual)” and “很有限 [hěn yǒu xiàn] (quite limited).”

The number of non-predicate adjectives is small and now more and more newly invented ones are appearing with the development of science and technology. However, they are confined to sci-tech nouns or phrases in a narrow scope.

### 3 Some special adjectives

Some special adjectives, such as “多 [duō] (many),” “少 [shǎo] (few),” “够 [gòu] (enough),” only function as predicates or complements, but they cannot stand alone to modify nouns as attributes. For example, it is improper to say “\*多书 [duō shū],” “\*多人 [duō rén],” “\*够东西 [gòu dōng xī],” “\*对时间 [duì shí jiān],” “\*错号码 [cuò hào mǎ].” “少 [shǎo] (few)” and “多 [duō] (many)” can function as attributes when combined with adverbs without “的 [de]” following, such as “很多书 [hěn duō shū] (many books),” “不少工作 [bù shǎo gōng zuò]

(a lot of work),” “很多人 [hěn duō rén] (a lot of people).” Instead of functioning as attributes, “够 [gòu] (enough),” “对 [duì] (right),” “错 [cuò] (wrong),” can serve as predicate and complement, such as “我的钱不够。 [wǒ de qián bú gòu.] (I don't have enough money.),” “号码错了。 [hào mǎ cuò le.] (Wrong number.),” “你电话打错了。 [nǐ diàn huà dǎ cuò le.] (You had the wrong telephone number.)”

## II. Feature adjectives and state adjectives

Based on their expressive functions, adjectives can be divided into feature adjectives and state adjectives.

### 1 Feature adjectives

Feature adjectives refer to those that describe features of an entity, such as “红花 [hóng huā] (red flower),” “大家庭 [dà jiā tíng] (big family),” “伟大的祖国 [wěi dà de zǔ guó] (great motherland). They include monosyllabic adjectives and disyllabic adjectives in general. Usually, they are syntactically restricted in the sentence.

### 2 State adjectives

State adjectives include adjectives with affixes, compound adjectives, and overlapped adjectives. The adjectives of this type are complex in form and mainly describe the state of an entity. Comparatively speaking, they are syntactically free in the sentence.

## III. Positive adjectives and opposite adjectives

Positive adjectives include “大 [dà] (big), 长 [cháng] (long), 粗 [cū] (thick), 厚 [hòu] (thick), 高 [gāo] (tall), 胖 [pàng] (fat), 热 [rè] (hot), 好 [hǎo] (good), 积极 [jī jí] (positive), 美 [měi] (beautiful), 聪明 [cōng míng] (smart), 快 [kuài] (fast), 熟 [shú] (cooked).”

Opposite adjectives are “小 [xiǎo] (small), 短 [duǎn] (short), 细 [xì] (thin), 薄 [báo] (thin), 矮 [ǎi] (short), 瘦 [shòu] (thin), 冷 [lěng] (cold), 坏 [huài] (bad), 消极 [xiāo jí] (negative), 丑 [chǒu] (ugly), 笨 [bèn] (stupid), 慢 [màn] (slow), 生 [shēng] (raw).”

In the comparative sentence, “没有 [méi yǒu] (no)” can negate positive adjectives but not opposite ones, except for “冷热 [lěng rè] (cold and hot)” for weather and “胖瘦 [pàng shòu] (fat and thin)” for a person.

Example 1 我没有他高。 [wǒ méi yǒu tā gāo.]

(I'm not as tall as he is.)

“\*我没有他矮。 [wǒ méi yǒu tā ǎi.]” is improper.

Example 2 你没有小刘大吧? [nǐ méi yǒu Xiǎo Liú dà ba?]

(Aren't you older than Xiao Liu?)

“\*你没有小刘小吧? [nǐ méi yǒu Xiǎo Liú xiǎo ba?]" is improper.

### Section three: grammatical features of adjectives

In Chinese, adjectives share many similar grammatical features with verbs, due to which they are regarded as one type of verb, named static verbs. Generally, adjectives can function as the predicate alone, which is similar to all verbs. Most adjectives can be modified by adverbs of degree, which are similar to state verbs and volitive verbs but dissimilar to action verbs. Some adjectives can be followed by “了 [le]” and verbal quantifiers or time quantifiers, such as “红了一下 [hóng le yī xià] (to be red for a while),” “亮了一天 [liàng le yī tiān] (to be shining for a whole day). Here, “红 [hóng] (red)” and “亮 [liàng] (shine)” are similar to verbs. Although adjectives share many things in common with verbs, they can differ from each other by grammatical features.

The main grammatical features of adjectives are as follows.

- 1 Generally, feature adjectives can be modified by adverbs of degree, such as “很红 [hěn hóng] (very red),” “十分壮观 [shí fèn zhuàng guān] (grand sight).” Adjectives with affixes and compound ones are excluded because they imply a sense of degree by themselves. For example, it is improper to say “\*很冷清清 [hěn lěng qīng qīng]” or “\*非常冰凉 [fēi cháng bīng liáng].
- 2 Usually, adjectives don't take objects, but sometimes some of them still possess the properties of verbs, so they can take objects due to their having multi-category features of adjectives and verbs. (See Section Six in Chapter 5.)
- 3 Monosyllabic adjectives, disyllabic adjectives, and compound adjectives can be overlapped. However, overlapped adjectives differ from overlapped verbs in meaning. Besides, the forms that adjectives overlap, such as AABB, differ from those of verbs. (See Section Five of Chapter 5).

### Section four: grammatical functions of adjectives

Feature adjectives differ from state adjectives by grammatical function.

Feature adjectives mainly function as attributes, predicates, adverbs, and complements under certain conditions but state adjectives are comparatively less restricted.

#### 1. *As an attribute*

When functioning as attributes, feature adjectives are restricted to “的 [de].” Let's compare the following two groups of adjectives. The group without “\*” is acceptable; the group with “\*” is not.

方桌 [fāng zhuō] (square table) \*方纸 [fāng zhǐ]  
 薄纸 [báo zhǐ] (thin paper) \*薄灰尘 [báo huī chén]  
 白布 [bái bù] (white cloth) \*短布 [duǎn bù]  
 绿上衣 [lǜ shàng yī] (green jacket) \*绿庄稼 [lǜ zhuāng jià]  
 客气话 [kè qì huà] (polite words) \*客气态度 [kè qì tài dù]

老实人 [lǎo shí rén] (honest man) \*老实工人 [lǎo shí gōng rén]  
 关键时刻 [guān jiàn shí kè] (critical moment) \*关键地点 [guān jiàn dì diǎn]  
 重要问题 [zhòng yào wèn tí] (important issue) \*重要方针 [zhòng yào fāng  
 zhēn]

In other words, the combination of adjectives and nouns inside the adjective phrase without “的 [de]” is inherently fixed, due to a long-term collocation accepted widely in practice. Since there is no syntactic or grammatical reason for such a combination, learning these phrases takes time and patience for Chinese learners.

When being modified by adverbs of degree or overlapped with “的 [de]” following, feature adjectives are free in connecting with nouns, such as “很薄的灰尘 [hěn báo de huī chén] (very thin dust),” “很短的（一块）布 [hěn duǎn de (yī kuài) bù] (a very short piece of cloth),” “绿绿的庄稼 [lǜ lǜ de zhuāng jià] (green crops),” “很客气的态度 [hěn kè qì de tài dù] (very polite attitude).”

Some feature adjectives imply more than one single meaning when connected with different nouns. For example, “老工人 [lǎo gōng rén] (veteran worker)” indicates “熟练工人 [shú liàn gōng rén] (skilled worker)”; “老朋友 [lǎo péng yǒu] (old friend)” refers to “相识已久的朋友 [xiāng shí yǐ jiǔ de péng yǒu] (being friends for a long time)” and “老同学 [lǎo tóng xué] (old classmate)” means “曾经一起学习过的人 [céng jīng yī qǐ xué xí guò de rén] (someone who once studied together).” Again, “大 [dà] (big)” in “大树 [dà shù] (big tree),” “大事 [dà shì] (great event),” “大个子 [dà gè zi] (tall person),” “大雪 [dà xuě] (heavy snow)” differs in meaning. Sometimes, such phrases of “adjective+noun” can be represented by different adjectives in other languages.

When functioning as attributes, feature adjectives should be followed by “的 [de].” As long as the semantic meaning allows, they are free to connect with nouns, such as “冷冰冰的面孔 [lěng bīng bīng de miàn kǒng] (cold face),” “黑咕隆咚的山洞 [hēi gū lóng dōng de shān dòng] (dark cave),” “雪白的衬衫 [xuě bái de chèn shān] (snow-white shirt),” “红红的小脸 [hóng hóng de xiǎo liǎn] (a small blushed face).”

In the spoken language, adjectives mainly function as predicates while they often serve as attributes in the written language or in formal oral expressions.

## II. As a predicate

Feature adjectives can function as predicates with certain limitations, such as referring to comparison.

Example 1 这件衣服短，那件衣服长。[zhè jiàn yī fu duǎn, nà jiàn yī fu cháng.]  
 (This dress is short; that one is long.)

Since the Chinese adjective contains a sense of comparison, “短 [duǎn] (short)” indicates “relatively short” and “长 [cháng] (long)” means “relatively long” in the previous example.

Example 2 这个孩子人小志气大。[zhè gè hái zi rén xiǎo zhì qì dà.]  
(This child is very young but has big ambition.)

Example 3 外边风大，快进来吧。[wài biān fēng dà, kuài jìn lái ba.]  
(It's windy outside. Come in quickly.)

Example 4

A: 黑龙江冷还是新疆冷? [hēi lóng jiāng lěng hái shì xīn jiāng lěng?]  
(The weather of which province is colder? Heilongjiang or Xinjiang?)

B: 当然黑龙江冷。[dāng rán hēi lóng jiāng lěng.]  
(Heilongjiang, of course.)

The adjective in the comparative sentence belongs to the above case.

Example 5 我们班小刘比小张高。[wǒ men bān Xiǎo Liú bǐ Xiǎo Zhāng gāo.]  
(Xiao Liu is taller than Xiao Zhang in our class.)

When a single adjective functions as a predicate in a sentence that itself indicates no comparison, this sentence would sound incomplete. Due to this situation, an adverb of degree “很 [hěn] (very)” can be added in front, such as “今天很冷。[jīn tiān hěn lěng.] (It's very cold today.),” “他学习很好。[tā xué xí hěn hǎo.] (He studies very well.).” Here “很 [hěn] (very)” means a weak degree. Besides, other adverbs or constituents can be put before adjectives, such as “外边风特别大。[wài biān fēng tè bié dà.] (It's very windy outside.),” “他哥哥非常聪明。[tā gē gē fēi cháng cōng míng.] (His brother is very clever.).”

The overlapped feature adjectives and adjectives with affixes can function as predicates alone, only if the modal particle “的 [de]” follow them.

Example 6 屋里乱哄哄的。[wū lǐ luàn hōng hōng de.]  
(The room was a mess.)

Example 7 这个孩子傻了吧唧的。[zhè gè hái zi shǎ le ba jī de.]  
(The child was very stupid.)

Example 8 姑娘的脸红红的。[gū niáng de liǎn hóng hóng de.]  
(The girl has a blushed face.)

Example 9 她大大方方的。[tā dà dà fāng fāng de.]  
(She is very natural and poised.)

Compound adjectives can function as predicates alone.

Example 10 我一摸，他的手冰凉。[wǒ yī mō, tā de shǒu bīng liáng.]  
(His hands were cold when I touched them.)

Example 11 街上漆黑 . . . [jiē shàng qī hēi . . . ]  
(It's dark in the street . . .)

Sentences similar to these examples often appear in compound sentences as a clause.

### III. As an adverb

Most feature adjectives cannot function as adverbs independently, except for “多 [duō] (many),” “少 [shǎo] (few),” “早 [zǎo] (early),” “晚 [wǎn] (late),” “迟 [chí] (late),” “快 [kuài] (fast),” “慢 [màn] (slow),” “难 [nán] (difficult),” “容易 [róng yì] (easy).”

Example 12 你们在一起多研究研究问题，少说闲话。[nǐ men zài yī qǐ duō yán jiū yán jiū wèn tí, shǎo shuō xián huà.]  
(You had better spend more time discussing questions together instead of gossiping.)

Example 13 小马经常早来晚走。[xiǎo mǎ jīng cháng zǎo lái wǎn zǒu.]  
(Xiao Ma often comes early and leaves late.)

Although some monosyllabic adjectives can function as adverbs independently, they are simply limited to modify several verbs. For example, “轻 [qīng] (gently)” only modifies “放 [fàng] (put down),” “弹 [tán] (flip)” to form “轻放 [qīng fàng] (put down gently)” and “轻弹 [qīng tán] (flip gently).” Similar examples are “高举 [gāo jǔ] (hold high),” “高喊 [gāo hǎn] (shout loudly),” “紧握 [jǐn wò] (hold tightly),” “紧跟 [jǐn gēn] (follow closely),” “粗看 [cū kàn] (look at roughly),” “粗通 [cū tōng] (rough understanding),” “静坐 [jìng zuò] (sit quietly),” “静听 [jìng tīng] (listen quietly),” “怪叫 [guài jiào] (manic cry),” “重打 [zhòng dǎ] (hit heavily),” “重创 [zhòng chuàng] (heavy lossess).”

Disyllabic adjectives often appear in the overlapped form and seldom function as adverbs alone in the spoken language.

Example 14 孩子们规规矩矩地坐在那里，一动也不动。[hái zi men guī guī jǔ jǔ de zuò zài nà lǐ, yī dòng yě bú dòng.]  
(The children sat there in a well-behaved manner, and motionlessly.)

Example 15 今天放假，我们痛痛快快地玩一天吧。[jīn tiān fàng jià, wǒ men tòng tòng kuài kuài de wán yī tiān ba.]  
(Today is a holiday. Let's have a good time.)

A few disyllabic adjectives can serve as adverbs alone.

Example 16 你再仔细看看，有没有错字。[nǐ zài zǎi xì kàn kàn, yǒu méi yǒu cuò zì.]  
(You check it again to see if there are some wrong typos.)

Example 17 工人们把车间彻底打扫了一下。[gōng rén men bǎ chē jiān chè dǐ dǎ sǎo le yī xià.]  
(The workers gave the workshop a thorough cleaning.)

Some disyllabic adjectives only appear as adverbs in the written language.

Example 18 听到这个消息，战士们激动地表示：... [tīng dào zhè gè xiāo xī, zhàn shì men jī dòng de biǎo shì . . .]

(Hearing the news, the soldiers said excitedly: . . .)

Example 19 在我们的社会主义祖国，孩子们愉快地生活，健康地成长。[zài wǒ men de shè huì zhǔ yì zǔ guó, hái zǐ men yú kuài de shēng huó, jiàn kāng de chéng zhǎng.]

(In the socialist motherland, the children live happily and grow healthily.)  
State adjectives can serve as adverbs, only if they are followed by “地 [de].”

Example 20 麦穗沉甸甸地垂着。[mài suì chén diàn diàn de chuí zhe.]  
(Heavy ears of wheat are hanging down.)

Example 21 老头儿孤零零地站在那里。[lǎo tóu er gū líng líng de zhàn zài nà lǐ.]

(The old man stood there alone.)

Example 22 小汤姆笔直地坐在椅子上。[Xiǎo Tāng mǔ bǐ zhí de zuò zài yǐ zi shàng.]

(Little Tom sat bolt upright in his chair.)

#### *IV. As a complement*

Feature adjectives can function as result complements.

Example 23 衣服晾干了。[yī fú liàng gān le.]  
(The clothes have dried out.)

Example 24 这个电影我看明白了。[zhè gè diàn yǐng wǒ kàn míng bái le.]  
(I have understood this movie.)

Adjectives of all types can function as modal complements to indicate a sense of comparison, basically the same as when functioning as predicates.

Example 25 妹妹唱得好，哥哥唱得不好。[mèi mèi chàng dé hǎo, gē gē chàng dé bù hǎo.]  
(The younger sister sings well; the brother doesn't.)

Example 26 小红长得漂亮，小兰长得丑。[Xiǎo Hóng zhǎng de piào liàng, Xiǎo Lán zhǎng de chǒu.]  
(Xiao Hong is pretty and Xiao Lan is ugly.)

When a feature adjective functions as a modal complement, it requires an adverb of degree in front.

Example 27 我坐在第一排，所以看得很清楚。[wǒ zuò zài dì yī pái, suǒ yǐ kàn de hěn qīng chǔ.]  
(I sit in the front row, so I have a good view.)

“的 [de]” is necessary after the state adjectives with affixes and the overlapped feature adjectives, when they function as modal complements.

Example 28 饭做得香喷喷的。[fàn zuò de xiāng pēn pēn de.]

(The food is delicious.)

Example 29 孩子们穿得整整齐齐的。[hái zi men chuān de zhěng zhěng qí qí de.]

(The children are all dressed up.)

Compound adjectives can function alone as complements.

Example 30 他的脸涨得通红。[tā de liǎn zhǎng de tōng hóng.]

(His face went red.)

Example 31 孩子一动也不动，站得笔直。[hái zi yī dòng yě bú dòng, zhàn de bǐ zhí.]

(The child stood bolt upright and motionless.)

#### V. *As a subject and object*

Similar to verbs, adjectives can function as subjects and objects. When serving as subjects, they choose their predicate verbs.

- 1 They take some copulas as predicate verbs, such as “是 [shì] (is),” “像 [xiàng] (seem).”

Example 32 勤劳是一种美德。[qín láo shì yī zhǒng měi dé.]

(Diligence is a virtue.)

Example 33 对她来说，黑暗简直像魔鬼一样。[duì tā lái shuō, hēi àn jiǎn zhí xiàng mó guǐ yī yàng.]

(To her, the darkness was like a devil.)

Example 34 对很多人来说，上班是一件快乐的事。[duì hěn duō rén lái shuō, shàng bān shì yī jiàn kuài lè de shì.]

(For many people, going to work is a joy.)

- 2 They choose causative verbs as the predicate, such as “使 [shǐ] (make),” “让 [ràng] (let),” “叫 [jiào] (make).”

Example 35 谦虚使人进步，骄傲使人落后。[qiān xū shǐ rén jìn bù, jiāo ào shǐ rén luò hòu.]

(Modesty helps one to make progress; conceit makes one lag behind.)

Example 36 割麦子叫他懂得了劳动的意义。[gē mài zǐ jiào tā dǒng dé láo dòng de yì yì.]

(Reaping wheat taught him the meaning of labor.)



Example 37 笑使她显得年轻了许多。[xiào shǐ tā xiǎn dé nián qīng le xǔ duō.]

(Smiling makes her look much younger.)

Example 38 这次胜利更增强了他们必胜的信心。[zhè cì shèng lì gèng zēng qiáng le tā men bì shèng de xìn xīn.]

(The victory strengthened their confidence in future wins.)

3 They take volitive verbs as predicates.

Example 39 成绩好会带给你快乐，也会使人变得骄傲起来。[chéng jì hǎo huì dài gěi nǐ kuài lè, yě huì shǐ rén biàn dé jiāo ào qǐ lái.]

(Good grades will bring you joy as well as arrogance at the same time.)

Example 40 劳动能改变一切。[láo dòng néng gǎi biàn yī qiè.]

(Labor changes everything.)

4 Adjectives can be chosen as the predicate.

Example 41 工作着是美丽的。[gōng zuò zhe shì měi lì de.]

(Working is pleasant.)

Example 42 我们老师讲课很生动。[wǒ men lǎo shī jiǎng kè hěn shēng dòng.]

(Our teacher teaches in quite a lively fashion.)

### Section five: overlapped adjectives

Feature adjectives and compound adjectives can be overlapped. Their meanings differ from one another due to different overlapped forms.

#### I. *Overlapped monosyllabic adjectives*

Monosyllabic adjectives have an AA form. In the spoken language, some syllables when repeated a second time are retroflexed and pronounced in the first tone with the stress on it, such as “早早儿 [zǎo zāor] (as early as possible),” “远远儿 [yuǎn yuǎnr] (as far as possible),” “慢慢儿” [màn mǎnr] (very slowly).” However, in formal situations or delivering a recitation of literary works, retroflexion should be avoided and no tones should be changed, either.

Overlapped monosyllabic adjectives can function as adverbs and complements, indicating a strong degree.

Example 1 您行行好，再重重地给我一拳。[nín xíng xíng hǎo, zài zhòng zhòng de gěi wǒ yī quán.]

(You should be kind to give me another heavy blow.)

Example 2 我自己会走，我要走得远远的。[wǒ zì jǐ huì zǒu, wǒ yào zǒu de yuǎn yuǎn de.]

(I will go myself, as far as possible.)

When functioning as attributes, they are strongly descriptive, carrying a sense of affection.

Example 3 小女孩弯弯的眉毛，大大的眼睛，红红的嘴唇，很可爱。  
[xiǎo nǚ hái wān wān de méi máo, dà dà de yǎn jīng, hóng hóng de zuǐ chún, hěn kě ài.]

(The little girl is very cute with curved eyebrows, big eyes, and red lips.)

Example 4 彬彬梳着短短的头发，穿着短短的裙子，很精神。[Bīn bīn shū zhe duǎn duǎn de tóu fà, chuān zhe duǎn duǎn de qún zi, hěn jīng shén.]  
(Binbin looks full of vigor with her short hair and miniskirt.)

In Example 3, “弯弯的眉毛 [wān wān de méi máo] (curved eyebrows),” “大大的眼睛 [dà dà de yǎn jīng] (big eyes)” and “红红的嘴唇 [hóng hóng de zuǐ chún] (red lips)” don’t actually mean what they indicate literally; in fact, they describe a lovely appearance.

Two monosyllabic adjectives of related semantic meanings can be overlapped in AABB, carrying a sense of variety or irregularity.

Example 5 教室里的椅子大大小小，桌子高高矮矮，很不美观。[jiāo shì lǐ de yǐ zi dà dà xiǎo xiǎo, zhuō zi gāo gāo ǎi ǎi, hěn bú měi guān.]

(The classroom is not pleasing to the eye with the chairs in various sizes, and the desks in different shapes.)

Example 6 路高高低低的，坐在车里很不舒服。[lù gāo gāo dī dī de, zuò zài chē lǐ hěn bù shū fu.]

(It was very uncomfortable to sit in the car running on the bumpy road.)

Example 7 游行的人们举着大大小小的红旗，打着红红绿绿的彩旗，穿着五颜六色的衣服，显得气氛很热烈。[yóu xíng de rén men jǔ zhe dà dà xiǎo xiǎo de hóng qí, dǎ zhe hóng hóng lǜ lǜ de cǎi qí, chuān zhe wǔ yán liù sè de yī fu, xiǎn dé qì fēn hěn rè liè.]

(The atmosphere of the parade is very warm, with people in colorful clothes holding the red or colored flags in different sizes.)

Some phrases are similar to overlapped adjectives in form, such as “多多少少 [duō duō shǎo shǎo] (more or less).” Actually, it is an idiom, referring to “或多或少 [huò duō huò shǎo] (more or less).”

## II. Overlapped disyllabic adjectives

They have two overlapped forms. One is AABB, such as “清清楚楚 [qīng qīng chǔ chǔ] (be crystal clear)” and “干干净净 [gān gān jìng jìng] (neat and tidy).” In the spoken language, the second A is pronounced slightly; the first B and the second B are retroflexed and pronounced in the first tone with the stress on them. For example, “漂漂亮亮 (beautiful)” is read as “[piào piào liàng liàng]”; “明明白白 (as clear as noonday)” is read as “[míng míng bái bái].” In formal

situations, the first A is pronounced with stress and the second A is pronounced slightly; two Bs are pronounced normally. For example, “漂漂亮亮 (beautiful)” is read as “[piào piao liàng liàng]”; “明明白白 (as clear as noonday)” is read as “[míng míng bái bái].”

Disyllabic adjectives in AABB can function as adverbs and complements, indicating a strong degree.

Example 8 小喜亲亲热热地问长问短。[Xiǎo Xǐ qīn qīn rè rè de wèn cháng wèn duǎn.]

(Xiao Xi kept making warm inquiries.)

Example 9 你看这是白纸黑字写得清清楚楚的。[nǐ kàn zhè shì bái zhǐ hēi zì xiě dé qīng qīng chǔ chǔ de.]

(You see it's written in black and white.)

When functioning as attributes, they are more effective in describing, rather than indicating a certain degree.

Example 10 他家来了一个斯斯文文的姑娘。[tā jiā lái le yī gè sī sī wén wén de gū niáng.]

(An elegant girl came to his house.)

Example 11 他那朴朴素素的衣着，实实在在的态度，大大方方的举止，给人留下了很好的印象。[tā nà pǔ pǔ sù sù de yī zhe, shí shí zài zài de tài dù, dà dà fāng fāng de jǔ zhǐ, gěi rén liú xià le hěn hǎo de yìn xiàng.]

(He gave us a good impression with his plain clothes, his down-to-earth manner, and his natural and poised behaviors.)

Example 12 你这种拖拖拉拉的作风必须改变！[nǐ zhè zhǒng tuō tuō lā lā de zuò fēng bì xū gǎi biàn!]

(Your dilatory way of doing things must be gotten rid of.)

Overlapped disyllabic adjectives are qualified as predicates alone, possessing descriptive functions at the same time.

Example 13 家里干干净净的，... [jiā lǐ gān gān jìng jìng de ...]

(The room is neat and tidy.)

Example 14 这个姑娘大大方方，一点也不扭捏。[zhè gè gū niáng dà dà fāng fāng, yī diǎn yě bù niǔ niē.]

(The girl is in an unaffected and natural manner.)

Usually, these two sentences and similar ones often appear as clauses of compound sentences.

Some disyllabic adjectives only possess an AABB form, such as “病病歪歪 [bìng bìng wāi wāi] (dispirited and discouraged),” “大大咧咧 [dà dà liē liē] (careless).”

The other is the “A里 [lǐ] AB” form. The tone of the first A doesn’t change with the stress on it. “里 [lǐ]” is pronounced slightly (light tone); AB is relatively slight. Sometimes, the stress can be put on B in order to strengthen the manner of speaking, such as “糊里糊涂 [hú li hú tú] (mixed up).” More similar examples are “傻里傻气 [shǎ li shǎ qì] (water on the brain),” “啰里啰唆 [luō li luō suō] (verbose),” “拉里拉杂 [lā li lā zá] (in a mess),” “马马虎虎 [mǎ li mǎ hǔ] (careless).”

The form “A里 [lǐ] AB” implies disgust and is simply restricted to the adjectives of a derogatory sense.

### III. Compound adjectives in the overlapped form of ABAB

Compound adjectives in the overlapped form of ABAB indicate a strong degree.

Example 15 天空瓦蓝瓦蓝的。[tiān kōng wǎ lán wǎ lán de.]  
(The sky is very blue.)

Example 16 这头小猪长得滚圆滚圆的。[zhè tóu xiǎo zhū zhǎng de gǔn yuán gǔn yuán de.]  
(The little pig is very fat.)

Example 17 他焦黄焦黄的长脸上布满了皱纹。[tā jiāo huáng jiāo huáng de cháng liǎn shàng bù mǎn le zhòu wén.]  
(His dry and yellowish face was lined with wrinkles.)

Certainly, not all adjectives can be overlapped and those that can be overlapped are frequently used in daily life. Here are some adjectives that cannot be overlapped:

“伟大 [wěi dà] (great),” “光明 [guāng míng] (promising),” “幸福 [xìng fú] (happy),” “美丽 [měi lì] (pretty),” “英明 [yīng míng] (wise),” “勇敢 [yǒng gǎn] (brave),” “熟悉 [shú xī] (familiar),” “困难 [kùn nán] (difficult),” “艰巨 [jiān jù] (arduous),” “悲 [bēi] (sad),” “疯 [fēng] (crazy),” “假 [jiǎ] (fake),” “贼 [zéi] (crafty).”

Compared with those monosyllabic adjectives, many disyllabic adjectives cannot be overlapped. In fact, most monosyllabic adjectives and compound adjectives in the form of ABAB can be overlapped.

## Section six: multi-categories of adjectives

Some adjectives possess other parts of speech.

### I. Adjectives possessing the properties of adverbs

When modifying verbs or adjectives, some adjectives change their lexical meanings and similarly function as adverbs. Due to this, they can be categorized into adverbs.

直 [zhí] (continuously)

Example 1 这个孩子直哭。[zhè gè hái zi zhí kū.]

(The child kept crying.)

怪 [guài] (much)

Example 2 跑了一天了，怪累的。[pǎo le yī tiān le, guài lèi de.]

(I'm very tired after a running day.)

老 [lǎo] (always)

Example 3 他怎么老不说话？[tā zěn me lǎo bù shuō huà?]

(Why does he always keep not speaking?)

全 [quán] (all)

Example 4 我十道题全对了。[wǒ shí dào tí quán duì le.]

(I got all ten questions right.)

白 [bái] (useless)

Example 5 今天又白跑了一趟。[jīn tiān yòu bái pǎo le yī tàng.]

(Today was another useless trip.)

光 [guāng] (just)

Example 6 不能光说不做。[bù néng guāng shuō bú zuò.]

(Don't just talk about it.)

快 [kuài] (soon)

Example 7 小刘快回国了。[Xiǎo Liú kuài huí guó le.]

(Xiao Liu will return to China soon.)

偏 [piān] (only)

Example 8 大家都高高兴兴，偏你一人生气。[dà jiā dōu gāo gāo xìng

xìng, piān nǐ yī rén shēng qì.]

(Everyone is happy, but only you are angry.)

死 [sǐ] (inflexible)

Example 9 学习的时候，不要死记硬背。[xué xí de shí hòu, bú yào sǐ jì

yìng bèi.]

(Don't learn by rote when you study.)

Example 10 这个箱子死沉沉的。[zhè gè xiāng zi sǐ chén sǐ chén de.]

(This box is dead heavy.)

Example 11 他犯了错误还死不承认。[tā fàn le cuò wù hái sǐ bù chéng

rèn.]

(He stubbornly refused to admit his mistake.)

早 [zǎo] (early)

Example 12 我们早就认识了。[wǒ men zǎo jiù rèn shí le.]

(We've known each other for a long time.)

真 [zhēn] (really)

Example 13 今天的电影真好。[jīn tiān de diàn yǐng zhēn hǎo.]

(Today's movie was great.)

干 [gān] (only)

Example 14 这件事他干着急没办法。[zhè jiàn shì tā gān zhāo jí méi bàn fǎ.]  
(He was anxious but did nothing about it.)

These adverbs only appear in the spoken language.

## II. Adjectives possessing the properties of verbs

They refer to those that can take an object to indicate a causative meaning, or those that can be overlapped in the ABAB form of verbs, implying a sense of a temporary attempt. They can be divided into several types. For example:

- 1 Taking an object as well as possessing the ABAB form of a verb and an adjective at the same time:

红 [hóng] (red), 壮 [zhuàng] (strong), 弯 [wān] (bent), 正 [zhèng] (positive), 斜 [xié] (sideling), 平 [píng] (horizontal), 松 [sōng] (loose), 饿 [è] (hungry), 静 [jìng] (quiet), 多 [duō] (many), 短 [duǎn] (short), 直 [zhí] (straight), 烫 [tàng] (hot), 温 [wēn] (warm), 宽 [kuān] (wide), 匀 [yún] (even), 光 [guāng] (light), 省 [shěng] (saving), 累 [lèi] (tired), 通 [tōng] (connected), 横 [héng] (sidelong), 端正 [duān zhèng] (decorous), 清楚 [qīng chǔ] (clear), 平静 [píng jìng] (calm), 明白 [míng bái] (explicit), 摇晃 [yáo huàng] (shaky), 富余 [fù yú] (surplus), 晃悠 [huàng yōu] (wandering), 平整 [píng zhěng] (neat), 麻烦 [má fan] (trouble), 安定 [ān dìng] (balanced), 冷淡 [lěng dàn] (fishlike)

- 2 Taking an object and simply possessing the ABAB form of a verb:

习惯 [xí guàn] (habitual), 充实 [chōng shí] (substantial), 坦白 [tǎn bái] (candid), 公开 [gōng kāi] (open), 缓和 [huǎn hé] (antic), 统一 [tǒng yī] (unified), 孤立 [gū lì] (isolated), 讲究 [jiǎng jiū] (cultured), 开阔 [kāi kuò] (wide), 可怜 [kě lián] (abject), 肯定 [kěn dìng] (affirmative), 清醒 [qīng xǐng] (sober), 深入 [shēn rù] (deep), 疏远 [shū yuǎn] (aloof), 壮大 [zhuàng dà] (strong), 平均 [píng jūn] (even), 纯洁 [chún jié] (pure), 固定 [gù dìng] (fixed), 严格 [yán gé] (strict), 满意 [mǎn yì] (satisfactory), 健全 [jiàn quán] (sane), 调和 [tiáo hé] (conciliatory), 突出 [tū chū] (obvious), 繁荣 [fán róng] (prosperous), 密切 [mì qiè] (closed), 滋润 [zī rùn] (moist), 便利 [biàn lì] (convenient), 集中 [jí zhōng] (centralized), 普及 [pǔ jí] (all-pervading), 挤 [jǐ] (crowded)

- 3 Taking the object and simply possessing the ABAB form of the adjective:

厚 [hòu] (thick), 乱 [luàn] (disorderly), 黑 [hēi] (black), 脏 [zāng] (dirty), 多 [duō] (many), 少 [shǎo] (few), 苦 [kǔ] (bitter), 死 [sǐ] (dead), 破 [pò] (broken), 哑 [yǎ] (dumb), 勉强 [miǎn qiáng] (reluctant), 模糊 [mó hú] (vague)

- 4 Taking an object but without any overlapped form:

聋 [lóng] (deaf), 瞎 [xiā] (blind), 瘸 [qué] (lame), 对 [duì] (right), 错 [cuò] (false), 差 [chà] (inferior), 涣散 [huàn sàn] (slack), 焕发 [huàn fā] (radiate),

坚定 [jiān dìng] (firm), 固执 [gù zhí] (stubborn), 讨厌 [tǎo yàn] (troublesome), 忠诚 [zhōng chéng] (loyal), 便宜 [pián yì] (cheap), 松懈 [sōng xiè] (lax), 冤枉 [yuān wǎng] (unfair)

- 5 Without taking an object and possessing the ABAB form of the verb and adjective at the same time:

高兴 [gāo xìng] (glad), 热闹 [rè nào] (noisy), 凉快 [liáng kuài] (cool), 安静 [ān jìng] (quiet), 亲热 [qīn rè] (intimate), 轻松 [qīng sōng] (relax), 唠叨 [láo dāo] (nagging), 痛快 [tòng kuài] (excited), 愉快 [yú kuài] (delighted), 舒服 [shū fu] (comfortable), 干净 [gān jìng] (clean), 漂亮 [piào liàng] (beautiful)

### III. *Adjectives possessing the properties of nouns*

They refer to those that can represent a certain entity or those that possess certain grammatical features of nouns. In other words, they can be modified by numeral-quantifier phrases or adjectives indicating features or quantities. The number of such adjectives is limited. For example:

横 [héng] (horizontal), 竖 [shù] (vertical), 苦 [kǔ] (bitter), 规矩 [guī jǔ] (disciplined), 秘密 [mì mì] (secret), 便宜 [pián yì] (cheap), 保险 [bǎo xiǎn] (secure), 方便 [fāng biàn] (convenient), 热闹 [rè nao] (noisy), 困难 [kùn nan] (difficult), 痛苦 [tòng kǔ] (painful), 烦恼 [fǎn nǎo] (worried)

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# 7 Adverbs

An adverb is a word that modifies or limits verbs and adjectives, expressing scope, time, degree, mood, affirmation, and negation of action or property. Sometimes, it denotes a relation between two actions or properties.

## Section one: features and grammatical functions of adverbs

### I. As an adverbial

Adverbs mainly function to modify verbs, adjectives, or an entire sentence, such as “刚到 [gāng dào] (just arrive),” “已经走了 [yǐ jīng zǒu le] (already left),” “最好你去。 [zui hǎo nǐ qù.] (You had better go.),” “非常高兴 [fēi cháng gāo xìng] (very happy).” Also, they can modify those pronouns which substitute verbs or adjectives, such as “这样 [zhè yàng] (in this way),” “那样 [nà yàng] (like that),” “这么着 [zhè me zhe] (like this).”

Example 1 我们都是留学生。 [wǒ men dōu shì liú xué shēng.]  
(We are all overseas students.)

Example 2 我很喜欢学习汉语。 [wǒ hěn xǐ huān xué xí hàn yǔ.]  
(I like learning Chinese very much.)

Example 3 那里的景色太好了。 [nà lǐ de jǐng sè tài hǎo le.]  
(The view there is wonderful.)

Example 4 我没学过汉语，不认识汉字。 [wǒ méi xué guò hàn yǔ, bú rèn shí hàn zì.]  
(I haven't learned Chinese before so I don't recognize Chinese characters.)

Example 5 难道你不想参加这次旅行吗？ [nán dào nǐ bù xiǎng cān jiā zhè cì lǚ xíng ma?]  
(Don't you want to take part in the trip?)

Example 6 事情已经这样了，还有什么办法？ [shì qing yǐ jīng zhè yàng le, hái yǒu shén me bàn fǎ?]  
(What else can we do since it has already been like this?)



“都 [dōu] (all)” in Example 1 modifies the verb “是 [shì] (are)”; “太 [tài] (very much)” in Example 3 modifies the adjective “好 [hǎo] (wonderful)”; “难道 [nán dào] (don't you)” in Example 5 is a modal adverb to modify the entire sentence and “已经 [yǐ jīng] (already)” in Example 6 modifies “这样 [zhè yàng] (like this)” as the substitution of the predicate verb.

Usually, adverbs cannot modify nouns (phrases) or numeral-quantifier phrases. However, when these words or phrases function as predicates, they can be modified by the adverbs indicating time or scope.

Example 7 今天才星期五，我以为又星期六了。[jīn tiān cái xīng qī wǔ, wǒ yǐ wéi yòu xīng qī liù le.]

(It's just Friday today. I thought it was Saturday.)

Example 8 王大伯都七十多岁了，他儿子刚十几岁。[wáng dà bó dōu qī shí duō suì le, tā ér zi gāng shí jǐ suì.]

(Mr. Wang is in his seventies and his son is just in his teens.)

Example 9 他们结婚已经两三年了。[tā men jié hūn yǐ jīng liǎng sān nián le.]

(They have been married for two or three years.)

A few adverbs expressing scope or negation are able to limit nouns (phrases), pronouns, or numeral-quantifier phrases.

Example 10 光你一个人去吗？[guāng nǐ yī gè rén qù ma?]

(Are you going alone?)

Example 11 这件事就你不知道，我们早就都知道了。[zhè jiàn shì jiù nǐ bù zhī dào, wǒ men zǎo jiù dōu zhī dào le.]

(We all know about it, except you.)

Example 12 天一擦黑，男的一律裤头，女的一律裙子。[tiān yī cā hēi, nán de yī lǜ kù tóu, nǚ de yī lǜ qún zi.]

(As soon as it got dark, men went out in shorts and women in skirts.)

## II. *Unable to be modified by another adverb*

### III. *Unable to stand alone or seldom as a response*

For example, “很好 [hěn hǎo] (very good)” or “好 [hǎo] (good)” can perform as a response to the question “昨天的电影好吗？[zuó tiān de diàn yǐng hǎo ma?] (How was yesterday's movie?)” but “很 [hěn]” cannot. Only a few adverbs can be accepted as response, such as “也许 [yě xǔ] (maybe),” “一定 [yī dìng] (certainly),” “差不多 [chà bù duō] (almost),” “当然 [dāng rán] (surely).”

Example 13

A: 给你的钱够不够？[gěi nǐ de qián gòu bú gòu?]

(Is the money enough for you?)

B: 差不多, 差不多吧。[chà bù duō, chà bù duō ba.]  
(It's almost enough, I think.)

Such usage is common in the spoken language.

#### IV. As a complement

Some adverbs function as complements, only being confined to those indicating a certain degree, such as “极 [jí] (greatly),” “很 [hěn] (very),” “坏 [huài] (bad),” “死 [sǐ] (so),” “透 [tòu] (thoroughly).” Before them, adjectives or verbs for a psychological state are required, such as “好极了 [hǎo jí le] (very good),” “高兴极了 [gāo xìng jí le] (greatly glad),” “坏极了 [huài jí le] (very bad),” “脏死了 [zāng sǐ le] (so dirty),” “吓死了 [xià sǐ le] (scared to death),” “急死了 [jí sǐ le] (worried to death),” “糟糕透了 [zāo gāo tòu le] (terribly bad),” “恨透了 [hèn tòu le] (hate to the utmost degree),” “坏透了 [huài tòu le] (bad to the utmost degree).”

Example 14 昨天的乒乓球表演赛精彩极了。[zuó tiān de pīng pāng qiú biǎo yǎn sài jīng cǎi jí le.]

(Yesterday's table tennis exhibition match was fantastic.)

Example 15 街上的车多得很。[jiē shàng de chē duō dé hěn.]

(The street has heavy traffic.)

Example 16 半路上车出问题了, 真把我急死了。[bàn lù shàng chē chū wèn tí le, zhēn bǎ wǒ jí sǐ le.]

(The car broke down on the highway, which really worried me to death.)

#### V. Functioning as a connection

Some adverbs can connect two verbs or adjectives, or even two phrases or clauses.

##### 1 Connected by a single adverb

Example 17 说干就干。[shuō gàn jiù gàn.]

(Start right now.)

Example 18 死也不投降。[sǐ yě bù tóu xiáng.]

(Never surrender.)

##### 2 Connected by two identical adverbs

Example 19 那座新楼又高又大。[nà zuò xīn lóu yòu gāo yòu dà.]

(The new building is tall and big.)

Example 20 我越学习越觉得自己知道的少。[wǒ yuè xué xí yuè jué de zì jǐ zhī dào de shǎo.]

(The more I learn, the less I feel I know.)

## 3 Connected by two different adverbs

Example 21 再困难也不怕。[zài kùn nán yě bú pà.]  
(I'm not afraid of any difficulty.)

Example 22 非学会不可。[fēi xué huì bù kě.]  
(have to learn)

## 4 Connected by an adverb and a conjunction or preposition

Example 23 不管多困难也得学会。[bù guǎn duō kùn nán yě děi xué hu.]  
(No matter how difficult it is, you have to learn.)

Example 24 刚来中国时，我连一个汉字也不认识。[gāng lái zhōng guó shí, wǒ lián yī gè hàn zì yě bú rèn shí.]  
(When I just came to China, I didn't recognize a Chinese character.)

**Section two: classifications of adverbs**

According to what they express, adverbs can be classified into seven types.

## 1 To express time

刚 [gāng] (just), 刚刚 [gāng gāng] (just), 已 [yǐ] (already), 已经 [yǐ jīng] (already), 曾经 [céng jīng] (ever), 早 [zǎo] (early), 就 [jiù] (as soon as), 早先 [zǎo xiān] (previously), 正 [zhèng] (in course of), 正在 [zhèng zài] (in process of), 在 [zài] (in course of), 将 [jiāng] (be about to), 将要 [jiāng yào] (be going to), 立刻 [lì kè] (immediately), 马上 [mǎ shàng] (immediately), 顿时 [dùn shí] (suddenly), 回头 [huí tóu] (later), 起初 [qǐ chū] (originally), 原先 [yuán xiān] (originally), 一时 [yī shí] (temporarily), 向来 [xiàng lái] (always), 一直 [yī zhí] (always), 一向 [yī xiàng] (consistently), 好久 [hǎo jiǔ] (for a long time), 永远 [yǒng yuǎn] (forever), 从来 [cóng lái] (all along), 随时 [suí shí] (at any time), 时时 [shí shí] (often), 偶尔 [ǒu ěr] (occasionally), 间或 [jiān huò] (sometimes), 老(是) [lǎo (shì)] (for ever), 总(是) [zǒng (shì)] (always), 忽然 [hū rán] (suddenly)

## 2 To express scope

都 [dōu] (both), 全 [quán] (all), 统统 [tǒng tǒng] (wholly), 一共 [yī gòng] (aggregately), 共 [gòng] (altogether), 总共 [zǒng gòng] (altogether), 一起 [yī qǐ] (together), 一块儿 [yī kuài er] (together), 一同 [yī tóng] (together), 一齐 [yī qí] (together), 一道 [yī dào] (together), 一概 [yī gài] (totally), 净 [jìng] (merely), 一味 [yī wèi] (blindly), 只 [zhǐ] (only), 仅仅 [jǐn jǐn] (barely), 就 [jiù] (right away), 独 [dú] (alone), 唯独 [wéi dú] (alone), 单 [dān] (singly), 光 [guāng] (only)

## 3 To express repetition or frequency

又 [yòu] (again), 再 [zài] (again), 还 [hái] (still), 也 [yě] (also), 屡次 [lǚ cì] (repeatedly), 再三 [zài sān] (frequently), 常常 [cháng cháng] (usually),

经常 [jīng cháng] (often), 时常 [shí cháng] (often), 往往 [wǎng wǎng] (always), 不断 [bú duàn] (unceasingly), 反复 [fǎn fù] (repeatedly).

4 To express degree

很 [hěn] (very), 极 [jí] (extremely), 挺 [tǐng] (quite), 怪 [guài] (quite), 太 [tài] (very), 非常 [fēi cháng] (exceedingly), 格外 [gé wài] (especially), 十分 [shí fēn] (utterly), 极其 [jí qí] (exceedingly), 分外 [fèn wài] (particularly), 最 [zuì] (most), 顶 [dǐng] (very), 更 [gèng] (more), 更加 [gèng jiā] (more), 越发 [yuè fā] (even more), 越加 [yuè jiā] (even more), 相当 [xiāng dāng] (reasonably), 稍 [shāo] (a bit), 稍微 [shāo wēi] (a bit), 稍稍 [shāo shāo] (a bit), 略 [lüè] (slightly), 略微 [lüè wēi] (slightly), 比较 [bǐ jiào] (comparatively), 较 [jiào] (comparatively), 有点儿 [yǒu diǎn er] (a little), 可 [kě] (about), 真 [zhēn] (truly), 好 [hǎo] (well), 多 [duō] (much more), 多么 [duō me] (extremely), 几乎 [jī hū] (nearly), 尤其 [yóu qí] (especially), 过于 [guò yú] (too)

5 To express tones of speaking

可 [kě] (about), 幸亏 [xìng kuī] (fortunately), 多亏 [duō kuī] (fortunately), 难道 [nán dào] (is it possible that), 何尝 [hé cháng] (did not), 居然 [jū rán] (unexpectedly), 究竟 [jiū jìng] (actually), 到底 [dào dǐ] (actually), 偏偏 [piān piān] (deliberately), 索性 [suǒ xìng] (directly), 简直 [jiǎn zhí] (simply), 反正 [fǎn zhèng] (at least), 却 [què] (but), 倒 [dào] (conversely), 多亏 [duō kuī] (fortunately), 也许 [yě xǔ] (maybe), 大约 [dà yuē] (about), 好在 [hǎo zài] (luckily), 几乎 [jī hū] (nearly), 差点儿 [chà diǎn er] (almost), 果真 [guǒ zhēn] (really), 果然 [guǒ rán] (really), 明明 [míng míng] (obviously), 敢情 [gǎn qíng] (indeed)

6 To express affirmation or negation

不 [bù] (no), 没(有)一定 [méi (yǒu) yī dìng] (not), 准 [zhǔn] (certainly), 未必 [wèi bì] (may not), 必定 [bì dìng] (definitely), 必然 [bì rán] (necessarily), 未 [wèi] (have not), 别 [bié] (do not), 莫 [mò] (not), 休 [xiū] (not), 勿 [wù] (not)

7 To express modality

猛然 [měng rán] (suddenly), 依然 [yī rán] (still), 仍然 [réng rán] (still), 逐步 [zhú bù] (progressively), 逐渐 [zhú jiàn] (gradually), 渐渐 [jiàn jiàn] (gradually), 亲自 [qīn zì] (personally), 擅自 [shàn zì] (arbitrarily), 百般 [bǎi bān] (every way), 毅然 [yì rán] (resolutely), 互相 [hù xiāng] (mutually), 特地 [tè dì] (specially)

### Section three: usage of frequently used adverbs

#### I. 都 [dōu] (all)

1 To express scope

都 [dōu] (all) mainly expresses scope of the person or the thing mentioned previously. It functions as an adverb to modify the verb or the adjective followed. “都 [dōu] (all)” implies that all actions conveyed by verbs or all features described by adjectives are all included without any exception.

Example 1 咱们都不要客气。[zán men dōu bú yào kè qì.]  
(Let's make ourselves at home.)

Example 2 今天学生都去参观了。[jīn tiān xué shēng dōu qù cān guān le.]  
(All the students went out for a visit today.)

Example 3 柜子里都是书。[guì zi lǐ dōu shì shū.]  
(The bookcase is full of books.)

Example 4 这儿的人都那么热情、好客。[zhè er de rén dōu nà me rè qíng, hǎo kè.]  
(All the people here are warm and hospitable.)

Example 5 老张每天都睡得很晚。[Lǎo Zhāng měi tiān dōu shuì de hěn wǎn.]  
(Lao Zhang goes to bed very late every night.)

Example 6 这是绝密，对任何人都不能讲。[zhè shì jué mì, duì rèn hé rén dōu bù néng jiǎng.]  
(This is top secret. You can't tell it to anyone.)

“都 [dōu] (all)” in Example 1 includes all speakers and listeners. In Example 2, it means all the students. In Example 3, it refers to all the books in the closet. In Example 4, it indicates the local people. In Example 5, it refers to everyday and in Example 6, it includes “任何人 [rèn hé rén] (anyone)” as object of the preposition “对 [duì] (to).” Sometimes, when the people or things before “都 [dōu] (all)” are plural, there are three possibilities of what “都 [dōu] (all)” indicates.

Example 7 这几个句子他们翻译得都很好。[zhè jǐ gè jù zi tā men fān yì de dōu hěn hǎo.]  
(They have translated all these sentences very well./All of them have translated these sentences very well.)

In this example, “都 [dōu] (all)” may refer to either of “这几个句子 [zhè jǐ gè jù zi] (these sentences)” and “他们 [tā men] (they),” or both, and it depends on which one is stressed by the speaker.

There is one thing to be noticed. “都 [dōu] (all)” is supposed to be put after what it includes. For example, “我们都是学生。[wǒ men dōu shì xué shēng.] (We are all students.)” cannot be changed into “\*都我们是学生。[dōu wǒ men shì xué shēng.]”

“都 [dōu] (all)” is frequently used in the following situations.

- (1) When the subject of sentence is plural, “都 [dōu] (all)” often appears with the predicate to emphasize “all.”

Example 8 大家都为你的成功感到高兴。[dà jiā dōu wèi nǐ de chéng gōng gǎn dào gāo xìng.]

(We are all happy for your success.)

Example 9 这件上衣很合身，长短肥瘦都合适。[zhè jiàn shàng yī hěn hé shēn, cháng duǎn féi shòu dōu hé shì.]

(This coat fits you very well.)

In these examples, the first “都 [dōu] (all)” refers to “大家 [dà jiā] (all of us)” and the second one means “长短肥瘦 [cháng duǎn féi shòu] (length and width).” Also, “都 [dōu] (all)” can emphasize the object of a preposition.

Example 10 好，这样对双方都有好处。[hǎo, zhè yàng duì shuāng fāng dōu yǒu hǎo chù.]

(O.K., it's good for both of us.)

Example 11 他把练习里的错字都改正过来了。[tā bǎ liànxí lǐ de cuò zì dōu gǎi zhèng guò lái le.]

(He corrected all the wrong words in the exercise.)

In these examples, the first “都 [dōu] (all)” indicates “双方 [shuāng fāng] (both sides)” as the object of preposition “对 [duì] (for)”; the second one denotes “练习里的错字 [liànxí lǐ de cuò zì] (the wrong words in the exercise)” as the object of preposition “把 [bǎ].”

Sometimes, the words denoted by “都 [dōu] (all)” can be omitted.

Example 12

A: 这些书怎么办? [zhè xiē shū zěn me bàn?]

(How do you deal with these books?)

B: 都扔了。[dōu rēng le.]

(Throw all of them away.)

Example 13 见了他，你别都说优点，不说缺点，他不喜欢拍马屁。[jiàn le tā, nǐ bié dōu shuō yōu diǎn, bù shuō quē diǎn, tā bù xǐ huān pāi mǎ pì.]

(When you meet him, don't keep on praising his advantages without pointing out his disadvantages; he doesn't like being flattered much.)

In some sentences, it is indispensable.

Example 14 王教授的外文书很多，英文的、法文的、日文的都有。[wáng jiāo shòu de wài wén shū hěn duō, yīng wén de, fǎ wén de, rì wén de dōu yǒu.]

(Professor Wang has many books in different foreign languages, such as English, French, and Japanese.)

Example 15 我们学校的留学生来自世界各地，亚洲的、非洲的、美洲的、澳洲的都有。[wǒ men xué xiào de liú xué shēng lái zì shì jiè gè dì, yà zhōu de, fēi zhōu de, měi zhōu de, ào zhōu de dōu yǒu.]

(Our overseas students come from all over the world, such as Asia, Africa, America, and Australia.)

In these examples, the nouns referred by “都 [dōu] (all)” serve as the topic of sentence.

- (2) “都 [dōu] (all)” is required to match with certain words in the sentence. These words include “每 [měi] (every),” “各 [gè] (each),” “所有 [suǒ yǒu] (all),” “一切 [yī qiè] (everything),” “全部 [quán bù] (whole),” “这些 [zhè xiē] (these),” “那些 [nà xiē] (those),” “随时 [suí shí] (at any moment),” “到处 [dào chù] (everywhere),” “任何 [rèn hé] (any).”

Example 16 诗人贾岛的每句诗和每个字都经过反复锤炼，用心推敲修改。[shī rén Jiǎ Dǎo de měi jù shī hé měi gè zì dōu jīng guò fǎn fù chuí liàn, yòng xīn tuī qiāo xiū gǎi.]

(Every sentence and every word in the poems of Jia Dao have been deliberated repeatedly and carefully.)

Example 17 你看这些家具都是你从前顶喜欢的东西。[nǐ kàn zhè xiē jiā jù dōu shì nǐ cóng qián dǐng xǐ huān de dōng xī.]

(You see that these pieces of furniture are all the things you used to like best.)

Example 18 我国的石拱桥几乎到处都有。[wǒ guó de shí gǒng qiáo jī hū dào chù dōu yǒu.]

(The stone arch bridges can almost be seen everywhere in our country.)

Example 19 所有的老师都说你很聪明。[suǒ yǒu de lǎo shī dōu shuō nǐ hěn cōng míng.]

(All the teachers admit your cleverness.)

Example 20 我每天都看报。[wǒ měi tiān dōu kàn bào.]

(I read newspapers every day.)

When nouns or quantifiers are repeated to indicate a plural sense, “都 [dōu] (all)” is necessary here.

Example 21 人人都应该遵守交通规则。[rén rén dōu yīng gāi zūn shǒu jiāo tōng guī zé.]

(Everyone should obey the traffic rules.)

Example 22 她很积极，热情，在厂里事事都跑在前面。[tā hěn jī jí, rè qíng, zài chǎng lǐ shì shì dōu pǎo zài qián miàn.]

(She was very active and enthusiastic in the various working affairs of the factory.)

Example 23 幼儿园的孩子们，个个都长得很健壮。[yòu ér yuán de hái zǐ men, gè gè dōu zhǎng dé hěn jiàn zhuàng.]

(All the children in the kindergarten grow healthy and strong.)

- (3) “都 [dōu] (all)” or “也 [yě] (too)” is necessarily required to match with certain interrogative pronouns as indefinite reference, such as “谁 [shuí] (who),” “什么 [shén me] (what),” “哪 [nǎ] (where),” “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where),” “哪里 [nǎ lǐ] (where),” “怎么 [zěn me] (how).” Here, these pronouns carry a sense of generalization, even though they are singular.

Example 24 您的问题，谁都答不上来。[nín de wèn tí, shuí dōu dá bú shàng lái.]

(No one can answer your question.)

Example 25 他回来后，什么都没带，拿一本书又走了。[tā huí lái hòu, shén me dōu méi shuō, ná yī běn shū yòu zǒu le.]

(He came back and left with a book without saying anything.)

Example 26 我刚来到北京，哪儿都不认识。[wǒ gāng lái dào běi jīng, nǎ er dōu bú rèn shí.]

(I just came to Beijing and knew nothing about its urban districts.)

Example 27 大青山上，目之所及，哪里都是绿的。[dà qīng shān shàng, mù zhī suǒ jí, nǎ lǐ dōu shì lǜ de.]

(Da Qing mountain is covered by green trees everywhere.)

- (4) “都 [dōu] (all)” is required to match with the predicate or to appear in the second clause, when a compound sentence contains certain conjunctions, such as “无论 [wú lùn] (no matter),” “不论 [bú lùn] (no matter),” “不管 [bù guǎn] (no matter).” They are frequently combined like this: “无论/不论/不管 . . . 都/也 [wú lùn/bú lùn/bù guǎn . . . dōu/yě] (no matter . . . all).”

Example 28 无论谁都应当讲究公德。[wú lùn shuí dōu yīng dāng jiǎng jiū gōng gòng dào dé.]

(No matter who you are, you should pay attention to public morals.)

Example 29 无论做什么事，都不能只顾自己，不考虑别人。[wú lùn zuò shén me shì, dōu bù néng zhǐ gù zì jǐ, bù kǎo lǜ bié rén.]

(No matter what you do, you can't only think of yourself but not others.)

Example 30 不管你学习还是工作，都要讲究效率。[bù guǎn nǐ xué xí hái shì gōng zuò, dōu yào jiǎng jiū xiào lǜ.]

(No matter what you do, to study or to work, you should pay attention to efficiency.)

- (5) “都 [dōu] (all)” should be put before the predicate verb and pronounced slightly when it appears in the interrogative sentence consisting of certain interrogative pronouns, such as “谁 [shuí] (who),” “什么 [shén me] (what),” “哪儿 [nǎ er] (where),” “哪 [nǎ]+quantifier” and “哪 [nǎ]+几 [jǐ] (how many)+quantifier.” “都 [dōu] (all)” indicates what is asked by these pronouns but it cannot be used alone as the response to them.



## Example 31

A: 你家里都有什么人? [nǐ jiā lǐ dōu yǒu shén me rén?]

(How many people do you have in the family?)

B: 我家里有我父亲、母亲、两个哥哥和一个妹妹。[wǒ jiā lǐ yǒu wǒ fù qīn, mǔ qīn, liǎng gè gē gē hé yī gè mèi mèi.]

(My father, my mother, two brothers, and one sister.)

## Example 32

A: 这件事情你都告诉谁了? [zhè jiàn shì qíng nǐ dōu gào sù shuí le?]

(To whom did you tell it?)

B: 我告诉了张老师和咱们班的同学。[wǒ gào sù le zhāng lǎo shī hé zán men bān de tóng xué.]

(I told it to Prof. Zhang and my classmates.)

## Example 33

A: 这次旅行你都去哪儿了? [zhè cì lǚ xíng nǐ dōu qù nǎ er le?]

(Where did you go in this trip?)

B: 我去了天津、上海、杭州、广州和桂林。[wǒ qù le tiān jīn, shàng hǎi, háng zhōu, guǎng zhōu hé guì lín.]

(I have been to Tianjin, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Guangzhou, and Guilin.)

## Example 34

A: 参加座谈会的都有哪些人? [cān jiā zuò tán huì de dōu yǒu nǎ xiē rén?]

(Who attended the symposium?)

B: 有学校的各级领导和各年级的学生代表。[yǒu xué xiào de gè jí líng dǎo hé gè nián jí de xué shēng dài biǎo.]

(School leaders at all levels and student representatives of different grades.)

## Example 35

A: 张老师, 您都教哪几门课? [Zhāng lǎo shī, nín dōu jiāo nǎ jǐ mén kè?]

(Mr. Zhang, how many courses do you teach?)

B: 我只教现代汉语。[wǒ zhǐ jiāo xiàn dài hàn yǔ.]

(I only teach modern Chinese.)

“都 [dōu] (all)” in these examples implies that the speaker assumes a plural answer rather than a single one; without “都 [dōu] (all),” misunderstanding tends to occur. “都 [dōu] (all)” doesn’t appear in the answer to each question because the noun in single form is used here.

In the spoken language, “都 [dōu] (all)” can stand next to the interrogative pronoun.

Example 36 你这辆自行车都哪儿有毛病? [nǐ zhè liàng zì xíng chē dōu nǎ er yǒu máo bìng?]

(What’s wrong with your bike?)

Example 37 今年暑假都谁想回国探亲? [jīn nián shǔ jià dōu shuí xiǎng huí guó tàn qīn?]

(Who wants to go home to visit family in this summer vacation?)

## 2 To be used in other ways

- (1) Standing after the topic of the sentence, “都 [dōu] (all)” is often connected with the preposition “连 [lián] (including),” the adverb “甚至 [shèn zhì] (even),” or the structure “一 [yī] (a)+quantifier+noun.” They are normally formed as “连 . . . 都 . . . [lián . . . dōu . . .] (including all . . .),” “甚至 . . . 都 . . . [shèn zhì . . . dōu . . .] (even . . . all),” “一 . . . 都 . . . [yī . . . dōu . . .] (even . . .).”

Example 38 连弟弟都懂得这个道理，你这么大了，怎么不懂。[lián dì dì dōu dǒng de zhè gè dào lǐ, nǐ zhè me dà le, zěn me bù dǒng.]

(Even the younger brother understood this truth, and how couldn't you when you are much older than him?)

Example 39 他胆子太小了，甚至树叶落下来都怕砸了脑袋。[tā dǎn zi tài xiǎo le, shèn zhì shù yè zì luò xià lái dōu pà zá le nǎo dai.]

(He was so timid that he was even afraid of being hit to death by a fallen leaf.)

Example 40 这次考试，李力一个汉字都没写错。[zhè cì kǎo shì, Lǐ Lì yī gè hàn zì dōu méi xiě cuò.]

(Li Li didn't write any wrong words in the examination.)

Example 41 她是女扮男装吗？一点儿都看不出来。[tā shì nǚ bàn nán zhuāng ma? yī diǎn er dōu kàn bù chū lái.]

(Did she disguise herself as a man? I didn't see it at all.)

Sometimes, the combined form in the previous example can be simplified into a single “都 [dōu] (all)” without changing any effect.

Example 42 这么重要的消息你都不知道。[zhè me zhòng yào de xiāo xī nǐ dōu bù zhī dào.]

(How don't you know such important news?)

Example 43 他为了赶火车，饭都没吃就走了。[tā wèi le gǎn huǒ chē, fàn dōu méi chī jiù zǒu le.]

(He left without a meal in order to catch the train.)

Example 44 爷爷，我都不怕那个家伙，您还怕他！[yé yé, wǒ dōu bù pà nà gè jiā huǒ, nín hái pà tā.]

(Grandpa, I'm not even afraid of that guy and let alone you.)

Example 45 小明的作文一百个字都不到，太短了。[xiǎo míng de zuò wén yī bǎi gè zì dōu bú dào, tài duǎn le.]

(Xiao Ming's composition is less than 100 words, which is too short.)

Example 42 may carry two implications, one of which is “这么重要的消息 [zhè me zhòng yào de xiāo xī] (such important news)” when it is stressed, and the other of which is “你 [nǐ] (you),” if it is stressed.

“都 [dōu] (all)” can stand after a numeral-quantifier phrase to imply a small quantity.

Example 46 小明写的作文一百字都不到。[Xiǎo Míng xiě de zuò wén yī bǎi zì dōu bú dào.]

(The composition written by Xiao Ming is no more than one hundred words.)

Example 47 我每天十个生词都记不住。[wǒ měi tiān shí gè shēng cí dōu jì bú zhù.]

(I can't remember more than ten words every day.)

Example 48 你太极拳学了三天都不到，就不想学了，那是学不好的。[nǐ tài jí quán xué le sān tiān dōu bú dào, jiù bù xiǎng xué le, nà shì xué bù hǎo de.]

(You cannot learn Taiji well just in three days.)

Also, “都 [dōu] (all)” can appear after the topic of sentence.

Example 49 听完老师的问题，他想都没想就回答出来了。[tīng wán lǎo shī de wèn tí, tā xiǎng dōu méi xiǎng jiù huí dá chū lái le.]

(After hearing the teacher's question, he answered it immediately without thinking.)

Example 50 拿到信后，她看都没看一眼就塞在书包里了。[ná dào xìn hòu, tā kàn dōu méi kàn yī yǎn jiù sāi zài shū bāo lǐ le.]

(After she got the letter, she put it into her schoolbag even without a look.)

Example 51 这个小家伙走都走不稳，就想跑！[zhè gè xiǎo jiā huǒ zǒu dōu zǒu bù wěn, jiù xiǎng pǎo!]

(How could the little fellow run, even without learning to walk first.)

- (2) “都 [dōu] (all)” indicates “已经 [yǐ jīng] (already)” in the slight pronunciation and “了 [le]” is added to the end of sentence.

Example 52 哟，都十二点了，该睡觉了。[yōu, dōu shí èr diǎn le, gāi shuì jiào le.]

(Oh, it's already midnight. It's time to go to bed.)

Example 53 几年不见，你怎么头发都白了。[jǐ nián bú jiàn, nǐ zěn me tóu fà dōu bái le?]

(Why is your hair all white? We just haven't seen each other for a few years.)

Example 54 打猎的追上来了，听，都能听见马跑的声音了。[dǎ liè de zhuī shàng lái le, tīng, dōu néng tīng jiàn mǎ pǎo de shēng yīn le.]

(The hunters are just after us. Listen, I can hear the hoofbeats of running horses.)

Some time adverbs are accepted after “都 [dōu] (all),” such as “快 [kuài] (almost),” “快要 [kuài yào] (nearly).”

Example 55 老愚公都快八十岁了，还带领儿孙们搬山呢。[Lǎo Yú gōng dōu kuài bā shí suì le, hái dài lǐng er sūn men bān shān ne.]

(Old Yu is still leading his children and grandchildren to even out the mountains, although he is nearly 80 years old.)

Example 56 飞机都快要起飞了，阿里才来。[fēi jī dōu kuài yào qǐ fēi le, ā lǐ cái lái.]

(The plane was about to take off when A Li arrived.)

Example 57 都快到冬天了，天气还这么暖和。[dōu kuài dào dōng tiān le, tiān qì hái zhè me nuǎn hé.]

(It's still warm, although it's almost winter now.)

Also, a numeral-quantifier phrase is allowed to appear after “都 [dōu] (all)” to imply a longer duration or many times.

Example 58 阿里来中国都三年了。[Ā Lǐ lái zhōng guó dōu sān nián le.]

(A Li has been in China for three years.)

Example 59 最近老王很忙，都半个月没回家了。[zuì jìn Lǎo Wáng hěn máng, dōu bàn gè yuè méi huí jiā le.]

(Lao Wang has been very busy recently, and he hasn't been home for half a month.)

Example 60 这个句子，老师都解释三遍了，我还不不懂。[zhè gè jù zi, lǎo shī dōu jiě shì sān biàn le, wǒ hái bù dǒng.]

(This sentence has been explained three times by the teacher, but I still don't understand it.)

Example 61 你都掌握两千多个常用词了，跟中国人谈话没什么大问题了。[nǐ dōu zhǎng wò liǎng qiān duō gè cháng yòng cí le, gēn zhōng guó rén tán huà méi shén me dà wèn tí le ba.]

(You have mastered more than 2000 common words, so there won't be any problem for you to talk with a Chinese.)

## II. 只 [zhǐ] (only)

“只 [zhǐ] (only),” (written with the same character as the quantifier 只 [zhǐ], but pronounced [zhǐ] here), is an adverb referring to a certain scope. Syntactically, it modifies a verb or verb phrase after it; semantically it limits the action conveyed by the verb and the scope involved.

### 1 To limit the object of a verb

“只 [zhǐ] (only)” usually stands between the subject and predicate verb to limit as well as direct the object of a verb.

Example 62 这学期，我们只学习汉语。[zhè xué qī, wǒ men zhǐ xué xí hàn yǔ.]

(We only study Chinese this term.)

Example 63 我父母去世早，身边只有哥哥、姐姐了。[wǒ fù mǔ qù shì zǎo, shēn biān zhǐ yǒu gē gē, jiě jiě le.]

(My parents died young, and only my brothers and sisters were left.)

Example 64 那两个村庄只隔了一条河。[nà liǎng gè cūn zhuāng zhǐ gé le yī tiáo hé.]

(The two villages are only separated by a river.)

Example 65 姑娘朝大刘走来了，小伙子只觉得脸上热烘烘的。[gū niáng cháo dà liú zǒu lái le, xiǎo huǒ zi zhǐ jué de liǎn shàng rè hōng hōng de.]

(Seeing the girl coming toward him, Da Liu blushed.)

Semantically, “只 [zhǐ] (only)” directs the object of a preposition.

Example 66 我只给家里写信了，没给朋友写信。[wǒ zhǐ gěi jiā lǐ xiě xìn le, méi gěi péng yǒu xiě xìn.]

(I only wrote home, not to my friends.)

Example 67 会上，他只对这个问题发表了意见。[huì shàng, tā zhǐ duì zhè gè wèn tí fā biǎo le yì jiàn.]

(He only commented on this issue at the meeting.)

In Example 66, “只 [zhǐ] (only)” modifies “给家里写信 [gěi jiā lǐ xiě xìn] (write home)” and limits “家里 [jiā lǐ] (home)” as the object of the preposition “给 [gěi] (to)”; “只 [zhǐ] (only)” in Example 67 directs “这个问题 [zhè gè wèn tí] (the subject)” as the object of the preposition “对 [duì] (on),” indicating “对其他事没有发表意见 [duì qí tā shì méi yǒu fā biǎo yì jiàn] (not on other issues).”

Also, “只 [zhǐ] (only)” can direct the attribute of an object.

Example 68 实现我们的计划，这只是一个时间问题。[shí xiàn wǒ men de jì huà, zhè zhǐ shì yī gè shí jiān wèn tí.]

(It's only a matter of time before we realize our plan.)

Example 69 老王啊，我们不能只关心青年工人的生活，那些老职工的问题也不能忽视。[Lǎo Wáng ā, wǒ men bù néng zhǐ guān xīn qīng wǔ gōng rén de shēng huó, nà xiē lǎo zhí gōng de wèn tí yě bù néng hū shì.]

(Lao Wang, we cannot only care about the lives of the young workers, but ignore the problems of the old workers.)

## 2 To limit a predicate verb or verb phrase

“只 [zhǐ] (only)” can limit a verb or verb phrase predicate, which can be further explained in three situations.

- (1) “只 [zhǐ] (only)” stands before a verb predicate, and then is usually followed by a negative clause that further complements the meaning of the preceding clause.

Example 70 我问她哭什么，她只哭，什么也不说。[wǒ wèn tā kū shén me, tā zhǐ kū, shén me yě bù shuō.]  
(When I asked her what she was crying about, she just kept crying and said nothing.)

This example says that she was just crying without replying. “什么也不说 [shén me yě bù shuō] (said nothing)” as a negative clause further complements the preceding clause “我问她哭什么。[wǒ wèn tā kū shén me.] (I asked her what she was crying about.)”

Example 71 他打开门，只看了看，没吭一声就走了。[tā dǎ kāi mén, zhǐ kàn le kàn, méi kēng yī shēng jiù zǒu le.]  
(He opened the door and just had a look, and then he left without a word.)

Example 72 咱们应该说得到，做得到，不能只说做不到。[zán men yīng gāi shuō de dào, zuò de dào, bù néng zhǐ shuō bú zuò.]  
(We should act on what we say; we shouldn't only talk and not act.)

Example 73 他学习外语，只看书，不爱张嘴，自然学不好。[tā xué xí wài yǔ, zhǐ kàn shū, bú ài zhāng zuǐ, zì rán xué bù hǎo.]  
(Only through reading instead of practicing speaking, he for certain cannot learn a foreign language well.)

Example 74 只学得好，还不够，还要会用。[zhǐ xué de hǎo, hái bú gòu, hái yào huì yòng.]  
(It is not enough to learn well, but to know how to use it.)

Example 75 那些劳保用品，我只领回来了，还没分给大家。[nà xiē láo bǎo yòng pǐn, wǒ zhǐ lǐng huí lái le, hái méi fēn gěi dà jiā.]  
(I only fetched those labor supplies, but I haven't distributed them yet.)

- (2) When a volitive verb appears in the sentence, “只 [zhǐ] (only)” should be put before it to limit this verb and other words after it.

Example 76 他懂一点汉语，可是只会说，不会写。[tā dǒng yī diǎn hàn yǔ, kě shì zhǐ huì shuō, bú huì xiě.]  
(He knows a little Chinese, only in speaking but not in writing.)

Example 77 这些年，我也学乖了，我只想看看他，他究竟是我生的孩子。[zhè xiē nián, wǒ yě xué guāi le, wǒ zhǐ xiǎng kàn kàn tā, tā jiū jìng shì wǒ shēng de hái zi.]  
(These years, I have known that I should not trouble him; anyway, he is my child and I just want to see him.)

Example 78 有些人只会空想，不会做事，也有些人只顾做事，不动脑筋。[yǒu xiē rén zhǐ huì kōng xiǎng, bú huì zuò shì, yě yǒu xiē rén zhǐ gù zuò shì, bú dòng nǎo jīn.]  
(Some people only dream, not work; some people only work, but not use their brains.)

- (3) Sometimes, if the preceding clause is negative, “只 [zhǐ] (only)” in the following clause simply limits a certain scope and further complements the preceding one.

Example 79 这壶酒不够两个人喝，只够一个人喝。[zhè hú jiǔ bú gòu liǎng gè rén hē, zhǐ gòu yī gè rén hē.]

(The wine in this pot is not enough for two, just for one.)

Example 80 有的人做事情，常常不从实际出发，不调查研究，只凭自己主观愿望和想象。[yǒu de rén zuò shì qīng, cháng cháng bù cóng shí jì chū fā, bú diào chá yán jiū, zhǐ píng zì jǐ zhǔ guān yuàn wàng hé xiǎng xiàng.]

(Some people often do things based on their own subjective wishes and imagination, without considering reality nor making any investigations.)

### 3 To be used with a numeral-quantifier phrase

When “只 [zhǐ] (only)” appears in the sentence, along with a numeral-quantifier phrase, it indicates a small number or quantity. In this case, it should be put before a verb or verb phrase, and cannot be directly connected with a numeral-quantifier phrase.

- (1) “只 [zhǐ] (only)” simply modifies the numeral-quantifier attribute of the object.

Example 81 这本书只有二百页。[zhè běn shū zhǐ yǒu èr bǎi yè.]

(This book has only 200 pages.)

Example 82 我只买了两条鱼。[wǒ zhǐ mǎi le liǎng tiáo yú.]

(I only bought two fish.)

Example 83 花瓶里只插一支花。[huā píng lǐ zhǐ chā yī zhī huā.]

(There is only one flower in the vase.)

Example 84 信里他只写了这么几行字。[xìn lǐ tā zhǐ xiě le zhè me jǐ xíng zì.]

(He wrote only a few lines in the letter.)

- (2) “只 [zhǐ] (only)” only limits the complement after the verb, such as the time quantifier complement, verbal quantifier complement, or numeral-quantifier complement.

Example 85 联欢会只进行了一个多小时。[lián huān huì zhǐ jìn xíng le yī gè duō xiǎo shí.]

(The get-together lasted just more than an hour.)

Example 86 织女急中生智，只喊了一声：“快去找爸爸。”[zhī nǚ jí zhōng shēng zhì, zhǐ hǎn le yī shēng: “kuài qù zhǎo bà bà.”]

(Zhi Nu had a good idea immediately and shouted: “Go and find your dad!”)

Example 87 钟只敲了一下儿，也不知道是几点了。[zhōng zhǐ qiāo le yī xià er, yě bù zhī dào shì jǐ diǎn le.]

(The clock struck only once, and I didn't know what time it was.)

Example 88 我们只见过一次面。[wǒ men zhǐ jiàn guò yī cì miàn.]

(We met only once.)

Example 89 这件衬衫比那件只长半公分。[zhè jiàn chèn shān bǐ nà jiàn zhǐ cháng bàn gōng fēn.]

(This shirt is only half a centimeter longer than that one.)

- (3) When “只 [zhǐ] (only)” stands in the middle with a time word in front and a numeral-quantifier in the rear or in the opposite order, it expresses different meanings. That is to say, it may indicate a small quantity or may express a short period of time.

Example 90 他两个小时只写了四百字。[tā liǎng gè xiǎo shí zhǐ xiě le sì bǎi zì.]

(He has only written four hundred words in two hours.)

Example 91 他四百字只写了两个小时。[tā sì bǎi zì zhǐ xiě le liǎng gè xiǎo shí.]

(It only took him two hours to write four hundred words.)

Example 92 你的车一小时只走五十公里。[nǐ de chē yī xiǎo shí zhǐ zǒu wǔ shí gōng lǐ.]

(Your car only runs fifty kilometers an hour.)

Example 93 你的车五十公里只走了一小时。[nǐ de chē wǔ shí gōng lǐ zhǐ zǒu le yī xiǎo shí.]

(It only takes your car one hour to run fifty kilometers.)

- (4) Sometimes, “只 [zhǐ] (only)” can be directly put before a noun phrase which functions as the predicate or subject.

Example 94 今天家里只我一个人，你们来玩儿吧。[jīn tiān jiā lǐ zhǐ wǒ yī gè rén, nǐ men lái wán er ba.]

(I'm the only one at home today. Come and play.)

Example 95 他头上是一顶破毡帽，身上只一件很薄的棉袄。[tā tóu shàng shì yī dǐng pò zhān mào, shēn shàng zhǐ yī jiàn hěn báo de mián ǎo.]

(He had a ragged felt hat on his head and only a thin padded jacket on his body.)

Example 96 这个消息只大张和王师傅听说了。[zhè gè xiāo xī zhǐ dà zhāng hé wáng shī fù tīng shuō le.]

(Only Da Zhang and the master worker Wang heard about the news.)

Example 97 这次午餐会，只王太太没来参加，她身体不好。[zhè cì wǔ cān huì, zhǐ wáng tài tài méi lái cān jiā, tā shēn tǐ bù hǎo.]

(Only Mrs. Wang was absent from the luncheon meeting because she was in poor health.)



Such a use is simply limited to those noun phrases functioning as a predicate or subject in the sentence. In Example 94 and Example 95, the noun phrases function as a predicate; in Example 96 and Example 97, the noun phrases function as a subject. However, “只 [zhǐ] (only)” in “阿里会只英语。[ā lǐ huì zhǐ yīng yǔ.] (A Li only knows English.)” is not the same case because the noun “英语 [yīng yǔ] (English)” after “只 [zhǐ] (only)” functions as an object and “只 [zhǐ] (only)” functions as a predicate in the sentence.

“只 [zhǐ] (only)” functions similarly to “只有 [zhǐ yǒu] (only).” Therefore, “只 [zhǐ] (only)” in the examples from 94 to 97 can be changed into “只有 [zhǐ yǒu] (only).”

#### 4 To appear in the sentence with double-objects

When “只 [zhǐ] (only)” appears in the sentence with double-objects, it modifies the verb syntactically and possesses complex semantic directions which are decided by the context and the logic stress of the sentence.

- Example 98 我只给她一本书。[‘wǒ zhǐ gěi tā yī běn shū.]  
 (‘I gave her a book.) (stress on “我 [wǒ] (I)”)  
 我只’给她一本书。[wǒ zhǐ ’gěi tā yī běn shū.]  
 (I only ‘gave her a book.) (stress on “给 [gěi] (give)”)  
 我只给’她一本书。[wǒ zhǐ gěi ‘tā yī běn shū.]  
 (I only gave ‘her a book.) (stress on “她 [tā] (her)”)  
 我给她’一本书。[wǒ gěi tā ‘yī běn shū.]  
 (I gave her only ‘one book.) (stress on “一本 [yī běn] (one)”)  
 我只给她一本’书。[wǒ zhǐ gěi tā yī běn ‘shū.]  
 (I gave her just a ‘book.) (stress on “书 [shū] (book)”)

#### 5 Positions in the bi-constituent construction

“只 [zhǐ] (only)” has two positions in the bi-constituent construction. One is before the first verb; the other is before the second verb. Its position decides its semantic direction. When it is in the first position, it may direct to the bi-constituent after the first verb, the second verb, or the object of the second verb, which depends on where the stress is.

- Example 99 我只叫’你帮助他。[wǒ zhǐ jiào nǐ bāng zhù tā.]  
 (I only asked ‘you to help him.) (stress on “你 [nǐ] (you)”)  
 我只叫你’帮助他。[wǒ zhǐ jiào nǐ ’bāng zhù tā.]  
 (I only asked you to ‘help him.) (stress on “帮助 [bāng zhù] (help)”)  
 我只叫你帮助’他。[wǒ zhǐ jiào nǐ bāng zhù tā.]  
 (I only asked you to help ‘him.) (stress on “他 [tā] (him)”)

When “只 [zhǐ] (only)” is in the second position, it simply directs to the object of the second verb.

Example 100 我叫你只帮助他。[wǒ jiào nǐ zhǐ bāng zhù tā.]  
(I asked you only to help 'him.) (stress on “他 [tā] (him)”)

## 6 Positions in the serial verb construction

“只 [zhǐ] (only)” has two positions in the serial verb construction. One is before the first verb; the other is before the second verb. Its position decides its semantic direction. When it is in the first position, it directs to the object of the first verb; when it is in the second position, it may direct to the second verb, the object of the second verb, or the numeral-quantifier attribute before the object of the second verb.

Example 101 我去书店买一本书。[wǒ qù 'shū diàn mǎi yī běn shū.]  
(I went to the 'bookshop to buy a book.) (direct to “书店 [shū diàn] (bookshop)”)  
我去书店'买一本书。[wǒ qù shū diàn' mǎi yī běn shū.]  
(I went to the bookshop to 'buy a book.) (direct to “买一本 [mǎi yī běn] (buy a book)”)  
我去书店买'一本书。[wǒ qù shū diàn mǎi' yī běn shū.]  
(I went to the bookshop to buy 'a book.) (direct to “一本 [yī běn] (a)”)

The semantic direction of “只 [zhǐ] (only)” varies by its position in different constructions, especially in those with complex predicates. Thus it takes time and patience in learning how to use “只 [zhǐ] (only).”

### III. 最 [zuì] (most)

“最 [zuì] (most)” is an adverb of degree, carrying a sense of “extremely” or “exceeding others” in comparison. It can be put before an adjective, volitive verb, or verb indicating a psychological state, such as “喜欢 [xǐ huān] (like),” “恨 [hèn] (hate),” “可怜 [kě lián] (poor).” Also, it can appear before “使 [shǐ] (make),” “让 [ràng] (let),” “叫 [jiào] (make).” It mainly functions as an adverb.

Example 102 甲班有9个学生，乙班有6个，丙班有12个，丙班的学生最多。[jiǎ bān yǒu 9 gè xué shēng, yǐ bān yǒu 6 gè, bǐng bān yǒu 12 gè, bǐng bān de xué shēng zuì duō.]  
(There are 9 students in Class A, 6 in Class B, and 12 in Class C. Class C has the largest number of students.)

Example 103 数理化三门功课比较起来，他数学学得最好。[shù lǐ huà sān mén gōng kè bǐ jiào qǐ lái, tā shù xué xué de zuì hǎo.]  
(Compared with three subjects of math, physics, and chemistry, he is the best at math.)

Example 104 这三个年轻人中，小王最爱学习，最有钻劲儿。[zhè sān gè nián qīng rén zhōng, Xiǎo Wáng zuì ài xué xí, zuì yǒu zuàn jìn er.]  
(Among these three young people, Xiao Wang is the most studious and energetic.)

Example 105 谁最能代表群众的利益，群众就最拥护谁。[shuí zuì néng dài biǎo qún zhòng de lì yì, qún zhòng jiù zuì yōng hù shuí.]  
(The common people will support whoever can best represent their interests.)

Sometimes, what is to compare with is omitted.

Example 106 玛丽最怕冷。[Mǎ lì zuì pà lěng.]  
(Mary fears the cold most.)

Example 107 中国的乐山大佛是世界上最大的佛像。[zhōng guó de lè shān dà fō shì shì jiè shàng zuì dà de fó xiàng.]  
(The Giant Stone Buddha at Leshan mountain is the largest figure of Buddha in the world.)

Example 108 气象灾害是自然灾害中发生频率最高，范围最大，损失最重的一种灾害。[qì xiàng zāi hài shì zì rán zāi hài zhōng fā shēng pín lǜ zuì gāo, fàn wéi zuì dà, sǔn shī zuì zhòng de yī zhǒng zāi hài.]  
(A meteorological disaster is a kind of natural disaster with the highest frequency, in the largest range, and with the heaviest losses.)

Besides, “最 [zuì] (most)” can express the extreme of a certain estimate or limitation in the aspects of feature, time, state, or quantity. It is often followed by some adjectives, such as “高 [gāo] (high),” “低 [dī] (low),” “大 [dà] (big),” “小 [xiǎo] (small),” “长 [cháng] (long),” “短 [duǎn] (short),” “快 [kuài] (quick),” “慢 [màn] (slow),” “早 [zǎo] (early),” “晚 [wǎn] (late),” “多 [duō] (many),” “少 [shǎo] (few),” “粗 [cū] (thick),” “细 [xì] (thin),” “冷 [lěng] (cold),” “热 [rè] (hot).”

Example 109 我们将尽最大努力完成好这项任务。[wǒ men jiāng jìn zuì dà nǚ lì wán chéng hǎo zhè xiàng rèn wù.]  
(We will try our best to finish the task well.)

Example 110 婴儿的睡眠时间最少要十二个小时。[yīng ér de shuì mián shí jiān zuì shǎo yào shí èr gè xiǎo shí.]  
(Babies need at least twelve hours of sleep per day.)

Example 111 用这种办法养鱼，每年亩产最高达到三四十万斤。[yòng zhè zhǒng bàn fǎ yǎng yú, měi nián mǔ chǎn zuì gāo dá dào sān sì shí wàn jīn.]  
(In this way of breeding fish, the annual yield per mu can reach up to three or four hundred thousand jin.)

Example 112 从北京到上海最快也要一个小时。[cóng běi jīng dào shàng hǎi zuì kuài yě yào yī gè xiǎo shí.]  
(It takes at least one hour to travel from Beijing to Shanghai.)

Example 113 你最晚在下午下班以前给我答复。[nǐ zuì wǎn zài xià wǔ xià bān yǐ qián gěi wǒ dá fù.]  
(Give me a reply at the least when you get off work in the afternoon.)

Since “最 [zuì] (most)” implies “top” in many aspects, it may stand before certain locatives to indicate the ends of a direction.

Example 114 走在游行队伍最前头的是身经百战的母亲们。[zǒu zài yóu xíng duì wǔ zuì qián tóu de shì shēn jīng bǎi zhàn de mǔ qīn men.]  
(At the head of the parade were battle-hardened mothers.)

Example 115 怕压的东西放在最上边儿，不怕压的放在最下边儿。[pà yā de dōng xī fàng zài zuì shàng biān er, bú pà yā de fàng zài zuì xià biān er.]  
(Put that stuff afraid of pressure on the top and those not afraid of pressure on the bottom.)

Example 116 最后边的一节车厢是餐车。[zuì hòu biān de yī jié chē xiāng shì cān chē.]  
(The last carriage is the dining car.)

Example 117

A: 你住在几号房间? [nǐ zhù zài jǐ hào fáng jiān?]

(Which room do you live in?)

B: 几号不知道，我住在最东边的那一间。[jǐ hào bù zhī dào, wǒ zhù zài zuì dōng biān de nà yī jiān.]

(I live in the easternmost room but I don't know its number.)

#### IV. 更 [gèng] (comparative degrees)

“更 [gèng] (comparative degree)” is an adverb of degree, indicating a sense of “better” in comparison or in the development. It mainly functions as an adverb before an adjective (phrase) or verb (phrase).

Example 118 那篇文章修改以后，主题更突出了。[nà piān wén zhāng xiū gǎi yǐ hòu, zhǔ tí gèng tū chū le.]  
(Having been revised again, the theme of the article became more obvious.)

Example 119 雨过天晴，景色显得更美丽了。[yǔ guò tiān qíng, jǐng sè xiǎn de gèng měi lì le.]  
(After raining, the scenery became more beautiful.)

Example 120 这个戏脱稿于去年春天，酝酿这个戏的时间还要更早一些。[zhè gè xì tuō gǎo yú qù nián chūn tiān, yùn niàng zhè gè xì de shí jiān hái yào gèng zǎo yī xiē.]

(The play was completed last spring, and it was conceived a little earlier.)

Example 121 做出这道题的不是小王，也不是小李，更不是小张。小张对数学最不感兴趣。[zuò chū zhè dào tí de bú shì Xiǎo Wáng, yě bú shì Xiǎo Lǐ, gèng bú shì Xiǎo Zhāng. Xiǎo Zhāng duì shù xué zuì bù gǎn xìng qù.]

(It was not Xiao Wang nor Xiao Li who worked out the math question. Xiao Zhang was most impossible because he was the least interested in mathematics.)

Example 122 这里的一切都很好，可是故乡的一草一木更吸引着我。[zhè lǐ de yī qiē dōu hěn hǎo, kě shì gù xiāng de yī cǎo yī mù gèng xī yǐn zhe wǒ.]

(Everything here is pretty good, but I am still more attracted by everything in my hometown.)

“更 [gèng] (comparative degree)” often appears in “比 [bǐ]” construction.

Example 123 现在的生活比过去好了，将来会比现在更好。[xiàn zài de shēng huó bǐ guò qù hǎo le, jiāng lái huì bǐ xiàn zài gèng hǎo.]

(Life is better now than in the past, and life in the future will be better than now.)

Example 124 那时他认为学习文艺比学习医学更重要。[nà shí tā rèn wéi xué xí wén yì bǐ xué xí yī xué gèng zhòng yào.]

(At that time, he thought learning literature was more important than learning medicine.)

Example 125 这个例子比那个例子更能说明问题。[zhè gè lì zǐ bǐ nà gè lì zǐ gèng néng shuō míng wèn tí.]

(This example is more illustrative than that one.)

Example 126 通过接触，他比以前更信任我们了。[tōng guò jiē chù, tā bǐ yǐ qián gèng xìn rèn wǒ men le.]

(Through contact, he trusted us more than ever.)

When used in a comparative sentence, “更 [gèng] (comparative degree)” actually affirms a certain feature or state that has already existed before comparison. In Example 123, “the life at present is good” is affirmed first and then “更 [gèng] (comparative degree)” indicates “the future life will be better.” The same is true for the examples from 124 to 126. Therefore, when someone says “甲比乙更高。[jiǎ bǐ yǐ gèng gāo.] (A is much taller than B),” it implies that B itself is tall.

“更 [gèng] (comparative degree)” can be followed by a negative adverb.

Example 127 昨天的天气不好，今天的天气更不好。[zuó tiān de tiān qì bù hǎo, jīn tiān de tiān qì gèng bù hǎo.]

(The weather was bad yesterday and became worse today.)

## V. 比较 [bǐ jiào] (relatively)

“比较 [bǐ jiào] (relatively/quite/rather)” is an adverb of degree, carrying a sense of “not very much” or “comparatively.”

Example 128

A: 今天冷吗? [jīn tiān lěng ma?]

(Is it cold today?)

B1: 比较冷。[bǐ jiào lěng.]

(It is colder relatively.)

B2: 冷。[lěng.]

(Yes, it is.)

B3: 很冷。[hěn lěng.]

(Very cold.)

B4: 非常冷。[fēi cháng lěng.]

(It is extremely cold.)

The four answers in this example vary by degree. B4 means “the coldest.” B3 indicates “much colder” than B2, and B2 means “colder” than B1. In fact, B1 refers to “a little bit cold.”

Example 129 小王比较了解我。[Xiǎo Wáng bǐ jiào le jiě wǒ.]

(Xiao Wang knows me better.)

Example 130 对这里的情况，您一定比较熟悉。[duì zhè lǐ de qíng kuàng, nín yī dìng bǐ jiào shú xī.]

(You must be familiar with the situation here.)

Example 131 我们的工厂在本市不算是最大的，也算比较大的工厂之一。[wǒ men de gōng chǎng zài běn shì bú suàn shì zuì dà de, yě suàn shì bǐ jiào dà de gōng chǎng zhī yī.]

(Our factory is not the largest but it is one of the largest factories in the city.)

Therefore, “比较 [bǐ jiào] (relatively, quite, rather)” doesn’t mean what it indicates literally, but just implies a certain low level of degree.

Example 132 这个电影比较好，你可以去看。[zhè gè diàn yǐng bǐ jiào hǎo, nǐ kě yǐ qù kàn.]

(This movie is relatively good and deserves watching.)

这个电影很好，你应该去看。[zhè gè diàn yǐng hěn hǎo, nǐ yīng gāi qù kàn.]

(This movie is good and you should watch it.)

这个电影非常好，你一定要去看，不然会后悔的。[zhè gè diàn yǐng fēi cháng hǎo, nǐ yī dìng yào qù kàn, bù rán huì hòu huǐ de.]

(The film is very good and you will regret it if you don’t watch it.)

Example 133 你这次考试成绩只能说比较好，不能算很好。[nǐ zhè cì kǎo shì chéng jì zhǐ néng shuō bǐ jiào hǎo, bù néng suàn hěn hǎo.]

(You did relatively well in this exam but not the best.)

Usually, “比较 [bǐ jiào] (relatively)” cannot be followed by negative adjectives or adverbs, thus it is improper to say “\*这个电影比较不好。[zhè gè diàn yǐng bǐ jiào bù hǎo.]” or “\*今天比较不热。[jīn tiān bǐ jiào bù rèe.]”

**VI. 稍微 [shāo wēi] (slightly)**

As an adverb of degree, “稍微 [shāo wēi] (slightly)” also expresses a low level of degree. It functions as an adverb before an adjective (phrase) or verb (phrase) to indicate a psychological state. In this case, certain numeral-quantifier phrases that denote a small amount or quantity are required, such as “一点儿 [yī diǎn er] (a little),” “一些 [yī xiē] (some),” “一会儿 [yī huì er] (a little while),” “一下 [yī xià] (one time).” Here, the overlapped verbs referring to a short time period or a small quantity are acceptable as well.

Example 134 这节课的生词稍微多了一点。[zhè kè shū de shēng cí shāo wēi duō le yī diǎn.]

(There are a few more new words in this lesson.)

Example 135 他们俩的关系稍微缓和了一些，不怎么吵嘴了。[tā men liǎng de guān xi shāo wēi huǎn hé le yī xiē, bù zěn me chǎo zuǐ le.]

(The relationship between them has eased up a bit and they don't quarrel much now.)

Example 136 您稍微等一会儿，他马上就来。[nín shāo wēi děng yī huì er, tā mǎ shàng jiù lái.]

(You can wait a moment and he will come soon.)

Example 137 这种药特别灵，稍微撒上几滴，虫子就都杀死了。[zhè zhǒng yào tè bié líng, shāo wēi sā shàng jǐ dī, chóng zi jiù dōu shā sǐ le.]

(This pesticide is so effective that a few drops of it will kill all the pests.)

Example 138 这个问题你稍微想一想就能答出来。[zhè gè wèn tí nǐ shāo wēi xiǎng yī xiǎng jiù néng dá chū lái.]

(You can answer this question just after a little more thinking.)

“有一点 [yǒu yī diǎn] (a little bit)” may stand in the middle of “稍微 [shāo wēi] (slightly)” and an adjective.

Example 139 你嗓子稍微有点儿红。[nǐ sǎng z shāo wēi yǒu diǎn er hóng.]

(Your throat is a little bit inflamed.)

Example 140 这个小姑娘，稍微有点儿不称心就撅嘴。[zhè gè xiǎo gū niáng, shāo wēi yǒu diǎn er bù chēng xīn jiù juē zuǐ.]

(This little girl would pout immediately as soon as she feels a little discontented.)

Example 141 他稍微有点儿头痛，没什么大病。[tā shāo wēi yǒu diǎn er tóu tòng, méi shén me dà bìng.]

(He has a slight headache and it is not very serious.)

“稍微 [shāo wēi] (slightly)” can be used in the structure “稍微 [shāo wēi] (slightly)+一 [yī] (a)+verb/adjective,” to indicate a transitory action or a low level of degree. In this case, another clause is required to follow closely after.

Example 142 小心点儿，你稍微一碰，杯子就会掉下来的。[xiǎo xīn diǎn er, nǐ shāo wēi yī pèng, bēi zi jiù huì diào xià lái de.]  
(Be careful and the glass will fall off if you touch it.)

Example 143 天稍微一亮咱们就出发。[tiān shāo wēi yī liàng zán men jiù chū fā.]  
(We'll depart as soon as it gets light.)

Example 144 你稍微一疏忽就会出差错。[nǐ shāo wēi yī shū hū jiù huì chū chā cuò.]  
(A slight slip on your part will be a mistake.)

Besides, “稍 [shāo] (a bit),” “稍稍 [shāo shāo] (a little bit),” “略略 [luè luè] (slightly)” function similarly with “稍微 [shāo wēi] (slightly).”

Example 145 地太滑，你稍不留神就会摔倒。[dì tài huá, nǐ shāo bù liú shén jiù huì shuāi dào.]  
(The ground is so slippery that you will fall down if you are not careful enough.)

Example 146 人们稍不提防，触动了它们，这种凶恶的家伙就会伤人。[rén men shāo bù tí fáng, chù dòng le tā men, zhè zhǒng xiōng è de jiā huǒ jiù huì shāng rén.]  
(If people touched it in slight carelessness, they would be hurt by this ferocious creature.)

Example 147 组长用亲切的但稍有点难为情的语调说... [zǔ zhǎng yòng qīn qiè de dàn shāo yǒu diǎn nán wéi qíng de yǔ diào shuō . . .]  
(The leader said in a kind but slightly embarrassing tone . . .)

Example 148 她并没有在那里哭，不过眼眶稍稍有点红。[tā bìng méi yǒu zài nà lǐ kū, bú guò yǎn kuàng shāo shāo yǒu diǎn hóng.]  
(She was not crying, but her eyes were a little red.)

Example 149 风虽然稍稍小了些，寒冷却好像更甚了。[fēng suī rán shāo shāo xiǎo le xiē, hán lěng què hǎo xiàng gèng shèn le.]  
(Though the wind weakened, it seemed to get even colder.)

## VII. 曾经 [céng jīng] (once), 已经 [yǐ jīng] (already), 刚 [gāng] (just)

They are adverbs for time and function as adverbs to modify verbs or adjectives. They indicate the action or the state that happened or existed at a certain time in the past.

Example 150 他曾经来过中国。[tā céng jīng lái guò zhōng guó.]  
(He once came to China.)

Example 151 他已经来中国了。[tā yǐ jīng lái zhōng guó le.]  
(He has already been in China.)



Example 152 他刚来中国。[tā gāng lái zhōng guó.]  
(He just came to China.)

Example 153 衣服已经干了。[yī fu yǐ jīng gān le.]  
(The clothes are already dry.)

Example 154 他曾经对她很亲热，可是，后来不知为什么两个人竟分手了。[tā céng jīng duì tā hěn qīn rè, kě shì, hòu lái bù zhī wèi shén me liǎng gè rén jìng fēn shǒu le.]  
(He had been very affectionate with her, but then, for some reason, they broke up.)

Example 155 您的境况刚好，多多保重吧。[nín de jìng kuàng gāng hǎo, duō duō bǎo zhòng ba.]  
(Your situation just became better and you'd better take care of yourself.)

In these examples, “来中国 [lái zhōng guó] (come to China)” in the first three sentences means that this action has been finished before it is mentioned. “干 [gān] (dry),” “亲热 [qīn rè] (affectionate),” “好 [hǎo] (better)” in the other three means that they once existed before they are mentioned.

Next is the usage of 曾经 [céng jīng] (once), 已经 [yǐ jīng] (already), 刚 [gāng] (just).

### 1 曾经 [céng jīng]/曾 [céng] (once)

Both “曾经 [céng jīng] (once)” and “曾 [céng] (once)” refer to the action or the state that once happened in the past and has already finished. Take Example 150 for instance. It means that he once came to China and as an experience, it has finished at present. Even though he is in China now, it has nothing to do with the past experience. Comparatively speaking, “曾 [céng] (once)” sounds more formal than “曾经 [céng jīng] (once),” though they possess the identical functions.

#### (1) “曾经 [céng jīng] (once)+verb+过 [guò]”

Here, “过 [guò]” is a dynamic verb and means “having experienced.”

Example 156 我曾经学过汉语。[wǒ céng jīng xué guò hàn yǔ.]  
(I once learned Chinese.)

Example 157 我们曾经见过面。[wǒ men céng jīng jiàn guò miàn.]  
(We have met before.)

Example 158 这种事我曾经碰到过。[zhè zhǒng shì wǒ céng jīng pèng dào guò.]  
(I once encountered the similar situation.)

Example 159 我们这次访问包头，曾经登临包头市西北大青山，游览了这里的一段赵长城。[wǒ men zhè cì fǎng wèn bāo tóu, céng jīng dēng lín zhè lǐ de yī duàn zhào cháng chéng.]

bāo tóu shì xī běi dà qīng shān, yóu lǎn le zhè lǐ de yī duàn zhào cháng chéng.]

(During our visit to Baotou, we once visited Da Qing mountain in the north-west of Baotou City and a section of the great wall of Zhao Dynasty here.)

(2) With a verbal quantifier complement or a time quantifier complement

The verb after “曾经 [céng jīng] (once)” can be followed by a verbal quantifier complement or time quantifier complement.

Example 160 我曾经跟他见过一次面。[wǒ céng jīng gēn tā jiàn guò yī cì miàn.]

(I met him once.)

Example 161 我曾经找他谈过三小时。[wǒ céng jīng gēn tā jiàn guò sān xiǎo shí.]

(I once talked with him for three hours.)

(3) In a negative sentence

In a negative sentence, “没/没有 [méi/méi yǒu] (no)” should be substituted by “曾经 [céng jīng] (once).”

Example 162

A: 你曾经来过中国吗? [nǐ céng jīng lái guò zhōng guó ma?]

(Have you been in China?)

B: 我没有来过中国。[wǒ méi yǒu lái guò zhōng guó.]

(No, I have never been in China before.)

Example 163

A: 你曾经看过那个电影吗? [nǐ céng jīng kàn guò nà gè diàn yǐng ma?]

(Have you seen that film before?)

B: 我没有看过那个电影。[wǒ méi yǒu kàn guò nà gè diàn yǐng.]

(No, I haven't.)

Or, “没 [méi] (no)” can be added when “曾经 [céng jīng] (once)” is used in the negative sentence.

Example 164 这里曾经半年多没有一场雨。[zhè lǐ céng jīng bàn nián duō méi yǒu yī chǎng yǔ.]

(There had been no rain for more than half a year.)

Example 165 老李曾经两三年没回家，回到家连自己的孩子都不认识了。[Lǎo Lǐ céng jīng liǎng sān nián méi huí jiā, huí dào jiā lián zì jǐ de hái zǐ dōu bú rèn shí le.]

(Lao Li hadn't been home for two or three years. He even didn't recognize his own children when he got home.)

Or, “不曾 [bù céng] (never)” is another choice to express negation. It sounds more formal in the written language.

Example 166 事情的结果会如此之糟，这是我不曾料到的。[shì qíng de jié guǒ huì rú cǐ zhī zāo, zhè shì wǒ bù céng liào dào de.]

(It was beyond my expectation that things turned out so badly.)

Example 167 结果如何，我不曾想过。[jié guǒ rú hé, wǒ bù céng xiǎng guò.]  
(I have never thought about how the consequence will be.)

## 2 已经 [yǐ jīng]/已 [yǐ] (already)

They have same functions and can replace each other. “已 [yǐ] (already)” mainly appears in the written language. “已经 [yǐ jīng] (already)” indicates that the state of action conveyed by the verb began before a particular time and still continues in a certain particular time.

Example 168 她女儿已经结婚了。[tā nǚ ér yǐ jīng jié hūn le.]  
(Her daughter has been married.)

Example 169 天气已经暖和了，树梢都绿了。[tiān qì yǐ jīng nuǎn hé le, shù shāo dōu lǜ le.]

(The weather has already warmed up and the treetops have become green.)

Example 170 那个公司的招聘条件上个月我已经问了，现在不知道变没变。[nà gè gōng sī de zhāo pìn tiáo jiàn shàng gè yuè wǒ yǐ jīng wèn le, xiàn zài bù zhī dào biàn méi biàn.]

(I inquired about the recruitment conditions of that company last month, and now I wonder whether they have been changed or not.)

Example 171 中国那时候已经有了自己的工程师，詹天佑就是他们中间的一个。[zhōng guó nà shí hòu yǐ jīng yǒu le zì jǐ de gōng chéng shī, zhān tiān yòu jiù shì tā men zhōng jiān de yī gè.]

(China had its own engineers by then, and Zhan Tianyou was one of them.)

“已经 [yǐ jīng] (already)” in the examples from 168 to 170 refers to the action or the state still continuing when it is mentioned; “已经 [yǐ jīng] (already)” in Example 171 means that the state conveyed by the verb began at a certain time before it is mentioned.

Example 172 他已经不吸烟了。[tā yǐ jīng bù xī yān le.]  
(He has given up smoking.)

Example 173 你已经不小了，别太孩子气了。[nǐ yǐ jīng bù xiǎo le, bié tài hái zǐ qì le.]

(You are no longer young, and don't be so childish.)

However, “已经 [yǐ jīng] (already)” can be used to refer to the time in the future but “曾经 [céng jīng] (once)” cannot.

Example 174 明年的现在，我们已经毕业了。[míng nián de xiàn zài, wǒ men yǐ jīng bì yè le.]

(By this time next year, we will have graduated.)

### 3 刚刚 [gāng gāng]/刚 [gāng] (just)

They share the same functions and serve as an adverb before the verb, indicating that the action conveyed by the verb happened shortly before it is mentioned. “刚 [gāng] (just)” is more frequently used than “刚刚 [gāng gāng] (just).”

Example 175 呀！你的电话，刚挂上。[ya! nǐ de diàn huà, gāng guà shàng.]

(Oh, my! I just hung up your phone.)

Example 176 天刚刚亮，他们就动身了。[tiān gāng gāng liàng, tā men jiù dòng shēn le.]

(They departed at dawn.)

“刚 [gāng] (just)” in Example 175 indicates that the action “挂上 [guà shàng] (hang up)” happened just now; “天刚刚亮 [tiān gāng gāng liàng] (at dawn)” in Example 176 describes the state that the sky brightens gradually.

“刚 [gāng] (just)” is different from “刚才 [gāng cái] (just now).”

- (1) “刚才 [gāng cái] (just now)” is a noun referring to the time not long before what is said.

#### Example 177

A: 小张呢? [Xiǎo Zhāng ne?]

(Where is Xiao Zhao?)

B: 我刚才还看见他在这儿呢，现在不知道去哪儿了。[wǒ gāng cái hái kàn jiàn tā zài zhè er ne, xiàn zài bù zhī dào qù nǎ er le?]

(I saw him here just now. I have no idea where he is now.)

Example 178 小张常常是刚吃了饭就饿。[Xiǎo Zhāng cháng cháng shì gāng chī le fàn jiù è.]

(Xiao Zhang is often hungry right after dinner.)

“刚才 [gāng cái] (just now)” in Example 177 refers to the time not long before what is asked. For example, if the time of speaking is at 10 a.m., “刚才 [gāng cái] (just now)” indicates the time from half past nine to ten. Thus “刚才 [gāng cái] (just now)” indicates the absolute time. “刚 [gāng] (just)” in Example 178 expresses the time not long after the dinner, so it doesn't refer to the absolute time or even has nothing to do with the time of speaking.

Example 179 刚才谁来了? [gāng cái shuí lái le?]

(Who came just now?)

Example 180 你怎么刚来? [nǐ zěn me gāng lái?]  
(Why did you just come?)

Therefore, it is proper to say “他刚从大学毕业。[tā gāng cóng dà xué bì yè.] (He just graduated from the college.)” “刚 [gāng] (just)” cannot be changed into “刚才 [gāng cái] (just now)” because it refers to the time not long before.

- (2) “刚才 [gāng cái] (just now)” can appear at the end of sentence with “了 [le]” but “刚 [gāng] (just)” cannot be used in the same way.

Example 181 小张刚才来了，很快就走了。[Xiǎo Zhāng gāng cái lái le, hěn kuài jiù zǒu le.]  
(Xiao Zhang arrived just now and left soon.)

Example 182 小张刚来。[Xiǎo Zhāng gāng lái.]  
(Xiao Zhang just came here.)

\*小张刚来了。[Xiǎo Zhāng gāng lái le.]

Example 183

A: 你刚才去哪儿了? [nǐ gāng cái qù nǎ er le?]  
(Where did you go just now?)

B: 我刚才上课了。[wǒ gāng cái shàng kè le.]  
(I had a class just now.)

\*我刚上课了。[wǒ gāng shàng kè le.]

### VIII. 快/快要 [kuài/kuài yào] (be about to), 就/就要 [jiù/jiù yào] (be going to), 将/将要 [jiāng/jiāng yào] (will)

They are time adverbs, indicating that the action conveyed by the verb is going to happen soon. Among them, “快 [kuài] (be about to)” and “就 [jiù] (be going to)” express the future at the earliest.

Example 184 快到站了，准备下车吧。[kuài dào zhàn le, zhǔn bèi xià chē ba.]  
(It's almost at our stop and be ready to get off the bus.)

Example 185 对不起，请等一会儿，我就来。[duì bù qǐ, qǐng děng yī huì er, wǒ jiù lái.]  
(Please, wait me for a moment and I will come soon.)

Example 186 半个世纪后，中国将成为一个发达国家。[bàn gè shì jì hòu, zhōng guó jiāng chéng wéi yī gè fā dá guó jiā.]  
(In half a century, China will become a developed country.)

“快 [kuài] (be about to),” “就 [jiù] (be going to),” “将 [jiāng] (will)” often connect with “要 [yào]” to form “快要 [kuài yào] (be about to),” “就要 [jiù yào] (be going to),” “将要 [jiāng yào] (will).” “将 [jiāng] (will) and “将要 [jiāng yào] (will)” mainly appear in the written language and “快(要) [kuài (yào)] (be about

to)” and “就(要) [jiù (yào)] (be going to)” often occur in the spoken language. Comparatively speaking, “快要 [kuài yào] (be about to)” or “就要 [jiù yào] (be going to)” sounds more urgent than “快 [kuài] (be about to)” or “就 [jiù] (be going to)” respectively. With “了 [le]” at the end of the sentence, these adverbs can form structures such as “快...了 [kuài...le] (be about to),” “快要...了 [kuài yào...le] (be going to),” “就要...了 [jiù yào...le] (will).”

Example 187 他们快回国了，飞机票都买好了。[tā men kuài huí guó le, fēi jī piào dōu mǎi hǎo le.]

(They are about to return home and they have bought their plane tickets.)

Example 188 天快亮了。[tiān kuài liàng le.]

(It is nearly dawn.)

Example 189 春天快要到了。[chūn tiān kuài yào dào le.]

(Spring is coming.)

Example 190 四年的大学生活就要结束了。[sì nián de dà xué shēng huó jiù yào jié shù le.]

(Four years of college life is coming to an end.)

Example 191 那几座楼下个月就要全部完工了。[nà jǐ zuò lóu xià gè yuè jiù yào quán bù wán gōng le.]

(Those buildings will be completed in the next month.)

“就 [jiù] (be going to)” means “立刻 [lì kè] (at once),” such as “我就走。[wǒ jiù zǒu.] (I am going to leave.),” “借你的词典查一个字，用完马上就还。[jiè nǐ de cí diǎn chá yī gè zì, yòng wán mǎ shàng jiù hái.] (I want to borrow your dictionary to consult a word and I will return it as soon as I finish.)” “就要...了 [jiù yào...le] (be going to)” sounds more urgent than “快要...了 [kuài yào...le] (be about to).” Before “就要 [jiù yào] (be going to),” adverbs for time are acceptable. However, except for “已经 [yǐ jīng] (already)” and “都 [dōu] (already),” no other time words are accepted before “快要...了 [kuài yào...le] (be about to).”

Example 192 胜利的时刻马上就要到了。[shèng lì de shí kè mǎ shàng jiù yào dào le.]

(The moment of victory is going to come.)

Example 193 他们的试验眼看就要成功了。[tā men de shì yàn yǎn kàn jiù yào chéng gōng le.]

(Their experiment is on the verge of success.)

Example 194 你借的那本书下星期三就要到期了。[nǐ jiè de nà běn shū xià xīng qī sān jiù yào dào qī le.]

(The book you borrowed is going to be due next Wednesday.)

Example 195 太阳已经快要下山了。[tài yáng yǐ jīng kuài yào xià shān le.]

(The sun is about to go down.)

Example 196 你再说下去他都快要哭了。[nǐ zài shuō xià qù tā dōu kuài yào kū le.]

(He's about to cry if you keep on talking.)

However, “\*电影七点半快要开始了”。[diàn yǐng qī diǎn bàn kuài yào kāi shǐ le.]” is not acceptable in Chinese.

### IX. 在 [zài] (ongoing)

It refers to the ongoing action.

Example 197

A: 老师在做什么? 怎么不来上课? [lǎo shī zài zuò shén me? zěn me bù lái shàng kè?]

(Where is the teacher? Why doesn't he/she come to class?)

B: 老师开会呢。课取消了。[lǎo shī kāi huì ne. kè qǔ xiāo le.]

(He/She is having a meeting and the class has been cancelled.)

Example 198 早上我正在洗澡的时候, 有人打电话来。[zǎo shàng wǒ zhèng zài xǐ zǎo de shí hòu, yǒu rén dǎ diàn huà lái.]

(When I was taking a shower this morning, someone called.)

Example 199 明年这个时候, 你会在做什么? [míng nián zhè gè shí hòu, nǐ huì zài zuò shén me?]

(What will you be doing at this time next year?)

Example 200 去年这个时候, 我正在上课。[qù nián zhè gè shí hòu, wǒ zhèng zài shàng kè.]

(I was having a class at this time last year.)

“在 [zài] (ongoing)” can be used with “呢 [ne]” in the sentence, which also indicates the ongoing action.

Example 201 我到学校的时候, 同学们正在考试呢。[wǒ dào xué xiào de shí hòu, tóng xué men zhèng zài kǎo shì ne.]

(When I arrived at the school, my classmates were taking an exam.)

Besides, “在 [zài] (ongoing)” can be used with “着 [zhe]” in the sentence, which also shows continuity of the action.

Example 202 你们看, 观众正在注视着我们, 我们做动作的时候千万不能马虎! [nǐ men kàn, guān zhòng zhèng zài zhù shì zhe wǒ men, wǒ men zuò dòng zuò de shí hòu qiān wàn bù néng mǎ hǔ!]

(You see, the audience is watching us. We must not be careless in our movements.)

### X. 还 [hái]

- 1 “还 [hái] (still)” means “仍旧 [réng jiù] (still)” or “依然 [yī rán] (still),” indicating that the action conveyed by the verb keeps on going, or that the state denoted by the verb continuously exists.

Example 203 几年没见，你还是老样子。[jǐ nián méi jiàn, nǐ hái shì lǎo yàng zi.]

(I haven't seen you for a few years but you are still in your old appearance.)

Example 204 夜深了，小明还在看书。[yè shēn le, Xiǎo Míng hái zài kàn shū.]

(In the dead of night, Xiao Ming was still reading.)

Example 205 这个矛盾解决了，还会遇到新的矛盾。[zhè gè máo dùn jiě jué le, hái huì yù dào xīn de máo dùn.]

(Once this contradiction is resolved, there will be a new one.)

Example 206 已经五月了，天还这么冷。[yǐ jīng wǔ yuè le, tiān hái zhè me lěng.]

(It's already May, but it's still pretty cold.)

Example 207 你怎么还不睡觉，都十二点了。[nǐ zěn me hái bú shuì jiào, dōu shí èr diǎn le.]

(Why don't you go to bed? It's twelve o'clock.)

Besides, “还 [hái] (still)” may express the action or the state that doesn't happen or will happen. In this case, some volitive verbs can appear in the sentence, such as “会 [huì] (will be),” “要 [yào] (need),” “想 [xiǎng] (wish).”

Example 208 你明年还想学中文吗？[nǐ míng nián hái xiǎng xué zhōng wén ma?]

(Do you still want to learn Chinese next year?)

Example 209 这次比赛你取得了好成绩，今后还要刻苦学习，争取更上一层楼。[zhè cì bǐ sài nǐ qǔ dé le hǎo chéng jì, jīn hòu hái yào kè kǔ xué xí, zhēng qǔ gèng shàng yī céng lóu.]

(You got a good result in this competition. You should study hard in the future to strive for a better one.)

Example 210 过完国庆节，这儿还会这么热闹吗？[guò wán guó qìng jié, zhè er hái huì zhè me rè nào ma?]

(After National Day, will it be so busy here?)

## 2 “还 [hái] (still)” means “not only . . . but also”

Example 211 你不但要关心自己的学生，还要关心自己的身体。[nǐ bú dàn yào guān xīn zì jǐ de xué shēng, hái yào guān xīn zì jǐ de shēn tǐ.]

(You should not only take care of your students, but also yourself.)

Example 212 除了他们，还有谁支持你的意见？[chú le tā men, hái yǒu shuí zhī chí nǐ de yì jiàn?]

(Besides them, who else supports your opinion?)

Example 213 这次旅游到上海，我们看了看市容，还尝了尝上海小吃。[zhè cì lǚ yóu dào shàng hǎi, wǒ men kàn le kàn shì róng, hái cháng le cháng shàng hǎi xiǎo chī.]

(On the trip in Shanghai, we saw its appearance and also tasted its local snacks.)



Example 214 按照规定，复试者还要唱一支外国歌。[àn zhào guī dìng, fù shì zhě hái yào chàng yī zhī wài guó gē.]

(According to the rules, the candidates are also required to sing a foreign song.)

In this case, a preceding clause introduced by “不但 . . . [bú dàn] (not only . . .),” “除了 . . . (以外) [chú le . . . (yǐ wài)] (except for/besides . . .)” or “既 [jì] (since)” often appears to match with “还 [hái] (still).”

- 3 “还 [hái] (still)” indicates further development in degree or in quantity in “比 [bǐ]” construction, similar to “更 [gèng] (even more)” but more oral than it.

Example 215 声速快，光速比声速还快。[shēng sù kuài, guāng sù bǐ shēng sù hái kuài.]

(Sound travels fast. Light travels faster than sound.)

Example 216 现在的年青人，你能干，我比你还能干。[xiàn zài de nián qīng rén, nǐ néng gàn, wǒ bǐ nǐ hái néng gàn.]

(Today's young people are very competitive: you are capable, I must be more capable than you.)

Example 217 你急啊？我比你着急。[nǐ jí ā? wǒ bǐ nǐ hái jí.]

(Are you worried? Actually, I'm more worried than you are.)

- 4 “勉强 [miǎn qiáng] (do with difficulty)” implies a sense of reluctance or belittling oneself, often followed by commendatory adjectives.

Example 218

A: 您最近身体好吗？[nín zuì jìn shēn tǐ hǎo ma?]

(How are you recently?)

B: 还可以。[hái kě yǐ.]

(Not well enough.)

Example 219

A: 这部小说写得怎么样？[zhè bù xiǎo shuō xiě de zěn me yàng?]

(How is this novel?)

B: 还不错，值得一看。[hái bú cuò, zhí de yī kàn.]

(Not bad. It's worth reading.)

Example 220 他这个人当个基层干部还能胜任。[tā zhè gè rén dāng gè jī céng gàn bù hái néng shèng rèn.]

(He is competent as a grassroots cadre.)

“还可以 [hái kě yǐ]” in Example 218 means “not well enough”; “还不错 [hái bú cuò] (not bad)” in Example 219 indicates that it's not good or bad but probably worth reading; “还能胜任 [hái néng shèng rèn] (competent)” in Example 220 shows that a certain degree is barely reached.

- 5 “还 [hái] (still)” means “尚且 [shàng qiě] (even).” It is used in the preceding clause of a compound sentence, posing a certain concessive situation, and then the following clause presents the conclusion.

Example 221 课文他还念不好呢，怎么能背得出来！[kè wén tā hái niàn bù hǎo ne, zěn me néng bèi de chū lái!]

(He cannot even read the text well, and how can he recite it!)

Example 222 他还能参加三千米长跑呢，你这个运动员肯定没问题。[tā hái néng cān jiā sān qiān mǐ cháng pǎo ne, nǐ zhè gè yùn dòng yuán kěn dìng méi wèn tí.]

(He can even run three kilometers in the long-distance race. I'm sure you can do it better.)

Example 223 三年级学生还读不了原著呢，我们刚上二年级更不行了。[sān nián jí xué shēng hái dú bù liǎo yuán zhe ne, wǒ men gāng shàng èr nián jí gèng bù xíng le.]

(The students in the third grade cannot even read the original work; how are we able to do it at the beginning of the second grade?)

Example 224 她走路还走不稳呢，就想跑？[tā zǒu lù hái zǒu bù wěn ne, jiù xiǎng pǎo?]

(She is unable to walk steadily, let alone run.)

“还 [hái] (still)” in the example implies “连... [lián] (even)...” Example 221 can be changed into “课文连念尚且念不好，怎么能背得出来！[kè wén lián niàn shàng qiě niàn bù hǎo, zěn me néng bèi de chū lái!] (Even not reading the text well, how do I recite it?).”

- 6 “还 [hái] (still)” can indicate “long time ago,” expressing that the action or the state happened a long time ago.

Example 225 那还是1948年以前的事呢，有好多细节已经模糊了。[nà hái shì 1948 nián yǐ qián de shì ne, yǒu hǎo duō xì jié yǐ jīng mó hú le.]

(That was before 1948, and a lot of details have become blurred out.)

Example 226 这张照片还是我考小学时候照的呢。[zhè zhāng zhào piàn hái shì wǒ kǎo xiǎo xué shí hòu zhào de ne.]

(This photo was taken even before I began my learning in the primary school.)

Example 227 这件毛衣还是我十岁的时候我母亲给我织的呢。[zhè jiàn máo yī hái shì wǒ shí suì de shí hòu wǒ mǔ qīn gěi wǒ zhī de ne.]

(My mother knitted this sweater for me even when I was ten years old.)

- 7 “还 [hái] (still)” shows emotion.

- (1) It means “居然 [jū rán] (unexpectedly),” carrying a sense of unexpectedness. Usually, “真 [zhēn] (unexpectedly)” is closely followed.

Example 228 这么难的题，他还真做出来了。[zhè me nán de tí, tā hái zhēn zuò chū lái le.]

(He unexpectedly worked out such a difficult problem.)

Example 229 他们母子失散了几十年，最后还真团聚了。[tā men mǔ zǐ shī sàn le jǐ shí nián, zuì hòu hái zhēn tuán jù le.]

(After decades of separation, the mother and the son were finally reunited.)

Example 230 进院时，他烧伤得非常严重，可是，他还真活过来了。[jìn yuàn shí, tā shāo shāng de fēi cháng yán zhòng, kě shì, tā hái zhēn huó guò lái le.]

(When he was sent to the hospital, he was badly burned, but he survived finally.)

- (2) “还 [hái] (still)” can be used in a rhetoric question to emphasize the mood.

Example 231 他是渔民的后代，还能不会游泳？[tā shì yú mín de hòu dài, hái néng bú huì yóu yǒng.]

(He is a descendant of fishermen and how can it be possible that he is unable to swim?)

Example 232 放心吧，您对我这么好，我还能不为您尽心尽力吗？[fāng xīn ba, nín duì wǒ zhè me hǎo, wǒ hái néng bú wèi nín jìn xīn jìn lì ma?]

(Don't worry. You are so good to me, and why cannot I do anything for you?)

Example 233 师傅说：“活人，活人，不干活，还能算大活人吗？[shī fu shuō huó rén, huó rén, bú gàn huó, hái néng suàn dà huó rén ma?]

(The master worker said: “working makes a human living; otherwise how could a human live?”)

- (3) “还 [hái] (still)” also means “undeserved reputation,” indicating a sense of blame or sarcasm.

Example 234 你还是哥哥呢，带着弟弟淘气。[nǐ hái shì gē gē ne, dài zhe dì dì táo qì.]

(You're an older brother and how could you let your younger brother be naughty like this.)

Example 235 还是大学生呢，这么容易的题都不会！[hái shì dà xué shēng ne, zhè me róng yì de tí dōu bú huì.]

(You are still a college student and how aren't you able to work out such an easy problem!)

Example 236 还行政科长呢，你这件事是怎么办的？哼！[hái xíng zhèng kē zhǎng ne, nǐ zhè jiàn shì shì zěn me bàn de? hēng!]

(What kind of chief of administration are you? What have you done about this thing? Hum!)

## XI. 又 [yòu] (again)

1 “又 [yòu] (again)” shows that the action conveyed by a verb happened and was repeated.

(1) To repeat the same verb or verb phrase

Example 237 这份试卷张老师看了一遍，李老师又看了一遍。[zhè fèn shì juàn Zhāng lǎo shī kàn le yī biàn, Lǐ lǎo shī yòu kàn le yī biàn.]  
(Prof. Zhang read the test paper and then Prof. Li read it again.)

Example 238 见我沉思不答话，老纪又问一句：怎么样？[jiàn wǒ chén sī bù dá huà, lǎo jì yòu wèn yī jù: zěn me yàng?]  
(Seeing that I was buried in thought without answering, Lao Ji asked again, “How is it?”)

Example 239 张文觉得弟弟比以前又长高了一些。[zhāng wén jué de dì dì bǐ yǐ qián yòu zhǎng gāo le yī xiē.]  
(Zhang Wen felt that his brother had grown taller than before.)

Example 240 丁力拿着妈妈寄来的相片看了又看。[dīng lì ná zhe mā mā jì lái de xiàng piàn kàn le yòu kàn.]  
(Ding Li held the photos sent by his mother and looked at them again and again.)

It may refer to the repeated calendar days or schedules. After “又 [yòu] (again),” a copula, adjective, or volitive verb may appear.

Example 241 明天又是星期曰了，我们又可以去郊外游玩了。[míng tiān yòu shì xīng qī yuē le, wǒ men yòu kě yǐ qù jiāo wài yóu wán le.]  
(Tomorrow is Sunday again, and we can go out for a countryside tour.)

Example 242 月亮又圆了，明天大概又是农历十五了。[yuè liàng yòu yuán le, míng tiān dà gài yòu shì nóng lì shí wǔ le.]  
(Here comes the full moon again and tomorrow is probably the fifteenth day of the lunar calendar.)

Example 243 下礼拜又轮到咱们组值日了，大家别忘了。[xià lǐ bài yòu lún dào zán men zǔ zhí rì le, dà jiā bié wàng le.]  
(Our group is on duty again next week, and don't forget it.)

Example 244 周末又到了，你又能跟你的好朋友见面了。[zhōu mò yòu dào le, nǐ yòu néng gēn nǐ de hǎo péng yǒu jiàn miàn le.]  
(It's the weekend again and you can see your best friends again.)

(2) To repeat a numeral-quantifier phrase

The same numeral-quantifier phrase is repeated before as well as after “又 [yòu] (again).”

Example 245 老船长把彼得送给他的礼物包了一层又一层。[lǎo chuán zhǎng bǎ Bǐ dé sòng gěi tā de lǐ wù bāo le yī céng yòu yī céng.]  
(The old captain wrapped Peter's present layer by layer.)

Example 246 他很会写，这小说他写了一篇又一篇。[tā hěn huì xiě, zhè xiǎo xiǎo shuō tā xiě le yī piān yòu yī piān.]  
(He is good at writing short articles, one after another.)

(3) To connect two identical structures of “一 [yī] (a)+verbal quantifier”

“又 [yòu] (again)” connects two identical structures of “一 [yī] (a)+verbal quantifier” and functions as an adverb before a verb.

Example 247 你一次又一次地来帮助我，真是太感谢了。[nǐ yī cì yòu yī cì dì lái bāng zhù wǒ, zhēn tài gǎn xiè le.]  
(I am fully grateful for your helping me again and again.)

Example 248 你一趟又一趟地来找他，有什么急事吗？[nǐ yī tàng yòu yī tàng dì lái zhǎo tā, yǒu shén me jí shì ma?]  
(You come to see him again and again. What's the emergency?)

Example 249 我一遍又一遍地说，他才勉强接受了我的意见。[wǒ yī biàn yòu yī biàn dì shuō, tā cái miǎn qiáng jiē shòu le wǒ de yì jiàn.]  
(I said it again and again, and he reluctantly accepted my opinion.)

(4) To connect two identical structures of “一 [yī] (a)+年/月/天 [nián/yuè/tiān] (year/month/day)”

“又 [yòu] (again)” connects two identical structures of “一 [yī] (a)+年/月/天 [nián/yuè/tiān] (year/month/day)” and functions as an adverb before a verb or complement after a verb.

Example 250 她织了一天又一天，织了一个月又一个月，终于织成了锦缎。[tā zhī le yī tiān yòu yī tiān, zhī le yī gè yuè yòu yī gè yuè, zhōng yú zhī chéng le jǐn duàn.]  
(Day after day and month after month, she has finally woven the brocade.)

Example 251 日子一年又一年地过去了，理想至今也没有实现。[rì zi yī nián yòu yī nián dì guò qù le, lǐ xiǎng zhì jīn yě méi yǒu shí xiàn.]  
(Year after year, but the dream has not come true yet.)

(5) To connect two identical structures of “一 [yī] (a)+noun quantifier”

“又 [yòu] (again)” connects two identical structures of “一 [yī] (a)+noun quantifier” and functions as an attribute before a noun or noun phrase.

Example 252 从他一封又一封的来信可以看出，他是多么想念久别的故乡啊。[cóng tā yī fēng yòu yī fēng de lái xìn kě yǐ kàn chū, tā shì duō me xiǎng niàn jiǔ bié de gù xiāng ā.]

(One letter after another expressed his strong homesickness to the long-lost hometown.)

Example 253 一辆又一辆的汽车飞驰而过，叫过路的行人很害怕。[yī liàng yòu yī liàng de qì chē fēi chí ér guò, jiào guò lù de xíng rén hěn hài pà.]  
(Car after car sped by, which pretty much frightened passers-by.)

#### (6) To connect alternate verbs or adjectives

“又 [yòu] (again)” connects alternate verbs or adjectives, indicating two actions or situations happening alternately.

Example 254 他把模型拆了又装，装了又拆，从中学会了不少手艺。[tā bǎ mó xíng chāi le yòu zhuāng, zhuāng le yòu chāi, cóng zhōng xué huì le bù shǎo shǒu yì.]  
(He took the model apart and reinstalled it again, from which he learned a lot of technique.)

Example 255 这张图纸，他画了又改，改了又画，整整忙了两天。[zhè zhāng tú zhǐ, tā huà le yòu gǎi, gǎi le yòu huà, zhěng zhěng máng le liǎng tiān.]  
(He has been busy with modifying this drawing again and again for two days.)

Example 256 他把家中的旧石章，刻了又磨，磨了又刻，终于学会了篆刻的本领。[tā bǎ jiā zhōng de jiù shí zhāng, kè le yòu mó, mó le yòu kè, zhōng yú xué huì le zhuàn kè de běn lǐng.]  
(Again and again, he carved and polished the old stone seal at home and finally learned the skill of seal cutting.)

In this case the dynamic auxiliary “了 [le]” is often added before a verb or adjective.

2 “又 [yòu] (again)” indicates that two situations or states exist simultaneously.

Example 257 听说我要到中国来学习，妈妈高兴，又不高兴。[tīng shuō wǒ yào dào zhōng guó lái xué xí, mā mā gāo xìng, yòu bù gāo xìng.]  
(Hearing that I would come to China to study, my mother felt happy and unhappy at the same time.)

Example 258 他离婚了，在家是爸爸，又是妈妈。[tā lí hūn le, zài jiā shì bà bà, yòu shì mā mā.]  
(He's divorced, thus he has to be the mother as well as the father at home.)

Example 259 天这么黑，又下着雨，也不带个电筒。[tiān zhè me hēi, yòu xià zhe yǔ, yě bú dài gè diàn tǒng.]  
(You should have taken a flashlight since it was so dark and raining outside.)

“又 [yòu] (again)” in these examples have subtle differences. “又 [yòu] (again)” in Example 257 describes two coordinate states; “又 [yòu] (again)” in Example 258 reflects two different situations, the latter of which goes forward further; “又 [yòu] (again)” in Example 259 indicates another situation added to complement the original one.

Sometimes, the structure consisting of two or even three “又 [yòu] (again),” is acceptable, such as “又 . . . 又 . . . [yòu . . . yòu] (again and again/and as well)” or “又 . . . 又 . . . 又 . . . [yòu . . . yòu . . . yòu] (again and again and again).”

The structure of “又 . . . 又 . . . [yòu . . . yòu] (again and again/and as well)” denotes that two actions, situations, or states happen simultaneously. The adjectives connected by “又 . . . 又 . . . [yòu . . . yòu] (again and again/and as well)” are either commendatory or derogatory. If the words connected by “又 . . . 又 . . . [yòu . . . yòu] (again and again/and as well)” are verbs, this means that the two actions frequently happen together.

Example 260 那天晚上，月亮又圆又亮。[nà tiān wǎn shàng, yuè liàng yòu yuán yòu liàng.]

(The moon that night looked full and bright as well.)

Example 261 这个姑娘又喜欢唱歌又喜欢跳舞。[zhè gè gū niáng yòu xǐ huān chàng gē yòu xǐ huān tiào wǔ.]

(The girl likes both singing and dancing.)

Example 262 憐小姐画张画也值得你们这样大惊小怪的，又赋诗、又题字、又亲自送去裱。[sù xiǎo jiě huà zhāng huà yě zhí de nǐ men zhè yàng dà jīng xiǎo guài de, yòu fù shī, yòu tí zì, yòu qīn zì sòng qù biǎo.]

(Is it worth such a big fuss for Miss Su's drawing, like composing a poem and inscriptions for it, and even personally sending it to be mounted.)

### 3 “又 [yòu]” shows two actions in succession.

Example 263 孩子们给我们唱了一支歌，又跳了一个舞。[hái zi men gěi wǒ men chàng le yī zhī gē, yòu tiào le yī gè wǔ.]

(The children sang a song and performed a dance for us.)

Example 264 她先看了镯子，又看了项链，随后又看了十字架，做工都非常精巧。[tā xiān kàn le zhuó zi, yòu kàn le xiàng quān, suí hòu yòu kàn le shí zì jià, zuò gōng dōu fēi cháng jīng qiǎo.]

(She looked at the bracelet first, then at the necklace, and then at the cross. They were all exquisitely crafted.)

Example 265 昨天他刚从东北回来，明天又要去广州。[zuó tiān tā gāng cóng dōng běi huí lái, míng tiān yòu yào qù guǎng zhōu.]

(He just came back from the northeast of China yesterday and will go to Guangzhou tomorrow.)

“又 [yòu] (again)” in Example 265 limits “要去 . . . [yào qù] (will go to)” and indicates that “去广州 [qù guǎng zhōu] (go to Guangzhou)” will happen again. In

this case, certain volitive words are required here, such as “可以 [kě yǐ] (may),” “能 [néng] (can),” “要 [yào] (want).”

4 “又 [yòu] (again)” expresses certain moods.

(1) To strengthen transition

“又 [yòu] (again)” can strengthen transition in the sentence, if contradictive situations are presented.

Example 266 有件事想告诉你，又怕你听了不高兴，你想听吗？[yǒu jiàn shì xiǎng gào sù nǐ, yòu pà nǐ tīng le bù gāo xìng, nǐ xiǎng tīng ma?]  
(I have something to tell you, but I'm afraid you won't like it. Do you still want to hear it?)

Example 267 那是一个多么美丽而又痛苦的梦啊。[nà shì yī gè duō me měi lì ér yòu tòng kǔ de mèng ā.]  
(What a beautiful but painful dream it was!)

Example 268 这个句子不太像中国话，可我又不知道应该怎么改。[zhè gè jù zì bú tài xiàng zhōng guó huà, kě wǒ yòu bù zhī dào yīng gāi zěn me gǎi.]  
(This sentence doesn't sound like Chinese very much, but I don't know how to improve it.)

Example 269 她想安慰安慰妈妈，可又想不出适当的话来。[tā xiǎng ān wèi ān wèi mā mā, kě yòu xiǎng bù chū shì dāng de huà lái.]  
(She tried to comfort her mother, but she couldn't find the proper words.)

Example 270 他确实像一棵树，健壮，沉默可是又有生气。[tā què shí xiàng yī kē shù, jiàn zhuàng, chén mò kě shì yòu yǒu shēng qì.]  
(He is indeed like a tree, strong, silent but alive.)

In this case, some conjunctive words, such as “可 [kě] (but),” “可是 [kě shì] (but),” “而 [ér] (and),” often appear before “又 [yòu] (again)” in order to reinforce transition further.

(2) To strengthen negation

“又 [yòu] (again)” can strengthen negation in the negative sentence or the rhetoric sentence.

Example 271 衣服旧一点儿，又有什么关系呢？[yī fu jiù yī diǎn er, yòu yǒu shén me guān xi ne?]  
(What does it matter if the clothes are a little worn?)

Example 272 他又不是孩子，用不着管得那么严。[tā yòu bú shì hái zi, yòng bù zháo guǎn de nà me yán.]  
(He's not a child and he doesn't need to be treated so strictly.)



Example 273 路又不远，何必要坐车去呢。[lù yòu bù yuǎn, hé bì yào zuò chē qù ne.]

(The road is not far, so why go there by car?)

Example 274 过去的旧事，又何必再提呢？[guò qù de jiù shì, yòu hé bì zài tí ne?]

(Why mention the past?)

### (3) To further emphasize degree

“又 [yòu] (again)” can emphasize degree further when it connects two repeated adjectives (phrases) or verbs (phrases), expressing a meaning of “very much.”

Example 275 现在，你身上这套衣服的款式已经是普通又普通了。[xiàn zài, nǐ shēn shàng zhè tào yī fú de kuǎn shì yǐ jīng shì pǔ tōng yòu pǔ tōng le.]

(Nowadays, your suit is quite out of fashion.)

Example 276 在我们这儿，像这种扶老携幼的事情常见又常见。[zài wǒ men zhè er, xiàng zhè zhǒng fú lǎo xié yòu de shì qing cháng jiàn yòu cháng jiàn.]

(Things, like helping the aged and the young, are very common here.)

In this case, “而 [ér] (and),” as another conjunction, is often added to strengthen intonation.

Example 277 这种故事也正在各处市镇上表演着，真是平常而又平常。[zhè zhǒng gù shì zhèng zài gè chù shì zhèn shàng biǎo yǎn zhe, zhēn shì píng cháng er yòu píng cháng.]

(Such stories repeated in towns and cities, are pretty common.)

## XII. 再 [zài] (again)

1 “再 [zài] (again)” is similar to “又 [yòu] (again/and)” in expressing repetition or continuity, but “又 [yòu] (again/and)” directs the action that has happened; “再 [zài] (again)” is for the action that will happen.

Example 278 我还不懂，请老师再讲一遍。[wǒ hái bù dǒng, qǐng lǎo shī zài jiǎng yī biàn.]

(I still don't understand and please say it again, Professor.)

“再 [zài] (again)” in this example semantically implies the action of speaking that will happen. If it is replaced by “我还不懂，老师又讲了一遍。[wǒ hái bù dǒng, lǎo shī yòu jiǎng le yī biàn.] (I didn't understand so the teacher explained it again),” it implies that the action of speaking has been repeated.

Example 279 你如果还有困难，明天再来。[nǐ rú guǒ hái yǒu kùn nán, míng tiān zài lái.]

(If you still have more difficulties, come here again tomorrow.)

Example 280 王芳没赶上这趟火车，只好再等下一趟车了。[wáng fāng méi gǎn shàng zhè tàng huǒ chē, zhǐ hǎo zài děng xià yī tàng chē le.]

(Wang Fang missed the train and had to wait for the next one.)

Example 281 祝母校，在辉煌过去上再创辉煌。[zhù mǔ xiào, zài huī huáng de guò qù shàng zài chuàng huī huáng.]

(I wish my alma mater another brilliant future.)

Example 282 再过几个月，我们就毕业回国了。[zài guò jǐ gè yuè, wǒ men jiù bì yè huí guó le.]

(In a few months, we will graduate and return to China.)

Sometimes, “再 [zài] (again)” seemingly directs to a past action and it is actually because the time of speaking is regarded as a much earlier action.

Example 283 三个月前我去看了他一次，当时他已经卧床不起，过了一个月再去看他时，竟完全认不出他来了。[sān gè yuè qián wǒ qù kàn le tā yī cì, dāng shí tā yǐ jīng wò chuáng bù qǐ, guò le yī gè yuè zài qù kàn tā shí, jìng wán quán rèn bù chū tā lái le.]

(I visited him once three months ago, when he was bedridden, and when I visited him again a month later, I did not recognize him at all.)

If “三个月前 [sān gè yuè qián] (three months ago)” is regarded as the time of speaking, “一个月后 [yī gè yuè hòu] (a month later)” can be relatively taken as the time for a later action.

- 2 “再 [zài] (again)” indicates an action that will be postponed until another action is finished. It is often connected with “先 [xiān] (first),” “等 [děng] (then),” or “然后 [rán hòu] (and then).”

Example 284 咱们应该先订个计划，然后再开始行动。[zán men yīng gāi xiān dìng gè jì huà, rán hòu zài kāi shǐ xíng dòng.]

(We should make a plan before we start.)

Example 285 回头说，回头说，等会儿见了老爷再说吧！[huí tóu shuō, huí tóu shuō, děng huì er jiàn le lǎo yé zài shuō ba!]

(Put it aside for a moment. We will talk about it again when we meet the master later.)

Example 286 你让我办的事，等我病好了再给你办。[nǐ ràng wǒ bàn de shì, děng wǒ bìng hǎo le zài gěi nǐ bàn.]

(I'll do what you want me to do when I feel better.)

Example 287 祥子喝了两壶茶，他觉出饿来，决定在外面吃饱再回家。[Xiáng zǐ hē le liǎng hú chá, tā jué chū è lái, jué dìng zài wài miàn chī bǎo zài huí jiā.]

(After drinking two pots of tea, Xiangzi felt hungry and decided to eat his fill before going home.)

Example 288 真正的道理是在行动中取得经验后，再根据经验想出来的。[zhēn zhèng de dào lǐ shì zài xíng dòng zhōng qǔ dé jīng yàn hòu, zài gēn jù jīng yàn xiǎng chū lái de.]

(The real truth comes from the experience that has been gained from action.)

In this case the action that will be postponed is due to unwillingness rather than incapability.

3 “再 [zài] (again)” means to strengthen degree and enlarge scope.

(1) To be used before an adjective phrase

Example 289 这个游泳池再大一点儿就好了。[zhè gè yóu yǒng chí zài dà yī diǎn er jiù hǎo le.]

(This swimming pool would be better if it were a little bit bigger.)

Example 290 老师，请您说得再慢一点。[lǎo shī, qǐng nín shuō de zài màn yī diǎn.]

(Please speak more slowly, Professor.)

Example 291 我想租一个比这间屋子再大一点儿的房间。[wǒ xiǎng zū yī gè bǐ zhè jiān wū zi zài dà yī diǎn er de fáng jiān.]

(I'd like to rent a room a little larger than this one.)

Example 292 这双鞋不够大，有再大一点儿的吗？[zhè shuāng xié bú gòu dà, yǒu zài dà yī diǎn de ma?]

(This pair of shoes is not big enough. Do you have a bigger one?)

Example 293 事情再多，她也不嫌多，不叫苦。[shì qing zài duō, tā yě bù xián duō, bú jiào kǔ.]

(No matter how many things she has to deal with, she never complains.)

“再 . . . 没有/不过了 [zài . . . méi yǒu/bú guò le]” is used for evaluation, expressing “nothing better than it”

Example 294 云南的风景再美不过了。[yún nán de fēng jǐng zài měi bú guò le.]

(The scenery in Yunnan cannot be more beautiful.)

Example 295 如果你能亲自去一趟，那真是再好没有了。[rú guǒ nǐ néng qīn zì qù yī tàng, nà zhēn shì zài hǎo méi yǒu le.]

(It would be nicer if you could go there yourself.)

Example 296 他这个人再狡猾不过了，你不能相信他说的。[tā zhè gè rén zài jiǎo huá bú guò le, nǐ bù néng xiāng xìn tā shuō de.]

(He can't be more cunning so you can't believe what he says.)

## (2) To be used before a locative

“再 [zài] (again)” can be used before a locative, such as “再里头 [zài lǐ tóu] (inside further),” “再前边 [zài qián biān] (in front further),” which is almost similar to “更 [gèng] (even more).”

Example 297 我的前边是阿里，再前边是彼得。[wǒ de qián biān shì ā lǐ, zài qián biān shì Bǐ dé.]

(A Li was in front of me, and Peter in front of A Li.)

Example 298 每课课文的后边是生词，再后边是练习。[měi kè kè wén de hòu biān shì shēng cí, zài hòu biān shì liàn xí.]

(Each lesson is followed by new words and then by the exercises.)

Example 299 这个假山洞，洞口还有一点儿亮儿，里头就黑了，再里头就更黑了，什么都看不见了。[zhè gè jiǎ shān dòng, dòng kǒu hái yǒu yī diǎn er liàng er, lǐ tóu jiù hēi le, zài lǐ tóu jiù gèng hēi le, shén me dōu kàn bú jiàn le.]

(There is a little light at the mouth of the fake cave, and it gets darker and darker inside, with nothing to be seen.)

## (3) To be used after the verb

“再 [zài] (again)” can be used after the verb to express “addition.”

Example 300 你穿上中式小布褂，头上再包上一块白毛巾，就算化装成农民了。[nǐ chuān shàng zhōng shì xiǎo bù guà, tóu shàng zài bāo shàng yī kuài bái máo jīn, jiù suàn huà zhuāng chéng nóng mǐn le.]

(You could disguise yourself as a farmer with a small cloth jacket of the Chinese style and a white towel on the head.)

Example 301 这张画儿再配上一个精致的镜框，那就再好也没有了。[zhè zhāng huà er zài pèi shàng yī gè jīng zhì de jìng kuàng, nà jiù zài hǎo yě méi yǒu le.]

(This picture could not be better if matched with a delicate frame.)

Example 302 这碗汤再放上点儿味精、胡椒之类调料，就更香了。[zhè wǎn tāng zài fàng shàng diǎn er wèi jīng, hú jiāo zhī lèi diào liào, jiù gèng xiāng le.]

(This bowl of soup could not be more delicious with some seasonings, such as monosodium and pepper.)

## 4 “再(也)不 [zài (yě) bú/bù] (never again)” and “不再 [bú zài] (no more/longer)”

“再 [zài] (again)” can be put either before or after “不 [bú/bù] (not),” such as “再不 [zài bú/bù] (never again)” or “不再 [bú zài] (no more/longer),” but they

have different meanings. “再不 [zài bú/bù] (never again)” is constructed based on “再+[不+(verb)]” with “了 [le]” as the end of sentence, indicating that the action conveyed by the verb won’t happen again.

Example 303

A: 你以后还来吗? [nǐ yǐ hòu hái lái ma?]

(Will you come again?)

B: 再也不来了。[zài bù lái le.]

(I will never come back again.)

Without “也 [yě] (again/and)” won’t change the meaning of the last example’s answer, but in fact, with intonation the answer sounds stronger.

Example 304 它再也不想吃桑叶了，只是挺着胸，抬起头，一动也不动地蹲在竹器边上。[tā zài yě bù xiǎng chī sāng yè le, zhǐ shì tǐng zhe xiōng, tái zhe tóu, yī dòng yě bú dòng dì dūn zài zhú qì biān shàng.]

(It did not want to eat more mulberry leaves. Standing straight, it raised its head and rested motionless at the edge of the bamboo shelf.)

Example 305 从这天起，他俩形影不离，朝夕相处，姑娘再也不像往日那样躲躲闪闪了。[cóng zhè tiān qǐ, tā liǎng xíng yǐng bù lí, zhāo xī xiāng chù, gū niáng zài yě bù xiàng wǎng rì nà yàng duǒ duǒ shǎn shǎn le.]

(From that day on, they were inseparable all day. The girl was no longer as shy as before.)

Example 306 这位作曲家再也不想作曲了。[zhè wèi zuò qǔ jiā zài yě bù xiǎng zuò qǔ le.]

(The composer didn’t want to compose any more.)

Example 307 这次村干部改选，村里人再也不敢投坏人的票了。[zhè cì cūn gàn bù gǎi xuǎn, cūn lǐ rén zài yě bù gǎn tóu huài rén de piào le.]

(In the reelection of the village cadre, this time the villagers dare not vote for the bad guys any more.)

Example 308 我再也不吃西餐了，真受不了。[wǒ zài yě bù chī xī cān le, zhēn shòu bù liǎo.]

(I don’t want to eat Western food any more. I can’t stand it.)

“不 [bú/bù] (not)+{再 [zài] (again)+verb}” means that such an action conveyed by the verb won’t happen again.

Example 309 他原来想写两封信，可是写完一封以后已经很晚了，就不再写了。[tā yuán lái xiǎng xiě liǎng fēng xìn, kě shì xiě wán yī fēng xìn hòu yǐ jīng hěn wǎn le, jiù bú zài xiě le.]

(He wanted to write two letters, but after one was finished, he stopped writing because it was too late.)

Example 310 她哭了一会就不再哭了。[tā kū le yī huì jiù bú zài kū le.]

(She cried for a while and then stopped.)

Example 311 他说得正高兴，忽然被进来的客人打断了，就不再说了。[tā shuō de zhèng gāo xìng, hū rán bèi jìn lái de kè rén dǎ duàn le, jiù bú zài shuō le.]

(He was enjoying his talking when he was suddenly interrupted by a visitor who came in, and after that, he said nothing more.)

### XIII. 也 [yě] (also)

“也 [yě] (also)” basically means “of the same kind.” It modifies a verb (phrase) and adjective (phrase) and functions as an adverb. Besides, it produces correlation and expresses a certain mood.

1 To indicate “of the same kind” as an adverb

- (1) “也 [yě] (also)” indicates two or more than two things of the same kind, or it shows two similar or same actions or features.

The examples about “of the same kind” are as follows.

Example 312 这本书是英文的，那本也是英文的。[zhè běn shū shì yīng wén de, nà běn yě shì yīng wén de.]

(This book is in English, so is that one.)

Example 313 张教授是一位著名的语言学家，王教授也是一位著名的语言学家。[zhāng jiāo shòu shì yī wèi zhè míng de yǔ yán xué jiā, wáng jiāo shòu yě shì yī wèi zhè míng de yǔ yán xué jiā.]

(Professor Zhang is a famous linguist, so is Professor Wang.)

The examples about the same actions conveyed by verb are as follows.

Example 314 老师说汉语，我们也说汉语。[lǎo shī shuō hàn yǔ, wǒ men yě shuō hàn yǔ.]

(The teacher speaks Chinese, so do we.)

Example 315 妈妈每天六点起床，我也六点起床。[mā mā měi tiān liù diǎn qǐ chuáng, wǒ yě liù diǎn qǐ chuáng.]

(Mother gets up at six o'clock every day, so do I.)

Example 316 我想给他发奖的同时，也给一些著名的作家发奖。[wǒ xiǎng gěi tā fā jiǎng de tóng shí, yě gěi yī xiē zhè míng de zuò jiā fā jiǎng.]

(I would like to give prizes to some famous writers when I give him an award.)

The examples about the same features conveyed by adjectives are as follows.

Example 317 春天了，天上风筝渐渐多了，地上孩子也多了。[chūn tiān le, tiān shàng fēng zhēng jiàn jiàn duō le, dì shàng hái zǐ yě duō le.]

(It is the spring now. More and more kites are appearing in the sky; more and more children are playing outside.)

Example 318 科学的自由王国无穷无尽，科学家的探索也永无止境。[kē xué de zì yóu áng guó wú qióng wú jìn, kē xué jiā de tàn suǒ yě yǒng wú zhǐ jìng.]  
(There is no end to science, nor to the scientists' research.)

Example 319 今年，花木供应多了，买花的人也多了。[jīn nián, huā mù gòng yīng duō le, mǎi huā de rén yě duō le.]  
(This year, more flowers and trees are in supply, thus causing more people to buy.)

Sometimes, two actions conveyed by verbs don't necessarily appear in the same sentence.

Example 320 晏子不慌不忙地站起来说：我听说过，橘子树长在淮河以南，结的果实又香又甜。如果把它移到淮河以北，结的果实就会又酸又苦。这是因为水土的关系。我们齐国人从来不偷别人的东西，可是一到楚国就变成了小偷。我看，这一定也是因为水土的关系吧。[yàn zǐ bù huāng bù máng de zhàn qǐ lái shuō: wǒ tīng shuō guò, jú zǐ shù zhǎng zài huái hé yǐ nán, jié de guǒ shí yòu xiāng yòu tián. rú guǒ bǎ tā yí dào huái hé yǐ běi, jié de guǒ shí jiù huì yòu suān yòu kǔ. zhè shì yīn wéi shuǐ tǔ de guān xì. wǒ men qí guó rén cóng lái bù tōu bié rén de dōng xī, kě shì yī dào chǔ guó jiù biàn chéng le xiǎo tōu. wǒ kàn, zhè yī dìng yě shì yīn wéi shuǐ tǔ de guān xì ba.]

(Yan Zi stood up calmly and said: "I have heard that the orange trees growing in the south of the Huai River will bear sweet fruits. If they were moved to the north, the fruits would be sour and bitter. This is because of the local water and soil. We, living in the state of Qi, never steal anything from others, but when we arrived in the state of Chu, we became thieves. Why is that? In my opinion, it must be due to the same reason.")

The sentences underlined in this example are separated by the sentence in *italic*. Sometimes, due to the same features the two things possess, one is mentioned and the other may be omitted.

Example 321 后来人们发现钢铁在磁石上摩擦，也能产生磁性，而且这种磁性还能保持较长的时间。[hòu lái rén men fā xiàn gāng tiě zài cí shí shàng mó cā, yě néng chǎn shēng cí xìng, ér qiě zhè zhǒng cí xìng hái néng bǎo chí jiǎo cháng de shí jiān.]

(It was later discovered that steel, when rubbed against a magnet, can also produce magnetism, and this magnetism can last a long time.)

Example 322 这些年我也学乖了，我只想他，他究竟是我生的孩子。[zhè xiē nián wǒ yě xué guāi le, wǒ zhǐ xiǎng tā, tā jiū jìng shì wǒ shēng de hái zi.]

(I have known better over the years and I just keep one thing in my mind that he is my child after all.)

Example 323 你自然想不到，侍萍的相貌有一天也会老得连你都不认识了。[nǐ zì rán xiǎng bú dào, shì píng de xiàng mào yǒu yī tiān yě huì lǎo de lián nǐ dōu bú rèn shí le.]

(You would never think that one day the Shi Ping's appearance would be too old to be recognized by you.)

- (2) “也 [yě] (also)” shows that the same person or the same thing conveys two actions, or possesses two features or properties.

Example 324 中国是具有五千年历史的文明古国，也是土地辽阔人口众多的大国。[zhōng guó shì jù yǒu wǔ qiān nián lì shǐ de wén míng gǔ guó, yě shì tǔ dì liáo kuò rén kǒu zhòng duō de dà guó.]

(China has an ancient civilization of five thousand years and is a large country with a large population.)

Example 325 辅导员批评了我们，也表扬了我们。[fǔ dǎo yuán pī píng le wǒ men, yě biǎo yáng le wǒ men.]

(The counselor not only criticized us but also praised us.)

Example 326 在这个世界上，确实有丑恶的，也有美好的东西。[zài zhè gè shì jiè shàng, què shí yǒu chǒu è de, yě yǒu měi hǎo de dōng xī.]

(In this world, there indeed exists something ugly as well as something beautiful.)

Example 327 姑娘信中没明确同意，但也没说不同意。[gū niáng xìn zhōng méi míng què tóng yì, dàn yě méi shuō bù tóng yì.]

(In the letter, the girl didn't show her explicit agreement nor disagreement.)

Example 328 妹妹比哥哥活泼多了，话也多。[mèi mèi bǐ gē gē huó pō duō le, huà yě duō.]

(The younger sister is much more lively and talkative than the elder brother.)

Sometimes, “也 [yě] (also)” appears in the related clauses simultaneously, indicating that several actions or situations exist at the same time.

Example 329 天气暖和了，树梢也发绿了，小草也青了。[tiān qì nuǎn hé le, shù shāo yě fā lǜ le, xiǎo cǎo yě qīng le.]

(The weather gets warmer, with the treetop and grass becoming green.)

Example 330 苦也吃了，烟也戒了，临走，临走，你难道还想闹场乱子。[kǔ yě chī le, yān yě jiè le, lín zǒu, lín zǒu, nǐ nán dào hái xiǎng nào chǎng luàn zi.]

(After suffering a lot in giving up smoking, do you still want to make more troubles when you leave?)

Example 331 一年不见，小家伙个子也高了，也懂事了。[yī nián bú jiàn, xiǎo jiā huǒ gè zǐ yě gāo le, yě dǒng shì le.]

(With a year gone, the little guy becomes taller and more sensible as well.)

Example 332 刘华为人正直，对领导那样，对群众也那样。[Liú Huá wéi rén zhèng zhí, duì lǐng dǎo nà yàng, duì qún zhòng yě nà yàng.]



(Liu Hua is a man of integrity, keeping the same way as anyone, no matter if they are leaders or the masses.)

Example 333 王老五也不生气，也不发作，也不觉得有什么难堪，乖乖地一拐一晃的家去了。[Wáng Lǎo wǔ yě bù shēng qì, yě bù fā zuò, yě bù jué de yǒu shén me nán kān, guāi guāi de yī guǎi yī huǎng de jiā qù le.]  
(Wang Laowu was neither angry nor lost his temper. He even didn't feel embarrassed and then obediently limped home.)

- 2 “也 [yě] (also)” produces correlation when it is used in the second clause of the compound sentence or before the second verb (phrase) in the compressed sentence.
- (1) “也 [yě] (also)” is used in the second clause of the compound sentence consisting of “无论 [wú lùn] (whether),” “不论 [bú lùn] (no matter),” “不管 [bù guǎn] (despite),” “虽然 [suī rán] (although),” “尽管 [jǐn guǎn] (in spite of),” “即使 [jí shǐ] (even though),” “就是 [jiù shì] (would rather),” “宁可 [níng kě] (would rather).”

Example 334 无论遇到什么样的天气，我们的队伍也要到达目的地。[wú lùn yù dào shén me yàng de tiān qì, wǒ men de duì wǔ yě yào dào dá mù dì dì.]  
(No matter what the weather it is, our team will reach the destination.)

In this example, “也 [yě] (also)” implies two situations: bad weather and good weather. Similar examples are as follows.

Example 335 不管有多大困难，咱们也要干下去。[bù guǎn yǒu duō dà kùn nán, zán men yě yào gàn xià qù.]  
(We'll insist regardless of any difficulties.)

Example 336 这次试验即使不成功，也不能气馁。[zhè cì shì yàn jí shǐ bù chéng gōng, yě bù néng qì nǐ.]  
(Even if this experiment fails, we won't be discouraged.)

Example 337 这东西，现在你就是出十块钱一只，也买不到。[hè dōng xī, xiàn zài nǐ jiù shì chū shí kuài qián yī zhī, yě mǎi bú dào.]  
(You can't get this stuff for ten dollars at the present.)

- (2) It can be used with “连 [lián],” “一 [yī]” and interrogative pronouns for indefinite reference.

A: “连 [lián] . . . 也 [yě] . . .”

Example 338 他连早饭也没吃，就到机场接朋友去了。[tā lián zǎo fàn yě méi chī, jiù dào jī chǎng jiē péng yǒu qù le.]  
(He went to the airport to meet his friend without breakfast.)

This example uses “without breakfast” as an extreme example to explain a fact, a reason, or a situation.

Example 339 连小孩子也知道打人骂人是不对的。[lián xiǎo hái zi yě zhī dào dǎ rén mà rén shì bú duì de.]

(Even a child knows that it is wrong to hit and swear at people.)

Example 340 他走了这么久连一个电话也没来，真不像话。[tā zǒu le zhè me jiǔ lián yī gè diàn huà yě méi lái, zhēn bú xiàng huà.]

(It is really unreasonable of him to have been away for so long without a phone call.)

B: “一 . . . 也 . . . [yī . . . yě . . .]”

Example 341 大家好像都睡觉了，院子里一点儿声儿也没有了。[dà jiā hǎo xiàng dōu shuì jiào le, yuàn zi lǐ yī diǎn er shēng er yě méi yǒu le.]

(Everyone seemed to be asleep, and there was no sound in the yard.)

This example means that it is quiet in the yard, nothing stirring. Another similar example is as follows.

Example 342 今天闷热得很，一点儿风也没有。[jīn tiān mèn rè de hěn, yī diǎn er fēng yě méi yǒu.]

(It's stuffy today. There's no wind at all.)

C: “谁 . . . 也 . . . [shuí . . . yě . . .],” “什么 . . . 也 . . . [shén me . . . yě . . .],” “哪儿 . . . 也 . . . [nǎ er . . . yě . . .],” “哪 [nǎ]+(quantifier)...也 [yě]...”

Example 343 大人孩子我给你照顾，谁也不要惦记。[dà rén hái zi wǒ gěi nǐ zhào gù, shuí yě bú yào diàn jì.]

(I'll take care of your family. Don't miss anyone.)

Example 344 关于那个学校的情况，我什么也不知道。[guān yú nà gè xué xiào de qíng kuàng, wǒ shén me yě bù zhī dào.]

(I don't know anything about that school.)

Example 345 我第一次到这个城市来，哪儿也不认识。[wǒ dì yī cì dào zhè gè chéng shì lái, nǎ er yě bù rèn shí.]

(This is my first time to visit this city and I don't know anywhere here.)

Example 346 这几位朋友，哪位也不是外人。[zhè jǐ wèi péng yǒu, nǎ wèi yě bú shì wài rén.]

(None of these friends is an out-group member.)

### (3) “也 [yě] (also)” and “都 [dōu] (all)”

“也 [yě] (also)” mainly appears in the interrogative sentence; “都 [dōu] (all)” can appear in the interrogative sentence as well as the affirmative sentence.

Example 347 我无论跟他怎么说，他都不答应。[wǒ wú lùn gēn tā zěn me shuō, tā dōu bù dǎ yìng.]

(No matter how I persuade him, he won't agree.)

我无论跟他怎么说，他也不答应。[wǒ wú lùn gēn tā zěn me shuō, tā yě bù dǎ yìng.]

(No matter how I persuade him, he won't agree.)

我无论提什么条件，他都答应。[wǒ wú lùn tí shén me tiáo jiàn, tā dōu dǎ yìng.]

(He'll agree to anything I ask for him.)

\*我无论提什么条件，他也答应。[wǒ wú lùn tí shén me tiáo jiàn, tā yě dǎ yìng.]

Example 348 连这么重要的会你都不参加，你以后还打算在这儿工作吗？[lián zhè me zhòng yào de huì nǐ dōu bù cān jiā, nǐ yǐ hòu hái dǎ suàn zài zhè er gōng zuò ma?]

(You even didn't attend such an important meeting. Does it mean that you don't want to work here anymore?)

连这么重要的会你也不参加，你以后还打算在这儿工作吗？[lián zhè me zhòng yào de huì nǐ yě bù cān jiā, nǐ yǐ hòu hái dǎ suàn zài zhè er gōng zuò ma?]

(You didn't even attend such an important meeting. Does it mean that you don't want to work here anymore?)

Example 349 连最不重要的会他都要参加，哪儿有时间作研究啊？[lián zuì bú zhòng yào de huì tā dōu yào cān jiā, nǎ er yǒu shí jiān zuò yán jiū ā?]

(You even attended the meeting of the least importance. How could he find the time for the research?)

连最不重要的会他也要参加，哪儿有时间作研究啊？[lián zuì bú zhòng yào de huì tā yě yào cān jiā, nǎ er yǒu shí jiān zuò yán jiū ā?]

(You even attended the meeting of the least importance. How could he find the time for the research?)

### 3 “也 [yě] (also)” is used to soften the tone with the slight pronunciation.

With “也 [yě] (also),” the sentence sounds mild and roundabout; without “也 [yě] (also),” “也 [yě] (also)” sounds direct and stiff.

Example 350 这句话你这样翻译也不能算错，不过 . . . [zhè jù huà nǐ zhè yàng fān yì yě bù néng suàn cuò, bú guò . . .]

(You may translate the sentence like this, but . . .)

Example 351 这件事也不能全怪他，主要是我做得不对。[zhè jiàn shì yě bù néng quán guài tā, zhǔ yào shì wǒ zuò de bú duì.]

(He shouldn't be blamed for it because it was mainly my fault.)

Example 352 由他唠叨去吧，都给他个装聋，也就过去了。[yóu tā lào dāo qù ba, dōu gěi tā gè zhuāng lóng, yě jiù guò qù le.]

(Let him nag on and let it go by pretending to be deaf.)

Example 353 你也太娇气了，说你两句就哭。[nǐ yě tài jiāo qì le, shuō nǐ liǎng jù jiù kū.]

(You're so squeamish and easy to be annoyed to cry.)

Example 354 老太太也不怕滑倒了摔着，下着雨还出来走。[lǎo tài tài yě bú pà huá dào le shuāi zhe, xià zhe yǔ hái chū lái zǒu.]

(Although it rained, the old lady still went out for a walk, regardless of the slippery ground.)

#### XIV. 就 [jiù] (even), 才 [cái] (only)

They are frequently used adverbs, functioning as adverbs to express time, quantity, scope, tone, and correlation.

##### 1 To express time

- (1) Both of them can be put after time words but they mean different things. “就 [jiù] (even)” implies that the action conveyed by the verb takes a short time and happens quickly; “才 [cái] (only)” implies that the actions conveyed by the verb takes more time and happens slowly. They should be pronounced slightly. When they are used to express the finished action, “了 [le]” is required at the end of the sentence to match with “就 [jiù] (even),” but “才 [cái] (only)” doesn't have such a requirement.

Example 355 演出七点半开始，他七点就到剧场了。[yǎn chū qī diǎn bàn kāi shǐ, tā qī diǎn jiù dào jù chǎng le.]

(The performance would start at half past seven but he even arrived at the theatre at seven.)

演出七点半开始，他八点才到剧场。[yǎn chū qī diǎn bàn kāi shǐ, tā bā diǎn cái dào jù chǎng.]

(The performance began at half past seven but he didn't arrive till eight.)

Example 356 这节课他念了十分钟就会背了。[zhè kè shū tā niàn le shí fēn zhōng jiù huì bèi le.]

(He could recite the text after having repeated it for ten minutes.)

这节课他念了三十分钟才会背。[zhè kè shū tā niàn le sān shí fēn zhōng cái huì bèi.]

(He couldn't recite the text until he had repeated it for half an hour.)

Example 357 这节课的生词他看了三遍就记住了。[zhè kè de shēng cí tā kàn le sān biàn jiù jì zhù le.]

(He has remembered the new words in this lesson only after repeating them three times.)

这节课他念了三遍才会背。[zhè kè shū tā niàn le sān biàn cái huì bèi.]

(He couldn't recite the text until he had repeated it three times.)

Both “就 [jiù]” and “才 [cái]” can show two successive actions or occurrences. Differently, “就 [jiù]” implies a short interval between two; “才 [cái]” implies a longer interval.

Example 358 他刚生病就告诉妈妈了。[tā gāng shēng bìng jiù gào sù mā mā le.]

(He told his mother when he just felt ill.)

他病好了，才告诉他妈妈。[tā bìng hǎo le, cái gào sù tā mā mā.]

(He didn't tell his mother until he was recovered.)

Example 359 她一毕业就回国了。[tā yī bì yè jiù huí guó le.]

(She returned to China after she graduated.)

她毕业一个月后，才回国。[tā bì yè yī gè yuè hòu, cái huí guó.]

(She returned to China a month after graduation.)

“一...就... [yī...jiù] (as soon as)” implies two continuous actions.

Example 360 他很聪明，什么事一学就会。[tā hěn cōng míng, shén me shì yī xué jiù huì.]

(He is so clever that he can learn everything quickly.)

Example 361 我一下课就去图书馆看书了。[wǒ yī xià kè jiù qù tú shū guǎn kàn shū le.]

(I went to the library for reading as soon as the class was over.)

- (2) When used before time words, “就 [jiù]” means “late” and “才 [cái]” means “early”

Example 362 那天，看完演出，我们到家就九点五十了，所以没给你打电话。[nà tiān, kàn wán yǎn chū, wǒ men dào jiā jiù jiǔ diǎn wǔ shí le, suǒ yǐ méi gěi nǐ dǎ diàn huà.]

(That day, we got home at 9:50 after the show, so we didn't call you.)

那天，看完演出，我们到家才九点五十，所以又聊了一会才睡觉。[nà tiān, kàn wán yǎn chū, wǒ men dào jiā cái jiǔ diǎn wǔ shí, suǒ yǐ yòu liáo le yī huì cái shuì jiào.]

(That day, we got home at 9:50 after the show, so we talked for a while before going to bed.)

Example 363 这座楼光盖房顶就用了十四个月。[zhè zuò lóu guāng gài fāng dǐng jiù yòng le shí sì gè yuè.]

(It has already taken fourteen months to build the roof of the building.)

这座楼才用了十四个月就盖好了。[zhè zuò lóu cái yòng le shí sì gè yuè jiù gài hǎo le.]

(The building has been finished in only fourteen months.)

Example 364 这篇小故事，他只是翻译就翻译了三天。[zhè piān xiǎo gù shì, tā zhǐ shì fān yì jiù fān yì le sān tiān.]

(He has spent three days in translating such a short story.)

他翻译这篇故事，才翻译了三天。[tā fān yì zhè piān gù shì, cái fān yì le sān tiān.]

(It only took him three days to translate this story.)

In Example 364, if “就 [jiù]” is pronounced with stress, it indicates a short duration, similar to “只 [zhǐ] (only).”

- (3) “就 [jiù]” means “立刻 [lì kè] (immediately)” or “马上 [mǎ shàng] (soon),” with stress pronunciation. It can be followed by “要 [yào] (be about to).”

Example 365 我就走，你别催了。[wǒ jiù zǒu, nǐ bié cuī le.]  
(I'm leaving immediately and don't urge me any more.)

Example 366 你再等等，小明就要回来了。[nǐ zài děng děng, xiǎo míng jiù yào huí lái le.]  
(You can wait a bit longer and Xiao Ming will be back soon.)

Example 367 别走了。你看，天黑上来了，又打雷，又打闪，就要下雨了。[bié zǒu le. nǐ kàn, tiān hēi shàng lái le, yòu dǎ léi, yòu dǎ shǎn, jiù yào xià yǔ le.]  
(Don't leave now. You see, it's getting dark as well as thundering and flashing outside. It's going to rain.)

## 2 To modify a quantifier

- (1) Before a quantifier, “就 [jiù]” is pronounced slightly but the noun before it should be stressed. In this case, “就 [jiù]” means “a large quantity.”

Example 368 王老师一周就上八节课。[Wáng lǎo shī, yī zhōu jiù shàng bā jié kè.]  
(Professor Wang has eight classes in one week.)

Example 369 我一天就走了一百里。[wǒ yī tiān jiù zǒu le yī bǎi lǐ.]  
(I have walked one hundred miles in one day.)

Example 370

A: 你们昨天只逛街，没买什么吧？[nǐ men zuó tiān zhǐ guàng jiē, méi mǎi shén me ba?]

(Didn't you buy anything when you went shopping yesterday?)

B: 怎么没买？光我就买了三件衣服。[zěn me méi mǎi? guāng wǒ jiù mǎi le sān jiàn yī fú.]

(How could it be possible! Even I bought three articles of clothing.)

If the stress is put on “就 [jiù]” or the quantifier after it, it implies “a small quantity.”

Example 371 这次考试，他就错了三个题。[zhè cì kǎo shì, tā jiù cuò le sān gè tí.]

(He missed only three questions on the exam.)

这次考试，他就错了三个题。[zhè cì kǎo shì, tā jiù cuò le sān gè tí.]

(He even missed three questions on the exam.)

Example 372 那个报告，我就听懂了三分之二。[nà gè bào gào, wǒ jiù tīng dǒng le sān fēn zhī èr.]

(I even understood two-thirds of that report.)

那个报告，我就听懂了'三分之二。[nà gè bào gào, wǒ jiù tīng dǒng le sān fēn zhī èr.]

(I only understood two-thirds of that report.)

Let's compare the following examples.

Example 373 这种菜一毛钱'就能买三斤。[zhè zhǒng cài yī máo qián jiù néng mǎi sān jīn.]

(You can buy only 1.5 kg of this vegetable for ten cents.) (expensive)

这种菜一毛钱就能买'三斤。[zhè zhǒng cài yī máo qián jiù néng mǎi sān jīn.]

(You can buy only 1.5 kg of this vegetable for ten cents.) (expensive)

这种菜'一毛钱就能买三斤。[zhè zhǒng cài yī máo qián jiù néng mǎi sān jīn.]

(It only costs ten cents to buy 1.5kg of this vegetable.) (cheap)

Example 374 他们四个人'就住一间屋子。[tā men sì gè rén jiù zhù yī jiān wū zi.]

(They four just live in one room.) (crowded)

他们四个人就住'一间屋子。[tā men sì gè rén jiù zhù yī jiān wū zi.]

(They four just live in one room.) (crowded)

他们'四个人就住一间屋子。[tā men sì gè rén jiù zhù yī jiān wū zi.]

(They four live in one room.) (roomy)

When “才 [cái]” is used, no matter which numeral-quantifier phrase is stressed, it means “a small quantity.”

Example 375 这种菜十块钱才买'三斤。[zhè zhǒng cài shí kuài qián cái mǎi sān jīn.]

(You can buy only 1.5 kg of this vegetable for ten cents.) (expensive)

这种菜'十块钱才买三斤。[zhè zhǒng cài shí kuài qián cái mǎi sān jīn.]

(You can buy only 1.5 kg of this vegetable for ten cents.) (expensive)

When a numeral-quantifier phrase stands before “就 [jiù]” or “才 [cái],” “就 [jiù]” implies “a small quantity” and “才 [cái]” implies “a large quantity.” No matter in which case, this phrase should be stressed.

Example 376 ‘四个人就把这块大石头搬走了。[sì gè rén jiù bǎ zhè kuài dà shí tóu bān zǒu le.]

(It only needs four men to move this big stone away.) (few)

‘四个人才把这块大石头搬走。[sì gè rén cái bǎ zhè kuài dà shí tóu bān zǒu]

(It took four men to remove this big stone.) (many)

Example 377 用了’三台收割机就把那片麦田抢收完了。[yòng le sān tái shōu gē jī jiù bǎ nà piàn mài tián qiǎng shōu wán le.]

(It only took three harvesters to rush-harvest that wheat field.) (few)

用了’三台收割机才把那片麦田抢收完。[yòng le sān tái shōu gē jī cái bǎ nà piàn mài tián qiǎng shōu wán.]

(It took three harvesters to rush-harvest the wheat field.) (many)

Example 378 他睡了’五个小时就起床了。[tā shuì le wǔ gè xiǎo shí jiù qǐ chuáng le.]

(He got up only after five hours’ sleep.) (less)

他睡了’十个小时才起床。[tā shuì le shí gè xiǎo shí cái qǐ chuáng.]

(He slept ten hours before he got up.) (more)

When a numeral-quantifier phrase stands after “就 [jiù]” or “才 [cái]” with the stress on itself, both of them imply “a small quantity.”

Example 379 这次考试，他就错了’三道题。[zhè cì kǎo shì, tā jiù cuò le sān dào tí.]

(He missed only three questions on the exam.) (few)

这次考试，他才错了三道题。[zhè cì kǎo shì, tā cái cuò le sān dào tí.]

(He missed only three questions on the exam.) (few)

Example 380 我们班就有’十个学生。[wǒ men bān cái yǒu shí gè xué shēng.]

(There are only ten students in our class.) (few)

我们班才有十个学生。[wǒ men bān cái yǒu shí gè xué shēng.]

(There are only ten students in our class.) (few)

Example 381 这里离城市中心就’三公里路。[zhè lǐ lí chéng shì zhōng xīn jiù sān gōng lǐ lù.]

(It’s only three kilometers away from the city center.) (few)

这里离城市中心才三公里路。[zhè lǐ lí chéng shì zhōng xīn cái sān gōng lǐ lù.]

(It’s only three kilometers away from the city center.) (few)

Example 382 上海我就去过两次。[shàng hǎi wǒ jiù qù guò liǎng cì.]

(I only have been to Shanghai twice.) (few)

上海我才去过两次。[shàng hǎi wǒ cái qù guò liǎng cì.]

(I only have been to Shanghai twice.) (few)

Example 383 我就认识—百多个汉字。[wǒ jiù rèn shí yī bǎi duō gè hàn zì.]

(I only know more than 100 Chinese characters.) (few)

我才认识一百多个汉字。[wǒ cái rèn shí yī bǎi duō gè hàn zì.]

(I only know more than 100 Chinese characters.) (few)

### 3 To express scope

“就 [jiù] (only)” can limit scope when stressed. In a sentence, it limits the subject, object, and predicate, similar to the adverb “只 [zhǐ] (only).”



(1) To limit the subject

“就 [jiù] (only)” stands before the noun or nominal subject to limit the subject.

Example 384 我们班就阿里学过一点儿汉语。[wǒ men bān jiù ā lǐ xué guò yī diǎn er hàn yǔ.]

(A Li is the only one in our class who has learned a little Chinese.)

Example 385 这件事就你和我知道，不要告诉别人。[zhè jiàn shì jiù nǐ hé wǒ zhī dào, bú yào gào sù bié rén.]

(It's just between you and me. Don't tell anyone else.)

Example 386 别的手续都办完了，就护照和机票还没有取回来。[bié de shǒu xù dōu bàn wán le, jiù hù zhào hé jī piào hái méi yǒu qǔ huí lái.]

(All other formalities were completed, except for the passport and the airticket that were not returned.)

(2) To limit the object

“就 [jiù] (only)” stands before the predicate to limit the object.

Example 387 谢力就学汉语，不学日语。[Xiè lì jiù xué hàn yǔ, bù xué rì yǔ.]

(Shelly only learns Chinese not Japanese.)

Example 388 我就借你新买的那本书。[wǒ jiù jiè nǐ xīn mǎi de nà běn shū.]

(I want to borrow the book you just bought.)

Example 389 这次去北京，我们就游览了故宫和长城，其他地方没有去。[zhè cì qù běi jīng, wǒ men jiù yóu lǎn le gù gōng hé cháng chéng, qí tā dì fāng méi yǒu qù.]

(We only visited the Forbidden City and the Great Wall, but not other places in Beijing this time.)

(3) To limit the predicate

Example 390 这本书我就翻了翻，还没有仔细看。[zhè běn shū wǒ jiù fān le fān, hái méi yǒu zǎi xì kàn.]

(I just flipped through the book without reading it carefully.)

Example 391 他就碰了你一下，哪至于疼得那个样子。[tā jiù pèng le nǐ yī xià, nǎ zhì yú téng de nà gè yàng zi.]

(He just touched you, which couldn't hurt you so much.)

Example 392 办公室里就剩老王一个人，别人都下班回家了。[bàn gōng shì lǐ jiù shèng Lǎo Wáng yī gè rén, bié rén dōu xià bān huí jiā le.]

(Lao Wang was the only one left in the office and the others went home after work.)

Example 393 这套诗集，图书馆就有这么一套，不出借。[zhè tào shī jí, tú shū guǎn jiù yǒu zhè me yī tào, bù chū jiè.]  
(The library only has one set of the poetry, so it is not allowed to be lent out.)

The word modified by “就 [jiù] (just)” implies a certain quantity, due to which the numeral-quantifier phrase may or may not appear after the word modified, such as “他就碰了你一下。[tā jiù pèng le nǐ yī xià.] (He just touched you.)” or “就阿里(一个人)学过一点儿汉语。[jiù ā lǐ (yī gè rén) xué guò yī diǎn er hàn yǔ.] (A Li is the only one who has learned a little Chinese.)”

#### 4 To produce correlation

“就 [jiù]” produces correlation when it appears in the second clause of the conditional sentence.

Example 394 你如果有问题，就去请教张老师。[nǐ rú guǒ yǒu wèn tí, jiù qù qǐng jiāo zhāng lǎo shī.]  
(If you have any questions, please ask Prof. Zhang.) (if . . .)

Example 395 只就咱们大家齐心协力，事情就能办好。[zhǐ jiù zán men dà jiā qí xīn xié lì, shì qíng jiù néng bàn hǎo.]  
(If we all pull together, things can be done well.) (as long as . . .)

Example 396 既然你不同意，我就不再往下说了。[jì rán nǐ bù tóng yì, wǒ jiù bú zài shuō xià qù le.]  
(Now that you don't agree, I won't go on my talking.) (now that . . .)

Example 397 要是阿里今天不来，你就再等他一天。[yào shì ā lǐ jīn tiān bù lái, nǐ jiù zài děng tā yī tiān.]  
(If A Li doesn't come today, you have to wait for him another day.) (if . . .)

“才 [cái]” can be used with the conjunctions to indicate condition and reason.

Example 398 只有认识落后，才能去改变落后；只有学习先进，才有可能赶超先进。[zhǐ yǒu rèn shí luò hòu, cái néng qù gǎi biàn luò hòu; zhǐ yǒu xué xí xiān jìn, cái yǒu kě néng gǎn chāo xiān jìn.]  
(Only by understanding backwardness can we change it; only by learning the advanced can we catch up with it.) (only if . . .)

Example 399 只有首先正视事实，才有可能作出合理的解释。[zhǐ yǒu shǒu xiān zhèng shì shì shí, cái yǒu kě néng zuò chū hé lǐ de jiě shì.]  
(Only by facing up to the fact can we make a reasonable explanation.) (only if . . .)

Example 400 因为不懂才来向你请教。[yīn wéi bù dǒng cái lái xiàng nǐ qǐng jiào.]  
(I come to you for advice because I don't understand it.) (because . . .)

Example 401 那时候,为了工作方便,他才更换了姓名。[nà shí hòu, wèi le gōng zuò fāng biàn, tā cái gèng huàn le xìng míng.]  
(He changed his name at that time for the convenience of his work.) (in order to . . .)

Also, “就 [jiù]” and “才 [cái]” can produce correlation when used in the compressed sentence.

## 5 To express a certain tone

### (1) “就 [jiù]” can express an affirmative tone.

Example 402 ‘这就是赵经理。[zhè jiù shì Zhào jīng lǐ.]  
(This is Manager Zhao.)

Example 403

A: 谁是这儿的负责人? [shuí shì zhè er de fù zé rén?]

(Who is in charge here?)

B: 我就是。[wǒ jiù shì.]

(It's me.)

“就 [jiù]” often appears in the following sentence patterns to express an affirmative tone.

Example 404

A: 教室在哪儿? [jiào shì zài nǎ er?]

(Where is the classroom?)

B: 教室不远,‘就在二楼。[jiào shì bù yuǎn, jiù zài èr lóu.]

(Not far from here. It's just on the second floor.)

Example 405

A: 哪儿有小卖部? [nǎ er yǒu xiǎo mài bù?]

(Is there a shop somewhere?)

B: 楼下就有一个。[lóu xià jiù yǒu yī gè.]

(There is one downstairs.)

Example 406

A: 你能找一个会吹笛子的人吗? [nǐ néng zhǎo yī gè huì chuī dí zi de rén ma?]  
(Can you find someone who can play the flute?)

B: 我弟弟就吹得不错。[wǒ dì dì jiù chuī de bú cuò.]

(My brother is very good at it.)

### (2) Both “就 [jiù]” and “才 [cái]” can express a resolute tone in the spoken language and only “就 [jiù]” should be pronounced with stress.

Example 407 弟弟捂住自己的嘴说:“我’就不吃,我’就不吃。”[dì dì wǔ zhù zì jǐ de zuǐ shuō: “wǒ jiù bù chī, wǒ jiù bù chī.”]  
(The younger brother covered his mouth and said: “I won't eat it. I won't eat it.”)

Example 408 我’就讨厌说假话的人。[wǒ jiù tǎo yàn shuō jiǎ huà de rén.]  
(I hate the person who tells lies.)

Example 409 ‘我才不相信你那套大道理呢。[wǒ cái bù xiāng xìn nǐ nà tào dà dào lǐ ne.]  
(I don’t buy your story.)

Usually, the sentence structure consisting of “就 [jiù]” for a certain tone is relatively simple. No words for condition, time, or quantity are allowed to appear before “就 [jiù].”

- (3) “才 [cái]” can express a tone of satisfaction or compliment, implying that a certain degree has been reached.

Example 410 那位书法家的字才棒呢！[nà wèi shū fǎ jiā de zì cái bàng ne!]  
(The handwriting of that calligrapher is really excellent!)

Example 411 王教授才有学问呢！[Wáng jiào shòu cái yǒu xué wèn ne!]  
(Prof. Wang is a man of knowledge!)

#### XV. 不 [bú/bù] (not), 没(有) [méi(yǒu)] (no)

As the negative adverbs, both of “不 [bú/bù] (not)” and “没(有) [méi(yǒu)] (no)” can stand before verbs and adjectives but they have different meanings.

##### 1 “不 [bú/bù] (not)”

“不 [bú/bù] (not)” negates a subjective wish and state that may exist in the future, at the present, or in the past.

- (1) “不 [bú/bù] (not)” negates action, a psychological state, wish, hobby, or possibility that may exist in the future or at the present. Especially when it negates the action conveyed by the verb, it expresses a set plan, an actual fact or a wish.

Example 412 我现在不去，过一会再去。[wǒ xiàn zài bú qù, guò yī huì zài qù.]  
(I won’t go now but later.) (planned)

Example 413 天气预报说明天有雨，我们明天不去春游。[tiān qì yù bào shuō míng tiān yǒu yǔ, wǒ men míng tiān bú qù chūn yóu.]  
(The weather forecast says it will rain tomorrow, so we won’t go on the spring outing tomorrow.) (not planned)

Example 414 周朴园说：“也好，我们暂且不提这一层。”[zhōu pǔ yuán shuō: “yě hǎo, wǒ men zàn qiě bù tí zhè yī céng.”]  
(Zhou Puyuan said, “Well, we put it aside for a moment.”) (unwilling)

Example 415 他不是我的老师，是我的邻居。[tā bú shì wǒ de lǎo shī, shì wǒ de lín jū.]  
(He is not my teacher, but my neighbor.) (a fact)

Or “不 [bú/bù] (not)” negates a frequent or regular action.

Example 416 那个地方一年四季不下雪。[nà gè dì fāng yī nián sì jì bù xià xuě.]  
(It never snows in that place all the year round.)

Example 417 他不吸烟，也不喝酒。[tā bú xī yān, yě bù hē jiǔ.]  
(He neither smokes nor drinks.)

Example 418 来中国以前，我一个汉字也不认识。[lái zhōng guó yǐ qián, wǒ yī gè hàn zì yě bú rèn shí.]  
(Before I came to China, I didn't know any Chinese characters.)

Example 419 勇敢不等于鲁莽。[yǒng gǎn bù dèng yú lǔ mǎng.]  
(To be brave is not equal to being rash.)

(2) “不 [bú/bù] (not)” negates a wish or possibility, followed by a volitive verb.

Example 420 想到这里，罗平不愿再想下去了。[xiǎng dào zhè lǐ, luó píng bú yuàn zài xiǎng xià qù le.]  
(Thinking of this, Luo Ping refused to think of it further.)

Example 421 我不敢说，你去问别人吧。[wǒ bù gǎn shuō, nǐ qù wèn bié rén ba.]  
(I'm not sure. Ask someone else.)

Example 422 他想上法院去告状，他爹不让他去。[tā xiǎng shàng fǎ yuàn qù gào zhuàng, tā diē bú ràng tā qù.]  
(He wanted to go to court, but his father wouldn't let him do it.)

Example 423 这个问题目前还不能解决。[zhè gè wèn tí mù qián hái bù néng jiě jué.]  
(This problem cannot be solved at present.)

Example 424 她不会是你说的那样的人。[tā bù huì shì nǐ shuō de nà yàng de rén.]  
(She is not like what you have described.)

Possible complements also can be negated by “不 [bú/bù] (not).”

Example 425 我永远也忘不了您对我的忠告。[wǒ yǒng yuǎn yě wàng bù liǎo nín duì wǒ de zhōng gào.]  
(I will never forget your advice to me.)

(3) “不 [bú/bù] (not)” can negate a feature or state described by the adjective after it.

Example 426 近来，我们不忙。[jìn lái, wǒ men bù máng.]  
(We are not busy these days.)

Example 427 你的志气真不小。[nǐ de zhì qì zhēn bù xiǎo.]  
(You are so ambitious.)

Example 428 你看，月亮不圆，今天肯定不是农历十五。[nǐ kàn, yuè liàng bù yuán, jīn tiān kěn dìng bú shì nóng lì shí wǔ.]  
(You see, the moon is not full, so today is definitely not the fifteenth of the lunar calendar.)

Example 429 此路不通，请绕行。[cǐ lù bù tōng, qǐng rào xíng.]  
(Road closed. Please detour.)

Example 430 她日子过得不痛快，总有一些麻烦事儿。[tā rì zi guò de bú tōng kuài, zǒng yǒu yī xiē má fán shì er.]  
(Her life is not going well, and she always has some troubles.)

## 2 没(有) [méi (yǒu)] (no)

“没 [méi] (no)” or “没有 [méi yǒu] (no)” can negate the state of existence, possession, occurrence, or accomplishment.

### (1) To negate existence or possession

Example 431 我没有汽车、没有洋房，算什么大款？[wǒ méi yǒu qì chē, méi yǒu yáng fáng, suàn shén me dà kuǎn?]  
(I have no car, no room, and what kind of rich am I?)

Example 432 屋子里没有人，好像发生了什么事情。[wū zi lǐ méi yǒu rén, hǎo xiàng fā shēng le shén me shì qíng.]  
(There is no one in the room. Something must have happened.)

Example 433 你看，院子里没有一点儿东西，都搬走了。[nǐ kàn, yuàn zi lǐ méi yǒu yī diǎn er dōng xī, dōu bān zǒu le.]  
(You see, nothing left in the yard and all the things have been moved away.)

### (2) To negate an occurrence or accomplishment

Example 434 昨天没下雪。[zuó tiān méi xià xuě.]  
(It didn't snow yesterday.)

Example 435 以前，我没学过汉语。[yǐ qián, wǒ méi xué guò hàn yǔ.]  
(I haven't learned Chinese before.)

Example 436 那次会议我们没派人参加。[nà cì huì yì wǒ men méi pài rén cān jiā.]  
(We didn't send anyone to the meeting.)

Example 437 那次去泰山，我们没有看到日出的奇景。[nà cì qù tài shān, wǒ men méi yǒu kàn dào rì chū de qí jǐng.]  
(On the trip to Mount Tai that time, we missed the spectacular sunrise.)

Example 438 我没听说过这样的事情。[wǒ méi tīng shuō guò zhè yàng de shì qíng.]  
(I have not heard of such a thing.)

## (3) To appear before the adjective to negate a certain state

Example 439 那天，天没亮，他们就出发了。[nà tiān, tiān méi liàng, tā men jiù chū fā le.]

(That day, they set out before dawn.)

Example 440 这件衣服没干，换另外一件穿吧。[zhè jiàn yī fu méi gān, huàn lìng wài yī jiàn chuān ba.]

(This dress is not dry, and try another one.)

Example 441 树上的果子还没熟，吃不了，还得过一个多月。[shù shàng de guǒ zi hái méi shú, chī bù liǎo, hái déi guò yī gè duō yuè.]

(The fruits on the tree were still unripe and they could not be eaten until more than a month later.)

Example 442 小伙子的病没(有)好，就急着出院了。[xiǎo huǒ zi de bìng méi (yǒu) hǎo, jiù jí zhe chū yuàn le.]

(The young man left the hospital in a hurry before recovery.)

“没有 [méi yǒu] (no)” is an adverb when standing before the predicate verb or predicate adjective; when “没有 [méi yǒu] (no)” appears before the noun or numeral-quantifier phrase as its object, “没 [méi]” is an adverb and “有 [yǒu]” is a verb.

Example 443 我回家住了没有两天。[wǒ huí jiā zhù le méi yǒu liǎng tiān.]

(I haven't stayed at home for more than two days.) (adverb+verb)  
我回家没有住两天就离开了。[wǒ huí jiā méi yǒu zhù liǎng tiān jiù lí kāi le.]

(I left home without staying for two days.) (adverb)

Example 444 我没有中文画报。[wǒ méi yǒu zhōng wén huà bào.]

(I don't have a Chinese pictorial.) (adverb+verb)  
我没有看中文画报。[wǒ méi yǒu kàn zhōng wén huà bào.]

(I didn't read the Chinese pictorial.) (adverb)

## 3 Differences between “不 [bú/bù] (not)” and “没(有) [méi (yǒu)] (no)”

- (1) Semantically, “不 [bú/bù] (not)” negates judgment, willingness, fact, and feature; “没有 [méi yǒu] (no)” negates occurrence of the action or accomplishment of the state.

Example 445 哪个营业员见我们来了也不站起来 [nǎ gè yíng yè yuán jiàn wǒ men lái le yě bú zhàn qǐ lái.]

(None of these assistants stood up when they saw us coming.)

她根本没有看见我们，所以没站起来。[tā gēn běn méi yǒu kàn jiàn wǒ men, suǒ yǐ méi zhàn qǐ lái.]

(She didn't see us at all, so she didn't stand up.)

“不 [bù/bù] (not)” and “没 [méi] (no)” in the last example mean different things. “不 [bù/bù] (not)” in the first sentence carries a sense of unwillingness but “没 [méi] (no)” in the second sentence just indicates no occurrence of the action, thus it has nothing to do with “unwillingness.” More similar examples are as follows.

Example 446 我不打乒乓球。[wǒ bù dǎ pīng pāng qiú.]

(I don't play table tennis.) (to negate the fact or willingness)

我没打乒乓球。[wǒ méi dǎ pīng pāng qiú.]

(I didn't play table tennis.) (to negate occurrence of the action)

Example 447 那个西红柿不红。[nà gè xī hóng shì bù hóng.]

(That tomato is not ripe enough.) (to negate the condition)

那个西红柿没红。[nà gè xī hóng shì méi hóng.]

(That tomato doesn't get ripe.) (to negate the change)

The phrases of “没 [méi] (no)/不 [bù/bù] (not)+verb/adjective” in the negative forms and their corresponding affirmative forms are shown in Appendix Three.

- (2) Since “没(有) [méi (yǒu)] (no)” negates occurrence of the action, it simply refers to the action in the past or at the present. “不 [bù/bù] (not)” can refer to the action in the past, at the present, and in the future.

Example 448 我过去不喜欢你，现在不喜欢你，将来也不会喜欢你。

[wǒ guò qù bù xǐ huān nǐ, xiàn zài bù xǐ huān nǐ, jiāng lái yě bú huì xǐ huān nǐ.]

(I didn't like you; I don't like you; and I won't like you.)

Example 449 他以前不抽烟，现在也不抽烟。[tā yǐ qián bù chōu yān,

xiàn zài yě bù chōu yān.]

(He didn't smoke in the past, and he doesn't smoke now.)

Example 450 会议已经结束了，可是主席还没来。[huì yì yǐ jīng jié shù

le, kě shì zhǔ xí hái méi lái.]

(The meeting is over, but the chairman hasn't come yet.)

Example 451

A: 明天你来吗？[míng tiān nǐ lái ma?]

(Are you coming tomorrow?)

B: 明天我不来。[míng tiān wǒ bù lái.]

(I will not come tomorrow.)

C: \*明天我没来。[míng tiān wǒ méi lái.]

Sometimes, it is proper to say:

Example 452

A: 明年这个时候你毕业了吗？[míng nián zhè gè shí hòu nǐ bì yè le ma?]

(Will you graduate this time of next year?)



B: 明年这个时候可能还没毕业。[míng nián zhè gè shí hòu kě néng hái méi bì yè.]

(I may not have graduated this time next year.)

In this example, occurrence of the action is set at this moment of next year.

- (3) Although “不 [bú/bù] (not)” and “没 [méi] (no)” can be used to negate verbs and adjectives, it depends on different situations. Some relation verbs can be negated by “不 [bú/bù] (not),” such as “是 [shì] (yes)” and “等于 [děng yú] (equal to).” Those adjectives indicating features are often negated by “不 [bú/bù] (not),” but they also can be negated by “没 [méi] (no),” when the dynamic auxiliary “过 [guò]” is added after them, such as “聪明 [cōng míng] (clever),” “漂亮 [piào liàng] (beautiful),” “对 [duì] (right),” “错 [cuò] (wrong),” “大 [dà] (big),” “小 [xiǎo] (small).” Action verbs, state verbs, and verbs for psychological activity can be negated by both “不 [bú/bù] (not)” and “没 [méi] (no).” All volitive verbs can be negated by “不 [bú/bù] (not)” but only some of them can be negated by “没 [méi] (no),” such as “能 [néng] (can),” “要 [yào] (will),” “肯 [kěn] (agree),” “敢 [gǎn] (dare).” “没 [méi] (no)” is the only choice to negate the verb “有 [yǒu].”

#### 4 Double negation

Double negation functions more effectively than single affirmation because it implies a kind of affirmation, excluding those opposite possibilities. The sentence with double negation often consists of “是 [shì] (yes),” “有 [yǒu] (have),” and volitive verbs. The common forms of double negation are as follows.

“不是不 [bú shì bú/bù] . . .”  
 “不能不 [bù néng bú/bù] . . .”  
 “不得不 [bù dé bù] . . .”  
 “不会/该/可不 [bú huì/gāi/kě bú/bù] . . .”  
 “无不 [wú bú/bù] . . .”  
 “不无 [bù wú] . . .”  
 “非 . . . 不可 [fēi . . . bù kě]”

Example 453 这病又不是不能治，着什么急。[zhè bìng yòu bú shì bù néng zhì, zhāo shén me jí.]

(This disease is not the disease that cannot be cured, so take it easy.)

This last example sounds stronger in tone than “这个病能治。[zhè gè bìng néng zhì.] (This disease can be cured.)” More similar examples are as follows.

Example 454 这个企业，由于经营不善，年年亏损，最后不得不宣布破产。[zhè gè qǐ yè, yóu yú jīng yíng bù shàn, nián nián kuī sǔn, zuì hòu bù dé bù xuān bù pò chǎn.]

(Due to poor management, the enterprise lost money every year and finally had to declare bankruptcy.)

Example 455 这项大型工程的总设计师，不能不研究当前科技发展的方方面面。[zhè xiàng dà xíng gōng chéng de zǒng shè jì shī, bù néng bù yán jiū dāng qián kē jì fā zhǎn de fāng fāng miàn miàn.]

(The chief designer of this large project cannot but study every aspect of the current development of science and technology.)

Example 456 这是我的终身大事，我不能不跟父母亲商量。[zhè shì wǒ de zhōng shēn dà shì, wǒ bù néng bù gēn fù mǔ qīn shāng liàng.]

(This is a great event in my life. I cannot but talk with my parents.)

Example 457 他们在技术攻关过程中，不会不遇到这样的困难。[tā men zài jì shù gōng guān guò chéng zhōng, bú huì bú yù dào zhè yàng de kùn nán.]

(They will not fail to encounter such difficulties in the process of technological breakthroughs.)

Example 458 对他们的精彩表演，在座的观众无不立起，鼓掌。[duì tā men de jīng cǎi biǎo yǎn, zài zuò de guān zhòng wú bù qǐ lì, gǔ zhǎng.]

(All the audience stood up to applaud their wonderful performance.)

Example 459 这种设计方案，不无可取之处。[zhè zhǒng shè jì fāng àn, bù wú kě qǔ zhī chù.]

(This design scheme is not without merit.)

Example 460 学习任何一种语言，非下苦功夫不可。[xué xí rèn hé yī zhǒng yǔ yán, fēi xià kǔ gōng fū bù kě.]

(No language learning doesn't require painstaking efforts.)

## Appendix three

### Negative forms of “没[méi](no)/不[bú] (not)+verb/adjective” and their corresponding affirmative forms

<i>A of verbs</i>	<i>N of verbs</i>	<i>N of adjectives</i>	<i>A of adjectives</i>
没去[méi qù]	去了[qù le]	没红[méi hóng]	红了[hóng le]
没来[méi lái]	来了[lái le]	没热[méi rè]	热了[rè le]
没上来[méi shàng lái ]	上来了[shàng lái le]	没亮[méi liàng]	亮了[liàng le]
没吃[méi chī]	吃了[chī le]	没冷[méi lěng]	冷了[lěng le]
不去[bú qù]	去[qù]	不红[bù hóng]	红[hóng]
不来[bù lái]	来[lái]	不热[bù rè]	热[rè]
不上来[bú shàng lái]	上来[shàng lái]	不亮[bù liàng]	亮[liàng]
不吃[bù chī]	吃[chī]	不冷[bù lěng]	冷[lěng]

(Note: A for “affirmation”; N for “negation”).

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