

COMMUNICATIVE EXCHANGES



Zhào Shīfu Gěi Xiǎo Lǐ Jiǎnchá Shōuyīnjī
(Master Worker Zhao Examines a Radio for Xiǎo Lǐ)

Xiǎo Lǐ's radio is out of order. He asks his friend Lǎo Chén to help him. Lǎo Chén takes it to Master Worker Zhào.

Frame 1

1	Lǐ: <u>Zāogāo!</u> <u>Lǎo Chén</u> , wǒde <u>shōuyīnjī</u> <u>huài</u> le.	Oh! What bad luck! Lǎo Chén, my radio is broken.
2	Chén: Wǒ gěi nǐ kànkàn. Shì búshì <u>diànchí</u> méi diàn le?	I'll look at it for you. Is it that the batteries are dead? (literally: have not electricity.)
3	Lǐ: Bù <u>kěnéng</u> . Nèixiē shì xīn diànchí, zài Shànghǎi Diànqì Shāngdiàn mǎi de.	Impossible. Those are new batteries, purchased at the Shanghai Electrical Equipment Shop.
4	Chén: Nàme, kěnéng shì lǐtóu de <u>tiānxiàn</u> huài le.	In that case, it's possible that the inside antenna is broken.
5	Lǐ: Wǒ zhèijítiān hěn máng. Nǐ tì wǒ qǐng Zhào Shīfu <u>jiǎnchá</u> , <u>xíng</u> bùxíng?	I've been very busy these last few days. Could you ask Master Zhao to check it out for me?
6	Chén: Méi wèntí. Wǒ tì nǐ <u>gēn</u> tā shuōshuo. Qǐng tā xiǎngxiang <u>bànfǎ</u> .	No problem. I'll go talk to him for you, and ask him to think of a way to handle it.

Notes:

1 Familiarity with Lǎo and Xiǎo. The Chinese expression for familiarity or intimacy (with a close acquaintance who belongs to the same generation) is a combination of Lǎo "to be old" or Xiǎo "to be small" plus the surname. Example: Lǎo Lǐ, Lǎo Chén, Xiǎo Lǐ, Xiǎo Chén.

Respect with Lǎo. Lǎo, when used after a surname or given name, is an expression of respect for older people. For example, seventy-year-old Mr. Ma Mingli may be called "Mǎ Lǎo" or "Míng Lǎo" by others to show their respect to/for him.

1&2 Change of status with le. The particle le indicates a change in the status of a condition or action:

- (a) SV: le with positive or negative statement or question.

SV le (Note the inference of "now" even without xiànzài.)

Zhèibù shōuyīnjī huài le. This radio is out of order (now).
 Nèixiē diànchí jiù le. Those batteries are old (now).
 Tā xiànzài hěn máng le. He is very busy now.

- (b) EV: le with positive or negative statement or question.

EV N le (Again, note the inference of now.)

Tā shì Lǐ Tàitai le. She is Mrs. Lǐ (now).
 Tā búxíng Wáng le. Her surname is no longer Wáng.

- (c) V: le with positive or negative statement or question.

Tā tàitai lái le. His wife has come.

Note that le in the above sentence is used to indicate two things: completion and change of status. We may call it "combined le," which can be thought of as a telescoping of the completion le followed by the change-of-status le: le le becomes le.

Neg V le (Note the inference of having had, but not anymore.)

Tā búyào le. He doesn't want it anymore.
 Tā búzài zhè zhù le. He is no longer living here.

Comparison of CVs of interest: gěi, tì, gēn, duì and yòng.
 All of these CVs and their objects stand before the main verb.

N	CV-O	V (O)
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Gěi "for the benefit of," "for" (Dialogue sentences 2, 10, 13, and 15)

Wǒ gěi nǐ mǎi zìdiǎn. I'll buy the dictionary for you.
 Wǒ gěi nǐ zuòfàn. I'll cook for you.

Tì "for," "substituting for," "in place of" (Dialogue sentences 5, 6, and 16)

Lǐ Xiānsheng tì Zhào Xiānsheng jiāoshū. Mr. Lǐ will teach in place of Mr. Zhào.
 Nǐ yào zìdiǎn, wǒ kěyǐ tì nǐ mǎi. (If) you want a dictionary, I can buy it for you (as a favor).

Gēn "with," "together with" (Dialogue sentence 6)

Wǒ gēn tā shuōhuà.	I am talking with him.
Wǒ míngtiān yào gēn tā yíkuàir chīfàn.	I will have a meal with him tomorrow.

Duì "to," "towards" (Dialogue sentence 7)

Tā duì wǒ shuōhuà.	He is speaking to me.
Xuésheng duì xiānsheng hěn kèqì.	Students are very polite to the teachers.

Yòng "with," "using" (Dialogue sentence 10)

Nǐ huì búhuì yòng kuàizi chīfàn?	Can you eat with chopsticks?
Qǐng nǐ yòng Zhōngguó huà shuō.	Please speak in Chinese.

5 Reduplicated compound verbs. As with the single verb, some compound verbs (as of this lesson only jiǎnchá qualifies) can also be reduplicated for the purpose of adding a sense of casualness to the sentence.

Wǒ yào jiǎnchá jiǎnchá nǐde shōuyīnjī, qǐng nǐ gěi wǒ.	I want to check your receiver; please give it to me.
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Pivotal Sentence using qǐng, jiào & ràng. In the sentence Nǐ tī wǒ qǐng Zhào Shifu jiǎnchá, xíng bùxíng?, Zhào Shifu is both the object of the verb qǐng and the subject of another verb jiǎnchá, so that the action pivots around it. It can also be said that the first verb qǐng, jiào or ràng "ask (request)," "tell," "allow (let)" someone to do something is a mild imperative.

(Nǐ) qǐng tā zuò wǎnfàn.	Ask him to cook supper.
Wǒ jiào tā zuò zhèige.	I'm telling (I told) him to do this.
Ràng tā jiǎnchá yíxià,	Let him check it out.

Frame 2

Chén, sitting in Zhào's office waiting for him, gets up as Zhào enters.

7 Chén: Zhào Shifu, nín huí-láile. Nínde tóngshì duì wǒ shuō, nín huíjiā le.	Master Worker Zhào, you've come back. Your colleague said to me that you had gone home.
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Frame 2 (Continued)

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| 8 | Zhào: <u>Bié</u> zhànqǐlái. Zuò-xia, zuòxia. Wǒ huíqù bàn diǎnr yàojǐnde shì qùle. | Don't stand up. Sit down, sit down. I went back to handle some important matters. |
| 9 | Chén: <u>Xiǎo Lǐ</u> de shōuyīnjī huài le. Ta jiào wǒ qǐng nín jiǎnchá yíxià. | Xiǎo Lǐ's radio is broken. He asked me to ask you to check it out. |
| 10 | Zhào: Ràng wǒ yòng zhèibù yíqǐ gěi tā jiǎnchá. (after a while) Shōuyīnjī méi wèntí, búguò diànchí méi diàn le. | Let me use this instrument to check it for him. (after a while) The radio has no problem, but the batteries are dead. |
| 11 | Chén: Kěshì diànchí shì Xiǎo Lǐ xīn mǎi de. | But the batteries were newly purchased by Xiǎo Lǐ. |
| 12 | Zhào: Nàme, tā yīnggāi qù huàn qù. Zài nǎr mǎi de? | In that case, he should go and exchange them. Where did he buy them? |

8 Negative Imperative: bié. The auxiliary verb bié is used to indicate the negative imperative.

Bié zǒu!

Don't go!

Bié shuōhuà!

Don't talk!

Double qù and lái. Occasionally the verbs qù and lái will appear twice in a sentence, both before and after the purpose for which someone is coming or going, to emphasize the purpose. (See the notes in Lesson 11.)

... V	purpose	V
qù/lái		qù/lái

Tā dào jiēshang lái mǎi dōngxī lái.

She is coming downtown to buy something.

Wǒ qù bàn diǎnr shì qù.

I am going to do some business (to run some errands).

9 Use of yíxia. Like the reduplicated verb with -yi-, e.g., kànyikan, the general measure of action yíxia is used to extend the action or to specify "once," "one time," "briefly," "for a moment."

Qǐng nín zuò yíxià (zuò-yizuò).

Please sit down for a moment.

Qǐng nín kàn yíxià (kàn-yikàn).

Please take a look.

11 SV used as an Adverb. Stative Verbs are sometimes used to modify verbs.

Tāde qìchē shì xīn mǎi de.
Nǐmēnde xiǎo hái zi zhēn
hǎokàn.

His car is newly bought.
Your child is really pretty.

Frame 3

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| 13 | Chén: Nǐ xiǎng Shànghǎi Diàn-qì Shāngdiàn huì gěi tā huàn ma? | Do you think that the Shànghǎi Electrical Equipment Shop will exchange them for him? |
| 14 | Zhào: Huì de. | They will. |
| 15 | Chén: Yàoshi tāmen bùkěn gěi Xiǎo Lǐ huàn ne? | What if they are not willing to exchange them for Xiǎo Lǐ? |
| 16 | Zhào: Yàoshi tāmen bùkěn huàn, wǒ jiù zìjǐ qù tī tā huàn. | If they are not willing to exchange them, then I will go myself and exchange them for him. |
| 17 | Chén: Hǎo, jiù zhème bàn. Máfan nín le. | Fine. Then we'll do it this way. I've put you to too much trouble. |
| 18 | Zhào: Méishénme. | Not at all. |

Notes:

16 Supposition with (yàoshi) ..., jiù ... The suppositional phrase, with or without yàoshi, sets up the following sentence introduced by jiù "then."

Yàoshi Xiǎo Lǐ zài nàr,
jiù gěi tā zhèizhāng
dìtú.

If Xiǎo Lǐ is there, then
give him this map.

(Yàoshi) nǐ bùgěi wǒ
qián, wǒ jiù bùgěi nǐ
fàn chī.

If you don't give me the
money, I won't give you the
food to eat.

(Yàoshi) tā qù, wǒ jiù
búqù.

If he goes, then I'll not go.

17&18 Common Expressions. Jiù zhème bàn "Then we'll do it like this" and jiù nème bàn "Then we'll do it like that" are common expressions of agreement after a particular course of action has been proposed. Máfan nín le "I've put you to too much trouble" is a common expression used to show appreciation for someone's efforts on your behalf. Méishénme "Not at all" is the answer to the above expression of appreciation.