



ChineseClass101.com

VOLUME

1



Taiwanese

Mandarin

Survival Phrases



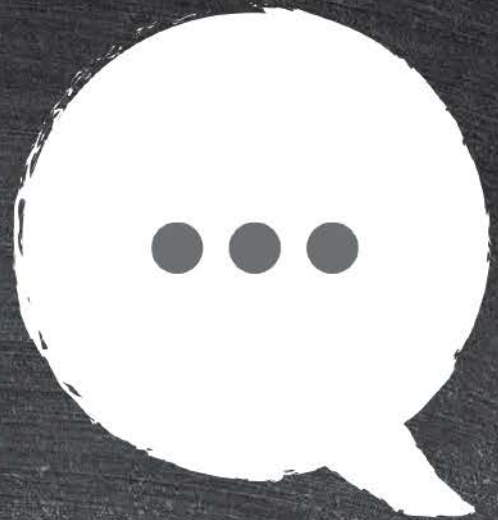
Unabridged Edition

innovative LANGUAGE

If you love the **Chinese** language, then you'll love this!

Get our Complete **Chinese** Learning Program
at **ChineseClass101.com**.

- Speak **Chinese** From Your First Lesson
- Access hundreds of Audio & Video Courses
by Real Teachers
- Get **FREE** New Lessons Every Week
- Learn Anywhere, Anytime on Any Android
Device or Computer



Go to
ChineseClass101.com
and sign up for your

FREE

Lifetime Account!



LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #1 Thank You!

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

#1

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 謝謝。
2. 感謝。
3. 我很感謝。

PINYIN

1. Xiè xie.
2. Gǎn xiè.
3. Wǒ hěn gǎn xiè.

ENGLISH

1. Thank you.
2. Thank you very much.
3. I am very thankful. Thank you so much.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
------------	-------------	--------	---------	-------

我	我	wǒ	I, me (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
您	您	nín	you (formal, Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
很	很	hěn	very, very much (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
多	多	duō	many, much (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adjective
謝謝	謝謝	xièxiè	thank you (Taiwanese Mandarin)	phrase
非常感謝。	非常感謝。	Fēi cháng gǎn xiè.	Thank you very much. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	expression
我很感謝。	我很感謝。	wǒ hěn gǎnxiè	I am very thankful. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>我的朋友很帥。</p> <p>Wǒ de péngyǒu hěn shuài.</p> <p>My friend is really handsome.</p>	<p>請問您貴姓？</p> <p>Qǐngwèn nín guìxìng?</p> <p>May I ask your surname?</p>
---	--

<p>今天玩得很開心。</p> <p>Jīntiān wán de hěn kāixīn.</p> <p>Today was great fun.</p>	<p>今天我們有很多工作要做。</p> <p>Jīntiān wǒmen yǒu hěn duō gōngzuò yào zuò.</p> <p>We have a lot of work to do today.</p>
<p>謝謝你的幫助。</p> <p>Xièxiè nǐ de bāngzhù.</p> <p>Thanks for your help.</p>	<p>謝謝你的晚飯。</p> <p>Xièxiè nǐ de wǎn fàn .</p> <p>Thank you for the dinner.</p>

GRAMMAR

Language Tip

Today's lesson covered a phrase that there is no excuse not to bring with you to Taiwan. In Chinese, there are several ways to express ones gratitude; however, by far the most common phrase used to express ones thanks is *xiè xie* ("Thank you.") This is undoubtedly the phrase of gratitude you will hear the most throughout your journeys, and conveniently the easiest to pronounce.

As Chinese is a tonal language, it is important to correctly pronounce the tones, as an incorrect pronunciation of a tone can change the meaning of a word and in turn, the meaning of the phrase. In the case of *xiè xie*, however, the phrase is used so frequently that it is likely no matter how badly you mispronounce the tones, this expression of gratitude will be understood. The tones for *xiè xie* are 4th and no tone respectively.

Chinese characters have meanings, and the character 謝 (*xiè*) means "thanks, to thank". As the phrase *Xiè xie* consists of two of the same characters, it literally means, "Thank(s), thank(s)." However, it is translated as "Thank you."

Xiè xie nǐ ("Thank you."), or the politer version *Xiè xie nín* ("Thank you.[formal]"), are common variations of the phrase *Xiè xie* ("Thank you."). In both of these phrases, *xiè xie* is followed by the word for "you", *nǐ* ("you") or the politer version *nín* ("you", formal). The literal meaning of these phrases are closer to their English counterpart "Thank you." as both phrases includes the word "you".

Another polite way to express one's gratitude is the phrase, *Fēi cháng gǎn xiè*. ("Thank

you so much.") which literally means "Thank you very much." or "extremely thankful." The components of this sentence are *fēi cháng* ("extremely") and *gǎn xiè* ("thankful.") Literally "extremely thankful", but translated as "Thank you very much." The tones for this phrase are the 1st tone, the flat tone, then the 2nd tone, and 3rd tone, followed by the 4th tone, the falling tone, respectively.

Finally there is a phrase that expresses one's utmost gratitude. This phrase is *Wǒ hěn gǎn xiè*. ("Thank you so much.") which literally means "I very feel thanks." but is translated as "Thank you so much." This phrase is reserved for very special occasions, such as when someone does something extremely kind or particularly helpful.

As mentioned previously, the tones in Chinese are extremely important. In the phrase *Wǒ hěn gǎn xiè*. ("Thank you so much.") The first three characters in this sentence are 3rd tone, the rising falling tone. When there are two consecutive 3rd tones, the first 3rd tone changes to the 2nd tone, the rising tone, while the second 3rd tone remains 3rd tone. For example, the word *wǒ* ("I, me") is 3rd tone; the word *hěn* ("very") is also 3rd tone. However, when combined to form the phrase *wǒ hěn*, the first 3rd tone becomes a second tone.

Wǒ hěn

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip #1

The formal gesture for "thank you" in Chinese is to cover one's right hand with the left, and raise them chest high while bowing one's head.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #2 You're Welcome!

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

#2

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 不用謝。
2. 不客氣。
3. 沒事。

PINYIN

1. Bú yòng xiè.
2. Bú kèqì.
3. Méi shì.

ENGLISH

1. You're welcome. (literally, No need for thanks.)
2. You're welcome. (literally, No polite. or Don't be polite.)
3. You're welcome. (literally, It's nothing.)

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
-------------	--------	---------	-------

不	bú	negative prefix (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
不用謝	bú yòng xiè	You're welcome. (lit. No need for thanks.) (Taiwanese Mandarin)	expression

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我不認識他。 Wǒ bú rènshí tā. I don't know him.	這是我應該做的，不用謝。 zhèshì wǒ yīnggāi zuòde, bú yòng xiè. You are welcome. It's what I should do.
---	--

GRAMMAR

Language Tip

Basic etiquette is a common characteristic shared by societies throughout the world, and Taiwan is no exception. In fact, the Taiwanese are exceptionally hospitable, and phrases of gratitude and those related are used at an extremely high frequency. During your travels in Taiwan, it is more probable you will hear, rather than use, one of the phrases for "You're welcome."

In Chinese, there are multiple ways to acknowledge and respond to an expression of gratitude. Again, as you will be using "thank you" repeatedly, there is a good chance you will come into contact with all three variations of "You're welcome." The following phrases are all frequently used, with usage depending on the speaker's style rather than other factors, such as politeness level, etc.

Bú yòng xiè. ("You're welcome.")

The phrase *Bú yòng xiè.* (You're welcome.) literally means "No need for thanks." or "No need for your thanks." Looking at the components of the sentence, *bu* is a negation

marker. *Yòng* means "need/necessary", and *xiè* is "thank/thanks". This phrase can be translated literally into a colloquial English expression "No need for thanks." The tone for *bù* is the 4th tone; however, when *bù* is followed by another 4th tone, the tone changes from 4th tone, the falling tone, to the 2nd tone, the rising tone.

For example:

Bùhǎo ("not good") is 4th tone and 2nd tone, and as the tone following *bù* is not 4th tone, *bù* remains 4th tone.

Bú yòng ("no need/not necessary") is 4th tone and 4th tone, and as the tone following *bú* is 4th tone, the tone changes from 4th tone, the falling tone, to the 2nd tone, the rising tone.

Bú kèqì. ("You're welcome.")

The phrase *Bú kèqì* literally means "Don't be polite." This phrase also begins with *bu* (the negation marker), which precedes *kèqì* ("polite.") Similar to the phrase *Bú yòng xiè*. ("You're welcome.") the tone for *bú* in this phrase changes from 4th tone, the falling tone, to the 2nd tone, the rising tone, as *bù* is followed by another 4th tone.

Méi shì. ("It's nothing.")

It is the most casual way of expressing the notion of "You're welcome." The phrase *Méi shì* literally means "It's nothing." Looking at the components of the sentence, *méi* is also a negation marker, while *shì* ("thing") indicates something. When taken together in context, this phrase can be translated as "It doesn't matter." or "It's nothing."

In each of the phrases above the speaker is emphasizing that there is no need for thanks or gratitude. In fact, each phrase is a negative sentence. This provides interesting insight into how the Taiwanese acknowledge and respond to an expression of gratitude, as the speaker is almost discouraging the thanking party showing appreciation. The negative commonality of these phrases provides interesting insight into how the Chinese perceive gratitude.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

不客氣 (*Bú kèqì*) is the most common response to 謝謝 (*xièxiè*). Although most Taiwanese may just respond with a smile and a nod of the head to express their "You're welcome."

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #3 This Please

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

3

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 請給我。
2. 請給我這個。
3. 請給我那個。

PINYIN

1. Qǐng gěi wǒ.
2. Qǐng gěi wǒ zhège.
3. Qǐng gěi wǒ nàge.

ENGLISH

1. Please give me.
2. Please give me this.
3. Please give me that.

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
------------	-------------	--------	---------	-------

我	我	wǒ	I, me (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
那個	那個	nàgè	that (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
請給我。	請給我。	qǐng gěi wǒ	Please give me. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

我的朋友很帥。 Wǒ de péngyǒu hěn shuài. My friend is really handsome.	我想問一下，那個人是誰？ Wǒ xiǎng wèn yíxià, nàgè rén shì shéi? I want to ask, who is that?
請給我一杯水。 Qǐng gěi wǒ yì bēi shuǐ. Please give me a glass of water.	

GRAMMAR

Taiwan is a small but diverse island. In addition to the many places to see and visit, there are also many foods to try and goods to buy! However, in order to sample these new tastes and capitalize on some of the jaw-dropping deals you are sure to come across, you must be able to ask for what you want. In Taiwan there are many street vendors, shops, stores, restaurants, and other locals where you can practice the phrase *Qǐng gěi wǒ* [something]. ("Please give me [something]."), which is commonly used when asking for something.

When asking for something in Chinese, you need to include the verb "to give" and the pronoun for the person receiving the object. The phrase used to accomplish this is *Qǐng gěi*

wǒ [something]. ("Please give me [something]."), with the "something" desired positioned at the end of the sentence.

Compared to its English counterpart phrase, "[Something] please." the phrase used to ask for something in Chinese is relatively complex as the receiver of the object, the indirect object, must be included. In English, the same request can be accomplished by identifying the "something" desired and following it with "please." (If it is just one thing, an indefinite article would be needed too.) The difference is exemplified here:

English: "A Big Mac please."

Chinese: *Qǐng gěi wǒ dà mài kè.* ("Please give me a Big Mac.")

As it is highly unlikely that you will know the word for each "something" you come to desire, using the physical location of the "something" you want and pointing at it to communicate this is an extremely useful tactic. For something located nearby, you can refer to the thing with the word *zhège* ("this.") Therefore, to ask for something nearby, you can use the phrase *Qǐng gěi wǒ zhège.* ("This please.") For something further away, there is the phrase *Qǐng gěi wǒ nàge.* ("Please give me that.")

The first three characters in this sentence are 3rd tone, the rising-falling tone. When there are two consecutive 3rd tones, the first 3rd tone changes to the 2nd tone, the rising tone, while the second 3rd tone remains a 3rd tone. For example, the word *nǐ* ("you") is 3rd tone, and the word *hǎo* is also 3rd tone. However, when combined to form the phrase *Ní hǎo.* ("Hello."), the first 3rd tone becomes a 2nd tone.

In the case of *Qǐng gěi wǒ!* there are three consecutive 3rd tones! While there are exceptions to this rule and linguists may take issue with this, the following rule for encountering three or more consecutive 3rd tones should suffice.

When there are three or more consecutive 3rd tones, change each 3rd tone preceding the last one to a 2nd tone.

The phrase *Qǐng gěi wǒ* ("Please give me") is pronounced *Qíng géi wǒ.* ("Please give me"), with the first two 3rd tones changing to 2nd tones.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

An extremely useful tactic for conveying what you want to a vender is using body language to identify the item you want while saying, *Qǐng gěi wǒ.* This should be more than enough to clearly convey your intention.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #4 Basic Greetings

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

4

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 你好。
2. 早安。
3. 你好嗎？

PINYIN

1. Nǐ hǎo.
2. Zǎo ān.
3. Nǐ hǎo ma?

ENGLISH

1. Hello.
2. Good morning.
3. How are you?

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
你	你	nǐ	you (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun

你好嗎?	你好嗎?	nǐ hǎo ma?	hello, how are you? (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
好	好	hǎo	okay, fine (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
早安。	早安。	Zǎo ān.	Good morning. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

是你嗎? Shì nǐ ma? Is it you?	Frank, 你好嗎? Frank, nǐ hǎo ma? How are you, Frank?
這樣不行。 Zhèyàng bù xíng. This way is no good.	早安，先生。 Zǎo ān, Xiānshēng. Good morning, Sir.

GRAMMAR

In Chinese, there are several basic greetings with usage dependent on the time of day. However, there is one universal phrase that can be used regardless of the time of day and is more than appropriate for any social situation you may find yourself in. This universal phrase is *Nǐ hǎo ma?* ("How are you?") The components of this phrase are *nǐ* ("you"), *hǎo* ("good"), and *ma* (a question-marker indicating that the sentence is a question), and this phrase literally means "You good?" The *ma* is sometimes omitted resulting in the greeting *Nǐ hǎo* ("Hello.")

The first two words in this sentence are 3rd tone, the rising-falling tone. When there are two consecutive 3rd tones, the first 3rd tone changes to the 2nd tone, the rising tone, while the second 3rd tone remains 3rd tone. The word *nǐ* ("you") is 3rd tone, and the word *hǎo* is also 3rd tone. However, when combined to form the phrase *Nǐ hǎo*. ("Hello.") The first 3rd tone becomes a 2nd tone, *Nǐ hǎo*.

To increase the politeness level of this statement for instances when you want to show the utmost respect, simply replace *nǐ* ("you") with its formal counterpart *nín* ("you," formal). *Nín hǎo ma?* ("How are you?" [formal.]) This simple substitution increases the formality and politeness level of the sentence.

In Chinese, the phrase *Zǎo ān*. ("Good morning.") is used in the morning. Literally this phrase means "Morning peaceful," and is translated as "Good morning". The components of this phrase are *zǎo* ("morning") and *ān* ("peaceful"). Together, *zǎo* means "morning," and this is followed by "peaceful" (*ān*.)

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

In formal settings, the handshake is a common form of greeting among most Taiwanese. Usually, Taiwanese people just greet with a smile and a nod of the head.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #5 Goodbye

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

5

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 再見。
2. 明天見。
3. 晚安。

PINYIN

1. Zài jiàn.
2. Míngtiān jiàn.
3. Wǎn ān.

ENGLISH

1. See you (later).
2. See you tomorrow.
3. Good night.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
再	zài	again (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb

明天見	míngtiān jiàn	see you tomorrow (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
明天	míngtiān	tomorrow (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
再見	zàijiàn	see you again (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
晚安	wǎn'ān	good evening, good night (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>再做一遍吧。</p> <p>Zài zuò yí biàn ba.</p> <p>Do it again.</p>	<p>我們明天見。</p> <p>Wǒmen míngtiān jiàn.</p> <p>We'll see each other tomorrow.</p>
<p>明天我去公園。</p> <p>Míngtiān wǒ qù gōngyuán.</p> <p>Tomorrow, I'm going to the park.</p>	<p>謝謝，再見！</p> <p>Xièxie, zàijiàn!</p> <p>Thanks. Bye!</p>
<p>我先走。 晚安！</p> <p>Wǒ xiān zǒu. Wǎn'ān!</p> <p>I'll go now. Good night!</p>	

GRAMMAR

In Chinese, there are several parting greetings; however, there is one universal phrase

that can be used for almost every situation. This universal phrase is *Zài jiàn* ("See you again.") Literally this phrase means, "Again meet." The components that make up this phrase are *zài* ("again") *jiàn* ("meet"), and both tones of the words in this sentence are 4th tone, the falling tone. The word *jiàn* ("meet") appears in multiple parting greetings. For example, there is the parting phrase *Míngtiān jiàn*. ("See you tomorrow.") In this phrase, the word *zài* ("again") is replaced with *míngtiān* ("tomorrow"), forming the phrase, "See you tomorrow." *Jiàn* ("to meet") doesn't change, and can be used as the basis for forming other parting phrases. For example, if you are meeting your friend at four o'clock, you can say, *Sì-diǎn jiàn*. ("See you at four o'clock.") In short, when used in a parting phrase, *jiàn* ("meet") means "See you," but in Chinese this cannot stand alone. In order to complete the phrase, one must specify time when they will see each other again. If there is a specific time or a general idea of when the two parties will meet next, that time can be used and precedes *jiàn* ("meet.")

Specific time (4:30): *Sì-diǎn jiàn*. ("See you at four-thirty.")

General time (tomorrow): *Míngtiān jiàn*. ("See you tomorrow.")

If the time of the next meeting is not known, *zài jiàn* ("See you again.") can be used. In English, the position of the first part of the phrase, "See you," is fixed, while what follows changes: "See you tomorrow." "See you tonight." "See you at 2." This is the opposite in Chinese, as the first part of the phrase changes, while the latter part, *jiàn*, is fixed.

In Chinese *Wan an*. ("Good night!") is used as a final parting phrase at night or before going to bed. The words for "evening" (*wan*) and "peaceful" (*an*) are paired, meaning "peaceful night." This is a common greeting before turning in for the night.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

When saying goodbye, it would not be unusual for the host of a dinner, or get-together, to make time to see you off. In fact, it would not be surprising if this includes watching you ride off into the night, sunset, or any other applicable place one drives off into! In fact, Chinese etiquette dictates that it is the host's duty to accompany each guest to the door at the end of the festivities.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #6 Where is the Bathroom?

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

6

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 洗手間在哪裡?
2. 洗手間在哪裡啊?

PINYIN

1. xǐ shǒu jiān zài nǎ lǐ?
2. xǐ shǒu jiān zài nǎ lǐ ā?

ENGLISH

1. Where is the bathroom?
2. Where is the bathroom?

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
洗手間	xǐshǒujiān	bathroom (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
銀行	yínháng	bank (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
在	zài	at (Taiwanese Mandarin)	preposition

哪裡	nǎ lǐ	where (Taiwanese Mandarin)	question pronoun
----	-------	----------------------------	------------------

SAMPLE SENTENCES

洗手間在那裡。 Xǐshǒujiān zài nà lǐ。 The washroom is there.	你可以到銀行去轉帳。 Nǐ kěyǐ dào yínháng qù zhuǎnzhàng。 You can go to the bank to transfer funds.
他在後面。 Tā zài hòumiàn。 He is in the back.	您住在哪裡？ Nín zhù zài nǎ lǐ? Where are you staying?

GRAMMAR

In Chinese, you can ask for the location of the bathroom with the following phrase *Xǐshǒujiān zài nǎ lǐ?* ("Where is the bathroom?") Literally this phrase means "Bathroom is where?," with the components of the sentence being *xǐshǒujiān* ("bathroom") *zài* ("exists") *nǎ lǐ* ("where"). As *nǎ lǐ* is an interrogative, the question-marker *ma* is not needed.

The first two tones of *xǐshǒu* are 3rd tones, the rising falling tone. When there are two consecutive 3rd tones, the first 3rd tone changes to the 2nd tone, the rising tone, while the second 3rd tone remains 3rd tone. Therefore, *xǐshǒu* is pronounced *xíshǒu*: 2nd tone, 3rd tone.

The following is the basic pattern for asking where something can be found (exists or is):

(something) *zài nǎ lǐ?* ["Where is (something)?"]

For example, when asking about the location of a bank (*yínháng*), the word for "bank" (*yínháng*) would be placed at the beginning of the sentence:

Yínháng zài nǎ lǐ? ["Where is the bank?"]

Notice how the latter parts of the sentence, *zài nǎ lǐ*, do not change.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

The sanitary standards of certain bathrooms in Taiwan may be considered shocking by tourists from developed countries. So be sure to carry tissues and especially wet tissues wherever you go. You can pick some up at most convenience stores. The condition is usually good in the cities, but it could be not so sanitary, especially in busy tourist sites.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #7 I Don't Understand

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

#7

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 我不懂。
2. 不好意思。
3. 我不會說中文。

PINYIN

1. Wǒ bù dǒng.
2. Bù hǎo yìsi.
3. Wǒ bù huì shuō zhōngwén.

ENGLISH

1. I don't understand.
2. I'm sorry. I feel bad.
3. I can't speak Chinese.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
-------------	--------	---------	-------

說	huà	to speak (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
我不會說中文。	Wǒ bù huì shuō zhōngwén.	I can't speak Chinese. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
中文	Zhōngwén	Chinese language (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
我不懂。	Wǒ bù dǒng.	I don't understand. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
不好意思。	Bùhǎo yìsi.	I'm sorry. I feel bad. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>南方人的普通話不太標準。</p> <p>Nánfāng rén de pǔtōnghuà bù tài biāozhǔn.</p> <p>The mandarin of Southerners is not terribly standard.</p>	<p>我不學中文。</p> <p>Wǒ bù xué Zhōngwén.</p> <p>I don't study Chinese.</p>
<p>我不懂你的意思。</p> <p>Wǒ bù dǒng nǐ de yìsi.</p> <p>I don't get your meaning.</p>	<p>不好意思，可以幫我們照張相嗎？</p> <p>Bù hǎo yì sī , kě yǐ bāng wǒ men zhào zhāng xiàng ma?</p> <p>Excuse me; can you take a photo for us?</p>

GRAMMAR

"I don't understand" is going to be a very useful phrase because most of the time, maybe even almost 100% of the time, you won't understand. The Chinese language sounds very different from English and, in the beginning, it will be very difficult to get your ear used to it. Michael himself spent a good month or two in China before he could really understand what the locals were saying. But don't worry. If you keep it up, you'll get it. Until then, practice the phrase *Wǒ bù dǒng*. ("I don't understand.")

The first two parts of this phrase are words you have seen before: *wǒ* ("I") and *bù* ("no.") The verb in this phrase is *dǒng*, which means "to understand." The phrase is literally "I no understand." ("I don't understand.")

Most people don't speak in isolated, four syllable phrases. In the lesson, we asked you to try to add *Bù hǎo yìsī*. ("I'm sorry" or "I feel bad") onto the beginning of *Wǒ bù dǒng*. This will make you sound more fluid and also more polite. (It is nice when a foreigner comes to your country and apologizes for not speaking your language.) Literally, *Bù hǎo yìsī* means "no good meaning." As was mentioned in a previous lesson, *Bù hǎo yìsī* is used as an apology or to say excuse me. Together, these two phrases become: "I'm sorry. I don't understand."

Wǒ bù huì shuō zhōngwén. means "I don't speak Chinese." *Huì* is a verb that indicates the ability to do something. (*Huì* also has other meanings, but we will try not to confuse you.) Generally *huì* refers to having knowledge or a certain skill. It is not used when the ability to do something is based on physical ability (for example, a task that requires a certain amount of physical strength.) You can place *huì* before another verb to say that you (or another subject) have the ability to do the second verb. In this phrase, the second verb is *shuō*. *Shuō* means "to say" or "to speak". *Huì shuō* means "to be able to speak". In this sentence, we combine the noun *zhōngwén* with the verb *shuō*. *Zhōngwén* means "Chinese." Literally, this noun can be broken into two pieces: *zhōng* and *wén*. *Zhōng* means "middle." In ancient times, the Chinese believed their land was the center of the world, thus the Chinese word for China is *Zhōngguó* ("middle kingdom.") In Chinese, the character *zhōng* is used to indicate all things Chinese. *Wén* means "language, literature, or culture." Put together, *Zhōngwén* literally means "middle language" or the language of the middle kingdom. Thus we get the word *Zhōngwén*, which means "the Chinese language." *Zhōngwén* can be attached onto the end of the verb *shuō* ("to speak") to make the compound verb phrase "to speak Chinese." Notice that this is just like English. You just add the word for a certain language after the verb "to speak." This can be done in exactly the same way for any language you want. (For example, "English", which is *yīngwén*, can be added onto the end of *shuō* for the verb phrase *shuō yīngwén* ["to speak English."]) Adding *huì*, the phrase is *huì shuō zhōngwén* ("to be able to speak Chinese.")

We negate this phrase by adding the word *bù* ("no") onto the beginning. (This is the same

way we negate all verbs in the present tense except for one. More about that in a later lesson.) It is important that you pay attention to the way *bù* is pronounced. Normally, *bù* is the fourth tone, the falling tone, but when it is put in front of another fourth tone (here *huì*) *bù* becomes *bú*, the second tone, the rising tone. The phrase then is *bú huì shuō zhōngwén* ("not able to speak Chinese.") Now we just add *wǒ* ("I") onto the beginning (the subject comes first, just like in English) and you are all set. *Wǒ bù huì shuō zhōngwén.* ("I can't speak Chinese.")

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip #1

In Taiwan, besides Mandarin, people also speak a southern Chinese dialogue, Taiwanese. It's a dialogue spoken in Fujian and Taiwan. It's called *Táiwān huà* ("Taiwanese") or *Mǐn nán yǔ* ("Southern Fujian Dialogue.") Though it's more common to hear people speak it in southern Taiwan, you hear it more often from elderly people. The younger generation mostly speaks Mandarin as their first language and Taiwanese as a second, or they don't speak it at all. It would be fun for you to learn one or two phrases in Taiwanese while visiting Taiwan.

Quick Tip #2

Watch out, there are many different ways of saying the word "Chinese" (as in the language). In addition to *zhōngwén*, two common forms are *Hànyǔ* and *Guóyǔ*, but there are others out there and they can be different for different regions. So stay on your toes.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #8 Can You Speak English?

CONTENTS

- 2 Simplified Chinese
- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 2 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

8

SIMPLIFIED CHINESE

1. 你會說英文嗎？

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 你會說英文嗎？

PINYIN

1. Nǐ huì shuō yīng wén ma?

ENGLISH

1. Can you speak English?

VOCABULARY

Simplified	Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
你	你	nǐ	you (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
	說	shuō	to speak (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
	你會說英文嗎？	Nǐ huì shuō yīng wén ma?	Can you speak English? (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>是你嗎?</p> <p>Shì nǐ ma?</p> <p>Is it you?</p>	<p>南方人的普通話不太標準。</p> <p>Nánfāng rén de pǔtōnghuà bù tài biāozhǔn.</p> <p>The mandarin of Southerners is not terribly standard.</p>
---	---

GRAMMAR

This lesson covers an important phrase that will prove useful when searching for someone who can speak English, or another language. Using this phrase as opposed to speaking English at someone is important for many reasons. For one, if the party you're speaking to doesn't understand English, at least they'll be able to understand what you're asking. Furthermore, if they cannot speak English, they may be able to help you find someone who does. And finally, it shows a lot of respect to show that you took the effort to learn even a little bit of the language, and for these reasons, and many more, we're going to cover this phrase.

In Chinese, the following phrase is used to ask if the listening party can speak English: *Nǐ huì shuō yīng wén ma*. ("Can you speak English?") Looking at this question by component, *nǐ*, the pronoun for "you", is the first word in the sentence. This is followed by the auxiliary verb *huì* ("can") and the verb *shuō* ("to speak.") In our example this is followed by *yīngyǔ* ("English.") *Nǐ huì shuō yīng wén* literally means "You can speak English." This is a statement, and can be used accordingly. However, if we attach the question-marker *ma*, this statement becomes a question. This is illustrated in the following example:

Nǐ huì shuō yīng wén. - "You can speak English."

Nǐ huì shuō yīng wén ma? - "Can you speak English?"

To ask someone if they can speak a different language, simply replace *yīngyǔ* with the Chinese word for the language you want to ask about. For example, if you would like to ask, "Can you speak French?"

Nǐ huì shuō fǎ wén ma? ("Can you speak French?")

Notice the common word, *wén* ("language,") shared by both Chinese words for French and English. In fact, the *wén* ("language") will appear as part of the word for any language. For example, "English" is *yīng wén*, "French" is *fǎ wén*, and "Chinese" can be *Zhōng wén*.

The following is an excerpt from a previous lesson on the verb *huì* ("to be able.") *Huì* is a verb that indicates the ability to do something. (*Huì* also has other meanings, but we will try not to confuse you.) Generally, *huì* refers to having knowledge or a certain skill. It is not used when the ability to do something is based on physical ability (for example, a task that requires a certain amount of physical strength.) You can place *huì* before another verb to say that you (or another subject) have the ability to do the second verb. In this phrase, the second verb is *shuō*. *Shuō* means "to say" or "to speak." *Huì shuō* means "to be able to speak." In this sentence we combine the noun *yīngyǔ* with the verb *shuō*. *Yīng wén* means "English." Literally, this noun can be broken into two pieces: *Yīng* and *wén*. *Yīng* means "English." *Wén* means "language, words, or article." Put together, *yīng wén* literally means "English language," or "the language of the middle kingdom." Thus we get the word *Zhōngwén*, which means "the Chinese language." *Zhōngwén* can be attached onto the end of the verb *shuō* ("to speak") to make the compound verb phrase "to speak Chinese."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip #1

Other languages:

"Japanese" - *Rìyǔ* (日語)

"German" - *Déyǔ* (德語)

"Korean" - *Hányǔ* (韓語)

"Italian" - *Yìdàlìyǔ* (義大利語)

"Spanish" - *Xībānyáyǔ* (西班牙語)

"Arabic" - *Ālābóyǔ* (阿拉伯語)

"Russian" - *Ēluósīyǔ* (俄羅斯語)

"Hindi" - *Yìndùyǔ* (印度語)

Quick Tip #2

In Chinese, there are usually two ways to refer to a language. For example, *Yīngyǔ* ("English") and *Yīngwén* ("English.") The pattern including *yǔ* ("to speak") is commonly used when referring to the spoken language; whereas, *wén* ("language," "literature," or "culture") can be used to refer to spoken and written language. However, they are often used interchangeably.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #9 Please Say it Once Again

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

#9

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 請再說一遍。
2. 請慢一點。

PINYIN

1. Qǐng zài shuō yībiàn.
2. Qǐng màn yīdiǎn.

ENGLISH

1. Please say it again.
2. A little slower please.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
再	zài	again (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
請再說一遍。	qǐng zài shuō yī biàn	Please say it again. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
說	huà	to speak (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb

慢	màn	slowly, slow (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
請慢一點。	qǐng màn yīdiǎn	Slowly, please. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>再做一遍吧。</p> <p>Zài zuò yí biàn ba.</p> <p>Do it again.</p>	<p>不好意思，請再說一遍，好嗎？</p> <p>Bùhǎoyìsi, qǐng zài shuō yí biàn, hǎo ma?</p> <p>Excuse me. Please say that again, okay?</p>
<p>南方人的普通話不太標準。</p> <p>Nánfāng rén de pǔtōnghuà bù tài biāozhǔn.</p> <p>The mandarin of Southerners is not terribly standard.</p>	<p>你可以說慢一點嗎？</p> <p>Nǐ kěyǐ shuō màn yīdiǎn ma?</p> <p>Can you speak a little slower?</p>
<p>我聽不懂，請說慢一點。</p> <p>wǒ tīngbùdǒng, qǐng shuō màn yīdiǎn.</p> <p>I don't understand. Please speak more slowly.</p>	

GRAMMAR

Language Tip

We believe that there is a tremendous amount of Chinese you can learn from speakers of the language wherever you are located geographically. Therefore, we do our best to provide you with the tools to allow you to turn everyday encounters into a learning opportunity. This lesson is one of the first steps in that process.

In Chinese, the following phrase is used to ask the speaking party to repeat what was said: *Qǐng zài shuō yībiàn*. ("Please say it again.") Chinese people speak fast. They use words you haven't studied before. They don't necessarily use the simplest grammar. All this can make interactions with Chinese people very frustrating for the beginner. The best thing is to remember to be patient. Every time you talk to a Chinese person you are improving. If you're not actually learning things that you can write down later, at least you're getting your brain accustomed to how Chinese people speak; you are working on one of the most important parts of any language: an unconscious feeling for that language. So be patient, and when you don't understand, say *Qǐng zài shuō yībiàn*.

Looking at this question by component, *qǐng* means "please." It can be used almost exactly as the English "please", except that it always comes at the beginning of the sentence. (Unlike in English, where you can add "please" onto the end of a request.) *Qǐng* must be either the first word in a sentence or directly follow the subject of the sentence. In this phrase, there is no subject (the subject, "you," is implied) so *qǐng* is the first word.

The next word, *zài* means "again." *Zài* is always placed before the verb in a sentence. The verb in this phrase is *shuō* which means "to say." So far our phrase is: *Qǐng zài shuō*. This means "Please say again." You could get by just saying this; however, Chinese people almost always add *yībiàn*. *Yī* means "one," and *biàn* is a measure word for a number of times. We will cover the way measure words are used in another lesson. For now, it's just fine to remember *biàn* is translated as "time(s)." Thus *yībiàn* is "one time." Added onto the end of the phrase, the whole phrase becomes *Qǐng zài shuō yībiàn*. ("Please say again one more time.") In English, we would want to add the object "it" into this sentence to make it "Please say it again one more time.", but in Chinese this object is unnecessary and actually would hurt the flow of the sentence. Objects and subjects in Chinese are often left out when their meaning can be inferred from context. So, again, the whole phrase is *Qǐng zài shuō yībiàn*. This is translated as "Please say it again one more time."

Unfortunately, getting someone to repeat themselves doesn't guarantee you'll understand them the second time. (Or the third, or fourth time, for that matter. Did we mention how it's important to be patient?) One key to understanding people is getting them to speak slower. *Qǐng shuō màn yīdiǎn* means "A little slower, please." *Qǐng*, again, means "please." *Màn* means "slow." *Yīdiǎn* means "a little." Literally, the phrase would be "Please a little slow." and this is kind of what it means. *Màn yīdiǎn* does mean "a little slow," but often *yīdiǎn* attached to an adjective implies the meaning "more" of a certain adjective. Thus here *màn yīdiǎn* means "a little slower." If someone were to say they wish they were *gāo yīdiǎn*, they are not saying they wish they were "a little tall" (the speaker could already be very tall,) they are saying they wish they were "a little taller." (*Gāo* means "tall" or "high.") Now we can understand how our phrase, *Qǐng shuō màn yīdiǎn*, comes to mean "A little slower, please."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

In Chinese, there are two ways of saying "again." *Zài* means "again," but it refers to events that are going to happen in the future. Thus in our phrase we used *zài*. The person you are talking to is going to repeat themselves after you ask. Events that have happened again in the past are given the word *yòu*. *Yòu* also means "again," but it is only for the past. *Yòu shuō le yībiàn* means "(He/she/you) said it again." Notice how this sentence is in the past tense.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #10 Apologies

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

10

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 對不起。
2. 不好意思。
3. 沒問題。

PINYIN

1. Duì bùqǐ.
2. Bùhǎo yìsī.
3. Méi wèntí.

ENGLISH

1. I am sorry.
2. I am sorry. (Literally, to feel embarrassed.)
3. No problem.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
-------------	--------	---------	-------

不	bú	negative prefix (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
對不起	Duìbùqǐ.	I'm sorry (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
好	hǎo	okay, fine (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
不好意思。	Bùhǎo yìsi.	I'm sorry. I feel bad. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
沒問題。	Méi wèntí.	no problems, ok (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>我不認識他。 Wǒ bú rènshí tā.</p> <p>I don't know him.</p>	<p>對不起，我很忙。 Duìbùqǐ, wǒ hěn máng.</p> <p>Sorry, I'm very busy.</p>
<p>這樣不行。 Zhèyàng bù xíng.</p> <p>This way is no good.</p>	<p>不好意思，可以幫我們照張相嗎？ Bù hǎo yì sī , kě yǐ bāng wǒ men zhào zhāng xiàng ma?</p> <p>Excuse me; can you take a photo for us?</p>
<p>你放心，沒問題。 Nǐ fàngxīn, méi wèntí.</p> <p>You should relax. No problem.</p>	

GRAMMAR

Many foreigners coming to Taiwan speak no Chinese at all. (Well, besides a garbled *Nǐ hǎo ma?*)

Chinese people have come to expect this from foreigners on the street. Most Chinese people will not say anything to you if they are trying to get past you or would like you to move out of the way. Some wave their hands to indicate they'd like you to move, some lower their head and just try to push through. Some Chinese people will even say "I'm sorry." or "Excuse me." in English when squeezing past you on a crowded bus. This lesson is your chance to shock complete strangers. Saying "Sorry." or "Excuse me." in Chinese (*Duì bùqǐ.* or *Bùhǎo yìsī.*) will make people do a double-take as you pass. Saying *Méi wèn tí.* ("No problem.") in response to their English "I'm sorry." will make their eyes go wide. It may even elicit a stunned "Your Chinese is really good." To which you can respond with the *Xièxiè.* we have already learned. Other people don't have to know that you've just started learning. (Chinese people in general have very low expectations of foreigners' Chinese levels, especially when they are taken by surprise in public. Often a couple words in understandable Chinese are enough to get a "Your Chinese is very good.") *Duì bùqǐ.* means "I'm sorry." or "Excuse me." *Bùhǎo yìsī.* can be broken into three separate words: *bù* ("no") *hǎo* ("good") *yìsī* ("meaning.") Altogether, this would be "No good meaning." *Bùhǎo yìsī.* actually means something more like "I feel bad." and can also be used as "I'm sorry." or "Excuse me." Teaching a language, we feel that we have a responsibility to give you ways to distinguish between words that have very similar meanings. In the lesson, we tried to do this. The truth is, the difference is miniscule. If you want to, you can use the two words interchangeably. If you must distinguish between them, the difference is that *Duì bùqǐ.* is more often used as an apology, whereas *Bùhǎo yìsī.* more often is used the way English speakers use "Excuse me." However, just like in English where "I'm sorry." and "Excuse me." can often be used in the same situations, *Bùhǎo yìsī.* and *Duì bùqǐ.* can always be switched out for one another. Let's look at some examples: You're riding the subway. You can't remember the name of the station that you're supposed to get off at. You pull out your little notebook where you've written down the name of the station. While you're still flipping through your book, the subway pulls into the next station and the brakes come on. The sudden decrease in speed causes you to lose your balance a little. You take a couple steps to your right, trying to regain your balance, but your foot lands squarely on the leather shoe of a man sitting in the seats in front of you. He looks up at you surprised, sees you're a foreigner, and immediately gives up any hope of communication. In this case, both forms are equally acceptable. For many people *Duì bùqǐ.* might be more natural because it is used a little more often as an apology, but *Bùhǎo yìsī.* would also be totally fine. Both will probably increase the man's surprise. Most likely, he will say nothing and just wave his hand, indicating that it's no problem. Don't feel too bad if he then brushes off his shoe, it's probably been stepped on at least once today. Now, let's take the same situation, in the subway, trying to figure out where to get off, and say you want to ask the person next to you what the next stop is. (We'll have to leave the

actual question "What's the next stop?" to a later lesson.) You gently tap the woman next to you on the shoulder. Here many people would say *Bùhǎo yìsī*. because it is probably closer to "Excuse me." It means you feel bad for disturbing the other person. However, *Duì bùqǐ*. would also be perfectly fine. It would be like saying "Sorry, but..." Hopefully, these two examples help demonstrate the difference between *Duì bùqǐ*. and *Bùhǎo yìsī*. Most importantly, they should show just how small this difference is. So how do you respond when someone says to you "I'm sorry." Probably the most common response is a very casual *Méi wèntí*. This literally means "no problem." *Méi* means "no." (It indicates the absence of something, in this case the absence of a problem. The difference between *méi* and *bù* is very important, but we will have to save that for another lesson. For now, always translating "no" as *bù* unless given a specific example is a safe bet.) *Wèntí* means "problem" or "question." So, together we get "no problem." Using *Méi wèntí*. is a snap. Just drop it whenever someone says *Duì bùqǐ*. or *Bùhǎo yìsī*. It's bound to get a good reaction. *Méi wèntí*. can also be used in the other way that the English "No problem." is used. It can be used to mean "Okay." If someone asks you to do something, or if you want to do something, you can respond *Méi wèntí*. "No problem."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

Another way to respond to *Bùhǎo yìsī*. or *Duì bùqǐ*. is *Méi shì*. *Méi* means "no," and *shì* can mean "business," "affair," "matter," or "trouble." So *Méi shì*. can be translated as "No trouble." *Méi shì*. can be used just the same as *Méi wèntí*. and is probably equally common. *Méi shì*. also has one advantage over *Méi shì*.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #11 Counting One to Ten

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

11

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

- 一, 二, 三, 四, 五, 六, 七, 八, 九, 十

PINYIN

- Yī, èr, sān, sì, wǔ, liù, qī, bā, jiǔ, shí

ENGLISH

- One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
零	líng	zero (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
十	shí	ten (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
九	jiǔ	nine (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
三	sān	three (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
七	qī	seven (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
一	yī	one (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number

二	èr	two (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
四	sì	four (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
五	wǔ	five (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
六	liù	six (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
八	bā	eight (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>你有零錢嗎？ nǐ yǒu língqián ma?</p> <p>Do you have any change?</p>	<p>現在十點鐘。 Xiànzài shí diǎn zhōng.</p> <p>It's ten o'clock now.</p>
<p>他爸爸一九八九年來美國。 Tā bàba yī jiǔ bā jiǔ nián lái Měiguó.</p> <p>His dad came to America in 1989.</p>	<p>他有三個孩子。 Tā yǒu sān ge hái zi.</p> <p>He has three children.</p>
<p>我們的公司有七個人。 Wǒmen de gōngsī yǒu qī gè rén.</p> <p>There are seven people in our company.</p>	<p>他給我一本書。 Tā gěi wǒ yī běn shū.</p> <p>He gave me a book.</p>
<p>我家在二樓。 Wǒ jiā zài èr lóu.</p> <p>My home is on the second floor.</p>	<p>我今年四十歲。 Wǒ jīnnián sìshí suì.</p> <p>I'm 40 years old this year.</p>

給我五塊錢就好。

Gěi wǒ wǔ kuài jiù hǎo.

Give me five TWD, that's fine.

我女兒六歲。

Wǒ nǚ'ér liù suì.

My daughter is six years old.

他住在八樓。

Tā zhùzài bā lóu.

He lives on the eighth floor.

GRAMMAR

What is there to say about the numbers? Practice them, memorize them, use them. The Chinese number system is generally very straightforward. You may find that the biggest problem you have with it is memorizing the new symbols for the numbers. The Chinese do have their own characters for the numbers, and they do use them. Numbers in Chinese characters pop up everywhere. When shopping, you will notice all prices are written in Arabic numerals, the prices in the grocery store will certainly be in Arabic numerals, even hand-written price tags are often written in Arabic numerals. Arabic numerals are widely used in Taiwan. You may see some Chinese numbers on street names which always come with English/Pinyin translation. You will see Chinese numbers on posters, advertisements, and signs all over the place. It's not too hard to learn these characters, and, because of the way the Chinese number system works, once you learn one through ten you will be able to read just about any number.

The Chinese numbers from 10 to 99 follow a very simple and predictable pattern: to say a multiple of ten you just say a number followed by ten. Thus 20 is *èrshí*, 30 is *sānshí*, 40 is *sìshí*, and so on. To add numbers to the ones column, just put a number after the multiple of ten you have just created. To say 41 you say *sìshíyī*. 52 is *wǔshíèr*. 63 is *liùshísān*. You get the idea.

There is one other tricky part of the basic Chinese number system: two. There are two words for the number two in Chinese. We can call the first version the counting two, or the numerical two. This version, pronounced *èr*, is used when you are counting (if you were counting the number of kids in a class, you would say: *yī, èr, sān, sì...*) or when you are saying numbers like 20 or 42 (20 is *èrshí* and 42 is *sìshíèr*.) If you are using the number two to say that you have two of something, you must use the word *liǎng*. If you want to say there are two people, you say *liǎng ge rén*. (*Ge* is a measure word, and talk of measure words must still be saved till later. *Rén* means "person.") Two steamed pork

buns is *liǎng ge ròubàozi*. (*Ròubàozi* is "steamed pork bun".) Whenever you are talking about two of something, you use the word *liǎng*. Thus *liǎng* is actually used much more often than *èr*. Be very careful about this, it will sound incredibly silly if you ask for *èr ge ròubàozi*.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

Everyone knows how to use hand signals for the numbers one through five, but the Chinese, being the geniuses that they are (and we are not being sarcastic about this, the Chinese have come up with some really ingenious and simple things over the years) have hand signals that can be done on one hand for all the numbers one through ten. The hand signals imitate the shapes of the Chinese characters. It is a very good idea to learn these, not only because they're cool and convenient, but because many Chinese people will assume that everyone understands them. Often at a market a vendor will tell you a price and then signal it to you using hand signals. They might even repeat these signals if you look confused, because they assume these are universal ways of communicating numbers. Really, many Chinese are astonished to find that Westerners need to use two hands to communicate the number seven. (And they think we look quite silly holding up both our hands.)

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #12 Counting 10 to 100

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

12

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 三十

2. 十一

PINYIN

1. sānshí

2. shíyī

ENGLISH

1. Thirty

2. Eleven

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
發財	fācái	to get rich (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
點	diǎn	point, dot (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
三十	sānshí	thirty (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number

十一	shì yī	eleven (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
----	--------	-----------------------------	--------

SAMPLE SENTENCES

恭喜發財! Gōngxǐfācái! Wishing you riches! (New Year's greeting)	下午4點。 Xiàwǔ sì diǎn. Four o'clock in the afternoon.
三十塊錢不多。 Sānshí kuài qián bù duō. 30 kuai is not much.	十一塊錢怎麼樣? Shì yī kuài qián zěnmeyàng? How about 11 TWD?

GRAMMAR

The numbers from ten to one hundred follow a very simple system, which we went over briefly in a previous lesson. This lesson is more of a review than anything else. We thought it might help you to hear a lot of the numbers spoken, just so you can get used to them. Let's start out with a list of the numbers ten through ninety, going by tens:

Number / Chinese

"ten" / 十 (shí)

"twenty" / 二十 (èrshí)

"thirty" / 三十 (sānshí)

"forty" / 四十 (sìshí)

"fifty" / 五十 (wǔshí)

"sixty" / 六十 (liùshí)

"seventy" / 七十 (qīshí)

"eighty" / 八十 (bāshí)

"ninety" / 九十 (jiǔshí)

As you can see, making these numbers is simply a matter of designating a number of tens. To say "twenty," you just say 二十 (èrshí,) or "two tens." To say "fifty," you just say 五十 (wǔshí,) or "five tens."

To add ones to one of the numbers we listed above, you just have to say the number of ones after the number of tens. "Eleven" is thus 十一 (shíyī,) or "ten one." A number like "forty-three" is 四十三 (sìshísān,) or "four tens three." There's nothing tricky about this system, no kinks, and no exceptions. (Though it makes us kind of worried to say something absolute like that. If you come across something troubling, please let us know; leave a comment on the site.)

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip #1

What about numbers between zero and one? In Chinese, we vocalize the decimal point by using the word 點 (diǎn.) This word literally means "dot" or "point." Saying numbers after the decimal point in Chinese is much like it is in English; you just list the numbers. Thus, "10.25" would be 十點二五 (shí diǎn èr wǔ) "ten point two five." And "6.27" is 六點二七 (liù diǎn èr qī) "six point two seven." And "3.14159" is 三點一四一五九 (sān diǎn yī sì yī wǔ jiǔ...). If there is no number in the ones column, you must say 零 (líng) "zero" before you say 點 (diǎn). It is not like English, where you can say "point two" for "0.2." In Chinese, "0.2" is 零點二 (líng diǎn èr) "zero point two; "0.125" is (líng diǎn yīèrwǔ.)

Quick Tip #2

Different cultures have different lucky numbers. For Chinese, of course, has its own, and the reasons are based on the language. The most basic lucky and unlucky numbers are eight and four. "Eight," as we've said before, is 八 (bā) in Chinese. This is a lucky number because it sounds somewhat similar to 發 (fā). 發 (fā) means "to send out" or "to come out" (among many other things.) This character is part of the word 發財 (fācái) "to get rich." We use 發財 (fācái) in all sorts of traditional good wishes and congratulations. Thus 發 (fā) has taken on this aura of good luck, which it then transfers to 八 (bā,) the number that sounds kind of like it. The unluckiness of four is a lot more straightforward. "Four" in Chinese is 四 (sì.) "To die" in Chinese is 死 (sǐ.) Can you figure out why four

might be unlucky? Superstitions and references to these numbers come up all the time in Taiwan; in some buildings, there is no 4th floor. They just skip 4 and jump to 5.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #13 How Much?

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

13

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 多少錢?
2. 這個多少錢?
3. 那個多少錢?

PINYIN

1. Duōshǎo qián?
2. Zhège duōshǎo qián?
3. Nàge duōshǎo qián?

ENGLISH

1. How much?
2. How much does this cost?
3. How much does that cost?

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
-------------	--------	---------	-------

多	duō	many, much (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adjective
那個	nàgè	that (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
多少錢	duōshǎo qián	how much (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence
兩	liǎng	two (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
二	èr	two (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>今天我們有很多工作要做。</p> <p>Jīntiān wǒmen yǒu hěn duō gōngzuò yào zuò.</p> <p>We have a lot of work to do today.</p>	<p>我想問一下，那個人是誰？</p> <p>Wǒ xiǎng wèn yíxià, nàgè rén shì shéi?</p> <p>I want to ask, who is that?</p>
<p>這個多少錢？</p> <p>Zhège duōshǎo qián?</p> <p>How much is this one?</p>	<p>上個星期，我去做了兩次按摩。</p> <p>Shàng gè xīngqī, wǒ qù zuò le liǎng cì ànmó.</p> <p>Last week, I went to get a massage twice.</p>
<p>我家在二樓。</p> <p>Wǒ jiā zài èrlóu.</p> <p>My home is on the second floor.</p>	

GRAMMAR

Taiwan is abounding with all types of goods and products. It is not a question of whether you will find something you like, but rather a question of how long will it take. When you finally find something that you like, the next step will be to find out how much it costs. In Taiwan, there are many shops, stores, street vendors, and merchants, and while the number of department stores is increasing, a tremendous amount of business is done by these small dealers who rarely tag the items they are selling with the price. Therefore, asking the price is a crucial step in shopping in Taiwan.

In Chinese, the phrase used for asking the price is *Duōshǎo qián?* ("How much (money)?") The phrase literally means "A lot, or a little money?" Looking at the components of the sentence, *duō* means "many". *Shǎo* means "few", and *qián* is a noun meaning "money." Therefore, we have "Many, few money?" or "A lot, or a little money?" Almost as if the question is "Will it cost a lot or will it cost a little (money)?" Perhaps thinking of the phrase *Duōshǎo qián?* ("How much?") in this manner will help you to remember it.

For something located close by, you can refer to the thing with the word *zhège* ("this.") Therefore, to inquire about the price of something nearby *Zhège duōshǎo qián?* ("How much does this cost?") Notice here that the word *zhège* ("this") precedes the question *Duōshǎo qián?* ("How much?"). The placement of this at the beginning of the sentence differs from the English construction, in which this comes last.

The phrase *duō* ("much") + *shǎo* ("few") is used to refer to quantity and can mean how much or how many, as its English translation depends directly on the something being inquired about. In the phrase of this lesson, *Duōshǎo qián?* ("How much (money)?") the something is money, so the phrase is translated as "How much (money)?" *Duōshǎo* is used when talking about abstract figures, an irregular amount of something, or amounts exceeding approximately ten PCs. (for example, people, cars, money, and stars).

Qián is the word for "money"; however, yuan is the currency used in Taiwan. Furthermore, when referred to in spoken Chinese, yuan is referred to as *kuài*.

If you are buying something that costs money, let's say three yuan, that'll be *sān kuài* in Chinese. Answering the inquiry would go like this: *Sān kuài qián.* = "It costs three yuan". Like in many other languages, you do not need to utter the whole sentence with the verb and everything in it-giving the figures will suffice: *sān kuài* = "three."

Please pay attention to the word you used when talking about the number two: when talking about prices, use the word *liǎng*, not *èr*. *Èr* refers to numerals, not to a quantity of something.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

While the number of shops and stores that accept credit cards continues to increase, there are still many stores that do not accept credit cards as a form of payment. Therefore, be sure to carry cash when you go shopping.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #14 Lower the Price Please!

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

14

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 太貴了。
2. 便宜一點。

PINYIN

1. Tài guì le.
2. Píanyi yī diǎn.

ENGLISH

1. Too expensive.
2. A little cheaper, please.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
太	tài	alot (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
一點	yīdiǎnr	a little (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
太貴了。	tài guì le.	Too expensive. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

貴	guì	expensive (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adjective
便宜	piányi	cheap (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>二十五太貴了。 èrshí wǔ tài guì le.</p> <p>25 is too expensive.</p>	<p>你小心一點，別摔倒了。 Nǐ xiǎoxīn yīdiǎn, bié shuāidǎo le.</p> <p>Be a bit careful; don't fall down.</p>
<p>這本書太貴了。 zhè běn shū tài guì le.</p> <p>This book is too expensive.</p>	<p>東京的香瓜很貴。 Dōngjīng de xiāng guā hěn guì.</p> <p>Melons in Tokyo are very expensive.</p>
<p>今天超市裡的雞蛋很便宜。 jīntiān chāoshì lǐ de jīdàn hěn piányi.</p> <p>The eggs in the supermarket today are very cheap.</p>	

GRAMMAR

While shopping, when you find something that you like, the next step will be to find out how much it costs. In Chinese, the phrase used for asking the price is *Duōshǎo qián?* ("How much (money)?")

Haggling is not as common a practice as it has been in Taiwan before. However, when shopping at some tourist sites, you may still need it. There could be some overpriced goods for tourists, it happens for those without pricetags. So when you're at the market and talking prices, the phrase *Tài guì le.* ("It's too expensive.") should be an involuntary verbal reflex to a clerk's quote. Use this phrase wisely, especially when you are at a

popular tourist site. It's always wise to compare the prices between different vendors.

The literal meaning of the phrase *Tài gùì le*. ("It's too expensive.") is "too expensive", which conveys the obvious notion that you feel that "the price is too high." The tones for these characters are 4th tone, 4th tone and 1st tone respectively.

The second phrase ideal for haggling over the price is *Píányi yī diǎn*. ("A little cheaper (please).") Literally, this phrase is "cheap a little." *Píányi* means "cheap," while *yī diǎn* means "a little." However, the nuance here is "a little cheaper (please)." This phrase is used frequently when haggling over the price.

Therefore, when shopping at a location without price tags, you start with *Duōshao qián?* ("How much is it?") Then use your judgement wisely to determine if it's necessary to haggle.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

Try to get the person selling the goods to say a price. At some tourist sites, the right price for something is usually several times lower than your first quote. Try to avoid the "foreign" premium at all costs!

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #15 Please Pass The Chopsticks!

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

15

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 請給我那個。
2. 請給我筷子。
3. 請給我醬油。

PINYIN

1. Qǐng gěi wǒ nàge.
2. Qǐng gěi wǒ kuàizi.
3. Qǐng gěi wǒ jiàng yóu.

ENGLISH

1. Please give me that.
2. Please give me chopsticks.
3. Please give me soy sauce.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
我	wǒ	I, me (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun

請	qǐng	please (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
那個	nàgè	that (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
請給我那個。	qǐng gěi wǒ nà ge	Please pass me that. (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>我的朋友很帥。</p> <p>Wǒ de péngyǒu hěn shuài.</p> <p>My friend is really handsome.</p>	<p>請幫我拿一下這個。</p> <p>Qǐng bāng wǒ ná yíxià zhè gè.</p> <p>Please hold this for me for a moment.</p>
<p>我想問一下，那個人是誰？</p> <p>Wǒ xiǎng wèn yíxià, nàgè rén shì shéi?</p> <p>I want to ask, who is that?</p>	<p>請給我那個東西。</p> <p>qǐng gěi wǒ nà ge dōngxi</p> <p>Please pass me that thing.</p>

GRAMMAR

This lesson goes through navigating a crowded noodle shop, but really the phrase of this lesson can be used whenever you need someone to hand you something. The phrase is *Qǐng gěi wǒ nàgè*. It literally means "Please give me that." *Qǐng* means "please." *Gěi* is "to give." *Wǒ* means "I" or "me." *Nàgè* means "that." Really simple, really straightforward, right guys? The biggest problem with the phrase is the ubiquitous third tones. The first three characters are all third tones.

We here should own up to being bad about sticking to our own rule of thumb on changing third tones. Or rather, we should admit that we have used two competing rules. There was a turf war during the recording over which rule should be used. One rule of thumb says that third tones must always be broken up by a second tone. That would change the second third tone here (*gěi*) into a second tone. The other rule says that when addressing

a string of third tones, all but the last third tone become second tones. In actuality, neither of these are iron-clad rules. Changing third tones into second tones depends on which third tones one views as really being connected and where you think you can place a pause in between third tones. This requires a feel for the language that no one expects beginners to have. Thus the rules of thumb. Regrettably, some of the residue from our battle over which rule to use has leaked into the lessons. For most of the lessons, we use the first rule. But in this lesson, we used the second rule. Both these rules are used by Chinese instructors when teaching beginners; which one they choose just depends on the instructor's preference. Neither one is right, they are both just ways to push the problem aside until later. You, the beginner, should feel free to use either rule until you get a better feeling for the language. We apologize for any confusion this causes. Unfortunately, all wars leave their scars.

In this lesson, Michael changed the first two tones to second tones. This means the sentence is pronounced:

Qǐng gěi wǒ nàge.

You could also use the rule we've been going with before and just change the second character to a second tone. In this case, the sentence is pronounced:

Qǐng gěi wǒ nàge.

Again, these are just rules of thumb, it doesn't matter which you use.

The sentence *Qǐng gěi wǒ nàge.* means "Please give me that." You can point at things and say this and people will generally know what you mean. But what if it's not totally clear what "that" is? In the noodle shop, the chopsticks are generally in a container on a tray at one end of the table. This tray also has soy sauce, vinegar, and hot pepper on it. How is your fellow diner to know which one you want? You have to be more specific. To be specific about what you want, just replace *nàge* with a noun. The Chinese word for "chopsticks" is *kuàizi*. To say you want chopsticks, all you have to say is *Qǐng gěi wǒ kuàizi*. You could say this if you want someone sitting next to you to pass the chopsticks, or you could say it to the shop's staff if there are no chopsticks in sight.

Now what about the other things on the tray? Depending on their tastes, Taiwanese people have been known to add any of these things (soy sauce, vinegar, or hot pepper) to their noodles. These are also necessary dipping sauces for dumplings. "Soy sauce" is *jiàngyóu*. "Vinegar" is *cù*. "Hot pepper" is *làjiāo*. Just insert any of these into the phrase to ask for them. *Qǐng gěi wǒ jiàngyóu.* is "Please give me the soy sauce." *Qǐng gěi wǒ cù.* is "Please pass the vinegar." *Qǐng gěi wǒ làjiāo.* is "Please give me the hot pepper."

One last wrinkle for this phrase. What if you want to ask for a specific something from a group of that thing? What if there are a bunch of cups on the table and you want that one, over there, the one that hasn't been used? You can't just say, "Please give me a cup." You would point and say, "Please give me that cup." It is really easy to add this into the sentence. "Cup" in Chinese is *bēizi*. "Please give me that cup." would be *Qǐng gěi wǒ nàge bēizi*. We just added "cup" right after "that" from the original phrase. You can do this with any noun.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip #1

In these lessons, we have been translating *zhège* and *nàge* as "this" and "that." Technically, though, *zhè* and *nà* by themselves mean "this" and "that." *Ge*, as we've said before, is a multi-purpose measure word, it is a measure word for anything. *Zhè* and *nà* mean "this" and "that," but in Chinese "this" and "that" must always be followed by a measure word. Thus they are often followed by *ge*. There is no way to translate the *ge* in *nàge*, so we just translate the whole thing as "that." In the last part of this PDF, we made the sentence *Qǐng gěi wǒ nàge bēizi*. ("Please give me that cup.") *Bēizi* uses the measure word *ge*, so we don't need to change *nàge* at all. If we were making this sentence with a different noun, we might have to change the measure word that we use. We're not going to introduce any new measure words here, we just want you to know what function *ge* serves in this sentence and how *nà* works.

Quick Tip #2

"Fork" in Chinese is *chāzi*. "Spoon" is *tāngshí*. But you still need to learn to use chopsticks. Although most restaurants do have forks for you, chopsticks are not hard to use and there are many ways to use them. (Though there is a standard way. Many Taiwanese people lament that their chopstick style is not standard.) Unfortunately, using chopsticks is more of a hands-on thing, so you will actually need someone to teach you in person. It's outside the scope of these lessons. Most people can get good at chopsticks after one or two lessons. And learning to use chopsticks is a great way to make friends with Taiwanese people you meet. Taiwanese people don't necessarily use chopsticks for everything, though. Often when eating rice mixed with other things (as in fried rice, for example) the Taiwanese use spoons. Rice, when it is mixed with other things, becomes very slippery and hard to grab with the chopsticks. The Taiwanese will think you're weird if you try to eat fried rice with chopsticks.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #16

Riding the Bus, Part 1 - Does This Bus go to Taipei?

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 2 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

16

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 到台北車站嗎?
2. 這輛車到台北車站嗎?

PINYIN

1. Dào Táiběi chē zhàn ma?
2. Zhè liàng chē dào Táiběi chē zhàn ma?

ENGLISH

1. Does (this bus) go to Taipei Main Station? (To other passenger.)
2. Does this bus go to Taipei Main Station? (To anyone.)

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
到	dào	to arrive (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
台北	Táiběi	Taipei (Taiwanese Mandarin)	proper noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>從這邊到那邊要多久？</p> <p>Cóng zhèbiān dào nàbiān yào duōjiǔ?</p> <p>How long does it take to go from here to there?</p>	<p>我要去台北大樓。</p> <p>Wǒ yào qù Táiběi dàlóu.</p> <p>I'm going to the Taipei building.</p>
---	---

GRAMMAR

Transportation in Taiwan is very modern. Especially if you are in Taipei. The Taipei MRT system is one of the best systems in the world. It's known for its punctuality, modern design, and cleanliness.

We highly recommend riding the Taipei MRT (Metro) and bus at least once. The metro is a supremely Taiwanese experience. Sure, it doesn't have the history or grandeur of the Great Wall, but the train is something that millions of Taiwanese people experience every day of their lives. It is a window into the life of an average Taiwanese person. Most foreigners in Taiwan spend all their time in taxis getting carted door to door. In addition to separating you from the average Taiwanese person, this also disconnects you from the place you are in. In a taxi, you get much less of a feeling of your surroundings, you don't notice where you are going; you get in, zone out, arrive, and get out. The metro and bus force you to locate yourself in the city you are in. It forces you to see this city as an actual place you can navigate around as opposed to a bunch of isolated spots connected by time spent in the back seat of a cab. Plus, the bus and metro are way cheaper than a taxi. Most bus rides cost about half of a USD, and metro tickets cost from half of a dollar to two dollars. Taxi rides start at about 3 USD and go up from there. Taking the metro and bus, while more challenging than a taxi, is completely doable and very interesting. There are also discounts on bus fees if you transit between metros and buses.

Your public transit adventure starts, of course, at the bus stop or metro station. There will be a bunch of signs with the numbers of different routes. There should also be a sign above these with the name of the stop you are at in Chinese and then romanized into pinyin. To be able to get around by public transit, you have four options:

Memorize the characters for the stop you want to go to.

Get somebody to write down the characters, then match them with the bus sign. Ask the bus driver or people at the stop if the bus goes where you want to go. We recommend all three.

Go to the information desk in any MRT station and ask for assistance. They are very experienced and happy to give you advice.

Don't be afraid to ask the bus driver about the stop you're going to. Taiwanese people do it all the time. When the bus pulls up and the doors open, lean in and shout *Dào* (the stop you need to go to) *ma*? The question, using *Táiběi chē zhàn*, would be: *Dào Táiběi chē zhàn ma*? Literally this is: "Arrive at Taipei Main Station?" It can be translated, however, as "Does this bus go to Taipei Main Station?" *Dào* means "to arrive." In English we would ask, "Does this bus go to Taipei Main Station?" but in Chinese, when you are talking about the destination of a form of transportation, you often do not use *qù* ("to go"), but rather *dào*. Thus we use *dào* in this lesson's phrase. The *ma* at the end of the phrase makes the phrase a question. It is kind of like the "does" that we add onto the beginning of the English phrase "Does this bus go to Taipei Main Station?" Without *ma*, the phrase would be *Dào Táiběi chē zhàn*. This would be translated into English as "This bus goes to Taipei Main Station." That would be an awfully confusing thing to yell at a bus driver. (*Ma* has no tone, but, because you are asking a question, it is natural to have your tone rise up a little at the end of the phrase.) In between *dào* and *ma* you place the name of the station you are asking about. *Zhàn* is just part of that particular stop's name. You don't add *zhàn* onto the end of every bus stop name.) Notice, also, that we don't have to say "this bus" when we are talking to the bus driver. That we are talking about this bus is obvious from the context and, in Chinese, objects and subjects that are obvious based on context do not have to be said.

If you don't want to get tangled in the rush of people getting on the bus, then you might try asking one of the other people at the stop. You can get their attention by using the *Bùhǎoyìsi*. we learned way back in lesson number 10. Then point to a bus sign and say *Zhè ge chē dào* (where you want to go) *ma*? This is the same as the previous phrase, but we have added *zhè ge chē*. This means "this bus." When talking to the bus driver it was unnecessary to include this, but when talking to other people at the stop, it is unclear which bus you are talking about. Thus you must point to a bus sign and say *zhè ge chē*. *Zhè* means "this." *Ge* is a measure word connecting *zhè* and *chē*. (Notice that it has no tone.) *Chē* literally means "car", but we can use it here to mean "bus." (See Quick Tip.) If we are asking about Taipei Main Station, our whole phrase is *Zhè ge chē dào Táiběi chē zhàn ma*? ("Does this bus go to Taipei Main Station?") Having these two phrases does not necessarily mean for a fool-proof bus ride, but don't be afraid to make mistakes, we all do; remember, you can do this, and, if all else fails, you can always take a taxi.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

Saying a group of numbers then adding the word *hào* designates a bus route. In Chinese, this would be *sānèrbā hào*. Chinese people very rarely talk about a bus as being "route three hundred twenty-eight," they just say the numbers directly. (*Hào* literally means "number". Here we can think of it as meaning "route.")

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #17

Riding the Bus, Part 2 - Where is the Bus Going?

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 2 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

17

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 到哪裡?

PINYIN

1. Dào nǎ lǐ

ENGLISH

1. Where are you going?

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
到	dào	to arrive (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
哪裡	nǎ lǐ	where (Taiwanese Mandarin)	question pronoun
下	xià	down, next, bottom (Taiwanese Mandarin)	preposition

SAMPLE SENTENCES

從這邊到那邊要多久？

Cóng zhèbiān dào nàbiān yào duōjiǔ?

How long does it take to go from here to there?

您住在哪裡？

Nín zhù zài nǎ lǐ?

Where are you staying?

我的生日是在下週。

wǒ de shēng rì shì zài xià zhōu .

My birthday is in the next week.

GRAMMAR

The public transit system in Taipei is very convenient. You can get an EasyCard or Travel Pass, which is an electronic ticket that can be topped up and are accepted both on public transports and for small payments. With an EasyCard, you don't have to prepare coins for buses and wait in line to purchase metro tickets. You can always check the remaining amount or top it up at any metro station or convenience stores, which can easily be found anywhere in Taiwan. If you don't have an electronic ticket with you and would like to take a bus, remember to prepare enough coins because the bus doesn't take banknotes and the driver would never touch money or even return your extra change. There is a machine for electronic tickets and a box for passengers to throw in coins.

The bus is interesting because it is an adventure. It is not the most comfortable or the most convenient way to travel. (Depending on the distance and area, the most convenient way might be taxi, metro, or bike.) Figuring out which bus to take is a puzzle. Getting on the bus can be a physical trial. The official rule is that people should wait for other passengers to get off before they try to get on. Most people in Taiwan have good manners and will wait in lines for their turn. In Taipei you will see waiting lines very often, just follow them. Don't forget to ask around if you are not sure if the line is for the bus you are waiting for.

On metroes and buses in Taipei, there is the multilingual audio announcement of the next stop. You don't have to be worried about missing your stop. If needed, you can always ask the bus driver, other passengers, or an attendant at the information desk. Taiwanese people are famous for being kind and welcoming to visitors, so just ask and you'll get the assistance you need.

When you ask people for directions, they will ask *Dào nǎlǐ?* *Dào* should be recognizable from the last lesson, it means "to arrive." *Nǎlǐ* is a combination of *nǎ* ("which") and *lǐ*,

together they mean "where." The phrase is literally "Arrive where?" but, as we have said before, *dào* can be interpreted as "going to" and thus our phrase becomes "Where are you going?" Two things to remember: No word for "you" needs to be included because it is obvious from the circumstances that they are asking about you. We do not need *ma* in this question. When there is a question word in the phrase (like "who," "what," or "where") we no longer put *ma* at the end. In response to this question you can reply *Dào* (wherever you are going.) or just say the name of your destination. Both are equally good. Using our old example of *Dào Táiběi chē zhàn* ("Taipei Main Station"), you would reply: *Dào Táiběi chē zhàn.* or just simply *Táiběi chē zhàn.*

The main denomination in the Chinese currency, the *tái bì* (or NTD), is the *yuán*. This is kind of like the US "dollar." When people are speaking, however, they don't usually use the word *yuán*, they usually say *kuài*. *Yuán* is used in writing and in a little more formal situations. This is kind of like the relationship between the American English words "dollar" and "buck." Bus tickets in Taipei are almost always 15 yuan. They will be more expensive only if you are going a long distance or you are on an express bus. The fare for metros goes up if you ride for longer distances, just like metros in other countries. Remember, the Taipei metro does not allow smoking, eating, drinking, or chewing gum on the metro or in the stations. This is how they keep the environment clean and they are proud of it. Just stow the food or drinks you are carrying in your bag.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

Anybody who's taken a lot of buses in their lifetime knows this rule: Move to the back of the bus. Unfortunately, people everywhere in the world are horrible about following this rule. They will stop as soon as they get on the bus, everyone clumps together up there, and the front of the bus becomes a mass of sharp elbows and heavy feet. The back of the bus always, always has more space. There are also more seats back there. Moving to the back of the bus gives you first shot at a seat when somebody gets up. Move back there and you will stand cool and calm, staring at the cramped masses, wondering where they lost their common sense.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #18 Riding the Metro

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

18

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 我要搭捷運
2. 我要搭公車

PINYIN

1. Wǒ yào dā jié yùn.
2. Wǒ yào dā gōng chē.

ENGLISH

1. I want to take the metro.
2. I want to take the bus.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
票	piào	ticket (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
捷運	jié yùn	MRT (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
儲值	chǔ zhí	to top up (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb

悠遊卡	yōu yóu kǎ	EasyCard (Taiwanese Mandarin)	proper noun
-----	------------	-------------------------------------	-------------

SAMPLE SENTENCES

一張票多少錢? Yì zhāng piào duō shǎo qián? How much is one ticket?	我想要儲值悠遊卡。 Wǒ xiǎng yào chǔ zhí yōu yóu kǎ I would like to top up the EasyCard.
--	--

GRAMMAR

The first step in any metro journey is buying a ticket. Ticket booths are located in all metro stations in Taipei. Most ticket booths are underground right before the metro platforms, but a few stations have ticket booths at street level. In all metro stations, tickets are checked at an entrance very near the ticket booth. In Taipei, there are six metro lines and one of them commutes to Taoyuan and goes through the Taoyuan International Airport.

The different metro lines all have different colors. They form a big web that connects all sections of Taipei. The construction of Taipei MRT started in 1988. The opening of the first line, Muzha Line (Brown), was in 1996, the first driverless medium-capacity rapid transit line in Taiwan. The length was only 10km. Until 2015, the operation length had reached over 100km, including the Wenhua (former Muzha), Tamsui-Xinyi, Songshan-Xindian, Zhonghe-Xinlu and Bannan Lines. Millions of people in the Taipei and New Taipei area counts on this system for their daily commute. There is another metro system in Kaohsiung, which is a much younger and smaller system.

The Chinese word for "metro" is *jié yùn*. *Jié* means "rapid" and *yùn* means "transport." *Jié yùn* only refers to train commute systems that go into the city. There are other words for rail systems that go above ground. Most people use electronic tickets that connect the metros and buses for discounts, you can even use it for YouBike, the public bike renting system which can be easily found around Taipei and some other cities. You only need to put the EasyCard in front of a special scanner and the machine automatically deducts

money, no need to count the fee, the screen will show the remaining amount. If you found the amount was not enough at exit, just top it up at the information desk. It's a very automatic and convenient modern system. Even the Singapore government sent groups to visit and learn how the Taipei Metro functions.

The ticket for the metro is called *piào*. It's actually a onetime electronic round token that will be recycled when you exit. *Piào* means "ticket." Each ticket is different when you put in the destination and the computer system will show you the fare of your ticket at purchase. The word *piào* can also refer to entrance tickets for concerts or museums, both electronic or paper. It's a general term for "tickets."

When you go to the ticket vending machine at a metro station, there are clear instructions showing you how to purchase your tickets. Or you can also purchase one at the information desk. Still, an electronic EasyCard is always your best choice and can save you a lot of time.

In Chinese, EasyCard is called *yōu yóu kǎ*. It's a basic item for Taiwanese people to use for transport and small purchases. *Chǔ zhí* means "top up"; you can put money into your EasyCard and use it as an electronic wallet. You can *chǔ zhí* your *yōu yóu kǎ* at any metro station or convenience store.

The phrase *Wǒ xiǎng yào chǔ zhí yōu yóu kǎ* means "I would like to top up the EasyCard". *Xiǎng yào* means "would like to". This is a polite and simple way to ask the cashier to assist you. They may respond with *Duōshǎo qián?* which means "How much?", like we learned in lesson 13. You respond with the amount you'd like to put into the card. For example: *Liǎng bǎi kuài* for "two hundred dollars". Of course, there are also top up machines at the metro station.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

Getting an EasyCard and using it as an electronic wallet while visiting Taiwan would be a very good choice. You can use it for most public transportations and convenience stores. In most major cities, you can find YouBike in various locations and rent one with your EasyCard. The first 30 minutes is free, so many Taiwanese people use it as a commute tool to travel between train/metro stations and their destination. The orange colored bikes with a big smile symbol makes them stand out in the cities. It would be a fun experience to tour the city on YouBike.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #19 Taking a Taxi

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

19

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 到台北車站。
2. 我想去台北車站。

PINYIN

1. Dào Táiběi chē zhàn.
2. Wǒ xiǎng qù Táiběi chē zhàn.

ENGLISH

1. To Taipei Main station.
2. I want to go to Taipei Main Station.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
到	dào	to arrive (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
台北	Táiběi	Taipei (Taiwanese Mandarin)	proper noun
想	xiǎng	would like to (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb

站	zhàn	station (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
我	wǒ	I, me (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
去	qù	to go (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>從這邊到那邊要多久？ Cóng zhèbiān dào nàbiān yào duōjiǔ?</p> <p>How long does it take to go from here to there?</p>	<p>我要去台北大樓。 Wǒ yào qù Táiběi dàlóu.</p> <p>I'm going to the Taipei building.</p>
<p>我想去看看。 Wǒ xiǎng qù kànkàn.</p> <p>I want to have a look.</p>	<p>這裡是什麼站？ Zhè lǐ shì shí me zhàn?</p> <p>What stop is this?</p>
<p>我的朋友很帥。 Wǒ de péngyǒu hěn shuài.</p> <p>My friend is really handsome.</p>	<p>我去公園。 Wǒ qù gōngyuán.</p> <p>I'm going to the park.</p>

GRAMMAR

Taxis are generally the main form of transportation for anyone traveling to Taiwan. Taxis are much less of a hassle than other forms of public transportation. You just have to know how to say where you want to go and you're all set. The easiest, bare-bones way to give your directions is a phrase we've studied before. *Dào* plus your destination tells the cabbie where you want to go. *Dào* means "to arrive," but we can often translate it as simply "to." If you want to go to Taipei Main Station, you just say, *Dào Táiběi chē zhàn*. This

means "To Taipei Main Station." *Chē* means "train" or "vehicle", *zhàn* means "station." All cities have a main train station that is called (the name of the city) *chē zhàn*. A slightly more elaborate way to tell the cabbie where to go is to say, *Wǒ xiǎng qù* (your destination). *Wǒ xiǎng qù* means "I want to go." *Wǒ* means "I" or "me," *xiǎng* means "to want to do something," and *qù* means "to go." Two pronunciation notes: First, because *Wǒ xiǎng* is two third tones in a row, remember to change the *wǒ* to a second tone. Second, *qù* is pronounced differently than *chù*. English does not have a sound exactly like *qù*. The difference between the two sounds does not sound very large to the Western ear, but it is discernible, and it is important. The easiest way to explain this sound is the way Michael pointed out in the lesson: you say the sound "*chu*" (like the beginning of "choose,") but with an exaggerated puckering of the lips, like you are going to kiss someone on the cheek. Say these sounds to yourself a couple times and try to feel out the difference. To complete this sentence, all you have to do is add in your destination after *Wǒ xiǎng qù*. We could use *Táiběi chē zhàn* again, but that would be boring.

Let's try *Shì zhèng fǔ zhàn*. *Shì zhèng fǔ* means "city hall". Taipei City Hall is surrounded with large department stores, hotels and conference centers. Once the world's tallest building, Taipei 101 is there too, so you may find yourself there. *Shì zhèng fǔ zhàn* would be the name of the station in the area. *Wǒ xiǎng qù shì zhèng fǔ zhàn* means "I want to go to Taipei City Hall Station." This phrase is probably most useful outside of a cab. When you are taking a taxi, you can just use *Dào* (your destination,) or you could just say where you want to go and leave off the *dào*. Saying *Dào Táiběi chē zhàn*. out of the blue to a friend doesn't have much meaning. (It tells them that something is going to Taipei Station.) You can use *wǒ xiǎng qù* in any kind of situation. If a friend asks you where in Taipei you'd like to visit, you can say, *Wǒ xiǎng qù Shì zhèng fǔ*. ("I want to go to Taipei City Hall.") "Taxi" in Chinese is *jìchéngchē* ("count distance car.") The act of taking a cab is generally called *jiào jìchéngchē* ("to call a taxi.") Hailing a cab in Taiwan is just like it is in any other part of the world. Just stand by the side of the road and raise your hand. Cabs have yellow lights on the top or next to the rear view mirror to tell you if they're looking for customers. You may also see "cab stops" that look like bus stops and have a big sign that says "taxi" on them. Often they just drive around, or they wait outside big hotels or night life spots. When a cabbie stops, you get in first and then tell them where you're going. *Dǎo Táiběi chē zhàn*, you might say. If the cabbie understands, he or she will nod or make some other nominal response and start off.

There is also Uber in Taiwan. Their fare and car condition are generally better than most cabbies on the road. There are also a few big taxi companies that offer reservation service by phone or app. Many cabbies will be excited to try out their English on you. Their English is extremely basic, not more than a few phrases, but, with a few phrases from them and a few from you, you can pass the time together pleasantly.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip #1

Get a card for your hotel. For most foreigners, the hardest part of learning Chinese is the pronunciation. (Well, aside from the characters, that is.) There is no guarantee that cabbies will understand your pronunciation of the place you want to go to, especially if it's the name of a hotel and not a major tourist destination. Always be sure to bring a card from your hotel with you when you go out. That way, when you want to go back home, if all else fails, you can just give the cabbie the card and he or she will know where to go. Many nicer hotels have cards with the Chinese and the English for at least a few tourist destinations. These cards are very useful for the same reason we just talked about: if you can't communicate, you can always just use the card. In addition, you can get the concierge or desk clerks at your hotel to write down the name of any place you want to go to so that you can show the cabbie. It might be a good idea to have them write down all the places you might want to go before you head out for the day.

Quick Tip #2

Get a receipt and don't tip. Just as in a restaurant, tipping is unnecessary and frowned upon. Cabbies will think you made a mistake in counting your money if you try to give them more than what the meter says. Getting a receipt, on the other hand, is especially useful if you think you have been overcharged (perhaps the cabbie drove in circles for a while.) You can take the receipt to the desk clerks in your hotel and they will be able to tell you if you've paid too much. If you have been overcharged, the desk clerk can call the taxi company and report the cabbie. Getting a refund is possible, but not always easy, and probably not worth it considering the amount of money at stake and the brevity of your time in Taiwan. But, again, while it's important to have your guard up in Taiwan (just as you should in most of the world,) don't let that get in the way of you seeing and enjoying Taiwan. Taiwanese people are known for being *rèqíng* ("warm feeling") which means "welcoming."

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #20 Where Are the Power Converters?

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

20

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 我在哪裡可以買變壓器?
2. 我在哪裡可以買電話卡?

PINYIN

1. Wǒ zài nǎ lǐ kěyǐ mǎi biànyāqì?
2. Wǒ zài nǎ lǐ kěyǐ mǎi diànhuàkǎ?

ENGLISH

1. Where can I buy power converters?
2. Where can I buy phone cards?

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
在	zài	at (Taiwanese Mandarin)	preposition
哪裡	nǎ lǐ	where (Taiwanese Mandarin)	question pronoun
變壓器	biànyāqì	power converter (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun

可以	kěyǐ	can (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
買	mǎi	to buy (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
電話卡	diànhuà kǎ	telephone card (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

他在後面。 Tā zài hòumiàn. He is in the back.	您住在哪裡？ Nín zhù zài nǎ lǐ? Where are you staying?
你要用變壓器。 Nǐ yào yòng biànyāqì. You have to use a power converter.	你可以叫我莉莉。 Nǐ kěyǐ jiào wǒ Lìlì. You can call me Lili.
我要買那本書。 Wǒ yào mǎi nà běn shū. I want to buy that book.	你有電話卡嗎？ Nǐ yǒu diànhuà kǎ ma? Do you have a telephone card?

GRAMMAR

You can use this lesson's phrase 在哪裡可以買變壓器? *Zài nǎlǐ kěyǐ mǎi biànyāqì?* to ask where you can buy all manner of things. It just so happened that this phrase fit well with the lesson about power converters, so the bosses decided we should run with it. Before we explore how to change this phrase up, let's look at the components that make up the phrase. The most basic part of the phrase comes at the end: 買 *mǎi* plus a noun. In this case, the noun is 變壓器 *biànyāqì*. (We noted in the last lesson that 變壓器 *biànyāqì*

means "power converter.") 買 *Mǎi* is the verb "to buy," and we use it in almost the same way as the English verb. You are probably noticing by now that Chinese word order often mirrors English. To talk about buying something, you just place what you are going to buy after 買 *mǎi*. Here the phrase is 買變壓器 *mǎi biànyāqì*. Together this means "to buy power converter(s)." Before 買變壓器 *mǎi biànyāqì* we have the verb 可以 *kěyǐ*. 可以 *Kěyǐ* means "to be able to." Specifically, 可以 *kěyǐ* means "to have permission to" or "to be allowed to." It is very similar to the English "may" (as in "May I have some cookies?") but Chinese people often use it in circumstances where English speakers would use the word "can," indicating the ability to do something. You can combine 可以 *kěyǐ* with any other verb there is, limited only by common sense. Just place 可以 *kěyǐ* in front of the verb it modifies. All altogether, our phrase 可以買變壓器 *kěyǐ mǎi biànyāqì* means "to be able to buy power converter(s)." The last component of this phrase is 在哪裡 *zài nǎlǐ*. We use these words together to ask "where." Literally, 在 *zài* means "at." 哪裡 *nǎlǐ* is a combination of two characters: 哪 *nǎ* and 裡 *lǐ*. 哪 *Nǎ* by itself means "which." When you add 裡 *lǐ* it becomes "where." Together, *zài nǎlǐ* means "at where." It is usually translated into English as just plain "where." In Chinese, we put the location of an action in front of the verb. Thus, we add 在哪裡 *zài nǎlǐ* onto the beginning of the phrase we already had to get our full phrase: 在哪裡可以買變壓器 *Zài nǎlǐ kěyǐ mǎi biànyāqì?* Literally, this means "At where can buy power converter(s)?" but we translate it as simply "Where can I buy power converters?"

Please note, some speakers of Mandarin Chinese will use the word 哪兒 *nǎr* in place of 哪裡 *nǎlǐ*; they are interchangeable. Two things to note:

1. There is no subject in this phrase. In Chinese, it is not necessary to say the subject of a sentence when the subject is clear from the situation or when the subject doesn't affect the meaning of the sentence. When you ask the question 在哪裡可以買變壓器? *Zài nǎlǐ kěyǐ mǎi biànyāqì?* the subject is irrelevant to the meaning of the question. In English, you could say, "Where can I buy power converters?" or "Where can one buy power converters?" Changing the subject doesn't change the meaning at all. In Chinese, you just eliminate the subject.
2. In this sentence, you have four third tones in a row. Third tones are tricky to string together and thus we use a rule stipulating that with any two third tones in a row, we change the first third tone to a second tone. In this case, having four third tones in a row, we change the first and third tones into second tones. We do this just to make the phrase

easier to say. Thus, we pronounce the final phrase as *Zài nǎlǐ kěyǐ mǎi biànyāqì?* (Although we pronounce the phrase this way, we still write it with the third tones unchanged.)

If you are looking for something else, you can freely change the object in the phrase 在哪裡可以買變壓器? *Zài nǎlǐ kěyǐ mǎi biànyāqì?* Just replace the noun 變壓器 *biànyāqì* with the word for anything else you'd like to buy. In the lesson, we used the noun 電話卡 *diànhuà kǎ*. This means "telephone card." 電話 *Diànhuà* can be broken up into two separate characters: 電 *diàn* means "electricity" and 話 *huà* means "speech." Together, these characters mean "telephone." 卡 *kǎ* is one of a collection of Chinese words that are taken from English and thus sound somewhat like English. 卡 *kǎ* means "card." Together we get "phone card." Just insert 電話卡 *diànhuà kǎ* in place of *biànyāqì*. The whole phrase is now 在哪裡可以買電話卡? *Zài nǎlǐ kěyǐ mǎi diànhuà kǎ?* ("Where can I buy phone cards?") There is no need to change anything else about the phrase.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

There are many different types of phone cards in Taiwan, but the word 電話卡 (*diànhuà kǎ*) only refers to two types. There are international calling cards, pay phone calling cards, and prepaid cell phone cards. For tourists, you can get prepaid cell phone cards, 預付卡 *yùfù kǎ* literally means "prepaid card." These are paid for by buying cards worth a certain amount of money. Charging up a cell phone is not considered a phone card; it is called 儲值 *chǔzhí*. (Literally, "save value.") *Chǔzhí* can be done online, by phone call, on smart phones, or at convenience stores.

To buy a card, go to any convenience store and use the phrase we learned in the last lesson, replacing *biànyāqì* with *diànhuà kǎ*: *Yǒu diànhuà kǎ ma?* ("Do you have telephone cards?") If they don't have them, they will say, *Méi yǒu*. ("We don't have them.") (This is all a review of the last lesson. You can go back and check it out for a better overview of this phrase.) If they do have them, they will say, *Yǒu*. ("We have them.") Next, they will probably ask, 什麼樣的電話卡? *Shénmeyàng de diànhuà kǎ?* ("What kind of telephone card?") To this, you respond using the vocabulary from this lesson: either 預付卡 *yùfù kǎ* ("local") or 國際 *guójì*. ("International.") (You could skip this step by saying

你有國際／預付卡嗎？ *Nǐ yǒu guójì/ yùfù kǎ ma?* as your first question.) Their next question will be: 你要多少錢的？ *Nǐ yào duōshǎo qián de?* ("What price card do you want?") Tell the vendor how much money you want on your card. As in most Western countries, calling cards come with a certain amount of money on them that is used up as you talk. Give the vendor the right amount of money, take the card home, dial the phone number on the back, and then enter the PIN when asked for it. You can talk as long as the card still has money on it. For prepaid cell phone cards, it is recommended to go to a telecommunication service center to get your mobile plan. The staff will assist you getting your cell phone ready for your time in Taiwan. You can find a service center at the airport and get this done as soon as you arrive.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #21 Directions

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 3 Vocabulary
- 4 Sample Sentences
- 5 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

21

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 往前走。
2. 往左轉。
3. 往右轉。
4. 在十字路口往右轉。
5. 在十字路口往左轉。
6. 這裡就好。

PINYIN

1. Wǎng qián zǒu.
2. Wǎng zuó zhuǎn.
3. Wǎng yòu zhuǎn.
4. Zài shízì lùkǒu wǎng yòu zhuǎn.
5. Zài shízì lùkǒu wǎng zuó zhuǎn.
6. Zhèlǐ jiù hǎo.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. Go straight.
2. Turn left.
3. Turn right.
4. Turn right at the intersection.
5. Turn left at the intersection.
6. Here is fine.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
走	zǒu	walk (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
十字路口	shízìlùkǒu	intersection (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
前	qián	front, forward (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
就	jiù	just, exactly, indicates close connection between two clauses (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
在	zài	at (Taiwanese Mandarin)	preposition

往	wǎng	towards (Taiwanese Mandarin)	preposition
左	zuǒ	left (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
右	yòu	right (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
轉	zhuǎn	to turn (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
好	hǎo	okay, fine (Taiwanese Mandarin)	sentence

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>我們走吧。 Wǒmen zǒu ba.</p> <p>Let's go.</p>	<p>在十字路口要右轉。 Zài shízìlùkǒu yào yòu zhuǎn.</p> <p>Turn right at the intersection.</p>
<p>往前走。 Wǎng qián zǒu.</p> <p>Go straight.</p>	<p>我吃一半就好。 Wǒ chī yí bàn jiù hǎo.</p> <p>I'll eat half; it's enough.</p>
<p>他在後面。 Tā zài hòumiàn.</p> <p>He is in the back.</p>	<p>往這裡走。 Wǎng zhèlǐ zǒu.</p> <p>Walk towards here.</p>
<p>我家在左邊。 Wǒ jiā zài zuǒbiān.</p> <p>My house is on the left.</p>	<p>靠右邊停。 Kào yòubiān tíng.</p> <p>Stop on the right.</p>

這裡要右轉。
Zhèlǐ yào yòu zhuǎn.

Turn right here.

這樣不行。
Zhèyàng bù xíng.

This way is no good.

GRAMMAR

We taught you how to ask "Where is...?" but how do you understand the answer to this question? How often have you been in a country where you have only the most tenuous grip on the language, enough to ask a few basic questions, but not enough to understand the answers? One well-worn and well-respected approach to getting directions is just to follow hand signals. When navigating around a city, it's often enough to keep asking someone again every hundred feet, and following another pointing finger. But wouldn't it be nice to know exactly where it is that you have to turn left? To not have to ask two or three times on the way to a particularly distant bathroom? In this lesson, we're working on that skill. Hopefully, we can help make you a little more directed in your wanderings, and a little more certain that you're going to find what you're looking for.

First, let's go over "Go straight." In Chinese, this is 往前走。 *Wǎng qián zǒu*. 往 *wǎng* means "toward." 前 *qián* means "front" or "forward." 走 *zǒu* means "to walk" or "to go." Literally, we have "Toward forward go." In Chinese, you have to put the direction before the verb, and that direction must be designated as such by placing a word that means "toward" before it. We will see this pattern repeat itself a couple of times in this lesson. The order is "toward direction verb." Thus, our sentence is 往前走。 *Wǎng qián zǒu*, which means "Go straight."

For "Turn left," we take the same pattern as before and just change the direction and verb. 往左轉。 *Wǎng zuó zhuǎn* means "Turn left." We just went over 往 *wǎng*. 左 *zuó* means "left" and 轉 *zhuǎn* means "to turn." The phrase is literally "Toward left turn." Note that the pattern never changes.

"Turn right" is the same as "Turn left." You just replace "left" with "right." "Right" in Chinese is 右 *yòu*. The phrase is 往右轉。 *Wǎng yòu zhuǎn*. If you're navigating a city, intersections become the main landmarks by which one moves around. "Intersection" in Chinese is 十字路口 *shí zì lù kǒu*. This literally means "ten character road opening" or

"road opening that looks like the character for ten." 十 *shí* means "ten." 字 *zì* means "character." 路 *lù* means "road." 口 *kǒu* means "mouth" or "opening." We write the character 十 *shí* as a cross; thus, it has the same shape as a four-way intersection. This is why we call a four-way intersection "road opening that looks like the character for ten."

The point of knowing how to say "intersection" is so that you can know where to turn (or, in the case of riding a cab, where to tell somebody else to turn). The way you say this is 在十字路口往左／右轉 *Zài shízì lùkǒu wǎng zuǒ/yòu zhuǎn*. This means, "Turn left/right at the intersection." We've gone over 在 *zài* before. 在 *zài* means "at." It says where something is or where an action is taking place. Our sentence is literally, "At intersection toward left/right turn." Locations in Chinese always precede the verb (with a few exceptions), and they also precede the direction.

In the word for "intersection," we noted that 路口 *lùkǒu* means "road opening." We can use this word by itself to refer to the place where a road comes off another road. If you are going down a main street and there is a smaller street that opens up on the left, where that small street hits the big road is called the 路口 *lùkǒu*. If you are coming out of a small residential area onto a big street, someone giving you directions could say, 在路口往右轉 *Zài lùkǒu wǎng yòu zhuǎn*. ("Turn right at the road opening.") Or if you are riding a taxi and you see the little street that your friend's house is on, you can say to the driver, 那個路口! 那個路口! *Nà ge lùkǒu! Nà ge lùkǒu!* ("That road opening! That road opening!") By the way, if anyone can think of a good way to translate 路口 *lùkǒu*, please post it on our site. We're very interested.

One last phrase for use in the taxi is 這裡就好。 *Zhèlǐ jiù hǎo*. This means "Here is fine." It's a phrase to tell the cabbie that they can let you off here. 這裡 *zhèlǐ* means "here" and 好 *hǎo* means "fine" or "okay." 就 *jiù* is very hard to translate into English. Sometimes it's translated as "exactly" or "just." It often connects two clauses in a sentence to show a close relation between the first and the second. Here we can think of it as "exactly" or as relating two things: it connects the 這裡 *zhèlǐ* and the 好 *hǎo*, showing that "here" is "just fine." You can also choose not to think about 就 *jiù* at all. 就 *jiù* is one of those words whose meaning and usage mostly just requires acclimation and familiarity with the language. It's not something that we can really explain; it's more something that you have to learn to feel.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

If you are getting directions and somebody tells you to turn at an intersection, often it's not the next intersection, but rather the second or third intersection down the road. Wouldn't it be nice, then, to know how to say ordinal numbers in Chinese? (Ordinal numbers are numbers like "first" and "second," as opposed to "one" and "two.") In Chinese, it is very simple to make a normal number into an ordinal number. Just place 第 *dì* in front of the number. That's it. "First" is 第一 *dì yī*. "Second" is 第二 *dì èr*. "Twenty-second" is 第二十二 *dì èrshíèr*. And so on. When you use ordinal numbers in front of nouns, you need to use a measure word (usually 個 *ge*.) Thus, "the second intersection" would be 第二個十字路口 *dì èr ge shízìlùkǒu*. When using these in a sentence, the ordinal number is treated as if it were part of the noun. The sentence "Turn left at the third intersection" would thus be 在第三個十字路口往左轉. *Zài dì sān ge shízì lùkǒu wǎng zuó zhuǎn*. Now you can give and receive much more detailed directions.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #22 I Am a Vegetarian

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

22

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 我是素食主義者。
2. 我不吃肉。
3. 我是佛教徒。
4. 可以不放肉嗎？

PINYIN

1. Wǒ shì sùshízhǔyìzhě.
2. Wǒ bù chī ròu.
3. Wǒ shì fójiào.
4. Kěyǐ bù fàng ròu ma?

ENGLISH

1. I am vegetarian.
2. I don't eat meat.
3. I am Buddhist.
4. Can you not add meat?

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
我	wǒ	I, me (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
是	shì	to be (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
肉	ròu	meat (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
不	bú	negative prefix (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
吃	chī	to eat (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
佛教	fó jiāo	Buddhism (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
素食主義者	sùshízhǔyìzhě	vegetarian (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>我的朋友很帥。</p> <p>Wǒ de péngyǒu hěn shuài.</p> <p>My friend is really handsome.</p>	<p>他是我哥哥。</p> <p>Tā shì wǒ gēge.</p> <p>He is my older brother.</p>
<p>我不認識他。</p> <p>Wǒ bú rènshí tā.</p> <p>I don't know him.</p>	<p>要吃什么？</p> <p>Yào chī shénme?</p> <p>What do you want to eat?</p>

佛教起源於印度。

fó jiāo qǐ yuán yú yìn dù 。

Buddhism originated in India.

GRAMMAR

We're sure some of you out there are vegetarians. While most people don't need to know the phrases in this lesson, they would seem to be very useful for those of us out there who don't eat meat. In fact, generally, these phrases are not useful. We thought it would be a good idea to teach them to you. You can find some vegetarian restaurants or menus in Taiwan. Since devout Buddhists don't eat meat, there are some good vegetarian restaurants for you to visit in Taiwan.

Vegetarianism in Taiwan is a minority. Generally, it is limited to devout followers of Buddhism (thus one of today's phrases.) All other people are expected to eat meat. The idea of not eating meat at all because of personal beliefs not connected with Buddhism is very rare in Taiwan, but still growing.

While Chinese people have traditionally cooked many dishes without meat (meat was long considered a luxury and was usually unavailable to most people), you may find that much of the food you get in restaurants has meat in it; possibly because of this view of meat as a luxury. Tofu is often flavored with pork. (As a side note, this may make tofu more appealing to people who would never normally eat it in their home country. You really should try some. We Westerners just don't understand how to cook tofu.) Greens have dried fish layered on top of them, ground meat mixed in, or are fried in pig grease. Many restaurants offer a vegetarian menu or serve one or two vegetarian dishes. You simply need to ask for it.

The phrase of this lesson will show you how to keep up with your vegetarian habits in Taiwan.

The most basic phrase is 我吃素, *Wǒ chī sù*. This means "I am vegetarian." 我, *Wǒ* means "I" or "me." 吃, *Chī* is "eat." 素, *sù* means "vegetarian." This literally means "I eat as vegetarian." Once the restaurant staff hears you saying this phrase, they will know what to offer. They will show you their vegetarian menu or just tell you that they don't serve vegetarian dishes. Most restaurants can come up with a simple vegetarian dish for you

since it's quite common in Taiwan.

The first step in clearing this up is to add a second sentence explaining your beliefs: 我不吃肉。 *Wǒ bù chī ròu.* ("I don't eat meat.") 我, *Wǒ* is "I" or "me." 不, *Bù* means "no." 吃, *Chī* is "to eat." 肉, *Ròu* means "meat." This is pretty straightforward.

As we mentioned, tofu in Taiwan is often flavored with meat. That spicy tofu you order may come with a generous helping of ground pork. We think that tofu is actually quite delicious with pork, but you might not agree. In this case, you'll want to use today's last phrase: 可以不放肉吗? *Kěyǐ bù fàng ròu ma?* ("Can you not add meat?") 可以, *Kěyǐ* means "can" or "to be allowed to." 放, *Fàng* means "to put." 吗, *Ma* makes the statement a question. The sentence is literally "Can no put meat?" There are two points to pay attention to for pronunciation. First, we pronounce the 可, *kě* in 可以, *kěyǐ* as a second tone because it precedes a third tone. Then we change the 不, *bù* to a second tone as well because it comes before a fourth tone. This sentence is the clearest direction you can give the staff. If you speak clearly, there should be no problem and you should get a meatless dish. If you find yourself confronted with the meat that you specifically asked not to have, you generally only have to call over your server and they will recognize the mistake and rush to get you a new order.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip #1

This tip is not just for vegetarians: Taiwanese has many wonderful fruits available cheaply from stands all over the place. If you see someone selling fruit, just go over and point at what you want. Be sure to ask 多少錢? *Duōshǎo qián?* ("How much does it cost?") The vendor will tell you the price per 斤, *jīn*. Most fruit is sold by weight. Some big supermarkets will pre-package fruit and have a price per package, but otherwise it's always done by weight. The fruit sold on the street is often better and cheaper than the fruit in the supermarkets. The vendor will say something to you like 十塊一斤。 *Shí kuài yī jīn*. This means "Ten yuan per jin." (十, *Shí* is "ten," 快, *kuài* is the casual word for the yuan, and 一, *yī* is "one.") The jin is a traditional unit of weight in Taiwan. In Taiwan, it has been standardized as 600 grams. While Taiwan generally uses metric measurements for most things, all food is still sold by the jin. The scales have grams, kilograms, and jin on them. The use of pesticides in Taiwan is much less regulated than it is in the West, so

before you eat any fruit in China you must wash it. How much you wash it is up to you. Some people just give fruit a quick rinse; some will scrub every individual cherry.

Quick Tip #2

Some people, usually for religious reasons, may not eat certain kinds of meat. This is not a new concept for some Taiwanese people. Some Taiwanese people will be familiar with this practice and will understand if you say, 我不吃牛肉。 *Wǒ bù chī niúròu*. ("I don't eat beef." 牛, *Niú* means "cow.") The way to say any kind of meat in Chinese is to just say the name of the animal followed by 肉, *ròu*. Some examples are: 猪肉, *Zhūròu* ("pork") 牛肉, *Niúròu* ("beef") 鸡肉, *Jīròu* ("chicken") 羊肉, *Yáng ròu* ("mutton"), etc.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #23 Help!

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 3 Grammar
- 4 Cultural Insight

23

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 救命啊!
2. 請打110。

PINYIN

1. Jiù mìng a!
2. Qǐng dǎ yāoyāolíng.

ENGLISH

1. Help!
2. Please dial 110.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
啊	a	mood particle (Taiwanese Mandarin)	mood particle
救命	jiùmìng	help (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
請	qǐng	please (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb

打	dǎ	to flag down (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
---	----	---	------

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>來人哪，救命！ Lái rén na, jiùmìng!</p> <p>Please come, help!</p>	<p>請幫我拿一下這個。 Qǐng bāng wǒ ná yíxià zhè gè.</p> <p>Please hold this for me for a moment.</p>
<p>我叫不到計程車。 Wǒ jiào bù dào jì chéng chē.</p> <p>I can't flag down a cab.</p>	

GRAMMAR

Make sure you pay attention to your belongings at all times. As a traveler, you are more vulnerable to theft than the average Taiwanese person is. First, you have no home, no people to help you, and are not fluent in the language. If you do lose something, you may find it causes you much more inconvenience than it would at home. Second, people will often be able to pick you out as a traveler. Travelers are more likely to have money and valuable things (such as cameras) and thus, thieves will target them.

The phrases of this lesson are to help you if you get into a situation where you need help immediately. Except for one, these phrases are not just for encountering thieves, but you can use them in many different kinds of emergencies. You will almost certainly never have to use them, but it is probably best to pay special attention to practicing these phrases because, if you do need them, it is necessary that you be able to think of them quickly.

救命啊！ *Jiùmìng a!* literally means "Save life!" 救, *jiù* means "to save," 命, *mìng* means "life." We add 啊, *a* to the end to emphasize the urgency of what we are saying. Chinese people often add sounds onto the ends of their speech to emphasize certain feelings or

tones. You can use this phrase in any emergency, from your friend falling into a river to a thief confronting you. 救命啊! *Jiùmìng a!* means "Help!" and should be screamed at the top of your lungs. Anytime when it is not appropriate to scream, it is also not appropriate to say 救命啊! *Jiùmìng a!* (Like if you are lost and need help finding your way, or if a box is too heavy to lift - unless that box is about to crush you.)

The next phrase is actually just one word: 小偷, *xiǎotōu*. 小, *xiǎo* means "little" and 偷, *tōu* means "to steal." 小偷, *xiǎotōu* is a noun meaning "thief." It refers to people who steal things through sneakiness. This does not include corporate criminals or muggers, or people who use force to steal. Muggers are very, very uncommon in Taiwan. Most theft occurs by way of trickery and quickness.

The third phrase is also one word: 警察, *jǐngchá*. 警, *jǐng* means "vigilant" and 察, *chá* means "to examine." Together they mean "police." You can shout both this and the previous word by themselves in emergencies.

The last phrase is 請打110。 *Qǐng dǎ yīyīlíng*. This means "Please dial 110." 請, *qǐng* means "please." 打, *dǎ* literally means "to hit," but it is the verb we use in 打電話, *dǎ diànhuà* ("to make a phone call.") 110 is the number for the police. We discussed this in a previous write up, but it's worth mentioning again (especially since Michael made note of it.) When saying this phrase, you should remember to pronounce 請, *qǐng* as a second tone because it precedes another third tone. Though, perhaps this will not be your most pressing concern at the time.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip #1

Safety in Taiwan: Taiwan is a very safe country. Very, very safe. Much safer than many Western countries. Many Taiwanese people are very concerned if they or someone close to them is going to America. The rate of violent crime is much higher in the US than it is in Taiwan, and movies and television have not helped America's image in this aspect. (It is interesting to note that Taiwanese movies and television deal with violence and modern crime far less than American movies.) Fights are not totally uncommon, but almost all of these are because of anger, not because of any planned out criminal activity. It is extremely unlikely that you will ever be the target of violence. The real danger in Taiwan is small-time thieves.

Quick Tip #2

Keeping your wallet in your back pocket or in the outside pocket of a bag is not the safest place for it. Putting your wallet in your front pocket is much safer. It is most safe to carry some sort of traveler's pouch, something that you tuck into your pants or keep under your shirt. As with anywhere, some places are more likely to have thieves than other places. On the bus and at the train station are the two most dangerous places for your belongings. In these places, the crush of people can make it hard to discern when somebody is prying your wallet from your pocket and when they are just trying to get past.

While it's always good to stay vigilant as a foreign tourist, most Taiwanese people find it very safe to go out and don't have to worry about thieves. If your wallet is lost, there's a pretty good chance you can get it back at the nearby information center or police station.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #24 Bottled Water, Please!

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 6 Cultural Insight

#24

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 請給我一瓶水。
2. 不要冰塊。
3. 請給我兩瓶水。

PINYIN

1. Qǐng gěi wǒ yī píng shuǐ.
2. Bù yào bīng kuài.
3. Qǐng gěi wǒ liǎng píng shuǐ.

ENGLISH

1. Please give me one bottle of water.
2. I don't want ice.
3. Please give me two bottles of water.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
請	qǐng	please (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb

給	gěi	to give (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
水	shuǐ	water (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
我	wǒ	I, me (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
一	yī	one (Taiwanese Mandarin)	number
不	bú	negative prefix (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adverb
要	yào	to want (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
熱	rè	hot (Taiwanese Mandarin)	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>請幫我拿一下這個。</p> <p>Qǐng bāng wǒ ná yíxià zhè gè.</p> <p>Please hold this for me for a moment.</p>	<p>請給我一杯水。</p> <p>Qǐng gěi wǒ yì bēi shuǐ.</p> <p>Please give me a glass of water.</p>
<p>有水嗎？冰的。</p> <p>Yǒu shuǐ ma? Bīng de.</p> <p>Do you have water? Cold water?</p>	<p>我的朋友很帥。</p> <p>Wǒ de péngyǒu hěn shuài.</p> <p>My friend is really handsome.</p>
<p>他給我一本書。</p> <p>Tā gěi wǒ yī běn shū.</p> <p>He gave me a book.</p>	<p>我不認識他。</p> <p>Wǒ bú rènshí tā.</p> <p>I don't know him.</p>

他要一張紙。

Tā yào yì zhāng zhǐ.

He wants a piece of paper.

今天很熱！

Jīntiān hěn rè.

Today is very hot.

GRAMMAR

Do not drink the tap water in Taiwan. It is not drinkable. The locals do not drink it, adventurous travelers do not drink it, nobody drinks it and neither should you. That is to say, don't drink it straight. We don't want to scare you too much. It is not as if the tap water is pure cyanide and just a drop will kill you. As long as you don't gulp down water straight, you will be okay. Boiled tap water is fine. We are not sure exactly what is wrong with the tap water-some say it's bacteria, some say it's chemicals-but whatever it is, boiling the tap water makes it drinkable. Taiwanese people boil tap water all the time and use it to make tea. Much of the tea you get in restaurants is probably made using boiled tap water. We don't say this to make you look askance at the tea you are being served, but rather to demonstrate how harmless the tap water is once it's been boiled. Small amounts of unboiled tap water will also not hurt you. You can use tap water to brush your teeth, and you can wash fruit with it. It is not deadly poison. That being said, let us reiterate: don't drink the tap water in Taiwan. Most Taiwanese people have a water cooler in their house. Many people boil water and then put it in the fridge. In restaurants, they will serve you bottled water, hot boiled water, or tea. No one ever gets a cool glass of tap water.

You're going to be spending a lot of time outside, and Taiwan can get very hot. Even Taipei, in the north of Taiwan, stays above 30°C almost the entire summer. (30°C is 86°F for all the Fahrenheit users out there.) If you don't buy water at some point, you will be very thirsty. Don't worry; there will be people all over the place selling water. Little convenience stores, supermarkets, and magazine stands all sell bottled water. In addition, in any spot where there are a lot of people, there are usually other people on the street with Styrofoam coolers selling bottled water. You will see these people all over tourist spots.

If you need some water, just go into a store or up to one of the people selling water on the street and say this lesson's phrase: 請給我一瓶水。(Qǐng gěi wǒ yī píng shuǐ.) The phrase means "Please give me one bottle of water." 請 (Qǐng) means "please." 給 (Gěi) means "to give."

我 (Wǒ) means "I" or "me." Together, these three words give us the phrase "please give me." The last half of the sentence is 一瓶水 (yī píng shuǐ). 一 (Yī) means "one." 瓶 (Píng) is a measure word that means "bottle." 水 (shuǐ) means "water." Together, 一瓶水 (yī píng shuǐ) is "one bottle of water." Thus, our whole phrase is 請給我一瓶水。 (Qǐng gěi wǒ yī píng shuǐ,) which means "Please give me one bottle of water." Remember that because the beginning of the phrase has three third tones in a row, the preceding two third tones become second tones. Thus, 給 (gěi) becomes géi. Our whole phrase is then pronounced like this: 請給我一瓶水。 (Qíng géi wǒ yī píng shuǐ.) If you say this to a vendor, they should know what you want, and they'll just tell you how much it costs. (See Quick Tip 1 for a possible problem in the exchange.) Plain water costs about fifteen yuan per bottle in the supermarket. Outside, it shouldn't ever be more than thirty yuan. Sometimes, if people can tell that you are a tourist, they will try to raise prices on you, but generally, they are very honest.

In the lesson, we also went over 不要冰塊。 (Bùyào bīng kuài.) This means "I don't want ice." 不 (bù) is "no" and 要 (yào) means "to want" or "to need." Together, these two characters can mean "don't" (as in "Don't eat that,") but here they mean "not want." Remember that when bù comes before another fourth tone, as is the case here, it becomes bú. Therefore, we say búyào. 冰 (bīng) means "ice" and 塊 (kuài) means "lump," "cube," or "chunk." Thus, 冰塊 bīng kuài means "ice cube." Together, the phrase is literally "not want ice cube." It means "I don't want ice." We don't have to say "I" because people will assume that you are talking about yourself. For locals, they simply say 去冰 (qù bīng.) This means "No ice." 去 (qù) means "go" or "get rid of." So qù bīng is the easy and common way of saying "I don't want ice." In Taiwan, most tea vendors or restaurant staff ask you if you like your drink to be qù bīng, meaning they will not add ice to your drink.

The locals make ice with boiled tap water, which they then put in their drinks. Restaurants and tea vendors use store bought ice. For an American, it is very important to remember to drink nothing with ice in it in Mexico because that ice was probably made from tap water. This is not the case in Taiwan.

Learning 不要冰塊。 (Bùyào bīng kuài) is not a total waste, though. The phrase 不要 (bùyào) is very important. As we said before, it means "to not want." You can replace the word 冰塊 (bīng kuài) with any noun that you don't want. Let's say you don't want "hot water" (熱水, rè shuǐ). You can say 不要熱水, Bùyào rè shuǐ ("I don't want hot water.")

Or, even more useful, if you don't want something that someone is selling you, you can simply say 不要 (*Bùyào*.) In tourist spots, you will often be accosted by people selling things: trinkets, postcards, snacks, whatever. You can just give these people a firm 不要 (*bùyào*.) In fact, this might become your most used phrase.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip

In Taiwan, you can find beverage shops that sell bubble tea everywhere. It's one thing you can't miss while being in Taiwan. There is quite a variety selection on the menu and different brands. You can get juice, black tea, green tea, herbal tea, coffee, or a mix of them. The vendor always asks how much ice and sugar you like in your drink. There are different levels of sweetness and amounts of ice for you to choose. For sweetness, there are 正常甜 *zhèng cháng tián* ("regular sugar,") 少糖 *shǎo táng* ("3/4 sugar,") 半糖 *bàn táng* ("1/2 sugar,") 微糖 *wēi táng* ("1/4 sugar,") 無糖 *wú táng* ("no sugar.") *Táng* means "sugar", so it indicates how much sugar syrup you like to add in your drink. For ice, there are 正常 *zhèngcháng* ("regular,") 少冰 *shǎo bīng* ("easy,") 去冰 *qù bīng* ("ice-free.") *Bīng* means "ice," or "icy cold." And the standards are different by different shops, so you might just want to try them out to find your favorite.

The selection of sweetness and ice is only available at beverage shops. It has become a unique culture in Taiwan. Although in restaurants, the waiter may also ask if you prefer *qù bīng* ("ice-free") for your cold drinks.

LESSON NOTES

Taiwanese Mandarin Survival Phrases #25 Introducing Others in Taiwan

CONTENTS

- 2 Traditional Chinese
- 2 Pinyin
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Grammar
- 5 Cultural Insight

25

TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 這是。
2. 這是我朋友。
3. 這是我先生。
4. 這是我太太。

PINYIN

1. Zhè shì.
2. Zhè shì wǒ péngyou.
3. Zhè shì wǒ xiānshēng.
4. Zhè shì wǒ tàitai.

ENGLISH

1. This is .
2. This is my friend, .
3. This is my husband.
4. This is my wife.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Pinyin	English	Class
這	zhè	this (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
是	shì	to be (Taiwanese Mandarin)	verb
先生	xiānshēng	husband (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
男朋友	nán péngyǒu	boyfriend (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
我	wǒ	I, me (Taiwanese Mandarin)	pronoun
朋友	péngyǒu	friend (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
太太	tàitai	Mrs., wife (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
同學	tóngxué	classmate (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun
女朋友	nǚ péngyǒu	girlfriend (Taiwanese Mandarin)	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>這是你的票。</p> <p>Zhè shì nǐ de piào.</p> <p>This is your ticket.</p>	<p>他是我哥哥。</p> <p>Tā shì wǒ gēge.</p> <p>He is my older brother.</p>
--	---

<p>你先生是做什麼的？</p> <p>Nǐ xiānshēng shì zuò shénme de?</p> <p>What does your husband do?</p>	<p>我是她的男朋友。</p> <p>Wǒ shì tā de nán péngyǒu.</p> <p>I am her boyfriend.</p>
<p>我的朋友很帥。</p> <p>Wǒ de péngyǒu hěn shuài.</p> <p>My friend is really handsome.</p>	<p>他是我的朋友。</p> <p>Tā shì wǒ de péngyǒu.</p> <p>He is my friend.</p>
<p>那是我太太。</p> <p>Nà shì wǒ tàitai .</p> <p>That is his wife.</p>	<p>我們是小學同學。</p> <p>Wǒmen shì xiǎoxué tóngxué.</p> <p>We were classmates in elementary school.</p>
<p>這是我的女朋友。</p> <p>Zhè shì wǒ de nǚ péngyǒu.</p> <p>This is my girlfriend.</p>	

GRAMMAR

This lesson is very straightforward, there is no grammar involved and the word order follows the English exactly. *Zhè shì* means "this is." *Zhè* means "this" and *shì* is "to be." To introduce someone you are with, you can just say *Zhè shì* followed by their name. If your friend's name is Bobby Valentine, you would say *Zhè shì Bobby Valentine*. ("This is Bobby Valentine." Bobby needs people to introduce him; he only speaks Japanese, not Chinese.)

It's often helpful to introduce people's relation to you in addition to their name, as there is a big difference between a sibling and a spouse. Let's start with "friend." "Friend" in Chinese is *péngyou*. To say "my friend" you just add *wǒ* ("I" or "me"). Literally *wǒ péngyou* would be "me friend," but it means "my friend." You can also add *de* after *wǒ* to make it *wǒ de péngyou*. *De* is the possessive particle, here it changes "me" to "my." When we are talking about something we own, we should always use *de*. "My car" is *wǒ de chē*. But when talking about close personal relationships, the Chinese don't use *de*. It's okay to use *de* for more distant relationships. People often say *wǒ de tóngxué* ("my classmate") or *wǒ*

de lǎobǎn ("my boss.") But for close relationships, like relatives and friends, *de* is rarely used. People just say *wǒ péngyou*. To introduce your friend, the whole phrase would be *Zhè shì wǒ péngyou*. ("This is my friend.") You can add your friend's name after this (*Zhè shì wǒ péngyou, Bobby Valentine.*) but you don't have to. The phrase is perfectly complete by itself. If you have been waiting for your friend, and you are about to leave, it is absolutely normal not to give your friend's name. If you are introducing a friend to the hosts of a dinner party, it's probably best to get names out of the way right at the beginning. (Though life doesn't always play out this way.)

This lesson also included words for spouses. *Zhè shì wǒ xiānshēng*. means "This is my husband." *Zhè shì wǒ tàitai*. means "This is my wife." (Remember to change *wǒ* to a second tone in the latter phrase because it precedes another third tone.) These can be used in exactly the same way as *Zhè shì wǒ péngyou*.

If you want to say boyfriend or girlfriend, it is very much like English. You just say male or female plus the word for friend. "Girlfriend" is *nǚpéngyou*. "Boyfriend" is *nánpéngyou*. (*Nǚ* means "female" and *nán* means "male.") Be aware though, people are sometimes a little uncomfortable about saying the words "boyfriend" or "girlfriend" out loud and will sometimes call their significant other their *péngyou* ("friend") even though they've been dating for years.

The next step in any introduction is for the parties being introduced to say "Hello." Remember, *Nǐ hǎo*. means "Hello." The *nǐ* is changed to second tone because *hǎo* is third tone. This common greeting is always appropriate, no matter the circumstances. You could get fancy and use some of the other greetings we studied in the first lesson. You could say the very formal *Nín hǎo*. But *Nǐ hǎo*. is probably your best bet. It's polite, but it doesn't sound stuffy or overdone. Almost nobody, other than customer service representatives, uses *nín*.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Quick Tip #1

People often do not give a person's name when they introduce them. Sometimes we do this on purpose. A girl on a first date who runs into some of her friends may purposely not reveal her guest's name because she's embarrassed or is unsure of the strength of the relationship. Most of the time though, this failure to give names is accidental. We are not all great in social situations, and in the heat of the moment we might just say, "This is my wife." and not "This is my wife, Peggy Lee." What are you to do if you've been

introduced to someone, but have never gotten their name? (This seems to happen very frequently with Chinese married couples.) One tactic is to combine "Mr." or "Mrs." with the last name of their spouse. "Mr." came up in lesson on self introductions, in Chinese it is *Xiānshēng*. We have not studied "Mrs." before. In Chinese, "Mrs." is *Tàitai*. These titles come after the last name of the person you're addressing. "Mr. Wang" would be *Wáng Xiānshēng*. "Mrs. Wang" would be *Wáng Tàitai*. The problem with this is that Chinese people do not change their last names after marriage. A woman named Wang will still be called Wang after she gets married to a Li. Still, it is considered okay to call a woman *Wáng Tàitai* if the man she is married to is named Wang and you don't know her last name. Calling her this just recognizes that she is married to a man named Wang, everyone still knows that this is not her family name. A man, however, might not like it so much if you were to refer to him by his wife's last name. One thing about this world, and something that is particularly true in Asia, men do not like being defined by their wives. Thus, there is the second way to deal with this problem: ask their name. Maybe you precede this with *Bùhǎoyìsī*. ("Sorry.") Then move into the way of asking someone's name that we went over in the self introduction lesson: *Nǐ jiào shénme?* ("What are you called?") Asking someone's name is never out of line, even if you've already been told it. Most Chinese take it for granted that foreigners cannot remember Chinese names. (Which leads us to Quick Tip #2.)

Quick Tip #2

Many Taiwanese people have English names. Just as we said before, Taiwanese people take it for granted that foreigners will not be able to pronounce or remember their names. For this reason, almost all Taiwanese people get an English name whenever they start to study English. This name is not considered permanent and many Taiwanese people will pick a new name whenever the fancy strikes them. (Like when they see a movie they particularly like.) Some Taiwanese people, however, will keep this first name for their entire life. In foreign companies, or companies that interact with foreigners often, everyone will have an English name and this will be the only name they are known by. An entire office of Taiwanese people speaking Mandarin will still call each other by their English names. Some people get so used to this English name that it becomes the only name they ever use. So do not be surprised when many people, especially young people and those from business sectors, tell you an English name. It may seem strange at first, but it has become a normal part of many people's lives.



	Intro	13	How Much?
1	Thank You!	14	Lower the Price Please!
2	You're Welcome!	15	Please Pass The Chopsticks!
3	This Please	16	Riding the Bus, Part 1 - Does This Bus go to Taipei?
4	Basic Greetings	17	Riding the Bus, Part 2 - Where is the Bus Going?
5	Goodbye	18	Riding the Metro
6	Where is the Bathroom?	19	Taking a Taxi
7	I Don't Understand	20	Where Are the Power Converters?
8	Can You Speak English?	21	Directions
9	Please Say it Once Again	22	I Am a Vegetarian
10	Apologies	23	Help!
11	Counting One to Ten	24	Bottled Water, Please!
12	Counting 10 to 100	25	Introducing Others in Taiwan