

Unit 10

Jiànshè yǒu Zhōngguó tèsè de shèhuìzhǔyì!
 Establish [possess Chinese special-quality DE] socialism!
 Establish a socialism with special Chinese characteristics.
Slogan on the wall of a new factory outside Shanghai, 1998.

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10.1 Feeling ill

In earlier lessons you encountered the verb juéde ‘to feel’. Here, we expand possible answers to the question: Nǐ juéde zěnmeyàng? ‘How do you feel; how are you feeling?’ The context is casual rather than the formal answers one might hear in a doctor’s office. First, some vocabulary:

dàifu	~	yīshēng	kàn dàifu ~ yīshēng	yáyī	guòmín
doctor (colloquial)		doctor (more formal)	visit a doctor	dentist	have allergies; allergies
gǎnmào	fāshāo	késou	tóuténg	bèiténg	yǒu shuǐpào
<i>feel-stuffed</i>	<i>emit-heat</i>	<i>cough</i>	<i>head-ache</i>	<i>back-hurt</i>	<i>water-blisters</i>
a cold; catch a cold	have a fever	a cough; have a cough	headache; have a headache	have a sore back	get blisters

xièdù<zi> <i>flow-stomach</i> have dysentery	tùxiě <i>spit-blood</i> spit blood	xiǎngjiā <i>miss-home</i> be homesick	hóulong téng <i>throat hurt</i> sore throat	liúhàn <i>flow-sweat</i> to sweat	tóuyūn <i>head-dizzy</i> be dizzy
chīyào take medicine	yīyuàn hospital	dǎzhēn get an injection	yàodiàn pharmacy	Zhōng/Xī yào Chinese/West. medicine	Zhōngyī / Xīyī Chinese/West. medicine (a subj.)

- a) Wǒ jīntiān yǒu yìdiǎnr bù shūfu.
Wǒ yǒu yìdiǎnr gǎnmào.
Tā dé-le gǎnmào.
- Wǒ yǒu diǎnr késou.
Tā gǎnmào le, ké+de hěn lihai.
- Tā fāshāo le, 39 dù.
Tā fā-le liǎng tiān shāo le.
- Yǒu diǎnr bù shūfu, tóuténg.
Tóu / wèi / jiǎo / bèi téng ~ tòng.
Yǒu diǎnr bù shūfu, xièdùzi.
Bù shūfu, tùxiě!
Bù shūfu, tóuyūn.
Bù shūfu, guòmín le!
Wǒ hěn xiǎngjiā.
- b) Wǒmen zǒu-le hěn yuǎn le,
jiǎo shàng yǒu shuǐpào!
Yào yí ge bāngdí ma?
Bǐ bāngdí hái dà!
Nà, fàng yì zhāng bēngdài ba.
- c) Chīyào le ma? /
Hái méi. Bù xiǎng chī. Pà kǔ.
- d) Āi, yá hěn téng. Néng bu néng
gēi wǒ jièshào yí ge yáyī?
Kěyǐ, wǒ shūshu shi yáyī!
- I don't feel very well today.
I've got a bit of a cold.
She's caught a cold.
- I've got a bit of a cough.
He's got a cold, and is coughing terribly.
- He's got a 39 degree fever.
She's had a fever for 2 days.
- [I]'m not feeling well, [my] head aches.
[My] head/stomach/foot/back hurts.
[I] don't feel very well – the runs.
Not too good, [I]'m spitting blood.
[I]'m not well, [I]'m dizzy.
[I]'m not well, allergies!
I'm homesick!
- We've walked a long way; I've got
blisters on my feet!
Do you want a 'bandaid'?
It's bigger than a bandaid.
So, you'd better put a bandage on it.
- Have [you] taken medicine [for it?]
*Not yet. [I] don't want to, [I]'m afraid
[it]'ll be bitter.*
- Ow, [my] tooth hurts. Can you
'recommend' a dentist for me?
Sure, my uncle's a dentist.

Notes

- a) Southerners tend to say tòng instead of téng: tóu / wèi / jiǎo / bèi tòng.
- b) Related to tù, with falling tone, is tǔ with low tone, whose core meaning is ‘spit’ (with an extended meaning of ‘enunciate’ – as in ‘spit out’ words): Qǐng wù suídi tǔtán ‘please [do] not randomly spit’ is a common public health notice. Tù, on the other hand, suggests unintentional evacuation [from the mouth], typically vomiting, but also, as in this case, spitting blood.
- c) Chinese medicines come in many tastes, but even if the taste isn’t nice, it’s not usual to try to disguise it by adding sweet ingredients.



Kǒuqiāng zhěnsuǒ ‘Oral clinic’. Kunming.

10.1.1 A note on traditional Chinese medicine (Zhōngyī)

Shēngcí

shíyù food-desire appetite	zuǐ mouth	kǔ bitter	ěr míng ear sound ringing ears	nèi internal	xūyào need to
qùhuǒyào go-fire-medicine reduce-heat medicine		xiè to discharge		shì <shì> to try	

Here is a sample interchange that uses terminology from traditional Chinese medicine [Zhōngyī]:

Zhèi liǎng tiān méi shíyù, zuǐ lǐ kǔ, ěr míng!
For the past couple of days I've lost my
appetite, and my ears are ringing!

Nǐ kěnéng shì nèi rè, xūyào chī
diǎnr qùhuǒyào, xièxiè huǒ. You might have 'an internal heat', [you]
should eat some 'reduce internal heat'
medicine, and 'discharge' some heat.

Hǎo, nǐ shuō de yǒu dào;lǐ;
wǒ shìshi kàn. Okay, what you say makes sense; I'll
try [it].

Exercise 1. Paraphrase in Chinese:

When I got up this morning I didn't feel very well. At first, I thought it was because I had drunk too much the previous night. So I had a cup of coffee, and then lay down (tǎng) on the sofa for a couple of hours. At noon, I ate a bit, but I didn't have an appetite, my stomach was upset, and I had diarrhea. By the afternoon, I realized I had a cold, my head ached, and I didn't have any energy. I took a cab to the hospital, but it was more than an hour before I could see a doctor. She gave me some medicine for reducing internal heat and told me to rest for a few days. So I did. I'm feeling a lot better now, but I still feel a bit dizzy. I guess I need to eat more, and drink more water.

10.2 More on indefinites

As noted in earlier units, question words in Chinese can also function as indefinites. So nǎr may mean 'where' or 'anywhere'; shénme may mean 'what' or 'anything'; and jǐ may mean 'how many' or 'many; several', depending on the context.

Wǒ bú qù nǎr.	I'm not going anywhere [in particular].
Wǒ bù zhǎo shéi.	I'm not looking for anyone [in particular].
Wǒ bù xiǎng mǎi shénme.	I don't feel like buying anything [in particular].
Wǒ méi chī shénme yào.	I didn't take any medicine [in particular].
Zhōngwén shū, wǒ méiyǒu jǐ běn.	I don't have many Chinese books.
Tāmen méiyǒu duōshao qián.	They don't have much money.
Tā bù zěnme gāo.	She's not that tall.

10.2.1 Complete exclusion or inclusion

Complete exclusion or inclusion can be conveyed by placing the indefinite phrase before the verb and supporting it by inclusive adverbs such as dōu or yě. Where both options are feasible – the plain indefinite and the exclusive/inclusive – then the difference can be highlighted by the addition of 'in particular' or 'at all' (or 'else' in some contexts) to the English translation, as indicated in the following examples:

a) Wǒ nǎr yě bú qù.	I'm not going anywhere [at all].
Wǒ dào nǎr dōu bú qù.	
Wǒ bú qù nǎr.	I'm not going anywhere [in particular].
Wǒ bú dào nǎr qù.	

Tāmen shéi dōu bú rènshi.	They don't know anyone [at all].
Tāmen bú rènshi shéi.	They don't know anyone [in particular].
Wǒmen shénme dōu bù xiǎng mǎi.	We don't want to buy anything [at all].
Wǒmen bù xiǎng mǎi shénme.	We don't want to buy anything [in particular].
b) Wǒ shénme dōu bú pà. Nǐ zhēn de shénme dōu bú pà ma?	I'm not afraid of anything [at all]. Are you really not afraid of anything [at all]?
Tā shéi dōu bú pà.	She's not afraid of anyone [at all].
Tā bǐ shéi dōu gāo.	He's taller than anyone [else].
Něitiān dōu xíng.	Any day [at all] is fine.
c) Tā zěnmē shuì yě shuìbuzháo.	No matter how he tries, he can't sleep.
Nèi ge biān zì, wǒ zěnmē xiě yě xiěbuduì.	The character 'biān', no matter how I write it, I can't get it right.
Jīntiān de zuòyè zěnmē zuò yě zuòbuwán.	No matter how I try, I can't get today's homework done.

10.2.2 Virtual exclusion or inclusion

Another strategy for indicating near or complete exclusion or inclusion is to cite a small amount and then rule even that out:

Wǒ yì fēn qián dōu méiyǒu.	I don't have a cent [to my name].
Wǒ yì máo yě méiyǒu.	I don't have a dime [to my name].
Tā yì běn yě méi kàn-guò.	He's hasn't even read one [of them].
Tā yì kǒu dōu bù gǎn chī.	She didn't dare to eat a bite [of it].

Where no particular item suggests itself, then yìdiǎnr can provide the amount:

Wǒ yìdiǎnr dōu bú lèi / bú è....	I'm not the least bit tired / hungry....
Wǒ yìdiǎnr dōu bú pà.	I'm not the least bit scared!
Wǒ yìdiǎnr dōu bù dǒng.	I don't understand any of it.

10.2.3 Lián...dōu/yě ‘even’

Lián has a core meaning of ‘join; link; connect’, but in certain contexts, in conjunction with inclusive adverbs such as dōu or yě, it corresponds to English ‘even’. And as such, it can serve to support virtual exclusion or inclusion of the type cited above:

Wǒ yí fèn qián dōu méiyǒu. ~
Wǒ lián yí fèn qián dōu méiyǒu!

In other examples, lián ... dōu/yě indicates ‘to a degree that includes even ...’:

Jīntiān máng+de bùdéliǎo, lián [I]’m really busy today – didn’t even have
wǔfàn yě méi shíjiān chī. time to eat lunch.

Wǒ lèi+de lián zìjǐ de míngzi I was so tired I forgot my own name!
dōu wàng le! [~ I’m so tired....]

In another common construction, lián appears with bié shuō ‘to say nothing of’:

Nǐ qù-guo Hūhéhàotè ma? Have you been to Huhhot?
Hūhéhàotè?! Bié shuō Hūhéhàotè Huhhot? I haven’t even been to Beijing,
le, wǒ lián Běijīng dōu méi qù-guo! to say nothing of Huhhot.

Nǐ kàn-guo Hóng Lóu Mèng ma? Have you read Dream of the Red Chamber?
Hóng Lóu Mèng a! Bié shuō Hóng Dream of the Red Chamber! I haven’t even
Lóu Mèng, wǒ lián Hóngsè Niángzǐ read ‘The Red Detachment of Women’, let
Jūn yě méi kàn-guo! let alone Dream of the Red Chamber!

Note

Hóng Lóu Mèng, literally ‘Red-Building Dream’, but usually translated as ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’. Written by Cáo Xuěqīn (曹雪芹) at the end of the 17th century, it is probably the best known of the Chinese classic vernacular novels. Hóngsè Niángzǐjūn (红色娘子军) ‘The Red Detachment of Women’ was one of the ‘model’ ballets (later a play and a film) from the time of the Cultural Revolution. As a ballet, it was performed for President Nixon on his 1972 visit.

10.2.4 Paired indefinites.

A final note: Indefinites often come in pairs, the second referring back to the first:

Xiǎng chī shénme jiù chī shénme. Eat whatever you want.

Xiǎng qù nǎlǐ jiù qù nǎlǐ. Go wherever you want.

Xiǎng wèn shénme jiù wèn shénme. Ask whatever you want.

Xiǎng gēn shéi liáotiān jiù gēn shéi liáotiān. Talk to whomever you want!



Wǒ shénme dōu bú pà! Public art in Dalian.

Exercise 2

Provide Chinese for the following mini-conversations:

1.

It's so hot – I don't feel like going anywhere [in particular].

Nor me, I'm just going to stay home and watch the World Cup.

2.

What did you do over the New Year break?

Absolutely nothing! I got sick and had to stay in bed the whole week.

3.

Order whatever you like – it's my treat ('I'm inviting') today!

You shouldn't; you treated last time – this time, I'm treating.

4.

This is a bright little kid; he does things faster than anyone, and better than anyone!

That's my 4th daughter – actually [qíshí] she's more mischievous than anyone!

5.

No matter how I try, I can't sleep; it's just too hot.

Don't you have airconditioning?

6.

Have you been to Burma?

Burma?! I haven't even been to London let alone Burma!

7.

We'll get out at the next intersection, okay?

I can't stop [tíng] at the intersection.

That's fine – we'll get out wherever it's convenient [fāngbiàn].

10.3 Verb Reduplication

In Chinese, as in other languages, it is sometimes useful to give an impression of wariness or nonchalance by suggesting that an action involves a minimum of effort:

Hē yidiǎnr chá ba.	Have a little tea.
Shànglai kànkàn ba.	Come on up and take a look.

As the second example shows, one way to achieve this effect is to reduplicate the verb (with the repeat untoned). There are a number of other options. With single-syllable verbs, such as kàn ‘look’ or zuò ‘sit’, yī ‘one’ can be inserted between the verbs, as if to say ‘look a look’ or ‘sit a sitting’. In this case, yī is untoned, but both iterations of the verb are toned:

kàn yì kàn	take a look
zuò yì zuò	sit a bit
zǒu yì zǒu	take a walk

Much the same effect can be achieved by adding the phrase yíxià ‘one time’ instead of the second iteration of the verb. So the options are:

Děngdeng!	Hang on!
Děng yì děng!	Wait a sec.!
Děng yíxià!	Hold on!

Two-syllable verbs, such as xiūxi are more restricted. Two-syllable verbs can still often be followed by a reiteration. They can also be followed by yíxià; but they do not accept a medial yī. So for two syllable verbs, the options are:

Xiūxi xiūxi ba.	Take a break.
Xiūxi yíxià ba.	
Wǒ gěi nǐ jièshao jièshao.	Let me introduce you.
Wǒ gěi nǐ jièshao yíxià.	

Other common examples:

Nǐ chángchang ba.	Have a taste [why don't you?]
Nǐ cháng yì cháng ba.	
Nǐ cháng yíxià ba.	
Shuìshuì jiào ba.	Sleep a bit.
Shuì yíxià jiào ba.	
Nǐ cāicai ~ cāi yì cāi ~ cāi yíxià.	Take a guess.
Nǐ wènwen tā ba.	Why don't you just ask her.

Nǐ de zìdiǎn, néng kànkàn ma? Can I take a look at your dictionary?
 Mōmo ~ mō yi mō ~ mō yixià! Feel [this]!

Certain verbs of cognition and consideration seem especially prone to the reduplication patterns:

xiǎng think	kǎolù think over; consider	shāngliang discuss; consult	tán talk; chat
Xiān gēn tā tán yi tán.		Talk to her first.	
Zánmen shāngliang shāngliang.		Let's talk about it.	
Ràng wǒ kǎolù yixià.		Let me think it over.	

Kǎolù, of course, involves a delay or postponement, so it is not surprising that in certain contexts, sentences such as the last may serve as an indirect way of denying a request – a way of saying ‘no’. There are, of course, other expressions that serve the same purpose of delaying a decision, eg: Yìhòu zài shuō ba ‘Why don’t we talk about it later?’

10.4 An interview with your teacher

This is an interview with a teacher whose name happens to be Wei (but you can fill in the name and particulars of your own teacher). This interview covers a lot of familiar ground and serves as a good review for biographical information.

nǐ	Wèi lǎoshī, néng bù néng wèn nín jǐ ge gèrén de wèntí?	Prof. Wei, can [I] ask you a few personal questions?
Wèi	Kěyǐ, méi wèntí, nǐ yào wèn shénme?	You may, no problem, what do you want to ask?
nǐ	Wǒ xiǎng wèn nín jǐ ge jiāting de wèntí, jǐ ge àihào de wèntí.	I'd like to ask you a few family questions, and some questions about your hobbies.
Wèi	Dāngrán kěyǐ. Wèn ba!	Of course you can. Go ahead and ask!
nǐ	Wèi lǎoshī, nín shēng zài Yīngguó ba?	Prof. Wei, you were born in England then?
Wèi	Shì a, kěshì wǒ shíwǔ suì jiù lái Měiguó le.	Yes, but at 15, I came to the US.
nǐ	Shíwǔ suì, kěshì Wèi lǎoshī hái dài diǎnr Yīngguó de kǒuyīn!	At 15, but ‘you’ (Prof. Wei) still have a bit of an English accent!

- Wèi Yīngguó rén shuō shì Měiguó de kǒuyīn, Měiguó rén shuō shì Yīngguó de kǒuyīn. Yěxǔ shì 'bàn Yīng bàn Měi'.
- The English say it's an American accent, the Americans say it's English. [I] expect it's half English and half American.
- nǐ Wèi lǎoshī jiéhūn le ma? Are you (Prof. Wei) married?
- Wèi Jiéhūn le, jiéhūn èrshí duō nián le, yǒu sì ge hái zi. Yes, [I] am, [I] 've been married for over 20 years. With 4 children.
- nǐ Wèi shīmǔ yě shì Yīngguó rén ma? Is 'Mrs' Wèi English too?
- Wèi Bù, tā shì Měiguó Xīn'ǎo 'érliáng lái de! Wǒmen shì zài Xiāng Gǎng rènshi de! No, she's from New Orleans, in the US! We met in Hong Kong!
- nǐ O, Xiāng Gǎng rènshi de, zhēn qiǎo! O, [you] met in Hong Kong, how fortunate!
- Wèi Shì a, nèi ge shíhou wǒ zài Xiāng Gǎng jiāoshū, tā qù Xiāng Gǎng lǚyóu yí ge xīngqī. Wǒmen shì zài chēzhàn pèngdao de. Yes, at that time, I was teaching in HK, she traveled to HK for a week. We met at a bus station.
- nǐ Wèi lǎoshī hái zimen duō dà? How old are your children [Prof. Wei]?
- Wèi Sān ge yǐjīng chéngnián le, xiǎo de shíqī suì. Three are already grown, the small one is 17.
- nǐ Jǐ ge nánhái r, jǐ ge nǚhái r? How many boys, how many girls?
- Wèi Dōu shì nǚhái r! They're all girls.
- nǐ Wèi lǎoshī yǒu méiyóu xiōngdì-jǐemèi? Do you have any siblings [Prof. Wei]?
- Wèi Yǒu ge dìdì, qíshí shì ge tóngfū yì mǔ de dìdì. I have a younger brother – actually, he's a half brother ('same father different mother').
- nǐ Wèi lǎoshī, chúle Zhōngwén yǐwài, nín hái huì shuō shénme biéde wàiguóhuà ma? Prof. Wei, do you speak any other languages besides Chinese?
- Wèi Wǒ yě huì shuō diǎnr Miǎndiàn huà. Nǐmen zhīdao, wǒ duì Miǎndiàn hěn gǎn xìngqu! I also speak some Burmese. You know I'm quite interested in Burma.

nǐ	Tīngshuō nín qù-guo hǎo jǐ cì le.	I hear you've been many times.
Wèi	Shì, wǒ chàbuduō měinián dōu qù yí cì. Xīwàng jiānglái yǒu jīhuì qù zhù yī liǎng nián duō zuò yìdiǎnr yánjiū, bǎ wǒ de jīngyàn xiěchéng yì běn shū.	That's right, I go almost every year. In the future, I hope to have a chance to go and live [there] for a year or two, do some more research, and write a book based on my experiences [there].
nǐ	Nà, Wèi láoshī, nín zài zhè zhù le jǐ nián le?	Well, Prof. Wei, how long have you been living here?
Wèi	Bā nián le. Zhè shì wǒ dì-jiǔ nián!	8 years. This is my 9th year.
nǐ	Wèi lǎoshī, chúle jiāoshū zuò yánjiū yǐwài, nín shì bu shì hái yǒu yì xiē àihào?	Apart from teaching and doing research do you also have some hobbies?
Wèi	Wǒ xǐhuan qí zìxíngchē, pá shān. Nǐ ne?	I like to ride my bike, and climb mountains. How about you?
nǐ	Wǒ xǐhuan tīng liúxíng yīnyuè, tiàowǔ, kàn diànyǐng. Wèi lǎoshī, xièxie, hěn yǒu yìsi!	I like to listen to modern music, to dance, and watch movies. Thank you very much, Prof. Wei, [that] was very interesting!
Wèi	Bú xiè, bú yòng kèqi.	You're quite welcome.

Shēngcí 'new words'

gèren	individual; personal	àihào	hobby (love-like)
jiāting	family; household	dài...kǒuyīn	have ('carry') an ...accent
shīmǔ	wife of teacher	qiǎo	coincident; opportune
lǚyóu	travel; tour	chēzhàn	station
pèngdao	bump into; meet (bump-to)	chéngnián	mature; grown
qíshí	actually; in fact ('its reality')		('become year')
tóngfù yimǔ	same father, different mother; cf. yìfù tóngmǔ		
chúle...yǐwài	in addition to; besides	hǎo jǐ cì	a lot of times
xīwàng	hope (contrast xǐhuan)	jiānglái	[in the] future
jīhuì	opportunity	jīngyàn	experience
xiěchéng	write [into]; cf. biànxíng 'chang into'		
bǎ ... xiěchéng	'write my experiences in a book, ie write a book based on my exp.'		
pá	climb	liúxíng	popular
yīnyuè	music	tiàowǔ	dance