

10.5 Minor Constructions

10.5.1 *Chúle ...yǐwài*

Chúle...yǐwài means literally ‘having removed...and put aside’, hence ‘besides; except for; other than’. The clause following will generally contain an inclusive adverb, such as *dōu*, *yě*, or *hái*. In more formal contexts, *yǐwài* can be rendered as *zhī wài*, with the Classical Chinese particle *zhī*. (Cf. *zhī yī* ‘one of’ and *zhīqián*, the formal alternative to *yǐqián* ‘before’.) Sometimes, either the first part of the expression (*chúle*) or the second (*yǐwài*) will be omitted.

Chúle Zhōngwén yǐwài nǐ hái huì
shuō shénme wàiyǔ? What foreign languages do you speak other
than Chinese?

Chúle zhōumò (yǐwài), tā biéde
shíhou dōu bú zài jiā. Except for the weekends, he’s never
at home [at other times].

Míngcháo Zhū Yuánzhāng huángdì
jiàn de gōngdiàn, xiànzài chúle dìjī
yǐwài, biéde dōu méiyǒu le. Except for the foundations, nothing
of the imperial palace built by the
Ming Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang, remains!
[Of Nanjing.]

Notes

- a) Jiàn V ‘build; construct’; cf. *jiànli* ‘set up; establish’.
b) Dìjī N ‘ground; base; foundation (land-base)’.

10.5.2 *Yuèlái yuè (SV) ‘more and more SV’*

Ài, shìjiè yuèlái yuè luàn. Gosh, the world is getting more and more
chaotic.

Dà chéngshì yuèlái yuè wēixiǎn. Big cities are becoming more and more
dangerous.
Nà shì yīnwèi rén yuèlái yuè duō. *That’s because there are more and more
people.*

Wénhuà Dàgémìng gǎo+de yuèlái
yuè jīliè. The Cultural Revolution was carried out
more and more intensely.

Lái may be replaced with other verbs, as in the following examples:

Guōtiē, yuè chī yuè xiǎng chī. The more you eat potstickers the more you
want to eat them.

Hànzì xué+de yuè duō, wàng+de
yuè kuài! With characters, the more you study [them]
faster you forget [them].

Pá+de yuè gāo, shuāi+de yuè cǎn. The higher you climb the farther you fall.

Notes

luàn	SV	chaotic; N ‘disorder’; in Chinese, the opposite of <u>luàn</u> is <u>zhì</u> ‘control; order’.
wēixiǎn	SV	dangerous: <u>Xiǎoxīn</u> , <u>hěn wēixiǎn!</u>
gǎo	V	a verb with a wide range of senses: ‘to do; make; manage; pick up, etc.’
jīliè	SV	intense [of sports: <u>jīliè de yùndòng</u> , <u>hěn jīliè de bǐsài</u> ; or arguments: <u>Zhēnglùn jīlièqilai le</u> ‘The argument intensified.’]
pá	V	crawl; climb; scramble
shuāi	V	fall down; slip
cǎn	SV	tragic; miserable

10.5.3 ‘Ought’ and ‘must’

There are a number of common verbs that convey notions of obligation and necessity:

<yīng>gāi	ought; should; have to
děi / búbì	must; have to [only in positive] / needn’t [only in negative]
bìxū	necessarily; be essential [often as a modifier]
bìyào	need; obligatory; necessary
xūyào	V: should; have to; need; require; N: requirements; needs

Nǐ yīnggāi xiūxi xiūxi.

You should take a rest.

Míngtiān yǒu kǎoshì, wǒ gāi
qù túshūguǎn xuéxí.

Tomorrow [there’s] a test, I should
go to the library to study.

Wǒ děi mǎshàng huíqù.

I have to go back right away.

Cóng Guǎngzhōu zuò huǒchē
dào Běijīng yídìng děi jīngguò
Wǔhàn ma?
*Wo xiǎng bù yídìng děi jīngguò
Wǔhàn.*

If you go by train from Canton to
Běijīng do you have to go through
Wuhan?
*I don’t think you HAVE to go through
Wuhan.*

Búbì huànchē.

No need to change (buses).

Búbì dōu qù, yí ge rén qù jiù
xíng le.

No need for [you] all to go, one will do.

Yào kāichē bìxū yǒu zhízhào.

If you want to drive, you need a license.

Zhèr de xuéshēng rúguǒ yào bìyè
bìxū xué wàiyǔ.

Students here need to study a foreign
language if they want to graduate.

riyòng bixūpǐn

daily necessities

bú biyào de máfan / shǒuxù.	unnecessary bother / procedures.
Wǒ kàn méiyǒu biyào bǎ tā suǒshàng.	I don't think that it's necessary to lock it. (‘As I see [it], there's no necessity to...’)
“Ài nǐ yě xūyào hěn duō de yǒnggǎn.”	“Loving you takes a lot of courage.” [Title of a popular song by the Cantonese singer, Harlem Yu.]
Nǐmen xūyào bǐ píngcháng zǎo yìdiǎnr chī zǎofàn.	You need to eat breakfast a bit earlier than usual.
Yǒu shénme xūyào bāngmáng de ma?	Anything you need help with?

Exercise 3

Explain that although things are getting more and more expensive, people (rénmen) are also earning (zhuàn) more and more money. Take fruit: in the past people used to eat water melons in the spring and apples in the fall. That was it. Occasionally there were also bananas or oranges. But except for those, you couldn't find any other fruit, and couldn't afford to buy any other fruit. But now, the situation (qíngxìng) is quite different. Now you can buy oranges and bananas in the winter. But they are much more expensive than in the past. When I was a child, we used to pay about 90 cents for a bunch (M chuàn) of bananas. Now you pay RMB 4-5. But the more expensive they are, they more they sell! It's amazing.

10.6 Xiēhòuyǔ, a form of word play

An expression in the last section, bú biyào de shǒuxù, conjures up a pungent example of a class of Chinese word play known as xiēhòuyǔ. Xiēhòuyǔ consist of two parts: the first part, which is stated, poses a riddle; the second part, which is usually not stated, answers it. But the creativity of the xiēhòuyǔ comes from the fact that the unstated answer requires further interpretation for it to apply to the situation. Here are a few examples:

<i>stated</i>		<i>unstated</i>		<i>implied</i>
Háma tiào jǐng toad jumps+in well	>	bù dòng, bù dòng. budong, budong [noise]	>	not understand
Fēijī shàng guà nuǎnpíng airplane on hang thermos;	>	gāo shuǐpíng. high 'water-level'	>	high standard
Shíbā suì zhào jìngzi 18 yrs-old reflect mirror	>	lǎo yàngzi. as always	>	no change [Because by 18, you're grown.]

And the more earthy example suggested by the earlier phrase:

Tuō kùzi fàng pì	>	bú biyào de shǒuxù.	
remove trousers put fart		unnecessary DE procedures	> red tape

While it is useful to know about xiēhòuyǔ, using them in speech would suggest a level of language use that would be hard for anybody but the most advanced students to sustain. In some ways, xiēhòuyǔ, like proverbs or sayings, can be mastered just like any other vocabulary, by observing – or being told – actual usage and then trying them out warily. However, they are used sparingly in ordinary conversation – particularly to foreigners – and so in the foundation stages of study, it is enough to be aware of them, and collect other examples from Chinese friends – who are usually delighted to talk about the subject.

10.7 Religion

Though the official line in China is that religions are superstition (míxìn, which means, literally, ‘confused belief’), nowadays some religious activity is tolerated, provided it does not show potential for threatening the power of the state. Chinese, knowing that formal religion plays a more prominent role in the life of many foreigners, will often ask about religious affiliation.

Nǐ xìn shénme jiào?	What’s your religion?
Wǒ shi Fójiàotú.	I’m Buddhist. (‘Buddhism-follower’)
Wǒ bú xìn jiào.	I don’t have a religion.

Answers would generally be expected to come from the following (alphabetical) list:

<i>Religion</i>		<i>Practitioner</i>	
Buddhism	Fójiào	Buddhist	Fójiàotú
Catholicism	Tiānzhǔjiào (heaven-host-religion)	Catholic	Tiānzhǔtú
Christianity	Jīdūjiào (Christ-religion)	Christian	Jīdūjiào de
Hinduism	Yīndùjiào	Hindu	Yīndùjiào de
Islam	Huíjiào	Moslem	Huízú
Judaism	Yóutàijiào	Jew	Yóutàirén
Protestantism	Xīnjiào (new-religion)	Protestant	Xīnjiàotú

Notes

- jiào ‘teachings’, reduced from zóngjiào ‘religion’.
- tú ‘disciple; follower’, a bound form; as noted, tú is not used for followers of all religions.

- c) Moslems are considered a minority group (shǎoshù mínzú) in China – the only minority group defined in terms of religion.
- d) While ordinary people in Chinese know about Tiānzhǔjiào, there is often some confusion about the difference between Jīdūjiào and Xīnjiào.
- e) It is often argued that Taoism (Dàojiào) and Buddhism operate syncretically, ie within a single system. In ordinary speech, people often identify themselves – or others – as Fójiàotú, or xìn Fójiào de, but not xìn Dàojiào de.
- f) Because of their importance in US history, the Puritans, Qīnqǐjiàotú ‘clear-religion-followers’, are also well known in China.



A roof in the Yōnghégōng ‘The Palace [temple] of Harmony and Peace’ in Beijing.

The names of buildings where the various faiths worship or otherwise practice their religions are incorporated in the sentences below:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Xìn Fó de zài sìmiào shāoxiāng
bàifó. | People who believe in Buddhism burn
incense and worship the Buddha in temples. |
| Xìn Jīdūjiào de zài jiàotáng
zuò lǐbài. | People who believe in Christianity worship
in churches. |
| Xìn Huíjiào de zài qīngzhēnsì
qídǎo. | People who believe in Islam pray in
mosques. |

Summary:

<i>Practitioner</i>	<i>building</i>	<i>worship practices</i>	
Xìn Fó de (Fójiàotú)	sìmiào	shāoxiāng	bàifó
Xìn Jīdūjiào de	jiàotáng	zuò lǐbài	qídǎo
Xìn Huíjiào de	qīngzhēnsì	qídǎo	

Notes

Buddhist priests are known as heshàng; Catholic priests are shénfu; protestant pastors are mùshi (‘shepherd – teacher’); non-specialists would be unlikely to know the comparable terms for the other religions.



Chinese temple, Rangoon, Burma [1970]

10.8 Verb Combos (4)

Students of English know the difficulty of dealing with its vast repertoire of ‘phrasal verbs’: check in, check out, check up; or pick on, pick off, pick up, pick out. The second element of these combinations is a directional particle; but the meaning of the whole is often not easily deduced from its component parts. In other words, many are idiomatic. In Chinese, verb-combos present much the same problem. While some are transparent (náguòqu), others are harder to derive from the elements involved (mǎibuqǐ). For this reason, they have been introduced incrementally. This section introduces a few more idiosyncratic sets.

10.8.1 –*xiàlai*

Verbs of recording or notation are completed by the directional complement xiàlai, roughly corresponding to ‘down’ in English. The relevant verbs are:

xiě	jì	bèi	lù	zhào	huà	miáo
write	note	memorize	record	photograph	draw; paint	trace

Usage

1. Qǐng bǎ tā xiěxiàlai. Would you mind writing it down.
2. Shuō màn yìdiǎnr, wǒ jìbuxiàlai. Speak slower – I can’t get it down.

3. Méi tīngqīngchū, nǐ shì bu shì
bǎ tā jìxiàlai le?
Jìxiàlai le, nǐ kàn.
Ng, wǒ kànbudǒng.
Wǒ de zì xiě+de bù hǎo.
I didn't hear clearly, did you get it down?
Yes, I did, look.
Er, I can't read it.
I didn't write the characters very well.
4. Tāmen shuō de hěn yǒu yìsi;
wǒmen yīnggāi bǎ tā lùxiàlai.
What they're saying is fascinating; we
should record it.
5. Wǒmen zuì hǎo bǎ nèi zhāng
dìtú miáoxiàlai.
It would be best if we traced that map.

10.8.2 – chūlai

Chūlai, with the literal meaning of 'come out', combines with verbs of perception to mean 'figure out; recognize':

- Yīnwèi tā de màozi, wǒ bǎ tā
rènchūlai le. [rènshi]
I recognized him by his hat.
- Nǐ cāidechūlai wǒ shì shéi ma?
Cāibuchūlai.
Can you guess who I am?
No, I can't.
- Dǎ diànhuà de shíhou tīngbuchū-
lai tā shì wàiguó rén.
On the phone, you can't hear that
she's a foreigner.
- Nǐ kàndechū zhèi ge dìfang yǒu
hěn duō biànhuà!
You can see that this place has a lot
of changes.



Shànghǎi [2006]: Wǒ rènchū zhèi ge dìfang lái le !

10.8.3 Moving out

Hǎi Bó is trying to get in touch with his friend Xǔ Chángdé. But when he phones his apartment, the woman who answers doesn't know where he is. Note how the selection of particular verb complements can modify the verb bān 'move'.

Hǎi Wei, qǐng zhǎo Xǔ Chángdé ji diànhuà. Hello, may I speak to Xǔ Chángdé?

Nǚde Xǔ Chángdé a, tā bānzǒu le. Xǔ Chángdé? He's moved away.

Hǎi Tā bānjiā le ma? He's moved?

Nǚde Shì, bānjiā le. Yes.

Hǎi Bāndào nǎlǐ, zhīdao ma? Do you know where he's gone?

Nǚde Bù zhīdào. I don't know.

Hǎi Tā shì shénme shíhou bānchūqu de? When did he move out?

Nǚde Bù zhīdào. Wǒmen běn yuè chū bānjìnlai de. Don't know. We moved in at the beginning of the month.

Hǎi Hǎo, duō xiè. Okay, thanks.

Nǚde Bú xiè! You're welcome!

Notes

- a) Wei is an interjection, used to open a telephone conversation, or call out to someone.
- b) Qǐng zhǎo X jiē diànhuà is the conventional way of asking to speak to someone, literally 'invite find X connect phone'.
- c) Běn yuè chū, literally 'root month beginning', ie 'at the beginning of the current month'; cf. běn yuè dǐ 'at the end of the month'.