

Lesson Fifteen Seeing a Doctor

第十五課 看 病

Dì Shí wǔ Kè Kàn Bìng

GRAMMAR

1. 死 (sǐ) Indicating Extreme Degree

Placed after an adjective, 死 (sǐ) can serve as a complement to indicate an extreme degree of the condition named by the adjective.

- (1) 打针疼死了。 (Dǎ zhēn téng sǐ le.) (It's extremely painful to get a shot.)
 (2) 我餓死了。 (Wǒ è sǐ le.) (I'm starved to death.)
 (3) 今天熱死了。 (Jīntiān rè sǐ le.) (It's awfully hot today.)

死 (sǐ) often follows an adjective with a pejorative meaning and therefore the combination carries a negative connotation, as shown in the examples above. Occasionally, however, it may also be used in a positive context.

- (4) 知道了这件事，他高兴死了。
 Zhīdào le zhè jiàn, tā gāo xìng sǐ le.
 (He was tickled pink when he learned about this.)

Most complimentary adjectives cannot be followed by 死 (sǐ). People therefore seldom say:

- (5) *那件衣服漂亮死了。 Nà jiàn yīfú piāoliàng sǐ le.
 (6) *他跟他女朋友好死了。 Tā gēn tā nǚpéngyǒu hǎo sǐ le

2. Times of Actions

次 (cì) is the measure word most frequently used to indicate that an action is performed a certain number of times. The “number + 次 (cì)” combination follows the verb.

- (1) 上午我打了兩次電話。

Shàngwǔ wǒ dǎle liǎng cì diànhuà.
(I made two phone calls this morning.)

- (2) 昨天我吃了三次藥。

Zuótiān wǒ chīle sān cì yào.
(I took the medicine three times yesterday.)

If the object is not a person or place, 次 (cì) should be placed between the verb and the object; if the object represents a person or a place, 次 (cì) can go either between the verb and the object or after the object.

- (3) A: 去年我去了一次中國。你呢？

Qùnián wǒ qùle yí cì Zhōngguó. Nǐ ne?
(Last year I went to China once. How about you?)

- B: 去年我去中國兩次。

Qùnián wǒ qùle Zhōngguó liǎng cì.
(Last year I went to China twice.)

- (4) A: 昨天我找了三次王醫生。

Zuótiān wǒ zhǎole sān cì Wáng Yīsheng.
(I looked for Doctor Wang three times yesterday.)

- B: 是嗎？昨天我也找了王醫生三次。

Zuótiān wǒ zhǎole Wáng yīsheng sān cì.
(Is that right? I also went looking for Doctor Wang three times yesterday.)

If the object is a personal pronoun, however, 次 (cì) must follow the object.

(5) 我昨天找了他兩次，他都不在。

Wǒ zuótiān zhǎole tā liǎng cì, tā dōu bú zài.
(Yesterday I looked for him twice, but he was not in either time.)

遍 (biàn) is another measure word for occurrences of actions, but its pertains to the entire course of the action from the beginning to the end.

(6) 請你念一遍課文。

Qǐng nǐ niàn yì biàn kèwén
(Please read the text [from the beginning to the end] once.)

Nouns denoting body parts involved in the actions can also sometimes serve as measure words for occurrences of actions. One example is from Dialogue I of the current lesson:

昨天晚上我吃了幾口...

zuótiān wǎn shàng wǒ chī le jǐ kǒu
(I ate a few mouthfuls last night...)

3. 起來 (qi lai) indicating the Beginning of an Action

起來 (qi lai) indicates the moment when something static becomes dynamic, that is, it signifies the beginning of an action or state.

(1) 我們一見面就聊了起來。

wǒmen yì jiànmiàn jiù liáo le qi lai.

(We began chatting as soon as we met.)

(2) 他一回家就寫起信來。

tā yì huì jiā jiù xiě qǐ xìn lai.

(He began to write a letter as soon as he got home.)

(3) 下了課以後，學生們打起球來。

xià le kè yǐ hòu, xuéshēng men dǎ qǐ qiú lai.

(The students started to play ball after the class was over.)

Note that the object is placed between 起(qi) and 來(lai), rather than after起來 (qi lai).

4. 把 (bǎ) Structure (I)

Sentences with 把 (bǎ) are common in Chinese. The basic structure is as follows:

Subject + 把 (bǎ) + Object + Verb + Other Element (Complement/了 {le} , etc.)

In the 把 (bǎ) structure, what follows the position 把 (bǎ) and precedes the verb serves as both the object of 把 (bǎ) and object of the verb. In general, a sentence in the 把 (bǎ) construction highlights the subject's disposal of or impact upon the object, with the result of the disposal or impact indicated by the element following the verb.

(1) 我把你要的書找到了。

Wǒ bǎ nǐ yào de shū zhǎo dào le.

(I have found the books that you wanted.) [到 is a Resultative complement.]

In (1) the subject 我 (wǒ) exerts an impact on the book through the action of 找 (zhǎo), of which 到 (dào) is the result;

(2) 你把這個字寫錯了。

Nǐ bǎ zhe ge zì xiě cuò le.

(You wrote this character wrong.) [錯 (cuò) is a Resultative complement.]

In (2) the subject 我 (wǒ) exerts an impact on the character through the action of 寫 (xiě), of which 錯 (cuò) is the result;

(3) 請把那條褲子給我。

Qǐng bǎ nà tiáo kùzi gěi wǒ.

(Please pass me that pair of pants.) [我 (wǒ) is the indirect object.]

(4) 你把這篇課文看看。

Qǐng nǐ bǎ zhè piān kèwén kànkàn.

(Would you please take a look at this book.)

[In the above sentence the reduplicated verb 看 (kàn) serves as the other element.]

(5) 把這杯咖啡喝了！

Bǎ zhè bēi kāfēi hē le.

(Finish this cup of coffee!)

(6) 你怎麼把女朋友的生日忘了？

Nǐ zěnmē bǎ nǚ péngyou de shēngrì wàng le?

(How did you manage to forget your girlfriend's birthday?)

[In the sentences (5) and (6) the particle 了 serves as the other element.]

(3, 4, 5) suggests what the listener is requested to do to the objects (the pants, the text and the coffee); The other element could be a complement as in (4), or the particle 了 as in (5, 6).

In sentences of the 把 (bǎ) structure, the object is often something already known to both the speaker and the listener. For example, 你要的書 (Nǐ yào de shū) in (1), 這個字 (Zhè ge zì) in (2), 那條褲子 (Nà tiáo kùzi) in (3), 女朋友的生日 (Nǚ péngyou de shēngrì) in (6) are all things already known. Now compare the following two sentences:

(7) 老王給了小張一些錢。

Lǎo Wáng gěile Xiǎo Zhāng yì xiē qián.

(Old Wang gives Little Zhang money.)

(8) 老王把錢給小張了。

Lǎo Wáng bǎ qián gěi Xiǎo Zhāng le.

(Old Wang gave the money to Little Zhang.)

The object in (7) “some money” is not specified. However, in (8), the speaker expects the listener to know what money is being referred to.

If the subject of a sentence is given, the object is something known to both of the speaker and the listener, and the verb is followed by a complement in the form of a prepositional phrase with 在 and 到, that sentence must appear in the把 (bǎ) construction.

你把筆放在桌子上。

Nǐ bǎ bǐ fàngzài zhuō zǐ shàng.

(Put the pen on the desk.)

請你把這封信送到律師的辦公室。

Qǐng nǐ bǎ zhèfēngxìn sòng dào lǚshī de bàngōngshì.

(Please deliver this letter to the attorney’s office.)

*你放筆在桌子上。

*請你送這封信到律師的辦公室。

5. The Preposition 對 (duì)

The preposition 對 (duì) introduces the person or thing that receives a certain effect from someone or something else. Its English translation varies depending on the context.

(1) 這種藥對感冒很有用。

Zhè zhǒng yào duì gǎnmào hěn yǒuyòng.
(This medicine is very effective for colds.)

(2) 他的電腦對他練習發音很有用。

Tā de diànnǎo duì tā liànxī fāyīn hěn yǒuyòng.
(His computer is a big help to him.)

(3) 你一定對什麼東西過敏了。

Nǐ yí dìng duì shénme dōngxi guòmǐn.
(You must be allergic to something.)

6. 越来越 (yuè lái yuè)

The structure 越来越 (yuè lái yuè) denotes a progressive change over time.

(1) 李友的中文越来越好了。

Lǐ yǒu de zhōngwén yuèlái yuè hǎo le.

(Li You's Chinese is getting better and better.)

(2) 天气越来越暖和了。

Tiānqì yuèlái yuè nuǎn hé le.

(The weather is becoming warmer and warmer.)

(3) 表姐考试考得越来越糟糕。

Biǎo jiě kǎoshì kǎo dé yuèlái yuè zāogāo.

(My cousin is doing worse and worse on her exams.)

7. 再說 (zàishuō, besides; moreover)

The expression 再說 (zàishuō) introduces an additional reason for an action that has been taken or decision that has been made. It is different from 再 + 說, (zài + shuō; to say it again).

(1) A: 你為什麼不去紐約？

Nǐ wèishénme bú qù niǔ yuē?
(Why aren't you going to New York?)

B: 我沒有時間，再說，也沒有錢。

Wǒ méiyǒu shíjiān, zàishuō, yě méiyǒu qián.
(I don't have the time, and besides, I don't have the money.)

(2) 我不喜歡今天晚上的舞會，音樂不好，再說人也太少。

Wǒ bù xǐhuan jīntiān wǎnshang de wǔhuì, yīn lè bú hǎo, zàishuō rén yě tài shǎo.
(I don't like the movie. It's too dull. Besides, it is too long.)

Like 再說 (zàishuō), 而且 (érqiě, moreover; in addition) also conveys the idea of “furthermore, additionally,” etc., but the clause that follows it may or may not be explanatory in nature. Compare the following sentences:

(3) A: 你為什麼不去紐約？

(Nǐ wèishénme bú qù niǔ yuē?)
(Why are you not going to New York?)

B: 我沒有時間，而且，也沒有錢。

(Wǒ méiyǒu shíjiān, érqiě, yě méiyǒu qián?)
(I don't have the time. Besides, I don't have the money.)

Note: In (3), 而且 (érqiě) can be replaced with 再說 (zàishuō).

(4) 這是王先生，他不但是我的老師，**而且**是我的朋友。

Zhè shì Wáng xiānsheng, tā búdàn shì wǒ de lǎoshī, érqiě shì wǒ de péngyǒu.
(This is Mr. Wang. He is not only my teacher but also my friend.)

Note: In (4), **而且** (érqiě) cannot be replaced with **再說** (zàishuō):

(4a) * 這是王先生，他不但是我的老師，**再說**是我的朋友。

(Zhè shì Wáng xiānsheng, tā búdàn shì wǒ de lǎoshī, zàishuō shì wǒ de péngyǒu.)