

Sentence Patterns

Parts of speech (1)

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Unit 1 List of the parts of speech

A.1 The list

	Cantonese	English Counterparts
1.	Nouns	Nouns
2.	Numbers	Numerals
3.	Measure Words	***
4.	Pronouns	Pronouns
5.	Verbs	Verbs
6.	Adjectives	Adjectives
7.	Adverbs	Adverbs
8.	Prepositions	Prepositions
9.	Conjunctions	Conjunctions
10.	Particles	***
11.	Interjections	Interjections
12.	Onomatopoeias	Onomatopoeias
	***	Article- a, an, the

1. Remarks

*** For the two parts of speech, “Measure Words” and “Particles”, there are no English counterparts.

The definitions of these parts of speech maybe not be exactly the same as that in English. However they are similar.

Besides, all the parts of speech mentioned in this book are according to the classification of Cantonese and may not be the same as that in English

A.2 Characteristics of Cantonese

1. Cantonese doesn't have Articles

There is no articles - a, an & the in Cantonese.

Therefore in Cantonese, for “a” or “an”, people say “one: **yât**”. For

definite referring - the, people use measure word.

Besides, in English, unless it's plural or uncountable things, people have to add an article before the noun, however, there's no this requirement in Cantonese. It's optional to use “yât...” or not before the noun and it's mainly depends on if the speaker wants to make it clear or emphasise it.

- 1) I have a pen

ngóh yáuh (yāt-jī) bāt
I have (1 MW) pen

2. English doesn't have Measure Words and Particles

Measure Word and Particles are two most difficult parts of speech to most learners as there is no counterparts in English.

3. Requirement of subject or verb

It is not necessary that a sentence must take a subject or a verb

4. No change in word forms

- 1) happy / happiness _____

hōi sām

- 2) swim / swam / swum _____

yàuh séui

- 3) eat / ate _____

sihk

- 4) He represents us _____

kéuih doih-bíu ngóh-deih
he represent us

- 5) He is our representative _____

kéuih haih ngóh-deih ge doih-bíu
he is our 's representatives

5. **Word suffix**

Since there's no change in word form, sometimes word suffixes are used

- 1) has eaten _____
sihk jǒ
- 2) has come _____
laih jǒ
- 3) happier _____
hōi-sām dī

Unit 2 Nouns

I. Some kinds of nouns

A. Nouns of time

A.1 Functions

1. Subjects

- 1) Tomorrow is my birthday _____
tīng-yaht haih ngóh sāang-yaht
- 2) Yesterday is Saturday _____
chàhm-yaht haih láih-baai-luhk
- 3) Today is Sunday _____
gām-yaht haih láih-baai-yaht
- 4) Tomorrow is Monday _____
tīng-yaht haih láih-baai-yāt

2. Adverbials

- 1) I went there on Monday _____
ngóh sīng-kèih-yāt heui gó-douh
- 2) I went there last week _____
ngóh seuhng-go láih-baai heui gó-douh
- 3) I went there at 10:30 _____
ngóh sah-p-dím-bun heui gó-douh
- 4) I will go for a picnic tomorrow _____
picnic/travel: léuih-hàhng
ngóh tīng-yaht heui léuih-hàhng

A.2 Order of different time words

In sentences dealing with different time words, the larger unit of time always precedes the smaller

- 1) 9:15 am _____
jīu-jóu gám-dím-sāam
- 2) 2:10 pm _____
aan-jau léuhng-dím-yih
- 3) 3:30 pm _____
aan-jau sāam-dím-bun
- 4) 8:20 pm _____
yeh-máahn baat-dím-sei
- 5) tomorrow 10:45 am _____
tīng-yaht jīu-jóu sahp-dím-gáu
- 6) yesterday 4:50pm _____
chàhm-yaht aan-jau sei-dím sahp
- 7) 1st May _____
ńgh-yuht yāt-houh
- 8) 25th December _____
sahp-yih-yuht yih-sahp-ńgh-houh
- 9) 1st Jan 2002 _____
yih-lǐhng-lǐhng-yih nǐhn yāt-yuht yāt-houh
- 10) 20th June 2002 _____
yih-lǐhng-lǐhng-yih nǐhn luhk-yuht yih-sahp houh

B. Nouns of place

B.1 Function

1. Subject

- 1) Hong Kong is very big _____
Hēung-góng hóu daaih

- 2) Central is very near _____
Jūng-wàahn hóu káhn
- 3) Tuen Mun is very far _____
Tyùhn-mùhn hóu yúhn
- 4) There are many people in Hong Kong _____
(Hong Kong has many people)
Hēung-góng yáuh hóu-dō yáhn

2. Object

- 1) I went to Central _____
ngóh heui Jūng-wàahn
- 2) I went to Admiralty _____
ngóh heui Gām-jūng
- 3) They went to Tuen Mun _____
kéuih-deih heui Tyùhn-mùhn
- 4) They like Hong Kong _____
kéuih-deih jūng-yi Hēung-góng
- 5) I like Hong Kong very much _____
ngóh hóu jūng-yi Hēung-góng

B.2 Combine with “hái” to form adverbials

In order to form adverbial, “hái” has to be added before a place word. Besides, adverbials has to be put before the main verb but after the subject

- 1) I work in Central _____
ngóh hái Jūng-wàahn fāan-gūng
- 2) They work in Tsim Sha Tsui _____
kéuih-deih hái Jīm-sā-jéui fāan-gūng
- 3) I buy things in Admiralty _____
ngóh hái Gām-jūng máaih-yéh
- 4) I studied in a library _____
ngóh hái tòuh-syū-gún wān-syū

- 5) I bought stamps in the post office _____
 stamps: yàuh-piu
 ngóh **hái** yàuh-gúk máaih yàuh-piu

B.3 Order of different place words

In sentences dealing with different place words, the larger unit always precedes the smaller

- 1) Gloucester Road, Wan Chai _____
Wāan-jái Gou-sih-dá-douh
- 2) Des Voeux Road, Central _____
Jūng-wàahn Dāk-fuh-douh
- 3) The Landmark, Central _____
Jūng-wàahn Ji-deih gwóng-chèuhng
- 4) Times Square, Causeway _____
Tùhng-lòh-wàahn Sih-doih gwóng-chèuhng
- 5) 80 Nathan Road, TST _____
Jīm-sā-jéui, Nèih-dēun-douh baat-sahp-houh
- 6) Flat D, 12/F, Block 3, Four Seas Centre _____
Sei-hói Jūng-sām, daih-sāam-joh, sahp-yih láu, D sāt
- 7) Room 601, 6/F, Block B _____
B joh luhk-láu luhk-líhng-yāt sāt

C. Nouns of locality

C.1 Dissyllabic nouns of locality

After adding “bihn/mihn”, it can serve, roughly like ordinary nouns.
 Where “bihn/mihn” literally means “side”

(1) **Part A**

- 1) east
dūng bihn/mihn
- 2) south
nàahm bihn/mihn

- 3) west
sāi bihn/mihn
- 4) north
bāk bihn/mihn

(2) **Part B**

- 1) front
chìhn bihn/mihn
- 2) back
hauh bihn/mihn
- 3) left
jó bihn/mihn
- 4) right
yauh bihn/mihn

(3) **Part C**

- 1) inside
yahp bihn/mihn
léuih bihn/mihn
- 2) outside
chēut bihn/mihn
ngoih bihn/mihn

(4) **Part D**

- 1) opposite
deui mihn
(can't say “bihn” here)
- 2) next to
gaak-lèih

C.2 Function

1. Can work as subjects

- 1) There are people in the front _____
chìhn-bihh yáuh yàhn
- 2) There are cars at the back _____
hauh-bihh yáuh chē
- 3) There are shops at the left _____
jó-bihh yáuh pou-táu
- 4) There is a Mc Donald's at the right _____
yauh-bihh yáuh Mahk-Dōng-Lòuh
- 5) There are people inside _____
yahp-bihh yáuh yàhn
- 6) There are students outside _____
chēut-bihh yáuh hohk-sāang

2. Can work as objects

- 1) The toilet is on the right _____
sái-sáu-gāan hái yauh-bihh
- 2) The MTR station is in front _____
deih-tit-jaahm hái chìhn-bihh
- 3) The taxi stand is at the back _____
dīk-sí-jaahm hái hauh-bihh

3. Can form position phrase (...of...)

- 1) the front of Park'n shop _____
Baak-gāai (ge) chìhn-bihh
Park'n shop 's front
("ge" is optional and it is always skipped, for formal statement, people leave it)
- 2) the back of the shop _____
gāan pou-táu hauh bihn

- 3) the back of the taxi stand _____
taxi stand dīk sí jaahm
dīk-sí-jaahm hauh-bihh
- 4) the left of the toilet _____
sái-sáu-gāan jó-bihh
- 5) the right of the bank _____
ngàhn-hòhng yauh-bihh
- 6) opposite to Mc Donald's _____
Mahk-dōng-lòuh deui-mihh
- 7) next to my home _____
ngóh ūk-kéi gaak-lèih
- 8) next to the cinema _____
hei-yún gaak-lèih
- 9) outside the MTR station _____
deih-tit-jaahm chēut-bihh
- 10) inside the MTR station _____
deih-tit-jaahm yahp-bihh
- 11) the east of Hong Kong _____
Hēung-góng (ge) dūng-mihh

4. Sentences with position phrase

- 1) The toilet is inside Park'n shop _____
sái-sáu-gāan hái Baak-gāai yahp-bihh
- 2) The toilet is outside Park'n shop _____
sái-sáu-gāan hái Baak-gāai chēut-bihh
- 3) The toilet is on the right of Park'n shop _____
sái-sáu-gāan hái Baak-gāai yauh-bihh
- 4) The toilet is next to Park'n shop _____
sái-sáu-gāan hái Baak-gāai gaak-lèih
- 5) The telephone is next to the information desk _____
dihh-wá hái sēun-mahn-chyu gaak-lèih

- 6) I will wait for you at the left of the bank _____
 (bank's left wait)
ngàhn-hòhng jó-bihh dáng
- 7) There are lots of people at the right of the MTR station _____
 (MTR station's right side has many people)
deih-tit-jaahm yauh-bihh yáuh hóu-dō yàhn

II. Attentions

A. Measure Word

If nouns are used after “numerals” or for specific referring, after this, that and the, it must have a measure word between it and the noun it modifies.

A.1 Measure Words are used

- 1) three people _____
sāam gò yàhn
- 2) three books _____
sāam bín syū
- 3) three chairs _____
sāam jēung dang
- 4) three sheets of paper _____
sāam jēung jí
- 5) three heads of cow _____
sāam jek ngàuh
- 6) three wishes _____
sāam gò yuhn-mohng
- 7) three umbrellas _____
sāam bá jē

A.2 Exceptions

Basically, all countable nouns, even abstract nouns, such as wish, also take measure word. However there are some exceptions which don't

take MW.

Usually exceptions are those nouns which themselves are somehow have the measuring sense.

1. Exceptions - some time expressions

yaht 'day', máahn 'night', nìhn 'year', fân 'minute' and míu 'second'

- 1) three days _____
sāam yaht
- 2) three nights _____
sāam máahn
- 3) three years _____
sāam nìhn
- 4) three minutes _____
sāam fân (jūng)
- 5) three second _____
sāam míu (jūng)

2. Other time expressions still take measure words

- 1) three of 'a-five-minute' _____
sāam gò jih
- 2) three hours _____
sāam gò jūng
- 3) three months _____
sāam gò yuht
- 4) three weeks _____
sāam gò láih baai

3. Exceptions - others

- 1) 2 lessons _____
léuhng tòhng

B. Reduplication

Some monosyllabic nouns can be reduplicated to express the meaning of “every”. It can also be done by reduplicate the MW instead of the noun it self

1. Without measure word

- 1) every year _____
nìhn nìhn
- 2) every day _____
yaht yaht

2. With measure word

- 1) every book _____
bún bún syū
- 2) every student _____
go go hohk-sāang
- 3) every table _____
jēung jēung tói
- 4) every pen _____
jī jī bāt
- 5) every item of clothing _____
gihn gihn sām

(2) With or without measure word

- 1) every people _____
go go yàhn / yàhn yàhn

C. Gender

When they want to denote the gender of a noun, most of the time, they add **nàahm** and **néuih** before the nouns. However usually they just don't mention the gender.

- 1) staff
jīk-yùhn

- 2) male staff _____
nàahm jīk-yùhn
- 3) female staff _____
néuih jīk-yùhn
- 4) students _____
hohk-sāang
- 5) male students _____
nàahm hohk-sāang
- 6) female students _____
néuih hohk-sāang
- 7) actor/actress _____
yín-yùhn
- 8) actor _____
nàahm yín-yùhn
- 9) actress _____
néuih yín-yùhn
- 10) waiter/waitress _____
sih-ying
- 11) waiter _____
nàahm sih-ying
- 12) waitress _____
néuih sih-ying
- 13) man/women (person/people)
yàhn
- 14) The man is very tall _____
gó go nàahm-yàhn* hóu gōu
- 15) The women is very short _____
gó go néuih-yàhn* hóu ái
- 16) Those boys are very lazy _____
gó dī nàahm jái hóu láahn

- 17) Those girls are very beautiful _____
 gó dī néuih jái hóu leng

D. Prefix

D.1 “áh”

- 1) My mum is a housewife _____
 ngóh áh-mā/mā-mìh haih gā-tìhng-jyú-fúh
- 2) My daddy is a taxi driver _____
 ngóh áh-bàh/dē-dìh haih dīk-sí sī-gēi
- 3) My elder brother is 20 years old _____
 ngóh áh-gō/daaih-lóu yih-sahp seui
- 4) My classmate is called Ling _____
 ngóh tùhng-hohk giu áh-Lìhng
- 5) His friend is call Sing _____
 kéuih pàhng-yáuh giu áh-Sìhng

E. Suffix

E.1 “jái”

- 1) The small table looks very nice _____
 jēung tóu-jái hóu leng
- 2) The small stool is \$48 _____
 jēung dang-jái sei-sahp-baat mǎn
- 3) He has gone to his little friend's home _____
 kéuih heui-jó pàhng-yáuh jái ūk-kéi
- 4) He has many little school mates _____
 kéuih yáuh hóu-dō tùhng-hohk jái
- 5) The little luggage carrier is \$80 _____
 ga chē-jái baat-sahp mǎn

F. Articles

F.1 a/an/the

Cantonese has no articles equivalent to ‘a’ and ‘the’. The word yāt ‘one’ may be used like an indefinite articles. Measure word is used like an definite articles ‘the’. Different from English, a noun may take no “a” or “the” even when it refer to a single one

- 1) a book _____
yāt bún syū
 one MW book
- 2) the book _____
bún syū
 MW book
- 3) an apple _____
yāt-go pìhng-gwó
- 4) a magazine _____
yāt bún jaahp ji
- 5) the magazine _____
bún jaahp ji
- 6) a cup of tea _____
yāt būi chàh
- 7) the cup of tea _____
būi chàh

F.2 a/an/the/any/X

- 1) Do you have any pens? _____
 néih yáuh-móuh bāt a?
- 2) Do you have a pen? _____
 néih yáuh-móuh bāt a?
- 3) Do you have the pen? _____
 néih yáuh-móuh jī bāt a?

- 4) I want to buy a pen _____
ngóh séung máaih bāt
- 5) I want to buy pens _____
ngóh séung máaih bāt
- 6) I want to buy the pen _____
ngóh séung máaih jī bāt
- 7) I want to buy the pens _____
ngóh séung máaih dī bāt
- 8) I want to buy some pens _____
ngóh séung máaih dī bāt
- 9) Go straight, you will see a shop _____
jihk-hàahng, néih wúih gin-dóu yāt-gāan pou-táu
(for giving direction, people have to make it clear, "yāt-gāan" is used, it's not grammatically bound, mainly depends on the context need "one yāt-gāan" or not.)
- 10) Go straight, you will see the shop _____
jihk-hàahng, néih wúih gin-dóu gāan pou-táu
- 11) I ate at a Japanese restaurant _____
ngóh hái yāt-gāan Yaht-bún chāan-tēng sihk-faahn
- 12) I ate at Japanese restaurant _____
ngóh hái Yaht-bún chāan-tēng sihk-faahn
(it sounds the name of the restaurant is "Japanese Restaurant")

G. Possessive Construction

In possessive cases, either the structure particle (possessive marker) "ge" or a proper measure word can be used. The following rules general guide lines and they are not absolute rules.

G.1 Using "ge"

Using "ge" can't show the possessions are singular or plural and it sounds more formal. Actually using measure words to show possessive is more common.

1. Abstract possessions

- 1) my interest _____
ngóh ge hing-cheui
- 2) my character _____
ngóh ge sing-gaak
- 3) his way of thinking _____
kéuih ge nám-faat
- 4) their hopes _____
kéuih-deih ge hēi-mohng
- 5) government's problems _____
jing-fú ge mahn-tàih
- 6) his wishes _____
kéuih ge yuhn-mohng
- 7) the welfare of this company _____
(welfare fúk-leih)
nī-gāan gūng-sī ge fūk-leih

2. Possessor is collective noun or it's in plural

- 1) Student's books shouldn't be so expensive _____
hohk-sāang ge syū m̀h yīng-gōi gam gwai
- 2) He wasted tax payers' money _____
tax payer: laahp-seui yàhn
kéuih sāai laahp-seui yàhn ge chín
- 3) their school _____
kéuih-deih ge hohk-haauh

3. Emphasis/Formal statements

- 1) Her clothes are very expensive _____
kéuih ge sāam hóu gwai

4. Don't know it's singular or plural

- 1) my book/books _____
ngoh **ge** syū

G.2 Using “measure words”

1. General possessive case

- 1) my book _____
ngoh **bún** syū
(if people know it's singular or plural, using a proper MW is more common)
- 2) my books _____
ngoh **dī** syū
- 3) His head is hurt _____
kéuih **go** tàuh sauh-jó sēung
- 4) my hair _____
ngoh **dī** tàuh-faat
- 5) my watch _____
ngoh **jek** sáu-bīu
- 6) my watches _____
ngoh **dī** sáu-bīu
- 7) my money(uncountable) _____
ngoh **dī** chin
- 8) His pen costs \$10 _____
kéuih **jī** bát sahp mǎn
- 9) His pens are very new _____
kéuih **dī** bát hóu sǎn
- 10) Their money is lost _____
kéuih-deih **dī** chin mǎh-gin-gó
- 11) Her dress is very beautiful _____
kéuih **tùh** kwàhn hóu leng

- 12) Her dresses are very beautiful _____
kéuih **dī** kwàhn hóu leng

- 13) My two books are both lost _____
ngoh léuhng **bún** syū dōu mǎh-gin-jó
my 2 MW book also lost

2. Animals

- 1) The wings of the bird is hurt _____
jek jeuk-jái **go** tàuh sauh-jó sēung
- 2) The tail of the cat is very long _____
jek mǎau **tùh** méih hóu chéuhng

G.3 Skip “ge” or “measure words”

The possessive marker ge may be left out with kinship terms and certain other nouns where there is a close link between the possessor and the noun, especially where the possessor is a pronoun. However in more formal statements, “ge” can be added back

1. Kinship / friends

- 1) my mother _____
ngoh mǎ-mǎh/mǎh-mǎ
- 2) your father _____
néih dē-dìh/bàh-bā
- 3) his elder brother _____
kéuih daaih-lóu
- 4) his younger brother _____
kéuih sai-lóu
- 5) his elder sister _____
kéuih gā-jē
- 6) his younger sister _____
kéuih sai-múi
- 7) my husband _____
ngoh sīn-sāang

- 8) my wife _____
ngóh taai-táai
- 9) his friend _____
kéuih pàhng-yáuh
- 10) my company _____
ngóh gūng-sī
- 11) my wallet _____
ngóh ngàhn-bāau
- 12) your school _____
néih hohk-haauh
- 13) Your home is very big _____
néih ūk-kéi hóu daaih
- 14) His parents are not in Hong Kong _____
kéuih fuh-móuh m̀h hái Hēung-góng
- 15) His family member lives in America _____
kéuih ūk-kéi yàhn jyuh hái Méih-gwok
- 16) Her wallet is lost _____
kéuih (go) ngàhn-bāau m̀h-gin-jó
- 17) You husband is very nice _____
nice: hóu yàhn
néih sīn-sāang hóu hóu-(yàhn)
Cantonese won't say "I like your husband". Like is "jūng yi" which is the same as "love".

2. Exception

In kinship, if the nouns are single syllable, "ge" or the measure words won't be skipped

- 1) my son _____
ngóh go jái
- 2) my daughter _____
ngóh go néui

3. Unanimated things

- 1) the legs of the table _____
tói geuk
- 2) the legs of the chair _____
dang geuk
- 3) The door of the room _____
fòhng* mùhn
- 4) chicken wings (the food) _____
gāi-yihk

I. Kinds of Numerals

A.1 Whole numbers

- 1) one _____
yāt
- 2) one hundred _____
yāt baak

A.2 Multiple Numbers

Multiple numbers are formed by adding the measure word “púih” after numerals.

- 1) one time _____
yāt púih
- 2) double _____
léuhng púih
- 3) triple _____
sām púih
- 4) 100 times _____
yāt-baak púih

A.3 Ordinal Numbers

Placing the prefix “daih” before numerals can form ordinal numbers.

- 1) the 1st _____
daih yāt
prefix one
- 2) the 2nd _____
daih yih

- 3) the 100th _____
daih yāt-baak
- 4) the 1000th _____
daih yāt chīn
- 5) 80 Nathan Road
Nèih-dēung-douh baat-sahp houh
Sometimes cardinal numbers are used even they are actually in the sense of ordinal numbers
- 6) I live on the 11th floor
ngóh jyuh hái sahp-yāt láu
I live on 11 floor
- 7) page 1 _____
daih yāt yihp
(no MW for page)
- 8) page 6 _____
daih lukh yihp
- 9) the first week _____
daih yāt go láih-baai
MW is required between a number and a noun.
- 10) the first month _____
daih yāt go yuht
- 11) the 8th day _____
daih baat yaht
- 12) the first time _____
daih yāt chi
- 13) I'm the first, you are the second, he is the third _____
ngóh daih-yāt, néih daih-yih, kéuih daih-sāam

II. Special numerals

A. 2 .

Both “yih” and “léuhng” means 2. When one says “two of something”, “léuhng” is used instead of “yih”.

One can also say that, before MW or nouns take no MW, “léuhng” is

used instead of “yih”

- 1) two pens _____
léuhng jī bāt
- 2) twenty-two pens _____
yih sahþ yih jī bāt (not two of something)
- 3) two days _____
léuhng yaht (day takes no MW)
- 4) two dollars _____
léuhng mǎn (two of sth.)
- 5) twenty dollars _____
yih-sahþ mǎn (not two of sth.)
- 6) \$0.2 _____
léuhng hòuh-(jī) (2 dimes)
hòuh-jī is a measuring unit that is equal to ten cents
- 7) \$2.2 _____
léuhng go yih
“go” is the measure word for coins, means dollars here. “léuhng” is usually used before a MW.
- 8) 2 dozen _____
léuhng dā
- 9) We have \$2 _____
ngóh yáuh léuhng mǎn
- 10) Those children has \$12 _____
gó-dī sai-mǎn-jái yáuh sahþ-yih mǎn
- 11) 2:10 _____
léuhng díng yih / léuhng díng léuhng go jih
“jih” is the measuring unit of “a-five-minute”. “go” is the MW for “jih”, léuhng is usually used before a MW.
- 12) Is your son 2 years old? _____
néih go jái haih-mh-haih léuhng seui a?
- 13) Is it 2:20 now? _____
yih-gā haih-mh-haih léuhng díng sei a?

- 14) Is it \$20? _____
haih mh haih yah-mǎn a?

B. half .

half can't be used by itself
MW is used after “half bun”

- 1) half an apple _____
bun go pihng gwó
- 2) one and a half apple _____
(yāt) go bun pihng gwó
- 3) two and a half apple _____
léuhng go bun pihng gwó
- 4) My daughter is one and half years old _____
daughter néui
ngóh go néui seui bun

III. Approximate numbers

A.1 Using two adjacent numerals together

- 1) I have three or four pens _____
ngóh yáuh sāam sei jī bāt
- 2) He has 3 or 4 girl friends _____
girlfriend néuih pǎhng yáuh
kéuih yáuh sāam sei go néuih-pǎhng-yáuh
- 3) There are 40 or 50 people _____
gó douh yáuh sei mh sahþ yáhn
- 4) There are 400 or 500 people _____
gó douh yáuh sei mh baak yáhn
- 5) That girl is 15 or 16 years old. _____
gó-go néuih-jái sahþ ngh lukh seui

Unit 4 Measure Words

I. Definition

Measure words are words that express a unit of things or action. They come before nouns for measuring purposes.

It is similar to the function of “piece” in “a piece of paper.”

Different groups of objects take different measure words. Usually, same shapes of objects share the same MWs.

Measure Word (MW) is also called Noun Classifier.

II. Sortal measure words

They reflect intrinsic features of the nouns with which they belong.

A. “go”

“go” is the most general sortal MW, if you don’t know which MW has to be used, you can use “go”. Even though it may be wrong, people are easier to understand your sentence rather than you just skip the MW.

A.1 Denoting people.

- 1) three students _____
sāam go hohk-sāang
- 2) a chef _____
yāt go chyùh-sī
- 3) a colleague _____
yāt go tùhng-sih
- 4) a client _____
yāt go haak

A.2 Spherical objects

- 1) an apple _____
yāt go pìhng-gwó

- 2) an orange _____
yāt go cháang
- 3) a water melon _____
yāt go sāi-gwā
- 4) an onion _____
yāt go yèuhng-chūng

A.3 Abstract nouns

It is also used for individual items that do not call for a more specific measure word.

Thus abstract nouns that refer to non-concrete entities lacking physical features, generally take go:

- 1) a wish _____
yāt go yuhn-mohng
- 2) a challenge _____
yāt go tīu-jin

B. “dī”

“dī” is a measure word for plural and uncountable things

It is used for all nouns showing plural without definite quantity or uncountable nouns

B.1 Plural

- 1) the chair _____
jēung dang
- 2) the chairs _____
dī dang
- 3) the pen _____
jī bāt
- 4) the pens _____
dī bāt
- 5) this pen _____
nī jī bāt

- 6) these pens _____
nī **dī** bāt
- 7) that pen _____
gó **jī** bāt
- 8) those pens _____
gó **dī** bāt
- 9) that mango _____
gó **gō** mōng-gwó
- 10) those mango _____
gó **dī** mōng-gwó
- 11) The apples are very nice _____
dī pìhng-gwo hóu leng

B.2 Uncountable

- 1) the water _____
dī séui
- 2) this water _____
nī-**dī** séui
- 3) that water _____
gó-**dī** séui
- 4) the coffee _____
dī ga-fē
- 5) this coffee _____
nī-**dī** ga-fē
- 6) that coffee _____
gó-**dī** ga-fē
- 7) the orange juice _____
dī cháang-jāp
- 8) this orange juice _____
nī-**dī** cháang-jāp

- 9) that orange juice _____
gó-**dī** cháang-jāp
- 10) The water is very hot _____
dī séui hóu yíht

B.3 Some

Besides carrying the meaning of “the”, **dī** also carry the meaning of ‘some’

When referring to “some”, it can be “**dī**” or “**yāt-dī**”. However “**dī**” is more common than “**yāt-dī**” in casual sayings

- 1) some pens _____
(**yāt**)-**dī** bāt
- Because “yāt” are often skipped in casual saying, “some pens” would be pronounced as “dī bāt”. However “the pens” is also pronounced as “dī bāt”, people have to distinguish the different meanings by the context.
- 2) some water _____
(**yāt**)-**dī** séui
- 3) I have some pens _____
ngóh yáuh (**yāt**)-**dī** bāt
- 4) I have some water _____
ngóh yáuh (**yāt**)-**dī** séui
- 5) There are some water _____
gó douh yáuh (**yāt**)-**dī** séui
- 6) There are some people _____
gó douh yáuh (**yāt**)-**dī** yàhn
- 7) Please give me some water _____
m̀h-gōi béi (**yāt**)-**dī** séui (ngóh) ā
- 8) I want to buy some apples _____
ngóh séung máaih (**yāt**)-**dī** pìhng-gwó

C. Some other sortal measure words

C.1 Defines nouns in terms of shape

1. jēung

MW for flat objects which are placed horizontally

- 1) a piece of paper _____
yāt jēung jí
- 2) a table _____
yāt jēung tói
- 3) a chair _____
yāt jēung dang
- 4) a photo _____
yāt jēung séung
- 5) a ticket _____
yāt jēung fēi

2. jī

MW for cylindrical objects

- 1) two pens _____
léuhng jī bāt
- 2) a bottle of coke _____
yāt jī hó-lohk
One can also use the container MW "bottle jēun" here.
- 3) a bottle of red wine _____
yāt jī hùhng-jáu
- 4) a toothpick _____
yāt jī ngàh-chīm

3. tìuh

MW for long and thin objects

- 1) a rope / a string _____
yāt tìuh síng
- 2) a pair of trousers _____
yāt tìuh fu
- 3) this dress _____
nī tìuh kwàhn
- 4) a road _____
yāt tìuh louh

4. gauh

MW for irregular shape

- 1) a stone _____
yāt gauh sehk
- 2) a piece of cake _____
yāt gih daahn gōu

C.2 Defines nouns in terms of category

1. jek

MW for 4 legs animals, birds and insect

- 1) a dog _____
yāt jek gáu
- 2) a bird _____
yāt jek jeuk-jái
- 3) a butterfly _____
yāt jek wùh-dihp*

2. ga

MW for vehicles, ship and aircraft

- 1) a car _____
yāt ga chē

- 2) a lorry _____
yāt **ga** fo-chē
- 3) an aeroplane _____
yāt **ga** fēi-gēi

C.3 Defines nouns in terms of functional features

1. **bá**
MW for tools
- 1) a umbrella _____
yāt **bá** jē
- 2) a pair of scissors _____
yāt **bá** gaau-jín

C.4 More specific sortal measure word

- 1) a book _____
yāt **bún** syū
- 2) a place _____
yāt **douh** deih-fōng

III. When to use measure words

A. Follows a numeral / quantifier

- 1) 2 dogs _____
léuhng **jek** gáu
- 2) a pen _____
yāt **jī** bāt
- 3) each MW car _____
múih **ga** chē

B. Specific referring

After “this”, “that” and “the”

- 1) this pen _____
nī-**jī** bāt
- 2) that pen _____
gó-**jī** bāt
- 3) the pen _____
jī bāt
- 4) I like reading that book _____
ngóh hóu jūng-yi tái gó-**bún** syū
- 5) The book is very expensive _____
bún syū hóu gwai
- 6) Do you have the pen? _____
néih yáuh-móuh **jī** bāt a?
- 7) this person _____
nī **go** yàhn
- 8) that person _____
gó **go** yàhn
- 9) The pen is cheap _____
nī **jī** bāt hóu pèhng
- 10) last week _____
seuhng **go** láih-baai
- 11) this week _____
nī **go** láih-baai
- 12) next week _____
hah **go** láih-baai
- 13) these three pens _____
nī **sāam jī** bāt
- 14) those three pens _____
gó **sāam jī** bāt

- 15) the three pens _____
gó sām jī bāt

C. General referring – no MW

- 1) I like reading books _____
ngóh hóu jūng-yi tái-syū
- 2) Do you have a pen? _____
néih yáuh móuh bāt a?
- 3) Do you have any pens? _____
néih yáuh móuh bāt a?

D. Other Rules

1. With bīn ‘which’ (specific referring)

- 1) Which pen? _____
bīn jī bāt?
- 2) Which pen is better? _____
bīn jī bāt hóu-dī a?
- 3) Which one is better? (referring to pens) _____
bīn jī hóu-dī a?
- 4) Which is better? (referring to chairs) _____
bīn jēung hóu dī a?

2. Relative quantifiers

For relative quantifiers, usually the MW is skipped. However rarely, people still keep it eg. hóu-dô bún syū (many books),

- 1) many books _____
hóu-dô syū
- 2) very few people _____
hóu-síu yàhn
- 3) I have many books _____
ngóh yáuh hóu-dô syū

- 4) I only have a few stamps _____
only have: dāk
ngóh dāk hóu-síu yàuh-piu

3. Questions – Countable entities

For concrete objects in questions, if the number is large, the MW is omitted, otherwise, MW is used.

- 1) How many kids do you have? (supposed not many kids)

néih yáuh géi-dō go sai-mān-jái a?
- 2) How many pens do you have? (supposed not many pens)

néih yáuh géi-dō jī bāt?
- 3) How many colleagues in your company? (supposed many colleagues)

néih gūng-sī yáuh géi-dō tūhng-sih a?
- 4) How many chairs are there? (supposed many chairs)

gó-douh yáuh géi-dō dang a?

4. Questions – Uncountable entities

For uncountable entities, questions do not carry MW

- 1) How much money do you have? _____
néih yáuh géi-dō chín a ?
- 2) How much time do you have? _____
néih yáuh géi-dō sīh-gaan a ?

5. People – large quantity

For “people: yàhn”, if the quantity is large, let say twenty, the MW can be skipped. The larger the quantity, the higher chance the MW is skipped.

- 1) There are 100 people _____
gó-douh yáuh yāt-baak yàhn
- 2) There are 20 people in our company _____
ngóh gūng-sī yáuh yih-sahp yàhn

- 3) There are 20 colleagues in our company _____
ngóh gūng-sī yáuh yih-sahp gō tùhng-sih
Compare when "colleagues" is used instead of "people", the MW is kept

D.2 Exercises

1. Drill 1 - countable nouns

- 1) This apple _____
nī-gō pìhng-gwó
- 2) That apple _____
gó-gō pìhng-gwó
- 3) These apples _____
nī-dī pìhng-gwó
- 4) Those apples _____
gó-dī pìhng-gwó
- 5) The apple _____
gō pìhng-gwó
- 6) The apples _____
dī pìhng-gwó

2. Drill 2 - countable nouns

- 1) This car _____
nī-ga chē
- 2) That car _____
gó-ga chē
- 3) These cars _____
nī-dī chē
- 4) Those cars _____
gó-dī chē
- 5) The car _____
ga chē

- 6) The cars _____
dī chē

3. Drill 3 - uncountable nouns

- 1) This wine _____
nī-dī jáu
- 2) That wine _____
gó-dī jáu
- 3) The wine _____
dī jáu
- 4) This glass of wine _____
nī-būi jáu
- 5) That glass of wine _____
gó-būi jáu
- 6) This bottle of wine _____
nī-jēun jáu
- 7) That bottle of wine _____
gó-jēun jáu
- 8) This bottle _____
nī-go-jēun
- 9) That bottle _____
gó-go-jēun

4. Short phrases

- 1) a doctor _____
yāt gō yī-sāng
- 2) a wish _____
yāt gō yuhn-mohng
- 3) two students _____
léuhng gō hohk sāang

- 4) three kids _____
sāam go sai-mān-jái
- 5) three children _____
sāam go síu pàhng yáuh
- 6) four elder brothers _____
sei go gòh gō
- 7) this pen _____
nī jī bāt
- 8) these people _____
nī dī yàhn
- 9) those people _____
gó dī yàhn
- 10) a person _____
yāt go yàhn
- 11) a friend / one friend _____
yāt-go pàhng-yáuh
- 12) two colleagues _____
léuhng-go tùhng-sih
- 13) three windows _____
sāam-go chēung
- 14) four books _____
sei-bún syū
- 15) half an apple _____
bun-go pìhng-gwó
- 16) one and a half apple _____
(yāt) go bun pìhng-gwó
- 17) two and a half apple _____
léuhng go bun pìhng-gwó

5. Sentences

- 1) I have some books _____
ngóh yáuh dī syū
- 2) This bottle is very heavy _____
heavy: chúhng
nī go jēun hóu chúhng
- 3) These bottles are very light _____
light: hēng
nī dī jēun hóu hēng
- 4) I want to drink coffee _____
ngóh séung yám ga-fē
- 5) I want to drink some coffee _____
ngóh séung yám dī ga-fē
"dī" here means "some"
- 6) The coffee is very sour _____
dī ga-fē hóu syūn
"dī" here means "the"
- 7) I have a son and a daughter _____
ngóh yáuh yāt-go jái tùhng-(màaih) yāt-go néui
- 8) The doctor is very nice _____
doctor: yí sāng
go yī-sāng hóu hóu
- 9) I have two wishes _____
ngóh yáuh léuhng-go yuhn-mohng
- 10) I have many wishes _____
ngóh yáuh hóu-dō yuhn-mohng
- 11) Do you have any pens? _____
néih yáuh móuh bāt a?
- 12) That person is very tall _____
gó go yàhn hóu gōu
- 13) This beer is expensive _____
nī-dī bē-jáu hóu gwai

- 14) The shop is very far _____
gāan pou-táu hóu-yúhn
- 15) I have ten friends _____
ngóh yáuh sahþ go pàhng-yáuh
- 16) Do you have any paper? _____
néih yáuh móuh jí a?
- 17) The coke is very cheap _____
dī hó-lohk hóu pèhng
- 18) These schools are very new _____
nī-dī hohk-haauh hóu sān
- 19) The paper is lost _____
lost: -h gin jó
jēung jí m̀h-gin-jó
- 20) I have some pens _____
ngóh yáuh dī bāt
- 21) I've bought some apple juice _____
ngóh máaih-jó dī p̀hng-gwó jāp
- 22) The world is very large _____
go sai-gai hóu daaih
- 23) The money is lost _____
dī chín m̀h-gin-jó

6. Nouns related to time

- 1) two seconds _____
léuhng míuh jūng
- 2) two minutes _____
léuhng fān jūng
- 3) two 'a five minutes' _____
léuhng go jih
- 4) two hours _____
léuhng go jūng

- 5) two days _____
léuhng yaht
- 6) two weeks _____
léuhng go láih baai / léuhng go sīng kèih
- 7) two months _____
léuhng go yuht
- 8) two years _____
léuhng nìhn
- 9) I've been to Hong Kong for four years _____
ngóh làih-jó Hēung-Góng sei nìhn
- 10) She has gone to Italy for four weeks _____
kéuih heui-jó Yi-Daaih-Leih sei-go láih-baai

IV. **Attentions**

A. **Reduplication**

They can be used reduplicatively and means "every one". The noun itself may be omitted.

- 1) every pen _____
jī jī bāt
- 2) every book _____
bún bún syū
- 3) Everyone likes her. _____
go go yàhn dōu jūng-yih kéuih
- 4) Every dress are very nice _____
tùh tùh kwàhn dōu hóu leng
- 5) Everything is very tasty _____
yeuhng yeuhng yéh dōu hóu hóu-sihk

B. **Substitute for a noun**

It can substitute for a noun, like the English pronoun 'one'

- 1) this one (referring a book) _____
nī bún
- 2) three of them (referring T-shirts) _____
sāam gihn
- 3) One please (buying things, referring pens) _____
nh-gōi yāt jī
When the noun is understood, it will be skipped, however the MW have to be kept after numerals.
- 4) I like this one. _____
ngóh jūng-yi nī-go

C. Alternative measure words

It can help to give more details about the noun it modifies

- 1) a ship _____
yāt ga syùhn (ga: large vehicle)
- 2) a boat _____
yāt jek syùhn (jek: small object)

D. Confusion between “a” and “the”

When people say “a pen”, they say “(yāt) jī bāt” however quite often “yāt” is skipped, therefore “a pen” will then be pronounced as “jī bāt”. People then have to distinguish it refers to “a pen” or “the pen” through the context.

- (1) **English to Cantonese**
- 1) I want to buy a pen _____
ngóh séung máaih (yāt)-jī bāt
- 2) I want to buy the pen _____
ngóh séung máaih jī bāt
- 3) She gave me a book _____
káuih béi (yāt)-bún syū ngóh
- 4) She gave me the book _____
káuih béi bún syū ngóh

(2) **Cantonese to English**

- 1) ngóh séung máaih gihn sêut-sāam _____
I want to buy a shirt / the shirt
- 2) ngóh séung máaih yāt gihn sêut-sāam _____
I want to buy a shirt
- 3) ngóh máaih-jó bún syū _____
I bought a book / the book
- 4) ngóh máaih-jó yāt bún syū _____
I bought a book
- 5) ngóh tái-jó chêt hei _____
I watch a movie / the movie
- 6) ngóh tái-jó yāt chêt hei _____
I watch a movie
- 7) ngóh sung-jó dī sām béi kéuih _____
I gave her some clothes / the clothes
- 8) ngóh sung-jó yāt-dī sām béi kéuih _____
I gave her some clothes
- 9) kéuih sihk-jó dī mihn _____
He have eaten some noodles / the noodles
- 10) kéuih sihk-jó yāt-dī mihn _____
He have eaten some noodles
- 11) kéuih tái-jó dī syū _____
He read some books / the books
- 12) kéuih tái-jó yāt-dī syū _____
He read some books

Unit 5 Pronouns

I. Personal Pronouns

A. Reflexive pronouns

1. Lists

	Reflexive Pronoun	Cantonese
1	myself	ngóh jìh géi
2	yourself	néih jìh géi
3	himself, herself, itself	kéuih jìh géi
4	ourselves	ngóh deih jìh géi
5	yourselves	néih deih jìh géi
6	themselves	kéuih deih jìh géi

2. Exercises

- I myself _____
ngóh jìh-géi
- he himself _____
kéuih jìh-géi
- You yourselves make the mistake _____
make the mistake jòuh cho (do wrong)
néih jìh-géi jòuh cho
- They themselves are careless _____
careless -h síu sâm (not careful)
kéuih-deih jìh-géi m̀h-síu-sām

II. Demonstrative Pronouns

1. Lists

	English	Cantonese
1	This	nī go (MW)
2	That	gó go (MW)
3	These	nī dī
4	Those	gó dī
5	Here	nī douh
6	There	gó douh

1	This	nī go (MW)
2	That	gó go (MW)
3	These	nī dī
4	Those	gó dī
5	Here	nī douh
6	There	gó douh

This is “nī go” where the go is the MW only. When different object is referred, different MW has to be used.

“go” is the most common MW and so it is used here.

2. This ...

- This watermelon _____
nī-go sāi-gwā
- That watermelon _____
gó-go sāi-gwā
- These watermelons _____
nī-dī sāi-gwā
- Those watermelons _____
gó-dī sāi-gwā
- This letter _____
nī-fūng seun
- That letter _____
gó-fūng seun
- These letters _____
nī-dī seun
- Those letters _____
gó-dī seun
- It's very hot here _____
nī-douh hóu yíht
- It's very cold there _____
gó-douh hóu dung
- It's very noisy here _____
nī-douh hóu chòuh

- 12) It's very quite there _____
gó-douh hóu jihng
3. **This is ...**
- 1) This is an watermelon _____
nī-go haih sāi-gwā
- 2) These are watermelons _____
nī-dī haih sāi-gwā
- 3) That is a book _____
gó-bún haih syū
- 4) Those are books _____
gó-dī haih syū
- 5) This is water _____
nī-dī haih séui
- 6) That is water _____
gó-dī haih séui
- 7) It is Hong Kong here _____
(here is Hong Kong)
nī-douh haih Hēung-Góng
- 8) It is the mainland there _____
the mainland daaih luhk
gó-douh haih daaih-luhk

III. Interrogative Pronouns

1. Notes

In English, the question word must be put at the beginning, while in Cantonese, the order of question is the same as that in declarative sentences.

2. Lists

which ...	bīn	邊
who (which person)	bīn go	邊個

which (which thing)	bīn go (MW)	邊個
where (which place)	bīn douh	邊嘍
how ...(quantity)	géi	幾
how many (how many + ...)	géi dō	幾多
how long (how many + duration)	géi noi	幾耐
when (how many + time)	géi sìh	幾時
what time (how many + o'clock)	géi dím	幾點
why (how to + explain)	dím gái	點解
what	māt yéh, mē ↗	乜嘢

Who must refer to people, therefore the MW must be “go”. For “Which”, it may refer different object; therefore the corresponding MW has to be used.

A.2 **bīn ...**

1. **Who**

(1) **Who is ...?**

1) Who is he? _____

kéuih haih bīn-go a?

2) He is my friend _____

kéuih haih ngóh pàhng-yáuh

3) Who are they? _____

kéuih-deih haih bīn-go a?

4) They are my family members _____

kéuih-deih haih ngóh ūk-kéi yàhn

5) Who is her boy friend? _____
kéuih nàahm-pàhng-yáuh haih **bīn go** a?

6) Her boyfriend is Peter _____
kéuih nàahm-pàhng-yáuh haih Peter a?

(2) **Who does ...?**

1) Who is coming? _____
bīn-go làih gán a?

2) My younger brother is coming _____
ngóh sai-lóu làih-gái

3) Who stole my car? _____
bīn go tâu-(jó) ngóh ga chē a?

4) Who is fatter? _____
bīn go fèih dī a?

5) Who is the best? _____
bīn-go jeui hóu a?

2. **Which**

(1) **Which one is ...?**

1) Which one is cheaper? _____
bīn-go pèhng-dī a?

2) Which one is better (which pen)? _____
bīn-jī hóu-dī a?

3) Which one is the most expensive (which table)? _____
bīn-jēung jeui gwai a?

4) Which one is better (which item of clothing)? _____
bīn-gihh hóu-dī a?

(2) **Which is ...?**

1) Which pen is better? _____
bīn-jī bāt hóu-dī a?

2) Which ruler is longer _____
bīn bá gaan-chek* chēuhng-dī a?

3) Which kitty more cute? _____
bīn-jek māau-jái dāk-yi dī a?

4) Which pen is yours? _____
bīn jī bāt haih néih ga?
(possessive case, the question particle should be "ga" instead of "a")

3. **Where**

(1) **Where is the...?**

1) Where is the toilet? _____
sái-sáu-gāan hái **bīn-douh** a?

2) The toilet is on the 3rd floor _____
sái-sáu-gāan hái **sāam-láu**

3) Where is the MTR station? _____
deih-tit jaahm hái **bīn-douh** a?

4) Where is the taxi stand? _____
dīk-sí jaahm hái **bīn-douh** a?

5) Where is the information desk _____
sēun-mahn chyu hái **bīn-douh** a?

(2) **Where are you going?**

1) Where are you going? _____
néih heui **bīn-douh** a?

2) I'm going to Happy Valley _____
ngóh heui Páau-máh-déi

3) Where is she going? _____
kéuih heui **bīn-douh** a?

4) She's going to Kowloon _____
ngóh heui Gáu-lùhng

(3) **Where do you ...?**

- 1) Where do you work? _____
 néih hái **bīn douh** fān gūng a ?
- 2) I work in Central _____
 ngóh hái Jūng Wàahn fān gūng
- (4) **Exception for “live”**
- 1) Where do you live? _____
 néih jyuh hái **bīn-douh** a?
- 2) I live in Mong Kok _____
 néih jyuh hái Wohng-gok a?

A.3 géi...

1. **How many**

- (1) **How many ...?**
- 1) How many people ? _____
 géi-dō yàhn a?
- 2) Nine people _____
 gáu-go yàhn
- 3) Two hundred people _____
 yih-baak yàhn
- 4) How many kids ? _____
 géi-dō go sai-mān jái a?
- 5) Three kids _____
 sāam go sai-mān jái
- 6) How many colleagues ? _____
 géi-dō go tūhng-sih a?
- 7) How old is the child? _____
 go sai-mān-jái géi-dō seui a?
- 8) What is your telephone number? _____
 néih dihn-wá géi dō houh a?

- 9) My number is 22345688 _____
 ngóh dihn-wá **haih yih yih sāam sei íng luhk chāt baat**
- (2) **How much is this one**
- 1) How much is this one? _____
 nī-go **géi-(dō)** chín a?
 much more often, “dō” is skipped here
- (3) **How many ... are there in...?**
- 1) How many colleagues are there in your company? _____
 néih gūng-sī yáuh **géi-dō** go tūhng-sih a?
- 2) There are 6 colleagues in my company _____
 ngóh gūng-sī yáuh luhk-go tūhng-sih
- 3) How many people are there in your company? _____
 néih gūng-sī yáuh **géi-dō** yàhn a?
- 4) There are 260 people in my company _____
 ngóh gūng-sī yáuh yih-baak luhk-sahp yàhn
- 5) How much (money) do you have? _____
 néih yáuh **géi dō chín** a?
- 6) I have \$250? _____
 néih yáuh yih-baak íng-sahp mán
2. **How long**
- 1) How long will you be in Hong Kong? _____
 ngóh wúih hái Hēung-Góng **géi noi**h a?
- 2) I'll be in Hong Kong half an year _____
 ngóh wúih hái Hēung-Góng bun nìhn
- 3) How long have you been married? _____
 néih git-jó-fān **géi-noih** a?
- 4) I've been married for 10 years _____
 ngóh git-jó-fān **sahp-nìhn**

3. When

- 1) When will she go to Central? _____
kéuih gái-sìh heui Jūng Wàahn a?
- 2) She will go to Central on Wednesday _____
kéuih lái-h-baai-sāam heui Jūng Wàahn
- 3) When did you come to Hong Kong _____
néih (haih) gái-sìh làih Hēung-Góng ga?
- 4) I came to Hong Kong in 1986 _____
ngóh (haih) hái yāt-gáu-baat-luhk nìhn làih Hēung-Góng ge
- 5) When will you go to Park'n shop? _____
néih gái-sìh heui Baak-Gāai a?
- 6) When will you come? _____
néih gái-sìh làih a?
- 7) When will they get married? _____
kéuih-deih gái-sìh git-fān a?
- 8) When will you come? _____
néih gái-sìh làih a?
- 9) When did you come? _____
néih gái-sìh làih ga?
- 10) When will you leave? _____
néih gái-sìh jáu a?
- 11) When did you leave? _____
néih gái-sìh jáu ga?

4. What time

- 1) What time do you open? _____
néih-deih gái-dím hōi mùhn ga?
- 2) What time do you close? _____
néih-deih gái-dím hōi mùhn ga?

- 3) What time will you come? _____
néih gái-dím làih a?

A.4 dím...

How (refer to manner of an action)

1. How do you...?

How do you...

- 1) How (do you)...? _____
dím / dím-yéung
- 2) How did you know? _____
néih dím(yéung) jī ga?

How do you say...?

- 3) How do you say "Happy birthday"? _____
"Happy birthday" dím(yéung) góng a?
- 4) How do you say "mobile phone"? _____
"Mobile phone" dím(yéung) góng a?

How do you go to...?

- 5) How do you go there? _____
dím(yéung) heui gó-douh a?
- 6) How do you go to Tsim Sha Tsui? _____
dím(yéung) heui Jīm-sā-jéui a??
- 7) How do you go to Causeway Bay? _____
dím(yéung) heui Tùhng-lòh-wāan a?
- 8) How do you go to the MTR station? _____
dím(yéung) heui deih-tit-jaahm a?
- 9) How do you go to your company? _____
dím(yéung) heui néih gūng-sī a?

2. Why...(lit.: how to explain)

(1) Why do you...?

- 1) why _____
dím-gáai
- 2) Why do you come to Hong Kong? _____
néih dím-gáai làih Hēung-góng a?
- 3) Why do you learn Cantonese? _____
néih dím-gáai hohk Gwóng-dūng-wá a? 你點解學廣東話呀
- 4) Why are you late? _____
néih dím-gáai chih-dou a? 你點解遲到呀

(2) Why don't you...

- 1) Why don't you come? _____
néih dím-gáai m̀h làih a?
- 2) Why don't you help him? _____
néih dím-gáai m̀h bōng kéuih a?
- 3) Why don't you believe him? _____
néih dím-gáai m̀h seun kéuih a?

A.5 māt yéh

1. What

(1) What is it?

- 1) What is this? _____
nī-go haih māt-yéh a?
- 2) This is a staple _____
nī-go haih dēng-syū-gēi

(2) What do you ...?

- 1) What did you buy? _____
néih máaih-jó māt-yéh a?
 - 2) I bought some clothes _____
ngóh máaih-jó (yāt)-dī sām
 - 3) What are you eating? _____
ngóh sihk-gán māt-yéh a?
 - 4) I'm eating cake _____
ngóh sihk-gán daahn-gōu
 - 5) What did you tell her? _____
(You with her say what PM?)
néih t̀hng kéuih góng māt-yéh a?
 - 6) I told her today is Sunday _____
ngóh t̀hng kéuih góng gām-yaht haih sīng-kèih-yaht
 - 7) What are you doing now? _____
néih yìh-gā jōuh-gán māt-yéh a?
 - 8) What's your name? _____
(you call what name?)
néih giu māt-yéh méng a?
 - 9) I'm called Peter _____
ngóh giu Peter
- (3) What's are you doing?
- 1) What are you doing? _____
néih jōuh-gán māt-yéh a?
 - 2) What are you eating? _____
néih sihk-gán māt-yéh a?
 - 3) What are you reading? _____
néih tái-gán māt-yéh a?
 - 4) What are you listening? _____
néih tēng-gán māt-yéh a?
- (4) What's the matter?

