

# COMMUNICATIVE EXCHANGES



## FRAME 1

1. A: <u>Qīngwèn</u> , nǐ shì nǎrde rén? B: Wǒ shì <u>Dézhōu</u> rén.	May I ask, where are you from? I'm from Texas.
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### Note

§1 Qīngwèn: Literally, qǐng means "request," and wèn means "ask (for information)." Qīngwèn is used as English speakers use "excuse me," to get someone's attention in order to ask him a question.\*

## FRAME 2

2. A: <u>Qīngwèn</u> , <u>Āndésēn Fūren</u> shì nǎrde rén? B: Tā <u>yě</u> shì <u>Dézhōu</u> rén.	May I ask, where is Mrs. Anderson from? She is from Texas too.
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### General note on Chinese transliteration:

§2 A limited number of proper names can be translated directly into Chinese, e.g., "King" becomes Wáng, a very common Chinese surname. However, most personal names are transliterated phonetically; Anderson become An Dēsēn (as above), "Washington" becomes Huáshèngdùn, etc.

The PRC now routinely transliterates full given names and surnames, (in that order) for all foreigners. Therefore, Mr. David Anderson is Dàiwèi Āndésēn Xiānsheng. But, in the past (and in Taiwan, still) the practice was less standardized. Frequently, only one syllable/sound was used to represent the entire word. And so today we will see: Anderson - An, Carter - Kǎ, Deutschland - Déguó, America - Měiguó, California - Jiāzhōu etc. The following table illustrates the numerous variations possible for one person's name.

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\*Qīngwèn is NOT the word used for saying "excuse me" when you step on someone's foot. For that, you say duìbuqǐ.

PRC:	Dàiwèi	Āndésēn	Xiānsheng
Taiwan:	Ān	Désēn	Xiānsheng
	Ān	Dàwèi	Xiānsheng

Titles: In the PRC, a foreign man is addressed as Xiānsheng, and a married woman as either Fūren or Tàitai, depending on her status. The term fūren is an especially respectful term used to address the wife of a high-ranking official or businessman. Fūren is also used this way on Taiwan. An unmarried foreign woman in the PRC may be addressed as Xiǎojiě, "Miss." Married or unmarried women may be addressed as Nǚshì, "Ms." or "Ma'am." Nǚshì will be introduced in Lesson 5.

The term Tóngzhì, "Comrade," was originally used only by members of the Communist Party to address other members. It is now the general term of address used by all Chinese adults in the PRC. It should be remembered, though, that Tóngzhì does carry a distinct political implication. Visitors in the People's Republic, who are not citizens and who do not take part in efforts to realize Communist ideals, will not be addressed as Tóngzhì and should not feel obliged to address anyone else as such.

Yě is an adverb meaning "also" or "too." It always comes before the verb.

## FRAME 3

3. A: Tā shì Yīngguó rén ma? B: Búshì, tā búshì Yīngguó rén.	Is he English? No, he is not English.
A: Tā àiren ne? B: Ta yě búshì Yīngguó rén.	And his spouse? She isn't English either.

Notes

§3 Àiren, which originally meant "loved one," or "lover," is used in the PRC for either "husband" or "wife," i.e., for "spouse."

The possessive phrase tā àiren, "his wife" (or "her husband"), is formed by putting the words for "he" (or "she") and "spouse" together. The marker -de (which you have seen in nǎrde rén) is not needed when the possessive relationship is felt to be very close.

Yě in a negative sentence is usually translated as "either." In this case, bú comes between yě and the verb. Possible English translations for yě, in both affirmative and negative sentences, are:

Tā yě shì Yīngguó rén.

She is English too.  
She is also English.

Tā yě búshì Yīngguó rén.

She is not English either.  
She is also not English.

FRAME 4

4. A: Qīngwèn, <u>Niūyuēshì zài nǎr?</u>	May I ask, where is New York City?
B: <u>Niūyuēshì zài Niūyuē-zhōu.</u>	New York City is in New York State.

Note

§4 Zài is the verb "to be in/at/on," that is, "to be somewhere," Zài involves location, while shì involves identity, "to be someone/something."

<u>identity</u>		
Wǒ	shì	Měiguó rén.
(I	am	an American.)

<u>location</u>		
Wǒ	zài	Zhōngguó.
(I	am in	China.)

## FRAME 5

5. A: Qīngwèn, nǐ <u>lǎojiā</u> zài nǎr?	May I ask, where is your original home?
B: Wǒ <u>lǎojiā</u> zài Āndàlǜè.	My original home is in Ontario.
A: Wǒ <u>lǎojiā</u> zài Shāndōng.	My original home is in Shandong.

Notes

§5 Literally, lǎojiā is "old home" (original home, "ancestral home," "native place"), that is, the place you and your family are from. When a Chinese asks you about your lǎojiā, he probably wants to know about your hometown, the place where you grew up. When you ask a Chinese about his lǎojiā, however, he will tell you where his family came from originally. A Chinese whose grandparents came from the province of Gǔangdōng will give that as his lǎojiā, even if he and his parents have spent all of their lives in Sīchuan.

Nǐ lǎojiā zài nǎr? and Nǐ lǎojiā shì nǎr? both ask the location of your home. Most Chinese feel that there is little difference between the two forms, and it is often a matter of individual choice. For purposes of this course they will be considered the same.

The question might be answered in several ways by a Chinese, either by stating his country of origin, including the province as well, or simply stating the city if it is well known. Compare:

Wǒ lǎojiā zài Zhōngguó.  
My home is in China.

Wǒ lǎojiā zài Zhōngguó, Shāndōngshěng.  
My home is in Shandong Province China.

Wǒ lǎojiā zài Zhōngguó, Shāndōngshěng, Qīngdǎo(shì).  
My home is in Qingdao, Shandong Province, China.

Note

The above examples illustrate a very important rule of Chinese word order, which, contrary to English, always places the LARGE before the SMALL. In Chinese it is first the country, the province/state, city, street, street number, and finally name of individual (in addressing an envelope, for example.) You will encounter this rule frequently in locations, addresses, times, descriptions, etc.

The possessive Nǐ lǎojiā, like tā àiren, does not require a possessive marker. However, if more than one word must be used to indicate the possessor, -de is often inserted after the last word: Nǐ àiren de lǎojiā, "your spouse's original home," or, "where your spouse's family comes from."

## FRAME 6

6. A: Chén Shímín Tóngzhì zài nǎr? B: Tā zài <u>nàr</u> .	Where is Comrade Chén Shímín? He's there.
7. A: Qīngdǎo zài nǎr? B: Zài <u>zhèr</u> .	Where is Qīngdǎo? It's here.
8. A: Nǐ àiren <u>xiànzài</u> zài nǎr? B: Wǒ àiren <u>xiànzài</u> zài <u>Jiānádà</u> .	Where is your wife now? My wife is in Canada now.

Notes

§6 - 7 You have learned three words for asking and telling about locations. Note their usage below, and particularly the difference in tones when asking or answering a question.

nǎr? (where?)

nǎrde? (from where?)

nàr/nèr (there)

nàrde/nèrde (from there)

zhèr (here)

zhèrde (from here)

Examples:

Tā zài nǎr? Tā shì nǎrde rén?  
Where is he/she? Where is he/she from?

Tā búzài zhèr, tā zài nèr.  
He's not here, he's there.

Wǒ búshì zhèrde rén, wǒ shì nàrde rén.  
I'm not from here, I'm not from there.

§8 When you are talking about moveable things and people that you presume are not nearby ("nearby" being approximately within pointing range), you usually ask where they are NOW. The "present time" word may be omitted if the time has been established earlier in the conversation.

NI àiren xiànzài zài nǎr?           Where is your wife now?  
Tā zài Běijīng.                       She's in Běijīng (now).

If you ask about someone or something you presume to be nearby (a pair of scissors in a drawer, for instance, or a person in a group across the room), you normally would not use xiànzài. In most cases the usage is similar to its English counterpart.

In English, the words "here" and "there" are used to refer to locations of any size. In Chinese, however, zhèr and nàr are usually not used for cities, provinces, and countries (with the exception that you may use zhèr to refer to the city you are in). Instead, you repeat the name of the place. Compare these two exchanges in Běijīng:

COUNTRY: Mǎdīng Xiānsheng xiànzài zài Zhōngguó ma?

Tā xiànzài zài Zhōngguó.  
(He's here now.)

CITY: Mǎdīng xiānsheng xiànzài zài Shànghǎi me?

Tā búzài Shànghǎi; tā zài zhèr.  
(He's not there; he's here.)

Jiānádà, "Canada": Although the middle syllable of this word is marked with the Rising tone, at a normal rate of speech you will probably hear Jiānádà.

## FRAME 7

9. A: Andésen Xiānsheng shì búshì Fàguó rén? B: Tā búshì Fàguó rén. Shì Yīngguó rén.	Is Mr. Anderson French? He's not French. He's British.
10. A: Nuòwǎkè Xiáojie shì Yīngguó rén búshì? B: Búshì. Tā shì Měiguó rén.	Is Miss Novak British? No, she's an American.

Notes

§9 - 10 Shì .. búshì ... This is the basic pattern for the so-called choice type questions. The positive and negative forms of a verb are coupled in a statement which poses two alternatives, and asks "which is the case?". No question words such

as, ma, a, shénme and shéi are used, (simply voice inflection). Two verbs are required, and the negated verb, i.e., bú plus verb, is placed after the affirmative verb, or, you may place the negated verb at the very end of the statement. Compare:

Tā <u>shì</u> Fàguó rén. (simple positive statement)	He/She <u>is</u> French.
Tā <u>shì</u> Fàguó rén <u>búshì</u> Fàguó rén?	Is he French, or isn't he French?
Tā <u>shì</u> <u>búshì</u> Fàguó rén?	Is he French? (or isn't he?)
Tā <u>shì</u> Fàguó rén <u>búshì</u> ?	Is he French? (or isn't he?)

You will note that the full form of the question is: "Tā shì Fàguó rén búshì Fàguó rén?" The others are simply variations where one speaker will leave out the first "Fàguó rén" and another speaker will leave out the second.

Using zài as the verb.

Tā <u>zài</u> Rìběn. (simple positive statement)	He/She <u>is</u> in Japan.
Tā <u>zài</u> Rìběn <u>búzài</u> Rìběn?	Is he is Japann, or isn't he in Japan?
Tā <u>zài</u> <u>búzài</u> Rìběn?	Is he in Japan? (or isn't he?)
Tā <u>zài</u> Rìběn <u>búzài</u> ?	Is he in Japan? (or isn't he?)

The tendency on the part of most Chinese speakers is to use the abbreviated forms.

## FRAME 8

11. A: Nǐ shì Jiāngsū rén <u>háishi</u> Zhèjiāng rén?	Are you from Jiangsu or Zhejiang?
B: Wǒ shì Zhèjiāng rén.	I'm from Zhejiang.
12. A: Wáng Dànián Tóngzhì <u>zài</u> Nánjīng <u>háishi</u> <u>zài</u> Běijīng?	Is Comrade Wang Danian in Nanjing or Beijing?
B: Tā <u>búzài</u> Nánjīng yě <u>búzài</u> Běijīng, tā <u>zài</u> Shànghǎi.	He isn't in Nanjing nor Beijing, he's in Shanghai.

Note

§11 háishi. This is another choice-type question pattern. In it, the word háishi is translated as "or." But, you will learn other usages for this word later. Think of the sentence as basically a "shì ... háishi ..." pattern, meaning, "is ... or is ...." This pattern is also commonly applied to sentences with other main verbs. Compare:

Tā shì Zhōngguó rén háishi Rìběn rén?  
(Is he Chinese or is he Japanese?)

Tā (shì) xìng Zhāng háishi xìng Wáng?  
(Is he surnamed Zhāng or Wáng?)

Tā (shì) jiào Měilíng háishi jiào Měilǐ?  
(Is she called Měilíng or Měilǐ?)

(Note that the initial shì becomes optional when you are using another main verb.)