

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #24 Being Told You're Really Ugly in Cantonese

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 廣東話點講 ugly 啊?
2. 樣衰。
3. 哦, "你好樣衰"!
4. ...
5. 啱唔啱啊?
6. 啱。

JYUTPING

1. gwong2 dung1 waa2 dim2 gong2 ugly a3 ?
2. joeng2 sei1 。
3. o2, "nei5 hou2 joeng2 sei1 " !
4. ...
5. ngaam1 m4 ngaam1 a3 ?
6. ngaam1。

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. How do you say "ugly" in Cantonese?
2. Jeong2 seoi1
3. Oh,"you're very ugly"!
4.
5. Is it right?
6. Yes.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Romanization	English	Class
點講	dim2 gong2	how to say	phrase
樣衰	joeng2 seoi1	ugly	adjective
啱	ngaam1	correct	adverb
瘦	sau3	thin	adjective
肥	fei4	fat	adjective
凍	dung3	cold	adjective
熱	jit6	hot	adjective
高	gou1	tall	adjective
矮	ai2	short	adjective

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>呢個點講? <i>ni1 go3 dim2 gong2?</i></p> <p>How do you say this?</p>	<p>佢唔樣衰。 <i>keoi5 m4 joeng2 seoi1.</i></p> <p>He's not ugly.</p>
<p>你啱。 <i>nei5 ngaam1.</i></p> <p>You're right.</p>	<p>我瘦咗。 <i>ngo5 sau3 zo2.</i></p> <p>I lost weight.</p>
<p>你肥咗。 <i>nei5 fei4 zo2.</i></p> <p>You gained weight.</p>	<p>加拿大好凍。 <i>gaa1 naa4 daai6 hou2 dung3.</i></p> <p>Canada is cold.</p>
<p>太陽晒著炎熱的沙漠。 <i>taai3 joeng4 saai3 zoek6 jim4 jit6 dik1 saa1 mok6</i></p> <p>The sun is heating the hot desert.</p>	<p>佢又高又瘦。 <i>keoi5 jau6 gou1 jau6 sau3.</i></p> <p>She's tall and thin.</p>
<p>佢又肥又矮。 <i>keoi5 jau6 fei4 jau6 ai2.</i></p> <p>She's fat and short.</p>	

GRAMMAR

The focus of this lesson is a review of grammatical patterns

你好樣衰 *nei5 hou2 joeng2 seoi1*

"You're very ugly"

好 *hou2* is an adverb of degree meaning "very". In Cantonese it functions to connect the subject of the sentence with the object. For example 你好靚 - "you are very pretty". The subject 你 is connected to the object 靚 (*leng3*) by the adverb 好. Another example involving Jackie Chan is 成龍好靚仔 (*sing4 lung4 hou2 leng3 zai*) - "Jackie Chan is very handsome."

Two other adverbs of degree that have been covered in the Absolute Beginner series are 太 ("too") and 仲 ("even more"). These two words function in the same manner as 好, being placed in between the subject and object.

Examples:

1. 呢個太貴。
ni1 go3 taai3 gwai3
"That is too expensive."
2. 呢個太大。
ni1 go3 taai3 daai6
"That is too big."
3. 我唔可以食, 太熱啦。
ngo5 m4 ho2 ji5 sik6 , taai3 jit6 laa6
"It's too hot, I can't eat it."
4. 佢仲慢。
keoi5 zung6 maan6
"He's even slower."
5. 我仲矮。
ngo5 zung6 ai2
"I'm even shorter."
6. 嗰個仲凍。
go2 go3 zung6 dung3
"That one is even colder."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Honest and Direct

It is not uncommon to experience surprisingly blunt and pointed comments while in China. Observations about your body shape, weight, physical appearance, and decision-making

skills will be brought to the table by strangers. "You have never met me before" might be the first thought that comes to your mind, but after some time, these seemingly rude inquiries will seem commonplace. After interacting with some locals, you will soon see this is how they treat each other, and not just the out of place "Westerner." Soon you may find yourself asking personal questions such as "are you married?" and "how much do you make?" of random strangers. While in Guangdong these questions may come in higher numbers, Hong Kong's exposure to Western practices has diminished this noisy practice.

In mainland China, the history of the communist party has created an environment where there are no secrets, and the sense of community means everyone is entitled to their own opinion. Even in traditional Chinese culture there were no locked doors in the house. So fair warning: expect your privacy to be invaded.