

LESSON NOTES

Intermediate S1 #2

Losing Sleep in Hong Kong

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. A: 撞鬼你啊?
2. B: 做咩啊?
3. A: 你咁嘅樣出去，嚇死人咩?
4. B: 我點啊?
5. A: 你睇下自己對眼，腫到.....
6. B: 尋晚夜瞓啊。

JYUTPING

1. A: zong2 gwai2 nei5 aa4 ?
2. B: zou6 me1 aa3 ?
3. A: nei5 gam2 ge3 joeng2 ceot1 heoi3, haak3 sei2 jan4 me1 ?
4. B: ngo5 dim2 aa3?
5. A: nei5 tai2 haa5 zi6 gei2 deoi3 ngaan5, zung2 dou3...
6. B: cam4 maan5 je6 fan3 aa3.

ENGLISH

CONT'D OVER

1. A: What's wrong with you?
2. B: What's the matter?
3. A: You're going to scare a lot of people if you go out like that.
4. B: How do I look?
5. A: Look at your eyes. They're so swollen.
6. B: I went to bed late last night.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Romanization	English	Class
撞鬼	zong2 gwai2	what's wrong (lit. to run into a ghost)	phrase
咁嘅樣	gam2 ge3 joeng2	such a (terrible) look	noun
嚇死人	haak3 sei2 jan4	to scare people to death	verb
點	dim2	how	pronoun
睇吓	tai2 haa5	to take a look	verb
眼	ngaan5	eye	noun
腫	zung2	to be swollen	adjective
夜瞓	je6 fan3	to sleep late	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>你做咩咁緊張啊？撞鬼呀你。 <i>nei5 zou6 me1 gam3 gan2 zoeng1 aa3? zong2 gwai2 aa4 nei5.</i></p> <p>Why are you looking so nervous? Seeing a ghost?</p>	<p>我呢幾日都好夜瞓，所以殘成咁嘅樣。 <i>ngo5 ni1 gei2 jat6 dou1 hou2 je6 fan3, so2 ji5 caan4 seng4 gam2 ge3 joeng2.</i></p> <p>I've gone to bed really late these past few days, so look awful.</p>
<p>你突然咁衝出嚟，想嚇死人咩？ <i>nei5 dat6 jin4 gam2 cung1 ceot1 lei4, soeng2 haak3 sei2 jan4 me1 ?</i></p> <p>What are you doing darting out into the street and scaring people?</p>	<p>你去照吓鏡，睇吓自己點嘅樣。 <i>nei5 heoi3 ziu3 haa5 geng3, tai2 haa5 zi6 gei2 dim2 ge3 joeng2.</i></p> <p>Go look in the mirror and see how you look.</p>
<p>我要去醫院，睇吓究竟係咩病。 <i>ngo5 jiu3 heoi3 ji1 jyun2, tai2 haa5 gau3 ging2 hai6 me1 beng6.</i></p> <p>I need to go to the hospital and find out what this disease is.</p>	<p>做實驗時好易傷到眼，記得一定要戴保護眼鏡。 <i>zou6 sat6 jim6 si4 hou2 ji6 soeng1 dou2 ngaan5, gei3 dak1 jat1 ding6 jiu3 daai3 bou2 wu6 ngaan5 geng2.</i></p> <p>It's easy to hurt your eyes when conducting experiments, so remember to wear protection glasses.</p>
<p>我對眼腫得好嚴重，唔想出去見人。 <i>ngo5 deoi3 ngaan5 zung2 dak1 hou2 jim4 zung6, m4 soeng2 ceot1 heoi3 gin3 jan4.</i></p> <p>My eyes are badly swollen, so I don't want to go out and see people.</p>	<p>你每晚都咁夜瞓，梗係眼腫啦。 <i>nei5 mui5 maan5 dou1 gam3 je6 fan3, gang2 hai6 ngaan5 zung2 laa1.</i></p> <p>You are sleeping so late each night, no wonder your eyes are swollen.</p>

GRAMMAR

The Focus of this Lesson is the Not-so-deadly Verb Complement 死 sei2 "to die"

你咁嘅樣出去，嚇死人咩？

"You're going to scare a lot of people if you go out like that."

Our grammar point in this lesson is all about the verb complement 死 (*sei2*) "to die; death". We already know this character as a standalone verb, in which case it literally means "to die." In our dialogue it serves a different purpose as a verb complement. These complements are characters which—when added to the end of verbs—change the meaning of the verb phrase in a predictable way.

In our dialogue, we see this verb complement used in the sentence 你咁樣出去, 嚇死人咩 (*nei5 gam2 joeng2 ceot1 heoi3, haak3 sei2 jan4 me1*) "You're going to scare a lot of people if you go out like that". Although 嚇死 (*haak3 sei2*) literally means "to scare to death," its real meaning here is less morbid. All we are doing by adding 死 (*sei2*) after our verb here is exaggerating the tone. For example, 笑死人 (*siu3 sei2 jan4*) means that something is really funny. This is similar to way we might say, "he's killing me" in English to describe a comedian.

For other examples, consider the following sentences:

1. 我隻腳腫死人啊。
ngo5 zek3 goek3 zung2 sei2 jan4 aa3.
"My feet are killing me."
2. 撞鬼咩, 你咁遲先嚟, 想餓死人咩?
zong2 gwai2 me1, nei5 gam3 ci4 sin1 lei4, soeng2 ngo6 sei2 jan4 me1?
"Why so late? Do you want to starve us to death?"
3. 咁多書, 睇死人咩?
gam3 do1 syu1, tai2 sei2 jan4 me1?
"With this many books, reading them all is going to kill me."

In most cases, native Cantonese speakers will add the character 咩 (*me1*) to sentences when using the verb complement 死 (*sei2*). This modal particle is not grammatically required, but helps exaggerate the tone and will make your Cantonese sound more native.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Nightlife in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, there is always something to do at night. At the intersection of western and eastern culture, Hong Kong has a ton of activities both Chinese and foreign. As in many Asian cities, karaoke and clubbing are popular activities for the young. One of the best areas for finding entertainment of this sort is Mongkok (旺角) and in the somewhat seedy area around Nathan Road (彌敦道). Other popular activities include eating late, playing *Majiang* or going to a sauna for a massage and a bath. The center of the city for these activities is around Temple Street in Yau Ma Tei (油麻地).