

LESSON NOTES

Introduction #1

Where Did You Learn to Speak Cantonese Like That!

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 食乜?
2. 食飯。
3. 炒飯?
4. 好。

JYUTPING

1. sik6 mat1 ?
2. sik6 faan6.
3. caau2 faan6 ?
4. hou2.

ENGLISH

1. What do you want to eat?
2. Rice.
3. Fried rice?
4. Cool.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Romanization	English	Class
食	sik6	to eat	verb
乜	mat1	what	pronoun
飯	faan6	rice	noun
炒飯	caau2 faan6	fried rice	noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>一齊食嘢。 <i>jat1 cai4 sik6 je5.</i></p> <p>Eat together.</p>	<p>乜都唔識。 <i>mat1 dou1 m4 sik1.</i></p> <p>(One) Doesn't know anything.</p>
<p>我鍾意食飯。 <i>ngo5 zung1 yi3 sik6 faan6.</i></p> <p>I like eating rice.</p>	<p>兩份炒飯。 <i>loeng5 fan6 caau2 faan6.</i></p> <p>Two orders of fried rice.</p>

GRAMMAR

What's Going On?

The grammar point is often the focus of each lesson. Most lessons build upon each other, and understanding the structure of a language is one of the fastest ways to acquire a language. We don't just throw grammar terms at you and tell you to write sentences. We take a practical approach to explaining the grammar, and we use normal English to explain how the grammar works and how to use it. Our goal is for you to learn Cantonese in a fun and easy way.

The Focus of This Lesson is Cantonese Word Order

食乜? / 食飯。

"--Eat what? --Eat rice."

As a language with little grammatical morphology, Cantonese relies heavily on word order to express grammatical relations such as subject and object. As a result, word order is fairly rigid, as it is in English for similar reasons. Like other isolating languages, Cantonese has the basic word order [subject-verb-object] or is said to be an SVO language.

1. [subject-object-verb] order [SVO]
2. [verb-subject] order or subject-verb inversion [VS]

No matter if it's a statement or a question, the word order doesn't change.

For Example:

1. 我做嘢。【SVO】
ngo5 zou6 je5.
"I work."
2. 做乜? 【VS】
zou6 mat1?
"Do what?"

Examples from This Dialogue:

1. 食乜?
sik6 mat1?
"Eat what?"
2. 食飯。
sik6 faan6.
"Eat rice."

The Site

The site is where it all comes together. There you can find bonus audio tracks, a voice recorder, lesson notes, grammar resources, line-by-line audio, a wonderful Cantonese learning community, and much more. It's like your teacher, textbook, dictionary, grammar resources, study tools, support group, and more—all in one convenient place.

Cantonese are very group-centric, so a great first step to learning to interact with Cantonese people is to participate in our great online community. So if you need some clarification about something, post it on the blog or in the forums, or send us an e-mail. We're here to help.

If you're new to Cantonese or CantoneseClass101.com, you should start listening to the introduction lessons first, which explain how our system works. We have many more lessons for you after that!

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Long Live Cantonese Rice

We talked about the Cantonese love of rice in this lesson. Rice is a staple of Cantonese food. Homemade Cantonese dishes are usually served with plain white rice. However, fried rice is also very popular. Plain white rice is usually considered a side dish, like bread at a western dinner table, and normally comes in a bowl, while fried rice is a dish that comes on a plate.

Food is a focal point for the Cantonese culture, celebrations, and family life. We will teach you more about auspicious Cantonese foods and the celebrations surrounding them in lessons to come! Long live the rice!