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Lower Beginner S1 #12
Describing Someone in Cantonese

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE

1. 警察:　　　　個賊乜嘢樣?

2. 受害人:　　　對眼好細，個鼻好大。

3. 警察:　　　　個口呢?

4. 受害人:　　　好臭。

JYUTPING

1. GING2 CAAT3:　　go3 caak2 mat1 je5 joeng2?

2. SAU6 HOI6 JAN4:　deoi3 ngaan5 hou2 sai3, go3 bei6 hou2 daai6.

3. GING2 CAAT3:　　go3 hau2 ne1?

4. SAU6 HOI6 JAN4:　hou2 cau3.

ENGLISH

1. POLICE:　　　　What does the robber look like?

2. VICTIM:　　　　He has small eyes, and a big nose.

3. POLICE:　　　　How about the mouth?

4. VICTIM:　　　　Very stinky.

VOCABULARY

Traditional	Romanization	English	Class
樣	joeng2	looks, face	noun
眼	ngaan5	eye	noun
鼻	bei6	nose	noun
耳	ji5	ear	noun
口	hau2	mouth	noun
臭	cau3	stinky, smelly	adjective
大	daai6	big, large, large size	adjective
細	sai3	small	phrase

SAMPLE SENTENCES

你去照吓鏡，睇吓自己點嘅樣。
nei5 heoi3 ziu3 haa5 geng3, tai2 haa5 zi6 gei2 dim2 ge3 joeng2.

Go look in the mirror and see how you look.

返屋企時順便幫我買支眼藥水。
faan1 uk1 kei2 si4 seon6 bin2 bong1 ngo5 maai5 zi1 ngaan5 joek6 seoi2.

Get me some eye drops on your way home.

我對眼腫得好嚴重，唔想出去見人。
ngo5 deoi3 ngaan5 zung2 dak1 hou2 jim4 zung6, m4 soeng2 ceot1 heoi3 gin3 jan4.

My eyes are badly swollen, so I don't want to go out and see people.

做實驗時好易傷到眼，記得一定要戴保護眼鏡。
zou6 sat6 jim6 si4 hou2 ji6 soeng1 dou2 ngaan5，gei3 dak1 jat1 ding6 jiu3 daai3 bou2 wu6 ngaan5 geng2。

It's easy to hurt your eyes when conducting experiments, so remember to wear protection glasses.

男人鼻上有一粒暗瘡。
naam4 jan2 bei6 soeng6 jau5 jat1 lap1 am3 cong1。

The man has a pimple on his nose.

你日日喺我耳邊唱歌令我好壓抑。
nei5 jat6 jat6 hai2 ngo5 ji5 bin1 coeng3 go1 ling6 ngo5 hou2 aat3 jik1.

It's depressing to have you singing in my ear every day.

笑口常開。
Siu3 hau2 soeng4 hoi1.

Keep smiling all the time.

佢對腳好臭。
keoi5 deoi3 goek3 hou2 cau3.

He has smelly feet.

佢將其中一張相晒大。
keoi5 zoeng1 kei4 zung1 jat1 zoeng1 soeng2 saai3 daai6.

He ordered a large size print of one of his photographs.

入緊嚟港口嗰隻係我有史以來見過最大隻嘅船。
jap6 gan2 lei4 gong2 hau2 go2 zek3 hai6 ngo5 jau5 si2 ji5 loi4 gin3 gwo3 zeoi3 daai6 zek3 ge3 syun4.

The largest ship I had ever seen was arriving at the port.

嗰張櫈對細路女嚟講太大喇。
go2 zoeng1 dang3 deoi3 sai3 lou6 neoi5 lei4 gong2 taai3 daai6 laa3.

That chair is too big for a little girl.

呢間屋好大。
ni1 gaan1 uk1 hou2 daai6.

This apartment is really big.

太大好過太細。
taai3 daai6 hou2 gwo3 taai3 sai3.

Too big is better than too small.

單人房太細。
daan1 jan4 fong2 taai3 sai3.

The single room is too small.

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

樣 (*joeng2*)

樣 means "appearance" or "look." It usually refers to the face or the facial features.

Note that although they use the same character, it's different from 邊樣 (*bin1 joeng6*) "which," where 樣 (*joeng6*) means "type," and is in the sixth tone.

嘴 vs 口

嘴 and 口 both mean "mouth," but 口 (*hau2*) includes a sense of a hollow area that we can put something inside; whereas 嘴 (*zeoi2*) includes the area of the lips as well.

For example

1. 用口食
   jung6 hau2 sik6
   "eat with the mouth"

2. 用嘴錫
   jung6 zeoi2 sek3
   "kiss with the lips"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of this Lesson is Classifiers
對眼好細，個鼻好大。
deoi3 ngaan5 hou2 sai3, go3 bei6 hou2 daai6.
"(He has) small eyes, and a big nose."

We use classifiers (or "measure words") in Cantonese to specify which type of object you are talking about. Just as English says a "pair of shoes" or a "bottle of water," Cantonese has a similar concept that applies a classifier to each object. In this lesson, we'll talk about classifiers for facial features and body parts.

In the dialogue, we hear the victim and police officer talking about the robber's facial features:

1. 對眼好細，個鼻好大。
   deoi3 ngaan5 hou2 sai3, go3 bei6 hou2 daai6.
   "A pair of small eyes, and a big nose."

2. 個口呢？
   go3 hau2 ne1?
   "(How about) the mouth?"

In sentence 1, we see "pair of eyes" and "the nose," let's break down the characters:

對眼 → 對 (classifier indicating "pair") + 眼 "eye(s)"

個鼻 → 個 (classifier) + 鼻 "nose(s)"

With these hints, it should be easy to spot the classifier for sentence 2:

個口 → 個 (classifier) + 口 "mouth(s)"

So from the dialogue, we found out the classifiers for three facial features. The following table lists out the other classifiers related to facial features and body parts; please try to use them or spot them from sentences:

Classifier	Item	Phrase	*Jyutping*	English
對	耳仔 "ear"	對耳仔	*deoi3 ji5 zai2*	pair of ears
隻	眼 "eye"	隻眼	*zek3 ngaan5*	(the) eye
隻	耳仔 "ear"	隻耳仔	*zek3 ji5 zai2*	(the) ear
個	嘴 "mouth"	個嘴	*go3 zeoi2*	(the) mouth
個	頭 "head"	個頭	*go3 tau4*	(the) head
隻	手 "hand"	隻手	*zek3 sau2*	(the) hand
隻	手指 "finger"	隻手指	*zek3 sau2 zi2*	(the) finger
隻	腳 "leg"	隻腳	*zek3 goek3*	(the) leg

Sample Sentences

1. 隻眼腫咗
   zek3 ngaan5 zung2 zo2
   "The eye is swollen."

2. 對眼腫咗

   deoi3 ngaan5 zung2 zo2

   "Both eyes are swollen."

3. 佢個頭好大。

   keoi5 go3 tau4 hou2 daai6.

   "His head is very big."

4. 呢隻手指好痛。

   ni1 zek3 sau2 zi2 hou2 tung3.

   "This finger hurts."

5. 你隻腳阻住我。

   5nei5 zek3 goek3 zo2 zyu6 ngo5.

   "Your leg is in my way."

Language Tip

In lesson 9 of this series, we mentioned how 一 "one" or "a" is often omitted in a sentence. This also applies in this lesson's grammar point. 一對眼 (*jat1 deoi3 ngaan5*) "a pair of eyes" can be just 對眼 (*deoi3 ngaan5*); but if the number is two or more, the number word needs to be there. For example: 兩對眼 (*loeng5 deoi3 ngaan5*) "two pairs of eyes."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Hong Kong Police

The Hong Kong Police Force used to be called the Royal Hong Kong Police Force before the transfer of sovereignty in 1997. Until 2004, the uniforms were green khaki for men and beige for women. Since the uniform updates, most officers have been wearing light blue shirts. This significant change can easily be seen, and is used to represent the time setting in Hong Kong movies.

A lot of Hong Kong movies are thriller, comedy, or action movies based on policemen, and

most of them have became a big hit in the industry, for examples *Infernal Affairs* (the original for the Hollywood's remake, *The Departed*), *Cold War, Fight Back to School*, and the *Police Story* film series.