Cantonese II
Week 11

Translate the following into Cantonese using zo2, gwo3, mei6 or mou5.

1. I've met (gin3 見） his family （ uk1 kei5 jan4 屋企人 ） before
2. I've just washed my hair （sai2 tau4 洗頭）。
3. He had breakfast （zou2 caan1 早餐） this morning (ziu1 朝）
4. I've heard （teng1 聽） this song （sau2 go1 首歌） before
5. I've been to Hong Kong once
6. She's won the first prize
7. He hasn't bought （maai5 買） a new car （san1 ce1 新車）before
8. I just sold (賣）the car
9. I haven't gone to the school (but you will)
10. I didn't go to the school
11. I haven't been to Thailand before
12. My father just went to Brno

Exercise 18.3

Negate the following sentences (refer to Unit 14 if necessary):

Example: keoi5 dei6 git3 zo2 fan1 佢哋結咗婚 They've gotten married. →
keoi5 dei6 mou4 git3 fan1 佢哋冇結婚 (They have not gotten married.)
keoi5 dei6 mei6 git3 fan1 ān 佢哋未結婚 (They're not married yet.)

1 di1 hok6 saang1 zau2 zo2   The students have gone.
啲學生走咗

2 ngo5 go3 zai2 heoi3 gwo3 jing1 gwok3   My son has been to England.
我個仔去過英國

3 keoi5 lo2 zo2 ce1 paai4   She's got her driving licence.
佢攞咗車牌

4 ngo5 dei6 zou6 gwo3 zing3 fu2 gung1   We've worked for the government before.
我哋做過政府工

5 ngo5 deng6 zo2 fong2

我訂咗房

I've reserved a room.

6 go3 bei3 syu1 fong3 zo2 gaa3

個秘書放咗假

The secretary has taken a day off.

7 ngo5 jam2 gwo3 cing1 dou2 be1 zau2 u

我飲過青島啤酒

I've drunk Tsingtao beer before.

8 ngo5 tung4 keoi5 paak3 gwo3 to1 o-tō

我同佢拍過拖

I've been on a date with him.

9 din6 fai3 gaa1 zo2 gaa3

電費加咗價

Electricity costs have gone up.

10 lou5 baan2 naau6 gwo3 keoi5 uih

老闆鬧過佢

The boss has scolded him before.

Exercise 18.4

Choose an appropriate adverb to add to each sentence from the list (a–f):

1 keoi5 mei6 si3 gwo3 ci4 dou3
佢未試過遲到
She's never been late.

2 ngo5 dei6 heoi3 gwo3 nei5 uk1 kei2
我哋去過你屋企
We've been to your house.

3 ngo5 sin1 saang1 faan1 zo2 se2 zi6 lau4
我先生返咗寫字樓
My husband has gone to the office.

4 keoi5 saang1 zo2 go3 zai2
佢生咗個仔
She's had a child.

5 ngo5 haau2 leoi6 gwo3 ci4 zik1
我考慮過辭職
I've considered resigning.

6 gaan1 zau2 lau4 saan1 zo2 mun4
間酒樓閂咗門
The restaurant has closed.

a ji5 ging1
已經
already

b ngaam1 ngaam1
啱啱
just

cang4 ging1
曾經
once

d ji5 cin4
以前
before

e zeoi3 gan6
最近
recently

f cung4 loi4
從來
never

UNIT 19
Activities
Gán 緊 and jyuh 住

gan2 zyu6

The aspect markers **gán** 緊 and **jyuh** 住 attached to verbs express ongoing actions.

hai2 dou6

Progressive gán 緊 and háidouh 喺度

The progressive suffix **-gán** 緊, like the English progressive '-ing', is used for ongoing activities:

keoi5 ji4 gaa1 hoi1 gan2 wui2

佢而家開緊會   She's having a meeting.

keoi5 dei6 loeng5 go3 king1 gan2 gai2

佢哋兩個傾緊偈   .gái   The two of them are chatting.

Although referring most often to the present, verbs with **gán** 緊 may apply to an activity in the past. In such cases, there is typically a past time adverb present to make this clear (see Unit 11; note also the adverb zung6 仲 'still'):

gau6 nin2 keoi5 zung6 duk6 gan2 zung1 hok6　舊年佢仲讀緊中學

Last year she was still studying in secondary school.

keoi5 dei6 soeng6 go3 jyut6 zung6 paak3 gan2 to1, ji4 gaa1 ji5 ging1 fan1 zo2 sau2 laa3

佢哋上個月仲拍緊拖, 而家已經分咗手喇

Last month, they were still dating; now they're already separated.

Similarly, **gán** 緊 [gan2] may be used in subordinate clauses referring to the past:

ngo5 duk6 gan2 siu2 hok6 go2 zan6 si4, keoi5 ji5 ging1 sik1 ngo5

我讀緊小學嗰陣時, 佢已經識我
(*lit.* I studying primary school that time, he already knew me)
When I was in primary school, she already knew me.

nei5 fan3 gan2 gaau3 go2 zan6 si4, jau5 jan4 daa2 din6 waa2 lai4

你瞓緊覺嗰陣時, 有人打電話嚟
(*lit.* you sleeping that time, somebody telephoned come)
Somebody called while you were sleeping.

An alternative means of describing an ongoing action is by using **háidouh** 喺度 [hai2 dou6], which literally means 'to be here/there':

ngo5 hai2 dou6 zou6 gung1 fo3   I'm (here) doing homework.
我喺度做功課

nei5 hai2 dou6 dang2 bin1 go3 aa3?   Who are you waiting for?
你喺度等邊個呀?

keoi5 dei6 hai2 dou6 aai3 gaau1   They're having an argument.
佢哋喺度嗌交

Because of the literal meaning 'here', it is suitable where the activity is going on in a location close to the speaker. **háidouh** 喺度 and **gán** 緊 can also be used together in expressing progressive meaning:

keoi5 hai2 dou6 zyu2 gan2 faan6
佢喺度煮緊飯   She's cooking.

lou5 baan2 hai2 dou6 se2 gan2 seon3
老闆喺度寫緊信   The boss is writing letters.

Continuous zyu6 住   Mandarin: zhe 著

jyuh 住 added to a verb describes a continuous activity or state without change. It is associated with particular verbs, such as those denoting stationary situations:

gaa3 din6 daan1 ce1 zo2 zyu6 go3 ceot1 hau2 架電單車阻住個出口

The motorbike is blocking the exit.

keoi5 sing4 jat6 zaa1 zyu6 fan6 bou3 zi2 佢成日揸住份報紙

She's always holding a newspaper.

ngo5 jat6 jat6 deoi3 zyu6 tung4 jat1 baan1 jan4 bāan yàhn 我日日對住同樣一班人

I face the same bunch of people every day.

Note that verb + **jyuh** 住 can mean something different from the simple verb by itself, such nam2 zyu6 諗住 'intend' vers nam2 諗 'think tai2 zyu6 睇住 'watch over' versus **tái** 睇 'look, see':

ngo5 nam2 zyu6 ceng2 keoi5 dei6 sik6 faan6 我諗住請佢哋食飯
I intend to invite them to dinner.

nei5 tai2 zyu6 ni1 loeng5 go3 sai3 lou6 zai2, m4 hou2 bei2 keoi5 dei6 daa2 gaau1
你睇住呢兩個細路仔, 唔好畀佢哋打交
Keep an eye on these two kids, (and) don't let them fight.

A verb with zyu6 住 can also be used to describe an action carried out simultaneously with another:

keoi5 mong6 zyu6 ngo5 siu3 佢望住我笑
(*lit.* he watching me smiled)
He smiled (while looking) at me.

keoi5 deoi3 zyu6 ngo5 haam3 佢對住我喊
She cried at (while facing) me.

nei5 gan1 zyu6 ngo5 haang4 你跟住我行
Walk after (following) me.

Note that there is no conjunction linking the two verbs (which is a characteristic of the sequences of verb phrases known as serial verb constructions, see *Intermediate Cantonese*, Unit 11).

Gán 緊 versus jyuh 住

Since both may be translated with progressive '-ing' foms in English, it can be difficult to choose between **gán** 緊 and **jyuh** 住. As a general rule, **gán** 緊 is appropriate for activities involving change or movement and **jyuh** 住 for static

ones. In many cases, either is possible, sometimes with a marked difference of meaning:

a keoi5 lo2 gan2 di1 wun6 geoi6   He's fetching the toys.
  佢攞緊啲玩具

b keoi5 lo2 zyu6 di1 wun6 geoi6 **h**   He's holding the toys.
  佢攞住啲玩具

a keoi5 zoek3 gan2 saam1   She's getting dressed.
  佢著緊衫

b keoi5 zoek3 zyu6 tiu4 dyun2 kwan4 **n**   She was wearing a short skirt.
  佢著住條短裙

a keoi5 daai3 gan2 tiu4 zyun3 sek6 geng2 lin2   She's putting on a diamond necklace.
  佢戴緊條鑽石頸鏈

b keoi5 daai3 zyu6 tiu4 zyun3 sek6 geng2 lin2   She's wearing a diamond necklace.
  佢戴住條鑽石頸鏈

In each case **gán** 緊 indicates a dynamic, changing situation and **jyuh** 住 a static one.

Exercise 19.1

Add **gán** 緊 and/or **háidouh** 喺度 to express progressive aspect in the following sentences:

Examp keoi5 tai2 syu1 佢睇書 She's reading (a book). →
Keuih tai-gan syū 佢睇緊書

1 ngo5 ji4 gaa1 wun6 saam1   I'm changing (my clothes) now.
   我而家換衫

2 keoi5 dei6 kam4 maan5 daa2 maa4 zoek2   They were playing mahjong
   佢哋琴晚打麻雀   last night.

3 keoi5 gong2 din6 waa2   She's (talking) on the phone.
   佢講電話

4 ji4 gaa1 lok6 jyu5   It's raining now.
   而家落雨

5 di1 sai3 lou6 zai2 waan2 seoi2   The children are playing with water.
   啲細路仔玩水

6 ngo5 dei6 haang4 lai4   We're coming (walking) over.
   我哋行嚟

7 keoi5 ji4 gaa1 cung1 loeng4   She's taking a shower.
   佢而家沖涼

8 ngo5 go3 zai2 waak6 waa2   My son is drawing.
   我個仔畫畫

9 lou5 baan2 hoi1 wui2   The boss is having a meeting.
   老闆開會

10 keoi5 zung6 nau1 ngo5 dei6   She's still angry with us.
   佢仲嬲我哋

Exercise 19.2

Add **gán** 緊 or **jyuh** 住 as appropriate to complete the following sentences:

Exampl— ngo5 sai2 saam1 — 我洗衫 I'm washing clothes. → **Ngóh sái-gán sāam** 我洗緊衫

1. keoi5 zaa1 tiu4 so2 si4
我揸條鎖匙 — I'm holding a key.

2. keoi5 maai5 sung3
佢買餸 — She is buying groceries.

3. ngo5 dei6 hou2 gwaa3 nei5
我哋好掛你 — We miss you very much.

4. nei5 zyu2 mat1 je5 aa3?
你煮乜嘢呀? — What are you cooking?

5. keoi5 jam2 gaa3 fe1
佢飲咖啡 — He's drinking coffee.

6. dim2 gaai2 nei5 mong6 ngo5 aa3?
點解你望我呀? — Why are you staring at me?

7. di1 sai3 lou6 zai2 cung1 loeng4
啲細路仔沖涼 — The children are taking a bath.

8. hou2 do1 jan4 wan2 gung1
好多人搵工 — Many people are looking for a job.

9. ngo5 ji4 gaa1 daap3 man6 tai4
我而家答問題 — I'm answering questions right now.

keoi5 sing4 jat6 zoek3 di1 gau6 saam1 — He's always wearing old clothes.
佢成日著啲舊衫

UNIT 21
Passives

Cantonese passives are signalled by **bei2** 畀 phrase similar to the English *by* phrase. The **béi** 畀 phrase (**béi** 畀 + a noun phrase indicating the agent of the action) occurs before the verb:

di1 syut3 gou1 bei2 di1 sai3 lou6 zai2 sik6 zo2　啲雪糕畀啲細路仔食咗
(*lit.* the ice cream by the children eaten)
The ice cream was eaten by the children.

bun2 syu1 bei2 go3 hok6 saang1 ze3 zo2　本書畀個學生借咗
The book was borrowed by a student.

ngo5 go3 zai2 bei2 sin1 saang1 fat6 gwo3　我個仔畀先生罰過
My son has been punished by the teacher.

The noun phrase denoting the agent of the action is obligatory in spoken Cantonese, in contrast to English and Mandarin which allow agentless passives. When the identity of the agent is unknown or left unspecified, the word jan4 人 'person' or je5 嘢 'thing' is used generically:

ngo5 go3 ngan4 baau1 bei2 jan4 tau1 zo2　我個銀包畀人偷咗
My wallet was stolen.

keoi5 sing4 jat6 bei2 jan4 aak1　佢成日畀人呃
He often gets cheated.

ngo5 jau6 bei2 je5 ngaau5 can1　我又畀嘢咬親
I've been bitten again.

Note the contrast with the English translations in which the agent is not mentioned at all.

A peculiarity of Cantonese passives is that a passive verb can still take a direct object. This applies especially to those verbs introduced in Unit 16 which take two objects, such tau1 偷 'steal', fat6 罰 'fine' and man6 問 'ask':

keoi5 bei2 jan4 tau1 zo2 go3 ngan4 baau1　佢畀人偷咗個銀包
She had her purse stolen.

ngo5 bei2 jan4 fat6 zo2 hou2 do1 cin2 我畀人罰咗好多錢

I was fined a lot of money.

ngo5 m4 soeng2 bei2 jan4 man6 gam3 do1 je5 我唔想畀人問咁多嘢

I don't want to be asked so much.

This possibility gives rise to alternative passive forms for the same idea:

a ngo5 go3 ce1 paai4 bei2 jan4 lo2 zo2   My licence has been taken away.
我個車牌畀人攞咗

b ngo5 bei2 jan4 lo2 zo2 go3 ce1 paai4   I've had my licence taken away.
我畀人攞咗個車牌

a keoi5 gaa3 ce1 bei2 jan4 zong6 gwo3   Her car has been dented.
佢架車畀人撞過

b keoi5 bei2 jan4 zong6 gwo3 gaa3 ce1   She's had her car dented.
佢畀人撞過架車

The first version provides an objective statement of events, while the second focuses on the effect on the person suffering the misfortune.

Exercise 21.1

Turn the following active sentences into their passive counterparts using **béi** 畀:

Example ging2 caat3 zuk1 zo2 keoi5 dei6 警察捉咗佢哋 The police have caught them. → keoi5 dei6 bei2 ging2 caat3 zuk1 zo2 佢哋畀警察捉咗

1 gaa3 ce1 zo2 zyu6 ngo5 dei6   The car is blocking us.
   架車阻住我哋

2 ngo5 jung6 zo2 di1 cin2 in   I have used the money.
   我用咗啲錢

3 di1 sai3 lou6 zai2 gaau2 lyun6 zo2 gaan1 fong2   The children have made a mess
   啲細路仔搞亂咗間房   of the room.

4 keoi5 ze3 zo2 ngo5 go3 sau2 doi2   She has borrowed my handbag.
   佢借咗我個手袋

5   di1 ce1 seng1 cou4 seng2 zo2 ngo5 óh   The noise of the cars has
啲車聲嘈醒咗我   awakened me.

6   ngo5 tai2 gwo3 fung1 seon3   I have read the letter.
我睇過封信

7   keoi5 dei6 zing2 waai6 zo2 go3 din6 nou5 uh   They have broken the
佢哋整壞咗個電腦   computer.

8   keoi5 hoi1 gwo3 go3 seon3 soeng1   He has opened the mailbox.
佢開過個信箱

9   keoi5 dei6 sik6 zo2 di1 zyu1 gu1 lik1 ik   They have eaten the chocolate.
佢哋食咗啲朱古力

10 keoi5 daa2 laan6 zo2 zek3 bui1   i   He has broken the glass.
佢打爛咗隻杯

1 jau5 jan4 lo2 zo2 ngo5 go3 sau2 biu1

Someone took my watch.

有人攞咗我個手錶

2 jau5 jan4 hoi1 zo2 dou6 mun4 **n**

Someone opened the door.

有人開咗度門

3 jau5 jan4 sik1 zo2 laang5 hei3 gei1

Someone turned off the air conditioning.

有人熄咗冷氣機

4 jau5 jan4 aak1 zo2 keoi5 di1 cin2 **hín**

Someone cheated him out of his money.

有人呃咗佢啲錢

5 jau5 jan4 maai5 zo2 di1 syu1

Someone bought the books.

有人買咗啲書

6 jau5 je5 ngaau5 dou2 ngo5 zek3 sau2 **l**

Something has bitten my hand.

有嘢咬到我隻手

7 jau5 di1 je5 faan4 dou2 keoi5 **h**

Something has troubled him.

有啲嘢煩到佢

8 jau5 di1 je5 jing2 hoeng2 dou2 keoi5 ge3 sam1 cing4

Something has affected her mood.

有啲嘢影響到佢嘅心情

Someone ate my cake

Someone borrowed （ze3 借）本bun2 the book

My mother threw away （dam2）掟 my book

Someone bought the ticket （zoeng1 fei1 張飛）

邊個	Who	Bin1 go6
咩 / 乜嘢	what	Me1 / Mat1 je5
邊度	Where	Bin1 dou6
點解	Why	Dim2 gaai2
幾時	When	Gei2 si4
點（樣）	How	Dim2 （yoeng2）
幾多	How many/ much	Gei2 do1