Cantonese II
Week 7

1. Now I am working （zou6 je5）. My friend is going shopping. (maai5 ye5 買嘢）

2. I am studying （wan1 syu1） and listening to music （teng1 jam1 ngok6）.

3. Where is the hotel （zau2 dim3）？

   It is near the metro station (dei6 tit3 zaam6）。 Fu6 gaan6

4. Where is the washroom （sai2 sau2 gaan1）?

  It is on 3rd floor （lau2） of the department store （soeng1 coeng4）
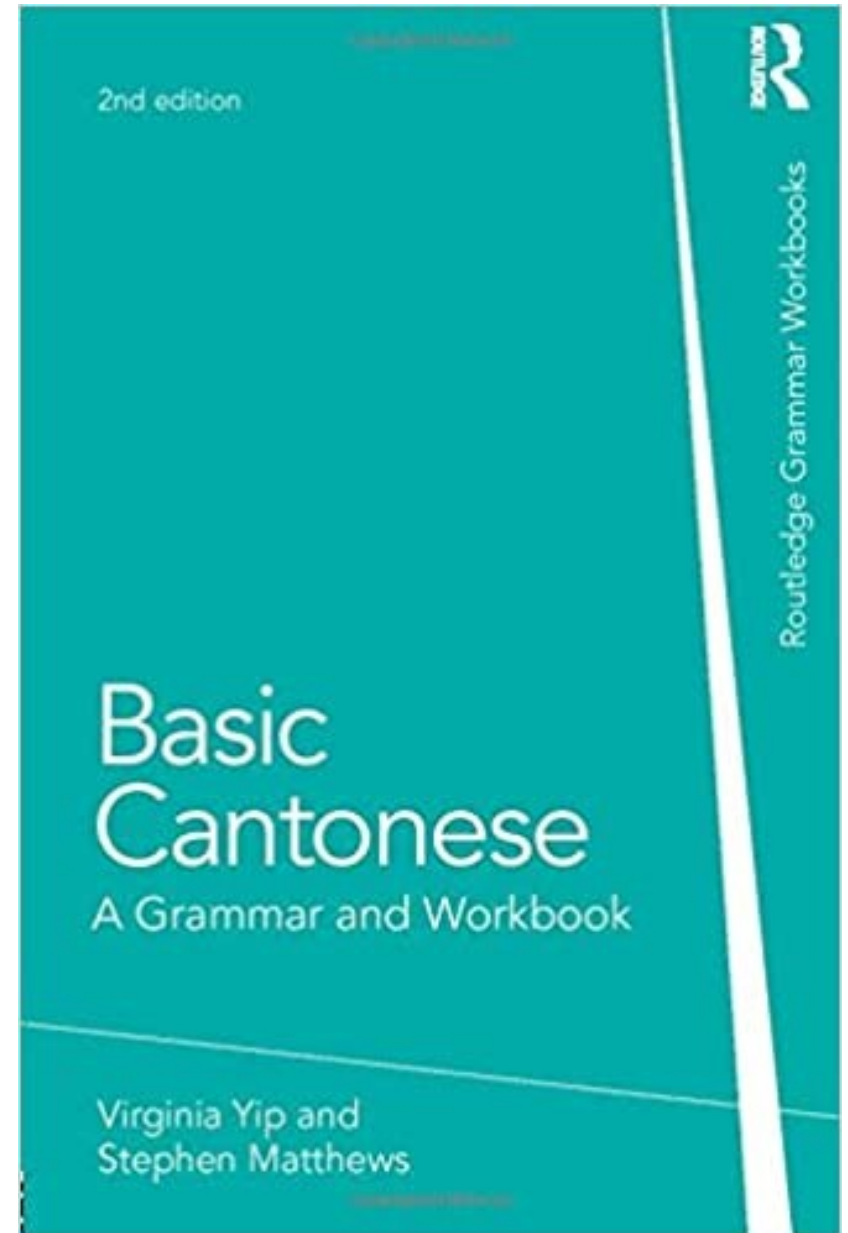
5. Is there any restaurants here?

  Yes, there is McDonalds (mak6 dong1 lou4）

New textbook:
Basic Cantonese
A Grammar and Workbook

Yale romanization of Cantonese

Limitation: unable to describe all vowels being used in Cantonese

Difference between Jyutping and Yale in initial consonants

	Jyutping	Yale
	z	j
	c	ch
	j	y

Difference between Jyutping and modified Yale in vowels

	Jyutping	Yale
	aa	a
	oe	eu
	oeng	eung
	oek	euk
	eoi	eui
	eon	eun
	eot	eut
	eu	/
	em	/
	en	/
	ep	/
	et	/

https://hongkongvision.com/tool/cc_py_conv_zh

Plurals and quantities with dī 啲

The word **dī** 啲 can be seen as a special kind of measure or, more precisely, as a collective classifier. It is used for both countable and uncountable nouns:

(a) when referring to an unspecified number of countable items:

Di1 caang2 hou2 tim4

啲橙好甜

The oranges are nice and sweet.

Ngo5 heoi3 taam3 di1 pang4 jau5

我去探啲朋友

I'm going to visit some friends.

Keoi5 di1 tung4 si6 taai3 mong4

佢啲同事太忙

Her colleagues are too busy.

(b) when referring to quantities of uncountable substances:

Di1 seoi2 m4 gau3 jit6

啲水唔夠熱

The water is not hot enough.

Ngo5 jiu3 maai5 di1 sin1 naai5

我要買啲鮮奶

I need to buy some fresh milk.

Nei5 di1 caa4 hou2 hoeng1

你啲茶好香

Your tea smells good.

Which classifier?

There are dozens of different classifiers, from the ubiquitous **go** 個 to very specific items like **bún** 本 in **bún syū** 本書 'the book'. As the term suggests, classifiers generally serve to sort nouns into semantic classes of objects:

Classifier	Semantic class	Examples	
bá 把	tools, instruments	**bá dōu** 把刀	knife
Gaa3 架	machines, vehicles	**ga chē** 架車 ce1	the car
gāan 間	buildings	**gāan ūk** 間屋	the house
Gin6 件	most clothes	**gihn sāam** 件衫	shirt, dress
Go3	people	Jat1 go3 ji1 sang1 一個醫生	a doctor
	abstract things	Ni1 go3 kyut3 ding6 呢個決定	this decision
		Jat1 go3 mung6 ng 一個夢	a dream
Zek3 隻	most animals	Zek3 gau2 隻狗	a dog
	one of a pair	Jat1 zek3 sau2 一隻手	one hand

A further important criterion is that many common classifiers categorize objects by their shape:

Classifier	Characteristics	Examples	
faai 塊	vertical surface	jat1 faai3 geng3 一塊鏡	a mirror
fūk 幅	square/rectangular	jat1 fuk1 waa2 一幅畫	a picture
zoeng1 張	flat surface	jat1 zoeng1 toi2 一張枱	a table
zi1 支	cylindrical	zi1 bat1 支筆	a pen/pencil
lāp 粒	small and round	jat1 lap1 tong2 一粒糖	a sweet
tiu4 條	long and narrow	tiu4 lou6 條路	the road

The shape criterion can override the semantic class criterion, so that animals and items of clothing distinguished by their elongated shape take **tìuh** 條, rather than **jek** 隻 or **gihn** 件:

This usage typically refers to a particular item. When the noun it goes with comes before the verb, it is definite (generally corresponding to 'the'):

gin6 saam1 hou2 gwai3	件衫好貴	The dress is expensive.
gaa3 ce1 zau2 zo2	架車走咗	The car has gone.
go3 wai6 hou2 tung3	個胃好痛	The stomach hurts.

When the classifier and noun come after the verb, it can be definite, but it can also refer to an indefinite, but specific, item ('a certain . . .'):

keoi5 maai5 zo2 gin6 saam1	佢買咗件衫	She's bought a/the dress.
ngo5 gam1 jat6 tai2 zo2 bun2 syu1	我今日睇咗本書	I read a/the book today.
keoi5 dei6 hoi1 zo2 go3 wu6 hau2	佢哋開咗個戶口	They opened an/the account.

Exercise 8.2

Order the following items at a restaurant, adding **mgōi** 唔該 for politeness at the beginning or end of the sentence (see Unit 27):

1 two glasses (**būi** 杯) of red wine (hung4 zau2 紅酒)
2 a dish (dip6 碟) of fried noodles (caau2 min6 炒麵)
3 three bowls (wun2 碗) of rice (faan6 飯)
4 another pair (deoi3 對) of chopsticks (faai3 zi2 筷子)
5 a bottle (zeon1 樽) of water (seoi2 水)
6 a menu (caan1 paai2 餐牌)
7 two wine glasses (zau2 bui1 酒杯) (Zek3)
8 a pot (wu4 壺) of hot water (jit6 seoi2 熱水)
9 a piece (gin6 件) of cake (daan6 gou1 蛋糕)
10 a cup (**būi** 杯) of coffee (gaa3 fe1 加啡)

Exercise 8.4

Choose the appropriate classifier to replace **ge** 嘅 in the following possessive expressions:

1. keoi5 ge3 sau2 biu1
2. lou5 baan2 ge3 toi2
3. go2 cang4 lau2 ge3 mun4
4. ngo5 gei3 so2 si4
5. nei5 gei3 soeng2 gei1

佢嘅手錶 her watch
老闆嘅枱 the boss's desk
ge mùhn 嗰層樓嘅門 the door of that flat
我嘅鎖匙 my key
你嘅相機 your camera

部 bou6

a zoeng1 張
b tiu4 條
c Zek3 隻
D. Gaa3 架
e dou6 度

Attributive adjectives

These modify the noun. All such adjectives come before the noun they modify:

peng4 **ge sāam** 平嘅衫		cheap clothes
gwaai1 ge3 sai3 lou6 zai2 乖嘅細路仔		good, obedient children
co3 ge3 kyut3 ding6 錯嘅決定		a wrong decision

The particle **ge** 嘅, which we have already seen in possessive constructions (Unit 5), serves here to link the adjective and noun. The adjective can be modified by **hóu** 好 'very', **jeui** 最 'most', etc.:

hou2 kan4 lik6 ge3 hok6 saang1 好勤力嘅學生		hard-working students
zeoi3 nin4 hing1 ge3 bok3 si6 最年輕嘅博士		the youngest PhD
gam3 daai6 ge3 jing2 hoeng2 咁大嘅影響		such a big influence

Predicative adjectives

These are used to state that something has a certain property. The verb hai6 係 'to be' is not used (see Unit 7), but instead the adverb **hóu** 好 is usually included:

ngo5 hou2 hoi1 sam1 我好開心		I'm happy.
di1 tong1 hou2 haam4 啲湯好鹹		The soup is salty.

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Adjecti

keoi5 gin6 saam1 hou2 leng3
gam1 jat6 hou2 sap1

...**hóu leng** 佢件衫好靚 — Her dress is beautiful.
今日好濕 — It's humid today.

hóu 好 by itself can mean 'good' or 'very', but when used in this way, it does not really mean 'very' but is merely part of the syntax of predicative adjectives.

Modifying adjectives

Other modifiers such as **géi** 幾 'quite' and **gam** 咁 'so' can appear in place of **hóu** 好, for example:

gei1 piu3 gei2 peng4
go3 sau2 tai4 din6 nou5 gam3 gwai3
daan6 gou1 taai3 tim4
cyun4 zeoi3 gan2 jiu3
sing2 gau3 saai3 coeng4

Dī gēipiu *géi* pèhng 啲機票幾平	The air tickets are quite cheap.
Léih go sáutàih dihnlóuh *gam* gwai 你個手提電腦咁貴	Your laptop computer is so expensive.
Go daahn-gōu *taai* tìhm 個蛋糕太甜	The cake is too sweet.
Ōnchyùhn *jeui* gányiu 安全最緊要	Safety is most important.
Tìuh síng *gau* (*saai*) chèuhng 條繩夠晒長	The string is (more than) long enough.

Reduplicated adjectives

Another strategy to modify the meaning of an adjective is reduplication together with the suffix -**déi** 哋:

dīn 癲 crazy → **dīn-dīn-déi** 癲癲哋	rather crazy
fú 苦 bitter → **fú-fú-déi** 苦苦哋	rather bitter
sau 瘦 thin→ **sau-sáu-déi** 瘦瘦哋	rather thin
tim4 甜 sweet → Tim4 tim2 dei2 甜甜哋	rather sweet
nyun5 暖 warm – Nyun5 nyun5 dei2 暖暖哋	rather warm
mun6 悶 bored/boring — Mun6 mun2 dei2 悶悶哋	rather bored (or: boring)

Note the change to a high rising tone on the repeated syllable (see Unit 3): this happens in all cases except where the original tone is high level (as in **dīn-dīn-déi** 癲癲哋 'rather crazy') or already high rising (as in **fú-fú-déi** 苦苦哋 'rather bitter'). These forms are used to qualify the force of an adjective:

di1 zung1 joek6 fu2 fu2 dei2 **déi** 啲中藥苦苦哋	Chinese medicine is rather bitter.
tiu4 gaai1 sap1 sap1 dei2 條街濕濕哋	The street is a bit wet.
tou3 hei3 mun6 mun2 dei2 **éi** 套戲悶悶哋	The film was fairly boring.
ngo5 gok3 dak1 mun6 mun2 dei2 **nún-déi** 我覺得悶悶哋	I feel rather bored.

Note that these forms are not used together with **hóu** 好 or other modifiers such as **géi** 幾 'quite':

ni1 go3 gaau3 sau6 din1 din1 dei2 ge3

呢個教授癲癲哋嘅

(not * **Lī go gaausauh hóu dīn-dīn-déi ge**
呢個教授好癲癲哋嘅)

This professor is pretty crazy.

go3 wu6 si6 fei4 fei2 dei2　個護士肥肥哋

(not * **Go wuhsih géi fèih-féi-déi**
個護士幾肥肥哋)

The nurse is rather chubby.

Such reduplicated forms are also used as adverbs (Unit 10).

Exercise 9.1

Use appropriate predicative adjectives to describe the following:

Example: the film on an aeroplane → **Tou hei hóu chèuhng** 套戲好長
The film was long.

1 your girlfriend/boyfriend （Neoi5/naam4 pang4 jau5）
2 your children or your friend's children（sai3 lou6）
3 a teacher you like
4 a colleague at work（tung4 si6）

5   your city
6   Your sibling

搞笑 gau2 siu3

Exercise 9.2

Add an appropriate attributive adjective to modify the following:

Example: ngo5 go4 go1 hai2 jat1 gaan1 hou2 jau5 meng2 ge3 gung1 si1 zou6 je5
我哥哥喺一間好有名嘅公司做嘢
My (elder) brother works for a famous company

1 keoi5 uk1 kei2 jau5 go3 佢屋企有個_____   At home there is a . . . living
   haak3 teng1 客廳   room.
2 deoi3 min6 jau5 gaan1 對面有間_____   Across the street there is a . . .
   caan1 teng1 餐廳   restaurant.
3 ngo5 zeoi3 gan6/kan5 tai2 zo2 我最近睇咗   I have recently read a . . . book.
   本_____ **syū** 書

Exercise 9.3

Substitute a modifier (e.g. **géi** 幾, **gam** 咁, **taai** 太, **gau saai** 夠晒) for **hóu** 好:

mun5 zuk1	We are satisfied.
lek1	She's smart (capable).
gui6	They're tired.
dak1 ji3	The children are cute.
long6 maan6	The film is romantic.
tau4 faat3...dyun2	Her hair is very short.
gaa1 si1...peng4	The furniture is cheap.
gaau3 sau6...ceot1 meng2	The professor is famous.
laan5	The student is lazy.
soeng2... leng3	The photos are pretty.

Exercise 9.4

Form reduplicated adjectives to express the meaning based on the adjective provided, remembering the change of tone:

Example: The baby is chubby (**fèih** 肥) → **Go bìhbī fèih-féi-déi** 個BB肥肥哋

1 This dish (dip6 sung1 碟餸) is a bit hot (laat6 辣).
2 The soup (tong1 啲湯) is rather sour (syun1 酸).
3 Your clothes (saam1 啲衫) are a bit wet (**sāp** 濕).
4 The weather (tin1 hei3 天氣) is rather cold (dung3 凍).
5 Her face (faai3 min6 塊面) is rather round (jyun4 圓).
6 Her eyes (ngaan5 **ahn** 對眼) are a little red (hung4 紅).
7 His office (baan6 gung1 sat1 it 個辦公室) is rather messy (lyun6 亂).
8 The button (lap1 lau2 粒鈕) is rather loose (sung1 鬆).
9 Your glasses (fu3 ngaan5 geng2 副眼鏡) are rather fuzzy (mung4 朦).
10 Your husband (lou5 gung1 老公) is a bit drunk (zeoi3 醉).

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