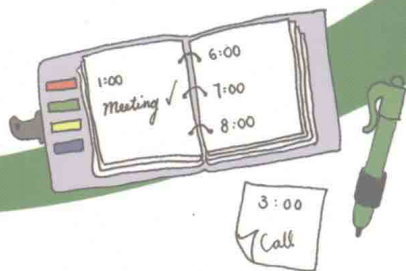


The Way We Communicate

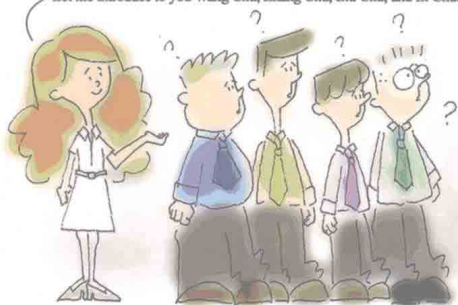
(Volume I)

怎样与中国人打交道(上)

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让我来介绍王处、张处、刘处和李处。
Let me introduce to you Wang Chu, Zhang Chu, Liu Chu, and Li Chu.



很高兴认识大家……
我是John处。
Nice to meet you all. ...
I am John ...Chu!



The Way We Communicate

(Volume I)

怎样与中国人打交道(上)

徐振亚 编著/翻译

Cynthia Kuo / 插图

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徐振亚，北京语言大学在读博士。1988年毕业于中国社会科学院研究生院汉语言文学专业；1989年移居德国；1993年移居美国夏威夷；1997年至今定居于旧金山。因外语专业和应用语言学专业的背景，在中国、德国和美国加州州立大学长期从事汉语教学，具有多种文化背景的第二语言习得教学经验。

Xu Zhenya, a current doctoral candidate of Beijing Language and Culture University, got his master degree of Chinese Language and Literature from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in 1988. He moved to Germany in 1989, and to Hawaii of the United States in 1993. Ever since 1997, he has settled in San Francisco. Thanks to his background in foreign language and applied linguistics, he has been engaged in Chinese teaching at universities in China, Germany and the California State University in the USA for a long time and has rich teaching experience in second language acquisition under various cultural backgrounds.

Preface

One of the important goals of learning Chinese is to be able to communicate with Chinese people. Suppose you have studied Chinese for three months and you know the meaning of each character of 吃, 过, 了 and 吗, do you truly understand what it means when someone asks you 吃过了吗? What response do you anticipate if you bring a beautiful clock as a gift when visiting a friend? In this book, we have included sixteen typical social scenarios, aiming to explain how to communicate with Chinese people.

For non-Chinese speakers, especially westerners with different cultural background, communicating with Chinese people requires not only language skills, but also an understanding of Chinese culture, customs, social life, business etiquettes and much more. “Ask the custom when entering a country” is another illustration of how we determine what to say and do in certain situations. Otherwise, you may end up offending people in spite of good intentions.

Each chapter in this book is made up of three sections. The first section contains situations one may encounter due to cultural differences, confusion, misunderstanding or even conflict. We believe it is easier to understand and quicker to catch the key points when learning a language within the scenarios. The

second section is cultural tips. One of the barriers in learning a second language is the cultural differences. Many people who have studied a second language may share similar experiences: a good grasp of words and grammar does not necessarily mean a good understanding or an appropriate use of the language. This section helps consolidate language skills via cultural analysis. The third section provides some useful expressions. It provides many examples used in various real-life situations. This book is characteristic of its witty and interesting scenarios, simplification of complicated cultural background, rich and colorful expressions. It's a handy textbook with a storyline and much humor in it.

In an attempt to facilitate readers, this book is published in English and Chinese with *pinyin* for Chinese characters.

My thanks first go to Ms. Ning Ren and Ms. Linda Tong whose input cannot be overlooked. My thanks also go to my editor Ms. Shurong Zhai, my friends Mr. Rui Zhang and Ms. Yiping Guo, and all who contributed to the publishing of this book.

前言

学汉语的一个重要目的就是要和中国人打交道。如果你已学了三个月的汉语，知道“吃”、“过”、“了”、“吗”这些单个字的意思，当有人问你“吃过了吗？”，你能明白这是什么意思吗？如果你去拜访一位朋友，并带了一个十分漂亮的钟作为礼物，你能预计将会出现什么结果吗？本套书共列举了十六种典型的社交场景，试图以此作为切入口，来探究如何与中国人打交道的诀窍。

一个外国人，特别是与中国文化背景差异很大的西方人，在与中国人打交道时不仅需要汉语知识，还要了解中国传统文化、民间习俗、社会生活、商务惯例等多方面知识。即入境要问俗，要知道在什么时间场合该说什么、不该说什么，否则会影响打交道的效果。

本书采取章节形式，每章都分三节：第一节是情景故事。以一个因文化差异而引起疑惑、不解、甚至冲突的会话情景，来开始语言的学习，这不仅轻松愉快，也便于理解、掌握。第二节是文化提示。第二语言习得的一大障碍就是文化差异。词汇、语法都能明白，却总还是听不懂、说不地道，这大概是许多外语学习者共有的体验。通过剖析文化差异来帮助掌握语言知识，是这一部分的主要目的。第三节是实用表达。这里有交际场上的大量实用语句，并讲解如何使用。风趣幽默的情景故事、深入浅出的文化知识、丰富多彩的交际语句，使这两本小册子读着像小说，看着像趣闻，学着像教科书。

这是一套并不需要太多汉语基础知识就可以阅读的有关中国文化的阅读材料，因为本书采用了英汉对照形式，并在汉字上附

有汉语拼音，这给读者提供了更多的信息。

在此，首先感谢任宁和 Linda Tong 两位女士，她们为此书的编写作出了不可忽略的贡献。十分感谢华语教学出版社各级领导的大力支持！感谢责任编辑翟淑蓉，朋友张瑞、郭憶萍，以及所有为本书的出版付出了辛勤劳动的朋友们！

作者

2008 年 5 月 29 日星期四

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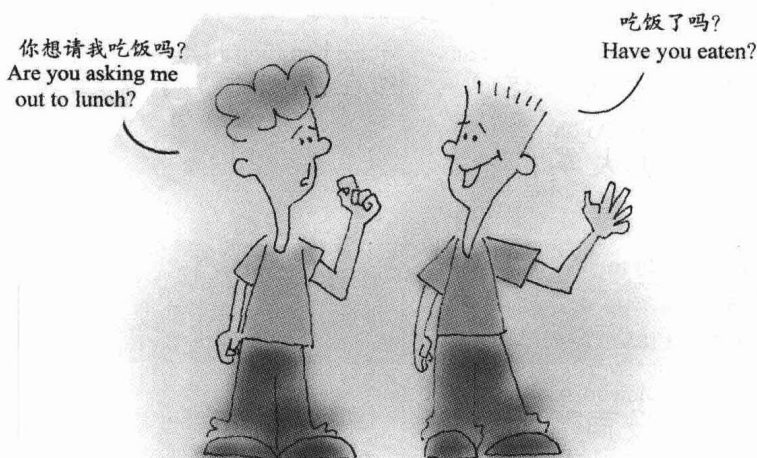
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Nǐ yào qǐng kè chī fàn ma ?
1. 你要请客吃饭吗?

Are You Asking Me Out to Lunch?

Dǎ zhāohu de jīběn yàodiǎn
打招呼的基本要点

(Essentials of greeting)



This was John's first visit to China for a business trip. He found out that people mentioned meals frequently, which often confused him. Why do people talk about this subject in the working environment all the time, and what is so interesting about eating meals?

After a couple of days, he was asked by someone the same question as well. One day he met Dajun, his

colleague, at the door of their office.

Yuèhàn dì-yī cì chūchāi dào Zhōngguó. Tā fāxiàn Zhōngguó
约翰第一次出差到中国。他发现中国
rén píngshí cháng tíjǐ yǒuguān chī fàn de huàtí, zhè hěn shì ràng
人平时常提及有关吃饭的话题，这很是让
tā kùnhuò: Wèi shénme Zhōngguó rén zǒngshì huì zài gōngzuò chǎnghé
他困惑：为什么中国人总是会在工作场合
zhōng tán dào chī de wèntí, bìng rúcǐ piān'ài zhè ge huàtí?
中谈到吃的问题，并如此偏爱这个话题？

Jǐ tiān yǐhòu, tā yě pèngdào le bèi biérén xúnwèn yǒuguān
几天以后，他也碰到了被别人询问有关
chī fàn de qíngjǐng. Zhè tiān, tā zài bàngōngshì ménkǒu pèngdào le
吃饭的情景。这天，他在办公室门口碰到了
tā de tóngshì Dàjūn:
他的同事大军：

Dàjūn: Chī fàn le ma?

大军：吃饭了吗？

Dajun: Have you eaten?

Yuèhàn: Méiyǒu a, nǐ ne?

约翰：没有啊，你呢？

John: Not yet, how about you?

Dàjūn: Wǒ yě méiyǒu. Ò, wǒ yíhuìr yǒu ge huì, děi xiān zǒu yí
大军：我也没有。哦，我一会儿有个会，得先走一
bù, zài jiàn.
步，再见。

Dajun: Me neither. Oh, I have a meeting and have to go
now. Bye!

Yuèhàn: Nǐ zhè bú shì yào qǐng wǒ chī fàn ma?

约翰：你这不是要请我吃饭吗？

John: So you are not inviting me out to lunch?

Dàjūn : Nǐ xiǎng de dào tǐng měi , děng wǒ yǒu shíjiān zài shuō , xiànzài
大军: 你想得倒挺美, 等我有时间再说, 现在
wǒ bìxū zǒu le .
我必须走了。

Dajun: You wish! Wait until I'm free. I have to go now.

Yuēhàn : Nà nǐ wèishénmeyào wèn wǒ yǒu méiyǒu chī fàn ?
约翰: 那你为什么要问我有没有吃饭?

John: Why did you ask me then?

Dàjūn : Zhè nǐ hái bù zhīdào ? Zhè zhǐshì Zhōngguó rén de yí jù wèn-
大军: 这你还不知道? 这只是中国人的一句问
hòuyǔ .
候语。

Dajun: You didn't get it, did you? This is just the Chinese
way of greeting.

Yuēhàn : Shénme ? (Yí liǎn bù jiě de shénqíng)
约翰: 什么? (一脸不解的神情)

John: What? (confused)

It was a very awkward situation for John when Dajun asked him if he had eaten a meal. He did not know how to reply. After asking Dajun about it, John figured out that 吃饭了吗? is a common greeting similar to "Hello" in English. He learned in his Chinese class to use 你好 to greet others. This was not the case. How should John reply? What does he do wrong next?

Dàjūn jiàndào Yuēhàn wèn tā shǐfǒu chī guo fàn le , Zhèràng
大军见到约翰问他是否吃过饭了, 这让

Yuēhàn gǎndào hěn bú zìzài , shènzhì yǒu diǎnr bùzhīsuǒcuò .
约翰感到很不自在，甚至有点儿不知所措。

Dāng tā qǐngjiàoguò Dàjūn hòu cái gǎomíngbai , “chī fànle ma ?”
当他请教过大军后才搞明白，“吃饭了吗？”

yuánlái shì Zhōngguó rén chángyòng de yì zhǒng dǎ zhāohu yòngyǔ .
原来是中国人常用的一种打招呼用语。

Yuēhàn cóng tā xuéguo de Hànyǔ kè lǐ hái jìde , zài hé tā rén
约翰从他学过的汉语课里还记得，在和他人
jiànmiàn dǎ zhāohu shí yòng “nǐhǎo” , dàn xiànzài xiǎnrán bú shì zhè
见面打招呼时用“你好”，但现在显然不是这
zhǒngqíngkuàng . Nà Yuēhàn jiūjīng yīnggāi zěnmé huídá ? Xiàmiàn
种情况。那约翰究竟应该怎么回答？下面

tā yòu zuò cuòle shénme ne ?
他又做错了什么呢？

Yuēhàn : Lili , nǐ chī fànle ma ?

约翰：莉莉，你吃饭了吗？

John: Lily, have you eaten?

Lili : Xiànzài chī fàn tài zǎole ba , nǐ shuō de shì wǎnfàn hái shì wǔ-
莉莉：现在吃饭太早了吧，你说的是晚饭还是午
fàn a ?
饭啊？

Lily: It is too early to eat right now. Do you mean lunch
or dinner?

Yuēhàn : Bú shì , bú shì . Wǒ zài duì nǐ shuō “Hello” . Dàjūn
约翰：不是，不是。我在对你说“Hello”。大军
shuō “chī fànle ma ?” shì “Hello” de yìsi .
说“吃饭了吗？”是“Hello”的意思。

John: No, no. I meant to say “Hello.” Dajun said that
“Have you eaten?” means “Hello.”

Lili : Hāha , nà nǐ yě děi zài chī fàn de shíjiān wèn a .
莉莉：哈哈，那你也得在吃饭的时间问啊。

Lily: Well, you should ask that question at meal time.

What is wrong when John uses the question 你吃饭了吗? to say hello to Lily? It seems that 你吃饭了吗? and 你好 are different. What should John do?

Zhè cì Yuēhàn duì Lili yòng “nǐ chī fànle ma” dǎ
这次约翰对莉莉用“你吃饭了吗”打
zhāohu , kě xiǎnrán yǒudiǎnr bù tài duìjīnr , gǎnjué shàng
招呼, 可显然有点儿不太对劲儿, 感觉上
zhè jù huà hé “nǐ hǎo” hái shì yǒu suǒ bù tóng . Nàme Yuēhàn
这句话和“你好”还是有所不同。那么约翰
jiūjìng yīnggāi zěnmě zuò ?
究竟应该怎么做?

Cultural Tips 文化提示

Foreigners coming to China for the first time are usually confused by Chinese customs especially when being asked 你吃饭了吗? Do they want to invite me to dinner? Do they think I am broken? Why do they care so much whether I have eaten or not?

Literally, 你吃饭了吗 is a simple question about eating. On most occasions, however, this sentence is used as a form of greeting. This is because in the past, food was scarce and the general public was concerned whether there was enough food. Asking someone 你

吃饭了吗? evolves to a form of greeting to show care and friendliness. This expression is often used between acquaintances when they want to say “Hi!”. A simple “Yes” or “No” is sufficient for a response.

Unlike 你好!, 你吃饭了吗? is used around meal time. Otherwise, it is inappropriate to be used. It is embarrassing when asking someone who is going to the restroom. In addition to greeting, 你吃饭了吗? may also be used to ask someone out to eat on some occasions. How does one differentiate between the two? Practice is the key!

One thing that should be remembered is that 你吃饭了吗? is used between people who know each other very well, better don't apply it to a person you just met. In other words, the relationship between people can be measured by whether they use this expression.

One should take note that different people should be addressed differently. Same as in the USA, in China one would not use the same greeting to address the president as one will address a three-year-old kid. Using the wrong greeting words may cause unnecessary trouble.

Wàiguó rén chūdào Zhōngguó cháng huì yīn yìxiē Zhōngguó rén
外国人初到中国常会因一些中国人
dàirén-jiēwù de xíguàn fāngshì, yóuqí shì xiàng “nǐ chī fàn le”
待人接物的习惯方式, 尤其是像 “你吃饭了”