

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Gengo Chinese S1 #1

Where Did You Learn to Speak Chinese Like That?

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INTRODUCTION

Victor: 大家好，我是Victor。(Dàjiā hǎo, wǒ shì Victor.)

Amber: And this is Amber! We're welcoming you to the Gengo Chinese lessons. And this is Lesson 1, and the title is...

Victor: Where Did You Learn to Speak Chinese Like That?

Amber: From you, Victor!

Victor: (laugh)

Amber: And today you are going to get to meet that very special... something!

Victor: Which is, of course...China!

Amber: Yeah, and because you are interested in Chinese, of course, this is very exciting. But in these lessons, you're going to get to know a little bit more about China, through the eyes of our main characters and the dialogues, but of course, along the way, learn Chinese.

Victor: Right.

Amber: So this lesson set is kind of like a field trip to China, if you think of it that way.

Victor: Yep, just enough to teach you a lot, but not so overwhelming.

Amber: Yeah, sort of like, think of it like temporary Chinese immersion. So first though we have a pre-lesson disclaimer.

Victor: Oh, what is that?

Amber: Well it's that if you haven't done the prerequisite bootcamp warmup for these lessons, you might get some dizziness or heart palpitations if you jump right in.

Victor: Yes we do have a series of bootcamp lessons that give you some background and foundation to get started in Chinese.

Amber: So make sure you go listen to these lessons first, and then come back to this lesson set, and they will give you some background and some foundation that will make it a lot easier.

Victor: Right, and they answer all the questions you might have before you even know you had them!

Amber: And one more thing, another disclaimer, the bootcamp is not as scary as it sounds. If there's no dizziness, and you're not going to faint or anything, it's not scary. Ok so our main character in the dialogue is a guy named Mike. So we're just introducing him as he's a guy who is going to China to boldly venture into unfamiliar territory, and he has lots of adventures along the way.

Victor: Through his trials and errors, you'll get prepared for everything from taking taxis to meeting people.

Amber: Yeah, to dining out... to bravely eat where no (western) man has eaten before. And basically his trip is a little business, a little pleasure... what we all like in a trip, what many of our trips to China is about.

Victor: And there is a lot of both to be had in China.

Amber: But first, you have to get there. So we're going to start today with our dialogue where our Chinese learner Mike is ringing up his old Chinese pal and letting him know that he's going to China.

Victor: So let's hear number one, how to have a phone conversation in Chinese.

Amber: Right. So, the dialogue you're about to hear, the conversation takes place on the telephone.

Victor: This conversation is between our main character Mike and his Chinese friend in America.

Amber: And the speakers are friends, so the speech is informal. Alright, so let's listen to the conversation.

DIALOGUE

Tim: 喂? (Wéi?)

Mike: 你好! 我是麦克。(Nǐhǎo! Wǒ shì Mài kè.)

Tim: 你好! (Nǐhǎo!)

Mike: 我明天去中国。(Wǒ míngtiān qù Zhōngguó.)

Tim: 是吗? 旅途愉快! (Shì ma? Lǚtú yúkuài!)

Mike: 谢谢, 再见! (Xièxie, zàijiàn!)

Tim: 再见! (Zàijiàn!)

Victor: 重复一次, 慢速。(Chóngfù yīcì, màn sù.)

Amber: One more time, a little slower.

Tim: 喂? (Wéi?)

Mike: 你好! 我是麦克。(Nǐhǎo! Wǒ shì Mài kè.)

Tim: 你好! (Nǐhǎo!)

Mike: 我明天去中国。(Wǒ míngtiān qù Zhōngguó.)

Tim: 是吗? 旅途愉快! (Shì ma? Lǚtú yúkuài!)

Mike: 谢谢, 再见! (Xièxie, zàijiàn!)

Tim: 再见! (Zàijiàn!)

Victor: 重复一次, 加英文翻译。(Chóngfù yīcì, jiā yīngwén fānyì.)

Amber: One more time, with the English.

Tim: 喂? (Wéi?)

Tim: Hello?

Mike: 你好! 我是麦克。(Nǐhǎo! Wǒ shì Mài kè.)

Mike: Hi! This is Mike.

Tim: 你好! (Nǐhǎo!)

Tim: Hi!

Mike: 我明天去中国。(Wǒ míngtiān qù Zhōngguó.)

Mike: I'm going to China tomorrow.

Tim: 是吗? 旅途愉快! (Shì ma? Lǚtú yúkuài!)

Tim: Oh yeah? Have a great trip!

Mike: 谢谢, 再见! (Xièxie, zàijiàn!)

Mike: Thanks, goodbye.

Tim: 再见! (Zàijiàn!)

Tim: Bye!

POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Victor: So everybody, did you hear anything familiar?

Amber: Yes, I think I did. I had some flashbacks to our Bootcamp series.

Victor: Yeah, I think there are a few.

Amber: Right. Let's take a look at the vocabulary for this lesson.

VOCAB LIST

Victor: 喂 (wéi) [natural native speed]

Amber: hello (answering telephone)

Victor: 喂 (wéi) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Victor: 喂 (wéi) [natural native speed]

Victor: 是 (shì) [natural native speed]

Amber: to be

Victor: 是 (shì) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Victor: 是 (shì) [natural native speed]

Victor: 明天 (míngtiān) [natural native speed]

Amber: tomorrow

Victor: 明天 (míngtiān) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Victor: 明天 (míngtiān) [natural native speed]

Victor: 去 (qù) [natural native speed]

Amber: to go

Victor: 去 (qù) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Victor: 去 (qù) [natural native speed]

Victor: 中国 (Zhōngguó) [natural native speed]

Amber: China

Victor: 中国 (Zhōngguó) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Victor: 中国 (Zhōngguó) [natural native speed]

Victor: 旅途愉快 (lǚtú yúkuài) [natural native speed]

Amber: have a nice trip

Victor: 旅途愉快 (lǚtú yúkuài) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Victor: 旅途愉快 (lǚtú yúkuài) [natural native speed]

Victor: 谢谢 (xièxie) [natural native speed]

Amber: thank you

Victor: 谢谢 (xièxie) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Victor: 谢谢 (xièxie) [natural native speed]

Victor: 再见 (zàijiàn) [natural native speed]

Amber: see you again, goodbye

Victor: 再见 (zàijiàn) [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Victor: 再见 (zàijiàn) [natural native speed]

VOCAB AND PHRASE USAGE

Victor: Let's have a closer look at the usage for some of the words and phrases from this lesson.

Amber: Yeah, so basically I think what we start out with is a very iconic Chinese line, don't you think, Victor? I mean anybody who has ever called a Chinese home knows this word, even if you call back their phone number. What is that?

Victor: 喂 (wéi)

Amber: Yes, that's the classic Chinese phone answer. So doesn't matter if you're on a cellphone, on a home phone, you know even in real life, where most of us know 你好 (nǐhǎo), you don't really say that much on the phone, at least not at first.

Victor: Right.

Amber: When you pick up, you just say 喂 (wéi).

Victor: It's the phone-exclusive word. This is a weird one, because technically the word 喂 (wéi) is a 4th tone.

Amber: This is important sometimes it confuses people, if you look it up in the dictionary, the character is fourth tone.

Victor: Right, but everyone when they answer the phone are more like wei2, which is 2nd tone.

Amber: Yeah, I would definitely say that I've not heard anyone answer it wei4, they always say wei2, wei2. I think it just sounds a little bit more nicer, sounds a bit dismissive when you say it in the 4th tone. So maybe that's why, who knows. But yeah, even though it's written 4th tone, pronounce it 2nd tone.

Victor: So now we hear the phone hello, but the real life hello is different.

Amber: Yes, we mentioned the real-life hello, which we learned in the bootcamp, of course. But let's hear it again Victor.

Victor: It's 你好 (nǐhǎo).

Amber: Right, which literally means "you good." It's 3rd tone, 3rd tone. However, with the tone change rule, it's pronounced 2nd tone, 3rd tone.

Victor: Yeah, and then his friend 'ni hao's him back.

Amber: Of course. Now the next word that comes is a clincher because it is a word that tells us about the time that something is occurring. So we're getting some hints now about what's happening. So in this case, the next word we hear is the word for "tomorrow".

Victor: Yes, it's 明天 (míngtiān).

Amber: Right. Now we're gonna talk a bit about time words now because time words are very important in Chinese because there is no verb tense. So while we're at it, why don't we just throw a few more time words Victor for everybody.

Victor: Sure.

Amber: How about the word for yesterday? What's that?

Victor: It's 昨天 (zuótiān). 昨 (zuó) is second tone and 天 (tiān) is first tone.

Amber: Good. So we've already got two time words - tomorrow.

Victor: 明天 (míngtiān). 明 (míng) is second tone and 天 (tiān) is first tone.

Amber: Good. And review, yesterday.

Victor: 昨天 (zuótiān). Second tone and first tone.

Amber: Ok, let's go back to our sentence. So in the rest of the sentence, there are definitely some familiar words from our bootcamp.

Victor: Yeah, Bootcamp flashbacks.

Amber: Yeah. And one word we hear from bootcamp is the word for 'China', which is

Victor: 中国 (Zhōngguó). 1st tone and 2nd tone.

Amber: Right. It's a very important word for us, of course China, and it's also going to help us understand the sentence.

Victor: So 我明天去中国 (Wǒ míngtiān qù Zhōngguó).

Amber: Means, literally, I tomorrow go China. Yeah, I'm going to China tomorrow. I wish it were me, Victor.

Victor: Me too. But anyway his friend is excited for him, too. We can tell because he says 是吗?(Shì ma?)

Amber: Yes, the return of the 'shi', which is the verb similar to "to be" in English. And also actually the return of the 'ma', which is our verbal question mark in Chinese. These are all in our bootcamp series. So it's just like a little review. So to put it together, when his friend exclaimed: what do you get?

Victor: 是吗? (Shì ma?) 是 (shì) is 4th tone, and 吗 (ma) is the neutral tone.

Amber: Right. And this is a great expression. I mean, you can use it all the time, kind of like how in English we'll say: 'really?!' or like 'no way?!'

Victor: Yeah. This is the Chinese version. So if your friend tells you something amazing you can say, shi ma?

Amber: That's right. So let's try it Victor. I'm moving to Turkey!

Victor: 哦, 是吗? (Ó, shì ma?)

Amber: You didn't sound very surprised. You should be like: 是吗??? (shì ma???) You're gonna miss me, come on!

Victor: Well, I have to find someone else to host the lessons with me then.

Amber: You don't sound that disappointed. Well so, I'm not really moving, but it worked, more or less. That's how you use it.

Victor: Now, naturally, if you were going on a trip, I would want to wish you well, Amber.

Amber: Of course, just like in our dialogue. Just like in English, wanting to say - have a good trip, here comes the big phrase of the day.

Victor: 旅途愉快 (lǚtú yúkuài) ! 旅 (lǚ) is 3rd tone, 途 (tú) is 2nd tone, 愉 (yú) is 2nd tone, and 快 (kuài) is 4th tone.

Amber: It's kind of a lot of words stuck together there, but let's just break it down.

Victor: 旅途 (lǚtú) means "journey."

Amber: And 愉快 (yúkuài) means "happy."

Victor: So 'Happy journey'!

Amber: Yes, happy journey. So Victor, do you say that every time someone goes on a trip?

Victor: Yeah, pretty much, pretty much.

Amber: So yes, we wish them well, even though we're secretly jealous. And now we can move on to learn a little bit of our grammar point in this lesson.

LESSON FOCUS

Amber: Ok, we're going to focus a little on word order in Chinese sentences.

Victor: Yes, and in this dialogue we hear a very good example of basic Chinese word order, in the sentence 我是迈克 (Wǒ shì Mài kè.)

Amber: Ok now, first of all, we hear this 迈克 (Mài kè). This is basically a translation of Mike's name into Chinese.

Victor: Yep, 迈克 (Mài kè).

Amber: 我是迈克 (Wǒ shì Mài kè) is "I am Mike."

Victor: This is the way we construct a simple sentence structure using the verb 'to be' in Chinese.

Amber: Yes, which is 是 (shì). You can see that the word order, this is a bonus because it is the same as in English for this kind of simple sentence. So the word order here being [subject] + [verb] + [object]. Can you give us a couple other examples of this kind of sentence structure Victor?

Victor: Sure, like, Amber是女孩子 (Amber shì nǚ hái zi).

Amber: Ah yes, in case you all didn't know... that was "Amber is a girl."

Victor: Yep, so now you try one.

Amber: OK, um, how about... 你是Victor (Nǐ shì Victor).

Victor: Right!

Amber: So I said "You're Victor." So it's very easy. Simple sentences are just like English in this case.

Victor: Now next we're going to talk about 'time when' phrases in Chinese.

Amber: So that's basically your fancy way of saying 'we don't have to conjugate verbs in Chinese'... which is good news

Victor: Yes! well no verb tense / conjugation means we need other things to tell us the time. So let's look at this sentence, 我明天去中国。(Wǒ míngtiān qù Zhōngguó.)

Amber: which translated means "I'm going to China tomorrow."

Victor: So we learned the time word 'tomorrow' earlier, 明天 (míngtiān)

Amber: Right. And we can see it in this sentence. So pay attention to the word order. Let's hear it again.

Victor: 我明天去中国。(Wǒ míngtiān qù Zhōngguó.)

Amber: So now, "time when" sentence goes like this: [subject + time when something is happening + predicate].

Victor: Yes. So we can use that format in other examples as well.

Amber: Let's try using another time word... let's try using like, 'every day'. Something that we do every day.

Victor: Sure, or maybe a lot of Chinese people do every day, which is 我每天喝茶。(Wǒ měitiān hēchá.)

Amber: Really, Victor?

Victor: "I drink tea every day."

Amber: Is it really true?

Victor: I don't, but a lot of Chinese do.

Amber: I think you go to Starbucks every day.

Victor: It's like the Chinese version of Starbucks, the tea in China.

Amber: Yes. So let's take a look at that. We said, first

Victor: 我 (Wǒ)

Amber: This is "I," which is a subject.

Victor: 每天 (měitiān)

Amber: which is "every day"

Victor: 每 (měi) is 3rd tone, 天(tiān) is 1st tone.

Amber: And then the predicate comes, which is

Victor: 喝茶 (hēchá). 喝 (hē) is 1st tone and 茶 (chá) is 2nd tone.

Amber: Which means "to drink tea." 喝 (hē) is "to drink," 茶 (chá) is "tea."

Victor: Yeah. If you go to China, you'll see a lot of people doing that all the time.

Amber: Well, the truth is I don't, so...I can say something different. I can say: 我每天喝咖啡 (Wǒ měitiān hē kāfēi). Can everybody guess what 咖啡 (kāfēi) is? It sounds a lot like the real word for coffee. Very non-Chinese of me, I'm just an imposter.

Victor: So that's our lesson points.

Amber: Yep. that's it for today's lesson. So we hope you all feel excited for the upcoming trip, just like Mike does, like we do.

Victor: Yes, very excited.

Amber: Who knows what adventures are in store in China. You can come along with us, and experience them along with us.

Victor: The adventure begins next lesson.

Amber: Yes, here on Gengo Chinese. So stay tuned for 'the fateful plane ride'!

OUTRO

Victor: 再见! (Zàijiàn!)

Amber: We'll see you next time. 再见! (Zàijiàn!)