

Complete Lesson Transcript – Lesson 17 [Traditional]

Hosts: Adam Menon / Kirin Yang

Adam: Hello and welcome. My name is Adam.

Kirin: 你們好. 我是 Kirin.

Adam: This is Lesson 17 of the ChineseLearnOnline.com podcast series teaching Mandarin Chinese. Each lesson builds upon previously learned material, while adding new words as we go along. If you ever find yourself in trouble, then please use the course outline on the site to see what words were taught in each lesson.

Now if you're a sharp listener, you may have noticed that Kirin just used a new character in her introduction. We all know what 你好 means. The literal translation is – “You good.” Here she said 你們好. The 們 is a neutral tone character that is added after 你 to make it plural. So it's the difference between “you” singular and “you” plural.

Similarly we could say 我們 to mean “we,” rather than 我 meaning “I.” We could also say 他們 to mean “they” rather than 他 meaning “he” or “she.” So when saying “hello,” you can say 你好 using a singular 你 or you could also say 你們好 to address a group. And of course we also have 大家好 to mean “Hello everyone.” So thank you, Kirin.

Kirin: 不客氣.

Adam: Alright, so we'll begin today's lesson with a short conversation. We'll then break it down for you line by line. Like we did recently, this one is also a two part dialogue. We'll listen to the first part today and then finish off in our next lesson. You can try and follow along by viewing lesson notes directly on your MP3 player if you can, or by viewing the transcripts on our website. As well, if you can, try and repeat the lines and characters as you hear them. So let's get started here.

Cindy: 請你自我介紹一下. 你結婚了嗎?

Yann: 對不起. 我聽不懂. “結婚” 是什麼意思?

Adam: So pretty simple there, let's listen to it again. Please repeat after Kirin.

Kirin: 請你自我介紹一下. 你結婚了嗎?

對不起. 我聽不懂. “結婚” 是什麼意思?

Adam: So lots of new vocabulary there. We'll now break it down for you starting with the first line.

Kirin: 請你自我介紹一下.

Adam: So we've seen the first two characters before 請你. What does “請” mean? It means... “please.” So that gives us “please you.” Now something to note here, they are both third tones. However, when we have two third tones together, the first one frequently changes to a second tone since that makes it simpler to pronounce. So for example 你好 is two third tones, but that slows us down to say the full third tones so usually you'll hear 你好. So the 你 here becomes 你- a second tone. So getting back to our example here, we have 請你, so the 請 becomes a second tone 請.

Kirin: 請你自我介紹一下.

Adam: 請你自我. The character 自 is a fourth tone and when combined with the 我 means “self.” So 你自我 means “you yourself.” We then have a new word – 介紹. That's two fourth tones and together that means “introduce.” The last two characters are 一下. 一 we should know means “one” or “a,” while 下 is a fourth tone and in this context combines with the 一 to mean “a moment” or “a short time.”

Kirin: 請你自我介紹一下.

Adam: So the literal translation of the whole sentence is “Please you self introduce a moment” or “Please give us a quick introduction.”

Kirin: 請你自我介紹一下.

Adam: She then asks:

Kirin: 你結婚了嗎?

Adam: So we have a new word here 結婚. That's a second tone 結 and a first tone 婚. 結婚. And that means “to be married.” The neutral particle 了 indicates a change in situation. If you were married, your situation would already have changed from being single to being married. As you may have noticed, the Chinese language doesn't use tenses as we do in English so to indicate past tense they make use of particles such as 了. So that gives us “Are you married?”

Kirin: 你結婚了嗎?

Adam: By adding the 了, we know she is asking “Are you already married?” as opposed to “Are you getting married?” or “Are you going to get married?” , in which case your situation wouldn’t have changed and so you wouldn’t need to use the 了 particle.

Kirin: 你結婚了嗎?

Adam: To which the man replies:

Kirin: 對不起. 我聽不懂.

Adam: Ah yes, my favorite expression when I was learning Chinese. We know...

Kirin: 對不起.

Adam: ...means “I’m sorry” or “excuse me.” We then have:

Kirin: 我聽不懂.

Adam: We have a couple of new characters there. 聽 is a first tone and is the verb “to listen.” That’s followed by 不懂. We know 不 is a negation character and 懂 is a third tone meaning “to understand.” So...

Kirin: 我聽不懂.

Adam: ...means “I don’t understand what I’m hearing.” It’s a common phrase that’s used when someone says something to you that you don’t understand. So...

Kirin: 對不起. 我聽不懂.

Adam: ...means “I’m sorry I don’t understand.” Quite a useful phrase to know when learning Chinese.

Kirin: 對不起. 我聽不懂.

Adam: The last line of the dialogue was...

Kirin: “結婚” 是什麼意思?

Adam: So we’ve actually seen all these words before. We know 結婚 means “married.” Although in this line the speaker actually doesn’t know that as you’ll soon see. What does “什麼” mean? It’s a question word meaning... “what.” We saw the last word we saw in our last lesson. Do you remember what “意思” means? It means “meaning.” So putting

that all together gives us “結婚 is what meaning?” The speaker doesn’t understand what 結婚 means so he is asking “What does 結婚 mean?”

Kirin: “結婚” 是什麼意思?

Adam: This is a very useful expression to know. You may also often hear “什麼意思?” meaning “What does that mean?”

We will continue this dialogue in our next lesson. For now let’s listen to the first part one more time before we wrap up. First, repeat after Kirin.

Kirin: 請你自我介紹一下. 你結婚了嗎?
對不起. 我聽不懂. “結婚” 是什麼意思?

Adam: And let’s hear the dialogue again at normal speed.

Cindy: 請你自我介紹一下. 你結婚了嗎?
Yann: 對不起. 我聽不懂. “結婚” 是什麼意思?

Adam: Ok, so thank you all for listening us today. We try to keep these lessons moving along and don’t dwell too long on some of the points. That’s where our Premium notes come in to play – they pick up where our podcasts leave off – giving you more examples and more explanations of items that we don’t spend enough time on in the actual lesson. So please take a look at them to get the full experience of this course and try out some of the exercises and review activities we created for you. And then join us next time for lesson 18, where we’ll finish off this dialogue. So see you then!

Kirin: 再見.