INTRODUCTION

The lessons in Unit 4 focus on the goings and comings of everyday life. The purpose is to make it clear that you can get to where you want to go in great sounding Mandarin. As always use your vivid imagination to put yourself into the journeys and the scenes you encounter along the way.

You have already experienced going places to do things. For example, going to Shanghai to have a meeting is expressed this way:

_Dào Shànghâi kāihuì._

You might recall that you can follow _dào_ with a place (Wûhàn), a place (tíshūguān, tíshūguān-li), or a placeword formed from a noun or pronoun followed by a location (jiē-shang, wô-zhèr):

_Nǐ dào Wûhàn kànkan Péng jiàoshòu ba._
Why don’t you go to Wuhan to see Professor Peng.

_Nǐ dào tíshūguān gěi Rén xiānsheng jiè nàbèn shū ba._
Why don’t you go to the library to take out that book for Mr. Ren.

_Tā shì zuótiān dào wô-zhèr de._
It was yesterday that he came to visit me.

Movement away from and toward the speaker can be expressed with the same pattern by using _qù_ (go) or _lái_ (come) before a place (Wûhàn), a place (tíshūguān, tíshūguān-li), or a placeword formed from a noun or pronoun followed by a location (jiē-shang, wô-zhèr):

_Nǐ qù Wûhàn kànkan Péng jiàoshòu ba._
I suggest you go to Wuhan to meet with Professor Peng.

_Nǐ lái Dàlián kànkan Huáng jīnglǐ ba._
I suggest you come to Dalian to see Ms. Huang, the manager.

_Nǐ qù tíshūguān gěi Rén xiānsheng jiè nàbèn shū ba._
Why don’t you go to the library and borrow that book for Mr. Ren.

_Nǐ lái tíshūguān gěi Rén xiānsheng jiè nàbèn shū ba._
Why don’t you come to the library and borrow that book for Mr. Ren.
It was yesterday when he went to visit me.

It was yesterday when he came to visit me.

Using the verbs dào and shàng before a destination and adding lái or qù after, you will also express movement toward and away from the speaker:

- Shàng tā-nàr qù. / Dào tā-nàr qù. Go to her.
- Dào túshūguān-wàibiān(r) lái. Come to outside the library.
- Nǐ shàng nàr qù? Where are you going?
- Tā méi(-you) dào zhèr lái. She didn’t come here.

If you have a purpose for going or coming, you may mention it after you describe the movement:

- Shàng tā-nàr qù wènwen. / Dào tā-nàr qù wènwen. Go ask her.
- Dào túshūguān-wàibiān(r) lái jiē wǒ. Come and pick me up outside the library.
- Nǐ shàng nàr qù xuéxí? Where are you going to study?
- Tā méi(-you) dào zhèr lái jiē qián. She didn’t come here to borrow money.

You might recall that you can express change by concluding an expression of a “state.” For example, states can be described by adjectives (Wǒ lèi le. I’m tired now.) and negatives (Lǎo Wáng bù-shàngbān le. Lao Wang quit coming to work.). You can also describe a state by adding a modal such as xiāng (intention, desire, etc.):

- Wǒ xiànzài xiāng qù le. I want to go now (change of mind).
- Wǒ bù-xiāng qù le. I no longer want to go.

One thing about going and coming that sometimes perplexes learners of Chinese is the formulaic use of social expressions. If someone you know comes into your room, it is common in Chinese to greet them by saying:

Nǐ lái le. You’re here. / Hi!
When you are about to leave a group, you announce your intention by saying:

_Wǒ zǒu le._

I’m leaving (probably the most common way to say goodbye).

Another formulaic expression using _qù_ that you will encounter in this unit will permit you to express complete befuddlement at someone’s actions. You will have to learn this one exactly to get the effect:

_Nǐ dōu xiǎng dào nǎr qù le?_ Where did you get that?

It will be useful to make the acquaintance of an irrational Chinese speaking person or two to get the opportunity to practice this line.

You will also practice giving and receiving gifts in this unit. This is an important social act in China. The Chinese are usually much more into gift giving than Americans. This means that Americans are usually uneasy in situations where gifts are exchanged. When you study gift giving, learn it well because you will be sure to use it in the future. And, if you do it well, you will appear much more sophisticated in Chinese.

Finally, in this unit you will continue to study the Chinese writing system(s) and learn to use name (or business) cards. If you plan to interact with Chinese at almost any level of formality, using business cards will be a common activity. You might start thinking about how to make your own name card in Chinese.