wán 'to be able to finish eating'; dúngdelyáu, kényi-dúng 'to be able to understand.'

e. The potential forms with de and bu are sometimes preceded by auxiliary verbs meaning 'to be able': něng-sywéde wán 'to be able to finish studying.' The forms with or without the auxiliary verbs mean the same thing.

f. Resultative verbs are rarely preceded by the negative prefix bu. In situations where English use a phrase like 'I don't see it' Chinese says Wó-kăn bujyán 'I can't see it.'

g. The basic form of resultative verbs is often preceded by the negative prefix méi or méiyóu or followed by the particles le and gwo: Wó-méi-kăn jyán 'I didn't see it,' Wó-kăn jyán le 'I saw it,' Wó-méi-kàn jyángwó 'I have never seen it.'

2. By a change in meaning from 'want' to 'need' and then to 'be necessary' the verb yáu is used in such sentences as Tsún-jé róu-nér yáu dzóu yíge júng lóu 'From here to there it is necessary to walk one hour, It will take an hour to get from here to there.'

3. The verb shí 'to be' is used where one might expect the verb 'to have' in the sentence Tá-shí shénma-bíng 'What sickness is he? What sickness does he have?'

4. The auxiliary verb děi or biděi 'have to' has an irregular negative form bubí 'don't have to.' While děi or biděi can be translated as either 'have to' or 'must,' bubí can only be translated as 'don't have to' or 'need not' and cannot be thought of as an equivalent to English 'must not.' 'I have to do this' and 'I must do this' may be the same thing in English, but 'I don't have to do this' and 'I must not do this' are quite different ideas.

5. The measure fén sometimes means 'a tenth' when preceded by a number from one to ten: Széng shí-Méi wó džó xióng wó-ren, lyóufén shí-Yíng wó džó xióng wó-ren 'Four-tenths are Americans, six-tenths are English.'

LESSON 26

DISTANCE AND SEPARATION

Conversation: Martin tells of talking to people on the street


W: Chyán-Jámgwí-de shwógwóle. Ní-méi-tíngyían-ma?

M: Méi-tíngyían.


Just now you said we would still have to walk twenty minutes before we could reach the Chinese-American Restaurant. I didn't know the Chinese-American Restaurant was so far from the bookstore. Manager Chyán mentioned it. Didn't you hear?

No.

Perhaps at that time you weren't inside the store. Oh, that's right. At that time you were still outside.
M: Tā-shwō făngwār li-tāde-pūdz yōu-jū-lū?

W: Nǐ-yē-gēn-lūshangde-rēn tān-hwā-ma?
W: Tāmen-shwōde-hwā nǐ-dōu-dūng-ma?
W: Tāmen-chāng-wēn-nī-Mēigwodeshrching-ma?
W: Tāmen-wēn-nīde-shrching bushāu.
Manager Chyán said the Chinese-American Restaurant was more than five lī from his store.
In that case the Chinese-American Restaurant isn't near his store.
That's right. And we don't have any way to ride a car either, as we don't have a cent left now.
That doesn't matter. I very much like to walk along and look at the people walking back and forth on the streets and listen to them talk. When one rides in a car one can't.
Do you also speak with people on the streets?
Sometimes I also speak with them.

Do you understand everything they say?
I don't understand everything. Some things I can understand, some I can't. Perhaps there are some people who can't understand what I say. As soon as a foreigner talks Chinese, everyone on the street wants to listen.
Do they often ask you things about America?
That's right. They often ask: Are all Americans rich? Where is America? Are American cities big? Are there also automobiles in America?
They ask you lots of things.
Other people ask me how far America is from China. They hadn't thought that America is more than 10,000 lī from China.
Other people think that since it is possible for planes coming from America to reach China in seven or eight days, hence America is only one or two thousand lī from China. There are also some people who say America is only six or seven hundred lī from China.