### Sentence Pattern 1:

**SENTENCE** = NOUN (that is a subject) (Adverb) STATIVE VERB

**SENT** = N  ADV  SV

Example: Wǒ hěn lèi.  
I [am] pretty tired.

---

Examples:

我很累。  Wǒ hěn lèi.  
我很忙。  Wǒ hěn máng.  
我很高興。  Wǒ hěn gāo xīng.  
我很悶。  Wǒ hěn mèn.  
我很痛！  Wǒ hěn tòng!  
他很麻煩！  Tā hěn má fán.  
你很討厭！  Nǐ hěn tāo yàn!

### Sentence Pattern 2:

**SENTENCE** = **SENTENCE** + ma

Example: Nǐ hěn lèi ma?  
Are you tired?

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Examples:

他是美國人嗎？  Tā shì Měi Guó rén ma?  
你去吃飯嗎？  Nǐ qù chī fàn ma?  
你們不來嗎？  Nǐmen bù lái ma?  
他們在家裡嗎？  Tāmen zài jiālǐ ma?
3. **SENTENCE** = A noun that is a subject, a transitive verb, and a noun that is an object.

SENT = N_s (ADV) TV N_o

Example: Wǒmen mǎi fángzi.
We buy houses.

Example

我們賣汽車。 Wǒmen mài qì chē.
他們寫字。 Tāmen xiě zì.
老虎吃肉。 Lǎo hǔ chī ròu.

**Sentence Pattern 4:**

A sentence may be formed by a subject plus the word shì plus the name of a set of things.

SENTENCE = N_s shì Nset

Example: Xiǎo Huá shì māo.
Little Flower is a cat.
小花是貓。

Example

他們是誰？ Tāmen shì shéi?
他們是老師嗎？ Tāmen shì lǎo shī ma?
他們是朋友嗎？ Tāmen shì péng yǒu ma?
他們都是朋友。 Tāmen dōu shì péng yǒu.
Sentence Pattern 5:

A predicate can be formed from an adverb and an immediately following verb, verb and object, etc..

\[ \text{SENTENCE} = \text{NOUN} \text{subject} \ \text{ADVERB} \ \text{PREDICATE} \]

\[ \text{SENT} = \text{Ns} \ \text{ADV} \ \text{PRED} \]

Example:  
\[ \text{Xiǎo Húá bù shì māo.} \]
\[ \text{Little Flower is not a cat.} \]

Examples:

我們昨天來了。  
Wǒmen zuó tiān lái le.

他們已經在。  
Tāmen yǐ jīng zài.

我們還沒走。  
Wǒmen hái méi zǒu.

他們已經走了。  
Tāmen yǐ jīng zǒu le.

Sentence Pattern 6:

Certain nouns preceded by certain stative verbs (which function adjectively) can take the place of simple nouns in many sentences.

\[ \text{NOUN} = \text{SV} \ \text{N} \]

Example:  
\[ \text{hǎo háizi} \]
\[ \text{good child} \]
Sentence Pattern 7:
A sentence can appear in a “multiple choice” format, i.e., the sentence includes a verb in its positive form and follows it with that verb in its negative form, and to answer that question one selects the correct alternative and repeats the sentence with only that verb present.

\[ \text{SENTENCE} = \text{Ns PRED negative PRED} \]

Examples:

- Tā dà bù dà? Tā bù dà. or Tā hěn dà.
  - Is he big? He is not big. or He is pretty big.
- Tāmén shì bù shì péng yǒu? Tāmén shì péng yǒu. or Tāmén bùshì péng yǒu.
  - Are they friends? They are friends. or They are not friends.

Examples:

- Tāmén yǒu méi you shēng qì?
  Tāmén yǒu méi you shēng qì?
- Tā shì bùshì nǐde lǎo shī?
  Tā shì bùshì nǐde lǎo shī?
- Tā piào (liàng) bù piào liàng?
  Tā piào (liàng) bù piào liàng?
- Nímen zuó tiān zài bù zai jiā?
  Nímen zuó tiān zài bù zai jiā?
**Sentence Pattern 8:**

The locational zerb zài
A sentence is formed with a subject + a locational verb + a noun that names a place
Sentence = $N_s \ LV \ NOUN_{loc}$

**Examples:**

誰在門口兒？
你在什麼時候回来？
在我看，你最漂亮！
Shéi zài mén kǒur？
Nǐ zài shéme shí hòu lái ？
Zài wǒ kàn, nǐ zui piào liàng！

**Sentence Pattern 9:**

The locations where people or things are found may be formed by mentioning, e.g., a building, and then adding a determining term such as "inside." So one says, "the barn behind," rather than "behind the barn."

$NOUN_{loc} = \text{broad location name} + \text{inside, outside, etc.}$

$NOUN_{loc} = NOUN_{loc} + \text{lítou/wàitou/shàngtou/xiàtou/dǐ xià, etc.}$

Examples: fángzi lítou, fángzi wàitou, fángzi shàngtou,
inside the house, outside the house, on the house,
fángzi xiàtou, fángzi dǐ xià,
at the bottom of the house, under the house,
fángzi qiántou, fángzi hòutou, etc.
in front of the house, at the back of the house, etc.
Example

Sentence Pattern 10:

Saying "there are" in Chinese requires mention, or at least implicit reference to, a place or time, and an affirmation that it has a certain person or thing. The full form of this statement is as follows:

SENTENCE = zài location yǒu object
(In location there is/are [object or objects])

Examples:

(在)教室裡頭有二十個人。 (在山上沒有人。
在三點鐘，媽媽已經回來了。 (Zài) jiào shì lǐ tóu yǒu èr shí ge rén. Zài shān shàng méi yǒu rén. Zài sān diǎn zhōng, Māma yǐ jīng huí lái le.)
Sentence Pattern 11:

A specifier, a number, a measure word, and a noun can stand in for a simple noun.
(Either the specifier or the number may be omitted.)

NOUN = SP # MW NOUN

example: zhèi sān běi kā fēi (these three cups of coffee)
         sān běi kā fēi (three cups of coffee)
         zhěi běi kā fēi (this cup of coffee)

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>這</th>
<th>一</th>
<th>杯茶</th>
<th>六</th>
<th>所房子</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>那</td>
<td>兩</td>
<td>張紙</td>
<td>七</td>
<td>件衣服</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>哪</td>
<td>三</td>
<td>本書</td>
<td>八</td>
<td>柯樹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>四</td>
<td>塊錢</td>
<td>九</td>
<td>輛汽車</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>五</td>
<td>片電影</td>
<td>十</td>
<td>鑰菜</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sentence pattern 12:

Indefinite vs. Definite

Some sentences have indefinite reference, e.g., "Fángzi lìtou yǒu yī xiē rén." (There are some people in the house.)
Once those sentences have drawn attention to the formerly indefinite individuals, they become identified in everyone's minds as "the individuals," "those individuals," etc.

Example: Fángzi lìtou yǒu yī xiē rén. Nèi xiē rén dōu shì péng yǒu. (In the house there are some people. Those people are all friends.)
         Sù shè wàitou yǒu jīge rén. Nèi xiē rén dōu shì xué shèng. (Outside the dormitory there were several people. Those people are all students.)
Sentence Pattern 13:

A sentence can be formed with a subject plus an intransitive verb.

Sentence = Ns ITV

Example: Lǎo Shī mínɡ tiān lái. (Teacher is coming tomorrow.)

Examples:

我不去。  Wǒ bú qù.
妹妹還沒有來呢。  Mēimeí hái méi yǒu lái ne.
我們走吧。  Wǒmen zǒu ba.
不要亂跑！  Bú yào luànpào.

Sentence Pattern 14:

A noun expression can be formed by a modifying phrase or clause linked to the original (unmodified) noun using de.

NOUN = modifier de NOUN

Examples:

qù de rén  (people who go)
lái de rén  (people who came)
bú qù de rén  (people who are not going)
méi yǒu lái de rén  (people who did not come)
zuó tiān lái de rén  (people who came yesterday)
bú zài de rén  (people who are not present)
Sentence Pattern 15:
A predicate can be composed of a locative verb, the name of a location, and a predicate indicating what is done there.

\[ \text{PRED} = \text{LV} \ N_\text{lv} \ \text{PRED} \]

Example: zài tú shū guān niàn shù
study at the library

Rule: **Set the stage and only then tell the action.**

Note: Chinese word order is strongly dominated by the sequence of events in the real world. For instance, causes are mentioned before effects. Where something occurs has to be mentioned before the action moves onto that stage. In English, to the contrary, the information about time and place is frequently put into a tag ending such as, "in 1948," "on the elevator," etc.
Sentence Pattern 16:

Questions and sentences about indefinite items can be formed by using X-words.

nà → nǎ    (that → "which" or "something")
neī → nēi   (that → "which" or "something")

Examples:

哪国人 nǎ guó rén  people of which country
哪天 nǎ tiān    which day (when)
哪位 nǎ wèi    which person of status (which honorable lady/gentleman)
哪些 nǎ xiē    which several items

Sentence Pattern 17:

A predicate can be formed by placing a modifying or auxiliary verb before the main verb.

PRED = AUX V  PRED

These auxiliary verbs have similar meanings. 能 means to be physically able to do something and/or that environmental factors permit doing something. 会 means to have learned how to do something, and 可以 means "permissible," although it is often used to mean "can" in the sense that a possibility for some action or result exists.

example  Rén huì shuō huà. (People know how to talk)
         Rén bù néng fēi-. (Humans do not have the physical ability to fly.)
         Nǐmen bù ké yí zài zhěr chī fàn. (You may not eat here.)
Sentence Pattern 18:
A predicate can be composed of a locative verb, the name of a location, and a predicate indicating what is done there, but a predicate can also be composed of one predicate that indicates something like going somewhere in order to do something, doing something in order to be able to do something else, etc. In English we generally use the word "to" as a link between the first and second predicate, e.g., "He bought a saw to cut the wood," or, "She went to London to see the Queen." In Chinese, however, there typically is no word corresponding to that "to," and the two clauses are simply jamed together.

Example: huí jiā xiūxi
go home to rest
Sentence Pattern 19:
Anywhere a noun can be used in a sentence it can be replaced by an exclusive or construction (either X or else Y).

$$\text{NOUN} = \text{NOUN}_a \text{ háishi} \text{ NOUN}_b$$

Example:  Xiǎo wáwa shì nán háizi háishi nǚ háizi?
Is the baby a boy or a girl?

Examples:
她是你老師還是你的女朋友？Tā shì nǐ de lǎo shī hái shì nǐ de péng yǒu?
你今天想吃雞肉還是牛肉？Nǐ jīn tiān xiǎng chī jī ròu hái shì niú ròu?
我不知道那個人是老先生還是年輕人。Wǒ bù zhī dào nà ge rén shì lǎo xiǎnshēng hái shì qīng rén.

Sentence pattern 20
A sentence can be formed using the special verb compound zhù zài (which means something close to the English expression “resides at”).

$$\text{SENTENCE} = \text{N}_s \text{ zhù zài } \text{ N}_{\text{location}}$$

Example:  Nèige xuéshēng bú zhù zài sù shè.
That student does not reside in the dormitory.

Examples:
你住在哪兒？
我住在宿舍。
我不住在宿舍。
Sentence Pattern 21:  
COVERBS: 

A coverb is can be a special kind of verb that cooperates with the verb that follows it and acts to give additional information about that verb. Often coverbs cannot be used alone or are rarely used alone. One such coverb, which otherwise appears in resultative verb compounds, is lí. As an active verb it means "to separate from." As a coverb, it means "is separated from" and requires a following stative verb or something indicating a length in space or time and that functions like a stative verb in such sentences.

PRED = COVERB  NOUNcoverb  PRED

example:  Tú shū guǎn lí xué xiào bù yuǎn.
The library is separated from the school not far.

Examples:
舊金山離北京很遠。  健 Jù Jìn Shān lí Běi Jīng hén yuǎn.
我家離你家不遠。  健 Wǒ jiā lí nǐ jiā bù yuǎn.
水星離土星很遠。  望 Shuǐ Xīng lí Tǔ Xīng hén yuǎn.
Sentence Pattern 22: In the development of the Chinese language its speakers felt a need to flag certain sentences as indicating that there had been a change in the status of events. In English we sometimes do this by prefixing a sentence with the phrase, "It came to pass that..." By sometime around the year 1200, Chinese speakers were doing much the same thing by appending the word "lái" (to come) to sentences. In somewhat the same way that the English phrase, "God be with you" tranformed into "goodbye," the terminal "lái" became "le," also losing its tone in the process.

SENTENCE = SENTENCE le

Example: Māma lái le. (There's been a change. Mom is coming!) or (There's been a new development. Mom is here!)
Example: Bāba bù lái le. (There's been a change. Dad is not coming after all.)
Example: Wāwa qī fàn le. (Baby has started eating solid food!) (Some change is "the first time ever.")

Examples:

他用手打开箱子。 Tū yòng shǒu dǎ kāi xiāng zi.
他用望远镜看火星的运河。 Tū yòng wàng yuǎn jìng kàn Huǒ Xīng de yùn hé.
他妈妈买鸡蛋做蛋糕。 Tū ma-mā mǎi jiān dà zào dàn gāo.
姐姐到德国去留学。 Jiējiě dào Dé Guó qù liú xué.
Pattern 23:

Numbers are formed in a very orderly way in Chinese. In high school math we learn to write numbers in the following format:
\[ d \times 1000 + e \times 100 + f \times 10 + g \]
But we say “fifty” instead of “five tens.” Chinese follows the basic mathematical schema shown above:
\[ c \times 10,000 + d \times 1,000 + e \times 100 + f \times 10 + g \]
\[ c (wàn) + d (qiān) + e (bǎi) + f (shí) + g \]

So, for example, 17,345 is read:

yī wàn qì qiān sān bǎi sì shí wǔ.

Examples:

- 一萬零五十  
  yī wàn líng wǔ shí  10050
- 三十萬零五塊錢  
  sān shí wàn líng wǔ kuài qián 30,005
- 一百一十天  
  yī bǎi yī shí tiān  115 days
- 一萬零二百零三  
  yī wàn líng èr bǎi líng sān 10,0203
Sentence Pattern 24:
Chinese uses a logical order or a sentence order that follows the time sequence of events in almost every situation. One such case is the sentence pattern that is used to indicate the actuality and/or the future potentiality to achieve a result. Many of the instances of this pattern are figurative and may seem abstract to English speakers. So it is important to start with an example that may make more sense to the beginning learner of the Chinese language:

VERB = VERB + Resultative VERB

Example: Tāmen chī bǎo.
They eat [and so] get full.

The negative form of this sentence, indicating that they did not get enough to eat is:

Example: Tāmen méi (yǒu) chī bǎo.
They have not gotten full.

Examples:
她睡著了。 Tā shuì zhāo le.
我們還沒吃完呢。 Tā men hái méi chī wán ne.
我沒有看懂。 Wǒ méi yǒu kàn dōng.
那隻貓跑掉了。 Nà zhī māo pǎo diào le.
Sentence Pattern 21a:

As mentioned in Pattern 20, the coverb lí can also be used with the designation of a length of space or time, and that expression functions like a stative verb in such sentences.

\[ \text{PRED} = \text{COVERB NOUN} \]

Example: Tú shū guǎn lí zhèr sān gōng lí.

The library is three kilometers from here.

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Sentence Pattern 25

Distances between different places can be compared by making an sentence that follows this pattern:

\[ \text{SENT} = (V \text{ lí } W) \text{ bǐ } (X \text{ lí } Y) \text{ PRED} \]

Example: Yīng Guó lí Fǎ Guó bǐ Āi ěr lán lí Dé Guó jīn.

The distance from England to France is (nearer =) less than the distance from Ireland to Germany.
Sentence Pattern 26

Chinese regularly proceeds from the largest unit to the least significant unit, so in giving dates, the year is mentioned first, followed by the month, and then the date. In writing one uses rì for the date, but in speaking one usually says háo.

nián   yuè   rì
nián   yuè   háo

Example: èr líng yì sān nián sì yuè wǔ rì
2013 April 5

Examples:

她的生日是三月二十七號。 Tāde shēng rì shì sān yuè èr shí qī hào.
他明年十一月五號回國。 Tā míng nián shí yī yuè wǔ hào huí guó.
Sentence Pattern 27

As well as indicating that a given location has certain people or things in it, in Chinese one can also show that a given location has certain people or things in it doing something.

**SENTENCE** = (zài) LOCATION yǒu NOUN\textsubscript{subject} PREDICATE

**SENT** = (zài) N\textsubscript{location} yǒu N\textsubscript{s} PRED

Example: (Zài) tú shū guǎn wàitou yǒu rén tī zú qiú.
Outside the library there are people playing soccer.

Examples:

在宿舍裡有人打牌。Zài sù shè lí yǒu rén dǎ pí.
在圖書館裡沒有人不念書。Zài tú shū guǎn lítòu méi yǒu rén bú shuì jiào.
白天沒有人在宿舍裡睡覺。Bái tiān méi yǒu rén zài sù shělǐ shuì jiào.

Sentence pattern 28

A sentence can be formed with a coverb that introduces a point of origin and a verb that indicates whether the subject’s motion is toward the speaker or not.

**SENTENCE** = Subject COVERB NOUN\textsubscript{origin} VERB

**SENT** = N\textsubscript{s} CV N\textsubscript{orgin} VERB

Example: Tā cóng Měi Guó lái.
S/he comes from America.
Sentence pattern 29

A sentence can be formed with a coverb that introduces a point of origin and a verb that indicates whether the subject’s motion is toward the speaker or not, which is then followed by the action that the subject performs after arrival.

SENTENCE = Subject COVERB NOUN\textsubscript{origin} VERB (to) PREDICATE

SENT = N\textsubscript{s} CV N\textsubscript{origin} VERB (to) PRED

Example: Tā cóng Měi Guó lái niàn shū.
S/he comes from America to study.
Sentence Pattern 30

In Chinese, some verbs make function as transitive verbs part of the time and as passive verbs the rest of the time. One example is jiào, which can mean “to call,” “to yell,” or “to order,” but it can also mean, “to be called,” “to be named.”

Example: Wǒ jiào Kǒng An Guó.
I called out to Kǒng An Guó.
or
I am called Kǒng An Guó.

Examples:

我叫王孝贤。 Wǒ jiào Wáng Xiào Xián.
请叫你爸爸出来。Qǐng jiào nǐ bāba chu lái.
我叫马思亮。 你叫什么名字？Wǒ jiào Mǎ Sī Liàng. Nǐ jiào shéme míng zi?

Sentence Pattern 31

The Chinese language mentions causes before effects and tools before the effects they cause. One instance of this general rule is to mention modes of conveyance before telling of the journey.

SENTENCE = N_subject COVERB NOUN_coverb PREDICATE

SENT = N_s CV N_cv PRED

Example: Wǒmen zuò chē qù.
We go by car.
Examples:

你坐車去嗎？ Nǐ zuò chē qù ma?
我不要坐飛機去。 Wǒ bú yào zuò fēi jī qù.
他打算坐火車來。 Tā dǎ suàn zuò huǒ chē lái.
你不願意坐船到中國去嗎？ Nǐ bù yuàn yì zuò chuán dào Zhōng Guó qù ma?

Pattern 32

In Chinese sentences about going to someplace are parallel in structure to sentences about coming from someplace. (See Pattern 27.)

\[
\text{SENTENCE} = \text{NOUN}_{\text{subject}} \text{ dào } \text{NOUN}_{\text{destination}} \text{ VERB}
\]

\[
\text{SENT} = \text{N}_s \text{ dào } \text{N}_{\text{destination}} \text{ VERB}
\]

Examples:  Tāmen dào xué xiào lái.
            They come to school.
            Tāmen dào tú shū guǎn qù.
            They go to the library.

Examples:

你到哪兒去？ Nǐ dào nǎr qù?
我到大華飯館去。 Wǒ dào Dà Huá fàn guǎn qù.
你的孩子已經到這兒來了。 Nǐde háizi yǐ jīng dào zhèr lái le.
Pattern 33

SENTENCE = NOUN\textsubscript{subject} dào NOUN\textsubscript{destination} VERB PREDICATE

SENT = N\textsubscript{s} dào N\textsubscript{destination} VERB PRED

Examples: Tāmen dào xué xiào lái niàn shū
They come to school to study.
Tāmen dào tú shū guǎn qù jiē shū.
They go to the library to borrow books.

Examples:

你到哪兒去吃飯？ Nǐ dào nǎr qù chī fàn?
我到大華飯館去吃飯。 Wǒ dào Dà Huá fàn guǎn qù chī fàn.
你的孩子已經到這兒來買書了。 Nǐde háizi yǐ jīng dào zhèr lái mǎi shū le.

Sentence Pattern 34

Chinese uses a weakened form of a resultative verb, liǎo, to clarify conversations about whether some expected action has actually been done. As a verb ending, liǎo is pronounced le.

A: Did you take your medicine? B: I did [take it].
Examples:

我還沒有吃飯，你吃了沒有？
我已經寫了信，你呢？
你不能進來！為什麼？我已經給了錢了！
他已經吃了藥。 @411 @911
奶奶昨天來了，你不知道嗎？989
真理已經沒有錢了。 @421 @921
你生氣了！怎麼搞得？ 979

Sentence Pattern 35

Coordinated use of le. The verb le flags the fact that someone did do something, and so a change must have occurred. The sentence le flags the fact that a change has occurred, so in cases where a verb le is used it is frequently appropriate to add a sentence le. When an intransitive verb occurs at the end of a sentence, the two le merge into one.

\[
\text{SENTENCE} = \text{NOUN}_{\text{subject}} \text{ TRANSITIVE VERB le NOUN}_{\text{object}} \text{ le } \text{N}_{\text{s TV le N}_{\text{object}} \text{ le}}
\]

Example: Wǒ chī le yào le

I did take the medicine. (I took the medicine.)
Lǎo bān lái le!
The boss is here!
Sentence Pattern 36

Both the point of origin and the destination can be mentioned in the same sentence. As with other cases, the Chinese language always follows the natural order, so the origin gets mentioned before the destination.

SENTENCE = NOUN_subject=cóng NOUN_origin=dào NOUN_destination=lái/qù

SENT = Ns=cóng Norigin=dào Ndestination=lái/qù

Example: Māma cóng xué xiào dào yín háng qù.
Mama went from the school to the bank.

Examples:
他從韓國到中國去。@141 @641
你從加拿大到過ご來。@151 @651
我們從中國到韓國去。@161 @661
我從瑞典到英國去。@171 @671
Sentence Pattern 37

An example of the narrative structure embedded in many Chinese sentences is the mention of an action done in preparation for another action followed by the intended action.

The verb 往 means to head oneself in a certain direction. It must be followed by a word meaning to walk, to run, to turn, etc.

SENTENCE = wāng NOUN_{direction} INTRANSITIVE VERB
SENT = wāng N_{direction} ITV

Example: Wāng dōng zǒu.
  (Lit.) Head yourself toward the east and then walk.
Wāng xī pāo.
  (Lit.) Head yourself toward the west and then run.

Examples:
一直往前走。  @191 @691
往回走。   @201 @701
往東拐。   @211 @711
往上飛。   @221 @721
Sentence Pattern 38

Trigger events with le. When the trigger event shall have occurred (le) it will then (jiù) be appropriate to do the next thing.

\[
\text{SENTENCE} = \text{NOUN} \text{subject} \text{TRANSITIVE VERB} \text{le NOUN} \text{object}, \text{NOUN} \text{subject} \text{jiù PREDICATE}. \quad (\text{If the same subject is used in both clauses, mention it only once.})
\]

\[
\text{SENT} = N_{s1} \text{TV le N}_{o} (N_{s2}) \text{jiù PRED}
\]

Example: Nǐ dào le yín hàng, jiù wǎng dōng guǎi .
When you do get to the bank then turn east.
Dào le xué xiào , tā jiù dào lǐ tou qù le.
When he got to school, he then went inside.
Sentence Pattern 39

Narrative structure: A frequent device used in conveying directions is to indicate what is done prior (xiān) to doing something else, and then indicating what is done thereafter (rán hòu). This format works for future actions, plans, etc.

SENTENCE = NOUN_{subject 1} xiān PREDICATE, rán hòu (NOUN_{subject 2}) PREDICATE
SENT = N_{s1} xiān PRED, rán hòu (N_{s2}) PRED

Example: Nǐ xiān dào yín háng qù, rán hòu wǎng xī guǎi.
First go to the bank, and after that turn west.

Examples:
Sentence Pattern 40

Two verbs can be used in series to communicate ideas like “ugly” (difficult to look at).

In English it is necessary to separate two predicates with "to", but in Chinese there is no such necessary separator. Expressions like "difficult to look at" can mean "ugly," so "difficult to read" is usually expressed by using 難念 instead of 難看.

PREDICATE = PREDICATE₁ [to] PREDICATE₂
PRED = PRED₁ [to] PRED₂

Example: nán kàn
difficult to look at
Sentence Pattern 41

One coverb is so often used that it is treated here as forming a sentence pattern in its own right. That coverb is “bi3,” which means “as compared to.” The subject is compared to some standard known to all parties in the conversation.

Sentence = NOUN<sub>subject</sub> bi3 NOUN<sub>standard</sub> PREDICATE

SENT = N<sub>s</sub> bi3 N<sub>standard</sub> PREDICATE

Example: Ta1 bi3 Yao2 Ming2 gao1!
He is taller than Yao Ming!

Examples:
她比我會開快車。
你比我開得不小心。 @271 @771
我比他們寫得多。 @281 @781

Sentence Pattern 42

Predicates involving Resultative Verbs (pattern 24) can be expanded to indicate the potentiality, or lack of it, to achieve the result.

Sentence = NOUN<sub>subject</sub> VERB de2/bu4 RESULTATIVE VERB

SENT = N<sub>s</sub> V de2/bu4 RV

Example: Ta1 chi1 bu4 bao3. Wo3 chi1 de2 bao3.
He can’t eat to satiety. I can get full.
Sentence Pattern 43

Narrative structure is often aided by expressions such as “the man who came to dinner.” If both parties is a discussion know some such fact about a third party, but do not know that person’s name, the commonly held information can substitute for a name.

SENTENCE = NOUN_{subject} shì (PREDICATE de NOUN)
SENT = N_{s} shì (PRED de N)

or

SENTENCE = (PREDICATE de NOUN) PREDICATE
SENT = (PRED de N) PRED

Examples:

Tā yí dìng shì zuó tiān láide nèige rén.
He is surely that person who came yesterday.

Zuó tiān láide nèige rén màile xīn qǐ chē le.
Now that person who came yesterday has purchased a new automobile.
Sentence Pattern 44

One special kind of predicate modifier comes after the main verb because it follows the general pattern whereby the natural order of events is mirrored by sentence structure. If, for instance, one speaks and thereby get a good result, that establish the fact that one speaks well. The same statement can record past events or indicate future potentialities. The positive form of these sentences uses a main verb followed by dé and then by a complement that expresses the capacity that has been demonstrated, so these modifiers are called “adverbs of capacity.”

**Examples:**

- Tā shuō dé hǎo.
  - He speaks well.
- Tāmen pāo dé kuài.
  - They run fast.

**Examples:**

- 在房子上頭的貓

- 老人走得很慢。
Sentence Pattern 45

Simply stating that someone sings well may not tell other people very much. Others frequently want to know that someone sings well in comparison to some well-known singer. The basic sentence pattern involved is: Ns V de2 PRED. That sequence does not change, but it is supplemented by putting in a coverb, bi3:

\[
\text{SENTENCE} = \text{NOUN}_{\text{subject}} \text{ bi NOUN}_{\text{standard}} \text{ PREDICATE} \\
\text{SENT} = N_s \text{ bi N}_{\text{standard}} \text{ PRED}
\]

Example: Tāmen bǐ mǎ pāo dé kuài
They run faster than horses.

Examples:

他比我說得好。

她比Miriam Makeba唱得好。@181@681

他比屁股頭鬧得厲害。@499@999
Sentence Pattern 46

The so-called “shi...de” pattern is another case wherein something already mentioned or obvious from context is habitually omitted. For instance, in a story about the Marx brothers or the Van Trapp family of singers, “Tāmen shì hěn yǒu míngde rén,” has a redundant element because everyone in the conversation knows full well that the Marx brothers are humans, and so are the members of the Van Trapp family. But this sentence pattern has two special functions: (1) It is frequently used to correct misinformation voiced by someone else. (2) Its use generally indicates, since somebody can be characterized as, e.g., a graduate of some university, that event must have already happened. So it gives some of the same information that putting a sentence into past tense does in the English language.

This structure has many practical uses. It can indicate a kind of passive idea when, e.g., a book is described as one that Hemingway wrote, it can be used to give prominence in a sentence to the element that immediately follows 是, and it can give essentially the same information as is given in English by putting the main verb of a sentence in past tense.

SENTENCE = NOUN_subject shì PREDICATE de.
SENT = N_s shì PRED de.

Example:  Wǒ bù shì qián tiān láide, wǒ shì zuó tiān lái de.
I did not come the day before yesterday, I came yesterday.
Tā shì dà xué bì yède.
She is a college graduate. (She has graduated from college.)
Pattern 47 (see Pattern 21)

One of the frequently used coverbs is gěi. Literally it means “to give somebody something as a present,” or just “to give,” but it can also be used when one is doing something for somebody as a favor.

SENTENCE = NOUN subject gěi NOUN indirect object NOUN direct object
SENT = Ns gěi Nid o Ndo

Example: Māma gěi wǒ xǐ yīfu.
Mama washed (my) clothes for me.

Examples:
爸爸替他理頭髮。

Sentence Pattern 48

A sentence involving an adverb of capacity along with a transitive verb and a direct object takes the form

SENTENCE = NOUN subject TRANSITIVE VERB NOUN direct object
TRANSITIVE VERB dé PREDICATE
SENT = Ns TV No TV dé PRED

Example: Tāmen xiě zì xiě dé kuài.
They write quickly.
Another coverb that is frequently used to make sentences is dui4, which means “to direct oneself toward,” to address (someone).” 許 means to direct oneself toward some object to perform some action, e.g., "She spoke to me," or "They were not very good to their visitors."

SENTENCE = NOUNsubject COVERB NOUNobject PREDICATE

SENT = Ns COVERB No PRED

Example: Jing3 cha2 dui4 da4 jia1 shuo1: Qing3 ma3 shang4 hui2 jia1 qu4!

The policeman said to everyone: Please return home immediately!
Sentence Pattern 50

A sentence can compare the capabilities of two subjects. The second subject mentioned is generally the better known of the two because it can then serve as a standard for comparison.

\[
\text{SENTENCE} = \text{NOUN}_{\text{subject}} \text{ ITV} \text{ dé bǐ } \text{NOUN}_{\text{standard}} \text{ RESULT} \\
\text{SENT} = N_s \text{ ITV} \text{ dé bǐ } N_{\text{standard}} \text{ RESULT}
\]

Example: Ta1 pao3 de2 bi3 wo3 kuai4.
                   She runs faster than I do.