

## CHINESE



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### **1. Do you speak English? (KS2-5)**

*Angus Guironnet*

Hello everyone, let me tell you a story. Before my second year of university, I went to Beijing with my friend, Rishi, from Chinese class. We were very excited because we really wanted to improve our Chinese and experience Chinese culture. We flew to Beijing together. London is far away from Beijing, so we were very tired when we arrived.

After getting off the plane, we took a taxi to Beijing Normal University. However, when we got to the university, we didn't know where to go.

We tried to find our dormitory, but we didn't know which dormitory building to go to. We searched for a long time and tried to ask Chinese students: "Where are the dormitories for international students?". However, our Chinese was not very good at the time, so Chinese students could not understand what we were saying. We found that the Chinese people's

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English was not great either. Confronting such a big communication barrier at that time truly left us puzzled.

In order to find our dormitory, we planned to try every dormitory building. We met a few students along the way. Before talking to them, we thought they were Chinese, but after talking to them, we found that their Chinese was not very good. They told us that they are international students funded by the Korean government. We were even more confused than before.

We decided to find the dormitory with our new Korean friends. We saw a westerner on the way, and immediately asked him "Do you speak English?" He replied: "对不起, 我不会说英语 (I'm sorry, I don't speak English)." We were surprised and carried on asking him, "French or Spanish, can you speak?" He replied, "对不起, 我只说汉语 (I'm sorry, I only speak Chinese)." We became more and more confused.

Later, we met many foreigners and asked them the same questions, but they all replied, "Sorry, we only speak Chinese." We were so confused. Why did the foreigners here only speak Chinese? Why were they unwilling to help us?

Some time later, the westerner to whom we asked the question before called us, "Come, I'll help you," he said in English: "I can speak English and I know where your dormitory is." "Thank you, thank you, but why didn't you speak English to us previously?" we asked him. He said, "Of course I can

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speak English, but my Chinese teacher is too strict. He only allows me to speak Chinese."

Later, we learned that every international student must speak Chinese in this university. This is a rule by which they must abide.

### **QUESTIONS:**

#### **KS2 & 3**

- 1) Why couldn't the writer and his friend find their dormitory? What would you do in this situation?
- 2) Why were the author and his friend confused even more after meeting some students from Korea?
- 3) Why did the westerner come back to help the writer and his friend?
- 4) Why can international students only speak Chinese in this university?
- 5) What difficulties might international students face when Chinese is the only language they can use on campus?
- 6) Imagine you are the writer. Describe the first Chinese lesson you attended.

**KS4 & 5**

- 1) Why couldn't the writer and his friend find their dormitory? What would you do in this situation? 为什么作者和他的朋友找不到他们的宿舍? 遇到这种情况, 你会怎么做?
- 2) How did the author describe his increased confusion? Find these Chinese phrases. 作者是怎么描述他逐渐增长的疑惑的? 找出相应的中文描述。
- 3) Why, when they met the first time, did the westerner tell the author and his friend that he could only speak Chinese? Why did he change his mind? 为什么在第一次见面时, 那个西方人告诉作者和他的朋友他只说中文? 他为什么又改变了主意?
- 4) What are the advantages of speaking only Chinese on campus in Chinese universities? 在中国校园里只能说中文有什么好处?
- 5) What difficulties might international students face when Chinese is the only language they can use on campus? 如果在校园里只能说中文, 对于外国留学生来说, 会有什么困难?
- 6) Imagine you are the writer. Describe the first Chinese lesson you attended. 想象一下, 如果你是作者, 描述你上第一节中文课的情况。