Lesson 7

There Are Only Nine Students Here Today

Key Grammar Points in Lesson Seven:

1. Existential Verb ཨི། Expressing Location
2. Locative Preposition བཟ
3. Ethnicity, Nationality, and Language
4. Numbers from མོ། One to གཏོ། Ten
5. Summary of Pronouns

7.1 Dialogue

There Are Only Nine Students Here Today
Wuchung: Students, how are you all? My name is called Wuchung Tserang. I’m Tibetan. I am your Tibetan language teacher.

Student: Teacher, where are you from?

Wuchung: I’m from Thrika (Ch. Guide), Qinghai.

Student: Teacher, is she our teacher too?

Wuchung: She is also your Tibetan language teacher. She is from Golok. Her name is Huamo Tso.

Student: Altogether, how many teachers do we have?

Wuchung: You have two Tibetan language teachers.

Huamo Tso: How are you all? There are ten students in our class. Five are from America; three are from Japan; still, there are two (Han) Chinese students from Beijing.

102
Student: Today there are only nine students here.
Huamo Tso: One American student is still in Tibet.
Student: Where in Tibet is he?
Huamo Tso: He is in Lhasa.
Student: Is he all by himself?
Huamo Tso: Yes, he is alone.
Wuchung: Huamo Tso, do you have his telephone number?
Huamo Tso: Yes. It's 904-5629.

7.2 Vocabulary

7.2.1 Vocabulary from the Dialogue

1. ལེགས། n. everyone
2. ལེགས། person Wuchung
3. ལྷག་སོགས། n. Tibetan (ethnicity)
4. བཙན། place Qinghai (Ch.)
5. བཙན། place Trika (Ch. Guide)
6. བཙན། pro. we, us
7. བཙན། pro. you (pl.)
8. ལེ་བཙན། place Golok (Ch. Guoluo)
9. ལེ་བཙན། person Huamo Tso
10. རབ་བཙན། adv. altogether (marked by Ladon)
11. རབ། interr. adj. how many
12. བཤེས། num. two
13. བཤེས། n. class
14. བཤེས། adv. in (our) class (marked with Ladon)
15. དབྱུམ། num. ten
16. བཤེས། adv. even, exactly (after a numeral)
17. བཤེས། adv. PP in these, among these
18. བཤེས། num. five
19. མསུང་།
   num. three
20. ལྷོན་[ལུན་]
   adv. still
21. ལྷུང་།
   n. Beijing
22. མཐོ་ལོག།
   n. Han Chinese
23. མི་ཁྱེར་།
   n. / adv. today
24. བོད།
   adv. here
25. སྣྲ།
   num. nine
26. སྤྲོལ།
   adv. only
27. སྭོར།
   num. one
28. སྰ།
   adv. now
29. སྲ།
   adv. right now
30. སྲོང་ལོག་ོ།
   n. Tibet (specifically TAR)
31. སྲ།
   n. place
32. སྙ།
   prep. at, in, on
33. སངས།
   adv. PP (at) where (Locative)
34. སྣྲ།
   n. Lhasa
35. སྣིན། [སིན་]
   adj. alone
36. སོ་བོ།
   n. telephone
37. སྲོང་ལོག་ོ།
   n. number
38. སྲ།
   num. zero
39. སྲ།
   num. four
40. སྲ།
   num. six

7.2.2 Additional Vocabulary
41. སྲ།
   num. seven
42. སྲ།
   num. eight
43. སྲ།
   n. school
44. སྲ།
   n. classroom
45. སི་མཚན། n. lesson
46. སི་ [སི] adv. there (near you)
47. སྲིང་། adv. there (over there)
48. སྲིང་། place Xining (Ch.)
49. ཤིང་། n. Hui Moslems
50. རྩེ་རིང་། n. Hui Moslems
51. ཐིང་། n. herdsman
52. རྣམ་། n. farmer
53. མིན་པོ་། person Lobzang

7.3 Grammar Notes

7.3.1 Ethnicity and Nationality: རོ་རོ and འ

Ethnicity and nationality are expressed by two different morphemes in Tibetan: རོ་རོ is used for different ethnic groups residing in China such as རོ་རོ་ རིང་། Tibetan, རོ་རོ་ Han Chinese, རོ་རོ་ Mongolian, and རོ་རོ་ རིང་། Monguor (Tu in Chinese) peoples. Examples:

(1) སྲིང་ལྡན་ལོ་བཞིན། I am Tibetan.
(2) རིང་ལྡན་ལྡོད། She is Han Chinese.
(3) རིང་ལྡན་ལྡོད། He is Mongolian.

A Hui Moslem is often called རིང་ལྡན་ (Lit. Chinese-Mongolian) or by the Chinese loan word རིང་ལྡན་. The more formal term for this religion-based ethnicity is རིང་ལྡན་ རིང་།.

ི, which means "person", is not only attached to the names of places and countries, indicating a person's origin, but is also combined with other nouns to form compounds indicating a person's profession. Therefore, ི is similar to the English suffix -er (or -or) such as farmer, worker (profession), New Yorker, Londoner (origin), etc.

(4) Ethnicity: ethnic name + རིང་།
(5) Nation/Hometown/Profession: ི
Note that the pronunciation of the morpheme ༠ changes, usually according to the number of syllables it follows. If the root is monosyllabic, change ༠ to ༠, e.g. རུ་སེལ a person from Kham, ཁ་རྣམས་ herdsman, བོད་པ་ farmer. Otherwise, the pronunciation remains ༠, e.g. རུ་སེལ a person from Lhasa, འབྲི་སེལ a person from Amdo, འབྲོག་ནག American. Allow exceptions: བོད་པ་ farmer (synonymous with ཁ་རྣམས་) and བོད་པ་ worker.

7.3.2 Interrogative word ཤ: how many, how much

The interrogative word ཤ how many/how much is used for both countable (e.g. books, students) and uncountable nouns (e.g. water, rice): Examples:

1. རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ How many students do you have?
2. རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ How many seats are there in this classroom?
3. རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ How many teachers do we have altogether?

Recall that Tibetan interrogative words remain in the place where the answer appears, instead of moving forward to the sentence initial position. Examples:

4. རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ Who is Lobzang? He is my friend.
5. རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ What is your name? My name is Tserang.
6. རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ རོ་ཁྲི་བསམ་པ་ How many pens do you have? I have five pens.

In some parts of the Amdo region, ལེ རེ is used in lieu of ཤ as the interrogative word.

7. ལེ རེ How many pens do you have?

7.3.3 Numbers from རོ་ཁྲི། One to སྲུང་། Ten

Note that all of the numerals from 1-10 have prefixes or superjoined letters in orthography. It is important to memorize the spelling, as when these numerals combine to form double-digit figures, the latent sounds of these prefixes or superjoined letters become overtly pronounced. We will discuss this effect in Lesson 8.
ten is customarily followed by the word whole, even, giving ten even. is used with other "whole" numbers such as 20, 30, 100, 200, etc. We will learn larger numbers in later lessons.

Tibetan numerals, like adjectives, follow the noun which they quantify, giving the word order: Noun (+Adj.) + Numeral. Examples:

1. ཆེ་ཞིང་ལོག་པ་| three Tibetans
2. ལོང་ཆེན་བཞི། four lessons
3. བོད་པོ་ལོང་ལོག་པ་| ten seats
4. ངང་གཞི་ལོང་ལོག་པ་| eight chairs

At this point, creative readers may be tempted to express the noun phrase with demonstratives such as those two Americans, these nine students, etc. We shall deal with the issue of definite NPs in our next lesson, as these phrases require that the numeral be attached with a definiteness marker རོ།: འཕྲོག་བཅས་པ། those three Americans, ངང་གཞི་ལོང་ལོག་པ་| these nine students. The complete paradigm of རོ། will be introduced in Lesson 8.

Tibetan also employs its own system of "Arabic" numeral scripts. It is in current use and should be learned at least for recognition:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

The number zero becomes useful when it comes to telephone numbers. It is ངྱིན in Amdo Tibetan. The telephone number is read in the style of a sequence of single digits. Examples:

5. 832-6709 reads ཁུག་རྩ་མི་ཕྱིན་པ་གྲུ།
6. 131-0089 reads དེ་ཐུ་རྩ་མི་ཕྱིན་པ་གྲུ།

In traditional Tibetan grammar, the word ཌི། in, on, at is analyzed as the locative Ladon. However, for our purposes, it does not need to be called a Ladon. Since this particular locative usage of Ladon (i.e., denoting location) has evolved into a uniformed preposition-like word གུ, unlike the typical Ladon, which always comes in several phonological variants, we may simply regard this གུ as a preposition, equivalent to the English in, on, at. (Remember that Tibetan
prepositions come after the noun.) The preposition 많, not to be confused with the sentential interrogative particle  confirmPassword (called Jeddu in Tibetan) in (L4), is one of a very small number of prepositions in Tibetan. It takes a "place noun" to form a preposition phrase to indicate its location. (Noun phrase + فارق) is a locative phrase (i.e. at a place) rather than a goal/destination phrase (i.e. to a place). Examples: འབྲིང་ཆུའི་སྲིད་ in the classroom; འབྲིང་ཆུའི་སྲིད་ at this school; འབྲིས་ེད་པོའི་སྲིད་ in our class; འབྲིས་ེད་ in Lhasa.

Unlike English, Nouns that denote objects instead of places cannot be followed directly by فارق (e.g., the box -&gt; in the box, OK for English but ungrammatical for Tibetan). Regular nouns must be "localized" (i.e. turned into a place noun) first, before allowing فارق to take it. In this lesson, we will introduce one such “localizer”-؛ confirm inside. Instead of saying in the restaurant like English, Tibetan says the inside of the restaurant + فارق. Sometimes place nouns can take localizers as well: འབྲིང་ཆུའི་སྲིད་ in this classroom; འབྲིས་ེད་པོའི་སྲིད་ in our class; Note that the noun before فارق uses genitive case. For more detail, see 15.3.1.

The locative adverbs དོན་དེ། here, དོན་དེ། there, and ལྷུན་དེ། over there are formed by attaching the preposition فارق to the three demonstratives: བོད་, བོད་, and ལྷུན་.  

7.3.5 Existential Verb ཤེིུ Expressing Location

The verb ཤེིུ was introduced in the previous lesson as the main verb expressing possession. Its other usage as a main verb is to express the location of its subject, which is marked absolutive. This is different from the oblique case marking the possessor. The negative and interrogative forms are ཁེེི་ and དེེི. The pattern:

(1) Subject (Abs) + [ Place + فارق ] + ཤེིུ (location)

Cf: Possessor-ལེི (Obliq) + Property (Abs) + ཤེིུ (possession)

For the objective perspective, the sentential particle བོད་ is added to ཁེེི་ or ཁེེི་. Examples:

(2) བོད་ཁེེིུད་ཤེིུ I am in Lhasa. Puntsok is in Golok.

(3) བོད་ཁེེིུད་ཤེིུ I am in the classroom.

(4) བོད་ཁེེིུད་ཤེིུ I am in Lhasa.
Drolma Tso and Huamo Tso are in Xining right now.

(5) ཨི་ཐོ་མ་ཐོ་ནི་ནུས་པ་དེ། My dictionary is not there. (N.B. subjective perspective)

(6) ཨི་ཐོ་མ་ཐོ་ནི་ནི་ནུས་པ་དེ། Is your American friend here?

7.3.6 མཐོས་ཐོག་Only

The literal meaning of མཐོས་ཐོག་is except (for). Lacking the equivalent for the English word only, Tibetan expresses the same idea of "only X" by saying "except for X, there is no..." This is why "only sentences" always appear in their negative form. Examples:

(1) ཨི་ཐོ་མ་ཐོ་ནི་ནི་ནུས་པ་དེ། Today we only have nine students here. (Lit. except for nine students, there is no one here today)

(2) ཨི་ཐོ་མ་ཐོ་ནི་ནི་ནུས་པ་དེ། Puntsok only has two friends.

(3) ཨི་ཐོ་མ་ཐོ་ནི་ནི་ནུས་པ་དེ། I only have one pen.

(4) ཨི་ཐོ་མ་ཐོ་ནི་ནི་ནུས་པ་དེ། We only have one Korean student in our class.

❖ 7.4 Cultural Notes

❖ 7.4.1 Ethnicity Groups in the Amdo Region and Their Languages

Amdo is a multi-ethnic region with dynamic cultural and linguistic interactions among different ethnic groups, most notably the Tibetan (the majority group, numbering approximately 800,000), the Hui (ཧིུ), the Mongol (མངོན་), the Monguor (མོངུའོ, a Mongolic minority living in Huzhu, Minhe counties of Haidong), and the Salar (སྲིལ་).

Hui people do not have a language of their own ethnicity. In areas where Hui and Tibetan communities coexist side by side, Tibetan is often the first language of many Hui people. The same can be said of the Monguor (Ch. Tu) living among Tibetans. In the suburb of Rebgong (Ch. Tongren), many thangka artists are of Monguor descent, speaking both Monguor and Amdo Tibetan natively.
Salar people (numbering approximately 90,000) have a strong presence in the Amdo region because of the ubiquitous Salar Muslim restaurants one finds in every single town and roadside bus stop all the way from Xining to Lhasa. They also dominate the business of long distance passenger transportation. Their language, a branch of the Turkic family, is rarely used by other ethnic groups. It has borrowings from Tibetan, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, and Persian.
One exciting ethnic group that does not live inside the traditional Amdo Province is the Gyarong, who live just off the southeastern tip of Amdo, in the southern Ngaba Prefecture. The Gyarong (numbering 130,000) speak what seems to be the most ancient form of the Tibetan dialects. The numbers 2 and 3, for example, are pronounced as [gnis] and [gsum]. If one checks the current Tibetan orthography of the two words 2 and 3, one will immediately notice that the Gyarong still pronounce the prefixes and the suffix 2, both of which have become silent in most other dialects. Gyarong architecture is justly famous for its high quality masonry and distinct style. In Rongdrag (རང་ངྲ་) and Chuchen (ཆུ་ཆུ་) counties, villages boast impressive watch towers, most constructed by the bare hands of their ancestors without modern machinery or blueprints.

7.4.2 Place Names in the Amdo Region

Amdo, as a geographical term, has become an abstract concept because various parts of the region have been incorporated into different provinces. Tianzhu (扴་རི་) County and Gannan (གངས་རྒྱལ) Prefecture now belong to Gansu Province. Although Qinghai Province is largely Amdo, there are pockets of Han and other ethnic groups in the northeastern part of the province. Yulshul Prefecture in southern Qinghai, over the mighty Tangu-la (ཙང་ལ་) Mountains, belongs to the traditional Kham region. Nomadic counties in the northern Ngaba Prefecture, Sichuan and sporadic nomadic pockets in northern Garze are also linguistically Amdo.

Other Tibetan geographical names at the prefectural or county level have in some cases been transliterated into Chinese. Some others simply have Chinese names bearing no resemblance to the original Tibetan, most of which are inventions dating back to the Qing Dynasty and are passed down to present day. Terms of both origins are used concurrently by Amdo Tibetans. The following is a list of common place names:

(1) Tibetan names with Chinese transliteration

Xining  Guoluo  Aba
Lhasa  Yushu  Anduo
(2) Tibetan names and Chinese inventions

For group (2), the Tibetan term usually refers to the town (county seat), whereas the Chinese term may refer to the town or the administrative area of the county. Western transliterations of Tibetan place names have not been consistent with the Tibetan writing, often resorting to western intuitions of how the word sounds. See Appendix IV for place name conversions.

7.5 Key Sentence Patterns

■ 7.5.1 Objective Perspective Marker 在 vs. 菜

(1) 菜 flirting is bullying, 菜 flirting is bullying

What’s her name? Her name is Huamo Tso. (N.B. objective perspective)

(2) 菜 what is your teacher’s name? 菜 what is your teacher’s name?

What’s your teacher’s name? His name is Lobzang. (N.B. subjective perspective)

(3) 菜 what is your friend’s name?

What’s your friend’s name? (N.B. subjective perspective)

(4) 菜 your friend’s name is Sangji Lhamo.

His friend’s name is Sangji Lhamo. (N.B. objective perspective)

■ 7.5.2 How many… 菜 and 菜

(1) 菜 how many lessons does this English textbook have?

How many lessons does this English textbook have?

(2) 菜 how many Chinese friends does Puntsok have?

How many Chinese friends does Puntsok have?

(3) 菜 how many teachers do we have altogether?

How many teachers do we have altogether?

(4) 菜 how many books does she have?

How many books does she have?

(5) 菜 how many jobs does Sonam Jid have?

How many jobs does Sonam Jid have?

(6) 菜
How many students are there in your class?

- 7.5.3 Numbers from ¹ to ¹ One to ¹ Ten

1. ཤིང་།ཞེས་བྱོ་སྟོགས་བདེན།
   In our class there are also nine students.

2. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   You have two Tibetan teachers altogether.

3. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   We have five American students altogether.

4. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   She has three dictionaries altogether.

5. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   He has six pens altogether.

6. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   There are ten chairs in this classroom.

- 7.5.4 ཤེབ་ཐོབ། Where Is...?

1. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   Where is our teacher? (N.B. objective marking)

2. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   Where are my pens? (N.B. objective marking)

3. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   Where is your textbook?

4. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   Where are my Tibetan dictionary and textbook?

5. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   Where is your map of Qinghai?

- 7.5.5 ཁུན་པས། Only

1. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   There are only nine students here.

2. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
   There are only ten computers in our school.

3. རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས། རྣམ་་ངོ་བོ་འབུམས་སྐབས།
There is only one American in our class.

There is only one Tibetan-English dictionary.

I have only two friends in our class.

Teacher Tserang only has five students.

He is still in Tibet. (The teacher uses subjective perspective when telling the others.)

She is now still in Beijing. (same as (1))

John and Sophie are in France now.

Lobzang Gyal and Puntsok Jid are still in Golok.

Teacher Rhangmo is still in the classroom.

7.6 Exercises

7.6.1 Listening Comprehension

Dialogue 1: Choose the right answer

(1) How many students are there in John’s class?
   (a) three  (b) four  (c) five

(2) Who is from England?
   (a) Tom  (b) Sophie  (c) John

(3) Where is Tom now?
   (a) Xining  (b) Beijing  (c) Lhasa

Dialogue 2: Answer the following questions in English

(1) Whose pen is it?
(2) How many Tserangs are there in the school?
(3) Where are they from, respectively?
7.6.2 Complete the Dialogues

(1) ཤ་________________________?  ཤ་འབུལ་བོ་བོས་ཕྲེང་བོ་ལྡན་ནེ།  ཤ་________________________
    ཤ་འདེམ་བ་བོ་བོས་ཕྲེང་བོ་ལྡན་ནེ།
(2) ཤ་________________________?  ཤ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་$message cut off
(2) A: Do you have a dictionary?
    B: What kind of dictionary?
    A: Tibetan-English dictionary.
    B: Yes, I have two Tibetan-English dictionaries.
(3) A: Our Tibetan language teacher is not here today. Where is he?
    B: He is still in Lhasa.
(4) A: How many classmates do we have?
    B: We have only eight classmates.

7.6.6 Reading Comprehension

Answer the following questions in English

(1) Who is Dawa? Where is she from?
(2) How many students does Dawa have? Where are the students from?
(3) What is Tom’s Tibetan name?
(4) What is Mary’s Tibetan name?