

## SECRET TEN: ATTRIBUTIVES

ATTRIBUTIVES are words or expressions used to qualify nouns. They can be used to either describe or delimit nouns. In Chinese language, nouns, nominal phrases, verbs, verbal phrases, adjectives and adjectival phrases can be attributives, which usually precede the words they qualify. This contrasts with English where most attributives usually follow the nouns.

### Patterns:

#### 1. Nouns as attributives

北京的天气 Běijīng de tiānqì the weather in Beijing  
瓶子的盖子 píngzi de gàizi the lid of the bottle  
办公室的门 bàngōngshì de mén the door of the office

#### 2. Nominal phrases as attributives

北京附近的天气 Běijīng fùjìn de tiānqì the weather near Beijing  
瓶子盖子的颜色 píngzi gài de yánsè the color of the bottle lid  
办公室左边的门 bàngōngshì zuǒbiān de mén the door to the left of the office

#### 3. Verbs as attributives

游泳的孩子 yóuyǒng de hái zi the child who is swimming  
吃饭的人 chīfàn de rén the person who is eating  
打篮球的帅哥 dǎ lánqiú de shuàigē the handsome guy who is playing basketball

#### 4. Verbal phrases as attributives

在河里游泳的孩子 zài héli yóuyǒng de hái zi the kid who is swimming in the river  
昨天在饭店吃饭的人 zuótiān zài fàndiàn chīfàn de rén the person who had dinner at the restaurant  
在操场上打篮球的帅哥 zài cāochǎng shàng dǎ lánqiú de shuàigē the handsome guy who is playing basketball on the playground

#### 5. Adjectives as attributives

漂亮的风景 piāoliang de fēngjǐng a beautiful scenery  
特别的爱好 tèbié de àihào a special hobby  
奇怪的人 qíguài de rén a weird person

#### 6. Adjectival phrase as attributive

又高又帅的男人 yòu gāo yòu shuài de nánrén a tall and handsome man  
聪明可爱的孩子 cōngmíng kěài de hái zi a clever and cute child  
又好吃又便宜的零食 yòu hǎochī yòu piányi de língshí delicious and cheap snacks

### Note:

1. In Chinese language, we use verbal phrases as attributives the most.
2. We can make attributives longer by extending the phrase before the central word. And

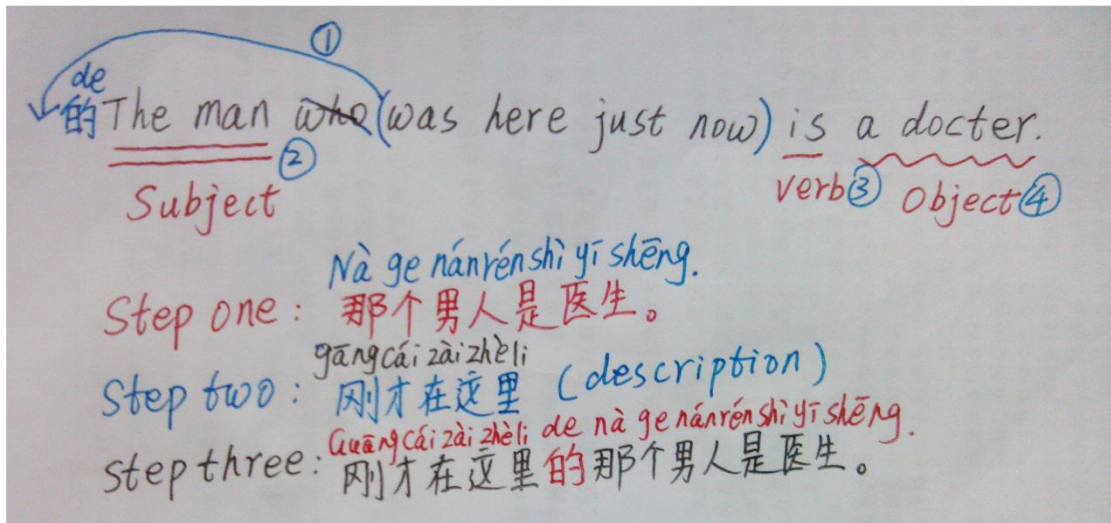
attributives also follow the order of the basic sentence structure: **subject + specific time + method + place + verb + complement + object.**

**For example:**

我昨天在（公园旁边的）饭店吃了饭。 Wǒ zuótiān zài (gōngyuán pángbiān de ) fàndiàn chī le fàn 。

我昨天在（邮局附近的公园旁边的）饭店吃了饭。 wǒ zuótiān zài (yóujú fùjìn de gōngyuán pángbiān de ) fàndiàn chī le fàn 。

3. In attributives, we don't use the particle “了”<sup>le</sup> to indicate the past time.
4. The method of translating an English sentence with attributives into a Chinese sentence is :  
**Step one:** find out the main English sentence structure  
**Step two:** find out the descriptive part and the central word (a noun, which in English normally can be connected to the attributive with connection words such as “which, that, who, why and etc.  
**Step three:** put all the descriptions before the central word, and add a <sup>de</sup> 的 before the noun.  
**Step four:** you don't need to translate the English connection words into Chinese.



**Exercise:**

**Please translate the following sentences into Chinese.**

1. The boy sitting behind my mother is my teacher's son.
2. Last week I bought a painting of Picasso's.
3. Travelling is a good way to practice your Chinese.

4. We had dinner at the restaurant to the left of the park.

5. I want to find someone suitable to finish this job.

6. I like the cellphone you bought on the internet.

1. 坐在我妈妈后面的男孩是我老师的儿子。

Zuò zài wǒ māma hòumiàn de nánhái shì wǒ lǎoshī de érzi.

2. 上个星期我买了毕加索的画。

Shàng ge xīngqī wǒ mǎile bìjiāsuo de huà.

3. 旅游是练习中文的好方法。

Lǚyóu shì liànxí zhōngwén de hǎo fāngfǎ.

4. 我们在公园左边的餐厅吃了晚餐。

Wǒmen zài gōngyuán zuǒbiān de cāntīng chīle wǎncān.