I Know I Love You 《我知道我爱你》

Dialogue Breakdown · Do Couples Still Say “I Love You”? · Sheet 1 of 7

Characters: Shi Ran 施然 Xu Nuo 许诺

#	Character	简体中文	*Pinyin*	English	Teaching Notes
1	Xu Nuo	怎么了	*Zěnme le?*	**What's wrong?**	Literal: “how has (it) become?” — 怎么 = how, and 了 marks a change of state, so the phrase asks what has changed. 怎么了 is THE all-purpose “what's up / what happened?” — use it any time someone's face shifts.
2	Shi Ran	你说正常的情侣之间啊	*Nǐ shuō zhèngcháng de qínglǚ zhījiān a*	**You mean, between normal couples,**	Literal: “you say — normal couples' between…” 你说… opens a question you're inviting the other person to weigh in on. 之间 = “between”, and it FOLLOWS the nouns: A 和 B 之间, the reverse of English.
3	Shi Ran	挂电话之前	*Guà diànhuà zhīqián*	**Before hanging up the phone,**	Literal: “hang-up-phone, before —” 之前 = “before”, and it comes AFTER the verb phrase, the reverse of English word order. 挂电话 (hang up) vs 打电话 (make a call): 挂 literally = “to hang”.
4	Shi Ran	肯定要说一句什么	*Kěndìng yào shuō yí jù shénme*	**you'd surely have to say something,**	Literal: “surely (you) must say one line (of) something.” 肯定 = definitely / surely. 一句 is the measure word for a spoken line, not 一个. 什么 here is vague — “some line or other”, not a real question.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

啊 (a) — the softener

啊 (a) rides the end of a line to make it casual and warm — 我想你啊 (wǒ xiǎng nǐ a) = “I miss you”, 怎么了 (zěnme le) stays neutral without it. It signals feeling, not grammar.

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5	Shi Ran	**我想你啊**	*Wǒ xiǎng nǐ a*	**like “I miss you,”**	Literal: “I miss you.” 想 does double duty: “to think” AND “to miss”. 我想你 = I miss you; 我想去 = I want to go. The sentence-final 啊 softens it into casual speech.
6	Shi Ran	**我爱你啊之类的话吧**	*Wǒ ài nǐ a zhīlèi de huà ba*	**or “I love you” — that kind of thing, right?**	Literal: “‘I love you’ — that-sort-of words, right?” …之类的 = “…and things of that sort”, the natural way to trail off a list. 话 = words/talk. Final 吧 seeks agreement — Shi Ran is fishing, not stating.
7	Xu Nuo	**早就不说了**	*Zǎo jiù bù shuō le*	**We stopped saying that ages ago.**	Literal: “early on (we) just don't say (it) anymore.” 早就 stacks 早 (early) + 就 (just/already) for emphasis — “long since / way back already”. The final 了 marks the change: not said now. Her five-character brevity IS the character note.
8	Shi Ran	**所以说这个恋爱啊**	*Suǒyǐ shuō zhège liàn'ài a*	**So that's the thing about relationships —**	Literal: “so to speak, this dating…” 所以说 = “that's why / which is to say”, used to draw a conclusion out loud. 恋爱 is romantic love as an activity: 谈恋爱 = “to date”, literally “to talk love”.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

了 (le) — the change marker

了 (le) after a verb marks that something CHANGED or completed — 早就不说了 (zǎo jiù bù shuō le) = “(we) stopped saying it”. It’s not a past tense; it flags a new state.

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9	Shi Ran	**就不能谈太久**	*jiù bù néng tán tài jiǔ*	**they just can't go on too long.**	Literal: “just can't be talked too long.” 就 = precisely/just; 不能 = can't. 谈 (to talk) is the verb that pairs with 恋爱 — you “talk” a relationship in Chinese. 太久 = too long; 太 always carries a note of complaint.
10	Xu Nuo	**你说**	*Nǐ shuō*	**I mean…**	Literal: “you say —”. Standing alone, 你说 is a conversational nudge/filler, not a real “tell me”. Same two characters as line 2, doing a completely different job.
11	Xu Nuo	**是不是因为恋爱**	*shì bú shì yīnwèi liàn'ài*	**is it because a relationship**	Literal: “is-(it)-not-(it), because dating…” 是不是 is the verb-not-verb question form — no 吗 needed. Fronting it means “is it the case that…”. 因为 = because, and it opens the clause.
12	Xu Nuo	**谈得太久**	*tán de tài jiǔ*	**goes on for too long,**	Literal: “talked-until-too-long.” The 得 complement: verb + 得 + description tells you HOW the action goes — 谈得太久 = talked (for) too long. Don't confuse 得 (de) with 的 (de): different jobs, same sound.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

谈恋爱 (tán liàn'ài) — you “talk” a relationship

恋爱 (liàn'ài) is love-as-activity, and the verb that pairs with it is 谈 (tán, to talk): 谈恋爱 (tán liàn'ài) = to date, 谈太久 (tán tài jiǔ) = dated too long. Also 之类的 (zhī lèi de) = “…and that kind of thing”, the natural way to trail off a list.

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13	Xu Nuo	**感情都耗没了**	*gǎnqíng dōu hào méi le*	**that the feelings just get worn away?**	Literal: “the feelings simply drain-until-gone.” 感情 = feelings. 耗 = to drain/consume slowly (as in 消耗); 耗没了 = drained until gone. 都 here isn't “all” — it's “even / simply”, adding exasperation. A brutal little line.
14	Shi Ran	**那得问你啊**	*Nà děi wèn nǐ a*	**You'd have to ask yourself that.**	Literal: “that — (you) must ask you.” 那 = that/then; 得 (děi) = must / have to — same character as line 12's 得 (de) but a different reading. 那得问你 flips the question back: that one's for you to answer.
15	Shi Ran	**你谈那么长时间恋爱**	*Nǐ tán nàme cháng shíjiān liàn'ài*	**You dated for all that time**	Literal: “you talked that-long a time (of) dating.” 那么 + adjective = “that / so” — 那么长 = that long. Note the split: 谈…恋爱 wraps around the duration phrase 那么长时间. Chinese lets you stuff the length right into the middle.
16	Shi Ran	**不结婚**	*bù jié hūn*	**and didn't get married.**	Literal: “(and) don't marry.” 结婚 is a separable verb (结 + 婚), so “married for three years” becomes 结婚三年 — you can't just tack objects on. Three characters land the whole accusation.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

得 (de / děi) — one character, two jobs

得 reads DE inside a complement — 谈得太久 (tán de tài jiǔ) = talked too long — but DĚI as a modal — 那得问你 (nà děi wèn nǐ) = you’ d HAVE to ask. Same shape, decided by position and meaning.

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17	Xu Nuo	宇安他最近	*Yǔ'ān tā zuìjìn*	**Yu'an, he's recently**	Literal: “Yu'an, he — lately.” Naming someone then adding 他/她 (Name + pronoun) is a very natural spoken topic marker — “Yu'an, he…”. 最近 = recently/lately, and it goes BEFORE the verb.
18	Xu Nuo	刚开始自己创业	*gāng kāishǐ zìjǐ chuàngyè*	**just started his own business,**	Literal: “just started (his) own venture.” 刚 = just barely / only just (in time); 开始 = to begin. 创业 = to start a venture (创 create + 业 enterprise). 自己 = on his own — she's defending him before anyone attacks.
19	Xu Nuo	所以又搁置了	*suǒyǐ yòu gēzhì le*	**so it got put off again.**	Literal: “so (it) was again shelved.” 所以 = so/therefore. 又 = again, doing heavy lifting — this has happened before. 搁置 = to shelve/set aside; 了 marks the change. Notice she never says WHO shelved it. That's the tell.
20	Shi Ran	我问你啊	*Wǒ wèn nǐ a*	**Let me ask you —**	Literal: “I ask you —”. 我问你 signals a direct, no-dodging question is coming. Shi Ran is done being polite. The 啊 keeps it friendly on the surface.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

又…了 (yòu …le) — “again”, quietly loaded

又…了 (yòu…le) = “…again”, signalling this has happened before. 所以又搁置了 (suǒyǐ yòu gēzhì le) = “so it got shelved AGAIN” — the 又 (yòu) carries the whole history of postponed plans without naming who postponed them.

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21	Shi Ran	你觉得彭宇安	*nǐ juéde Péng Yǔ'ān*	**do you think Peng Yu'an**	Literal: “you feel (that) Peng Yu'an…” 你觉得 = “do you think / in your feeling” — asks for a gut read, not a fact. Note she uses his FULL name here, where Xu Nuo used just 宇安. Distance vs intimacy, in two extra characters.
22	Shi Ran	真的想结婚吗	*zhēnde xiǎng jiéhūn ma*	**actually wants to get married?**	Literal: “really wants (to) marry — (question)?” 真的 = really / actually, planted right before the verb for maximum doubt. 想 = want to here (cf. line 5's “miss”). Final 吗 makes it a yes/no question.
23	Xu Nuo	其实吧	*Qíshí ba*	**Well, actually…**	Literal: “actually, well —”. 其实 = actually / in fact, and it almost always precedes a correction or a hesitation. The trailing 吧 buys time. She has no answer.
24	Xu Nuo	算了别提他了	*Suàn le bié tí tā le*	**Forget it — let's not talk about him.**	Literal: “forget-it, don't bring-up him anymore.” 算了 = forget it / let it go, one of the most useful two-character phrases in Mandarin. 别 + verb = “don't…”. The bookending 了 closes the topic. Deflection, complete.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

算了 (suàn le) — the topic-closer

算了 (suàn le) = “forget it / let it go”, one of Mandarin’s most useful two-character phrases. Paired with 别提他了 (bié tí tā le, “don’t bring him up”), it politely shuts a subject down.

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25	Xu Nuo	干杯	*Gān bēi*	**Cheers.**	Literal: “dry (the) cup.” 干杯 = 干 (dry) + 杯 (cup) — “empty your glass”. Xu Nuo raises the toast first, closing her own deflection by turning the mood light rather than answering.
26	Shi Ran	干杯	*Gān bēi*	**Cheers.**	Literal: “dry (the) cup.” The same two characters, now a reply instead of an offer. Shi Ran returns the toast, dropping the interrogation to just drink with her friend — the warmest beat in the scene.

GRAMMAR FOCUS

干杯 (gān bēi) — dry the glass

干杯 (gān bēi) = “cheers”, literally 干 (gān, dry) + 杯 (bēi, cup) — “empty your glass”. Said back and forth, the same two characters shift from an offer to a reply, ending the scene on warmth instead of an answer.