

E-plan Project – FJU 2011 Fall -- basic unit

Episode 3:

Reading: 短文聽讀

Night market culture is uniquely Taiwan's. In most countries, after the usual nine-to-five work hours, people rush home to rest and relax. Stores, even convenience stores, in the United States commonly close at nine or ten at night; not many stores operate after midnight, much less 24 hours, like 7-11s, *Yoshinoya* (吉野家), or McDonalds, just to name a few. In Taiwan, "night" is when we flourish (興旺). Shops in the night market areas don't open until four or five p.m., and street vendors (who are everywhere) only begin setting up their placemats (攤位) when the sun begins to set. You may have noticed that this is also approximately when people begin to get off work or out of school. Before they head on home, adults and children alike seek entertainment, food, and daily necessities (需用品). Many students make a quick drop (四處晃晃) before going to vigorous (積極) cram schools (補習班), giving them a very short break to dine or snack. After cram school is over, which would often be well after nine o'clock, students may need to eat again, or stroll around (四處走走) to relieve (紓解) stress. Parents may also want to eat with their children when they pick them up.

This type of lifestyle does not limit to students, however. Many businessmen work overtime, and, depending on how much workload they have, they may grab a quick bite (隨便買個東西吃) before going back to the office or home. College students thrive in night markets as well. Ranging from inexpensive and attractive attire to midnight snacks, night markets provides a variety of goods with affordable (經濟實惠) price to all.

Night markets consist of stores, small shops, but mainly street vendors (攤販). The latter park carts (拉車) or place mats on the hallways or verandas (騎樓), and can sell simple items like small jewelry or decorative gadgets (零件、小東西). Many food vendors provide refrigeration and stoves for foods that may go bad or need heating. The vast array (排列) of items that can be found in night markets is truly amazing.