



LESSON THIRTEEN

COMPLAINT

PREVIEW AND PREPARATION

Look up the meaning of any unfamiliar words or phrases in the preview table.

complain/complaint

original bill

the table over there

a glass of the house white (wine)

chicken Caesar salad

Greek salad

quite sure

work out

charge for

add onto

add up

take a look at

pay for

come to

I think there's a mistake in the bill.

You ought to be more careful.

Take a closer look at the bill.

This bill goes to the table over there.

I would be paying too much.

I thought there was something wrong.

I didn't order either of these items.

Let me know what the bill comes to.

Are you sure that's what I owe you?

It's been a long shift.

That's nearly \$40 you've added onto my bill.

I must have given you the wrong bill.

I guess my mind must have wandered.

Don't worry about it.

Any chance we can just forget this conversation?

My mistake.

LISTENING PRACTICE

Listen to the audio program and try to answer these questions.

Note: Starting from this lesson, questions are asked as if these dialogues were happening around us in order to practice the way verbs are used in everyday, real-life contexts.

Who made the mistake with the bill?

- a. Michael.
- b. The waitress.

How many people were eating with Michael?

- a. One.
- b. Two

What was actually wrong with the bill?

- a. The bill didn't add up.
- b. It wasn't Michael's bill.

At the end, which bill did Michael end up paying?

- a. The right bill.
- b. The wrong bill.



THE BILL DOESN'T ADD UP

*Dialogue between Michael (M)
and a waitress (W).*

- M: Excuse me, waitress. 1
- W: Yes, sir?
- M: I think there's a mistake in the bill. You've charged me
for the Greek salad and a Coke, but I didn't order either
of these items. 5
- W: You didn't?
- M: No. That's nearly forty dollars you've added onto my bill.
- W: I'm sorry, sir. I'm not sure how... Oh, I see. I must have
given you the wrong bill.
- M: Yeah, I thought there was something wrong. 10
- W: Yes, this bill goes to the table over there. My mistake.
I'll have to work your bill out again. You had the pasta
and the white wine, right?
- M: Right. And my friend here had the chicken Caesar salad
and a glass of the house white. 15
- W: Of course. Let me just add that up.
- M: You really ought to be more careful. If I hadn't taken
a close look at the bill, I would be paying for food I
never ordered.
- W: I'm sorry, sir. It's been a long shift. I guess my mind must
have wandered. 20
- M: Don't worry about it. Just let me know what the bill
comes to.
- W: Okay. Your bill comes to \$131.45.
- M: We didn't order very much. Are you sure that's what
I owe you? 25
- W: Quite sure. You see, the wine is \$19.95 per glass.
- M: Right. Now, how much was the first bill you gave me?
- W: That one came to \$116.35, sir.
- M: Any chance we can just forget this conversation,
and I'll pay the original bill? 30

STUDY GUIDE

1. *W: You didn't?*

M: No.

The full meaning of Michael's reply is "No. I didn't." or "Yes, you are right. I didn't." In English, you are expected to state your case in your reply, regardless of whether you are asked with a positive question (you did?) or a negative question (you didn't?).

In Michael's case, he did not order these items, so he said "no."

2. *I must have given you the wrong bill.*

"Must have given" is guessing what must have happened just now. If she used the present tense "I **must give** you the wrong bill." it means that is what she is going to do.

Compare with this sentence: I guess my mind must have wandered.

3. *I thought there was something wrong.*

Michael was explaining why he said "There's a mistake in the bill" just now, so he used "thought" instead of "think."

4. *If I hadn't taken a close look at the bill, I would be paying...*

The fact is Michael knows that he **has taken** a close look at the bill. So when he is making a hypothetical assumption (different from the truth), he needs to say "**if I hadn't taken... I would be paying...**"

Pay attention to how the tense of the verb changes in a hypothetical statement:

Facts:

I am going to watch the movie.

I am watching the movie.

I have watched the movie.

I watched the movie.

Hypothetical Statements:

If I were not going to watch the movie, I would..."

If I were not watching the movie, I would..."

If I hadn't watched the movie, I would..."

If I hadn't watched the movie, I would..."

5. *Just let me know what the bill comes to.*

Here, the word "**what**" is interchangeable with "**how much**." He is using a statement. He could also ask it as a question, "What does the bill come to?" or "How much does the bill come to?"

Compare with these sentences:

Are you sure that's **what** I owe you?

How much was the first bill you gave me?

COMPREHENSION PRACTICE

Referring back to the dialogue,
answer the question.

- M: You have charged me for the Greek salad and a Coke, but I didn't order either of these items.*
Didn't Michael order the Greek salad and a Coke?

(Yes/No) (he did/he didn't)
- M: If I hadn't taken a close look at the bill, I would be paying for food I never ordered.*
Didn't Michael double-check the bill?

(Yes/No) (he did/he didn't)
- M: I think there is a mistake in the bill.*
At this point, was it clear what was wrong with the bill?

(Yes/No) (it was/it wasn't)
- M: I thought there was something wrong.*
At this point, did they find out what was wrong with the bill?

(Yes/No) (they did/they didn't)
- W: This bill goes to the table over there.*
Isn't this the correct bill for Michael's order?

(Yes/No) (it is/it isn't)
- W: It's been a long shift. I guess my mind must have wandered.*
The waitress must be very tired by now. Is she?

(Yes/No) (she is/she isn't)
- M: Any chance we can just forget this conversation, and I'll pay the original bill?*
Michael doesn't sound too happy with the result, does he?

(Yes/No) (he does/he doesn't)

IN OTHER WORDS

1. *Excuse me, waitress.*
 - a. My mistake, waitress.
 - b. My apologies, waitress.
 - c. Do you have a second, waitress?
2. *I didn't order either of these items.*
 - a. I didn't want to order anything.
 - b. I didn't order both of these items.
 - c. I didn't order these two items.
3. *That's nearly forty dollars you've added onto my bill.*
 - a. You've almost charged me over forty bucks.
 - b. You've over charged me about forty bucks.
 - c. The bill is added up to close to forty bucks.
4. *I thought there was something wrong.*
 - a. I knew some of the mistakes.
 - b. I knew there was a question in the bill.
 - c. I knew there was a problem with the bill.
5. *I'll have to work your bill out again.*
 - a. Let me add your bill up again.
 - b. Let's work it out again.
 - c. I'll have to bill you again.
6. *Just let me know what the bill comes to.*
 - a. Just let me know where my bill is.
 - b. Just give me the total amount.
 - c. Just tell me how it is added up.
7. *It's been a long shift.*
 - a. It's been a late shift.
 - b. It's been a long day.
 - c. My shift is too late.
8. *Any chance we can just forget this conversation?*
 - a. Can we start the conversation all over again?
 - b. Can we start speaking to each other again?
 - c. How can we possibly forget our conversation?

*Referring back to the dialogue,
choose the expression that has the
closest meaning.*

IN ANOTHER CONTEXT

Practice the following sentence patterns by reading them aloud to the class.
Try to make one new sentence for each pattern using your own words.

I	think there is thought there was	a mistake in a problem with a question about a change in	the bill. our orders. our schedule. the menu.
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Are you sure	that's what this is how much this is exactly how much	I owe you? we have ordered? the bill comes to? the food adds up to?
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Any chance	we can just we could simply	forget about this conversation? walk out of here? pay for the first bill? stop right here?
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I	guess think believe figure	I must have	given you the wrong bill. ordered the wrong dish. placed the wrong order. paid for the wrong table.
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I	didn't order _____	either of any of both of a couple of	these items.
	did order		

CONVERSATION PRACTICE

Role-play the following dialogue with a partner.

If you can't remember every word, use your own words to say the same thing.

- a. I think there's something wrong with our bill.
- b. Let me take a look. You ordered the CPU, the keyboard, the mouse...
- c. No, I didn't order the mouse. It's supposed to come with the keyboard.
- d. Are you sure? Let me double check for you.
- e. It says "Buy one get one free" in your ad.
- f. I am sorry, but that special offer ended last week.
- g. Oh, I must have overlooked the date. Any chance I can get the same offer?
- h. I'm afraid not. But we still have a special deal on wide screen TVs.
Any chance you will need one?

Now work with a classmate and make up a dialogue according to the new situation described below. Try to include at least eight of the new expressions in the table:

pay for	I think there is a mistake in the bill.
add onto	If I hadn't taken a close look...
add up	Are you sure that's what I owe you?
work out	It's been a long shift.
charge for	I must have (given)...
come to	I guess my mind must have wandered.

Situation: The bill A gives to B has all the food B ordered, but A added the wine twice, which makes the bill nearly twenty dollars more than what B should be paying.

- A: _____
- B: _____
- A: _____
- B: _____