HSK 4 Grammar 15: "But" Statements

HSK 4 "but" statements with 尽管, 倒 and 却, taught from the reviewed topic handout; classroom examples, not official exam items.

Three flavours of "but"

尽管 concedes then overrides; **倒** flags the pleasant surprise; **却** marks the disappointing twist from inside the sentence.

- Choosing **倒** or **却** is a feeling question.
- And **却** has a strict position rule.

尽管 … 但是 …: the concession frame

Concede, then override

尽管很多人批评他，他还是坚持这么做。(Jǐnguǎn hěn duō rén pīpíng tā, tā háishì jiānchí zheme zuò.) — Although many people criticise him, he still insists on doing it.

尽管我很生气，但是没发脾气。(Jǐnguǎn wǒ hěn shēngqì, dànshì méi fāpíqi.) — Although I was furious, I didn't lose my temper.

Watch the other 尽管

Your turn

有问题尽管问 uses which 尽管?

A. "Although" — the concession starter
B. "Go right ahead, feel free" — the invitation
C. "Still, anyway"
D. "However" — the sentence twist

倒: actually, the bright side

The "huh, actually..." twist

他不是很努力，成绩倒也不错。(Tā bú shì hěn nǔlì, chéngjì dào yě búcuò.) — He's not very hard-working, but his grades actually aren't bad.

英语不是他的母语，他说得倒挺地道。(Yīngyǔ bú shì tā de mǔyǔ, tā shuō de dào tǐng dìdào.) — English isn't his native language, but he actually speaks it quite naturally.

却: the twist that tucks in

1. **The relationship** Contrast inside the sentence — "yet, however".
2. **The position rule** Before the verb, after the subject: 他却 … ✓, never 却他 … ×.
3. **Worked sentence** 他是老板，却没有人听他的。(Tā shì lǎobǎn, què méiyǒu rén tīng tā de.) — He's the boss, yet nobody listens to him.
4. **The pairing** It teams up with 但是: 但是 … 却 …, and usually brings the disappointing twist.

Decision

Unlike English "however", 却 can never lead the sentence.

倒 or 却? Read the feeling

Word	Twist	Position	Feel
倒	Pleasant surprise	After the subject	"Huh, actually..." — the bright side
却	Disappointing	Before the verb, inside	"Yet..." — the let-down

Quick check

Your turn

Which word cannot start a sentence?

A. 却
B. 尽管
C. 但是

Check yourself

Your turn

Which word gives the pleasant twist – 这家店不大，菜 ___ 很好吃。

A. 倒
B. 却
C. 尽管