

Prepositions

Ref Hsk4 Grammar

随着——”along with, as”

随着 ties one thing to another that **moves in step with it** —”along with, as, in the wake of.” **随** means ”follow,” so the **随着** clause sets a *moving backdrop* and the main clause tracks it. It’s formal in flavour and translates a dozen different ways.

Structure: 随着 + Noun (+ 的 + change) , Subject + Predicate

{zh: 随着 |suí zhe|as / 经济 |jīng jì|the economy / 的 |de / 发展 |fā zhǎn|develops / , 生活 |shēng huó|life / 越来越 |yuè lái yuè|more and more / 好 |hǎo|comfortable / 。 }

As the economy develops, life keeps getting better.

{zh: 孩子们 |hái zi men|the children / 随着 |suí zhe|along to / 音乐 |yīn yuè|the music / 跳 |tiào|started / 起 |qǐ / 了 |le / 舞 |wǔ|dancing / 。 }

The children started dancing along to the music.

Remember: **随** = ”follow” —随着 X means ”keeping pace with X.” Picture two things moving together: as the economy rises, life rises *with* it. The **随着** part is the lead, the main clause follows.

Watch out

- It’s written/formal —in casual speech you’d often just use **越来越** or a plain cause clause.

在…上 / 在…下——”in terms of” / ”under (conditions)”

These look like ”on” and ”under,” but here they’re **abstract** brackets. **在…上** frames the **field or aspect** something holds in —”in (the area of), in terms of, on the matter of.” Its sibling **在…下** frames a **condition** —”under (such circumstances).”

Structure: 在 + Topic + 上, …… · 在 + Condition + 下, ……

{zh: 在 |zài|on / 这个 |zhè ge|this / 问题 |wèn tí|matter / 上 |shàng / , 我们 |wǒ men|our / 的 |de / 看法 |kàn fǎ|views / 一样 |yí yàng|are the same / 。 }

On this matter, our views are the same.

{zh: 在 |zài|under / 这种 |zhè zhǒng|these kinds of / 情况 |qíng kuàng|circumstances / 下 |xià / , 你 |nǐ|you / 会 |huì|would / 怎么 |zěn me|how / 做 |zuò|act / ? }

Under these circumstances, what would you do?

Remember: these are **abstract, not literal**: **在…上** = ”in the area of” (在历史上”in history,” 在语法上”grammatically”); **在…下** = ”under (conditions)” (在帮助下”with help”). Nothing is physically on top of or beneath anything.

Watch out

- Don't read them as real positions — 在这个问题上 is "on this *issue*," not "on top of a problem."