

HSK 6 Grammar

Chinese grammar · bilingual edition

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1 Adverbs

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

1.1 ■ Verb + 得 + 倒 + Adj (a pointed note)

1.1.1 A suggestion meets a practical obstacle

- A friend says that moving all the desks will be easy, but has not offered to help.
- **你说得倒容易，谁来搬呢？** – The speaker challenges the easy claim by asking who will do the work.

A suggestion meets a practical obstacle

SITUATION

A friend says that moving all the desks will be easy, but has not offered to help.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker challenges the easy claim by asking who will do the work.

CHECK THE LIMIT

倒 can mark a contrast with an expectation; it does not force every following compliment to be sarcastic.

1.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **Verb + 得 + 倒 + Adj (a pointed note):** 你说得倒轻松!; 他想得倒美。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.1.3 Follow the speaker

你说得倒容易。

nǐ shuō de dào róng yì

Word guide: 你 – you; 说 – say; 倒 – (actually); 容易 – easy.

- In the opening situation: **你说得倒容易，谁来搬呢？**
- The speaker challenges the easy claim by asking who will do the work.

1.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 倒 can mark a contrast with an expectation; it does not force every following compliment to be sarcastic.
- 你做得倒不错 can be sincere surprise.

1.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **你说倒得容易** needs repair here. Write **你说得倒容易** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.

- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.1.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker challenges the easy claim by asking who will do the work. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 倒 can mark a contrast with an expectation; it does not force every following compliment to be sarcastic. 你做得倒不错 can be sincere surprise.

1.1.7 Try it with help closed

A friend says that moving all the desks will be easy, but has not offered to help. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 你说得倒容易，谁来搬呢？

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 倒 can mark a contrast with an expectation; it does not force every following compliment to be sarcastic.
- 你做得倒不错 can be sincere surprise.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.2 ■ 很是 + Adj (a formal “very”)

1.2.1 Choose the voice of a written report

- A report describes the team's reaction after the results arrive.
- 大家对结果很是满意。 – The report expresses strong satisfaction in a slightly literary voice.

Choose the voice of a written report

SITUATION

A report describes the team's reaction after the results arrive.

SPEAKER MEANING

The report expresses strong satisfaction in a slightly literary voice.

CHECK THE LIMIT

Plain 很满意 works in ordinary conversation.

1.2.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **很是 + Adj (a formal “very”)**: 大家很是高兴。; 老师对他的进步很是满意。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.2.3 Follow the speaker

大家很是高兴。

dà jiā hěn shì gāo xìng

Word guide: 大家 – everyone; 很是 – very; 高兴 – pleased.

- In the opening situation: **大家对结果很是满意。**
- The report expresses strong satisfaction in a slightly literary voice.

1.2.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- Plain 很满意 works in ordinary conversation.
- 大家是很高兴 can also be grammatical: 是 stresses agreement, often before a contrast.

1.2.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **大家很是了满意** needs repair here. Write **大家很是满意** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.2.6 Keep the distinction

- The report expresses strong satisfaction in a slightly literary voice. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- Plain 很满意 works in ordinary conversation. 大家是很高兴 can also be grammatical: 是 stresses agreement, often before a contrast.

1.2.7 Try it with help closed

A report describes the team's reaction after the results arrive. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 大家对结果很是满意。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Plain 很满意 works in ordinary conversation.
- 大家是很高兴 can also be grammatical: 是 stresses agreement, often before a contrast.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.3 ■ 足足 + Amount (a full / as much as)

1.3.1 A short wait feels unexpectedly long

- You expected a ten-minute queue but waited two hours.
- 我们足足等了两个小时。 – 足足 presents the full two hours as a notable amount.

A short wait feels unexpectedly long

SITUATION

You expected a ten-minute queue but waited two hours.

SPEAKER MEANING

足足 presents the full two hours as a notable amount.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The speaker's expectation matters, not an absolute minimum number.

1.3.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 足足 + Amount (a full / as much as): 我们足足等了两个小时。; 这条鱼足足有五斤重。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.3.3 Follow the speaker

我足足等了一个小时。

wǒ zú zú děng le yí ge xiǎo shí

Word guide: 我 – I; 足足 – a full; 等 – wait; 一 – one; 个 – (measure word); 小时 – hour.

- In the opening situation: 我们足足等了两个小时。

- 足足 presents the full two hours as a notable amount.

1.3.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The speaker's expectation matters, not an absolute minimum number.
- 足足十秒 can feel long when a screen should respond immediately.

1.3.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 足足等两个小时 needs repair here. Write 足足等了两个小时 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.3.6 Keep the distinction

- 足足 presents the full two hours as a notable amount. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The speaker's expectation matters, not an absolute minimum number. 足足十秒 can feel long when a screen should respond immediately.

1.3.7 Try it with help closed

You expected a ten-minute queue but waited two hours. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 我们足足等了两个小时。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The speaker's expectation matters, not an absolute minimum number.
- 足足十秒 can feel long when a screen should respond immediately.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.4 ■ 一再 + Verb (again and again)

1.4.1 A warning is repeated before departure

- A leader has reminded the group several times to check their equipment.
- 老师一再提醒我们检查装备。 – The reminder has been repeated; this is more than one new reminder.

A warning is repeated before departure

SITUATION

A leader has reminded the group several times to check their equipment.

SPEAKER MEANING

The reminder has been repeated; this is more than one new reminder.

CHECK THE LIMIT

一再 does not mean exactly two or three times.

1.4.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 一再 + Verb (again and again): 他一再强调这一点。; 我一再提醒过你。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.4.3 Follow the speaker

他一再强调安全。

tā yí zài qiáng diào ān quán

Word guide: 他 – he; 一再 – repeatedly; 强调 – stress; 安全 – safety.

- In the opening situation: 老师一再提醒我们检查装备。
- The reminder has been repeated; this is more than one new reminder.

1.4.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 一再 does not mean exactly two or three times.
- 又提醒了一次 names one additional occurrence; 一再提醒 summarises a recurring action.

1.4.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 一了再提醒我们 needs repair here. Write 一再提醒我们 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.4.6 Keep the distinction

- The reminder has been repeated; this is more than one new reminder. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 一再 does not mean exactly two or three times. 又提醒了一次 names one additional occurrence; 一再提醒 summarises a recurring action.

1.4.7 Try it with help closed

A leader has reminded the group several times to check their equipment. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 老师一再提醒我们检查装备。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 一再 does not mean exactly two or three times.
- 又提醒了一次 names one additional occurrence; 一再提醒 summarises a recurring action.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.5 ■ 凡是 ... 都 (all / any without exception)

1.5.1 Who qualifies for the same benefit?

- A club notice gives a certificate to every person who completes the course.
- 凡是完成课程的人，都能领取证书。 – Completing the course defines the group; every member qualifies.

Who qualifies for the same benefit?

SITUATION

A club notice gives a certificate to every person who completes the course.

SPEAKER MEANING

Completing the course defines the group; every member qualifies.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The group may be defined by a whole clause, not just a bare noun.

1.5.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 凡是 ... 都 (all / any without exception): 凡是去过的人，都说好。; 凡是他说的话，我都记得。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.5.3 Follow the speaker

凡是学生都可以参加。

fán shì xué shēng dōu kě yǐ cān jiā

Word guide: 凡是 – all; 学生 – students; 都 – all; 可以 – may; 参加 – take part.

- In the opening situation: 凡是完成课程的人，都能领取证书。

- Completing the course defines the group; every member qualifies.

1.5.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The group may be defined by a whole clause, not just a bare noun.
- 凡是报名的人 does not include people who never registered.

1.5.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 凡是了完成课程的人 needs repair here. Write 凡是完成课程的人 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.5.6 Keep the distinction

- Completing the course defines the group; every member qualifies. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The group may be defined by a whole clause, not just a bare noun. 凡是报名的人 does not include people who never registered.

1.5.7 Try it with help closed

A club notice gives a certificate to every person who completes the course. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 凡是完成课程的人，都能领取证书。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The group may be defined by a whole clause, not just a bare noun.
- 凡是报名的人 does not include people who never registered.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.6 ■ 向来 (always / all along)

1.6.1 A reliable colleague has one unusual day

- A colleague is normally punctual, but today has not arrived.
- 他向来准时，今天怎么还没来？ – The speaker contrasts his established record with today's exception.

A reliable colleague has one unusual day

SITUATION

A colleague is normally punctual, but today has not arrived.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker contrasts his established record with today's exception.

CHECK THE LIMIT

A long-standing habit can be followed by an exception.

1.6.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **向来 (always / all along):** 他向来守时。; 这家店向来生意很好。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.6.3 Follow the speaker

他向来准时。

tā xiàng lái zhǔn shí

Word guide: 他 – he; 向来 – always; 准时 – punctual.

- In the opening situation: 他向来准时，今天怎么还没来？
- The speaker contrasts his established record with today's exception.

1.6.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- A long-standing habit can be followed by an exception.
- 向来准时 does not make 今天迟到 grammatically impossible.

1.6.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 向了来准时 needs repair here. Write 向来准时 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.6.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker contrasts his established record with today's exception. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- A long-standing habit can be followed by an exception. 向来准时 does not make 今天迟到 grammatically impossible.

1.6.7 Try it with help closed

A colleague is normally punctual, but today has not arrived. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他向来准时，今天怎么还没来？

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- A long-standing habit can be followed by an exception.
- 向来准时 does not make 今天迟到 grammatically impossible.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.7 ■ 果然 (sure enough / as expected)

1.7.1 A forecast is confirmed by observation

- The forecast predicted afternoon rain. Rain starts after lunch.
- 天气预报说有雨，下午果然下雨了。 – The event confirms the forecast the speaker already knew.

A forecast is confirmed by observation

SITUATION

The forecast predicted afternoon rain. Rain starts after lunch.

SPEAKER MEANING

The event confirms the forecast the speaker already knew.

CHECK THE LIMIT

居然 would highlight surprise instead.

1.7.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 果然 (sure enough / as expected): 天气预报说有雨，下午果然下了。；他说会赢，果然赢了。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.7.3 Follow the speaker

我说会下雨，果然下了。

wǒ shuō huì xià yǔ guǒ rán xià le

Word guide: 我 – I; 说 – said; 会 – would; 下雨 – rain; 果然 – sure enough; 下 – fell.

- In the opening situation: 天气预报说有雨，下午果然下雨了。
- The event confirms the forecast the speaker already knew.

1.7.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 居然 would highlight surprise instead.
- An event is not inherently 果然: the same rain may confirm one person's forecast and surprise another person.

1.7.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 下午下雨了果然 needs repair here. Write 下午果然下雨了 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.7.6 Keep the distinction

- The event confirms the forecast the speaker already knew. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 居然 would highlight surprise instead. An event is not inherently 果然: the same rain may confirm one person's forecast and surprise another person.

1.7.7 Try it with help closed

The forecast predicted afternoon rain. Rain starts after lunch. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 天气预报说有雨，下午果然下雨了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 居然 would highlight surprise instead.
- An event is not inherently 果然: the same rain may confirm one person's forecast and surprise another person.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.8 ■ 似乎 (it seems / as if)

1.8.1 Read a face without claiming certainty

- A colleague is quiet and frowning. You do not know the reason.
- 他似乎不太高兴。 – The speaker cautiously interprets observable behaviour.

Read a face without claiming certainty

SITUATION

A colleague is quiet and frowning. You do not know the reason.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker cautiously interprets observable behaviour.

CHECK THE LIMIT

似乎 does not prove the mood or its cause.

1.8.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 似乎 (it seems / as if): 他似乎不太高兴。; 这个名字我似乎在哪儿听过。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.8.3 Follow the speaker

他似乎不太高兴。

tā sì hū bú tài gāo xìng

Word guide: 他 – he; 似乎 – seems; 不 – not; 太 – very; 高兴 – happy.

- In the opening situation: 他似乎不太高兴。
- The speaker cautiously interprets observable behaviour.

1.8.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 似乎 does not prove the mood or its cause.
- 似乎很高兴 is equally possible when the observed signs suggest happiness.

1.8.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 他不太高兴似乎 needs repair here. Write 他似乎不太高兴 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.8.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker cautiously interprets observable behaviour. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 似乎 does not prove the mood or its cause. 似乎很高兴 is equally possible when the observed signs suggest happiness.

1.8.7 Try it with help closed

A colleague is quiet and frowning. You do not know the reason. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他似乎不太高兴。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 似乎 does not prove the mood or its cause.
- 似乎很高兴 is equally possible when the observed signs suggest happiness.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.9 ■ 偏偏 (of all things / just had to)

1.9.1 Rain arrives at the inconvenient moment

- You planned an outdoor event for the only free afternoon, and rain begins then.
- 偏偏这时候下雨。 – The timing clashes with the speaker's plan.

Rain arrives at the inconvenient moment

SITUATION

You planned an outdoor event for the only free afternoon, and rain begins then.

SPEAKER MEANING

The timing clashes with the speaker's plan.

CHECK THE LIMIT

偏偏 also marks deliberate opposition, as in 让他别去, 他偏偏要去。

1.9.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 偏偏 (of all things / just had to): 我让他别去, 他偏偏要去。; 早不下晚不下, 偏偏这时候下雨。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.9.3 Follow the speaker

我让他别去, 他偏偏要去。

wǒ ràng tā bié qù tā piān piān yào qù

Word guide: 我 – I; 让 – told; 他 – him; 别 – don't; 去 – go; 他 – he; 偏偏 – just had to; 要 – insist; 去 – go.

- In the opening situation: 偏偏这时候下雨。
- The timing clashes with the speaker's plan.

1.9.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 偏偏 also marks deliberate opposition, as in 让他别去, 他偏偏要去.
- It does not itself identify whether the clash was accidental or intentional.

1.9.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 偏了偏这时候下雨 needs repair here. Write 偏偏这时候下雨 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.9.6 Keep the distinction

- The timing clashes with the speaker's plan. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 偏偏 also marks deliberate opposition, as in 让他别去, 他偏偏要去. It does not itself identify whether the clash was accidental or intentional.

1.9.7 Try it with help closed

You planned an outdoor event for the only free afternoon, and rain begins then. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 偏偏这时候下雨。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 偏偏 also marks deliberate opposition, as in 让他别去, 他偏偏要去.
- It does not itself identify whether the clash was accidental or intentional.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.10 ■ 再 + Adj + 也 (however ..., still ...)

1.10.1 A rule survives even extreme busyness

- Someone suggests skipping lunch to finish work. You insist on a break.
- 再忙也要吃饭。 – Eating remains necessary however busy the person becomes.

A rule survives even extreme busyness

SITUATION

Someone suggests skipping lunch to finish work. You insist on a break.

SPEAKER MEANING

Eating remains necessary however busy the person becomes.

CHECK THE LIMIT

This 再 means even at a greater degree, not doing the action again.

1.10.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **再 + Adj + 也 (however ..., still ...):** 再忙也要吃饭。; 再难也要坚持下去。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.10.3 Follow the speaker

再忙也要吃饭。

zài máng yě yào chī fàn

Word guide: 再 – however; 忙 – busy; 也 – still; 要 – must; 吃饭 – eat.

- In the opening situation: **再忙也要吃饭。**
- Eating remains necessary however busy the person becomes.

1.10.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- This 再 means even at a greater degree, not doing the action again.
- 再吃一口 uses a different meaning of 再.

1.10.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **再忙也了要吃饭** needs repair here. Write **再忙也要吃饭** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.10.6 Keep the distinction

- Eating remains necessary however busy the person becomes. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- This 再 means even at a greater degree, not doing the action again. 再吃一口 uses a different meaning of 再.

1.10.7 Try it with help closed

Someone suggests skipping lunch to finish work. You insist on a break. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 再忙也要吃饭。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This 再 means even at a greater degree, not doing the action again.
- 再吃一口 uses a different meaning of 再.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.11 ■ 一律 (uniformly / without exception)

1.11.1 Read the scope of a shop notice

- A notice says that every item in the clearance area has the same discount.
- 清仓区的商品一律打八折。 – The uniform rule applies to goods in the named area.

Read the scope of a shop notice

SITUATION

A notice says that every item in the clearance area has the same discount.

SPEAKER MEANING

The uniform rule applies to goods in the named area.

CHECK THE LIMIT

打八折 means paying 80% of the price, a 20% reduction.

1.11.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 一律 (uniformly / without exception): 店内商品一律八折。; 会议期间手机一律关机。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.11.3 Follow the speaker

商品一律打八折。

shāng pǐn yí lǚ dǎ bā zhé

Word guide: 商品 – goods; 一律 – uniformly; 打八折 – 20% off.

- In the opening situation: 清仓区的商品一律打八折。
- The uniform rule applies to goods in the named area.

1.11.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 打八折 means paying 80% of the price, a 20% reduction.
- 一律 covers its stated group, so this notice says nothing about items outside the area.

1.11.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 一了律打八折 needs repair here. Write 一律打八折 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.11.6 Keep the distinction

- The uniform rule applies to goods in the named area. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 打八折 means paying 80% of the price, a 20% reduction. 一律 covers its stated group, so this notice says nothing about items outside the area.

1.11.7 Try it with help closed

A notice says that every item in the clearance area has the same discount. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 清仓区的商品一律打八折。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 打八折 means paying 80% of the price, a 20% reduction.
- 一律 covers its stated group, so this notice says nothing about items outside the area.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.12 ■ 无非 (nothing but / merely)

1.12.1 A simple motive replaces a dramatic guess

- Someone suspects a complicated plan. A friend offers a simpler explanation.
- 他无非是想帮你。 – The friend reduces the motive to wanting to help.

A simple motive replaces a dramatic guess

SITUATION

Someone suspects a complicated plan. A friend offers a simpler explanation.

SPEAKER MEANING

The friend reduces the motive to wanting to help.

CHECK THE LIMIT

This is the speaker's interpretation, not proof of the person's real intention.

1.12.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 无非 (nothing but / merely): 他这么做, 无非是想帮你。; 大家聊的无非是工作和孩子。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.12.3 Follow the speaker

他无非是想帮你。

tā wú fēi shì xiǎng bāng nǐ

Word guide: 他 – he; 无非 – merely; 是 – is; 想 – want; 帮 – help; 你 – you.

- In the opening situation: 他无非是想帮你。
- The friend reduces the motive to wanting to help.

1.12.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- This is the speaker's interpretation, not proof of the person's real intention.
- 无非 can describe more than one item: 无非是工作和学习。

1.12.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 无了非是想帮你 needs repair here. Write 无非是想帮你 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.12.6 Keep the distinction

- The friend reduces the motive to wanting to help. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- This is the speaker's interpretation, not proof of the person's real intention. 无非 can describe more than one item: 无非是工作和学习。

1.12.7 Try it with help closed

Someone suspects a complicated plan. A friend offers a simpler explanation. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他无非是想帮你。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This is the speaker's interpretation, not proof of the person's real intention.
- 无非 can describe more than one item: 无非是工作和学习。
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.13 ■ 一向 (all along / consistently)

1.13.1 A standing preference differs from one meal

- A friend has disliked sweet food for years, not just today.
- 她一向不喜欢甜食。 – The sentence summarises a stable preference across occasions.

A standing preference differs from one meal

SITUATION

A friend has disliked sweet food for years, not just today.

SPEAKER MEANING

The sentence summarises a stable preference across occasions.

CHECK THE LIMIT

一直不喜欢甜食 can also express a lasting preference.

1.13.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 一向 (all along / consistently): 张老师一向要求严格。; 他一向不喝酒。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.13.3 Follow the speaker

他一向很努力。

tā yí xiàng hěn nǔ lì

Word guide: 他 – he; 一向 – all along; 很 – very; 努力 – hard-working.

- In the opening situation: 她一向不喜欢甜食。
- The sentence summarises a stable preference across occasions.

1.13.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 一直不喜欢甜食 can also express a lasting preference.
- 一向 is not restricted to people: 这里的 service 一向很好 describes service quality.

1.13.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 一了向不喜欢甜食 needs repair here. Write 一向不喜欢甜食 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.13.6 Keep the distinction

- The sentence summarises a stable preference across occasions. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 一直不喜欢甜食 can also express a lasting preference. 一向 is not restricted to people: 这里的 service 一向很好 describes service quality.

1.13.7 Try it with help closed

A friend has disliked sweet food for years, not just today. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 她一向不喜欢甜食。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 一直不喜欢甜食 can also express a lasting preference.
- 一向 is not restricted to people: 这里的 service 一向很好 describes service quality.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.14 ■ 到时候 (when the time comes)

1.14.1 Set a reminder for a known event

- A trip starts next Friday. You will send the meeting point nearer departure.
- 下周五出发, 到时候我把地点发给你。 – The departure provides the time to which 到时候 refers.

Set a reminder for a known event

SITUATION

A trip starts next Friday.
You will send the meeting
point nearer departure.

SPEAKER MEANING

The departure provides the
time to which 到时候 refers.

CHECK THE LIMIT

A reader needs a recoverable
event or time.

1.14.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 到时候 (when the time comes): 别急, 到时候我提醒你。; 先准备好, 到时候就不慌了。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.14.3 Follow the speaker

别急, 到时候再说。

bié jí dào shí hou zài shuō

Word guide: 别 – don't; 急 – worry; 到时候 – when the time comes; 再 – then; 说 – talk.

- In the opening situation: 下周五出发, 到时候我把地点发给你。

- The departure provides the time to which 到时候 refers.

1.14.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- A reader needs a recoverable event or time.
- 到时候 does not always mean postponing a decision; it can schedule a definite action.

1.14.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 到时候我提醒你 needs repair here. Write 到时候我提醒你 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.14.6 Keep the distinction

- The departure provides the time to which 到时候 refers. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- A reader needs a recoverable event or time. 到时候 does not always mean postponing a decision; it can schedule a definite action.

1.14.7 Try it with help closed

A trip starts next Friday. You will send the meeting point nearer departure. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 下周五出发，到时候我把地点发给你。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- A reader needs a recoverable event or time.
- 到时候 does not always mean postponing a decision; it can schedule a definite action.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

1.15 ■ 何必 (why bother / no need)

1.15.1 An unnecessary trip is challenged

- A friend wants to travel across town for a book that can be borrowed next door.
- 楼下就能借到，何必跑那么远？ – The speaker argues that the distant trip is unnecessary.

An unnecessary trip is challenged

SITUATION

A friend wants to travel across town for a book that can be borrowed next door.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker argues that the distant trip is unnecessary.

CHECK THE LIMIT

何必 asks rhetorically about necessity.

1.15.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **何必 (why bother / no need):** 何必这么客气?; 事情已经过去了, 何必再提?
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

1.15.3 Follow the speaker

你何必这么客气。

nǐ hé bì zhè me kè qì

Word guide: 你 – you; 何必 – why bother; 这么 – so; 客气 – polite.

- In the opening situation: 楼下就能借到, 何必跑那么远?
- The speaker argues that the distant trip is unnecessary.

1.15.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 何必 asks rhetorically about necessity.
- It can sound critical, not always gentle. 为什么跑那么远 can genuinely request the person's reason.

1.15.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 何了必跑那么远 needs repair here. Write 何必跑那么远 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

1.15.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker argues that the distant trip is unnecessary. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 何必 asks rhetorically about necessity. It can sound critical, not always gentle. 为什么跑那么远 can genuinely request the person's reason.

1.15.7 Try it with help closed

A friend wants to travel across town for a book that can be borrowed next door. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 楼下就能借到，何必跑那么远？

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 何必 asks rhetorically about necessity.
- It can sound critical, not always gentle. 为什么跑那么远 can genuinely request the person's reason.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

2 Auxiliary Words

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

2.1 ■ Sentence + 来着 (recalling the recent past)

2.1.1 Recall a name learned long ago

- You recognise an old classmate but cannot recall the name you once knew.
- 他叫什么名字来着? – The speaker is trying to retrieve an earlier known fact.

Recall a name learned long ago

SITUATION

You recognise an old classmate but cannot recall the name you once knew.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker is trying to retrieve an earlier known fact.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The recalled information need not be recent.

2.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **Sentence + 来着 (recalling the recent past):** 你刚才说什么来着?; 他叫什么名字来着?
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

2.1.3 Follow the speaker

你刚才说什么来着?

nǐ gāng cái shuō shén me lái zhe

Word guide: 你 – you; 刚才 – just now; 说 – say; 什么 – what; 来着 – (recall).

- In the opening situation: 他叫什么名字来着?
- The speaker is trying to retrieve an earlier known fact.

2.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The recalled information need not be recent.
- 明天几点开会来着 can recall a previously announced future meeting time; 来着 is not a ban on future-time words.

2.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 来着他叫什么名字 needs repair here. Write 他叫什么名字来着 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.

- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

2.1.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker is trying to retrieve an earlier known fact. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The recalled information need not be recent. 明天几点开会来着 can recall a previously announced future meeting time; 来着 is not a ban on future-time words.

2.1.7 Try it with help closed

You recognise an old classmate but cannot recall the name you once knew. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他叫什么名字来着?

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The recalled information need not be recent.
- 明天几点开会来着 can recall a previously announced future meeting time; 来着 is not a ban on future-time words.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3 Conjunctions

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

3.1 ■ 以免 (so as to avoid)

3.1.1 Choose a purpose that avoids trouble

- A form asks you to check the address before sending a parcel.
- **请核对地址，以免寄错。** – Checking is the precaution; sending to the wrong place is the avoided outcome.

Choose a purpose that avoids trouble

SITUATION

A form asks you to check the address before sending a parcel.

SPEAKER MEANING

Checking is the precaution; sending to the wrong place is the avoided outcome.

CHECK THE LIMIT

以免寄错 does not assert that a mistake has already happened.

3.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **以免 (so as to avoid):** 早点出发，以免堵车。; 多穿点，以免感冒。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

3.1.3 Follow the speaker

早点走，以免堵车。

zǎo diǎn zǒu yǐ miǎn dǔ chē

Word guide: 早点 – earlier; 走 – leave; 以免 – so as to avoid; 堵车 – traffic.

- In the opening situation: **请核对地址，以免寄错。**
- Checking is the precaution; sending to the wrong place is the avoided outcome.

3.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 以免寄错 does not assert that a mistake has already happened.
- Avoid adding a negative automatically: 以免不小心寄错 includes 不小心, but 以免不寄错 reverses the intended risk.

3.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **请核对地址，寄错以免** needs repair here. Write **请核对地址，以免寄错** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.

- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

3.1.6 Keep the distinction

- Checking is the precaution; sending to the wrong place is the avoided outcome. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 以免寄错 does not assert that a mistake has already happened. Avoid adding a negative automatically: 以免不小心寄错 includes 不小心, but 以免不寄错 reverses the intended risk.

3.1.7 Try it with help closed

A form asks you to check the address before sending a parcel. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 请核对地址，以免寄错。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 以免寄错 does not assert that a mistake has already happened.
- Avoid adding a negative automatically: 以免不小心寄错 includes 不小心, but 以免不寄错 reverses the intended risk.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3.2 ■ 以及 (as well as / and)

3.2.1 A list adds a final item

- A meeting discusses price, quality and after-sales service.
- 会议讨论了价格、质量以及售后服务。 – 以及 links the final named topic to the preceding topics.

A list adds a final item

SITUATION

A meeting discusses price, quality and after-sales service.

SPEAKER MEANING

以及 links the final named topic to the preceding topics.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The final item need not be broader or more important.

3.2.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **以及 (as well as / and):** 老师、学生以及家长都来了。; 会议讨论了价格、质量以及售后服务。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

3.2.3 Follow the speaker

老师、学生以及家长都来了。

lǎo shī xué shēng yǐ jí jiā zhǎng dōu lái le

Word guide: 老师 – teachers; 学生 – students; 以及 – as well as; 家长 – parents; 都 – all; 来 – come.

- In the opening situation: 会议讨论了价格、质量以及售后服务。
- 以及 links the final named topic to the preceding topics.

3.2.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The final item need not be broader or more important.
- 北京、上海以及广州 simply joins three cities. Use commas or 、 to keep the groups readable.

3.2.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 老师、学生以及了家长 needs repair here. Write 老师、学生以及家长 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

3.2.6 Keep the distinction

- 以及 links the final named topic to the preceding topics. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The final item need not be broader or more important. 北京、上海以及广州 simply joins three cities. Use commas or 、 to keep the groups readable.

3.2.7 Try it with help closed

A meeting discusses price, quality and after-sales service. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 会议讨论了价格、质量以及售后服务。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The final item need not be broader or more important.
- 北京、上海以及广州 simply joins three cities. Use commas or 、 to keep the groups readable.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3.3 ■ 总之 (in short / in a word)

3.3.1 A summary must follow the evidence

- An event stayed within budget, started on time and received good feedback.
- **总之，这次活动很成功。** – The sentence draws together the preceding evaluation.

A summary must follow the evidence

SITUATION

An event stayed within budget, started on time and received good feedback.

SPEAKER MEANING

The sentence draws together the preceding evaluation.

CHECK THE LIMIT

总之 does not prevent later detail.

3.3.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **总之 (in short / in a word):** 总之，这次活动很成功。; 衣服、书、药, 总之该带的都带了。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

3.3.3 Follow the speaker

总之，我们要努力。

zǒng zhī wǒ men yào nǔ lì

Word guide: 总之 – in short; 我们 – we; 要 – must; 努力 – work hard.

- In the opening situation: **总之，这次活动很成功。**
- The sentence draws together the preceding evaluation.

3.3.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 总之 does not prevent later detail.
- A writer may state a summary and then explain it; the issue is whether the summary is justified by the earlier points.

3.3.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 总之, 这次活动很成功 needs repair here. Write 总之, 这次活动很成功 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

3.3.6 Keep the distinction

- The sentence draws together the preceding evaluation. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 总之 does not prevent later detail. A writer may state a summary and then explain it; the issue is whether the summary is justified by the earlier points.

3.3.7 Try it with help closed

An event stayed within budget, started on time and received good feedback. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 总之, 这次活动很成功。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 总之 does not prevent later detail.
- A writer may state a summary and then explain it; the issue is whether the summary is justified by the earlier points.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

3.4 ■ 则 (while / whereas – formal contrast)

3.4.1 Compare two preferences in parallel

- Two siblings choose different activities for the weekend.
- 哥哥喜欢运动, 弟弟则喜欢读书。 – 则 marks the second preference as a comparison with the first.

Compare two preferences in parallel

SITUATION

Two siblings choose different activities for the weekend.

SPEAKER MEANING

则 marks the second preference as a comparison with the first.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The two clauses need clear corresponding subjects or topics.

3.4.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 则 (while / whereas – formal contrast): 南方多雨, 北方则比较干燥。; 哥哥爱运动, 弟弟则喜欢安静。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

3.4.3 Follow the speaker

哥哥爱运动, 弟弟则爱读书。

gē ge ài yùn dòng dì dì zé ài dú shū

Word guide: 哥哥 – older brother; 爱 – love; 运动 – sports; 弟弟 – younger brother; 则 – while; 爱 – love; 读书 – reading.

- In the opening situation: 哥哥喜欢运动, 弟弟则喜欢读书。
- 则 marks the second preference as a comparison with the first.

3.4.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The two clauses need clear corresponding subjects or topics.
- 则 also occurs in conditional writing, such as 不进则退; it is not always translated as whereas.

3.4.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 弟弟喜欢读书则 needs repair here. Write 弟弟则喜欢读书 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

3.4.6 Keep the distinction

- 则 marks the second preference as a comparison with the first. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The two clauses need clear corresponding subjects or topics. 则 also occurs in conditional writing, such as 不进则退; it is not always translated as whereas.

3.4.7 Try it with help closed

Two siblings choose different activities for the weekend. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 哥哥喜欢运动，弟弟则喜欢读书。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The two clauses need clear corresponding subjects or topics.
- 则 also occurs in conditional writing, such as 不进则退; it is not always translated as whereas.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

4 Nouns

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

4.1 ■ 本 + Noun (this / our / one's own)

4.1.1 Identify who issued a notice

- A company writes a notice about its own opening hours.
- 本公司周一恢复营业。 – 本公司 points to the company issuing the notice.

Identify who issued a notice

SITUATION

A company writes a notice about its own opening hours.

SPEAKER MEANING

本公司 points to the company issuing the notice.

CHECK THE LIMIT

本 is also used for the current time or item:
本周、本次。

4.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 本 + Noun (this / our / one's own): 本公司成立于 1998 年。; 本次列车开往北京。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

4.1.3 Follow the speaker

本公司不接受退货。

běn gōng sī bù jiē shòu tuì huò

Word guide: 本 – our; 公司 – company; 不 – not; 接受 – accept; 退货 – returns.

- In the opening situation: 本公司周一恢复营业。
- 本公司 points to the company issuing the notice.

4.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 本 is also used for the current time or item: 本周、本次。
- It is not the measure word 本 in 一本书, and 本公司 should not be used for an unrelated competitor.

4.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 本的公司恢复营业 needs repair here. Write 本公司恢复营业 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.

- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

4.1.6 Keep the distinction

- 本公司 points to the company issuing the notice. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 本 is also used for the current time or item: 本周、本次. It is not the measure word 本 in 一本书, and 本公司 should not be used for an unrelated competitor.

4.1.7 Try it with help closed

A company writes a notice about its own opening hours. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 本公司周一恢复营业。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 本 is also used for the current time or item: 本周、本次.
- It is not the measure word 本 in 一本书, and 本公司 should not be used for an unrelated competitor.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

4.2 ■ Word + 性 (-ness / -ity)

4.2.1 Name a property rather than describe a thing

- An evaluator compares how safe two products are.
- 我们需要比较两种产品的安全性。 – 安全性 names the property being compared.

Name a property rather than describe a thing

SITUATION

An evaluator compares how safe two products are.

SPEAKER MEANING

安全性 names the property being compared.

CHECK THE LIMIT

性 forms established words; do not attach it freely to every adjective.

4.2.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **Word + 性 (-ness / -ity):** 这个问题很有代表性。; 安全性是第一位的。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

4.2.3 Follow the speaker

这件事的重要性很高。

zhè jiàn shì de zhòng yào xìng hěn gāo

Word guide: 这 – this; 件 – (measure word); 事 – matter; 重要性 – importance; 很 – very; 高 – high.

- In the opening situation: 我们需要比较两种产品的安全性。
- 安全性 names the property being compared.

4.2.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 性 forms established words; do not attach it freely to every adjective.
- 重要 describes importance directly in 这很重要; 重要性 names the concept in 它的重要性.

4.2.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 安全性性很高 needs repair here. Write 安全性很高 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

4.2.6 Keep the distinction

- 安全性 names the property being compared. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 性 forms established words; do not attach it freely to every adjective. 重要 describes importance directly in 这很重要; 重要性 names the concept in 它的重要性.

4.2.7 Try it with help closed

An evaluator compares how safe two products are. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 我们需要比较两种产品的安全性。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 性 forms established words; do not attach it freely to every adjective.
- 重要 describes importance directly in 这很重要; 重要性 names the concept in 它的重要性.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5 Particles

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

5.1 ■ 是否 (whether or not)

5.1.1 A formal reply must answer either way

- A form asks the recipient to confirm whether they agree.
- 请确认您是否同意。 – Both agreement and disagreement are possible responses.

A formal reply must answer either way

SITUATION

A form asks the recipient to confirm whether they agree.

SPEAKER MEANING

Both agreement and disagreement are possible responses.

CHECK THE LIMIT

是否 goes before the predicate.

5.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 是否 (whether or not): 请问您是否满意?; 我们在讨论是否需要改期。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

5.1.3 Follow the speaker

请确认您是否同意。

qǐng què rèn nín shì fǒu tóng yì

Word guide: 请 – please; 确认 – confirm; 您 – you; 是否 – whether; 同意 – agree.

- In the opening situation: 请确认您是否同意。
- Both agreement and disagreement are possible responses.

5.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 是否 goes before the predicate.
- In this direct request, it already frames the yes-or-no issue; adding 吗 is unnecessary. 是否 does not imply agreement.

5.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 您同意是否 needs repair here. Write 您是否同意 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

5.1.6 Keep the distinction

- Both agreement and disagreement are possible responses. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 是否 goes before the predicate. In this direct request, it already frames the yes-or-no issue; adding 吗 is unnecessary. 是否 does not imply agreement.

5.1.7 Try it with help closed

A form asks the recipient to confirm whether they agree. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 请确认您是否同意。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 是否 goes before the predicate.
- In this direct request, it already frames the yes-or-no issue; adding 吗 is unnecessary. 是否 does not imply agreement.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5.2 ■ ... 与否 (whether ... or not)

5.2.1 An attendance decision becomes the topic

- An organiser needs a reply even from people who cannot attend.
- 参加与否, 都请尽快回复。 – Whether attending or not is the issue; everyone should reply.

An attendance decision becomes the topic

SITUATION

An organiser needs a reply even from people who cannot attend.

SPEAKER MEANING

Whether attending or not is the issue; everyone should reply.

CHECK THE LIMIT

与否 follows the action or property; 是否 precedes it.

5.2.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- ... 与否 (whether ... or not): 成功与否, 就看这一次。; 参加与否, 请尽快回复。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

5.2.3 Follow the speaker

成功与否，取决于努力。

chéng gōng yǔ fǒu qǔ jué yú nǚ lì

Word guide: 成功 – success; 与否 – or not; 取决于 – depends on; 努力 – effort.

- In the opening situation: **参加与否，都请尽快回复。**
- Whether attending or not is the issue; everyone should reply.

5.2.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 与否 follows the action or property; 是否 precedes it.
- 参加与否 and 是否参加 frame the same two possibilities, rather than two successive actions.

5.2.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **与否参加** needs repair here. Write **参加与否** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

5.2.6 Keep the distinction

- Whether attending or not is the issue; everyone should reply. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 与否 follows the action or property; 是否 precedes it. **参加与否** and **是否参加** frame the same two possibilities, rather than two successive actions.

5.2.7 Try it with help closed

An organiser needs a reply even from people who cannot attend. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 参加与否，都请尽快回复。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 与否 follows the action or property; 是否 precedes it.
- 参加与否 and 是否参加 frame the same two possibilities, rather than two successive actions.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5.3 ■ Noun + 之 + Noun (a literary 的)

5.3.1 Choose a proverb's established wording

- A writer quotes the familiar expression about learning from failure.
- 失败是成功之母。 – 之 links 成功 to 母 in an established literary expression.

Choose a proverb's established wording

SITUATION

A writer quotes the familiar expression about learning from failure.

SPEAKER MEANING

之 links 成功 to 母 in an established literary expression.

CHECK THE LIMIT

This use is similar to 的, but 之 has other classical uses.

5.3.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- Noun + 之 + Noun (a literary 的): 失败是成功之母。; 这是人生之路的起点。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

5.3.3 Follow the speaker

失败是成功之母。

shī bài shì chéng gōng zhī mǔ

Word guide: 失败 – failure; 是 – is; 成功 – success; 之 – of; 母 – mother.

- In the opening situation: 失败是成功之母。
- 之 links 成功 to 母 in an established literary expression.

5.3.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- This use is similar to 的, but 之 has other classical uses.
- Do not replace every spoken 的 mechanically; 我的书 remains the natural everyday form.

5.3.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 成功的之母 needs repair here. Write 成功之母 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

5.3.6 Keep the distinction

- 之 links 成功 to 母 in an established literary expression. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.

- This use is similar to 的, but 之 has other classical uses. Do not replace every spoken 的 mechanically; 我的书 remains the natural everyday form.

5.3.7 Try it with help closed

A writer quotes the familiar expression about learning from failure. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 失败是成功之母。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This use is similar to 的, but 之 has other classical uses.
- Do not replace every spoken 的 mechanically; 我的书 remains the natural everyday form.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5.4 ■ Statement + 嘛 (self-evident)

5.4.1 Explain the obvious reason without asking

- A beginner is slow, and you remind a colleague that this is the first attempt.
- **第一次嘛, 慢一点很正常。** – 嘛 marks the first attempt as an understood explanation.

Explain the obvious reason without asking

SITUATION

A beginner is slow, and you remind a colleague that this is the first attempt.

SPEAKER MEANING

嘛 marks the first attempt as an understood explanation.

CHECK THE LIMIT

嘛 differs from the yes-or-no question particle 吗.

5.4.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **Statement + 嘛 (self-evident):** 孩子嘛, 都爱玩。; 第一次嘛, 慢一点很正常。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

5.4.3 Follow the speaker

有意见就说嘛。

yǒu yì jiàn jiù shuō ma

Word guide: 有 – have; 意见 – opinions; 就 – then; 说 – say.

- In the opening situation: **第一次嘛，慢一点很正常。**
- 嘛 marks the first attempt as an understood explanation.

5.4.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 嘛 differs from the yes-or-no question particle 吗.
- It can follow a topic as well as a full statement, and may sound impatient if the listener does not share the assumption.

5.4.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **嘛第一次，慢一点很正常** needs repair here. Write **第一次嘛，慢一点很正常** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

5.4.6 Keep the distinction

- 嘛 marks the first attempt as an understood explanation. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 嘛 differs from the yes-or-no question particle 吗. It can follow a topic as well as a full statement, and may sound impatient if the listener does not share the assumption.

5.4.7 Try it with help closed

A beginner is slow, and you remind a colleague that this is the first attempt. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 第一次嘛，慢一点很正常。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 嘛 differs from the yes-or-no question particle 吗.
- It can follow a topic as well as a full statement, and may sound impatient if the listener does not share the assumption.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

5.5 ■ Sentence + 呗 (a casual shrug)

5.5.1 Offer a simple solution with care

- A friend says they are tired. You suggest resting in a casual conversation.
- **累了就休息呗。** – 呗 presents resting as a straightforward available solution.

Offer a simple solution with care

SITUATION

A friend says they are tired. You suggest resting in a casual conversation.

SPEAKER MEANING

呗 presents resting as a straightforward available solution.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The same words can sound reassuring or dismissive depending on voice and relationship.

5.5.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **Sentence + 呗 (a casual shrug):** 不会就学呗。; 他不来就算了呗。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

5.5.3 Follow the speaker

不会就学呗。

bú huì jiù xué bei

Word guide: 不 – not; 会 – can; 就 – then; 学 – learn.

- In the opening situation: 累了就休息呗。
- 呗 presents resting as a straightforward available solution.

5.5.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The same words can sound reassuring or dismissive depending on voice and relationship.
- Use a plain polite suggestion with a customer or in a formal report.

5.5.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 呗累了就休息 needs repair here. Write 累了就休息呗 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

5.5.6 Keep the distinction

- 呗 presents resting as a straightforward available solution. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The same words can sound reassuring or dismissive depending on voice and relationship. Use a plain polite suggestion with a customer or in a formal report.

5.5.7 Try it with help closed

A friend says they are tired. You suggest resting in a casual conversation. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 累了就休息呗。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The same words can sound reassuring or dismissive depending on voice and relationship.
- Use a plain polite suggestion with a customer or in a formal report.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

6 Prepositions

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

6.1 ■ 鉴于 (in light of / given)

6.1.1 A notice explains why an event changed

- A venue is closed for repairs, so the organiser postpones the event.
- **鉴于场地正在维修，活动延期。** – The notice gives a circumstance as the basis for a decision.

A notice explains why an event changed

SITUATION

A venue is closed for repairs, so the organiser postpones the event.

SPEAKER MEANING

The notice gives a circumstance as the basis for a decision.

CHECK THE LIMIT

鉴于 fits formal explanations; 因为 is often simpler in conversation.

6.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **鉴于 (in light of / given):** 鉴于天气原因，比赛推迟举行。；鉴于情况特殊，我们决定延期。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

6.1.3 Follow the speaker

鉴于天气不好，活动取消。

jiàn yú tiān qì bù hǎo huó dòng qǔ xiāo

Word guide: 鉴于 – in light of; 天气 – weather; 不 – not; 好 – good; 活动 – event; 取消 – cancel.

- In the opening situation: **鉴于场地正在维修，活动延期。**
- The notice gives a circumstance as the basis for a decision.

6.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 鉴于 fits formal explanations; 因为 is often simpler in conversation.
- It does not prove the reason is sufficient, and the decision still needs to be clearly stated.

6.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 鉴于场地正在维修 needs repair here. Write 鉴于场地正在维修 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

6.1.6 Keep the distinction

- The notice gives a circumstance as the basis for a decision. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 鉴于 fits formal explanations; 因为 is often simpler in conversation. It does not prove the reason is sufficient, and the decision still needs to be clearly stated.

6.1.7 Try it with help closed

A venue is closed for repairs, so the organiser postpones the event. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 鉴于场地正在维修，活动延期。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 鉴于 fits formal explanations; 因为 is often simpler in conversation.
- It does not prove the reason is sufficient, and the decision still needs to be clearly stated.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7 Sentence patterns

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

7.1 ■ 岂不是 (wouldn't that be ...?)

7.1.1 A rhetorical question points to wasted effort

- A project is nearly finished. Someone proposes abandoning it now.
- **现在放弃，岂不是白费功夫？** – The speaker invites agreement that abandoning it would waste the effort.

A rhetorical question points to wasted effort

SITUATION

A project is nearly finished. Someone proposes abandoning it now.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker invites agreement that abandoning it would waste the effort.

CHECK THE LIMIT

Rhetorical force shows the speaker's position, not everyone else's agreement.

7.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **岂不是 (wouldn't that be ...?)**: 这样岂不是更好?; 现在放弃，岂不是太可惜了?
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.1.3 Follow the speaker

那岂不是更好？

nà qǐ bú shì gèng hǎo

Word guide: 那 – that; 岂不是 – wouldn't that be; 更 – even; 好 – good.

- In the opening situation: **现在放弃，岂不是白费功夫？**
- The speaker invites agreement that abandoning it would waste the effort.

7.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- Rhetorical force shows the speaker's position, not everyone else's agreement.
- A listener can dispute the claim; that disagreement does not make 岂不是 ungrammatical.

7.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **岂不了是白费功夫** needs repair here. Write **岂不是白费功夫** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.

- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.1.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker invites agreement that abandoning it would waste the effort. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- Rhetorical force shows the speaker's position, not everyone else's agreement. A listener can dispute the claim; that disagreement does not make 岂不是 ungrammatical.

7.1.7 Try it with help closed

A project is nearly finished. Someone proposes abandoning it now. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 现在放弃，岂不是白费功夫？

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Rhetorical force shows the speaker's position, not everyone else's agreement.
- A listener can dispute the claim; that disagreement does not make 岂不是 ungrammatical.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.2 ■ 非 (要) ... 不可 (simply must / insist on)

7.2.1 Insistence is stronger than a preference

- A child rejects every alternative and insists on buying one particular toy.
- 他非要买那个玩具不可。 – The child presents that purchase as non-negotiable.

Insistence is stronger than a preference

SITUATION

A child rejects every alternative and insists on buying one particular toy.

SPEAKER MEANING

The child presents that purchase as non-negotiable.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The pattern can express personal insistence or necessity.

7.2.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **非 (要) ... 不可 (simply must / insist on):** 他非要去不可。; 这个会我非参加不可。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.2.3 Follow the speaker

他非要去不可。

tā fēi yào qù bù kě

Word guide: 他 – he; 非 – simply must; 要 – want; 去 – go; 不可 – no other way.

- In the opening situation: 他非要买那个玩具不可。
- The child presents that purchase as non-negotiable.

7.2.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The pattern can express personal insistence or necessity.
- It does not prove that buying the toy is objectively required; context identifies whose demand it is.

7.2.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 他非要买那个玩具可不 needs repair here. Write 他非要买那个玩具不可 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.2.6 Keep the distinction

- The child presents that purchase as non-negotiable. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The pattern can express personal insistence or necessity. It does not prove that buying the toy is objectively required; context identifies whose demand it is.

7.2.7 Try it with help closed

A child rejects every alternative and insists on buying one particular toy. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他非要买那个玩具不可。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The pattern can express personal insistence or necessity.
- It does not prove that buying the toy is objectively required; context identifies whose demand it is.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.3 ■ 兼 (doubling as / concurrently)

7.3.1 One person holds two roles

- A school biography describes a teacher who is also a writer.
- 她是老师兼作家。 – One person holds both roles at the same time.

One person holds two roles

SITUATION

A school biography describes a teacher who is also a writer.

SPEAKER MEANING

One person holds both roles at the same time.

CHECK THE LIMIT

Place 兼 between the roles in A兼B.

7.3.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 兼 (doubling as / concurrently): 他是老师兼班主任。; 她是歌手兼演员。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.3.3 Follow the speaker

他是老师兼作家。

tā shì lǎo shī jiān zuò jiā

Word guide: 他 – he; 是 – is; 老师 – teacher; 兼 – and also; 作家 – writer.

- In the opening situation: 她是老师兼作家。
- One person holds both roles at the same time.

7.3.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- Place 兼 between the roles in A 兼 B.
- This differs from 她以前是老师，现在是作家, which describes a change of role rather than concurrent roles.

7.3.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 她是兼老师作家 needs repair here. Write 她是老师兼作家 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.3.6 Keep the distinction

- One person holds both roles at the same time. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- Place 兼 between the roles in A 兼 B. This differs from 她以前是老师，现在是作家, which describes a change of role rather than concurrent roles.

7.3.7 Try it with help closed

A school biography describes a teacher who is also a writer. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 她是老师兼作家。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Place 兼 between the roles in A 兼 B.
- This differs from 她以前是老师，现在是作家, which describes a change of role rather than concurrent roles.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.4 ■ 莫非 (could it be that ...?)

7.4.1 An absence leads to a tentative guess

- A friend is very late. You wonder whether they forgot the meeting.
- 他还没来,莫非忘了时间? – The speaker offers a possible explanation with surprise.

An absence leads to a tentative guess

SITUATION

A friend is very late. You wonder whether they forgot the meeting.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker offers a possible explanation with surprise.

CHECK THE LIMIT

莫非 is a guess, not confirmation.

7.4.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **莫非 (could it be that ...?):** 莫非你忘了我们的约定?; 他到现在还不来, 莫非出了什么事?
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.4.3 Follow the speaker

莫非你忘了?

mò fēi nǐ wàng le

Word guide: 莫非 – could it be; 你 – you; 忘 – forget.

- In the opening situation: 他还没来, 莫非忘了时间?
- The speaker offers a possible explanation with surprise.

7.4.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 莫非 is a guess, not confirmation.
- A following question or reply may test it. 既然忘了时间 would treat the forgetting as established instead.

7.4.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 莫了非忘了时间 needs repair here. Write 莫非忘了时间 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.4.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker offers a possible explanation with surprise. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 莫非 is a guess, not confirmation. A following question or reply may test it. 既然忘了时间 would treat the forgetting as established instead.

7.4.7 Try it with help closed

A friend is very late. You wonder whether they forgot the meeting. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他还没来，莫非忘了时间？

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 莫非 is a guess, not confirmation.
- A following question or reply may test it. 既然忘了时间 would treat the forgetting as established instead.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.5 ■ 由此 (from this / hence)

7.5.1 Separate a conclusion from its cause

- A survey finds that most respondents prefer the shorter route.
- 由此可见，短路线更受这些受访者欢迎。 – 由此 refers back to the survey result and introduces an inference.

Separate a conclusion from its cause

SITUATION

A survey finds that most respondents prefer the shorter route.

SPEAKER MEANING

由此 refers back to the survey result and introduces an inference.

CHECK THE LIMIT

Match the conclusion's scope to the evidence: these respondents do not represent everybody automatically.

7.5.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 由此 (from this / hence): 由此可见，习惯的力量很大。；问题正是由此而来。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.5.3 Follow the speaker

由此可见，努力很重要。

yóu cǐ kě jiàn nǚ lì hěn zhòng yào

Word guide: 由此 – from this; 可见 – it can be seen; 努力 – effort; 很 – very; 重要 – important.

- In the opening situation: 由此可见，短路线更受这些受访者欢迎。

- 由此 refers back to the survey result and introduces an inference.

7.5.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- Match the conclusion's scope to the evidence: these respondents do not represent everybody automatically.
- 由此引发讨论 instead refers to a resulting event, not an inference.

7.5.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 由此可见 needs repair here. Write 由此可见 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.5.6 Keep the distinction

- 由此 refers back to the survey result and introduces an inference. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- Match the conclusion's scope to the evidence: these respondents do not represent everybody automatically. 由此引发讨论 instead refers to a resulting event, not an inference.

7.5.7 Try it with help closed

A survey finds that most respondents prefer the shorter route. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 由此可见，短路线更受这些受访者欢迎。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Match the conclusion's scope to the evidence: these respondents do not represent everybody automatically.
- 由此引发讨论 instead refers to a resulting event, not an inference.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.6 ■ 莫过于 (nothing is more ... than)

7.6.1 State a personal highest value

- A speaker says that being together with family gives the greatest happiness.
- 最幸福的事莫过于和家人在一起。 – The speaker ranks this experience above the alternatives.

State a personal highest value

SITUATION

A speaker says that being together with family gives the greatest happiness.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker ranks this experience above the alternatives.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The superlative expresses the speaker's evaluation.

7.6.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **莫过于 (nothing is more ... than):** 最幸福的事, 莫过于和家人在一起。; 最让他头疼的, 莫过于每天的堵车。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.6.3 Follow the speaker

最快乐的事莫过于旅行。

zuì kuài lè de shì mò guò yú lǚ xíng

Word guide: 最 – most; 快乐 – happy; 事 – thing; 莫过于 – nothing more than; 旅行 – travel.

- In the opening situation: **最幸福的事莫过于和家人在一起。**
- The speaker ranks this experience above the alternatives.

7.6.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The superlative expresses the speaker's evaluation.
- It does not assert a scientific measurement or everybody's preference. 莫过于 introduces the experience ranked highest.

7.6.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **莫过不于和家人在一起** needs repair here. Write **莫过于和家人在一起** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.6.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker ranks this experience above the alternatives. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The superlative expresses the speaker's evaluation. It does not assert a scientific measurement or everybody's preference. 莫过于 introduces the experience ranked highest.

7.6.7 Try it with help closed

A speaker says that being together with family gives the greatest happiness. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 最幸福的事莫过于和家人在一起。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The superlative expresses the speaker's evaluation.
- It does not assert a scientific measurement or everybody's preference. 莫过于 introduces the experience ranked highest.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.7 ■ 与其 A, 宁可 / 宁愿 B (rather than ... would rather)

7.7.1 A choice rejects waiting in favour of action

- You would rather investigate a problem yourself than wait for an update.
- 与其等着, 宁愿自己去看看。 – Waiting is the rejected option; going to look is preferred.

A choice rejects waiting in favour of action

SITUATION

You would rather investigate a problem yourself than wait for an update.

SPEAKER MEANING

Waiting is the rejected option; going to look is preferred.

CHECK THE LIMIT

Preference is not proof that the action occurred.

7.7.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 与其 A, 宁可 / 宁愿 B (rather than ... would rather): 与其在家等着, 宁愿自己去看看。; 与其抱怨, 宁可想想办法。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.7.3 Follow the speaker

与其等着, 宁愿自己去。

yǔ qí děng zhe nìng yuàn zì jǐ qù

Word guide: 与其 – rather than; 等着 – wait; 宁愿 – would rather; 自己 – oneself; 去 – go.

- In the opening situation: 与其等着，宁愿自己去看看。
- Waiting is the rejected option; going to look is preferred.

7.7.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- Preference is not proof that the action occurred.
- 与其 A，不如 B can recommend B; 宁愿 B stresses willingness or preference, sometimes despite a cost.

7.7.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 与了其等着，宁愿自己去 needs repair here. Write 与其等着，宁愿自己去 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.7.6 Keep the distinction

- Waiting is the rejected option; going to look is preferred. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- Preference is not proof that the action occurred. 与其 A，不如 B can recommend B; 宁愿 B stresses willingness or preference, sometimes despite a cost.

7.7.7 Try it with help closed

You would rather investigate a problem yourself than wait for an update. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 与其等着，宁愿自己去看看。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Preference is not proof that the action occurred.
- 与其 A，不如 B can recommend B; 宁愿 B stresses willingness or preference, sometimes despite a cost.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.8 ■ 跟 ... 似的 (just like / as if)

7.8.1 A comparison does not identify the object

- An artificial flower looks convincingly real.
- 这朵花跟真的似的。 – The flower is compared with a real flower in appearance.

A comparison does not identify the object

SITUATION

An artificial flower looks convincingly real.

SPEAKER MEANING

The flower is compared with a real flower in appearance.

CHECK THE LIMIT

跟...似的 expresses likeness, not identity.

7.8.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 跟 ... 似的 (just like / as if): 他高兴得跟孩子似的。; 外面热得跟蒸笼似的。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.8.3 Follow the speaker

这花跟真的似的。

zhè huā gēn zhēn de shì de

Word guide: 这 – this; 花 – flower; 跟 – like; 真的 – real; 似的 – as if.

- In the opening situation: 这朵花跟真的似的。
- The flower is compared with a real flower in appearance.

7.8.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 跟 ... 似的 expresses likeness, not identity.
- 似的 is read shì de in this pattern; 似乎 uses sì. Keep the matching frame 跟 X 似的 together.

7.8.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 跟真的的似 needs repair here. Write 跟真的似的 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.8.6 Keep the distinction

- The flower is compared with a real flower in appearance. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 跟 ... 似的 expresses likeness, not identity. 似的 is read shì de in this pattern; 似乎 uses sì. Keep the matching frame 跟 X 似的 together.

7.8.7 Try it with help closed

An artificial flower looks convincingly real. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 这朵花跟真的似的。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 跟 ... 似的 expresses likeness, not identity.
- 似的 is read *shì de* in this pattern; 似乎 uses *sì*. Keep the matching frame 跟 X 似的 together.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.9 ■ 不愧是 (truly worthy of)

7.9.1 A reputation is supported by an action

- An expert immediately identifies a fault that others missed.
- 他不愧是专家，一眼就看出了问题。 – The quick diagnosis supports praise that he lives up to the title.

A reputation is supported by an action

SITUATION

An expert immediately identifies a fault that others missed.

SPEAKER MEANING

The quick diagnosis supports praise that he lives up to the title.

CHECK THE LIMIT

不愧是 links reputation and performance.

7.9.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 不愧是 (truly worthy of): 他不愧是专家，一眼就看出了问题。; 不愧是冠军，水平就是高。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.9.3 Follow the speaker

他不愧是专家。

tā bú kuài shì zhuān jiā

Word guide: 他 – he; 不愧 – truly worthy; 是 – is; 专家 – expert.

- In the opening situation: 他不愧是专家，一眼就看出了问题。
- The quick diagnosis supports praise that he lives up to the title.

7.9.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 不愧是 links reputation and performance.
- It can be used ironically in context, so do not grade every negative follow-up as a syntax error merely because praise is usual.

7.9.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 他是不愧专家 needs repair here. Write 他不愧是专家 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.9.6 Keep the distinction

- The quick diagnosis supports praise that he lives up to the title. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 不愧是 links reputation and performance. It can be used ironically in context, so do not grade every negative follow-up as a syntax error merely because praise is usual.

7.9.7 Try it with help closed

An expert immediately identifies a fault that others missed. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他不愧是专家，一眼就看出了问题。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 不愧是 links reputation and performance.
- It can be used ironically in context, so do not grade every negative follow-up as a syntax error merely because praise is usual.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.10 ■ 由 ... 做主 (for ... to decide)

7.10.1 Name the person who has the final say

- A group asks who should select the gift. The decision is assigned to the child.
- 买什么礼物，由孩子自己做主。 – The child is given authority over this particular choice.

Name the person who has the final say

SITUATION

A group asks who should select the gift. The decision is assigned to the child.

SPEAKER MEANING

The child is given authority over this particular choice.

CHECK THE LIMIT

This does not mean the child controls the entire event.

7.10.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 由 ... 做主 (for ... to decide): 这件事由你做主。; 家里的大事由父母做主。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.10.3 Follow the speaker

这件事由你做主。

zhè jiàn shì yóu nǐ zuò zhǔ

Word guide: 这 – this; 件 – (measure word); 事 – matter; 由 – by; 你 – you; 做主 – decide.

- In the opening situation: 买什么礼物，由孩子自己做主。
- The child is given authority over this particular choice.

7.10.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- This does not mean the child controls the entire event.
- State the area first when needed; 做主 assigns decision authority, unlike 帮忙, which only offers assistance.

7.10.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 买什么礼物，由做主孩子 needs repair here. Write 买什么礼物，由孩子做主 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.10.6 Keep the distinction

- The child is given authority over this particular choice. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- This does not mean the child controls the entire event. State the area first when needed; 做主 assigns decision authority, unlike 帮忙, which only offers assistance.

7.10.7 Try it with help closed

A group asks who should select the gift. The decision is assigned to the child. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 买什么礼物，由孩子自己做主。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- This does not mean the child controls the entire event.
- State the area first when needed; 做主 assigns decision authority, unlike 帮忙, which only offers assistance.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.11 ■ 非得 ... 不可 (absolutely must)

7.11.1 A constraint narrows the possible person

- A task requires the only team member who holds the key.
- **这事非得他来不可。** – The speaker insists that he, rather than an alternative person, must come.

A constraint narrows the possible person

SITUATION

A task requires the only team member who holds the key.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker insists that he, rather than an alternative person, must come.

CHECK THE LIMIT

得 is read děi here.

7.11.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **非得 ... 不可 (absolutely must):** 这事非得他出面不可。; 今天非得把作业写完不可。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.11.3 Follow the speaker

这事非得他来不可。

zhè shì fēi děi tā lái bù kě

Word guide: 这 – this; 事 – matter; 非得 – absolutely must; 他 – he; 来 – come; 不可 – no other way.

- In the opening situation: **这事非得他来不可。**
- The speaker insists that he, rather than an alternative person, must come.

7.11.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 得 is read děi here.
- 非得 often appears without 不可 in ordinary speech, as in 非得今天去吗; do not treat the long form as the only possible sentence.

7.11.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **非了得他来不可** needs repair here. Write **非得他来不可** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.11.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker insists that he, rather than an alternative person, must come. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 得 is read děi here. 非得 often appears without 不可 in ordinary speech, as in 非得今天去吗; do not treat the long form as the only possible sentence.

7.11.7 Try it with help closed

A task requires the only team member who holds the key. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 这事非得他来不可。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 得 is read děi here.
- 非得 often appears without 不可 in ordinary speech, as in 非得今天去吗; do not treat the long form as the only possible sentence.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

7.12 ■ 一来 ... , 二来 ... (firstly ..., secondly ...)

7.12.1 Two reasons differ from a time sequence

- You choose cycling because it saves money and gives exercise.
- **骑车上班, 一来省钱, 二来锻炼身体。** – The two phrases give two reasons for the same choice.

Two reasons differ from a time sequence

SITUATION

You choose cycling because it saves money and gives exercise.

SPEAKER MEANING

The two phrases give two reasons for the same choice.

CHECK THE LIMIT

They do not mean that saving money happens first and exercise second.

7.12.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 一来 ... , 二来 ... (firstly ..., secondly ...): 我不去了, 一来太远, 二来没时间。; 骑车上班, 一来省钱, 二来锻炼身体。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

7.12.3 Follow the speaker

一来便宜, 二来方便。

yì lái pián yi èr lái fāng biàn

Word guide: 一来 – firstly; 便宜 – cheap; 二来 – secondly; 方便 – convenient.

- In the opening situation: 骑车上班, 一来省钱, 二来锻炼身体。
- The two phrases give two reasons for the same choice.

7.12.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- They do not mean that saving money happens first and exercise second.
- For successive actions use 先 ... 再 Reasons may have different importance without a strict ranking.

7.12.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 二来省钱, 一来锻炼身体 needs repair here. Write 一来省钱, 二来锻炼身体 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

7.12.6 Keep the distinction

- The two phrases give two reasons for the same choice. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- They do not mean that saving money happens first and exercise second. For successive actions use 先 ... 再 Reasons may have different importance without a strict ranking.

7.12.7 Try it with help closed

You choose cycling because it saves money and gives exercise. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 骑车上班，一来省钱，二来锻炼身体。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- They do not mean that saving money happens first and exercise second.
- For successive actions use 先 ... 再 Reasons may have different importance without a strict ranking.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

8 Verbs

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

8.1 ■ 谅 (I bet / I'll wager ...)

8.1.1 A confident prediction can still be wrong

- A speaker expects someone not to reveal a secret.
- 谅他也不会说出去。 – The speaker confidently predicts that he will not tell others.

A confident prediction can still be wrong

SITUATION

A speaker expects someone not to reveal a secret.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker confidently predicts that he will not tell others.

CHECK THE LIMIT

谅 here means to reckon or presume.

8.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 谅 (I bet / I'll wager ...): 谅他也不敢说谎。; 谅你也不会拒绝。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

8.1.3 Follow the speaker

谅他也不敢。

liàng tā yě bù gǎn

Word guide: 谅 – I bet; 他 – he; 也 – either; 不 – not; 敢 – dare.

- In the opening situation: 谅他也不会说出去。
- The speaker confidently predicts that he will not tell others.

8.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 谅 here means to reckon or presume.
- The prediction is not a guarantee; 不会 also gives the negative meaning. 谅 does not itself mean not.

8.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 谅了他也不会说出去 needs repair here. Write 谅他也不会说出去 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

8.1.6 Keep the distinction

- The speaker confidently predicts that he will not tell others. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 谅 here means to reckon or presume. The prediction is not a guarantee; 不会 also gives the negative meaning. 谅 does not itself mean not.

8.1.7 Try it with help closed

A speaker expects someone not to reveal a secret. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 谅他也不会说出去。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 谅 here means to reckon or presume.
- The prediction is not a guarantee; 不会 also gives the negative meaning. 谅 does not itself mean not.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

9 Verb phrases

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

9.1 ■ 不屑 (于) (disdain to)

9.1.1 Refusal can show an attitude of superiority

- Someone refuses to debate a rumour because they consider it beneath them.
- 她不屑于争论这种谣言。 – The refusal is framed as disdain, rather than inability.

Refusal can show an attitude of superiority

SITUATION

Someone refuses to debate a rumour because they consider it beneath them.

SPEAKER MEANING

The refusal is framed as disdain, rather than inability.

CHECK THE LIMIT

不能争论 means cannot debate; 不愿争论 means unwilling.

9.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 不屑 (于) (disdain to): 他不屑于做这种小事。; 她对这种谣言不屑一顾。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

9.1.3 Follow the speaker

他不屑于撒谎。

tā bú xiè yú sā huǎng

Word guide: 他 – he; 不屑 – disdain to; 于 – (to); 撒谎 – lie.

- In the opening situation: 她不屑于争论这种谣言。
- The refusal is framed as disdain, rather than inability.

9.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 不能争论 means cannot debate; 不愿争论 means unwilling.
- 不屑于 adds an attitude toward the activity, and does not prove the rumour false.

9.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 她屑不于争论 needs repair here. Write 她不屑于争论 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

9.1.6 Keep the distinction

- The refusal is framed as disdain, rather than inability. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 不能争论 means cannot debate; 不愿争论 means unwilling. 不屑于 adds an attitude toward the activity, and does not prove the rumour false.

9.1.7 Try it with help closed

Someone refuses to debate a rumour because they consider it beneath them. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 她不屑于争论这种谣言。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 不能争论 means cannot debate; 不愿争论 means unwilling.
- 不屑于 adds an attitude toward the activity, and does not prove the rumour false.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

9.2 ■ 以便 (so as to / in order to)

9.2.1 Make a later useful action possible

- An organiser asks for a contact number to send later updates.
- 请留下电话, 以便我们联系您。 – Leaving the number enables the intended contact.

Make a later useful action possible

SITUATION

An organiser asks for a contact number to send later updates.

SPEAKER MEANING

Leaving the number enables the intended contact.

CHECK THE LIMIT

以便 states a purpose, not a completed result.

9.2.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 以便 (so as to / in order to): 请留下电话, 以便我们联系您。; 早点出发, 以便赶上头班车。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

9.2.3 Follow the speaker

请留下电话，以便联系。

qǐng liú xià diàn huà yǐ biàn lián xì

Word guide: 请 – please; 留下 – leave; 电话 – number; 以便 – so as to; 联系 – contact.

- In the opening situation: **请留下电话，以便我们联系您。**
- Leaving the number enables the intended contact.

9.2.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 以便 states a purpose, not a completed result.
- Contrast 以免联系不上您, which names an unwanted failure the same action aims to prevent.

9.2.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **请留下电话，我们联系您以便** needs repair here. Write **请留下电话，以便我们联系您** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

9.2.6 Keep the distinction

- Leaving the number enables the intended contact. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 以便 states a purpose, not a completed result. Contrast 以免联系不上您, which names an unwanted failure the same action aims to prevent.

9.2.7 Try it with help closed

An organiser asks for a contact number to send later updates. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 请留下电话，以便我们联系您。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 以便 states a purpose, not a completed result.
- Contrast 以免联系不上您, which names an unwanted failure the same action aims to prevent.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

10 "If" Statements

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

10.1 ■ 假使 ... , 就 ... (if / supposing)

10.1.1 Prepare for a possibility without asserting it

- An outdoor event has a backup plan if rain arrives tomorrow.
- 假使明天下雨，我们就改在室内活动。 – Rain is a hypothetical condition; moving indoors is the planned response.

Prepare for a possibility without asserting it

SITUATION

An outdoor event has a backup plan if rain arrives tomorrow.

SPEAKER MEANING

Rain is a hypothetical condition; moving indoors is the planned response.

CHECK THE LIMIT

就 is a common partner, not a compulsory word in every conditional.

10.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 假使 ... , 就 ... (if / supposing): 假使明天下雨，活动就取消。; 假使他不同意，我们就再想办法。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

10.1.3 Follow the speaker

假使有问题，就来找我。

jiǎ shǐ yǒu wèn tí jiù lái zhǎo wǒ

Word guide: 假使 – supposing; 有 – have; 问题 – problem; 就 – then; 来 – come; 找 – find; 我 – me.

- In the opening situation: 假使明天下雨，我们就改在室内活动。
- Rain is a hypothetical condition; moving indoors is the planned response.

10.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 就 is a common partner, not a compulsory word in every conditional.
- 假使有困难，请告诉我 is natural without 就. The condition may never happen.

10.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 假了使明天下雨 needs repair here. Write 假使明天下雨 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

10.1.6 Keep the distinction

- Rain is a hypothetical condition; moving indoors is the planned response. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 就 is a common partner, not a compulsory word in every conditional. 假使有困难, 请告诉我 is natural without 就. The condition may never happen.

10.1.7 Try it with help closed

An outdoor event has a backup plan if rain arrives tomorrow. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 假使明天下雨, 我们就改在室内活动。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 就 is a common partner, not a compulsory word in every conditional.
- 假使有困难, 请告诉我 is natural without 就. The condition may never happen.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

11 Cause/Effect Statements

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

11.1 ■ 因为 ... 而 ... (because ..., thereby ...)

11.1.1 A cause explains one outcome

- A nervous speaker accidentally says the wrong word.
- 他因为紧张而说错了话。 – 紧张 names the reason; 说错了话 names the resulting action.

A cause explains one outcome

SITUATION

A nervous speaker accidentally says the wrong word.

SPEAKER MEANING

紧张 names the reason;
说错了话 names the resulting action.

CHECK THE LIMIT

Keep the cause between 因为 and 而.

11.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 因为 ... 而 ... (because ..., thereby ...): 比赛因为下雨而取消。; 他因为紧张而说错了话。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

11.1.3 Follow the speaker

比赛因为下雨而取消了。

bǐ sài yīn wèi xià yǔ ér qǔ xiāo le

Word guide: 比赛 – the match; 因为 – because; 下雨 – rain; 而 – thereby; 取消 – cancel.

- In the opening situation: 他因为紧张而说错了话。
- 紧张 names the reason; 说错了话 names the resulting action.

11.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- Keep the cause between 因为 and 而.
- This explains the claimed cause, rather than proving it. The subject can precede the whole structure, avoiding a needless second subject.

11.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 他因为而紧张说错了话 needs repair here. Write 他因为紧张而说错了话 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

11.1.6 Keep the distinction

- 紧张 names the reason; 说错了话 names the resulting action. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- Keep the cause between 因为 and 而. This explains the claimed cause, rather than proving it. The subject can precede the whole structure, avoiding a needless second subject.

11.1.7 Try it with help closed

A nervous speaker accidentally says the wrong word. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他因为紧张而说错了话。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Keep the cause between 因为 and 而.
- This explains the claimed cause, rather than proving it. The subject can precede the whole structure, avoiding a needless second subject.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12 Sentence Patterns

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

12.1 ■ 借 ... 之名 (under the guise of)

12.1.1 The announced reason may hide another goal

- Someone claims to attend a meeting but spends the trip sightseeing.
- 他借开会之名去旅游。 – The meeting is presented as a cover for travel.

The announced reason may hide another goal

SITUATION

Someone claims to attend a meeting but spends the trip sightseeing.

SPEAKER MEANING

The meeting is presented as a cover for travel.

CHECK THE LIMIT

借...之名 often suggests a pretext; 以...的名义 can neutrally state whose name an action uses.

12.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 借 ... 之名 (under the guise of): 他借开会之名去旅游。; 有人借慈善之名骗钱。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

12.1.3 Follow the speaker

他借学习之名出去玩。

tā jiè xué xí zhī míng chū qù wán

Word guide: 他 – he; 借 – under the guise of; 学习 – study; 之名 – in the name of; 出去 – go out; 玩 – play.

- In the opening situation: 他借开会之名去旅游。
- The meeting is presented as a cover for travel.

12.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 借 ... 之名 often suggests a pretext; 以 ... 的名义 can neutrally state whose name an action uses.
- A writer must provide context rather than assume that any named purpose is dishonest.

12.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 他借之名开会去旅游 needs repair here. Write 他借开会之名去旅游 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

12.1.6 Keep the distinction

- The meeting is presented as a cover for travel. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 借 ... 之名 often suggests a pretext; 以 ... 的名义 can neutrally state whose name an action uses. A writer must provide context rather than assume that any named purpose is dishonest.

12.1.7 Try it with help closed

Someone claims to attend a meeting but spends the trip sightseeing. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他借开会之名去旅游。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 借 ... 之名 often suggests a pretext; 以 ... 的名义 can neutrally state whose name an action uses.
- A writer must provide context rather than assume that any named purpose is dishonest.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12.2 ■ 通过 ... 使 ... (by ..., bring about ...)

12.2.1 Give the method a real subject

- A team improves its pronunciation through repeated practice.
- 我们通过反复练习，使发音更加标准。 – 我们 carries out the practice, which improves pronunciation.

Give the method a real subject

SITUATION

A team improves its pronunciation through repeated practice.

SPEAKER MEANING

我们 carries out the practice, which improves pronunciation.

CHECK THE LIMIT

Avoid a subjectless sentence when the agent matters.

12.2.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **通过 ... 使 ... (by ..., bring about ...):** 这次培训使大家掌握了新技能。; 我们讨论, 使问题变得更清楚了。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

12.2.3 Follow the speaker

我们通过锻炼, 使身体更健康。

wǒ men tōng guò duàn liàn shǐ shēn tǐ gèng jiàn kāng

Word guide: 我们 – we; 通过 – through; 锻炼 – exercise; 使 – cause; 身体 – body; 更 – more; 健康 – healthy.

- In the opening situation: **我们通过反复练习, 使发音更加标准。**
- 我们 carries out the practice, which improves pronunciation.

12.2.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- Avoid a subjectless sentence when the agent matters.
- 通过反复练习, 发音更加标准了 is also natural; do not stack 通过 and 使 so that no clear subject remains in formal writing.

12.2.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **通过使反复练习我们发音更标准** needs repair here. Write **我们通过反复练习, 使发音更标准** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

12.2.6 Keep the distinction

- 我们 carries out the practice, which improves pronunciation. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- Avoid a subjectless sentence when the agent matters. 通过反复练习, 发音更加标准了 is also natural; do not stack 通过 and 使 so that no clear subject remains in formal writing.

12.2.7 Try it with help closed

A team improves its pronunciation through repeated practice. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 我们通过反复练习，使发音更加标准。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- Avoid a subjectless sentence when the agent matters.
- 通过反复练习，发音更加标准了 is also natural; do not stack 通过 and 使 so that no clear subject remains in formal writing.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12.3 ■ 以 ... 的名义 (in the name of)

12.3.1 Choose whose name appears on a letter

- A class sends a gift as a group rather than from one student.
- 我们以班级的名义送了一份礼物。 – The action is presented as being in the class's name.

Choose whose name appears on a letter

SITUATION

A class sends a gift as a group rather than from one student.

SPEAKER MEANING

The action is presented as being in the class's name.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The phrase states the named capacity; it does not itself prove authorisation.

12.3.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 以 ... 的名义 (in the name of): 他以公司的名义发了邮件。; 我们以班级的名义送了一份礼物。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

12.3.3 Follow the speaker

他以公司的名义签了合同。

tā yǐ gōng sī de míng yì qiān le hé tóng

Word guide: 他 – he; 以 – in; 公司 – company; 名义 – name; 签 – sign; 合同 – contract.

- In the opening situation: 我们以班级的名义送了一份礼物。
- The action is presented as being in the class's name.

12.3.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The phrase states the named capacity; it does not itself prove authorisation.
- 以个人名义 is a common form without 的, whereas 以公司的名义 includes it.

12.3.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 我们以名义班级的送礼物 needs repair here. Write 我们以班级的名义送礼物 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

12.3.6 Keep the distinction

- The action is presented as being in the class's name. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The phrase states the named capacity; it does not itself prove authorisation. 以个人名义 is a common form without 的, whereas 以公司的名义 includes it.

12.3.7 Try it with help closed

A class sends a gift as a group rather than from one student. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 我们以班级的名义送了一份礼物。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The phrase states the named capacity; it does not itself prove authorisation.
- 以个人名义 is a common form without 的, whereas 以公司的名义 includes it.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12.4 ■ 势必 (be bound to / inevitably)

12.4.1 A strong forecast needs supporting reasons

- A report predicts that a closure will necessarily affect travel.
- 封闭这条道路, 势必影响出行。 – The writer presents the effect as unavoidable.

A strong forecast needs supporting reasons

SITUATION

A report predicts that a closure will necessarily affect travel.

SPEAKER MEANING

The writer presents the effect as unavoidable.

CHECK THE LIMIT

势必 is stronger than 可能.

12.4.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **势必** (be bound to / inevitably): 这样做势必引起误会。; 长期熬夜势必影响健康。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

12.4.3 Follow the speaker

不改变, 势必落后。

bù gǎi biàn shì bì luò hòu

Word guide: 不 – not; 改变 – change; 势必 – be bound to; 落后 – fall behind.

- In the opening situation: 封闭这条道路, 势必影响出行。
- The writer presents the effect as unavoidable.

12.4.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 势必 is stronger than 可能.
- It expresses confidence in a prediction, not independent proof. If evidence only suggests a possibility, choose 可能影响 instead.

12.4.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 势了必影响出行 needs repair here. Write 势必影响出行 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

12.4.6 Keep the distinction

- The writer presents the effect as unavoidable. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 势必 is stronger than 可能. It expresses confidence in a prediction, not independent proof. If evidence only suggests a possibility, choose 可能影响 instead.

12.4.7 Try it with help closed

A report predicts that a closure will necessarily affect travel. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 封闭这条道路，势必影响出行。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 势必 is stronger than 可能.
- It expresses confidence in a prediction, not independent proof. If evidence only suggests a possibility, choose 可能影响 instead.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12.5 ■ 倘若 (if / should – literary)

12.5.1 Write a formal contingency

- A formal invitation asks people to notify the organiser if difficulties arise.
- 倘若有困难，请告诉我们。 – The request applies if the hypothetical difficulty occurs.

Write a formal contingency

SITUATION

A formal invitation asks people to notify the organiser if difficulties arise.

SPEAKER MEANING

The request applies if the hypothetical difficulty occurs.

CHECK THE LIMIT

倘若 is formal, but calling it the most literary of all if words is unnecessary.

12.5.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 倘若 (if / should – literary): 倘若明天有雨，行程就改。；倘若你愿意，我们一起去。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

12.5.3 Follow the speaker

倘若有困难，请告诉我。

tǎng ruò yǒu kùn nán qǐng gào su wǒ

Word guide: 倘若 – should; 有 – have; 困难 – difficulty; 请 – please; 告诉 – tell; 我 – me.

- In the opening situation: 倘若有困难，请告诉我们。
- The request applies if the hypothetical difficulty occurs.

12.5.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 倘若 is formal, but calling it the most literary of all if words is unnecessary.
- Its result may be a request or use 也; 就 is not compulsory.

12.5.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 倘了若有困难 needs repair here. Write 倘若有困难 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

12.5.6 Keep the distinction

- The request applies if the hypothetical difficulty occurs. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 倘若 is formal, but calling it the most literary of all if words is unnecessary. Its result may be a request or use 也; 就 is not compulsory.

12.5.7 Try it with help closed

A formal invitation asks people to notify the organiser if difficulties arise. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 倘若有困难，请告诉我们。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 倘若 is formal, but calling it the most literary of all if words is unnecessary.
- Its result may be a request or use 也; 就 is not compulsory.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

12.6 ■ 所 + Verb + 的 (that which is V-ed)

12.6.1 Turn an action's object into a noun phrase

- A notice says all the material you need is available here.
- 你所需要的资料都在这里。 – 所需要的 modifies 资料: the material that you need.

Turn an action's object into a noun phrase

SITUATION

A notice says all the material you need is available here.

SPEAKER MEANING

所需要的 modifies 资料: the material that you need.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The subject remains 你, so the construction is not automatically passive.

12.6.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 所 + Verb + 的 (that which is V-ed): 他所说的都是实话。; 我们所看到的只是一部分。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

12.6.3 Follow the speaker

这是我所知道的一切。

zhè shì wǒ suǒ zhī dào de yí qiè

Word guide: 这 – this; 是 – is; 我 – I; 所 – (that which); 知道 – know; 一切 – all.

- In the opening situation: 你所需要的资料都在这里。
- 所需要的 modifies 资料: the material that you need.

12.6.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- The subject remains 你, so the construction is not automatically passive.
- 我所知道的 can stand alone as what I know; adding a head noun specifies the thing.

12.6.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 你需要所的资料 needs repair here. Write 你所需要的资料 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

12.6.6 Keep the distinction

- 所需要的 modifies 资料: the material that you need. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The subject remains 你, so the construction is not automatically passive. 我所知道的 can stand alone as what I know; adding a head noun specifies the thing.

12.6.7 Try it with help closed

A notice says all the material you need is available here. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 你所需要的资料都在这里。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The subject remains 你, so the construction is not automatically passive.
- 我所知道的 can stand alone as what I know; adding a head noun specifies the thing.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

13 Let alone

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

13.1 ■ 连 ... 都 ... , 何况 ... (even ..., let alone ...)

13.1.1 Follow the direction of a scale

- A box is too heavy even for an adult to move. A child is less able to move it.
- 连大人都搬不动, 何况孩子? – Failure for the stronger adult supports failure for the weaker child.

Follow the direction of a scale

SITUATION

A box is too heavy even for an adult to move. A child is less able to move it.

SPEAKER MEANING

Failure for the stronger adult supports failure for the weaker child.

CHECK THE LIMIT

何况 extends an argument along a relevant scale, not always toward a harder task.

13.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 连 ... 都 ... , 何况 ... (even ..., let alone ...): 连大人都搬不动, 何况孩子?; 连本地人都会迷路, 何况游客?
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

13.1.3 Follow the speaker

连专家都不懂, 何况我们。

lián zhuān jiā dōu bù dǒng hé kuàng wǒ men

Word guide: 连 – even; 专家 – experts; 都 – even; 不 – not; 懂 – understand; 何况 – let alone; 我们 – us.

- In the opening situation: 连大人都搬不动, 何况孩子?
- Failure for the stronger adult supports failure for the weaker child.

13.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 何况 extends an argument along a relevant scale, not always toward a harder task.
- In 这点事孩子都懂, 何况大人, understanding by children supports understanding by adults.

13.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 连大人都搬不动, 何况孩子 needs repair here. Write 连大人都搬不动, 何况孩子 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

13.1.6 Keep the distinction

- Failure for the stronger adult supports failure for the weaker child. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 何况 extends an argument along a relevant scale, not always toward a harder task. In 这点事孩子都懂, 何况大人, understanding by children supports understanding by adults.

13.1.7 Try it with help closed

A box is too heavy even for an adult to move. A child is less able to move it. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 连大人都搬不动, 何况孩子?

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 何况 extends an argument along a relevant scale, not always toward a harder task.
- In 这点事孩子都懂, 何况大人, understanding by children supports understanding by adults.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14 Comparing similar adverbs

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

14.1 ■ 按照 vs 根据 (in accordance with vs based on)

14.1.1 A rule can be followed and cited

- A notice cites the parking rule, while an instruction tells staff to follow a procedure.
- **请按照规定办理。** – 按照 highlights acting in accordance with the rule.

A rule can be followed and cited

SITUATION

A notice cites the parking rule, while an instruction tells staff to follow a procedure.

SPEAKER MEANING

按照 highlights acting in accordance with the rule.

CHECK THE LIMIT

按照规定办理 can also be natural.

14.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **按照 vs 根据 (in accordance with vs based on):** 他的话毫无 ____。 ; ____ 调查, 多数人支持这个计划。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.1.3 Follow the speaker

按照规定办理。

àn zhào guī dìng bàn lǐ

Word guide: 按照 – according to; 规定 – the rules; 办理 – handle.

- In the opening situation: **请按照规定办理。**
- 按照 highlights acting in accordance with the rule.

14.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 按照规定办理 can also be natural.
- The useful contrast is following a model versus reasoning from evidence; the two words overlap with rules. 根据 can also be a noun: 有根据.

14.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **请规定按照办理** needs repair here. Write **请按照规定办理** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.

- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.1.6 Keep the distinction

- 按照 highlights acting in accordance with the rule. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 根据规定办理 can also be natural. The useful contrast is following a model versus reasoning from evidence; the two words overlap with rules. 根据 can also be a noun: 有根据.

14.1.7 Try it with help closed

A notice cites the parking rule, while an instruction tells staff to follow a procedure. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 请按照规定办理。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 根据规定办理 can also be natural.
- The useful contrast is following a model versus reasoning from evidence; the two words overlap with rules. 根据 can also be a noun: 有根据.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14.2 ■ 不得不 vs 只好 (forced to vs only option)

14.2.1 Pressure and a last resort can overlap

- The last bus has left, leaving walking as the available way home.
- 末班车走了，我只好走回家。 – 只好 highlights accepting the remaining option.

Pressure and a last resort can overlap

SITUATION

The last bus has left, leaving walking as the available way home.

SPEAKER MEANING

只好 highlights accepting the remaining option.

CHECK THE LIMIT

我不得不走回家 also fits this situation, stressing necessity.

14.2.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **不得不 vs 只好 (forced to vs only option):** 由于台风, 航班 ____ 取消。; 医生说必须休息, 他 ____ 放下工作。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.2.3 Follow the speaker

我不得不同意。

wǒ bù dé bù tóng yì

Word guide: 我 – I; 不得不 – have to; 同意 – agree.

- In the opening situation: **末班车走了, 我只好走回家。**
- 只好 highlights accepting the remaining option.

14.2.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 我不得不走回家 also fits this situation, stressing necessity.
- Do not label one option impossible just because the other emphasises resignation more clearly.

14.2.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **我好只走回家** needs repair here. Write **我只好走回家** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.2.6 Keep the distinction

- 只好 highlights accepting the remaining option. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 我不得不走回家 also fits this situation, stressing necessity. Do not label one option impossible just because the other emphasises resignation more clearly.

14.2.7 Try it with help closed

The last bus has left, leaving walking as the available way home. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 末班车走了，我只好走回家。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 我不得不走回家 also fits this situation, stressing necessity.
- Do not label one option impossible just because the other emphasises resignation more clearly.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14.3 ■ 不断 vs 不停 (continually vs non-stop)

14.3.1 Repeated progress is not a stopwatch rule

- A report describes technology continuing to improve over time.
- 技术在不断进步。 – 不断 presents continuing development.

Repeated progress is not a stopwatch rule

SITUATION

A report describes technology continuing to improve over time.

SPEAKER MEANING

不断 presents continuing development.

CHECK THE LIMIT

不断 can describe repeated or continuous activity; it does not guarantee gaps.

14.3.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 不断 vs 不停 (continually vs non-stop): 科技在 ____ 发展。; 我们要 ____ 学习新知识。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.3.3 Follow the speaker

技术不断进步。

jì shù bú duàn jìn bù

Word guide: 技术 – technology; 不断 – continually; 进步 – advance.

- In the opening situation: 技术在不断进步。
- 不断 presents continuing development.

14.3.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 不断 can describe repeated or continuous activity; it does not guarantee gaps.
- 不停 highlights not stopping, and 响个不停 is an established result pattern. Choose by phrasing and focus, not an invented gap rule.

14.3.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 技术在断不进步 needs repair here. Write 技术在不断进步 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.3.6 Keep the distinction

- 不断 presents continuing development. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 不断 can describe repeated or continuous activity; it does not guarantee gaps. 不停 highlights not stopping, and 响个不停 is an established result pattern. Choose by phrasing and focus, not an invented gap rule.

14.3.7 Try it with help closed

A report describes technology continuing to improve over time. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 技术在不断进步。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 不断 can describe repeated or continuous activity; it does not guarantee gaps.
- 不停 highlights not stopping, and 响个不停 is an established result pattern. Choose by phrasing and focus, not an invented gap rule.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14.4 ■ 反而 vs 却 (instead vs however)

14.4.1 Identify the expectation that was reversed

- Someone tries to help but makes the situation more confusing.
- 他想帮忙, 反而添了乱。 – The actual result runs opposite to the expected helpful result.

Identify the expectation that was reversed

SITUATION

Someone tries to help but makes the situation more confusing.

SPEAKER MEANING

The actual result runs opposite to the expected helpful result.

CHECK THE LIMIT

却 can also mark an unexpected contrast.

14.4.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 反而 vs 却 (instead vs however): 风不但没停, ____ 越来越大。; 吃了药, 病不但没好, ____ 更重了。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.4.3 Follow the speaker

病反而更重了。

bìng fǎn ér gèng zhòng le

Word guide: 病 – illness; 反而 – instead; 更 – more; 重 – serious.

- In the opening situation: 他想帮忙, 反而添了乱。
- The actual result runs opposite to the expected helpful result.

14.4.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 却 can also mark an unexpected contrast.
- 反而 makes reversal explicit; 却 is not limited to ordinary or mild contrasts. Both can stand before adjective predicates as well as verbs.

14.4.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 他想帮忙, 添了乱反而 needs repair here. Write 他想帮忙, 反而添了乱 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.4.6 Keep the distinction

- The actual result runs opposite to the expected helpful result. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 却 can also mark an unexpected contrast. 反而 makes reversal explicit; 却 is not limited to ordinary or mild contrasts. Both can stand before adjective predicates as well as verbs.

14.4.7 Try it with help closed

Someone tries to help but makes the situation more confusing. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他想帮忙，反而添了乱。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 却 can also mark an unexpected contrast.
- 反而 makes reversal explicit; 却 is not limited to ordinary or mild contrasts. Both can stand before adjective predicates as well as verbs.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14.5 ■ 根本 vs 到底 (at all vs on earth)

14.5.1 A denial differs from a demand for an answer

- A speaker firmly denies knowing someone, then asks what the listener wants.
- 我根本不认识他。你到底想说什么？ – 根本 strengthens the denial; 到底 presses for the actual answer.

A denial differs from a demand for an answer

SITUATION

A speaker firmly denies knowing someone, then asks what the listener wants.

SPEAKER MEANING

根本 strengthens the denial;
到底 presses for the actual answer.

CHECK THE LIMIT

到底 also occurs in affirmative statements such as 他到底是老师.

14.5.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 根本 vs 到底 (at all vs on earth): 我 ____ 不认识他。; 这件事他 ____ 没听说过。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.5.3 Follow the speaker

我根本不知道。

wǒ gēn běn bù zhī dào

Word guide: 我 – I; 根本 – at all; 不 – not; 知道 – know.

- In the opening situation: 我根本不认识他。你到底想说什么？

- 根本 strengthens the denial; 到底 presses for the actual answer.

14.5.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 到底 also occurs in affirmative statements such as 他到底是老师.
- 根本 can name a foundation as a noun, so its meaning is not limited to negative sentences.

14.5.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 我不认识他根本 needs repair here. Write 我根本不认识他 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.5.6 Keep the distinction

- 根本 strengthens the denial; 到底 presses for the actual answer. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 到底 also occurs in affirmative statements such as 他到底是老师. 根本 can name a foundation as a noun, so its meaning is not limited to negative sentences.

14.5.7 Try it with help closed

A speaker firmly denies knowing someone, then asks what the listener wants. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 我根本不认识他。你到底想说什么？

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 到底 also occurs in affirmative statements such as 他到底是老师.
- 根本 can name a foundation as a noun, so its meaning is not limited to negative sentences.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14.6 ■ 根据 vs 据 (based on vs formal shorthand)

14.6.1 Compact reporting can still take an object

- A report introduces a conclusion based on a survey.
- 据调查, 多数人支持这个计划。 – 据 names the source in compact written style.

Compact reporting can still take an object

SITUATION

A report introduces a conclusion based on a survey.

SPEAKER MEANING

据 names the source in compact written style.

CHECK THE LIMIT

据 is not limited to set phrases: 据调查 and 据最新统计 take objects.

14.6.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 根据 vs 据 (based on vs formal shorthand): 大家的意见, 我们修改了计划。; 这种说法没有科学。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.6.3 Follow the speaker

根据调查, 大家都同意。

gēn jù diào chá dà jiā dōu tóng yì

Word guide: 根据 – based on; 调查 – the survey; 大家 – everyone; 都 – all; 同意 – agrees.

- In the opening situation: 据调查, 多数人支持这个计划。
- 据 names the source in compact written style.

14.6.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 据 is not limited to set phrases: 据调查 and 据最新统计 take objects.
- 根据 also forms the noun for a basis, as in 这种说法没有根据; 据 alone does not replace it there.

14.6.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 这种说法没有科学据 needs repair here. Write 这种说法没有科学根据 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.6.6 Keep the distinction

- 据 names the source in compact written style. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 据 is not limited to set phrases: 据调查 and 据最新统计 take objects. 根据 also forms the noun for a basis, as in 这种说法没有根据; 据 alone does not replace it there.

14.6.7 Try it with help closed

A report introduces a conclusion based on a survey. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 据调查, 多数人支持这个计划。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 据 is not limited to set phrases: 据调查 and 据最新统计 take objects.
- 根据 also forms the noun for a basis, as in 这种说法没有根据; 据 alone does not replace it there.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14.7 ■ 恢复 vs 还原 (recover vs restore to original)

14.7.1 A service returns; a scene is reconstructed

- An internet connection works again after an outage.
- 网络恢复正常了。 – 恢复 highlights the return of a former state or function.

A service returns; a scene is reconstructed

SITUATION

An internet connection works again after an outage.

SPEAKER MEANING

恢复 highlights the return of a former state or function.

CHECK THE LIMIT

恢复 is not restricted to a good state: 恢复原价 returns to the earlier price.

14.7.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 恢复 vs 还原 (recover vs restore to original): 他身体已经 ____ 了。; 网络 ____ 正常了。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.7.3 Follow the speaker

他恢复了健康。

tā huī fù le jiàn kāng

Word guide: 他 – he; 恢复 – recover; 健康 – health.

- In the opening situation: 网络恢复正常了。
- 恢复 highlights the return of a former state or function.

14.7.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 恢复 is not restricted to a good state: 恢复原价 returns to the earlier price.
- 还原 emphasises original form or reconstruction, as in 还原现场; context matters where restoration overlaps.

14.7.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 网络复恢正常了 needs repair here. Write 网络恢复正常了 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.7.6 Keep the distinction

- 恢复 highlights the return of a former state or function. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 恢复 is not restricted to a good state: 恢复原价 returns to the earlier price. 还原 emphasises original form or reconstruction, as in 还原现场; context matters where restoration overlaps.

14.7.7 Try it with help closed

An internet connection works again after an outage. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 网络恢复正常了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 恢复 is not restricted to a good state: 恢复原价 returns to the earlier price.
- 还原 emphasises original form or reconstruction, as in 还原现场; context matters where restoration overlaps.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14.8 ■ 居然 vs 反而 (surprisingly vs instead)

14.8.1 Surprise and reversal can describe one event

- Someone tries to help but unexpectedly makes a mess.
- 他想帮忙，居然添了乱。 – 居然 highlights the speaker's surprise at the result.

Surprise and reversal can describe one event

SITUATION

Someone tries to help but unexpectedly makes a mess.

SPEAKER MEANING

居然 highlights the speaker's surprise at the result.

CHECK THE LIMIT

反而添了乱 can describe the same event with emphasis on reversal.

14.8.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 居然 vs 反而 (surprisingly vs instead): 这么简单的题, 他 ____ 做错了。; 他 ____ 忘了自己的生日。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.8.3 Follow the speaker

他居然成功了。

tā jū rán chéng gōng le

Word guide: 他 – he; 居然 – surprisingly; 成功 – succeed.

- In the opening situation: 他想帮忙, 居然添了乱。
- 居然 highlights the speaker's surprise at the result.

14.8.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 反而添了乱 can describe the same event with emphasis on reversal.
- The words differ in focus; they are not two mutually exclusive categories of event.

14.8.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 他想帮忙, 添了乱居然 needs repair here. Write 他想帮忙, 居然添了乱 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.8.6 Keep the distinction

- 居然 highlights the speaker's surprise at the result. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 反而添了乱 can describe the same event with emphasis on reversal. The words differ in focus; they are not two mutually exclusive categories of event.

14.8.7 Try it with help closed

Someone tries to help but unexpectedly makes a mess. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他想帮忙，居然添了乱。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 反而添了乱 can describe the same event with emphasis on reversal.
- The words differ in focus; they are not two mutually exclusive categories of event.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14.9 ■ 一度 vs 一时 (at one time vs for the moment)

14.9.1 A brief mistake can belong to the past

- A person once made a hasty decision while briefly excited.
- 他一时高兴，答应得太快了。 – 一时 describes a passing state of excitement at that earlier moment.

A brief mistake can belong to the past

SITUATION

A person once made a hasty decision while briefly excited.

SPEAKER MEANING

一时 describes a passing state of excitement at that earlier moment.

CHECK THE LIMIT

一时 is not restricted to now.

14.9.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 一度 vs 一时 (at one time vs for the moment): 他曾 ____ 想放弃，后来坚持了下来。；这首歌前几年 ____ 很流行，现在没人听了。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.9.3 Follow the speaker

这首歌一度很流行。

zhè shǒu gē yí dù hěn liú xíng

Word guide: 这 – this; 首 – (measure word); 歌 – song; 一度 – at one time; 很 – very; 流行 – popular.

- In the opening situation: 他一时高兴，答应得太快了。

- 一时 describes a passing state of excitement at that earlier moment.

14.9.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 一时 is not restricted to now.
- 一度 highlights a period or occasion, as in 曾一度想放弃, without specifying how long the phase lasted.

14.9.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 他时一高兴 needs repair here. Write 他一时高兴 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.9.6 Keep the distinction

- 一时 describes a passing state of excitement at that earlier moment. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 一时 is not restricted to now. 一度 highlights a period or occasion, as in 曾一度想放弃, without specifying how long the phase lasted.

14.9.7 Try it with help closed

A person once made a hasty decision while briefly excited. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他一时高兴，答应得太快了。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 一时 is not restricted to now.
- 一度 highlights a period or occasion, as in 曾一度想放弃, without specifying how long the phase lasted.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

14.10 ■ 一直 vs 一向 (continuously vs habitually)

14.10.1 A continuous action differs from a usual habit

- You have been waiting throughout the morning for a reply.
- 我一直在等你的消息。 – 一直 describes the continuing waiting during a particular span.

A continuous action differs from a usual habit

SITUATION

You have been waiting throughout the morning for a reply.

SPEAKER MEANING

一直 describes the continuing waiting during a particular span.

CHECK THE LIMIT

A lasting preference can take either 一直 or 一向.

14.10.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 一直 vs 一向 (continuously vs habitually): 雨 ____ 下到今天早上。; 我 ____ 在等你的消息。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

14.10.3 Follow the speaker

我一直在等你。

wǒ yì zhí zài děng nǐ

Word guide: 我 – I; 一直 – continuously; 在 – (doing); 等 – wait; 你 – you.

- In the opening situation: 我一直在等你的消息。
- 一直 describes the continuing waiting during a particular span.

14.10.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- A lasting preference can take either 一直 or 一向。
- 一向 also describes service or other recurring conditions; it is not limited to personal traits. 一直往前走 uses the spatial meaning straight ahead.

14.10.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 我直一在等你的消息 needs repair here. Write 我一直在等你的消息 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

14.10.6 Keep the distinction

- 一直 describes the continuing waiting during a particular span. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- A lasting preference can take either 一直 or 一向。一向 also describes service or other recurring conditions; it is not limited to personal traits. 一直往前走 uses the spatial meaning straight ahead.

14.10.7 Try it with help closed

You have been waiting throughout the morning for a reply. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 我一直在等你的消息。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- A lasting preference can take either 一直 or 一向.
- 一向 also describes service or other recurring conditions; it is not limited to personal traits. 一直往前走 uses the spatial meaning straight ahead.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

15 Comparing similar nouns

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

15.1 ■ 彼此 vs 对方 (each other vs the other party)

15.1.1 The other side's reply is a one-sided event

- You call someone, and the person at the other end speaks first.
- 电话接通后，对方先开了口。 – 对方 identifies the counterpart, not both sides together.

The other side's reply is a one-sided event

SITUATION

You call someone, and the person at the other end speaks first.

SPEAKER MEANING

对方 identifies the counterpart, not both sides together.

CHECK THE LIMIT

彼此信任 describes mutual trust; 对方信任我 describes the other person's trust in me without asserting that I trust them.

15.1.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- 彼此 vs 对方 (each other vs the other party): 老朋友之间应该 ____ 信任。; 我们 ____ 了解，不用多说。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

15.1.3 Follow the speaker

我们彼此信任。

wǒ men bǐ cǐ xìn rèn

Word guide: 我们 – we; 彼此 – each other; 信任 – trust.

- In the opening situation: 电话接通后，对方先开了口。
- 对方 identifies the counterpart, not both sides together.

15.1.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 彼此信任 describes mutual trust; 对方信任我 describes the other person's trust in me without asserting that I trust them.
- Track who acts on whom.

15.1.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 我们此彼信任 needs repair here. Write 我们彼此信任 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

15.1.6 Keep the distinction

- 对方 identifies the counterpart, not both sides together. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 彼此信任 describes mutual trust; 对方信任我 describes the other person's trust in me without asserting that I trust them. Track who acts on whom.

15.1.7 Try it with help closed

You call someone, and the person at the other end speaks first. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 电话接通后, 对方先开了口。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 彼此信任 describes mutual trust; 对方信任我 describes the other person's trust in me without asserting that I trust them.
- Track who acts on whom.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.

15.2 ■ 人家 vs 别人 (others – colloquial vs neutral)

15.2.1 Identify the referent before translating

- A friend asks you to forgive a person who has already apologised.
- 人家都道歉了, 你就原谅他吧。 – 人家 refers to the person under discussion, with sympathy or an appeal.

Identify the referent before translating

SITUATION

A friend asks you to forgive a person who has already apologised.

SPEAKER MEANING

人家 refers to the person under discussion, with sympathy or an appeal.

CHECK THE LIMIT

别人 neutrally means someone else or others.

15.2.2 Locate the pattern in real examples

- **人家 vs 别人 (others – colloquial vs neutral):** ____ 的东西不能随便拿。; 不要在背后说 ____ 的坏话。
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

15.2.3 Follow the speaker

这是别人的事。

zhè shì bié rén de shì

Word guide: 这 – this; 是 – is; 别人 – other people; 事 – business.

- In the opening situation: **人家都道歉了, 你就原谅他吧。**
- 人家 refers to the person under discussion, with sympathy or an appeal.

15.2.4 Check the limit of the explanation

- 别人 neutrally means someone else or others.
- 人家 can refer to another person or, in certain familiar styles, the speaker; tone and context decide. It is not automatically warmer or more polite.

15.2.5 Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form **人家都了道歉** needs repair here. Write **人家都道歉了** instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

15.2.6 Keep the distinction

- 人家 refers to the person under discussion, with sympathy or an appeal. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- 别人 neutrally means someone else or others. 人家 can refer to another person or, in certain familiar styles, the speaker; tone and context decide. It is not automatically warmer or more polite.

15.2.7 Try it with help closed

A friend asks you to forgive a person who has already apologised. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 人家都道歉了，你就原谅他吧。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 别人 neutrally means someone else or others.
- 人家 can refer to another person or, in certain familiar styles, the speaker; tone and context decide. It is not automatically warmer or more polite.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.