

Comparing similar conjunctions

HSK 5

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.

跟 vs 对 (with vs toward)

■ A partner marker does not guarantee a reply

- You tell someone the news, without saying whether they answered.
- 我跟他说了这个消息。 – 跟 introduces the person addressed in this context.

■ Build the form

- The pattern in this lesson is 跟 vs 对 (with vs toward). Locate it in the original interlinear examples below.
- Keep the words in their demonstrated positions; the pattern must fit the intended situation as well as the sentence form.

我跟他商量。

wǒ gēn tā shāng liang

Word guide: 我 – I; 跟 – with; 他 – him; 商量 – discuss.

■ Read examples in context

他对我笑了。

tā duì wǒ xiào le

Word guide: 他 – he; 对 – toward; 我 – me; 笑 – smile.

- In the opening example, 我跟他说了这个消息。: 跟 introduces the person addressed in this context.
- Explain who acts, what is described and which time or group is relevant before choosing an English paraphrase.

■ Know the boundary

- 跟他商量 implies joint discussion, but 跟他说 does not itself prove a two-way exchange.
- 对他说 also directs speech towards him.

■ Use the distinction

- 跟 introduces the person addressed in this context.
- 跟他商量 implies joint discussion, but 跟他说 does not itself prove a two-way exchange. 对他说 also directs speech towards him.

■ Try it with help closed

You tell someone the news, without saying whether they answered. 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: 我跟他说了这个消息。

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- 跟他商量 implies joint discussion, but 跟他说 does not itself prove a two-way exchange.
- 对他说 also directs speech towards him.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.