

Sentence patterns – rhetoric & emphasis

HSK 6

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.

岂不是 (wouldn't that be ...?)

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

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

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

兼 (doubling as / concurrently)

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

莫非 (could it be that ...?)

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

由此 (from this / hence)

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

莫过于 (nothing is more ... than)

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

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

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

跟 ... 似的 (just like / as if)

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

不愧是 (truly worthy of)

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

由 ... 做主 (for ... to decide)

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

非得 ... 不可 (absolutely must)

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

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

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.