

Particles

Ref Hsk4 Grammar

... ... — embedding a question inside a question

Here’s a structure that looks like two questions but is really one. can close a clause that **embeds a question word** — “do you know *who / what / where* ...?” The front carries a verb of knowing (, ,), and the whole thing stays a plain yes/no question.

Structure: Confirmation (...) + embedded Question +

{zh: |nǐ|you / |zhī dào|know / |tā|he / |shì|is / |shéi|who / |ma / ? }

Do you know who he is?

{zh: |tā|she / |shuō guo|did say / |tā|she / |zhù|lives / |zài / |nǎr|where / |ma / ? }

Did she say where she lives?

Remember: the **makes it yes/no; the / inside is just part of the embedded clause**. “Do you know [who he is]?” — you’re asking *whether* they know, not “who?”. Answer / .

Watch out

- The lead verb is one of knowing/saying: , , , , .

... , ; ... , — weighing two options

Echo across two options and you lay out a **dilemma** — “if A ..., but if B” It has an indecisive, no-win ring, and the two options are usually both unappealing.

Structure: Option 1 + ; Option 2 +

{zh: |dōng tiān|in winter / |qù|go / |ba / , |tài|too / |lěng|cold / ; |xià tiān|in summer / |qù|go / |ba / , |tài|too / |rè|hot / 。 }

Go in winter and it’s too cold; go in summer and it’s too hot.

{zh: |bù|not / |shuō|tell him / |ba / , |tā|he / |huì|will / |zuò cuò|get it wrong / ; |shuō|tell him / |ba / , |tā|he / |bù|won’t / |gāo xìng|be happy / 。 }

If I don’t tell him he’ll get it wrong; if I do, he’ll be upset.

Remember: **doubled = a no-win fork** — “do A , downside; do B , downside.” Picture a shrug at each branch: whichever you pick, it stings.

Watch out

- Both options should carry a drawback — that’s what gives the pattern its trapped, can’t-win feel.

..... — the modal particle

A sentence-final can add a tone of **certainty or reassurance** — “(it) definitely (is / will be).” It often rides with or , sealing a promise or a confident prediction.

Structure: Statement (+ ...) +

{zh: |wǒ|I / |bù|won’t / |huì / |piàn|lie to / |nǐ|you / |de / 。 }

I would never lie to you.

{zh: |nǐ men|you / |huì|will / |chéng gōng|succeed / |de / 。 }

You will succeed.

Remember: this = a **spoken full stop of conviction** — “trust me, it’s so.” It’s *not* the possessive . It loves a / ahead of it: (“you *will* make it”).

Watch out

- Don’t read this as “of / ‘s” — here it carries tone, not ownership.