

”But” Statements

Ref Hsk4 Grammar

... — “although, even though”

... ... concedes a point, then overrides it — “although A, (but) B.” is a shade stronger and more formal than — closer to “despite, even though” — and the second clause often carries (“still”).

Structure: + A , (+) Subject + + B

{zh: |jǐn guǎn|although / |hěnn duō|many / |rén|people / |pī píng|criticise / |tā|him / , |tā|he / |hái shì|still / |jiān chí|insists on / |zhè me / |zuò|doing it / 。 }

Although many people criticise him, he still insists on doing it.

{zh: |jǐn guǎn|although / |wǒ|I / |hěnn|very / |shēng qì|angry / , |dàn shì|but / |méi|didn’t / |fā pí qì|lose my temper / 。 }

Although I was furious, I didn’t lose my temper.

Remember: = formal “although / despite” (a notch above); the second half loves a / . Don’t confuse it with the *other* = “go right ahead, feel free” (, “ask away”).

Watch out

- Like, Chinese keeps *both* halves where English uses one.

— “actually, contrary to expectation”

The adverb flags a **surprising turn** — “actually, on the contrary, if anything.” It usually ushers in a *positive* or unexpected comment, and often pairs with or .

Structure: , Subject + (+ /)

{zh: |tā|he / |bú shì|isn’t / |hěnn|very / |nǚ lì|hard-working / , |chéng jì|his grades / |dào|but actually / |yě / |bú cuò|aren’t bad / 。 }

He’s not very hard-working, but his grades actually aren’t bad.

{zh: |Yīng yǔ|English / |bú shì|isn’t / |tā|his / |de / |mǔ yǔ|native language / , |tā|he / |shuō|speaks / |de / |dào|actually / |tǐng|quite / |dì dào|native-like / 。 }

English isn’t his native language, but he actually speaks it quite naturally.

Remember: = a “huh, actually...” twist — usually a *pleasant* surprise (the bright side). “Actually” almost always works in the English. Contrast its gloomier cousin (the disappointing twist).

Watch out

- Don’t confuse this (dào, “actually”) with (dǎo, “fall over”) — same character, different reading and meaning.

— “however, yet”

The adverb marks a **contrast inside the sentence** — “yet, however.” Crucially it sits **before the verb** (after the subject), never at the start, and it often appears alongside .

Structure: Sentence , (+) Subject +

{zh: |tā|he / |shì|is / |lǎo bǎn|the boss / , |què|yet / |méi yǒu|no one / |rén / |tīng|listens to / |tā|him / |de / 。 }

He’s the boss, yet nobody listens to him.

{zh: |tā|his / |de / |xué lì|qualifications / |hěnn|very / |gāo|high / , |néng lì|his ability / |què|however / |hěnn|very / |yì bān|average / 。 }

He’s highly qualified, but his ability is only average.

Remember: hides before the verb (..., never ...) and usually brings the **disappointing** twist — the dark twin of . It teams up with :

Watch out

- Unlike English “however,” can’t lead the sentence — it tucks in after the subject.