

Complex Sentence Patterns

Ref Hsk4 Grammar

+ + , ... — conceding a point

The frame **Adj Adj**, ... grudgingly **concedes** a quality before pulling back — “(it’s) ... alright, but ...” It’s a debater’s move: admit the point, then keep your reservation.

Structure: Adjective + + (same) Adjective , /

{zh: |gōng zuò|work / |máng|busy / |shì / |máng|busy / , |dàn shì|but / |wǒ|I’m / |hěn|very / |kāi xīn|happy / 。 }

Work may be busy, but I’m very happy.

{zh: |zhè jiàn|this / |yī fu|outfit / |hǎo kàn|nice-looking / |shì / |hǎo kàn|nice-looking / , |jiù shì|it’s just / |bù|doesn’t / |shì hé|suit / |wǒ|me / 。 }

This outfit looks nice alright — it just doesn’t suit me.

Remember: the **doubled adjective concedes** (“**busy, sure...**”), the / **clause delivers the catch**. , ... = “busy it may be, but...”. Note: here means “it’s just (that),” not “is.”

Watch out

- The adjective must repeat exactly around : , not .

... ... — “as soon as”

A B binds two events tight — “as soon as A, (then) B,” with B following A at once or automatically. It doubles as “**whenever** A, B” for a habitual link.

Structure: Subject + + Event 1 , + Event 2

{zh: |wǒ|I / |yī|as soon as / |xià kè|class ends / |jiù|then / |qù|go / |chī|eat / |wǔ fàn|lunch / 。 }

I’ll have lunch as soon as class is over.

{zh: |tā|he / |yī|the moment / |hē jiǔ|drinks / |jiù|then / |liǎn hóng|goes red / 。 }

He goes red the moment he drinks.

Remember: **A B** = “**the moment A, B**” — instant, automatic follow-on (...). The two clauses can even have different subjects: (“the moment the teacher came, everyone went quiet”).

Watch out

- Don’t read this as “one” — it’s the “the instant...” trigger, paired with .

... ... — “on one hand ... on the other ...”

... () ... lays out **two sides** of a situation — “on one hand ..., on the other” The two sides may agree or pull against each other, and the second often takes / / .

Structure: + A , () + B

{zh: |zì jǐ / |zuò fàn|cooking for yourself / |yì fāng miàn|on one hand / |jiàn kāng|healthy / , |yì fāng miàn|on the other / |hái|also / |néng|can / |shěng qián|save money / 。 }

Cooking for yourself is healthy on one hand, and saves money on the other.

{zh: |tā|he / |yì fāng miàn|on one hand / |xiǎng|wants to / |gǎi biàn|change / , |yì fāng miàn|on the other / |yòu|yet / |hàì pà|fears / |gǎi biàn|change / 。 }

On one hand he wants to change; on the other, he’s afraid of it.

Remember: **weighs two sides** — = “side / aspect.” The sides can agree (two perks) or clash (want vs fear); a clashing second side often carries (“yet”).

Watch out

- The second one can take () for extra clarity — both forms are fine.