

# A study of Concessive and Contrastive *AND*

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## A Study of Concessive and Contrastive *AND*

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### Abstract

According to English-Japanese dictionaries, *and* can be replaced by *but* in a concessive or contrastive context. However, the speaker's choice between *and* and *but* in each context should be based on a rationale. Specifically, in what context does the speaker use *and* instead of *but*? The difference between *and* and *but* lies in whether the expectation before the conjunction can be denied after the conjunction. Thus, this paper examines the nuances between *and* and *but* in a concessive or contrastive context. Indeed, even in a concessive situation, a sentence using *and* may be rendered a causal rather than a concessive interpretation. The use of *and* leads to a surprising effect on the sentence because two conflicting situations are simply juxtaposed with *and* without a hint of conflict. Based on such observations in each context, I argue that dictionaries need to reconsider their position that *and* can be replaced by *but* in a concessive or contrastive context.

キーワード ; 譲歩, 対比, 接続詞

**Keyword ;** concession, contrast, conjunction

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\* 英語語法文法学会第 27 回大会 (語法ワークショップ) で口頭発表 (2019 年 10 月 19 日, 北九州市立大学)

## 1. Introduction

Some English-Japanese dictionaries say that *and* could be replaced by *but* in a contrastive or concessive context. That kind of description is seen in *Taishukan's Unabridged Genius English Dictionary*, *Kenkusha's New Comprehensive English Dictionary*<sup>6</sup>, and *Shogakukan Randomhouse English-Japanese Dictionary*<sup>2,1)</sup>

On the other hand, *COBUILD*<sup>5</sup>, *LDOCE*<sup>8</sup>, *MED*<sup>2</sup>, *OALD*<sup>9</sup> neither refer to the meaning of contrast or concession nor say that *and* could be replaced by *but*.<sup>2)</sup>

However, grammar books refer to contrastive or concessive use of *and*. For example, Quirk et al. (1985:931) describes eight uses of *and*. Two of them are contrastive and concessive uses and they say such an *and* could be replaced by *but*.<sup>3)</sup>

Konishi (2006:227) also mentions that the concessive meaning could be expressed by *and* saying that it is not uncommon in Japanese-English translation that *and* is used as an English counterpart for Japanese *ga* or *noni*, which are particles of concessive meaning, like in (1) and (2).<sup>4)</sup> The underlines are mine.

(1) I hate studying *and* I want to learn English. (勉強はいやだが, 英語はうまくなりたいと思う) <sup>5)</sup>

(2) I had longed so much to begin school again *and* now there were no classes worthy of the name. (張り切って再び通学を始めたのに, 授業らしい授業はなかった) <sup>6)</sup>

When I asked two native speakers of English whether *but* can be used in (1) and (2), like (3) and (4), both of them said that *but* is also acceptable.

(3) I hate studying but I want to learn English.

(4) I had longed so much to begin school again but now there were no classes worthy of the name.

That suggests that it is up to the speaker which of them is chosen in the context. There should be a reason for their choice. Then, I think it is not appropriate that the dictionary easily says that *and* could be replaced by *but*. There should be a nuance between them we cannot ignore. This paper examines the nuance between *and* and *but* in a contrastive or concessive context.

## 2. The denial of the preceding expectation

Blakemore and Carston (2005:581) says that if the word order of what precedes *and* or *but* and what follows them is reversed, the meaning of the sentence does not change for *and*, like (5a) and (5b), but it does change for *but*, as in (6a) and (6b).<sup>7)</sup>

(5) a. Her husband is in hospital and she is seeing other men.

b. She's seeing other men and her husband is in hospital.

(6) a. Her husband is in hospital but she is seeing other men.

b. She's seeing other men but her husband is in hospital.

According to Blakemore and Carston (2005:581), the expectation from what precedes *but* is denied in the latter half of (6a) and (6b). What is denied in (6a) is that the woman is not having fun, while in (6b) is that the woman is having fun. On the other hand, nothing is denied in the latter half of (5a) and (5b). That is a crucial difference between *and* and *but*.

*Genius English-Japanese Dictionary*<sup>5</sup> says that *but* is not used unless there is a logical contrast between before and after *but*, giving (7) as an example. <sup>8)</sup>

(7) My car is black, and [*\*but*] yours is yellow.

When I asked the two native speakers of English whether *but* cannot be used in (7), they said it would be acceptable, for example, in a situation where all cars are supposed to be black and a yellow car betrays the expectation. In such a situation, it makes sense to suggest a denial of the preceding presupposition using *but*.

That dictionary also says that both *but* and *and* can be used in some cases but it depends on the nuance the speaker is trying to convey which is chosen. It gives an example like (8), saying that the speaker does not think young people are generally smart in (8b), where *but* is used.<sup>9)</sup>

(8) a. He is young and smart.

b. He is young but smart.

(8a) and (8b) are different in whether “young” is used in a positive connotation or negative connotation. In (8b), *but* signals to the speaker that an expectation of “young” is denied in the following “smart.” Being smart describes a positive property of a person. Therefore, the denied expectation of the preceding “young” should be its opposite, that is, a negative one, like “being inexperienced because of youth.” However, in (8a) there is no signal that the opposite meaning follows. Then the connotation of “young” in (8a) is positive as well as that of “smart,” for example, “being full of energy.”

### 3. The use of *and* in the concessive context

In this section, I will examine cases where *and* is used in a concessive context and consider the reason why *and* is used there.

#### 3.1 causal interpretation

Look at (9) and (10), in both of which the adjectives before *and* (“haggard”, “vicious”) have a negative meaning and the adjective after *and* (“attractive”) has a

positive meaning. Because of this negative-positive contrast, the use of *but* seems to be quite natural in the context, but *and* is actually used there.

(9) He looked haggard and attractive.<sup>10)</sup>

(10) He looked vicious and attractive.<sup>11)</sup>

The contexts in (9) and (10) can be interpreted in a concessive way because there is a negative-positive contrast between the adjectives. However, another interpretation, that is, a causal interpretation could also be possible here. In the causal interpretation, what comes before *and* could be interpreted to be the cause for what comes after *and*. It is like looking “haggard” or “vicious” can add up to the attractiveness of the subject person. When I asked a native speaker of English the meanings of (9) and (10), he paraphrased them in the way like (11) and (12).

(11) He looked handsomely haggard.

(12) He looked handsomely vicious.<sup>12)</sup>

In the causal interpretation, *and* cannot be replaced by *but*. Which interpretation is more preferable in (9) and (10)? Concessive or causal? I will cite the contexts of these sentences below to see it. (13) is for (9) and (14) is for (10). The underlines are mine.

(13) Michael appeared at this moment, also yawning. He had a cup of black coffee in his hand and was wearing a very smart dressing-gown. He looked haggard and attractive — and his smile had the usual charm.

(14) Paul Varesco had arrived. Sometimes he wore faultless evening dress, sometimes, as tonight, he chose to present himself in a kind of *apache* getup, tightly-buttoned coat, scarf round the neck. He looked vicious and attractive. Detaching himself from a stout,

middle-aged woman plastered with diamonds, he leaned over Alice Cunningham who was sitting at a table writing busily in a little notebook and asked her to dance. The stout woman scowled at Alice and looked at Varesco with adoring eyes.

In (13), the last part “and his smile had the usual charm” suggests that Michael probably just got up, yawning, but still has not lost his charm at all. In that interpretation, the concessive meaning seems to be more appropriate. The Japanese translation of (9) is (15), where a Japanese concessive particle *ga* is used. The underline is mine.

(15) 疲れたような顔つきだったがなかなか魅力的でもあった。<sup>13)</sup>

How about (10)? Since a middle-aged woman looks at Varesco with adoring eyes, his vicious-looking appearance seems to really have a charm. The causal interpretation seems to be more persuasive here than in (9). The Japanese translation of (10) is (16), where a particle expressing concession is not used, but a particle just expressing juxtaposition *de* is used. The underline is mine.

(16) やくざな感じで魅力的に見えた。<sup>14)</sup>

We should now note that if the word order of the adjectives of (10) is reversed like (17), the sentence sounds strange. However, it is not the case with *but* (cf. (18)).

(17) ? He looked attractive and vicious.

(18) He looked attractive but vicious.

The difference in acceptability of (17) and (18) suggests that “being vicious” can be a reason for “being

attractive,” but “being attractive” cannot be a reason for “being vicious” at all, so (17) sounds incomprehensible. In contrast, such a causal interpretation does not exist in (18), therefore there is no problem in interpretation in (18).

### 3.2 The unification by *and*

In “A and B”, A and B are interpreted as a set. That is not the case if A and B are two separate full-stop sentences. The communicative effect of wholeness of “A and B” comes from the use of *and*, not from the context because if (9) and (10) are changed into two full-stop sentences like (19) and (20), they sound strange. That suggests that *and* is indispensable in (9) and (10).

(19) ? He looked haggard. He looked attractive.

(20) ? He looked vicious. He looked attractive.

Ohtake (2016:71) cites (21) from *Collins COBUILD English Usage*<sup>3</sup>, which says that *and* cannot be used in a contrastive context.<sup>15)</sup>

(21) We were tired {but / \*and } happy.

However, Ohtake gives (22) and (23) as the counterexamples against it and says that *and* can be used in a contrastive context if the speaker recognizes the two situations make up a kind of set.<sup>16)</sup> The underlines are mine.

(22) But when I had finished my novel and it went to press, I didn't feel like writing anything else then, so I didn't write anything. I was tired and happy, having completed a book, so I stopped work.

(23) We played flashlight tag for an hour, crawling through the bushes, climbing the fences, sneaking behind cars. And at the end, we're tired and happy. The kids slept well and so did I.

About (22) and (23), I think people will be satisfied after they have done something with their full strength. That is to say, they are having a sense of accomplishment. So “tired” and “happy” are closely related and make up a set.

*Collins COBUILD English Usage*<sup>3</sup> gives (24) as a similar token.<sup>17)</sup> We cannot imagine “being fat” could be a cause for “being agile” at all. That is a difference from “tired and happy.” *And* is unacceptable in the combination of “fat” and “agile.”

(24) He was fat { but /\*and } agile.

### 3.3 The surprising effect of *and*

*CALD*<sup>2</sup> says that a sentence using *and* can have a surprising effect like (25).<sup>18)</sup>

(25) used to express surprise: You’re a vegetarian and you eat fish?

Surprise is based on unexpectedness. What follows *and* is unexpected judging from the preceding context, so it is surprising. In (25), “being a vegetarian” makes the listener expect that the person does not eat fish, but the following part says that it is not the case.

(26) , (27) are from Huddleston and Pullum (2002:1301).<sup>19)</sup> They are example sentences of concession: ‘X and Y’ implicates “despite X, Y.”

(26) You can eat as much of this as you like and not put on weight.

(27) They expect us to get up at 3 a.m. and look bright and cheerful.

If the conjunctions in (26) and (27) were not *and* but *but*, the listener would be given a hint that an expectation of the preceding part will be denied in the following part.

Then, the listener would not be so surprised when they hear something against the preceding part. I think the speaker who is aimed at such a surprising effect could use *and* not *but* here.

Finally I will give one more example of this kind from a novel. The underline is mine.

(28) Beats me how Mr. George Lee can be the exact opposite, and be his father’s son.<sup>20)</sup>

The Japanese translation of (28) is (29), where not a particle expressing concession but a particle expressing a simultaneous situation *nagara* is used. That expresses the co-existence of the two situations of “being the exact opposite” and “being his son” effectively. The underline is mine.

(29) 彼の息子でありながら、ジョージ・リー氏がどうして、あんなに正反対な性質であるのか、わたしには不思議でなりません。<sup>21)</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

It is the speaker’s choice whether *and* is used instead of *but* in a contrastive or concessive context. The denial of the expectation from the preceding part is hinted with the use of *but*. With *and*, there is no such a hint. A causal interpretation will also be possible in the case of *and*. What comes before *and* and what comes after *and* make up a unified set, which could cause a surprising effect in some cases because the listener has not expected any denial of expectation following at all.

Based on the difference between *and* and *but* given here, I think the dictionary should not say that *and* could be replaced with *but* easily.

## Notes

1) *Kenkusha’s New Comprehensive English Dictionary*.

- 6<sup>th</sup> ed. 2002. Tokyo: Kenkyusha. (竹林滋 (編集主幹) 『研究社新英和大辞典 第 6 版』); *Shogakukan Randomhouse English-Japanese Dictionary*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1994. Tokyo: Shogakukan. (小学館ランダムハウス第二版編集委員会 (編) 『小学館ランダムハウス英和大辞典 第 2 版』); *Taishukan's Unabridged Genius English Dictionary*. 2001. Tokyo: Taishukan. (小西友七・南出康生 (編集主幹) 『ジーニアス英和大辞典』).
- 2) *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. 2006. London: HarperCollins. [COBUILD<sup>5</sup>]; *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. 2006. Harlow: Pearson Education. [LDOCE<sup>8</sup>]; *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learner's*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2007. Oxford: Macmillan. [MED<sup>2</sup>]; *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. 9<sup>th</sup> ed. 2015. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [OALD<sup>9</sup>]
- 3) Quirk, R., S. Greenbaum, G. Leech and J. Svartvik. 1985. *The Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.
- 4) Konishi, T. 2006. *Dictionary of Present-day English Usage*. 2006. Tokyo: Sanseido. (小西友七 (編) 『現代英語語法辞典』).
- 5) Matthew, R. (trans.) *The Capricious Robot*. 1997. Kodansha English Library. Tokyo: Kodansha. (星新一. 1986. 『きまぐれロボット』. 東京: 角川書店)
- 6) Vardaman, Jr., J. M. (trans.) *The Glass Rabbit*. 1986. Kodansha English Library. Tokyo: Kodansha (高木敏子 『ガラスのウサギ』. 1977. 東京: 金の星社).
- 7) Blakemore, D. and R. Carston. 2005. "The pragmatics of sentential coordinator *and*." *Lingua* 115, 569-589.
- 8) *Genius English-Japanese Dictionary*.<sup>5</sup> 2014. Tokyo: Taishukan. (南出康生 (編集主幹) 『ジーニアス英和大辞典』 第 5 版).
- 9) *ibid.*
- 10) Agatha Christie. *After the Funeral*.
- 11) Agatha Christie. "The Capture of Cerberus" in *The Labours of Hercules*.
- 12) The other English native speaker says the adverb "handsomely" in (12) could also be interpreted to express the way he is vicious.
- 13) 『葬儀を終えて』. 加島祥造 (訳). ハヤカワ文庫.
- 14) 「ケルベロスの捕獲」『ヘラクレスの冒険』査収. 田中一江 (訳). ハヤカワ文庫
- 15) 大竹芳夫. 『談話のことば 1 文をつなぐ』. 2016. 東京: 研究社.
- 16) *ibid.*
- 17) *Collins COBUILD English Usage*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2012. Glasgow: Harpercollins.
- 18) *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2005. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [CALD<sup>2</sup>]
- 19) Huddleston, R. and G. K. Pullum. 2002. *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 20) Agatha Christie. *Hercules Poirot's Christmas*.
- 21) 『ポワロのクリスマス』. 村上啓夫 (訳). ハヤカワ文庫.