

STUDY GUIDE: Connectives

Let's get on with it



What are CONNECTIVES?

Connectives are words or phrases that show the connections or relationships between ideas in writing and in speech.

Good writing needs to be as clear as possible so that a reader can easily follow your sentences, ideas and details. Use cohesive devices to link individual sentences and parts of sentences and to help the reader to follow the movement of ideas with ease. These devices will also help your writing to flow naturally, without unnecessary repetition.

Academic writing and speaking usually deals with complex ideas. To enable the reader to follow your thoughts and the connections between them, these complex ideas need to be clearly and smoothly linked. Examples of various types of links are given below.



Emphasis Words

Among the most valuable signals for you to know are emphasis words, through which the writer or speaker tells you directly that a particular idea or detail is especially important

It is <i>important to note</i> ...	A <i>primary concern</i> is ...
It is <i>especially valuable</i> ...	A <i>central issue</i> ...
It <i>should be noted</i> ...	A <i>distinctive quality</i> ...
It is <i>most noteworthy</i> ...	A <i>major event</i> is ...
It is <i>especially relevant</i> ...	A <i>vital force</i> ...
<i>In particular</i> ...	<i>Above all</i> ...
<i>Indeed</i> it is ...	<i>Most of all</i> ...
<i>The chief outcome</i> ...	A <i>significant factor</i> is ...

The *main value* is ...
The *chief factor* is...
The *critical item* ...
The *most substantial issue* ...

Notably ...
Especially ...
Significantly...
Pay particular attention to...



Addition Words

Addition words tell you that the writer or speaker's thought is going to continue in the same direction. He or she is going to add more points or details of the same kind.

first
second
another
and
likewise
furthermore
moreover
besides
similarly

first of all
the third reason
also
in addition
next
for one thing
too
as well as
finally
last of all



Change-of-Direction Words (Contrasting)

Change-of-direction words tell you that the writer will probably reverse or modify a previous statement.

but
on the contrary
even though
yet
on the other hand
conversely
despite
apart from
alternatively
unless

instead
however
in contrast
if
otherwise
nevertheless
as long as
whereas
unlike
except
although



Illustration Words

Illustration words tell you an example or illustration will be given to make an idea clear.

for example
for instance
in the case of
as revealed by

specifically
to illustrate
such as
as shown by



Conclusion Words

Conclusion words tell you to expect the writer's final and possibly most important point within a paragraph or larger unit of thought.

therefore
finally
in summary
in conclusion

thus
ultimately
as a result
in the end

hence
all in all
last of all
to sum up



Cause and Effect Words

Cause and effect words tell you that the writer or speaker is expressing how an action leads to (or causes) another (or the result).

because
therefore
consequently
due to
attributed to
subsequently
force
since
trigger
effect
fuel
source
root

so
thus
as a result of
caused by
contribute to
give birth to
affect
impact
create
fruit
lead to



Sequencing Words

Sequencing words tell you that the writer or speaker is describing a series of steps that follow a particular order as in a process, or express the order in which the writers' /speakers' thoughts flow.

first, second, third
next
meanwhile
eventually

then
finally
after
before



Comparing Words

Comparing words tell you that the writer/speaker is referring to similar ideas.

equally
similarly
as with
compared with
resembles

in the same way
likewise
like
correspondingly

(Adapted from Langan, 1982)

Hint: DO NOT OVERUSE

It is important

1. not to use too many connectives, and
2. to vary their position in sentences i.e. not always at the start of sentences.

Examples:

- 01** If people stopped drinking, they might be able to prevent liver cirrhosis. The government should help in preventing this disease **because** they permit the production and sale of alcohol. Government resources, **however**, are limited.
- 02** **Although** the government was elected for a three-year term, the Prime Minister decided to hold an early election. **Meanwhile**, the opposition parties, which had anticipated this move, had been planning their own election campaigns, **but** they had not expected such immediate public support.



Activity 1

Analyse the following paragraph for cohesion (reference and connectives).

(Check your answers at the back.)

Hint: Reference words refer to something mentioned beforehand. E.g. *the man's* → *his*

Shrinking Glaciers

From the high mountains to the vast polar ice sheets, the world is losing its ice faster than anyone thought possible. Even scientists who had monitored Chacaltaya since 1991 thought it would hold out for a few more years. It's no surprise that glaciers are melting as emissions from cars and industry warm the climate. But lately, the ice loss has outstripped the upward creep of global temperatures.

Scientists are finding that glaciers and ice sheets are surprisingly touchy. Instead of melting steadily, like an ice cube on a summer day, they are prone to feedbacks, when melting begets more melting and the ice shrinks precipitously. At Chacaltaya, for instance, the shrinking glacier exposed dark rocks, which sped up its demise by soaking up heat from the sun. Other feedbacks are shriveling bigger mountain glaciers ahead of schedule and sending polar ice sheets slipping into the ocean.

(*National Geographic*, June 2007. Vol. 21. No.6 p 58)



Activity 2

Analyse the following paragraph for cohesion (reference and connectives).

(Check your answers at the back.)

The Wind and the Sun

The Wind said to the Sun, "I am much stronger than you." "You are not," replied the Sun. "I can prove my strength," said the Wind. "See that man? I will blow off his hat and coat. Watch me do it now!" He blew with all his might, but the harder he blew the more the man wrapped his coat around him. Then the Sun had a turn. His happy beams calmed the air, warmed the earth and made the man feel so hot that he took off his hat and coat. It is better to be gentle than rough.

Aesop's Fables, 1967

Strategies to improve cohesion

1. Select a piece of writing (textbook or journal article) from your area of study.
2. Take a paragraph and underline all the different forms of cohesion used (reference and connectives.)
3. Which forms are the most common?
4. Choose a few that you think are effective and practise using them in your own writing.
5. Try to use a variety of ways to show the relationship(s) between your ideas.

Useful references on cohesion

Taylor, G. (1989). *The Student's Writing Guide for the Arts and Social Sciences*. Available [online] (<http://books.google.com.fj/books?id=ZO30esIZ5DIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Student%27s+Writing+Guide+for+the+Arts+and+Social+Sciences.#v=onepage&q=&f=false>)

Jordan, R.R. (1990). *Academic Writing Course*. Available [online] (<http://books.google.com.fj/book?id=eoonPWAACAAJ&dq=Acaemic+Writing+Course>)



Answers to Activity 1

02 Connectives
 but
 instead of
 for instance
 and

01 Reference words
 (words referring to something mentioned before)
 the world-----its
 scientists-----who
 Chacaltaya-----it
 glaciers and ice sheets-----they
 the shrinking glacier exposed dark rock-----which
 the shrinking glacier-----its



Answers to Activity 2

02 Connectives:
 but
 and
 Then
 so... that

01 Reference words
 (words referring to something mentioned before)
 The Wind - I - you - my the wind - I - me - He - his
 might - He
 The Sun - the Sun - the Sun - his
 That man - his - him - the man - he - his
 Blow off his hat and coat - it