



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

ROLE OF CONJUNCTIONS IN SENTENCE STRUCTURES OF ENGLISH

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Abstract : Since English language involves both speaking and writing, it is important to know and understand conjunctions well, so that effective and good flow of communication to be maintained in an efficient manner. Conjunctions when used properly, allow for more natural flow and rhythm in speech and writing, whereas the improper use of conjunctions often results in writing that sounds abrupt and disjointed. Conjunctions are words that link or connect two words, phrases, clauses or sentences together in English. This paper aims to analyse the conjunctions and their role as meaning, types and uses or functions in English; and examines the uses of conjunctions semantically and uses of conjunctions pragmatically. This study provides impetus thoughts of conjunctions in English language. And also, it carries out a panoramic description and explanation about the function of conjunctions which is obvious, perspicuous and well defined, as one of the core grammatical classes, popularly known as parts of speech in English.

Keywords: Conjunctions, Coordinating, Subordinating, Correlative.

Introduction

A word in parts of speech is a conjunction that is used to connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences as Relatives Adjective, Relative verbs, Preposition, Adverbs, and Adjectives also. There are many conjunctions in the English language such as “and, or, but, because, for, if, and when”. There are three basic types of conjunctions: coordinating, subordinating, and correlative or paired. Conjunctions help to add varieties in writing creating sentences in different styles with different meanings.

Definition

“Malmkjar, is defined the conjunctions as an indeclinable part of speech That links other parts of speech, in company with which it has significance, by classifying their meaning or relations”.

Structure of Conjunctions

Conjunctions are the grammatical elements which indicate the links within texts. Conjunctions do not have inflection as prepositions have. Because they belong to the closed class which are not expandable. This means, that they cannot be inflected through affixations (prefixes and suffixes) to make them change from one grammatical class to other class of words such as nouns, verbs and adjectives.

Characteristics of Conjunctions

1. Verb-Facilitation as Addition in Sentences

Verbs appear in separate sentences, which may be accompanied by special wording or punctuation that to be shared with one or more verbs. It is called this special wording or punctuation “joining devices”. The verbs usually accompany in this role as not just the new verb, but also as subject and with necessary words. The new verb usually needs an ordinary form, not nonfinite form but finite form.

Example: -

- Most snakes won't bite, unless they are provoked.

Unless otherwise stated, the one being attacked looks to be the non-finite "past" participle. This may not be a true exception, though. It can be seen as finite they are attacked and has the same meaning. When the subject of both verbs is the same in the example above (most snakes), and the conjunction verb appears to be possible.

2. As Inter-Verb Meaning

When verbs are putting together physically, the conjunctions show how related the meanings of the statements. For example, **unless** in (eg) says the statement after it is naming an exception to a rule stated before it; **because** helps to name a cause; **so (that)** indicates a consequence; **after** indicates an earlier event; and **when** can indicate an earlier, later or simultaneous one.

3. Variation in Grammatical Structure

The majority of Conjunctions which are often called “subordinating”, can be used either before two verbs or between them, do not follow the same grammar rules.

Example: -

- Although the dog barks, he won't bite.
- It is not dangerous (,) although the dog barks.

The conjunctions such as and, but, for, nor, not that, only, or, so, then, yet, can place between the two verbs. For example, but could replace although in (the first example) but not in (the second example). This kind of conjunctions are usually called “coordinating conjunctions”. The coordinating conjunctions have a comma before them; but subordinating conjunctions have comma before the end of the previous clause.

4. Influence on Focus of the Sentence.

It sometimes happens that some parts of a sentence are not what the sentence is about. They help only for the appreciation of the main message, or focus for a full description of this tendency.

Example: -

- Although the dog barks, it is not dangerous

The word which is after a conjunction is not the focus of the sentence. This would happen particularly in the subordinating conjunctions at the beginning of a sentence, as in (Example). The focus there is on what the dog is, not how it is. which is assumed by the reader to know already.

5. Use of Correlative Conjunctions

Often two verbs are used in the same sentence but not with a single conjunction as means of a conjunction with each. Those pairs of conjunction include either...or, not only...but also, if...then, both...and, just as...so. And no sooner...than.

6. Ellipsis (Word-Dropping)

Ellipsis would not be always used as a conjunction, but it so happens often.

Example: -

- The new Creatures have been formed recently, as The Tajmahal has.

The words which dropped here are “been formed recently”. The meaning of **As** “too”. It shows that how auxiliaries work with conjunctions to achieve verb ellipsis when repeating of the word ‘**have**’.

7. Formation in Different Structure.

Coordinating conjunction ‘**and**’ plays in a statement of equal status. Subordinating conjunctions play as the statement centered on the other verb.

Example: -

- Teachers believe that practice is vital.

In this example, the conjunction ‘that’ and its predicate ‘practice’ is replaced by a noun, not an adverb.

8. Similarity as Prepositions

Conjunctions and prepositions are merely resembling one another in the way they often add information in a sentence as meaning or in the spellings.

Example: -

- (Conjunction) The man shouted when feared of darkness.
- (Preposition) The man shouted with the fear of darkness.

The main difference is that the conjunction needs finite verb (shouted) whereas the preposition expresses the same meaning with the “action” noun fear.

Types of Conjunctions

“Baskervill and Sewell, Arthur, Lester and Eckhard-Black divide conjunctions into two classes: coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and Lester says correlative conjunctions are similar to coordinating conjunctions. However, there are three types of conjunctions such as coordinating, subordinating, and correlative conjunctions”.

1. Coordinating Conjunctions

“Huddleston divides coordination into two”:

a) Basic coordination

Example: -

- ❖ His son is a teacher and his daughter is a medical student.

b) Non-basic coordination (in terms of its relation to the more elementary type)

- ❖ Kumar says he is innocent and she is a disinterested witness.

“According to Aarts, coordination is as an instance of parataxis (a term derived from Greek, meaning “syntactic side-by-side arrangement”).

The coordination that involves an overt coordinator are referred to as syndetic coordination. A syndetic coordination is exemplified as follows:

Example: -

- ❖ She is honest, hardworking, intelligent.
- ❖ We need bananas, apples, oranges, pears.

Coordinating conjunctions are and, nor, but, and or.

Example: -

- ❖ I got a pencil and an eraser.
- ❖ My bag is in the cupboard or on the table.

2. Subordinating Conjunction

Subordinating conjunctions are used to join an independent or main (principal) clause with a dependent (subordinate) one that relies on the main clause for meaning and relevance in a complex sentence. This means that main clauses can stand alone and do not depend on subordinate clauses while subordinate clauses cannot stand alone.

“According to Sahebkhair & Aidinlou , subordinating conjunctions are also known as transitional conjunctions. They are after, because, if, that, though, although, till, before, unless, as, when, where, while, then, whether, in order that, nevertheless, etc.”

Example: -

- ❖ He came after I had finished my work.
- ❖ John came when I was writing my dissertation, etc.

“According to Baskervill and Sewell, subordinating
Conjunctions are divided into eight classes” as follows;

a) Time

These subordinators express consequence in time or succession in time between clauses. They are before, after, till, since, when, while, etc.

Examples: -

- ❖ Mary had left before I reached there.
- ❖ I attended my duty after my friend had moved away.

b) Cause or Reason

These subordinators express causal relations in the simplest form that mean “as a result of this” or “because of this”. They are because, since, as, and for.

Examples: -

- ❖ Raja went to his native place because there was a marriage function.
- ❖ Since there is a dog, the girls go to the next street.

c) Result or Consequence

Reason / cause and consequence / result are closely related. But the main subordinator is “so.... that”. It is expressed to mean ‘for this reason’ for something else.

Examples: -

- ❖ Rahim walked so fast that I could not follow him.
- ❖ He was so tired that he could not speak after walking.

d) Purpose

Reason / cause and purpose and are closely related in the sense of “for this reason” or “for this purpose”. They are lest, in order that, so that, that, etc.

Example: -

- ❖ We eat so that we may live.
- ❖ My friend helps her tomorrow so that she can get rid of the problem.

e) Condition

“According to Quirk and Greenbaum, conditional subordinators state the dependence of one circumstance or set of circumstances on another. If and unless are the main subordinators in English. The unless-clause is a negative one while the if-clause is to be a positive or a negative condition”.

Example: -

- ❖ If you do not do the job well, I will not pay you.
- ❖ Unless the power is shut down, tomorrow will be a working-day.

“According to Silva there are three types of if-clauses” as follows:

1: This is called type 1 of the if-clause which refers to the possible condition that can be fulfilled. The if-clause appears in the simple present tense, and the main clause has the pattern: will-future (or modal + infinitive).

Example: -

- ❖ If you run fast, you can catch the bus.

2: This is called type 2 of the if-clause which refers to the condition in past possible to fulfil which appears in the simple past tense. The pattern of the main clause is as follows:

Example: -

- ❖ If you ran fast, you would catch the bus.

3: This is called type 3 of the if-clause which refers to the condition which didn't happen in the past. The if-clause here appears in the past perfect tense, and the main clause has the pattern: would + have + past participle.

Example; -

- ❖ If Banu had studied well, she would have written the exam well.

f) **Concession**

These subordinators express the sense of “reluctant yielding”. The subordinators are introduced by though, although, even if, and also, however, etc.

Examples: -

- ❖ No goal was scored, though it was an exciting match.
- ❖ Although it was a tedious journey, I was glad to come here.

g) **Comparison**

These subordinators express comparison between the two ideas found in the dependent and independent clauses. Such subordinators are then, as....as, as, etc.

Example: -Raju presented me a lot than I expected.

3. **Correlative Conjunctions**

Correlative conjunctions are more similar to coordinating conjunctions in that the sentence fragments they connect are fairly equal. They are either...or, neither...nor, both...and, as many...as, whether...or, not only...but also, such...that, so...that, hardly...when, scarcely...when, no sooner...than, not...but, etc.

Example: -

- ❖ I want either a pen or a pencil.

4. **Compound Conjunctions**

“Quirk and Green Baum regard the groups of words which are used as conjunctions is called as compound subordinators. They are compound items which act, to various degrees, like a single conjunction. The words end with obligatory „that“, e.g. in that, in order that, except

that, so that, such that, on condition that, etc. while some others have optional „that“, e.g. now (that), provided (that), supposing (that), seeing (that), considering (that), etc.”.

Example: -

- ❖ I can lend you money on condition that you repay me next month.

Four Types of Conjunction as Cohesive Device (inter-sentential likers)

In a different development, “Halliday and Hasan added as four types of conjunction which ensure cohesion in English”.

(i) **Additive Conjunctions** act to structurally link by adding to proposed items that are signaled by and, also, furthermore, in addition, etc. and also act to negate the proposed items that are signaled by nor, and ... no, neither.

The Kinds of additive are;

- ❖ **Alternative**, e.g. or, or else, alternatively;
- ❖ **After-thought (or conjunct)**, e.g. incidentally, by the way;
- ❖ **Expository**, e.g. that is, I mean, in other words;
- ❖ **Exemplificatory**, e.g. for instance, thus;
- ❖ **Comparing similarity**, e.g. in the same way, similarly, likewise.
- ❖ **Comparing dissimilarity**, e.g. on the other hand, by contrast, on the contrary.

(ii) **Adversative Conjunctions** are used to express contrast between the points of two consecutive sentences. They are on the other hand, on the contrary.

The Kinds of adversative are;

- ❖ **Emphatic**, e.g. nevertheless, despite this;
- ❖ **Contrastive avowal**, e.g. in fact, actually, as a matter of fact;
- ❖ **correction of meaning**, e.g. instead, rather, at least;
- ❖ **Closed dismissal**, e.g. in either case, in any case, whichever way it is;
- ❖ **Open-ended dismissal**, e.g. at any rate, anyhow, however it is.

(iii) **Clausal Conjunctions** express the cause of what is being stated. They are then, so, hence, therefore.

The Kinds of clausal conjunction are;

- ❖ **Specific causal**. It is divided into three as follows;
 - (a) **reason**, e.g. on account of this, for this reason, it follows, on this basis;
 - (b) **result**, e.g. in consequence, as a result, arising out of this.
 - (c) **purpose**, e.g. with this in mind, for this purpose, to this end;
- ❖ **Simple emphatic**, e.g. in such an event, in that case, that being so;
- ❖ **Direct respective**, e.g. in this regard, in this respect, with reference to this;
- ❖ **Reversed polarity**, e.g. in other respects, under other circumstances, aside from this otherwise.

(iv) **Temporal conjunctions** explain the sequence relationships between clauses. They are next, secondly, then, in the end.

The Kinds of temporal conjunction are;

- ❖ **Simultaneous**, e.g. just then, at the same time;
- ❖ **Preceding**, e.g. previously, formerly, before that;
- ❖ **Conclusive**, e.g. finally, at last, in conclusion;
- ❖ **Immediate**, e.g. at once, thereupon, forthwith;
- ❖ **Repetitive**, e.g. next time, on another occasion, later;
- ❖ **Specific**, e.g. next day, an hour later;
- ❖ **durative**, e.g. meanwhile, in the interim, for the time being;
- ❖ **Here and now**. This is divided into three as follows;
 - (a) **past**, e.g. up to now, last time;
 - (b) **present**, e.g. at this point, here, now and
 - (c) **future**, e.g. from now on, henceforth (or henceforward);
- ❖ **Summarizing**, e.g. to sum up, in short, briefly;
- ❖ **Presumptive**, e.g. to resume, to return to the point.

Kinds of Conjunctions

“According to Murthy, coordinating conjunctions are divided into three kinds”. They are:

(i) Cumulative or Copulative Conjunctions

The words *and*, *so*, *both ... and*, *as well as*, *not only ... but also*, *no less than*, *etc.*, are Cumulative or Copulative Conjunctions which are used to join statements or to add one statement to another.

(ii) Adversative Conjunctions

“Halliday and Hasan say the meaning of the adversative relation is “contrary to expectation”. They are *but*, *still*, *only*, *etc.*”

(iii) Disjunctive or Alternative Conjunctions

These are used to express a choice between two alternatives. They are *or*, *nor*, *either...or*, *neither...nor*, *or else*, *whether...or*, *otherwise*, *etc.*

Use of Conjunctions

i. The Semantic Use of Conjunctions

Conjunctions contribute by indicating the semantic meaning or relationship between what has been said and what is to come. They do by creating cohesion in texts, either spoken or written, by indicating linkages across the sentences.

ii. The Pragmatic Use of Conjunction

It should be noted that *and*-conjunctions like *communicate* suggestions over the truth of their conjuncts in the pragmatic theory.

iii. The use of conjunction in Logic

To express the logical relations of conjunction and disjunction, especially coordinators, corresponding approximately to English and and or respectively is the most basic semantic roles of conjunctions. In addition, the order of elements can be changed without affecting the propositional meaning of the sentence.

Importance of Conjunctions

The conjunctions, which are important tools for speech and writing, are used to connect words and concepts / ideas together by creating complex sentences to convey interesting messages. This is because readers who fail to note a conjunction or who misunderstand it may interpret the proposition. It connects as either totally unrelated, or related in the ways unintended by the speaker. Thus, they may comprehend each sentence or clause, but fail to understand the passage as a whole. Conversely, speakers who fail to make judicious use of conjunctions leave their readers guessing about the connections between ideas they have presented.

Conclusion

Conjunctions are very important in English which have been discussed with a special focus on their meaning, types and uses or functions in the language. Conjunctions, like prepositions, adverbs and adjectives, can sometimes be difficult to conceptualise and identify. Although there is much information about them elsewhere, bringing their general characteristics together in one place seems desirable to make more convenient. In doing this, many simple but straightforward sentential examples have been provided for easy comprehension. The major advantage of this article is that it has succeeded in making an attempt to present before the reader the basic information he/she needs as far as conjunctions in English are concerned.

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