

CONJUNCTIONS IN ENGLISH

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Abstract. *This paper contains an in-depth study of conjunctions, including their meaning, types as well as uses or functions in English. Conjunctions are words that link or connect two words, phrases, clauses or sentences together, either in speech or in writing. Conjunctions are one of the eight parts of speech in English, according to the traditional grammar. Apart from the coordinating, subordinating and correlative types, the author has also researched into other kinds of conjunctions that can be of great interest to the reader. The author deemed it necessary to carry out a study of this kind because over the years, this important area of language study has received less attention from language scholars and students of English/linguistics in comparison with other parts of speech like nouns, verbs, adjectives and prepositions. As this paper had unveiled, the author had not only conceived of conjunctions as one of the eight parts of speech in English, as upheld in traditional grammar, but also went beyond to examine the meaning and uses of conjunctions semantically and pragmatically as well as in propositional logic. This study is very significant, as it provides an impetus for those who hitherto have not thought of researching into this area of language study. Furthermore, the paper has presented before the reader a myriad of sentential examples for easy understanding or comprehension.*

Keywords: Conjunctions, Coordinating, Subordinating, Correlative.

СОЮЗЫ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

Аннотация: *Эта статья содержит углубленное исследование союзов, включая их значение, типы, а также использование или функции в английском языке. Союзы — это слова, которые связывают или связывают два слова, фразы, предложения или предложения вместе в устной или письменной форме. Согласно традиционной грамматике союзы — одна из восьми частей речи английского языка. Помимо сочинительных, подчинительных и соотносительных типов, автор исследовал и другие виды союзов, которые могут представлять большой интерес для читателя. Автор счел необходимым провести исследование такого рода, поскольку с течением времени этой важной области изучения языка уделялось меньше внимания со стороны лингвистов и студентов, изучающих английский язык/лингвистику, по сравнению с другими частями речи, такими как существительные, глаголы, прилагательные и предлоги. Как было показано в этой статье, автор не только рассматривал союзы как одну из восьми частей*

речи в английском языке, как это поддерживается в традиционной грамматике, но также пошел дальше, чтобы исследовать значение и использование союзов семантически и прагматически, а также в логика высказываний. Это исследование очень значимо, так как дает толчок тем, кто до сих пор не задумывался об исследованиях в этой области изучения языка. Более того, статья представила читателю множество сентенциальных примеров для облегчения понимания или понимания.

Ключевые слова: союзы, сочинительные, подчинительные, соотносительные.

Traditionally, the conjunction is one of the eight parts of speech in English. A conjunction, as reported by Malmkjær, is defined 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. According to Leung, conjunctions have been studied under various labels and have drawn much attention from various scholars in the field of English/Linguistics over time: Halliday and Hasan treat them as “linguistic devices that create cohesion”, while Sanders and Maat describe them as a “semantic relation that is explicitly marked” (1-2). According to Er, as cited by Aidinlou and Reshadi, conjunctions are a “semantic connection between two clauses”. Furthermore, Leung cites four scholars in this regard. These are: Schiffrin, who treats conjunctions as “discourse markers”, Fraser considers them as a “pragmatic class of lexical expressions”, or simply, “pragmatic markers”, while Rouchota states that conjunctions “encode different meanings, and that they can be a procedural device”, and lastly, Caron conceives conjunctions simply as being used “to express various kinds of relations between utterances”.

Aside from the scholars mentioned above, others most generally conceive conjunctions as linkers or connectors that join two words, phrases, clauses or sentences together, either in speech or in writing. To this end, Leech and Svartvik note, “Clauses or phrases may be linked together (coordinated) by conjunctions”. They further state that conjunction or coordination can also link two words of the same word class. Aarts says, “Conjunctions belong to a closed class of words that have a linking function”. (Closed class here means that we cannot derive another word class from conjunctions the same way we do with others such as nouns, verbs and adjectives). According to Roberts, conjunctions perform the function of joining any two or more sentences together to form another coordinate sentence. Speaking from the same viewpoint, Lester states that conjunctions join words or groups of words. In the words of Eckhard-Black, “A conjunction stands between two words, phrases or clauses and links them”. Similarly, Carnie says that “Coordinate structures are constituents linked by conjunctions like *and* or *or*”. In addition, Kirkpatrick states

that “A conjunction is a linking word used to join words, word groups or clauses”. Again, a conjunction, in the words of Murthy, is “A word which joins together sentences or words and clauses”. Furthermore, Baskervill and Sewel say that “Unlike adverbs, conjunctions do not modify but they are just solely for the purpose of connecting”. As noted by Kirksten, “Conjunction is an indeclinable part of speech that links other parts of speech, in company with which it has significance, by classifying their meaning or relations”. In a similar fashion, Crystal says that conjunctions are “A term used in the GRAMMATICAL classification of words to refer to an ITEM or a process whose primary function is to connect words or other CONSTRUCTIONS in which the conjoined elements may be referred to as conjuncts”. Also, McArthur says that a conjunction is a part of speech or word class used to connect words or constructions, adding that the linked units that result are said to be coordinated or coordinate.

All these scholars, as we have seen, are unanimous in echoing the fact that conjunctions are words that link, connect or join two words, phrases, clauses and sentences together. This is absolutely true because whenever the word conjunction, being a part of speech in a language, is mentioned, the first thing that comes to mind traditionally is that it is a linker, a connector or a joiner.

Language scholars have divergent views on the types of conjunction. For instance, Baskervill and Sewell, Arthur, Lester and Eckhard-Black divide conjunctions into two classes: coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. These scholars (including others not mentioned here) leave out correlative conjunctions because, according to them (e.g. Lester (65)), correlative conjunctions are similar to coordinating conjunctions. However, there are traditionally basically three types of conjunctions, which are: coordinating, subordinating, and correlative conjunctions. In a different development, Halliday and Hasan on their part, propose four types of conjunction that ensure cohesion in English generally: (1) *Additive Conjunctions* act to structurally coordinate or link by adding to proposed item and are signalled by *and, also, furthermore, in addition*, etc. Additive conjunctions may also act to negate the proposed item and are signalled by *nor, and ... no, neither*. Kinds of additive include: *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. *likewise, similarly, in the same way (or in the same vein); and comparing dissimilarity*, e.g. *on the other hand, by contrast, on the contrary*. (ii) *Adversative Conjunctions* are used to express comparison or contrast between sentences and they include *but, on the other hand, however, yet, though, only*. Kinds of adversative include: *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 any case, in eithercase, whichever way it is; and open-ended dismissal, e.g. any how, at any rate, however it is.

(iii) *Causal Conjunctions* express the cause or reason of what is being stated. They include: *then, so, hence, therefore*. Kinds of clausal conjunction include: *specific causal*. It is divided into three – (a) *reason*, e.g. *for this reason, on account of this, on this basis, it follows*; (b) *result*, e.g. *as a result, in consequence, arising out of this* and (c) *purpose*, e.g. *for this purpose, with this in mind, to this end*; *simple emphatic*, e.g. *in that case, in such an event, that being so*; *direct respective*, e.g. *in this respect, in this regard, with reference to this*; *reversed polarity*, e.g. *otherwise, under other circumstances, in other respects, aside from this*. (iv) *Temporal conjunctions* represent sequence relationships between clauses and they include: *next, secondly, then, in the end*. Kinds of temporal conjunction include: *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 – (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*; *resumptive*, e.g. *to resume, to return to the point*. Moreover, Halliday, as cited by Saya and Fatemi, further classifies conjunction into three more abstract types: elaboration, extension and enhancement. Elaboration includes apposition like *in other words* and clarification like *rather*. Extension includes addition and variation like *alternatively*. Enhancement includes spatial-temporal like *there, previously* and causal-conditional like *consequently* and *in that case*. We deem it necessary to comment here that the above taxonomy by Halliday and their examples are more of adverbs than conjunctions. Also on his part, Murthy outlines four types of conjunctions which are: coordinating, subordinating, correlative and compound conjunctions. We will consider them one after the other.

3.1 Coordinating Conjunctions

These are used to link words, phrases and clauses. They are conjunctions which are used to join together clauses of equal rank. In other words, they generally connect sentence elements of the same grammatical class such as nouns with nouns, adverbs with adverbs, phrases with phrases and clauses with clauses. They also link two sentences that do not depend on each other for meaning. They are simply referred to as coordinators, and the art of joining two words, phrases,

clauses or sentences using coordinators is known as *coordination*. Huddleston divides coordination into two - basic coordination, which can be described directly, e.g.

(1) Her daughter is a dentist *and* her son is studying law;

and non-basic coordination, which can be described indirectly, in terms of its relation to the more elementary type.

(2) Okosun says he is innocent *and* she is a disinterested witness.

According to Aarts (45-6), we treat coordination as an instance of *parataxis*, a term derived from Greek, meaning „syntactic side-by-side arrangement“. Furthermore, all cases of coordination that involve an overt coordinator are referred to as *syndetic coordination*. Where there is no overt coordinator, it is referred to as *asyndetic coordination*. Asyndetic coordination is exemplified as follows:

(3) (a) She is honest, hard working, intelligent.

(b) We need bananas, apples, oranges, pears.

(c) Abu laughed, Jummai chuckled, Ojo grinned.

Coordinating conjunctions include: *and*, *nor*, *but*, and *or*. Sentential examples:

(4) (a) I bought a computer *and* a keyboard.

(b) When his wife left him, he did not bother *nor* went to plead for her return.

(c) She is poor *but* she is happy.

(d) The books are on the table *or* in the cupboard.

According to Murthy (215), coordinating conjunctions are divided into three kinds. They are:

Cumulative or Copulative Conjunctions

Adversative Conjunctions and

Disjunctive or Alternative Conjunctions

Also, we will consider them one after the other:

(i) Cumulative or Copulative Conjunctions

These are used to join statements, or they add one statement to another. They include: *and*, *so*, *both ... and*, *as well as*, *not only ... but also*, *no less than*, etc. Sentential examples:

(5) (a) He looked *and* smiled at me.

Generally, conjunctions perform linking functions. To this end, Leung (14-15) says that conjunctions perform the following functions: to link two or more words, groups or clauses, to link two clauses especially the main or independent and the dependent or subordinate, to link two identical words or phrases in order to emphasise the degree of something or to suggest that something continues or increases over a period of time (e.g. *Day by day I am getting better and*

better), to introduce a question which follows logically from what somebody has just said, to link two or more alternatives, to be used between numbers to give estimation (e.g *We will stay there a day or two*), to introduce a comment for correction, to introduce something for explanation or justification, to show contrast, for adding, to change a subject in a discussion, to be used as a condition in conditional statements, to be used for warning.

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