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SSC - 245

Coordination

Overview: To understand coordination, we first need to understand independent clauses. An independent clause contains a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought; in other words, an independent clause can stand alone as a complete sentence. When two independent clauses are equally important and about the same topic, they are coordinate and can be joined together in the same sentence by a **coordinating conjunction** or a **conjunctive adverb**. By joining them, you can create compound sentences, which improves the complexity of your writing and helps you avoid having too many short, simple sentences.

Coordinating Conjunctions

When two independent clauses are coordinate, they can be joined by a **coordinating conjunction and a comma**. Coordinating conjunctions usually appear in the middle of a sentence. They are commonly remembered by the acronym “FANBOYS,” in which each letter stands for a coordinating conjunction: for, and, nor, bt, or, yet, so.

Example 1:

One benefit of group study is that students learn others’ perspectives, **and** each member can share his or her unique insight with the group.

Example 2:

There were no vegetarian items on the menu, **so** I filled up on complimentary bread.

Note that some of these words have *other* functions when they are *not* acting as coordinating conjunctions, in which case they may not require a comma. In the following sentences, “and,” “or,” and “for” do not join independent clauses; therefore, they are not acting as coordinating conjunctions and *do not* need a comma: 1) Next semester I’m taking English **and** math.

2) I am going to take either English 180 **or** English 250A. 3) I am looking **for** an English class that fulfills a GE requirement.

Conjunctive Adverbs

Two independent clauses of equal importance and similar emphasis can also be joined by a **conjunctive adverb**. When conjunctive adverbs join independent clauses, they are preceded by a semicolon and followed by a comma. Here are some common conjunctive adverbs:

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<p><u>To show addition</u></p> <p>also further furthermore in addition likewise moreover next</p>	<p><u>To show contrast</u></p> <p>conversely however instead nevertheless on the other hand otherwise still</p>	<p><u>To show result</u></p> <p>as a result consequently hence subsequently then therefore thus</p>
<p><u>To show a specific case</u></p> <p>for example for instance in fact specifically</p>	<p><u>To strengthen a point</u></p> <p>certainly essentially indeed</p>	

Example 1:

Students prepare carefully before group-study sessions to avoid disappointing the group; **therefore**, students spend more time studying individually as well.

Example 2:

There were no vegetarian items on the menu; **consequently**, I filled up on complimentary bread.

Note that in the previous two examples, you could also insert a period after the first independent clause and begin a new sentence: *There were no vegetarian items on the menu. Consequently, I filled up on complimentary bread.* Either option is correct according to the rules of grammar and punctuation.

Also note that conjunctive adverbs do not always join independent clauses. When a conjunctive adverb interrupts a single independent clause, it is preceded and followed by a comma.

Example 1:

My sister claims that she recently completed a cooking class. The bland taste of her casserole, **however**, suggests that she needs more practice.

Example 2:

I recommend, **therefore**, that you reject her dinner invitations.

Practice: Focus on one paragraph in your writing, and identify the **independent clauses**. Do you have several independent clauses standing alone as simple sentences? Choose two and combine them by adding a coordinating conjunction or conjunctive adverb along with the correct punctuation. Make sure that the sentences in your paragraph do not all follow the same structure. Remember that variety makes writing more interesting.

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