



# **DBB 308 WRITING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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# Coordinators

- ▶ This group includes the seven coordinating conjunctions **and**, **but**, **so**, **or**, **nor**, **for**, and **yet** and the five paired conjunctions **both ... and**, **not only ... but also**, **neither ... nor**, **either ... or**, and **whether ... or**.
- ▶ Coordinators may or may not have commas. When they connect two independent clauses, use a comma.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE INDEPENDENT CLAUSE  
In a matriarchy, the mother is the head of the family, **and** all the children belong to her clan.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE INDEPENDENT CLAUSE  
In warm climate zones, water evaporates rapidly, **so** the concentration of salt is greater.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE INDEPENDENT CLAUSE  
Children **not only** need love, **but** they **also** need discipline.

- When coordinators connect two words or phrases, do not use a comma.

**Examples:** Would you rather take a written **or** an oral exam?  
Children need **not only** love **but also** discipline.

**Exception:** Some writers use a comma before **but** and **yet** even when they do not connect independent clauses to emphasize the contrast of the connected ideas.

- The poem is solemn, **yet** optimistic in tone.

# Subordinators

- ▶ A subordinator (subordinating conjunction) is the first word in a dependent clause. A dependent clause is always connected to an independent clause to make a sentence. The sentence may or may not have a comma.
- ▶ **The general rule is this:  
Put a comma after a dependent clause but not in front of one.**

DEPENDENT CLAUSE      INDEPENDENT CLAUSE  
**Although** the company's sales increased last year, its net profit declined.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE      DEPENDENT CLAUSE  
The company's net profit declined last year **although** its sales increased.

**dependent clause: group of words containing a subject and a verb that does *not* express a complete thought. A dependent clause always begins with a subordinator.**

# Others

- ▶ The transition signals in this group include nouns such as **example**, adjectives such as **additional**, prepositions such as **in addition to**, verbs such as **cause**, and adverbs such as **too**. There are no punctuation rules for this group, but it is important to notice what kinds of words follow these signals.
- ▶ An **additional** reason for the company's bankruptcy was the lack of competent management. (*Additional is an adjective, so it is followed by a noun.*)
- ▶ **In addition to** increased competition, the lack of competent management caused the company's bankruptcy. (*In addition to is a preposition, so it is followed by a noun or noun phrase.*)
- ▶ Vocabulary differences between British and American English include words **such as** *bonnet/hood, petrol/gasoline, windscreen/windshield, and lorry/truck.* (*Such as is followed by a noun or noun phrase.*)

1. A recent article in *Era* magazine suggested ways to reduce inflation. The article suggested that the president reduce the federal budget \_\_\_\_; furthermore \_\_\_\_, it suggested that the government reduce federal, state, and local taxes. (**however, in contrast, furthermore**)
2. The same article said that the causes of inflation were easy to find \_\_\_\_\_ the cure for inflation was not so easy to prescribe. (**however, for example, therefore**)
3. *Era* also suggested that rising wages were one of the primary causes of inflation \_\_\_\_\_ the government should take action to control wages. (**however, therefore, for example**)
4. In physics, the weight of an object is the gravitational force<sup>3</sup> with which Earth attracts it; \_\_\_\_\_, if a man weighs 150 pounds, this means that Earth pulls him down with a force of 150 pounds. (**moreover, therefore, for example**)

# Don't Overuse Transition Signals

- ▶ Read your paragraph aloud and pay attention to your own language. Are you using too many transition signals? Too many can be distracting rather than helpful.
- ▶ The following paragraph has too many transition signals. Which transition signals are an unnecessary distraction?

## How to Grow an Avocado Tree<sup>1</sup>

After you have enjoyed the delicious taste of an avocado, do not throw out the seed! You can grow a beautiful houseplant or even your own tree by following these simple steps. **First**, wash the seed. **Second**, dry it. **Third**, insert three toothpicks into its thickest part. **Then** fill a glass or empty jar with water. **After that**, suspend the seed in the water with the pointed end up and the broad end down. The water should cover about an inch of the seed. **Next**, put the glass in a warm place, but not in direct sunlight. Add water when necessary to keep the bottom of the seed under water at all times. In two to six weeks, you should see roots begin to grow. **Furthermore**, the seed will crack open, and **then** a stem will emerge from the top. **However**, wait until the stem is 6 to 7 inches long. **Then** cut it back to about 3 inches. **Now** wait until the roots are thick and the stem has leafed out again. **Then** fill an 8- to 10-inch diameter clay pot with enriched potting soil. Plant the seed, leaving the top half exposed. **Then** water it well. **After that**, water frequently but lightly; **also** give the plant an occasional deep soaking. **However**, do not overwater your little tree. Yellow leaves are a sign of too much water. **Then** place the potted plant in a sunny window and watch it grow. The more sunlight, the better. **Then, when** the stem is 12 inches high, cut it back to 6 inches to encourage the growth of side branches. In just a few more weeks, you will have a beautiful indoor plant. **In conclusion**, enjoy your new plant, but do not expect it to bear fruit. Avocados grown from seed occasionally flower and bear fruit; **however, first** you will have to plant it outside and **then** wait anywhere from five to thirteen years.



# Logical order

- ▶ In addition to using transition signals and repeating key nouns and pronouns, a fourth way to achieve coherence is to arrange your sentences in some kind of **logical order**.
- ▶ Some common kinds of logical order in English are **chronological order**, **logical division of ideas**, and **comparison/contrast**.
  - **Chronological order** is order by time—a sequence of events or steps in a process.
  - In **logical division of ideas**, a topic is divided into parts, and each part is discussed separately.
  - In a **comparison/contrast** paragraph, the similarities and/or differences between two or more items are discussed.

### Paragraph 1

The process of machine translation of languages is complex. To translate a document from English into Japanese, for example, the computer first analyzes an English sentence, determining its grammatical structure and identifying the subject, verb, objects, and modifiers. Next, the words are translated by an English-Japanese dictionary. After that, another part of the computer program analyzes the resulting awkward jumble<sup>1</sup> of words and meanings and produces an intelligible sentence based on the rules of Japanese syntax<sup>2</sup> and the machine's understanding of what the original English sentence meant. Finally, a human bilingual editor polishes the computer-produced translation.

Kind of logical order: \_\_\_\_\_

# Review

- ▶ These are the important points covered in this chapter.
  1. Every good paragraph has both unity and coherence.
  2. You achieve unity by
    - discussing only one idea in a paragraph.
    - always staying on the topic in your supporting sentences.
  3. You achieve coherence by
    - repeating key nouns.
    - using consistent pronouns.
    - using transition signals.
    - arranging your ideas in some kind of logical order.
  4. There are different types of transition signals. Each type is punctuated differently.

In the following paragraph, notice how the four elements work together to create a unified and coherent paragraph.

### A Leap Year Custom Lives On

ALL SENTENCES ARE RELATED TO THE TOPIC.

KEY NOUNS ARE REPEATED, AND SYNONYMS ARE USED.

PRONOUNS ARE CONSISTENT.

TRANSITION SIGNALS HELP THE READER FOLLOW THE PROGRESSION OF IDEAS.

IDEAS ARE PRESENTED IN LOGICAL ORDER.

No one knows for certain the origin of the custom that allows women to propose marriage on Leap Day. Leap Day is February 29th, the extra day added every four years to put the calendar year in synch with the solar year. One explanation for the custom comes from Ireland. According to Irish legend, Saint Brigid, an Irish holy woman who lived in the fifth century, complained to Saint Patrick about women having to wait for men to propose. Saint Patrick agreed that this practice was unfair, so he decided that eager females could propose on this one day. A different explanation of the custom comes from medieval England. According to this explanation, people there thought that because Leap Day existed to fix a problem in the calendar, it could also be used to fix an old and unjust practice. In 1288, the custom became an actual law in Scotland. Not only did the Scottish law allow women to propose on any day during a Leap Year, but it also said that any man who declined a woman proposal had to pay a fine! Whatever its origins, the tradition of women taking the initiative one day a year lives on in Sadie Hawkins Day celebrations held in many communities in the United States even today.

# Supporting Details: Facts, Quotations and Statistics

- ▶ Academic writing normally requires that you support your ideas and opinions with facts, statistics, quotations, and similar kinds of information.
- ▶ You get these kinds of supporting details from outside sources such as books, magazines, newspapers, web sites, personal interviews, and so on.

# Facts versus opinions

- ▶ **Opinions** are subjective statements based on a person's beliefs or attitudes.
- ▶ **Examples:**  
Men are better drivers than women.  
English is an easy language to learn.
- ▶ **Facts** are objective statements of truths.
- ▶ **Examples:**  
At sea level, water boils at 100 degrees Celsius.  
Women live longer than men.
- ▶ Sometimes even facts need proof. While the two statements above are facts, the second sentence needs proof. Your readers may not believe that women live longer than men. You have to use specific supporting details to prove that these statements are true facts. Kinds of specific supporting details include **examples, statistics, and quotations.**

OPINION	Photographs of ultrathin fashion models send the wrong message to girls and young women.
FACT, BUT NEEDS PROOF	Fashion models are unnaturally thin.
SPECIFIC SUPPORTING DETAIL	The average model weighs 25 percent less than the average woman of the same height.

- F-NP 1. People who steal identities do a lot of damage before their victims become aware of it. (*The writer could give an example of a person who was victimized before noticing it.*)
- O 2. Punishment for identity thieves is not severe enough. (*The writer could give an example of a typical punishment.*)
- SSD 3. Last year, the losses of victims totaled more than \$7 billion.

# Using Outside Sources

- ▶ Where can you find specific supporting details to support your ideas?
- ▶ For some assignments, you may be able to use examples from your own personal experience, or you may be able to gather quotations and statistics by performing an experiment, taking a survey, or interviewing people. For other assignments, you may have to look for outside sources by researching your topic in a library or on the Internet.
- ▶ There are **three ways** to insert outside information into your own writing:
- ▶ (1) You can quote it, (2) you can summarize it, or (3) you can paraphrase it.



# Plagiarism

- ▶ **Plagiarism** is using someone else's words or ideas as if they were your own, and it is a serious offense. When you use information from an outside source without acknowledging that source, you are guilty of plagiarism.

# Quotations

- ▶ Quotations from reliable and knowledgeable sources are good supporting details. There are two kinds of quotations: **direct** and **indirect**.
- ▶ In a **direct quotation**, you copy another person's exact words (spoken or written) and enclose them in quotation marks.
- ▶ In an **indirect quotation**, you report the person's words without quotation marks.

### Drugs and the Olympic Games 1

<sup>1</sup>It is no secret that performance-enhancing drugs have been used by Olympic athletes for decades. <sup>2</sup>According to an article in *Forbes* magazine, "From the brute steroids the East Germans reportedly used on their Olympians during the Cold War to today's man-made versions of natural human proteins, drugs have been as much a staple of the Games as gold, silver, and bronze" (Herper, par. 4). <sup>3</sup>Despite rigorous drug testing, the use of banned performance-enhancing substances has become more widespread than ever. <sup>4</sup>The disqualification of athletes from the most recent Olympic Games because of illegal drug use shows that the problem is ongoing.

<sup>5</sup>It seems apparent that if athletes want to win, they must consider using drugs. <sup>6</sup>Dr. Michael Karsten, a Dutch physician who said he had prescribed anabolic steroids to hundreds of world-class athletes, states, "If you are especially gifted, you may win once, but from my experience you can't continue to win without drugs. <sup>7</sup>The field is just too filled with drug users" (qtd. in Bamberger and Yaeger 62). <sup>8</sup>In fact, some people claim that record-breaking performances of Olympic athletes may be directly due to drugs. <sup>9</sup>Charles Yesalis, a Pennsylvania State University professor who has studied the use of drugs in sports, believes "a large percentage" of athletes who have set new records have done so with the help of performance-enhancing drugs. <sup>10</sup>"A lot of experts, at least in private, feel that way," he claims (qtd. in Herper, par. 6).

# Reporting Verbs and Phrases

- ▶ To introduce direct quotations, indirect quotations, or statistics, use the phrase **according to** or a **reporting verb** such as the following:

assert	insist	report	suggest
claim	maintain	say	write
declare	mention	state	

- ▶ Here are some rules for their use:
- ▶ 1. Reporting verbs can appear before, in the middle of, or after borrowed information. The reporting phrase **according to** usually appears before or after but not in the middle.
- ▶ **Examples:**

One young bicyclist **says**, "To win in world-class competition, you have to take drugs" (Jones).

"To win in world-class competition," **says** one young bicyclist, "you have to take drugs" (Jones).

"To win in world-class competition, you have to take drugs," **says** one young bicyclist (Jones).

**According to** one young bicyclist, athletes have to take drugs to win (Jones).

Athletes have to take drugs **to** win, **according to** one young bicyclist (Jones).

- 2. Reporting verbs can be used either with or without the subordinator *as*.
- **Examples:**
  - As** one writer **says** when discussing the case of an Olympic medallist who unknowingly took a banned drug, "The human body, of course, doesn't distinguish intentional use from inadvertent exposure. Neither does the IOC [International Olympic Committee]"
  - One writer **says** when discussing the case of an Olympic medallist who unknowingly took a banned drug, "The human body, of course, doesn't distinguish intentional use from inadvertent exposure. Neither does the IOC [International Olympic Committee]"

- ▶ 3. Reporting verbs can be in any tense. However, be aware that a past tense reporting verb may cause changes in verbs, pronouns, and time expressions in an indirect quotation.
- ▶ **Examples:**
- ▶ Some critics **claim/have claimed** that the International Olympic Committee has been lax on enforcement of drug bans
- ▶ Some critics **claimed** that the International Olympic Committee had been lax on enforcement of drug bans.

- ▶ 4. Including the source of the borrowed information with the reporting expression gives authority to your writing because it lets your reader know immediately that your information is from a credible source.
- ▶ **Examples:**
- ▶ **The institute of Global Ethics** warns, "The Olympics could well become just another money-drenched media promotion in which contestants will be motivated less by athletic glory than by lucrative future contracts" (Kidder, par. 7).