Unit Four

Joining Sentences with Subordinators

Subordinators are sentence-joining words that, like the coordinators, help us show a variety of relationships between ideas. Here are the subordinators we use most often:

Subordinator	Logical Relationship	Example
although, though, even though, while, whereas	contrast	Although I am a senior, I have 40 more units to take.
because, since	effect/cause	School is taking longer because I have to work.
if	condition	I can go to the movies if I finish my homework.
unless	condition	I cannot go to the movies unless I finish my homework. (Unless I finish means if I don't finish.)
before, after, when, whenever, until, as soon as	time	After I finish my homework, I'll go to the movies.

When we put a subordinator in front of a sentence, we change the sentence from an independent clause to a dependent (or subordinate) clause. A dependent clause cannot be a sentence by itself, so we have to join it to an independent clause:

Because she purchased her ticket in advance,	(dependent clause)
she got a discount fare.	(independent clause)
She got a discount fare	(independent clause)
because she purchased her ticket in advance.	(dependent clause)

Here is the rule to remember when using the subordinators to join two logically related ideas:

The dependent clause can come first or second in the sentence, but the two logically related ideas must appear in the same sentence.

She bought a ticket in advance.	(sentence)
Because she bought a ticket in advance.	(fragment, not a sentence)
Because she bought a ticket in advance, she got a discount fare.	(sentence)

PUNCTUATION: When the subordinate clause comes first in a sentence, it is followed by a comma, following this pattern: subordinate clause + comma + independent clause.

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Exercise Two Urban Green

In the following exercise, first decide how the ideas in the two separate sentences are logically related; then, choose a <u>subordinator</u> that shows the relationship and use it to join the two sentences.

EXAMPLE: Urban policymakers need to take action.
The number of trees in American cities has decreased by 25 percent in the last 25 years.

SOLUTION: Urban policymakers need to take action because the number of trees in American cities has decreased by 25 percent in the last 25 years.

1.   Fires and diseases have caused American cities to lose trees.
They are not the main cause of tree loss.

2.   Cities experience the most tree loss.
Trees are removed for office buildings, shopping malls, homes, and parking lots.

3.   Some people claim that trees are too messy for urban areas.
A significant body of research shows the benefits of trees to the environment and human health.

4.   Trees clean the environment.
They filter pollutants from the air and water.

5.   Sick people recover faster.
     They recuperate around trees.

6.   Children have spent time in nature.
     They pay more attention.

7.   Research suggests that people want to exercise more.
     They are surrounded by greenery.

8.   Some people argue that the government shouldn't take action.
     It needs to solve other problems first, such as urban crime.

9.   But studies show that people are less aggressive.
     They live near trees.

10. City governments begin to sponsor tree-planting for residents.
     They will continue to lose trees and their benefits.

Exercise Three   You Be the Co-Author

Complete the following sentences by filling in the blanks with subordinate clauses beginning with the subordinators given or with main clauses. Be sure to add information that relates to your own life and that logically fits with the given subordinator.

1.   Next summer, I want to travel because _____

_____

2.   I'm considering going to _____ although_____
                    Name a place.

_____

3.   I dream of going to _____ whenever_____.
                    Name a place.

_____

4.   While Spain sounds exciting, _____ is more affordable.
                            Name a place.

5.   I can't go anywhere unless _____

6.   Before _____,
     I might have to renew my passport.

7.   When I asked my closest friend for suggestions, he (or she) _____

_____

8. Even though I was offered a summer job, _____.

9. After thinking it over, I've decided to _____

    because _____.

10. I would travel around the world if _____

    _____