

Connecting Ideas Using Transitions and Semicolons

Rhetorical Grammar Concepts

The materials labeled Rhetorical Grammar Concepts are for your reference as you proceed with the instruction in this unit.

Transitions, like coordinating words, are used to connect ideas that are of equal importance. They join two separate sentences; therefore, either a semicolon or a period must be used at the end of the first sentence. Place the transition at the beginning of the second sentence and always place a comma after the transition. Transitions can also sometimes begin a sentence for additional emphasis.

Example

sentence

transition + comma

They join two separate sentences; therefore, either a semicolon or a period must be used at the end of the first sentence.

When the ideas in two sentences are closely related and don't require a transition to show the logical connection, the sentences can be joined simply with a semicolon.

Example

sentence

semicolon

sentence

The ideas in some sentences are closely related; they can be joined with just a semicolon.

| Using Coordination and Transitions to Express Logical Relationships | | |
|--|---|--|
| Logical Relationship | Coordinating Words | Transition Words/ Phrases |
| Addition | and, not only . . . but also, both . . . and | in addition, furthermore, moreover, also, besides |
| Concession or Contrast | but, yet | however, nevertheless, on the other hand, still, in contrast, instead, on the contrary |
| Alternatives, Choice, or Option | or, nor, either . . . or, neither . . . nor | alternatively, on the other hand |
| Cause or Reason | for | therefore, consequently, thus, for that reason |
| Result | so | as a result, therefore, thus, consequently, for this reason |
| Condition | | otherwise |
| Time or Sequence | | then, first, second, third, finally, next, afterwards, after that, before that, meanwhile, at first, eventually |
| Comparison or Contrast | but | similarly, likewise, in contrast |
| Restatement | | in other words, that is |
| Example, Generalization, or Conclusion | | for example, for instance, in general, overall, in conclusion |

Punctuation note: Transitions, like coordinating words, can begin sentences. However, when a transition begins a sentence, it must be followed by a comma.