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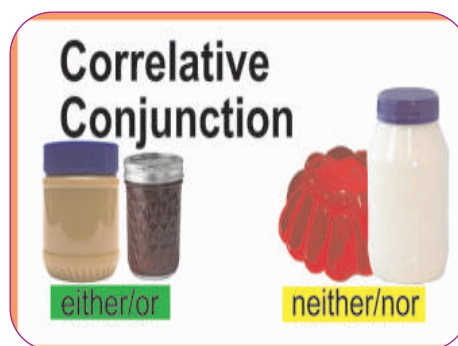
## AN INNOVATIVE WAY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING OF CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS IN ENGLISH

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### ABSTRACT :

**A** conjunction is a part of grammar, i.e. a part of speech. It joins words, phrases, or clauses together (Ehrlich, E. and Murphy, D., 1991). Conjunctions such as *and*, *but*, *because*, *when*, *while*, *since*, *if*, etc, link thoughts and ideas in speaking and writing. They are extremely useful and vital for forming sentences. Further, they are used to avoid the sentences with like bullet points and help in easy flow of text. There are three types of conjunctions in English: coordinating conjunctions as in *I like both English and linguistics*, subordinating conjunctions like in *When I went to the station, the train had gone*, and correlative conjunctions as in *The programme was developed not only for the students, but also for the teachers*. The researcher in this paper concentrates on the correlative conjunctions, their structures, and usage in the written and communicative aspect, because over the years, the area of correlative conjunctions which is important in language study, has received less attention from both the students of English as a Second Language (ESL) and the students of linguistics in comparison with other parts of speech like nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions. Thus, having considered this concept in mind, a student-friendly innovative teaching and learning tool known as 'Conjunction Learner' is developed with the help of the computer technology to deeply promote the knowledge of the correlative conjunctions of the students of English and linguistics.



**KEYWORDS :** *correlative conjunction, part of speech, language study, students of ESL and linguistics, innovative tool, computer technology.*

### INTRODUCTION

A correlative conjunction is a pair of elements that join two similar parts of a phrase, clause, or sentence (Bas Aarts, et.al., 2014). For example, *You may either stand up or sit down*. Here, *either...or* is one of the correlative conjunctions and it links the lesser complete constituents, *stand up* and *sit down*. Gene Parulis (2000) also says that correlative conjunctions are conjunctions in pair which harmonize two items. These conjunctions, also known as correlatives, are often used in both spoken and written English to make a point, give an explanation, or discuss alternatives. Correlatives should introduce parallel units, i.e. grammatical units of equivalent functions: nouns with nouns, verbs with verbs, adjectives with adjectives, phrases with phrases, clauses with clauses, and so on. They also lend equal weight to the joined elements; which is to say, one joined element is always equal to the other, but never subordinate to it. There are two types of correlative conjunctions: *Coordinating correlatives and Subordinating correlatives*.

**COORDINATING CORRELATIVES:**

They include *both...and*, *either...or*, *neither...nor*, and *not only...but also*. In these conjunctions, the first word is an 'endorsing item' and the second is a 'coordinator' (Greenbaum, S. and Quirk, R., 2005). Correlatives are used in pairs in a parallel construction.

**both...and**

It emphasizes the additive or combinatory meaning of and:

Vishal *both* loves Luxmi *and* wants to marry her.  
Both Kavya *and* her *sister* failed in mathematics.

It also singles out the segregatory meaning of 'and' rather than the combinatory meaning:

Both Vishal *and* Luxmi got divorced. (not from each other)

Usually the meaning is practically the same as it would be with a simple coordinating conjunction, but there is an additional degree of emphasis:

He added milk and sugar.  
He added *both* milk *and* sugar.

**either...or**

It emphasizes the exclusive meaning of 'or'. The linked units may be the completed ones. For example:

I noticed that I couldn't move *either* my head *or* my arms.  
That clock runs *either* too fast *or* too slow.

**neither...nor**

It is the negative correlative of 'both...and'. It emphasizes that the negation applies to both units:

Vishal *neither* loves Luxmy *nor* wants to marry her.  
The house was *neither* attractive *nor* affordable.

The negative counterpart of a sentence which is written with the use of 'either...or', is equivalent to the sentence with 'neither...nor', so that these two sentences are similar in meaning. For example:

He hasn't met *either* her mother *or* her father.  
He has met *neither* her mother *nor* her father.

**not only...but also**

The combination of 'not' and 'only', i.e. 'not only', is the correlative with the combination of 'but' and 'also', i.e. 'but also':

Your method is *not only* effective but also easy.  
Not only does she write novel, *but also* she writes poetry.

**Subordinating correlatives:**

These conjunctions include *hardly/scarcely...when*, *if...then*, *so/such...that*, *less/more...than*, *no sooner...than*, etc.

**hardly...when**

It is possible to express the same idea using *hardly/scarcely...when*:

*Hardly* had I reached the station *when* the train came.  
*Scarcely* had I thought of having ice cream *when* my friend bought one for me.

**if...then**

This conjunction is used to form the conditional statement, which is a statement with a hypothesis followed by a conclusion. For instance:

If you get good results in G.C.E (A/L), *then* you will enter the university.  
 If the weather is nice, *then* I will play outside.

Here, the parts after the ‘if’: ‘you get good results’ and ‘the weather is nice’ – are called hypotheses and the parts after the ‘then’ – ‘you will enter the university’ and ‘I will play outside’ – are called *conclusions*.

so/such...that

It is used to express a cause and effect. For example:

My sister is so shy *that* she hides behind my mother when there are strangers around.

**Cause:** *My sister is very shy.*

**Effect:** *She hides behind my mother when there are strangers around.*

She is such a charming woman *that* everybody stares at her.

**Note:** such a very charming... ‘very’ is dropped.

**Cause:** *She is a very charming woman.*

**Effect:** *Everybody stares at her.*

**less/more...than**

Less is the comparative of ‘little’ (mostly used before uncountable, singular nouns). For example:

A receptionist earns *less* money *than* a director.  
 I have *more* books *than* my grandfather.

**no sooner...than**

If the second event occurs immediately after the first, then that idea can be expressed by using the structure *no sooner ... than*. For instance:

*No sooner* had I arrived at the station *than* the train came. (= I came first and the train arrived right after me.)  
*No sooner* had I closed my eyes *than* I fell asleep.

In the above structure, *no sooner* introduces the event that occurred first.

**Some points to ponder when using correlative conjunctions:**

1. As far as the correlative conjunctions are concerned, a special attention is required for parallelism. This implies that the grammatical units after both the parts of the correlative conjunctions should be equal. For example, in a sentence written with correlative conjunctions, if a prepositional phrase, for instance, follows one part of the correlative conjunction, say ‘either’ then another prepositional phrase in the same sentence should follow the other part of the said correlative conjunction, ‘or’. For example:

You will find your lecturer either *in the canteen or in the library*.

2. When joining singular and plural subjects, the subject closest to the verb determines whether the verb is singular or plural. For example:

Either you or *Leon* has to remain with me.  
 Everyday either the alarm of the clock or *his sisters* wake him up for school.

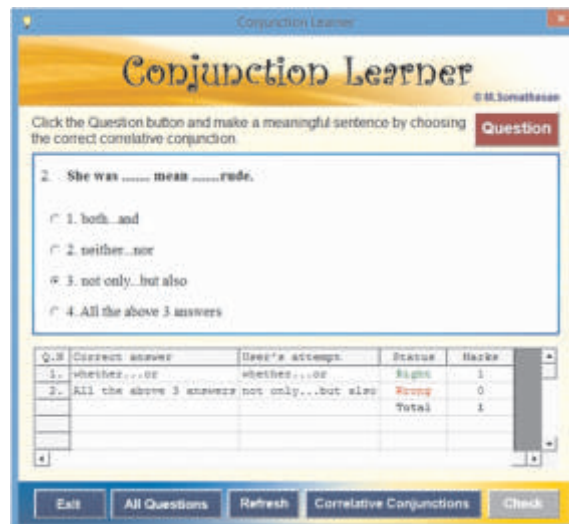
3. When two subjects are joined together by a correlative conjunction, any pronoun that follows must be in agreement with the second subject. For instance:

Neither the CEO nor *the executives* got *their* share of the bonuses this year.  
 Neither the executives nor *the* CEO got *his* share of the bonuses this year.

**METHODOLOGY:**

The correlative conjunctions, their structures, and usage were, first of all, deeply deemed for the particular study. Then, nearly hundred multiple choice questions (for this paper) about correlative conjunctions were carefully prepared from course books of Higher National Diploma in English (HNDE) at Advanced Technological Institutes (ATIs), English grammar books, and reliable grammar materials in the internet. Then, the computer language, Visual Basic 6, was used to design the particular programme, i.e. the learning tool (Conjunction Learner), and all the questions and their relevant answers were cautiously fed into the programme. As far as the mechanism of this tool is concerned, a student of ESL or linguistics, first of all, has to click the *Question* button to get the questions. Then, he can see the question and its four answers displayed. The tool has been programmed to display the question randomly. Now the student has to read the question carefully and click the appropriate answer. If he likes to see or check his results immediately, he can click the *Check* button to see it. Otherwise, he can check the answers of all the questions after attending them completely. In the results grid, the student can see the question number, question, the correct answer of the question, his attempt, the status whether his attempt is right or wrong or NA (Not Attempted), and finally his marks.

Sample visual of the developed tool



**Results and discussion:**

For this study, 50 first year students of HNDE at ATI, Trincomalee, Sri Lanka were selected to test their existing and also boosting the knowledge in correlative conjunctions with the learning tool. The researcher used pre-test and post test in the usage of correlative conjunctions as research tools. First, the pre-test was conducted among the participants and the results were obtained. Then, the students were given the opportunity to use the

developed tool for two weeks to learn the correlative conjunctions. After two weeks, the post test was conducted, and the results were obtained. The results of the pre-test and post test were tabled as follows:

The Results of the Pre-test and Post test				
Marks Range	Number of Students (50)			
	Pre-test	Percentage (%)	Post test	Percentage (%)
0-24	5	10	1	2
25-29	4	8	1	2
30-34	7	14	2	4
35-39	5	10	3	6
40-44	6	12	6	12
45-49	7	14	6	12
50-54	4	8	7	14
55-59	3	6	9	18
60-64	4	8	5	10
65-69	3	6	3	6
70-84	1	2	4	8
85-100	1	2	3	6
	<b>50</b>		<b>50</b>	

Then, the results of both pre-test and post test together were put in a bar graph (Figure 1) to measure the progress of the students in the knowledge of correlative conjunctions.

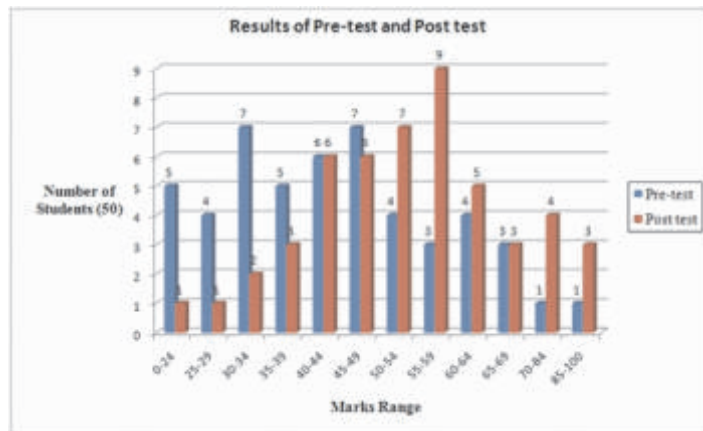


Figure 1

**CONCLUSION:**

In conclusion, correlative conjunctions are very important for English language learning. Commonly, they refine an ESL (here, the student of HNDE) student’s abilities of writing and speaking to great extent. It is the main reason why the researcher has taken time to widely discuss the correlative conjunctions in this paper, with a special focus on their types and structures, meaning, and uses or functions in the language study. To develop the knowledge of correlative conjunctions of the students of HNDE, a user-friendly innovative teaching and learning tool, ‘Conjunction Learner’, was developed with the help of Visual Basic 6. Pre-test and post test were taken as the research tools; and their results were put in a bar graph for observing the progress of the students. The students utilized the tool enthusiastically and their results were quite progressive. Further, they stated that they were very interested in doing such technology-incorporated activity and especially all voiced happily that they were able to get the immediate feedback of their every attempt in the e-tool. Therefore, it is obvious that technology based education, especially computer based learning and testing activities stimulate the students’ interest in English language learning and it is also very helpful for teachers to observe the students’ performance and motivate them towards their learning mission in their academic life.

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