

Academic Writing

Lesson 5
Cause and effect
Topic Sentences
Essay structures

Cause and effect

- While data reports require discussion of change and stasis, a report is not academic unless it is interpreted.
- Interpretation of data may be based on fact or informed hypothesis, but the underlying structures used are similar

Indicating cause-effect

- One of the most obvious ways to indicate cause-effect is to use the structure
Y is caused by X; X causes Y
- However, not only do you need a wider range of vocabulary for this function, but you also need to be able to indicate cause in different syntactic structures: in **adjuncts, conjunctions** and **nouns**, as well as **verbs**.

Indicating cause-effect

- **Adjuncts and conjunctions**
 - **as / because / since / seeing as** [+clause]
 - **as a consequence, / as a result,** [+clause]
 - **thus / therefore / hence/ so** [+clause]
 - **as a consequence of/on account of/ as a result of** [+noun phrase]
 - **because of** [+noun phrase]
 - **due to / owing to / thanks to** [+noun phrase]
- **TASK 1: cause and effect**
 - Exercises A & B

Indicating cause

- **Nouns**
 - The [likely/probable] **cause of** X is...
reason for
 - One [possible] **cause of** X is...
reason for
 - The **motive behind / motivation for** X is...
The one **causative/ driving / motivating / underlying + factor / force**

Indicating cause

- **Verbs**
 - **X causes Y**
 - **X brings about Y / X brings Y about**
 - **X gives rise to Y**
 - **X induces Y** (in experimental contexts)
 - **X leads to Y**
 - **Y stems from X**

Indicating effects

- Information pertaining to **causes** is not always required.
- The **effects**, however, are often the *raison d'être* of the report.
 - Effects can be **in keeping with** or **in contrast to** existing knowledge
 - Effects can be **verified** (factual) or **hypothetical** (expected)

Indicating effects

- Effects **in keeping with** existing knowledge
 - X **agrees with** Y
 - X **is in agreement with** Y
 - X **confirms** Y
 - X **conforms to** Y
 - X **corroborates** Y
 - X **is consistent with** Y
 - X **is in keeping with** Y
 - X **reinforces** Y
 - Y **is borne out by** X

Indicating effects

- Effects **contrasting with** existing knowledge
 - X **contradicts** Y
 - X **contrasts with** Y
 - X **stands in contrast to** Y
 - X **disagrees with** Y
 - X **disproves** Y
 - X **is inconsistent with** Y
 - X **invalidates** Y
 - X **refutes** Y

Indicating effects

- Effects can be **verified** (factual) or **hypothetical** (expected)
 - Use **tenses** to express certainty
 - Use **modal verbs** to express expectation

X is consistent with Y	X should be consistent with Y
X indicates that ...	X would seem to indicate that ...
X proves Y	X may well prove Y
X demonstrates Y	X could indeed demonstrate Y
X negatively affects Y	X might negatively affect Y

Indicating effects

- Some verbs can express expectation without the help of modals, e.g.
 - assume**
 - expect**
 - hope**
 - hypothesize**
 - indicate**
 - presume**
 - seem**
 - suppose**

Indicating effects

- Another difference lies in the use of **adverbs** and **prepositional phrases**, e.g.
 - apparently**
 - likely**
 - in all likelihood**
 - ostensibly**
 - presumably**
 - purportedly**
 - seemingly**
 - supposedly**

Indicating effect

- Finally, you can also use **nouns** to indicate (possible and actual) effects, e.g.
- The **result** of X is to Y *have+result*
 consequence(s) *have+consequence*
 effect *have+effect*
 end result *have+end result*
 outcome *have+outcome*
- X has **repercussions** for **the ... of Y**.
- The **upshot** of X is **to INF...**

Topic sentences

Back to basics...

- “Aboutness”
 - A paragraph should focus on one idea
 - More than one idea = more than one para
 - The idea should be expressed in a single sentence near the start of the paragraph (often, but not always, the first sentence)
 - This can be called a **topic sentence**

Topic sentences

TASK 3

- Topic sentences (i)
 - Look at the paragraphs provided and identify the topic sentence in each one.
- Topic sentences (ii): EURALEX
 - Do the same with these paragraphs on lexicography: they have been specially selected so that the topic sentence does not always come at the beginning ☺

Topic sentences

- Can you condense the information in your paragraph/ essay / article into just one sentence?
 - i.e., one sentence of no more than 20 words?
- Identify the **main topic**, the **specific topic** within that, and how they are put into **relation** with one another

Topic sentences

TASK 4

- The topic sentences (first sentences) of the paragraphs provided have been removed and jumbled up.
 - Using the words in the table, match up text from columns A-B-C-D to form sentences, and allocate each sentence to one of the paragraphs.

Topic sentences

TASK 5

- ◉ From the topic sentences alone, predict the likely content of the rest of the paragraphs.
 - Write one or two of those paragraphs.

Body text

- ◉ Body text needs to be arranged sequentially so that one idea flows naturally into the next.
 1. Think about how you wish to present the information before you start writing, and
 2. Use appropriate transitional devices.
→ See hand-out
- ◉ In the next lesson we will focus on essay plans and different types of sequencing of ideas