A Contrastive Study of Conjuncts in English and Arabic

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Abstract
This research is a contrastive study of “conjuncts” in English and Arabic. It deals with their form, function, position as well as their relation to the whole relevance and their semantics in both languages. The research is organized along three parts; the first and the second analyze “conjuncts” in English and Arabic respectively. The third is kept to deal with aspects of similarity and difference of “conjuncts”, if any, in both languages.

1. Introduction
“Conjuncts” are certain devices used to connect items with what has been said previously (Wikipedia, 2000:2). But they could be an area of difficulty for Arabic learners of English, since English conjuncts are
formally different from their identical ones in Arabic. Another point is that learners have to differentiate between “conjuncts” and other types of connecters. To use “conjuncts” properly, learners then should be aware of the semantic implications of each conjunct.

2. **Aim of the Research:**
   This research aims at analyzing “conjuncts” in both English and Arabic. It investigates their grammatical and semantic roles in a sentence through giving examples. Aspects of similarity and difference will be discussed in detail.

3. **Hypothesis:**
   The present study hypothesizes that English and Arabic conjuncts are formally different since in English, they are adverbials, whereas, in Arabic, they are particles but they have the same function in that English and Arabic conjuncts are used to connect two or more units. Accordingly, it is assumed that conjuncts in both languages are devices used to have a connective function but have no effect on the content meaning of the proposition as a whole.

4. **Conjuncts in English:**

4.1 **form and function:**
   Conjuncts are defined as certain types of adverbials whose function is primarily connective\(^1\), e.g. however, moreover, indeed. (Crystal, 1998:81). They have the form of single words, as “however”, or adverbial phrases or promotional phrases, (Quirk et al., 1985: 657), as in:

   1. George couldn’t find his sixpence. **What is more**, he couldn’t get his arm out. (adverbial phrases)
   2. **On the other hand**, he made no attempt to help her. (prepositional phrase)
   The connective function of conjuncts is clarified by Wikipedia (2000:2) by saying “conjuncts connect the sentence with previous parts of discourse”, as in:

   3. It was raining. **Therefore**, we didn’t go swimming.
   4. It was sunny. **However**, we stayed inside.

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\(^1\) Crystal (1998:81) explains that these conjuncts should not be confused with coordinating conjunctions which are “items whose function is to connect words and other constructions”.
“therefore” and “however” in (3) and (4) relate “we didn’t go swimming” and “we stayed at inside” to what is mentioned previously, i.e. “it was raining” and “it was sunny” respectively. But this connective of function of “conjuncts” is limited to sentences (not words). This is what Muir (1972: 72) affirms when he calls “in fact, therefore, nevertheless” as SENTENCE and LINKERS since they link the sentence to what has gone before, as in:

5. I don’t know, in fact, what he is going to do.
6. We could, therefore, keep it going for quite a time.
7. We all sent presents, nerveless.

4.2 Position:

Muir (ibid) states that the position of conjuncts is not fixed in clause structure. “However”, for example, can occur initially, medially, and finally, as in:

8. However, I don’t think we should go on with it.
9. I don’t think, however, that we should go on with it.
10. I don’t think we should go on with it, however.

Quirk et al (1985: 643), on the other hand, state that most conjuncts occur initially like “hence, besides, also, yet, still”. Medial positions are rare for most conjuncts. Those that occur medially are “on the contrary, in other words, nevertheless”. final position is rarer and those that occur finally include “anyhow, anyway, though”. Quirk et al (ibid) explains that conjuncts at initial position are often followed by a comma, and those at final position are often preceded by one in writing. In speech, they are separated by a tone unit boundary.

This tendency to separate “conjuncts” from other clauses is due to the fact that conjuncts are treated as independent constituents syntactically and semantically.

Syntactically, “conjuncts” are not considered as parts of the syntactic structure in which they are used. Quirk et al (1985.633) affirm this by saying “conjuncts both indicate the relation and are demonstrably outside the syntactically integrated clause structure”. They also add (p.631) that “conjuncts have a relatively detached and super ordinate role as compared with other clause elements”. As such, it is possible to remove the conjuncts in (5), (6), (7) without making the sentence ungrammatical.

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1 Muir (ibid) further adds that other linkers like “and, or, but” have a fixed position in the sentence, i.e. medial as “I came in and he went out”
Semantically, “conjuncts” don’t contribute information to the propositional content in which they are used. Quirk et al (1985:631) state that conjuncts “have the function of conjoining independent units rather than contributing another facet information to a single integrated unit. They indicate how the speakers view the connection between two linguistic units”, as in:

11. The candidate is a fine teacher, a broadcaster of some experience, and a respected drama critic. In addition, she has written a successful novel. “in addition” (11) connects the proposition that follows with the previous one without adding extra information to the proposition itself.

4.3 Conjuncts and Relevance:

Conjuncts are considered as types of parenthetical adverbial which are traditionally treated as non-truth-conditional\(^1\), i.e. they do not contribute to the truth conditions of the utterance in which they occur.

Blackmore (1987:141) discusses “and, after all, so, moreover, furthermore”. She proposes that these expressions are not seen as encoding concepts or as contributing to the truth conditions of utterances but as “indicating to the hearer what types of inference process he/she is in”. Their main function is to relate two separate syntactic units involved.

As such, a conjunct has no effect on the content meaning of a sentence. However, Fraser (1990:390) gives the following examples to prove that the presence or absence of the conjuncts “and, but, or, so, however, then” doesn’t alter the potential discourse relationship between the message which follows and the foregoing discourse. That is, these conjuncts don’t create meaning as in:

12.A: Mary left
   B: (i) John stayed.
   (ii) Now, John stayed.
   (iii) So, John stayed.
   (iv) However, John stayed.
   (v) Then, John stayed.

(i) can be interpreted as it one of the “conjuncts” were there. For example, it can be interpreted as a “transitional message”, as it is signaled by “and” or a “resultant” message as it is signaled by “so”. The main relevance of the sentence will be derived from the fact that “John stayed” and not from the fact that this information has been given with “and” or with “or” or with “but” … etc, that is why.

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\(^1\) For further discussion on adverbs and truth conditionality, see Levinson (1983:255), Palmer (1986:64) and Infantodon-Trouki (1993:73)
In fact, there is a general assumption that “conjuncts” are independent constructions, in that they don’t modify any constituent of the relevant clauses. Haegman (1988:85) argues that “conjuncts” are parts of the peripheral adverbials which are “orphan constituents and fully unattached at all syntactic level of representation”.

Fraser (1990:388) affirms this claim through his discussion of “and, but, or, however, so, then” giving the following example:
13. I want it finished today. However, you did it.

“However” here is used to signal a contrast to expectations and is not a part of the message content. It separates two distinct messages and signals that the second message is concessive of the first. “However” is a device used to show how the message that follows relates to the preceding. So, it is not a part of the structure of the sentence in which it is used. Consequently, “conjuncts” are not considered as integrated parts of the sentence. They are independent constructions having a conjoining function.

4.4 The Semantics of English Conjuncts:
Quirk et al (1985:634-639) set out seven conjunctive roles with their sub-divisions as follows:

a: LISTING:
(i) ENUMERATIVE: next, then, first, second, … etc.
These conjuncts are used to give order to a list as in:
14. In the first place, the economy is recovering, and secondly unemployment is beginning to decline.

(ii) ADDITIVE:
EQUATIVE: correspondingly, equally, similarly, likewise.
By the use of the EQUATIVE subtype, we indicate that an item has a similar force to a preceding one:
15. She has a high reasonability and, equally, a high salary.

(iii) REINFORCING:
again, also, further, furthermore, moreover, then, too, in addition, about all.
The REINFORCING subtype assesses an item as adding greater weight to a preceding one:
16. He has the opportunity, the motivation, and above all the courage to do it.

b: SUMMATIVE:
altogether, therefore, thus, overall, in conclusion, in sum, to conclude, to sum up.
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Summative conjuncts introduce an item that embraces the preceding ones:
17. He was late for work, he quarreled with a colleague, and he lost his wallet, all in all, it was a bad day.

c: Appositive:
  namely, in other words, for instance, that is.
  Appositive conjuncts are concerned to express the content of the preceding items in other items:
18. She has some assistance, for instance, a secretary.

d: RESULTIVE:
  accordingly, consequently, hence, now, so, therefore, as a consequence, as a result, of course.
  The conjuncts show that the final item tends to be a conclusion and a result:
19. I got there very late, so, I missed most of the fun.

e: INFERENTIAL:
  otherwise, in that case, else, in other words.
  They indicate a conclusion based on logic and supposition:
20. You haven’t answered my question, in other words, you disapprove of my proposal.

f: CONTRASTIVE:
  (i) REFORMULATORY:
    better, rather, more accurately, more precisely, alternatively.
    Contrastive conjuncts present contrastive words or contrastive matter in relation to what has preceded:
21. She has asked some of her friends – some of her husband’s friends, rather.
  (ii) REPLACITIVE:
    better, worse, on the other hand, rather.
    By the use of these conjuncts, the speaker withdraws an item replaces it by a more important one.
22. He was opposed by his mother or, rather, by both his parents.
  (iii) ANTITHETIC:
    instead, oppositely, on the contrary, in contrast, in comparison, by way of comparison.
    The item may be contrasted with preceding one by introducing a direct antithesis:
23. He expected to be happy but, instead, he felt miserable.
(iv) CONCESSIVE:
however, nevertheless, yet, of course, anyhow, anyway, still, though, after all, all the same.
By the use of these conjuncts one item seems as unexpected in the light of the other as in:
24. My age is against me, still, it’s worth a try.

**g: TRANSITIONAL:**
(i) **DISCOURSAL:**
Incidentally, now, by the way.
They are used to shift attention to another topic:
25. I want to tell you about my trip, but, by the way, how is your father?
(ii) **TEMPORAL:**
meantime, meanwhile, originally, subsequently, eventually.
These conjuncts seek to indicate a move away from the normal sequence in narrative to a temporally related event:
26. He saved a great deal of money but in the meantime his house deteriorated badly.

However these seven conjunctive roles with their subdivisions are displayed in Fig.(1):

(a) LISTING

   (i) enumerative

   (ii) additive

   equative

   reinforcing

(b) SUNNATIVE
(c) APPOSITIONAL
(d) RESULTIVE
(e) INFERENTAIL

(f) CONTRASTIVE

   (i) reformulatory

   (ii) replacive

   (iii) antithetic

   (iv) concessive
5. **Conjuncts in Arabic:**

5.1 **Form and Function:**

Arabic conjuncts are particles (حروف). They are: بل، لكن، ثم، ف و. It would be more convenient here to distinguish these conjunctive particles from conjunctive adverbs. Conjunctive particles, or conjunctive conjunctions, are those used to join units which have the same grammatical status, i.e. two verbs, two nouns, two adverbs or two sentences. Conjunctive adverbs, on the other hand, are those like “where, when, however”, used to join clauses or sentences only. (Al-Khuli, 1982:53).

However, Arabic conjunctive particles are used to join:

A. two verbs:

27. جاء و جلس زيد Zayd came and sat.

B. two nouns:

28. جاء زيد و عمرو Zayd and Amer came.

C. two adverbs:

29. سافرت إلى بيروت والي دمشق I travelled to Beirut and Damascus.

D. two sentences:

30. جاء زيد و ذهب عمرو Zayd came and Amer went.

Conjunctive particles, as stated above, have the function of connecting words and sentences. In this research, we will concentrate on sentence conjunction only. Cantarino (1975:11) emphasizes that conjunctive conjunctions are particles whose function is mainly connective. He (ibid) further adds that their main role is bringing together independent sentences that are understood as necessary parts in the complete exposition of an idea. The semantic relationship between the connected sentences is only given through their logical relation to each other.

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1 For a detailed account on words conjunction see Al-Andalusi (1987:697) and Al-Antaki (W.D. Vol. 2:289-292)
The conjunctive particle َوَ َوَ is the most generally used. Cantarino (ibid: 13-20) discusses the cases in which َوَ is used:

A. َوَ may connect two sentences with different verbs:
31. قاطعها وصاحَ... He interrupted her, shouting…

B. َوَ may also connect two sentences with the same verb but different subjects to indicate a simultaneous occurrence of action:
32. أن تركوه هللكوا If they leave him, he will perish and so will they.

C. It may connect two sentences with different objects:
33. يسميه قومه مُحمداً ويسميه أحمد.. His people call him Mohammed and also Ahmed.

D. It may connect two sentences with the same verb to express a reciprocal idea:
34. أحدث روكسان وتُحدثني. Roxane and I were talking to each other.

E. It may be preceded by an imperative sentence to give the reason of the command:
35. تعال وحدثني عن شهرزاد الجميلة. Come on, tell me about the beautiful Shahrazade.

F. It may introduce the jussive of the perfect, preceded by the particle “ل” (لِاَلأمر), as an expression of an indirect command, (Wright, 1971:291)
36. {الفَلْيَسَحْبِيْبِيْ لِي وَلِيْئُمِنَا بِي “Listen to my call, And believe in me” (Ali, 1997:79)

Cantarino(ibid:29) states that “ف” may also be used in case of (E) and (F) respectively as in:
37. قبلتي فَأَنا أَخوُها Kiss me, for I am her brother.
38. أولاً فَليأْتَوا بالقطنين First, let them bring the two cats.

5.2 Position:
Arabic conjunctive particles occur only in medial position, i.e. their position is fixed. This fact is affirmed by Cantarino (ibid:11) who states that a conjunction unites two or more sentences that are complete and structurally independent of each other without changing this structural independence of individual sentences, as in
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فكرة وطوال التفكير. He remained, thinking a long while.

“و” connects فكر which is structurally independent of أطول التفكير which is also independent, so the medical position of “و” is obligatory.

5.3 Conjuncts and Relevance:

Arabic conjunctive particles, as stated above, join two structurally independent sentences without changing this independence but the nature of this relationship and the meaning of the compound will vary according to the conjunction used. (Cantarino, ibid:11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>قاطعها وصاح</td>
<td>He interrupted her, shouting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قاطعها فصاح</td>
<td>He interrupted her, then he shouted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قاطعها ثم صاح</td>
<td>He interrupted her, then he shouted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since in (40), “و” joins equally important units, i.e. “قاطعها” and “صاح” to indicate their simultaneous validity whereas in (40.i), “ف” indicates a logical classification or arrangement. In (40.ii), “ثم” implies an interval between the two units.

As such, the conjunctive particle has no effect on the content meaning of the sentence, i.e, they don’t contribute to the meaning of the exposition. So the main meaning of the whole relevance will be derived from the fact that he shouted “صاح” whether it is used with “و”, “ف”, or “ثم”. That only show how the following unit relates to the preceding. Consequently, we may conclude that since these particles separate two distinct semantic and structural unites, they are not considered as parts of the sentence in which they are used. They are independent constructions having a connective function.

5.4 The Semantics of Arabic Conjuncts:

As stated previously, Cantarino (ibid) argues that the meaning of the compound will vary according to the conjunction used, therefore, “أم، ف، و، بل، لكن” perform different semantic functions when they join two independent sentences.

1. 

The semantic function of “و” could be summarized as follows, (ibid:12-20):
A. To connect sentences that happening simultaneously. In fact, simultaneity is considered as the main semantic effect of “و”:

41. لماذا تهتم بالوحدة العربية وتهمل الوحدة الإسلامية.

Why be concerned with Arabic unity and [at the same time] neglect Moslem unity?

B. To connect sentences happening in immediate sequence:

42. شكراً وأصرف. I thanked him and he left.

In relation to (B), “و” may also connect sentences understood as a natural succession of events:

43. بايع أبا بكر وتبع الناس. He acknowledged Abu Bakr as Caliph and the people follow him.

C. To connect sentences intended as equally important in the exposition:

44. لقد سمعت وقرأت ولا أزال أسمع وأقرأ. I have heard and read it and still do.

D. to introduce a sentence that should be understood as parenthetical explanation of the preceding one:

45. ذلك الحق هو الزكاة وهي الركن الثالث من الأركان الخمسة التي. This duty is the Zaka [which] is the third of the five pillars…

This parenthetical explanation may add a new aspect of the sentence:

46. فكر وأطل التفكير. He remained, thinking a long while.

E. To connect sentences in an adversative relationship, such as “but”, and “yet”:

47. جاز وتفعل كالغريب! You are a neighbour, yet you act like a stranger.

ف is a particle of classification or gradation which unites two clauses, showing either that the latter is immediately subsequent to the former in time, or that it is connected with it by some internal link, such as cause and effect, (Wright, 1971:291):

48. والذي اخرج المرعي فجعله غثاءاً أحوى. "And who bringth out the pasture and then doth make it swarthy stubble”(Ali, 1997:1636)

Thus “ف” implies an arrangement contrary to “و” which joins equally important sentences, stating their simultaneous validity, but without any
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attempt at internal arrangement or classification, (Cantarino, ibid:20). The difference between the two conjunctions can be seen in the following examples, (ibid:21):

49. He went on talking to her for a while until it was time for her to go back. Then, took leave and departed.

However, Cantarino (ibid,20-34) classifies Wright’s above definition and explains it in detail:
A. فَ introduces a sentence that may be understood as subsequent in time to the preceding action or situation:

49. أستمر يحادثها ساعة حتى حان وقت رجوعها فودعته وانصرفت. He went on talking to her for a while until it was time for her to go back. Then, took leave and departed.

50. When they were through with eating, they departed and he slept where he was.

B. فَ implies an internal- and logical- relationship between two coordinate sentences, e.g. it may refer back to the preceding statement as a necessary premise for the action of the second:

51. When I take a trip to go to the sea… I feel…

Cantarino (ibid:25) further adds that the sentence following the conjunction فَ may also express the reason for the cause of the preceding statement:

52. He could not avoid greeting him, so he did.

C. It may also unite two sentences that have a causal relationship pointing toward the effect and its consequences:

52. He could not avoid greeting him, so he did.

53. I praise God, for I have found my friend.

D. As a consequence of the progression, فَ may focus attention on the main idea when it occupies a secondary position following another statement:

54. It is the classical (language) which Islam at its appearance, found fully developed.
E. like the conjunction َوَ، ُثُمَّ may also connect two sentences that are in an adversative relationship:

55. خرج قومك فقيت في الدار. Your people went away, but you remained at home.

3. ُثُمَّ indicates succession at an interval and not immediately, (Wright, 1971:293):

"وَلله أنبتكم من الأرض نباتاً َوَ، يعيدكم فيها" [نوح:الآية 171-8-16].

“And Allah has produced you from the earth growing then in the end he would return you into the earth.” (Ali, 1997:1535)

Thus َوَ، ُثُمَّ connects two structurally independent statements as an interval contrary to َوَ، which stresses the connected series, so, before ُثُمَّ a pause or an interval in the narrative to be understood, (Cantarino, ibid:35).

The following example will clarify the difference between the two conjunctions َوَ، َوَ،:

56. فِإذا  فرغوا من الغداء انصرفوا عنه فنام حيث ُثُمَّ نهض َوَ، توضأ

When they had finished eating, they departed and he slept where he was; later he would wake up and perform his ablutions.

However, ُثُمَّ indicates the following, (ibid:35-39):

A. It introduces a new event or situation which shows that the preceding sentence has been completed:

58. اشتريت الكتاب بثمن غالٍ َوَ، ثم انتحته َوَ، زكتا في فهوة.

I brought the book at a high price, then I went to a corner of a coffee house.

B. It may introduce a logical sequence:

59. هي دينية من حيث أنها تُلغى الغريبات التي يرتكز عليها الدين َوَ، ثم أيضاً تأخذ مكان الدين في تعيين الأخلاق والقيم الإنسانية َوَ، ثم هي فلسفة.

It is religious, for it does away with secrets on which religion is based, and then, {because} it also takes the place of religion in determining virtues and human values, it is also philosophical...

C. It may indicate a transition from the general to the more special, (Abdul-Hameed, 1946:428) as in:

60. جاء القوم َوَ، جاء زيد.

People came then Zayd did.
4. **أم**:  

**أم** is a particle of equation. It indicates that the following sentence has a similar force to a proceeding one, (Al-Antaki, W.D.293):

"whether you warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe." (Ali, 1997:18)

5. **لكن**:  

**لكن** is an adversative particle ¹ which stresses the function of one part within a sentence in as adversative relationship to another sentence. Hence, **لكن** must introduce a complete sentence to which the particle belongs, (Cantarino, ibid:40)

He had always been very curious…, but something [happened that] set bounds to his inquisitiveness.

6. **لكن** is followed by a verb to express an adversative relationship, (ibid:43):

I did not pay much attention to you at first, but I heard one of you…

The adversative meaning expressed by **لكن** is based on the new statement or situation it introduces:

I will excuse you today from reciting, but I want you to make a vow to me.

The adversative part introduced by **لكن** may be presented as a parenthetical expression; (ibid:45):

There the old man became increasingly angry, but, with the school teacher, not with the boy.

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¹ Adversative particles are **لكن**، **لكنْ**، **ةلّ**، **ةلّْ**. Their function is to present an adversative proposition, without having any connective value, hence, they are very frequently preceded by the connective conjunction “و”, (Cantarino, ibid:39).
7. بل
A. Cantarino (ibid:46) states that بل is an adversative particle introduces an element which implies negation of the preceding statement:

Nobody knew if this family had a head, nor even how it had come down from...

B. بل may introduce additional information to the preceding sentence or statement:

An historian is not simply a translator, he also examines the translations in order to ascertain the truth contained therein.

C. It may also introduces a part of a sentence which could be considered as an elliptical construction, (ibid:47):

Whenever the prophet becomes a part of life, or rather an element of its new meaning...

D. It may indicate a transition from one purpose to another, (Abdul-Hameed, 1946:523):

“Those will proper who purify themselves and glorify their Guardian-Lord, And lift their hearts in prayer. Nay, ye prefer the life of this world”. (Ali,1997: 1638)

6. Comparison:
6.1 Form and Function:

English conjuncts are types of adverbials which are classified into seven conjunctive roles, each role has its sub-divisions. Arabic conjuncts, on the other hand, are particles which are nine in number: “أَمْ، ثُمَّ، فَ، وَبَلْ، لَكُنْ، لِكَنْ”

English and Arabic are extremely similar in employing conjuncts to have a connective function. In both languages, conjuncts are linkers. But English conjuncts are used to connect sentences only as in:

5. I don’t know, in fact, what he is going to do.

while Arabic conjuncts are used to connect words as well as sentences:

27. جاء زيد و عمرو Zayd and Amer came.

32. جاء زيد و ذهب عمرو Zayd came and Amer went.
6.2 Position:
The position of English conjuncts is not fixed. Some conjuncts like “however” can occur freely in all positions, viz. initially, medially, finally:
8. However, I don’t think we should go on with it.
9. I don’t think, however, that we should go on with it.
10. I don’t think we should go on with it, however.
Some conjuncts occur initially, some are restricted to medial position and some occur only finally.

The position of Arabic conjunctive particle is fixed. They occur in medial position only.
Another difference is that English conjuncts are separated from what follows by a tone unit boundary in speech or comma in writing, whereas Arabic conjunctive particles are not.

6.3 Conjunctions and Relevance:
In both languages, conjuncts do not create meaning, i.e. they have no effect on the content meaning of the message:

12. A: Mary left.
B: John stayed.
As it is said previously, the main relevance of the sentence is derived from the fact that John stayed and not from the fact that this information has been given with “however, so, now, …etc”.

In Arabic, the same case could be found:

40. قاطعها وصاح He interrupted her, shouting.
40.(i). قاطعها فصاح He interrupted her, then he shouted.
40.(ii). قاطعها ثم صاح He interrupted her, then he shouted.

The main relevance of the sentence is derived from صاح not from the fact that this information has been given with “ثم، ف، و…” etc.”

6.4 The Semantics of Conjuncts:
In fact, there are certain semantic functions that are common to English and Arabic conjuncts. They are as follows:

1. Enumeration:
The enumerative conjuncts in English are “next, then, first, second…” which are used to give order as in:

14. In the first place, the economy is recovering, and secondly unemployment is beginning to decline.

Whereas in Arabic, the particle “ف” could be considered as enumerative since it may indicate order and arrangement of events:

والذي اخرج المرعى فجعله غثاءًا أحوى “(الأعلى: الآية 4-5)
“And who bringth out the pasture and then doth make it swarthy stubble” (Ali, 1997:1636).

2. **Result:**

Resultive conjuncts in English are “accordingly, consequently, hence, now, so, therefore,…etc.” which are used to show that the final item tends to be a conclusion and a result:

19. I go there very late, **so**, I missed most of the fun.

In Arabic, on the other hand, the resultive particle is “ف” which may introduce a sentence that can be a result of the preceding:

أحمد الله فقد وجدت صديقي. 53. I praised God, for I have found my friend.

3. **Transition:**

The transitional conjuncts in English are divided into “discoursal” and “temporal”. Transitional-discoursal-conjuncts are “incidentally, now, by the way” which are used to shift attention to another topic:

25. I want to tell you about my trip, but, **by the way**, how is your father?

Transitional-temporal-conjuncts are “meantime, meanwhile, originally, subsequently, eventually” which are used to move temporally to a related events:

26. He saved a great deal of money, but **in the meantime** his house deteriorated badly.

On the other hand, the transitional conjunctive particles in Arabic are “ثام” and “بل”.

“ثام” is used to indicate a transition from the general to the more special:

60. جاء القوم ثم جاء زيد. People came then Zayd did.

“بل” may indicate a transition from one purpose to another:


4. **Equation:**

The equative conjuncts in English are “correspondingly, equally, similarly, likewise” which are used to indicate that an item has a similar force to a preceding one:

15. She has a high responsibility and, **equally**, a high salary.
A Contrastive Study of Conjuncts in English and Arabic.

On the other hand, the equative particle in Arabic is “أم”:

سواء عليهم أنذرتم أم لم تنذرهم لا يؤمنون، {البقرة: الآية 6}.

“Whether you warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe”. (Ali, 1997:18).

“و” may also indicate equation in that it may connect sentences equally important in the exposition:

44. لقد سمعت وقرأت ولزال أقرأ واسمع.

5. Antithesis:

The antithetic conjuncts in English are “instead, oppositely, on the contrary, in contrast, in comparison, by the way of comparison” which are used to indicate that the following item may be contrasted with the preceding one:

23. He expected to be happy, but, instead, he felt miserable.

While Arabic conjunctive particle that may indicate antithesis is “و” in that it may introduce a sentence opposite to the preceding in an adversative relationship:

47. جارُ وتفعل كالغريب.

Conclusion

After reviewing and comparing conjuncts in English and Arabic, we can conclude that there are some areas that are common to the two languages, and some others which are restricted to one language rather than the other.

The two languages are extremely different in the form of “conjuncts”. In English, they are adverbials, whereas in Arabic, they are particles but they are similar in using “conjuncts” to have a connective function.

The position of “conjuncts” in English is not fixed while it is in Arabic. Arabic conjunctive particles are restricted to medial position only.

As far as the relation between “conjuncts” with the whole relevance, the two languages are similar in considering the absence or presence of “conjuncts” doesn’t affect the syntactic relationship of the whole relevance.

Concerning the semantics of “conjuncts”, there are specific semantic functions that are common in both languages like “enumeration”, “result”, “transition”, “equation”, and “antithesis”. Other functions are restricted to one language rather than the other.

Reference