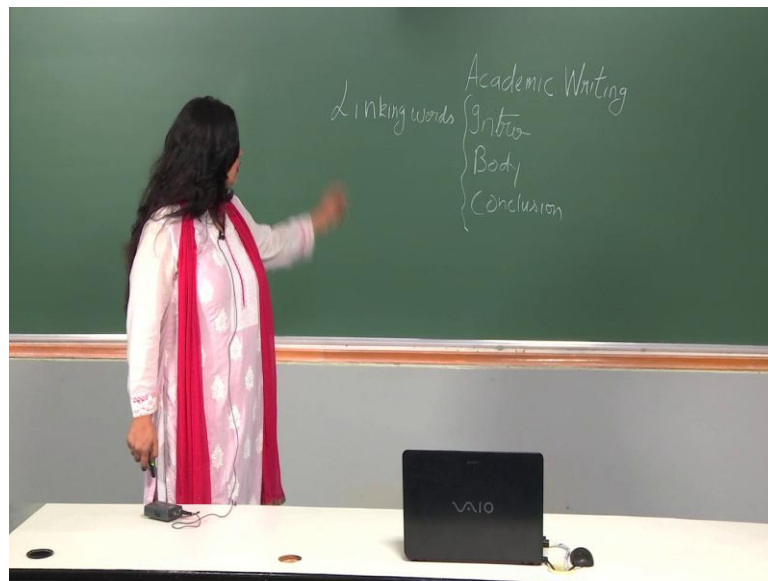


Technical English for Engineers
Prof. Aysha Iqbal
Department of Humanities and Social Science
Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

Lecture - 26
Academic Writing and Linking Words

(Refer Slide Time: 00:16)



Hi. So today, we are going to talk about Academic Writing and second part of today's lecture would be focused on Linking Words, that is those words that bring about a sense of cohesion between sentences and within sentences as well. So, what is academic writing? Let us first begin with what is written over here, academic writing, and how often do you need academic writing? Now, the answer to that would be that you need academic writing very frequently, you write reports, you write your answer papers, you write your assignments and term papers and then at a later stage you also need to write publishable papers, your SOPs. So, all these things require a great deal of understanding of the mechanics of academic writing.

Why do you need academic writing? So we need academic writing and a good understanding of its mechanisms in order to get by in our academic life. What does

academic writing aim to do? Why is academic writing so different from let say any semi formal kind of writing? See, the main idea of being well versed with writing an academic piece of work is to demonstrate how well you research a topic, it also reflects and involves how well you argue, interpret and explain.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:28)

Q: Discuss the idea that 'overconsumption in the modern world is a serious threat to true sustainability'.

Q.: *In the last 20 years, rates of divorce have risen significantly in Western countries. Critically analyse some of the different explanations given for this phenomenon. In your discussion you should consider what implications these explanations might have for social policy.*

Now, I am showing you these two questions here, **take a look at this**. Take a look at the slide, please. Discuss the idea that 'overconsumption in the modern world is a serious threat to true sustainability'. Now discuss, is it a serious threat to true sustainability, what is sustainability, you have to define that first, and what is overconsumption; consumption we all know, but what is over consumption and how is that becoming a serious threat to sustainability. So, look at the various words and expressions involved here, and then you have to discuss. So, you can say it is a serious threat or you can say it is not so serious threat to the sustainability, there are other serious threats.

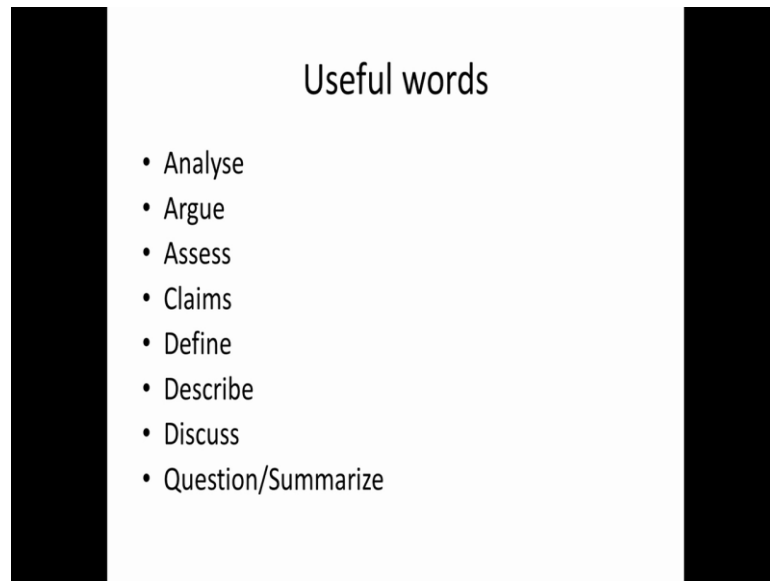
Overconsumption is only one of the many threats, but it is not as serious as some other issue, some other threats that is the way you discuss. You always are supposed to give an opinion, take a stand somewhere that comes in your conclusion. That may also come in the beginning in the introduction, where you mentioned the general thesis, general statement and say yes, I support or I do not support. Conclusion should always have a

good rounding off what you express the idea or the stand you took in the very first statement, and in the very first paragraph of your essay.

Look at the second question. In the last 20 years, rates of divorce have risen significantly in Western countries. Critically analyze some of the different explanations given for this phenomenon. In your discussion, you should consider what implications these explanations might have for social policy. Now this is the serious question, how many things you have to look at, Western countries and rates of divorce, critically analyze, some of the different explanations given for the phenomenon, what are the reasons and give different explanations or this kind of happening in the Western country.

And then in your next part is, in your discussion you should consider the implication. So, not just the reasons and you have to critically analyze; just do not say, this is one of the reason and reason one, reason two, reason three, but you have to also critically analyze, support it through some scholarly academic readings, and that is where the entire idea of research comes in. That when you are asked to critically analyze or support something then you have to look at some kind of readings that support this kind of a question or this kind of an argument, so that is what we mean by taking a stand and developing an argument. You look at the entire question and you have to consider what kind of impact would, these reasons would have on formulation of social policy or public policy. So, there is lot that is happening in this question. It has various parts; each part has to be given responses properly.

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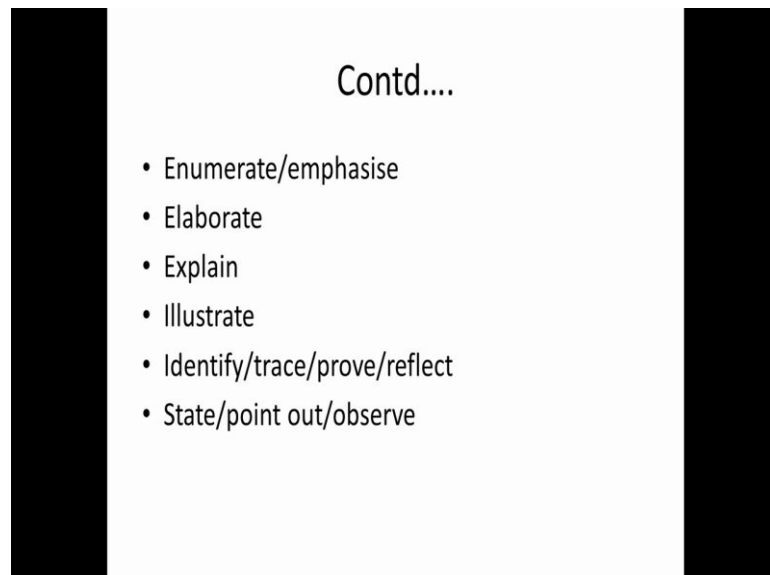


Useful words

- Analyse
- Argue
- Assess
- Claims
- Define
- Describe
- Discuss
- Question/Summarize

Look at this line, and here is a list of useful words in academic writing. Analyse, argue, assess, claims, define, describe, discuss, question, summarize.

(Refer Slide Time: 06:57)



Contd....

- Enumerate/emphasise
- Elaborate
- Explain
- Illustrate
- Identify/trace/prove/reflect
- State/point out/observe

Enumerate, emphasise, elaborate, explain, illustrate, identify, trace, prove, reflect, state, point out, observe. Why are these words important for us? These are the words we use in

our written language. Now we are not talking about an ordinary written communication he says and she says and I said and they said and I feel and I believe; you have to now look at some of the jargons of academic writing where you use such kind of language. So, you identify trace, prove, reflect, demonstrate, illustrate, and all these words are loaded with meaning not as simple as I feel, I say, I would say all right in written ordinary written communication or spoken communication. Here you are looking at something more complex.

Remember, an academic question demands attention. So, identify the key words in the essay topic, and ensure that you understand what you have being asked to do. You have to also pay attention to each part in each section of the question and make sure that you do not deviate or digress^{ion} from it. Look at that question on social policy, and reasons for divorce rate, make sure that you are talking about divorce rate, the reasons - analyzing the reasons and what all this could have, what implications all these could have on making social policy.

Now, digression would be you start talking, you take a stand and then go and beat about it as much, women's education, you take up something like women's education and then go on and on and on about it. You do not talk about the overall picture; you do not view in your argument and response in the kind of discussion you are supposed to have. So, ^{we go there} deviating and digressing. Remember, if there are two parts in the question; make sure that you respond to both parts as you have already seen in that previous question.

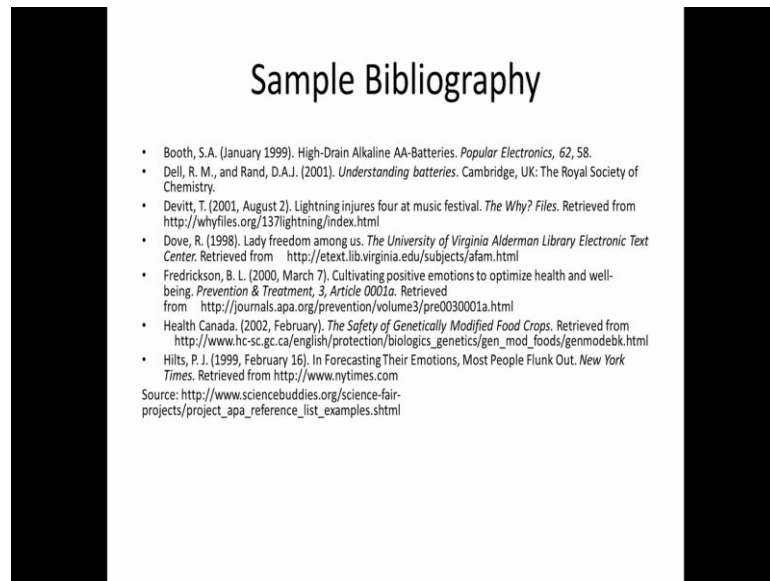
Let us talk about researching for academic essays. So, while researching always look for the most recent reference books and journal articles, also I am sure there are encyclopedias in your respective domains, so you have to look up those as well, but most recent reference books and journal articles, particularly reference books that have been reviewed well, received well. So, you should always consult them. You have to read and this is a tip, I would give you read the bibliographic given at the end of those books and journal articles, and references of these resources, and try to find material that could be of any direct use or relevance to you.

I would also suggest that make hand written or type notes on your readings; and note that if you are reading consulting too many sources on the same topic. If there is a general concerns, agreement between various experts or a disagreement on any point, sometimes there can be conflicting opinions on a given topic or area, it is a good practice to include that also in your discussion. Particular professor says this; however, there is another theorist, who refutes this argument or this explanation. So, your work should be well researched, therefore research is complete that you have looked at both sides of the argument.

Plagiarism extremely important, especially for those interested in academic writing and also in publishing their works. You know that plagiarism is the act of directly lifting parts of someone else work. Many a time, students and also establish researches, they feel that they cannot perhaps express themselves so well as that person who has already done some work on a given area. So, rather than pushing themselves and coming up with something original, they prefer to lift the works of other writers. Now remember, this is another form of theft and it can have and it does has serious consequences when discovered. So, it is essential to quote and mention sources correctly, while taking materials from other people's works.

How do you quote appropriately? There are 2 reliable form or 2 reliable formats for quoting and references; one is the APA that is the American Psychological Association and the second is the MLA. So, there are two kinds of referencing. One is in-text, and another is bibliography. In-text is within the body of the article, when we quote source within the essay of the text or the text. Biblio is a list, bibliography is the list of books you may have used or read or refereed to while writing your essay. And as I have already told you APA or MLA style of a quoting is something that is recognized all over.

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Sample Bibliography

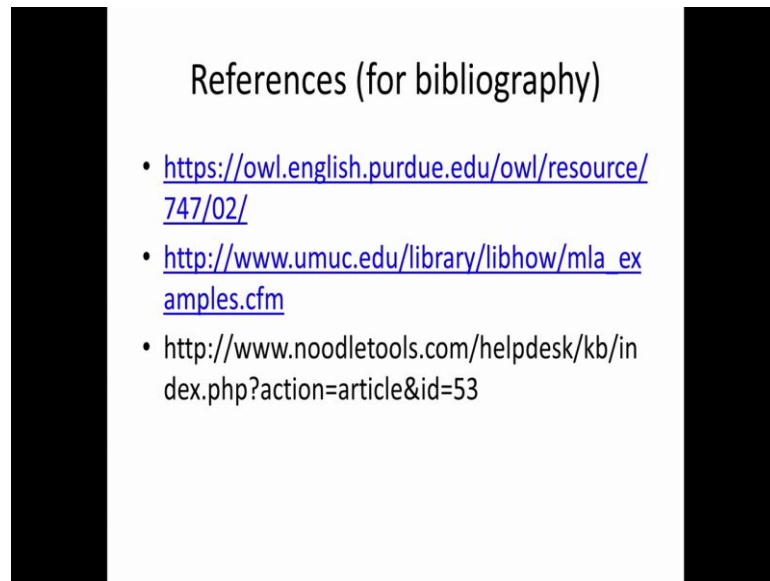
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Source: http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_apa_reference_list_examples.shtml

Please take a look at this sample bibliography. I would not be reading it out for you. I am just giving you the basic format. Please look at the slide, you are given a particular somebody's name, month and year, article title, the title of their journal, issue and volume.

Look at the second bullet point; there are 2 authors, year of the book, title of the book, place of publication and country, and the publisher - The Royal Society of Chemistry. So, this is the way you write your bibliography, although formats differ.

(Refer Slide Time: 15:07)



References (for bibliography)

- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/>
- http://www.umuc.edu/library/libhow/mla_examples.cfm
- <http://www.noodletools.com/helpdesk/kb/index.php?action=article&id=53>

Please take a look at this particular slide. And this will give you some understanding how references are done for writing a bibliography. These are useful links for you. Please take a look at the slide. Now let us talk about how to structure an academic essay. So, there are three parts, introduction, the body and conclusion. As I have already told you in introduction, you state the basic premise, and how you are going to approach it, whether you agree or disagree, what is your opinion, are you taking a stand, are you applying any theory here. And introduction could be in 3 to 4 sentences, it can also be in one lengthy paragraph, but you cannot have paragraphs, after paragraphs of introduction.

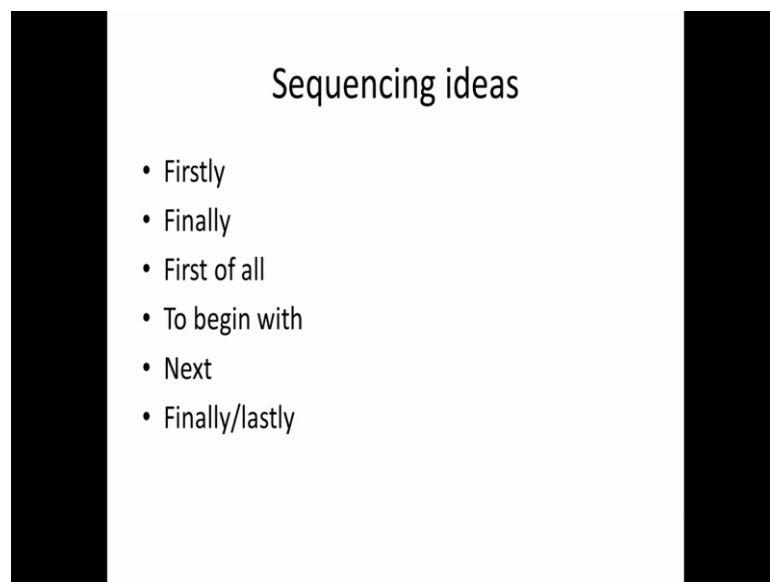
Body of the essay can have several parts, you can speak go on talking about for in one paragraph and give several justifications; remember each paragraph has to have one main point, one central point, you can go **on and on non** for about for and then you can go on **and on non** about against. Body can always have several paras.

Conclusion is the summary of what you have of the stand that you have taken, and whether you agree, disagree, giving your opinion. So, you have to reiterate more **firmly**. Remember in conclusion, you do not bring about a new point, I have been saying this, but this is also possible. So, please summary is or conclusion is like summarizing and tying up threads, it is not starting a new thread or a strand here. So, you have to

remember that.

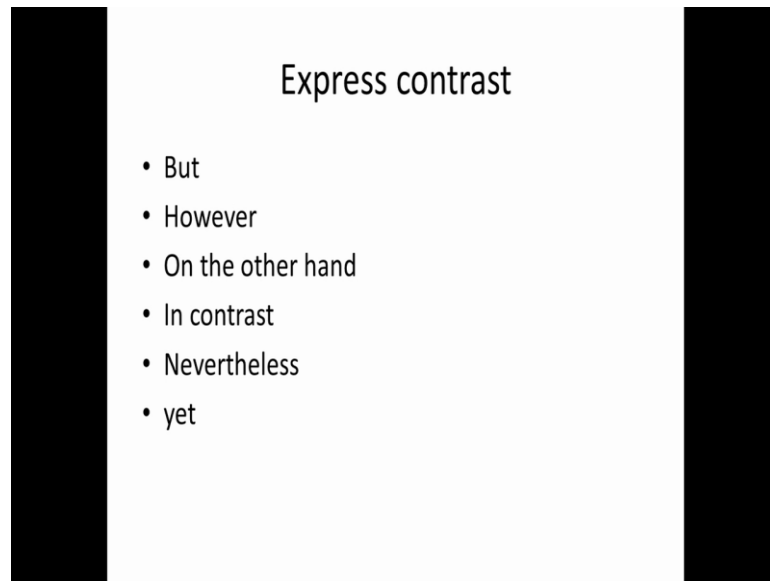
So, we will be doing, how to write a paragraph and we will also be doing how to write more academic kinds of essays in our subsequent classes. But before we do that let me introduce you to linking words that is the second part of our talk today or our lecture today. You know words in English and you know what they mean, but there are words that we use to join our ideas correctly, these words are called linking words.

(Refer Slide Time: 17:46)



Please take a look at these slides. How we sequence ideas in within a given within the body of an essay. So, we may say firstly, we may say secondly, but do not over use this firstly, secondly, thirdly fourthly. Firstly and secondly are good enough then you can always say finally, first of all; we can also say instead of firstly and first of all to begin with. Instead of saying secondly, hence something like that you can always say next, so it is sequencing of ideas. Finally, lastly in conclusion, again you are sequencing your ideas.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:30)

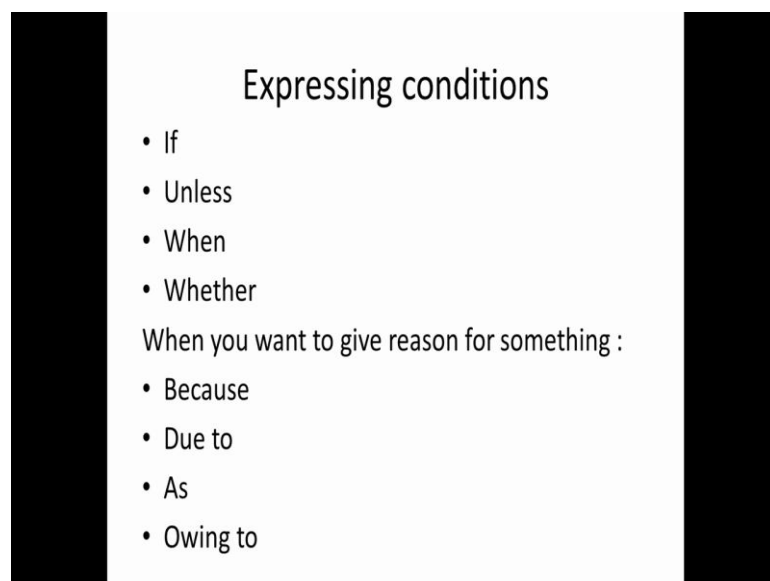


Express contrast

- But
- However
- On the other hand
- In contrast
- Nevertheless
- yet

Let us look at this slide, how you express contrast. This is true, but still there are some problems with it; however. So but, however, on the other hand, in contrast, nevertheless, yet, these words express contrast.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:46)



Expressing conditions

- If
- Unless
- When
- Whether

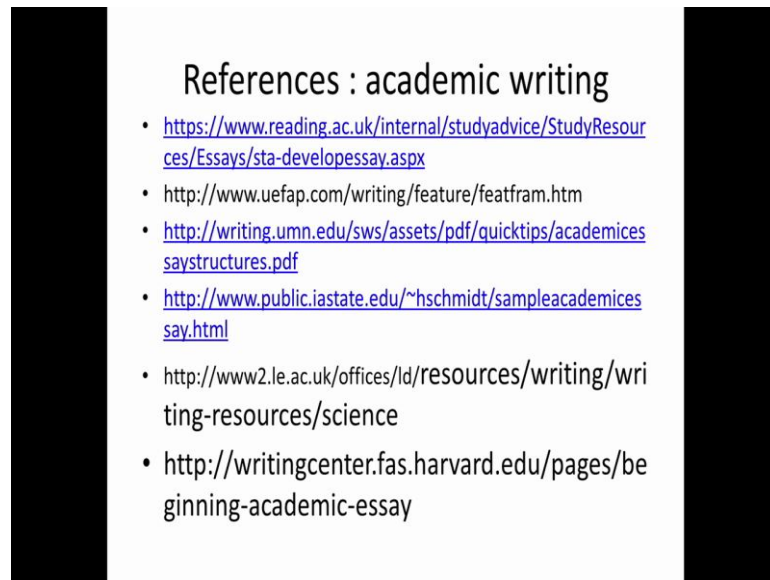
When you want to give reason for something :

- Because
- Due to
- As
- Owing to

Look at this slide, these word express conditions; if, unless, when, whether. And when

you want to give reason for something – because, due to, as, owing to. And when you want give examples - for instance, for example.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:06)



References : academic writing

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- <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~hschmidt/sampleacademicessay.html>
- <http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/resources/writing/writing-resources/science>
- <http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/beginning-academic-essay>

Look at this slide; it is a useful slide for you for looking at references on academic writing. Now, let me do one sample text with you; this is about referential words. I will tell you what are referential words; look at the slide here.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:26)

Sample: Referential words

- Astronomers face an embarrassing conundrum: **they** don't know what 95% of the universe is made of. Atoms, *which* form everything we see around us, only account for a measly 5%. Over the past 80 years **it** has become clear that the substantial remainder is comprised of two shadowy entities – [dark matter](#) and [dark energy](#). **The former**, first discovered in 1933, acts as an invisible glue, binding galaxies and galaxy clusters together. Unveiled in 1998, **the latter** is pushing the universe's expansion to ever greater speeds. Astronomers are closing in on the true identities of **these** unseen interlopers.
<http://www.theguardian.com/science/2013/sep/01/20-big-questions-in-science>

Astronomers face an embarrassing conundrum: **they** do not know what 95 percent of the universe is made of. Atoms, which form everything we see around us, only account for a measly 5 percent. Over the past 80 years **it** has become clear that the substantial remainder is comprised of two shadowy entities - dark matter and dark energy. **The former**, first discovered in 1933, act as an invisible glue, binding galaxies and galaxy clusters together. Unveiled in 1988, **the latter** is pushing the universes expansion to ever greater speeds. So, remember the former refers to the dark matter, we are not saying the dark matter first discovered in 1933, we want to be more elegant in our expression. Therefore, we do not want to use the same word again and again, and that is the purpose of using references. Now again look at the slide the latter is stand for dark energy and which is pushing the universal expansion to ever greater speeds. Astronomers are closing in on the true identities of **these** unseen interlopers; so, dark a matter and dark energy; these.

So, this is the way we use referential words the idea is not to repeat the same nouns or any kinds of nouns over and again, but use certain words like those, and these, and that, which, and also former, **latter**.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:19)



Sample: Retail Therapy

- People who are upset tend to be more impulsive, **which** could mean they spend more money during a retail therapy experience. **However**, individuals did not regret spending money on "self-treats" with the goal of improving mood.
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/rent/2015/09/03/retail-therapy-does-it-help/#331b77a51f29>
- **Of course**, it's possible to overdo consumption, in terms of drinking or shopping, or any number of other things for that matter. **In fact**, the warning signs that habitual shopping has become a problem have a lot of overlap with the classic tell-tale indications that you're abusing alcohol.
<http://business.time.com/2013/04/16/is-retail-therapy-for-real-5-ways-shopping-is-actually-good-for-you/>

Let me take you to another sample text now it is on retail therapy. Again take a look at the linking words and reference words here. People who are upset tend to be more impulsive, which could mean this spend more money during a retail therapy experience. However, individuals did not regret spending money on "self-treats" with the goal of improving mood.

Second bullet point, **of course**, its **is** possible to overdo consumption, in terms of drinking or shopping, or any number of other things for that matter, 'even', 'or' is a linking word, you can highlight that too. **In fact**, the warning signal or signs that habitual shopping has become a problem have a lot of overlap with the classic tell-tale indications that you are abusing alcohol. So, those are the examples of linking words and referential words.

(Refer Slide Time: 22:28)



Attitude words

- Evidently
- Generally speaking, presumably
- If I may say so
- Obviously, Frankly
- Eventually, In short
- Naturally, Apparently
- Personally, Ideally
- Admittedly
- Confidentially

Now, here is another useful list of words for you; please take a look at this, look at the slide. Attitude words: expressing the attitude that the writer is taking and this is something. However, it is important that you do not over use these words. Evidently generally speaking, presumably, if I may say so, obviously, frankly, honestly, eventually, in short, naturally, apparently, personally, ideally, admittedly, confidentially, **so** these are attitude words or these are the attitudes, **!** which writers may assume.

(Refer Slide Time: 23:07)

Exercise

- i. This film is rated PG,....., children over 13 are allowed to watch it.
- ii. Fresh apples are available during only one season,.....the winter.
- iii. Calcium has several advantages,, it gives strength to the bones.
- iv.you choose science or arts as your main discipline, you have to work hard.
- v. There is a big sale going on,don't miss it.
- vi. Moving into a new house requires lot of preparation,one should be ready to spend a lot of time doing this. namely,in other words, for instance, so, whether, i.e.,

Let me show you or take you to this exercise. Let us solve it together; please take a look. Here I want you to employ the list of words that are given at the bottom, all these are linking words. This film is rated PG- parental guidance, children over 13 are allowed to watch it. Fresh apples are available during only one season, the winter. Calcium has several advantages, it gives strength to the bones. You choose science or arts as your main discipline, you have to work hard. There is a big sale going on, do not miss it. Moving into a new house requires lot of preparation, one should be ready to spend a lot of time doing this.

So, this film is rated PG that is children over 13. Fresh apples are available during only one season, namely the winter. Calcium has several advantages, for instance, it gives strength to the bones. Whether you choose science or arts. There is a big sale going on, so do not miss it. Moving into a new house requires lot of preparation, in other words one should be ready to spend a lot of time doing this. See, you may always have second thoughts about some other word also, but these are the words that are best suited. There may be other words also that can go on that can fit here, but those are the best words that we can think of from the given list.

(Refer Slide Time: 25:05)

Sample

- **According to** Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, good entrepreneurs must be stubborn and flexible. When referring to Amazon, Bezos says, “We are **stubborn** on vision. We are flexible on details.”
- Sticking to the vision is the first part, and being flexible about the tactics is the second part. Bezos adds, “**If** you’re **are** not stubborn, you’ll **will** give up on experiments too soon. **And if** you’re **are** not flexible, you’ll **will** pound your head against the wall and you won’t see a different solution to a problem you’re trying to solve.”
- There’s a challenge in being stubborn and flexible. Bezos warns: “The thing about inventing is you have to be both stubborn and flexible, **more or less** simultaneously. The hard part is figuring out **when** to be **which!**”

Let us now look at the sample text. Again we are talking about a linking word; an example. **According to** Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, good entrepreneurs must be stubborn and flexible. When referring to Amazon, Bezos says, “We are stubborn on vision. We are flexible on details”.

Sticking to the vision is the first part, and being flexible about the tactics is the second part. Bezos adds, “**If** you’re **are** not stubborn, you’ll **will** give up on experiments too soon. **And if** you’re **are** not flexible, you’ll **will** pound your head against the wall and you **won’t** **would not** see a different solution to a problem you’re **are** trying to solve”.

There’s **is** a challenge in being stubborn and flexible. Bezos warns: “The thing about inventing is you have to be both stubborn and flexible, **more or less** simultaneously. The hard part is figuring out **when** to be **which!**”, flexible or a stubborn. So, you are not repeating those words. So, this is another very good example of using reference and linking words.

(Refer Slide Time: 26:23)

Exercise

- One of the things I've heard about entrepreneurs is that they are inherently stubborn individuals. They're the "natural leaders"like to take charge and have things done their way....., it seems as if they are close minded on both tactical details and vision. Sohaving natural leadership skills is good, one of the characteristics that define good entrepreneurs is being flexible on details.ask the guy who built a company from 0 employees to over 117,000. He probably knows a few things about leadership.
- <https://blog.kissmetrics.com/lessons-from-jeff-bezos/>

Now, let us look at this particular exercise; again based on Jeff Bezos and Amazon. One of the things I've have heard about entrepreneurs is that they are inherently stubborn individuals. Exercise is about filling in the blank with appropriate linking words. They're are the "natural leaders" dash like to take charge and have things done their way, it seems as if they are close minded on both tactical details and vision. So, dash having natural leadership skills is good, one of the characteristics that define good entrepreneurs is being flexible on details. Dash ask the guy who built a company from 0 employees to over this much. He probably knows a few things about leadership.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:19)

- Who
- In this sense
- While
- Just

And here are your answers. Who, in this sense, while and just. So, they are the natural leaders who like to take charge, and have things done their way in this sense, it seems as if they are close minded on both tactical. So, while having natural leadership skills is good, one of the characteristics. And last one; just ask the guy who built a company from 0 employees to over 117,000.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:54)

Exercise: Identify any 5 linking words

- If you've seen **Christian Bale** in films like *The Machinist* and *American Hustle*, then you know that the actor puts his whole body into any given performance. However, it appears the weight gain Bale was going to take on in order to star in **Enzo Ferrari** has caused the actor to drop out of the production. Bale is famous for his physical transformations on film, previously dropping down to 121 pounds for *The Machinist*, only to gain 109 pounds in just six months in order to star in *Batman Begins*. But 230 pounds was too big for the shape Christopher Nolan wanted Bale to be in, so he dropped another 40 pounds. Beyond that, Bale also got quite out of shape for his role in *American Hustle*, as seen above.
- Even though Christian Bale had already began the weight gain process he thought necessary in order to play the role of Ferrari, the actor became worried that he wouldn't be able to safely gain the right amount weight by the time production starts this spring. despite his success with dramatic weight change in a short time before, surely that's not healthy for him to do so often. Anyway, the film takes place in 1957 and is said to tell the "personal, intimate story of a passionate man and his sprawling world, at times hilarious and at the next moment devastating, as he faces a brutal challenge to his survival."
- <http://www.slashfilm.com/christian-bale-leaving-enzo-ferrari-due-to-weight-gain-concerns/>

Now, here is the last exercise of the day. I want you to identify any five linking words; I would not be giving you the answers here. This is do it yourself exercise. Let us look at the passage.

If you have seen **Christian Bale** in films like *The Machinist* and *American Hustle*, then you know that the actor puts his whole body into any given performance. However, it appears the weight gain Bale was going to take on in order to star in **Enzo Ferrari** has caused the actor to drop out of the production. Bale is famous for his physical transformations on film, previously dropping down to 121 pounds for *The Machinist*, only to gain 109 pounds in just six months in order to star in *Batman Begins*. But 230 pounds was too big for the shape Christopher Nolan wanted Bale to be in, so he dropped another 40 pounds. Beyond that, Bale also got quite out of shape for his role in ***American Hustle***.

Even though Christian Bale had already began the weight gain process he thought necessary in order to play the role of Ferrari, the actor became worried that he would not be able to safely gain the right amount weight by the time production **starts** this spring. Despite his success with dramatic weight change in a short time before, surely that is not healthy for him to do so often. Anyway, the film takes place in 1957 and is said to tell the "personal, intimate story of a passionate man and his sprawling world, at times hilarious and at the next moment devastating, as he faces a brutal challenge to his survival."

So, please do this exercise on your own. I am very sure that you enjoyed the passage and you have already identified at least 5 linking words.

Thank you very much, we will meet again soon.

Tags

Reading English, English for Engineers, English words, English Exercise, Exercises in English, Grammar usage, English Grammar, vocabulary, words and phrases, spoken communication, written communication, English writing, English speaking, scientific English, report writing, CV, formal letter, Speech-Preposition, Noun Phrases, Countable and uncountable nouns, singular, plural, Modals and Voice, Tenses, Effective Speaking

Essay writing, word categories, word formation, formal tone, paragraph writing, tone in writing, speaking tone, signal words, Letter writing, understanding essays, Mechanics of Essays, publishable essays, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, propositions, determiners, linking words, 'be' form, linking words, reading, listening, sentence, Subject, Verb, Object, Articles, comparatives, passive voice, Dictionary skills, Presentation, Punctuation, collocation