



Using connectors

Lesson code: 11G2-G6CA-IKV8

 American English

1 Presentation

In parts 2 and 3 of the IELTS speaking test, you will need to speak at length about a particular issue. It is important to develop your ideas using appropriate connecting words and phrases. Study how the connecting words/phrases in bold are used in the answer below.

Examiner: How efficient is the transport system in your city?

Candidate: Well, if we're talking public transportation, we have many different types of transport, for example trams, buses, trains, a metro. So I think it's quite efficient. In fact, I believe we have one of the most efficient public transport systems in Europe. However, regarding private transport, there are many problems. Firstly, more and more people can afford a car so the traffic can be very bad, especially during rush hour. On top of that, we have a lot of investment projects in progress, so there are road works everywhere. This makes the problem even worse. But, on the whole, I would say our transport system is efficient -- just don't drive a car!

Introducing one aspect of a topic:	If we're talking (public transportation), Regarding (private transport),
Listing or adding your reasons:	Firstly, On top of that,
Describing a situation in general:	On the whole,
Giving an example:	For example,
Making a contrast:	However, But,
Modifying/correcting what you just said:	In fact,
Giving yourself a little time to think:	Well,
Talking about the result of a situation:	So,

Points to remember

- Do not overuse connectors that are slightly formal. These include: **in addition, therefore, regarding** and **however**.
- Avoid using very formal connectors such as **furthermore, moreover, thus** and **hence**. Some of these can be good for writing, but they are usually too formal for speaking.
- Do not overuse connectors in general. Your English will sound unnatural if you try to force a connector in every sentence.



2 Practice

In the sentences below, there are some more words and expressions that you can use to develop an argument in speaking. Put them in the correct categories in the table on page 1.

1. Living in a big city is very stressful. **Therefore**, I'd prefer to live in a small town.
2. **Basically**, there are three reasons why I'd like to live in a big city.
3. **On the other hand**, I think there are a few important drawbacks.
4. **Concerning** shopping, I think it's much better to live in a big city than a small town.
5. There are a few reasons why I didn't enjoy my trip. **First of all**, the hotel was awful. **What's more**, the weather was cold and wet.
6. **In general**, I think the food in my country is healthy.
7. I live a very healthy lifestyle. **For instance**, I don't drink or smoke.
8. Crime in my city is a serious problem. **Actually**, we have one of the highest levels of crime in the country.
9. I live a very healthy lifestyle. **For starters**, I don't drink or smoke.
10. I think learning languages is very important. **In the first place**, you have more job opportunities.
11. **Typically**, people in my country work very hard.
12. **Despite** the high cost, we decided to stay at the 5-star hotel.
13. I don't watch TV very often. **Because of that**, I'm not familiar with television series.
14. **As far as shopping is concerned**, I think it's much better to live in a big city than a small town.

3 Practice

Work in pairs. Take turns to select, ask, and answer a question from the list below. After you have used at least 3-4 connectors in your answer, move on to the next question.

1. How important is learning languages?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using mobile devices?
3. What can people do to protect the environment?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of public transportation?
5. Is crime a problem in your country?
6. Do you think computer games are good or bad for children?
7. Why do people travel?
8. What would your ideal home look like? Why?



1 Presentation

Go through the sample answer table and notes. Explain that in order to get a high band in the test, students should show that they can use a variety of appropriate connectors.

2 Practice

Students of similar level can work in pairs. Some connectors may belong to more than one category.

1. Talking about the result of a situation
2. Giving yourself a little time to think; Describing a general situation
3. Making a contrast
4. Introducing one aspect of a topic
5. Listing or adding your reasons
6. Describing a situation in general
7. Giving an example
8. Modifying what you just said
9. Giving an example; Listing or adding your reasons
10. Listing or adding your reasons
11. Describing a situation in general
12. Making a contrast
13. Talking about the result of a situation
14. Introducing one aspect of a topic

3 Practice

Demonstrate the pair work activity with a strong student. Set a time limit for this task. Encourage students to use a variety of connectors, not the same ones each time.

