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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## 6 Minute Grammar

### Linking devices: cause and effect

*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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**Neil**

Hello! Welcome to 6 Minute Grammar with me Neil.

**Catherine**

And me, Catherine. Hello.

**Neil**

In this show we're talking about linking devices.

**Catherine**

Yes, linking devices. There are lots of different kinds, but today we're interested in words and phrases that link a **cause** – that's something that happens - with its **effect or result**.

**Neil**

So words and phrases like **therefore, for that reason** and **because of**. We'll tell you how they work...

**Catherine**

...We'll give you lots of examples...

**Neil**

...And we'll finish off with a quiz to check what you've learnt.

**Catherine**

So here we go. Let's start with an example. So Neil, do you prefer e-books or paper books?

**Neil**

Well, I have to say, I'm a bit old fashioned: I like a good paper book.

**Catherine**

Why's that then?

**Neil**

It just feels more authentic.

**Catherine**

OK, well, we're going to talk today actually about e-books, so can you give us an example sentence about e-books. Come on then Neil...

**Neil**

E-books are increasingly popular. There has been a fall in sales of paper books.

**Catherine**

Except to you Neil. Now those two sentences are OK. But we could make them a lot clearer and more interesting by linking the ideas in them together with a word like **consequently**, like this.

**Neil**

E-books are increasingly popular. **Consequently**, there has been a fall in sales of paper books.

**Catherine**

**Consequently** is a very useful linking word. It shows that the event before the word **consequently** is the cause of the event after it. We could also use the words **therefore, as a result, for that reason, thus** or **that's why**. They all mean the same as **consequently**. And they are all used to join the ideas in two sentences or main clauses together.

**Neil**

Although remember that some are more formal than others. We use **that's why** a lot in informal everyday English.

**Catherine**

I missed the bus **and that's why** I'm late.

**Neil**

Good example Catherine: it would sound wrong to say **I missed the bus and therefore I'm late**. Now can you give us an example of a more formal use of linking devices?

**Catherine**

OK, try this one: There was a lot of opposition to the proposal; **therefore**, it was dropped.

**Neil**

Nice one. You can use **consequently** and **thus** instead of **therefore** in this type of sentence.

**Catherine**

That's right. Now let's look at a group of words and phrases that we use to link cause and effect in a slightly different way.

**Neil**

Some examples are: **because of**, **as a result of**, **due to** and **owing to**. Listen.

**Catherine**

**Due to** the increasing popularity of e-books, there has been a fall in sales of paper books.

**Neil**

So how is that different? Well, **due to** is followed by a noun phrase – **the increasing popularity of e-books** – not a complete sentence or main clause. We could also say **due to e-books increasing in popularity**. That's a participle clause.

**Catherine**

So **due to** joins a noun phrase or a participle clause to the main clause in the sentence.

**Neil**

Exactly. And **as a result of**, **owing to** or **because of** do too. We could use any of these in that example because they mean the same as **due to**. But **because of** is less formal than the others.

**Catherine**

That's right, and we could also put the sentence the other way round, like this Neil.

**Neil**

There has been a fall in sales of paper books **due to** the increasing popularity of e-books.

**Neil**

Yes, it just depends which part of the sentence you want to emphasize by putting first.

**IDENT**

You're listening to BBC Learning English.

**Catherine**

And we're looking at linking devices of cause and effect.

**Neil**

Now for a couple of tips. When you start a sentence, in writing, with a noun phrase, be sure to use a comma after it.

**Catherine**

So **As a result of the fall in paper book sales**, (comma) some bookshops are struggling to stay open.

**Neil**

That's right. But don't use a comma if the noun phrase comes at the end.

**Catherine**

And if we're using a verb phrase, we can introduce it with the phrase **the fact that**.

**Neil**

Yes. You could say **As a result of the fact that book sales have fallen**, some bookshops are struggling to stay open.

**Catherine**

That's right.

**Neil**

And now it's quiz time! Complete these sentences. Number 1. Our climate is changing a) due to the Arctic ice is melting. b) therefore the Arctic ice is melting.

**Catherine**

The answer's b) therefore the Arctic ice is melting.

**Neil**

Well done! Number 2. Lewis was promoted a) for that reason his hard work. b) as a result of his hard work.

**Catherine**

It's b) as a result of his hard work.

**Neil**

Very good! Number 3. The accident happened a) owing to the fog on the motorway. b) owing to the fog was on the motorway.

**Catherine**

This time it's a) owing to the fog on the motorway.

**Neil**

Well done indeed! I hope wherever you are, you listened carefully to the show and **as a result** you got all the answers right.

**Catherine**

That's good and there's more about this on our website at [bbclearningenglish.com](http://bbclearningenglish.com). Join us again for more 6 Minute Grammar.

**Both**

Bye.