

BELLTES ACADEMY

Comprehensive Guide to Conjunctions:
English & isiZulu Translation Matrix

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Introduction to Conjunctions

In English and isiZulu, conjunctions serve to link words, phrases, or clauses seamlessly. However, the structural behavior of these linkages varies across languages. In isiZulu, conjunctions (**izihlanganiso**) can fundamentally alter verbs or verbs' prefixes, occasionally creating contraction systems or demanding specific dependent moods (such as the Subjunctive or Situational/Participial moods).

Core Grammatical Rules for isiZulu Conjunctions (Izihlanganiso)

- 1. Phonological Conditioning & Vowel Elision:** Many conjunctions in isiZulu end with vowels (e.g., *na-*, *kodwa*). When combining words, the terminal vowels interact through elision or coalescing (e.g., *na-* + *ubaba* becomes *nobaba*).
- 2. Mood Shifts:** Subordinating conjunctions like *ukuba* or *ukuze* (so that/in order that) systematically require the following verb to change into the Subjunctive mood (e.g., ending with **-e** instead of **-a**). Conjunctions like *uma* (if/when) often command the Participial mood.
- 3. Infix Structure:** Certain transitions and conjunctive concepts are introduced as infixes, prefixes, or clitics natively bound directly to words rather than existing strictly as autonomous separate components.

1. Coordinating Conjunctions (Izihlanganiso Ezisizayo)

These join expressions, items, or complete clauses of equivalent structural importance.

English Conjunction	isiZulu Conjunction
For	Ngoba / Ngokuphathelene ne-
And	Futhi / Na- (bound prefix)
Nor	Futhi kakade... (negative form)
But	Kodwa
Or	Noma
Yet	Kepha / Nokho
So	Ngakho-ke / Ngaleyo ndlela

Usage Examples:

For / Ngoba

- EN: We stayed indoors, for it was pouring rain outside.
- ZU: Sihlale endlini, ngoba belina kakhulu ngaphandle.

And / Futhi

- EN: He ordered a burger and a side of fries.
- ZU: U-ode ibhega nama-chips.

But / Kodwa

- EN: I wanted to go to the beach, but it started to storm.
- ZU: Bengifuna ukuya olwandle, kodwa kwaqala isivunguvungu.

Or / Noma

- EN: You can have hot coffee, or you can choose iced tea.
- ZU: Ungaphuza ikhofi elishisayo, noma ungakhetha itiyi elibandayo.

So / Ngakho-ke

- EN: The store was closed, so we drove back home.
- ZU: Isitolo besivaliwe, ngakho-ke sibuyele ekhaya.

2. Correlative Conjunctions (Izihlanganiso Ezihambisana Ngababili)

Paired frameworks aligning structurally equivalent syntactic items.

English Conjunction	isiZulu Conjunction
Both... and	Kokonke... na- / Kokubili... na-
Either... or	Noma... noma
Neither... nor	Akukho... futhi akukho...
Not only... but also	Hhayi kuphela... kodwa futhi...
Whether... or	Ukuba... noma

Usage Examples:

Both... and / Kokubili... na-

- EN: Both the manager and the employee received a warning.
- ZU: Kokubili umphathi nomsebenzi bathole isixwayiso.

Either... or / Noma... noma

- EN: Either you finish your homework now, or you cannot watch TV.
- ZU: Noma uqeda umsebenzi wakho wesikole manje, noma ngeke uyibuke i-TV.

Neither... nor / Akukho... futhi akukho...

- EN: Neither the public nor the local government supported the tax.
- ZU: Akukho nomphakathi futhi akukho nohulumeni wasendaweni osekele lo mthetho wentela.

3. Subordinating Conjunctions (Izihlanganiso Ezingaphansi)

Connect basic standalone clauses with dependent structural units, changing tone or mood profile configurations.

English Conjunction	isiZulu Conjunction
Because	Ngoba / Ngenxa yokuthi
Since	Njengoba / Selokhu
Although / Even though	Yize / Nakuba / Noma kunjalo
If	Uma / Uma ngabe
Unless	Ngaphandle kokuba / Ngaleyo ndlela
While / Whereas	Khona manjalo / Kanti
After	Ngemva kokuba / Emva kokuba
Before	Ngaphambi kokuba
Until	Kuze kube / Kuze

Usage Examples:

Because / Ngoba

- EN: The game was postponed because the field was flooded.
- ZU: Umdlalo uhlehlisiwe ngoba inkundla ibigcwele amanzi.

If / Uma

- EN: If it rains tomorrow, our outdoor picnic will be cancelled.
- ZU: Uma lina kusasa, ipikiniki yethu yangaphandle izohlehliswa.

Unless / Ngaphandle kokuba

- EN: You will not pass the final exam unless you start studying.
- ZU: Ngeke uphase ukuhlolwa kokugcina ngaphandle kokuba uqale ukufunda.

4. Conjunctive Adverbs (Izithasiselo Zokuxhumanisa)

Syntactic transition modifiers providing flow between independent sentences.

English Conjunction	isiZulu Conjunction
Therefore / Consequently	Ngakho-ke / Ngenxa yalokho
However / Nonetheless	Kepha / Nokho / Kodwa-ke
Moreover / Furthermore	Ngaphezu kwalokho / Futhi
Otherwise	Kungenjalo / Uma kungenjalo

Usage Examples:

Therefore / Ngakho-ke

- EN: The company lost a massive contract; therefore, profits dropped.
- ZU: Inkampani ilahlekelwe yinkontileka enkulu; ngakho-ke, inzuzo yehlile.

However / Nokho

- EN: I respect your opinion; however, I completely disagree.
- ZU: Ngiyalihlonipha umbono wakho; nokho, angivumi neze.

Otherwise / Kungenjalo

- EN: You must back up your files immediately; otherwise, you risk losing data.
- ZU: Kufanele uwagcine kahle amafayela akho manje; kungenjalo, ungalahlekelwa yidatha.