

BELLTES ACADEMY

A Comprehensive Guide to Conjunctions:
English & Sesotho Translation Matrix

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Sesotho Conjunctions (Likopanyi) & Grammar Rules

In Sesotho, conjunctions (**likopanyi**) are words used to join phrases, words, clauses, or sentences together. Unlike Western Germanic languages like Afrikaans, Sesotho grammar does not shuffle verb positioning to the very end of clauses in a rigid Germanic syntax framework. Instead, Sesotho conjunctions heavily dictate the **grammatical mood** of the subsequent verbs. Depending on the conjunction chosen, the verb will either remain in the indicative mood or switch to the **Subjunctive mood** or the **Situational/Participial mood**.

Key Syntactic Frameworks in Sesotho:

- 1. The Subjunctive Trigger:** Conjunctions like *hore* (so that / in order that) and *hore re mpe* demand that the succeeding verb morphs into the subjunctive mood. In the present tense, this usually changes the terminating verb vowel suffix from **-a** to **-e** (e.g., *ho bala* becomes *a bale*).
- 2. The Situational / Participial Condition:** Conjunctions expressing conditional states or temporal events like *ha* (when / if) shift the clause into the situational mood. This modifies subject pronouns and alters negative structures radically (e.g., negative uses *sa* instead of *ha se*).
- 3. Simple Coordinating Links:** Basic connectors such as *le* (and) and *empa* (but) serve as direct bridges without disrupting the base indicative clause layout.

1. Coordinating Conjunctions

English Coordinating Conjunction	Sesotho Equivalent (Likopanyi)
For (Because)	Hobane / Ka ha
And	Le / Hape / Mme
Nor	Leha e le (kamora latolo)
But	Empa
Or	Kapa
Yet	Athe / Leha ho le joalo
So	Kahoo / Ka baka leo

Parallel Examples:

- For / Hobane**
English: We stayed indoors, for it was pouring rain outside.
Sesotho: Re lulari ka tlung, hobane pula e ne e na haholo ka ntle.

- **And / Mme**

English: He ordered a burger and a side of fries.

Sesotho: O ile a odara burger mme a eketsa ka ditshepa.

- **But / Empa**

English: I wanted to go to the beach, but it started to storm.

Sesotho: Ke ne ke batla ho ya lebopong la lewatle, empa sefelo se ile sa qala.

- **Or / Kapa**

English: You can have hot coffee, or you can choose iced tea.

Sesotho: O ka nwa kofi e chesang, kapa wa kgetha tee e batang.

- **So / Kahoo**

English: The store was closed, so we drove back home.

Sesotho: Lebenkele le ne le kwetswe, kahoo re ile ra kgutlela hae.

2. Correlative Conjunctions

English Correlative Conjunction	Sesotho Equivalent Matrix
Both... and	Ka bobeli... le
Either... or	Ebang ke... kapa
Neither... nor	Leha e le... kapa
Not only... but also	Eseng feela... empa le hape
Whether... or	Hore na... kapa

Parallel Examples:

- **Both... and / Ka bobeli... le**

English: Both the manager and the employee received a warning.

Sesotho: Ka bobeli mookameli le mosebeletsi ba ile ba fumana temoso.

- **Either... or / Ebang ke... kapa**

English: Either you finish your homework now, or you cannot watch TV.

Sesotho: Ebang ke hore o qeta mosebetsi wa sekolo hona jwale, kapa o ke ke wa shebella TV.

- **Neither... nor / Leha e le... kapa**

English: Neither the public nor the local government supported the tax.

Sesotho: Leha e le setjhaba kapa mmuso wa lehae ha ba a tshehetsa lekgetho leo.

3. Subordinating Conjunctions

English Subordinating Conjunction	Sesotho Equivalent
Because	Hobane / Ka baka la hore
Since (Cause)	Kaha / Ka ha
Although / Even though	Le hoja / Leha ho le joalo
If	Haeba / Ha
Unless	Kantle le haeba
While / Whereas	Moo... teng / Ha... ntse
After	Kamora hore
Before	Pele ho hore / Pele
Until	Ho fihlela
When	Ha

Parallel Examples:

- **Because / Hobane**

English: The game was postponed because the field was flooded.

Sesotho: Papadi e ile ya hlekiswa hobane lebala le ne le tletse metsi.

- **If / Haeba**

English: If it rains tomorrow, our outdoor picnic will be cancelled.

Sesotho: Haeba pula e na hosasane, phikiniki ya rona e tla hlekiswa.

4. Conjunctive Adverbs

English Conjunctive Adverb	Sesotho Transition Equivalent
Therefore / Consequently	Kahoo / Ka baka leo
However / Nonetheless	Leha ho le joalo / Empa
Moreover / Furthermore	Hape / Ho ekelletsa moo
Otherwise	Ho seng joalo

Parallel Examples:

- **Therefore / Kahoo**

English: The company lost a massive contract; therefore, profits dropped.

Sesotho: Khampani e ile ya lahlehelwa ke konteraka e kgolo; kahoo, diporofiti di ile tsa theoha.

- **However / Leha ho le joalo**

English: I respect your opinion; however, I disagree with your conclusion.

Sesotho: Ke hlompha maikutlo a hao; leha ho le joalo, ha ke dumellane le sephetho sa hao.