

# DISCOURSE CONNECTORS

by Seda Sürel

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Function

Discourse connectors show how clauses and sentences are logically related.

They express relations such as:

- cause and result
- purpose
- contrast and concession
- sequence
- explanation and clarification

The events themselves do not change.

The speaker's organization of meaning changes.

### 2. Forms

In Turkish, discourse relations are expressed mainly through grammatical structures, not only through independent words.

#### Two core forms:

- Dependent clause builders (subordinating connectors)
- → formed with verb morphology (converbs, nominalizations)
- Independent connectors (sentence-level connectors)
- → free words placed between or at the beginning of sentences

Both types organize discourse, but they behave structurally differently.

### 3. Morphology

#### A) Dependent clause builders (core Turkish mechanism)

These connectors are formed by verbal morphology and create subordinate clauses.

#### Common patterns:

- Zarf-füller (Converbs)
  - -(y)lp
  - -(y)ErEk
  - -lncA
  - -Dİktan sonra
- Nominalized clauses
  - -DİĞI için
  - -mEk için

The connector is part of the verb form, not a separate word.

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## B) Independent connectors

These are free forms and do not change verb morphology.

### Examples:

- ama
- bu yüzden
- yine de
- dolayısıyla
- ayrıca
- kısacası
- oysa

They connect sentences or clauses, not verb forms.

## 4. Structural Guide

### A) Subordinating (dependent) connectors

#### Structure:

[Dependent clause + connector morphology] + main clause

The logical relation is encoded inside the verb form.

### B) Coordinating / independent connectors

#### Structure:

Sentence + connector + sentence

The connector is external to the clause.

## 5. Usage

### A) Cause → Result (Neutral result)

Used to explain why something happened.

The cause is embedded in a dependent clause.

### B) Purpose

Used to express intended outcome.

Typically formed with nominalized clauses.

### C) Sequence

In Turkish discourse, sequence is most naturally expressed through converbs, not simple time adverbs.

### D) Contrast and Concession (Stance-sensitive)

Different connectors express different speaker attitudes:

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- neutral contrast
- strong opposition
- unexpected or concessive result

## E) Result / Conclusion

Different connectors express different result types:

- neutral result
- formal / logical result
- summarizing result

### Examples

#### Cause → Result (Neutral result)

Yağmur yağdığını için dışarı çıkmadık.

— Because it was raining, we didn't go out.

Çok çalıştığı için başarılı oldu.

— Because he worked a lot, he became successful.

#### Purpose

Erken kalkmak için uyudum.

— I slept early in order to wake up early.

Seni görmek için geldim.

— I came to see you.

#### Sequence

Kahve içtikten sonra işe başladık.

— After we had coffee, we started work.

Eve gelince beni ara.

— Call me when you arrive home.

Kapıyı kapatıp çıktı.

— He closed the door and left.

#### Contrast: ama (Neutral contrast)

Gelmek istedim, ama zamanı yoktu.

— He wanted to come, but he had no time.

Film güzeldi, ama çok uzundu.

— The movie was good, but it was very long.

Onu aradım, ama cevap vermedi.

— I called him, but he didn't answer.

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## Concession: yine de (Unexpected result)

Çok yorgundu, yine de çalışmaya devam etti.

— He was very tired; still, he kept working.

Yağmur yağıyordu, yine de dışarı çıktılar.

— It was raining; nevertheless, they went out.

Her şeyi anlattım, yine de anlamadı.

— I explained everything; still, he didn't understand.

## Result: bu yüzden (Neutral result)

Yağmur yağıyordu, bu yüzden dışarı çıkmadık.

— It was raining, so we didn't go out.

Geç kaldı, bu yüzden toplantıyı kaçırdı.

— He was late; therefore, he missed the meeting.

Çok hastaydı, bu yüzden okula gitmedi.

— He was very sick, so he didn't go to school.

## Result: dolayısıyla (Formal / logical result)

Zamanımız çok azdı, dolayısıyla plan değişti.

— We had very little time; therefore, the plan changed.

Tüm veriler eksiki, dolayısıyla karar ertelendi.

— All the data was incomplete; therefore, the decision was postponed.

Bu bir riskli durumdu, dolayısıyla kabul edilmedi.

— This was a risky situation; therefore, it was not accepted.

## Addition: ayrıca (Additional information)

Ali toplantıya geldi, ayrıca raporu da getirdi.

— Ali came to the meeting and also brought the report.

Bu konu zor, ayrıca zamanımız da az.

— This topic is difficult; moreover, we don't have much time.

Projeyi bitirdi, ayrıca sunumu da hazırladı.

— He finished the project and also prepared the presentation.

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## Result: kısacası (Summarizing result)

Çok konuştu, kısacası karar veremedik.

— We talked a lot; in short, we couldn't make a decision.

Her şeyi denedik, kısacası işe yaramadı.

— We tried everything; in short, it didn't work.

## Contrast: oysa (Strong contrast / correction)

Herkes hazırdı, oysa toplantı iptal edildi.

— Everyone was ready; however, the meeting was canceled.

Çok çalıştı, oysa sonuç beklediği gibi olmadı.

— He worked a lot; however, the result was not as expected.

## Notes

- In Turkish, discourse relations are primarily grammatical, not lexical.
- Converbs and nominalized clauses form the backbone of discourse connection.
- Independent connectors mainly add tone and stance.
- Time adverbs alone (önce, sonra) do not create discourse structure.
- Morphological connectors (–DIktan sonra, –InCA) establish true discourse relations.
- Connector choice reflects how strongly ideas are linked and how the speaker positions themselves toward the information.