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## SEMANTIC PECULIARITIES OF SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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**Abstract** Subordinating conjunctions are essential linguistic tools that establish relationships between clauses in a sentence. While they primarily serve as structural markers, their semantic functions significantly influence meaning and interpretation. This paper explores the semantic peculiarities of subordinating conjunctions in the English language, examining how their meanings vary in context and how they interact with syntax and discourse. It also highlights challenges in their usage and implications for language learners.

**Key words:** subordinating conjunctions, clauses, sentence, structure, functions, meaning, context, syntax, discourse, types of complex sentences, semantic meaning.

## СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ ПОДЧИНИТЕЛЬНЫХ СОЮЗОВ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

**Аннотация** Данная статья посвящена изучению семантических особенностей подчинительных союзов в английском языке. Сложноподчиненные предложения являются сложной структурой и требуют тщательного анализа, с точки зрения структуры. Части сложноподчиненных предложений связаны с помощью подчинительных союзов. В статье проанализированы семантические значения подчинительных союзов с точки зрения семантики.

**Ключевые слова:** подчинительные союзы, предложение, структура, функция, значение, контекст, синтаксис, дискурс, виды сложноподчиненных предложений, семантическое значение.

## INGLIZ TILIDA ERGASHTIRUVCHI BOG'LOVCHILARNING SEMANTIK XUSUSIYATLARI

**Annotatsiya** Mazkur maqolada ingliz tilidagi ergash qo'shma gaplarning qismlarini bog'lab tutuvchi ergashtiruvchi bog'lovchilarning semantic xususiyatlari o'rganib chiqilgan,

ularning turlari, gap strukturasidagi positsiyasi, gapning semantic ma`nosiga ta`siri masalalari o`rganib chiqilgan.

**Kalit so`zlar:** ergashtiruvchi bog`lovchilar, gap, struktura, funksiya, ma`no, kontekst, sintaksis, diskurs, ergash gap turlari, semantic ma`no.

## **Introduction**

In English grammar, subordinating conjunctions are words or phrases that link a dependent (subordinate) clause to an independent (main) clause. The role of these conjunctions is to show the relationship between the two clauses, whether it's time, cause and effect, condition, contrast, purpose, or any other kind of relationship. Understanding subordinating conjunctions is essential for constructing complex sentences that convey more detailed and nuanced information. This article aims to explain the use, types, and examples of subordinating conjunctions in English.

Subordinating conjunctions are words that link dependent (subordinate) clauses to independent clauses, introducing relationships of time, cause, condition, concession, or purpose. Common examples include "because," "although," "if," "while," and "since." While their primary role is structural, their semantics reveal subtle nuances that can shift meaning depending on context. Understanding these peculiarities is critical for both linguists and learners of English, as they influence interpretation and coherence.

## **METHODS**

Subordinating conjunctions are integral components of complex sentence construction. They introduce subordinate clauses, which are clauses that cannot stand alone as complete sentences. Subordinate clauses rely on an independent clause for their meaning and completeness. The purpose of subordinating conjunctions is to express the relationship between these two clauses.

Subordinating conjunctions can be broadly classified based on the semantic relationships they establish:

**Temporal Conjunctions:** Indicate time relationships, e.g., "after," "before," "while," "since."

**Causal Conjunctions:** Express cause-effect relationships, e.g., "because," "as," "since."

**Conditional Conjunctions:** Indicate conditions, e.g., "if," "unless," "provided that."

**Concessive Conjunctions:** Introduce contrasts or unexpected results, e.g., "although," "even though," "whereas."

**Purpose Conjunctions:** Show intent or purpose, e.g., "so that," "in order that."

These categories, while useful, often overlap semantically, leading to ambiguity or multiple interpretations in certain contexts.

### **Semantic Peculiarities and Ambiguities**

Many subordinating conjunctions are polysemous, meaning they have multiple related meanings. For instance, "since" can denote time ("Since I arrived, it has been raining") or cause

("Since you are here, let's start the meeting"). This dual function requires contextual interpretation to clarify meaning.

#### Contextual Dependence

The meaning of subordinating conjunctions often depends on the broader context. For example, "while" can indicate temporal simultaneity ("While I was cooking, the phone rang") or contrast ("While I agree with your point, I have some reservations").

Some conjunctions share overlapping meanings but are used differently based on subtle nuances. For example, "although" and "though" are nearly synonymous but differ in formality and frequency of use. Similarly, "because" and "as" both indicate causality, but "because" is more explicit, while "as" may imply a weaker causal link.

Subordinating conjunctions often carry additional pragmatic implications. For instance, "if" in conditional clauses can suggest hypothetical scenarios, but its interpretation may vary:

Open condition: "If it rains, we will cancel the trip."

Remote condition: "If I were you, I would apologize."

The semantic nuances of "if" depend on the likelihood or reality of the condition being met.

#### Challenges in Usage

##### Ambiguity in Interpretation

Ambiguities arising from polysemy or contextual dependence can confuse readers or listeners. For example, the use of "since" as a temporal or causal marker may require additional clarification in complex sentences.

##### Interference in Second Language Acquisition

Language learners often struggle with subordinating conjunctions due to their multiple meanings and overlapping functions. For instance, distinguishing between "although" and "even though" may require exposure to nuanced examples.

##### Translation Challenges

In translation, the semantic subtleties of subordinating conjunctions can pose difficulties. Equivalent conjunctions in other languages may not carry the same range of meanings, leading to potential loss of nuance.

##### Implications for Teaching and Learning

To address these challenges, educators should emphasize contextual examples and focus on the semantic nuances of subordinating conjunctions. Activities such as sentence analysis, contrastive exercises, and contextualized practice can help learners master these conjunctions more effectively.

## RESULTS

Subordinating conjunctions in English play a crucial role in sentence structure and meaning. Their semantic peculiarities, including polysemy, contextual dependence, and pragmatic implications, make them a rich area of study. By understanding these nuances,

linguists can deepen their analysis of English syntax and semantics, and educators can better support language learners in navigating these complexities.

Example: "I stayed home because it was raining."

Here, "because" is a subordinating conjunction. It connects the independent clause "I stayed home" with the dependent clause "because it was raining." The conjunction "because" indicates that the action in the independent clause is the result of the condition expressed in the dependent clause.

### Functions of Subordinating Conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions serve several functions in sentences, most notably indicating various logical relationships between clauses. These relationships include:

1. Cause and Effect: These conjunctions explain why something happened or is happening.

Examples: because, since, as

Example Sentence: "She cried because she was upset."

2. Time: These conjunctions indicate the timing of the action or event in the subordinate clause relative to the main clause.

Examples: when, while, before, after, until, as soon as

Example Sentence: "We will start the meeting after the lunch break."

3. Condition: These conjunctions introduce conditional relationships.

Examples: if, unless, provided that

Example Sentence: "If you study hard, you will pass the exam."

4. Contrast: These conjunctions show how one action or event contrasts with another.

Examples: although, though, even though, whereas, while

Example Sentence: "He was tired although he had slept well."

5. Purpose: These conjunctions explain the reason behind an action or event.

Examples: so that, in order that

Example Sentence: "She works hard so that she can achieve her goals."

6. Place: These conjunctions indicate the location in relation to the main clause.

Examples: where, wherever

Example Sentence: "He will go wherever she goes."

7. Manner or Degree: These conjunctions describe how something is done or to what extent.

Examples: as, than, as if, as though

Example Sentence: "She sings as if she were a professional."

### 3. Common Subordinating Conjunctions and Their Uses

#### **DISCUSSION**

Let us examine the most common subordinating conjunctions and the relationships they express.

#### Cause and Effect Conjunctions

Because: Indicates the reason for something.

Example: "I stayed at home because it was raining."

Since: Can indicate both time and cause.

Example: "Since it was late, we decided to leave."

As: Often used in the sense of cause or reason.

Example: "She was late as the traffic was heavy."

#### Time Conjunctions

When: Indicates a point in time.

Example: "Call me when you arrive."

While: Refers to the duration of time during which something happens.

Example: "She studied while listening to music."

Before/After: Indicates actions occurring earlier or later.

Example: "I will leave after I finish my homework."

Until: Suggests a point in time up to which something continues.

Example: "Wait until I finish my call."

#### Condition Conjunctions

If: Indicates a condition that needs to be met.

Example: "If it rains, we will stay inside."

Unless: Means "if not" or "except under the condition."

Example: "You won't pass the exam unless you study."

Provided that: Introduces a condition that must be fulfilled.

Example: "You can borrow my car provided that you return it by 6 PM."

#### Contrast Conjunctions

Although/Though: Indicates a contrast or concession.

Example: "Although he is young, he is very wise."

Even though: Stronger emphasis on contrast.

Example: "Even though it was raining, they continued the game."

Whereas: Shows a contrast between two clauses.

Example: "He likes jazz, whereas she prefers classical music."

#### Purpose Conjunctions

So that: Indicates the purpose of an action.

Example: "She saved money so that she could travel abroad."

In order that: A more formal version of "so that."

Example: "He worked overtime in order that he could finish the project on time."

#### Place Conjunctions

Where: Indicates the location in relation to the main clause.

Example: "I will go where you lead me."

Wherever: Refers to any place or location.

Example: "She follows him wherever he goes."

### Manner or Degree Conjunctions

As: Indicates the manner in which something is done.

Example: "She runs as fast as a cheetah."

Than: Used for comparison.

Example: "She is taller than I am."

As if/As though: Suggests a hypothetical situation or manner.

Example: "He behaves as if he were the boss."

### 4. Position of Subordinating Conjunctions in Sentences

In complex sentences, subordinating conjunctions can be positioned at the beginning or in the middle of the sentence. However, the placement affects the structure of the sentence:

At the beginning of the sentence: If the subordinating conjunction begins the sentence, the dependent clause comes first, followed by a comma before the main clause.

Example: "Although it was raining, we went for a walk."

In the middle of the sentence: If the subordinating conjunction appears in the middle, the dependent clause follows the main clause, and no comma is used.

Example: "We went for a walk although it was raining."

### 5. Subordinating Conjunctions in Complex Sentences

Complex sentences consist of an independent clause and a dependent clause, often joined by subordinating conjunctions. These conjunctions allow for more sophisticated communication by adding layers of meaning and linking related ideas.

For instance:

Time Relationship: "I finished my homework before the movie started."

Cause and Effect: "She passed the test because she studied hard."

Condition: "If you leave now, you'll catch the bus."

Contrast: "Although he was tired, he continued working."

Each of these examples shows how subordinating conjunctions can help us create complex sentences that explain time, reasons, conditions, or contrasts.

### 6. The Difference Between Coordinating and Subordinating Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions join two independent clauses of equal importance, whereas subordinating conjunctions link a dependent clause to an independent clause, showing a relationship between them.

Coordinating Conjunctions: For, and, nor, but, or, yet, so (FANBOYS)

Example: "I want to go to the party, but I have too much homework."

Subordinating Conjunctions: Because, although, if, when, since, while

Example: "I wanted to go to the party because I was bored."

Subordinating conjunctions create a sense of hierarchy, where one clause is of primary importance (the independent clause) and the other is secondary (the dependent clause).

### 7. Common Mistakes with Subordinating Conjunctions

1. Comma Misuse: When the dependent clause precedes the independent clause, a comma is required, but when the independent clause comes first, no comma is needed.

Incorrect: "I stayed home because it was raining." (No comma before "because")

Correct: "Because it was raining, I stayed home." (Comma after the dependent clause)

2. Fragmentation: A dependent clause cannot stand alone as a complete sentence.

Incorrect: "Although I am tired."

Correct: "Although I am tired, I will finish my work."

3. Word Choice: Confusing subordinating conjunctions with coordinating ones can lead to confusion about sentence structure and meaning.

### **Conclusion**

Subordinating conjunctions are powerful tools that allow for more complex and meaningful sentence structures. By connecting dependent and independent clauses, they help convey relationships such as cause, effect, time, place, condition, purpose, and contrast. Mastery of subordinating conjunctions enhances writing, making it more engaging, descriptive, and precise. Understanding their functions, correct usage, and placement is crucial for both writing and speaking effectively in English.

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