

Subordinate Conjunctions in Complex Sentences

Introduction

こんにちは (Hello)! Today, we're going to learn about **subordinate conjunctions** in English. These are special words that help us make longer, more interesting sentences. If you're an intermediate or advanced student, this is very important for you!

When you first learn English, you start with simple sentences like:

- **I like ice cream.** (S-V-O: Subject-Verb-Object)
- **He plays soccer.**

These are easy—one idea, very simple. But as you get better, you don't want to just say "I like ice cream" or "I play soccer." You want to say **more**, right? For example:

- **I like ice cream because it tastes good.**
- **When I get home, I'll eat ice cream.**

These are **complex sentences**. They have a basic idea (like "I like ice cream") plus extra information (like "because it tastes good"). This makes your English more exciting and fun!

What Are Subordinate Conjunctions?

Subordinate conjunctions are words that connect two parts of a sentence:

1. The **independent clause** (a complete idea, like "I like ice cream").
2. The **dependent clause** (extra information that can't stand alone, like "because it tastes good").

Today, we'll focus on **four types** of subordinate conjunctions. I'll call them the "Four Cs" to make it easy to remember: **Cause, Condition, Contrast, and Time**.

Examples of Subordinate Conjunctions

Let's use a fun example: Imagine Bitsy, my favorite person, playing Scrabble. Here's how we can use subordinate conjunctions to talk about her:

1. Cause (理由 – Riyū)

These conjunctions explain **why** something happens.

- **Because**: なぜなら (Nazenara)
 - *Bitsy wins Scrabble because she knows many words.*
- **Since**: ~なので (~nanode)
 - *Since Bitsy is smart, she always gets high scores.*

2. Condition (条件 – Jōken)

These show **if** or **under what situation** something happens.

- **If**: もし (~moshi)
 - *If Bitsy plays Scrabble, she'll have fun.*
- **Unless**: ~しない限り (~shinai kagiri)
 - *Bitsy won't lose unless she forgets the rules.*

3. Contrast (対比 – Taihi)

These show a difference or something unexpected.

- **Although**: ~けれど (~keredo)
 - *Although Bitsy is tired, she still plays Scrabble.*
- **While**: ~一方で (~ippō de)
 - *While Bitsy loves Scrabble, her brother prefers soccer.*

4. Time (時間 – Jikan)

These tell us **when** something happens.

- **When**: ~とき (~toki)
 - *When Bitsy finishes her homework, she plays Scrabble.*

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- ****After****: ~後に (~go ni)
- *After Bitsy wins, she smiles a lot.*

Practice

Let's try making your own sentences! Use these conjunctions to talk about yourself or a friend. For example:

- Cause: *I study English because I want to travel.*
- Condition: *If I learn more words, I'll speak better.*
- Contrast: *Although I'm busy, I still practice English.*
- Time: *When I wake up, I read a book.*

Write one sentence for each type!

Summary Table with Translations

Type	Subordinate Conjunction	English Example	Japanese Translation	Japanese Equivalent
Cause	Because	I eat ice cream because it tastes good.	アイスを食べる、なぜなら美味しいから。	なぜなら (Nazenara)
Cause	Since	Since it's hot, I want ice cream.	暑いので、アイスが欲しい。	~なので (~nanode)
Condition	If	If I win, I'll be happy.	もし勝ったら、嬉しいよ。	もし (~moshi)
Condition	Unless	I won't eat unless it's chocolate.	チョコじゃなければ食べないよ。	~しない限り (~shinai kagiri)
Contrast	Although	Although I'm tired, I'll play.	疲れてるけれど、遊ぶよ。	~けれど (~keredo)
Contrast	While	While I like tea, she likes coffee.	私がお茶好き一方で、彼女はコーヒーが好き。	~一方で (~ippō de)
Time	When	When I get home, I'll rest.	家に着いたとき、休むよ。	~とき (~toki)
Time	After	After I finish, I'll call you.	終わった後に、電話するよ。	~後に (~go ni)

Why Is This Useful?

Simple sentences like "I like soccer" are okay, but they get boring fast. Complex sentences with subordinate conjunctions (like "I like soccer because it's exciting") make your English sound natural and advanced. Plus, it's more fun to talk about your ideas this way!

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Final Tip

Think of a complex sentence as a game like Scrabble: you start with a basic word (S-V-O), then add more pieces (conjunctions and clauses) to make it bigger and better!