

# A Note on NPs as Temporal Subordinating Conjunctions\*

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## 1. Introduction

Recent studies (Amanuma (1987), Fuji (1985), Fukuchi (1986), Igarashi (1985), Ike-uchi (1986), Inoue (1984), Ishii (1983a, b, 1985), Kajita (1977, 1983a, b), Koma (1987), Kono (1985), Ohna (1985, 1986, 1990a, b), Omuro (1985), Sakakibara (1982), Suzuki (1985a, b, 1986, 1987), etc.) have adduced a good deal of evidence for the "non-instantaneous" model of grammar. In this model the notion "time" is incorporated, reference to the intermediate stages of language development being thus theoretically permitted.

This paper tries to show that NPs as temporal subordinating conjunctions (hereafter, NSC) can be suitably handled in such a "dynamic" approach, with many of their properties being given natural accounts. NSCs include: *the moment*, *the minute*, *the instant*, *every time*, *each time*, *any time*, *the first time*, *last time*, *next time*<sup>1</sup>. Henceforth, we will use the term NSCC for NSC+clause.

In section 2, some of the facts concerning NSCs will be presented. Section 3 will present an alternative. Section 4 is a conclusion.

## 2. Syntactic properties of NSC

### 2. 1. Properties of NP

NSCs have properties of NP such as follows:

First, some of them have the definite article *the*, like a common NP such as *the paper*.

Second, some of them have quantifiers such as *every*, *each*, *any*. Ordinary NPs also can take quantifiers.

Third, some of them have ordinals such as *first*, *last*, *next*. This is the case with usual NPs.

Fourth, the adjective *very* or *precise* may modify the following head N in NSC:

(1) The very (precise) instant I saw him, I recognized him<sup>2</sup>.

(Quirk et al. 1985: 1002)

Fifth, subordinate clauses always follow after NSCs as in (2). The subject NP or complement NP also can have subordinate clauses after them as in (3) and (4).

- (2) Probably the first time it's come up in this generation, Mr. Wilson would like to do a lot of erudite thinking about that for a while.

: John D. Ehrlichman

=Former chief domestic affairs adviser to President Nixon

: Meeting: The President, Haldeman and Ehrlichman,

Oval Office, April 14, 1973. (2: 24–3: 55 p. m.)

(The New York Times (ed.) 1974: 351)

- (3) The first time he saw the enemy was at eight o'clock one spring morning, and at eight-thirty he was hit in the right leg by a heavy slug that mashed and splintered the bones beyond repair.

(Steinbeck 1952: 18)

- (4) It was one of those situations where I was torn between my natural reaction to peek in my binoculars and match the animal because it was the first time I had ever seen one, so it was tremendously exciting,...

: Mark Brazil = An English ornithologist

(TV–EC–II May, 1987: 35)

Sixth, subordinating markers *that* or *when* may follow after NSC as in (5) and (6)<sup>3</sup>.

- (5) Their habitat, unfortunately, is seriously endangered but, luckily, every year some do breed successfully, and I have been able to see them every time that I've been to Okinawa when I've been looking for the Okinawa Rail.

: Mark Brazil = An English ornithologist

(TV–EC–II May, 1987: 44)

- (6) These were the last carefree hours of life together. But we didn't know it. Or did we suspect it somehow? Each time when I stood in the doorway with a last, cheerful good-bye, something "important" occurred to one of us:...

(Trapp 1953: 237)

## 2. 2. Properties of subordinators

### 2. 2. 1. Criteria in Quirk et al. (1985)

Quirk et al. (1985: 920–929) lists the criteria of coordination–conjunct–subordination gradients as follows:

- (a) Clause coordinators are restricted to clause–initial position.
- (b) Coordinated clauses are sequentially fixed.
- (c) Coordinators are not preceded by a conjunction.
- (d) Coordinators can link clause constituents.
- (e) Coordinators can link subordinate clauses.
- (f) Coordinators can link more than two clauses.

In the following, we shall check out how NSCs behave according to the criteria mentioned above.

- (a) Clause coordinators are restricted to clause—initial position.

It is obvious that NSCs are restricted to clause—initial position.

- (b) Coordinated clauses are sequentially fixed.

Some preposed NSCC can be postposed and others cannot, as you can see in (7)–(10).

- (7) Yes, indeed. Every time I come I see Mr. Fukuda.

: Harry F. Kern

=The president of a well known American consulting firm based in Washington, D. C.  
(TV—EC—II March, 1988: 22)

- (8) Yes, indeed. I see Mr. Fukuda every time I come.

- (9) I'm a romantic so I'm a little disappointed because every time I go to Broadway, it's usually to see a musical and I like to see plays, especially comedies.

: Victor Argo=A well-known American actor

(TV—EC—II June, 1988: 56)

- (10) ?I'm a romantic so I'm a little disappointed because it's usually to see a musical every time I go to Broadway, and I like to see plays, especially comedies.

It is possible for some postposed NSCC to be preposed and it is not possible for others, as in (11)–(14).

- (11) Their habitat, unfortunately, is seriously endangered but, luckily, every year some do breed successfully, and I have been able to see them every time that I've been to Okinawa when I've been looking for the Okinawa Rail.

: Mark Brazil=An English ornithologist

(TV—EC—II May, 1987: 44)

- (12) Their habitat, unfortunately, is seriously endangered but, luckily, every year some do breed successfully, and every time that I've been to Okinawa when I've been looking for the Okinawa Rail I have been able to see them.

- (13) That was when I started looking at the front door every time he went through it.  
(Rossner 1983: 82)

- (14) ?That was when every time he went through it I started looking at the front door.

- (c) Coordinators are not preceded by a conjunction.

NSCs can be preceded by a conjunction, as in (15)–(16).

(15) "Well," Juanita said, "I'm here, and last time I looked the tunnel was open."

(Hailey 1975: 328)

(16) John said, "That would be a grave mistake because it would be subversive to the orderly process of justice if everytime you had an important case you strive to put the matter in an ad hoc process. ..."

: John D. Ehrlichman

=Former chief domestic affairs adviser to President Nixon

: Meeting: The President, Haldeman and Ehrlichman,

Oval Office, April 14, 1973. (2: 24–3: 55 p. m.)

(The New York Times (ed.) 1974: 351)

(d) Coordinator can link clause constituents.

NSCs can not link clause constituents, as in (17)–(18).

(17) That's advertising—a business expense, so every time \*(I) smoke a cigar  
I've the satisfaction of knowing it's on Uncle Sam.

(cf. Hailey 1975: 307)

(18) I'll just have to go on scanning the horizon every time \*(I) let him off the lead.

(cf. Herriort 1987: 321)

(e) Coordinators can link subordinate clauses.

NSCs can not link subordinate clauses, as in (19)<sup>4</sup>

(19) \*Every time before he comes to Tokyo, he buys lots of presents.

(f) Coordinators can link more than two clauses.

NSCs can not link more than two clauses, as in (20).

(20) He was the boy's prisoner, and \*(every time) he found he could live through yet another indignity, every time he felt that mild relief, the boy's power grew.

(cf. King 1982: 140)

See Table 1 for summary.

Table 1. Coordination—conjunct—subordination gradients  
(cf. Quirk et al. 1985:927 Table 13.18.)

		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
coordinators	<i>and, or</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+
	<i>but</i>	+	+	+	+	±	—
conjuncts	<i>yet, so, nor</i>	+	+	×	+	—	—
	<i>however, therefore</i>	—	+	—	—	—	—
subordinators	<i>for, so that</i>	+	+	+	—	—	—
	<i>if, because</i>	+	±	—	—	—	—
NSCs	<i>every time, etc.</i>	+	±	—	—	—	—

## 2. 2. 2. Criteria in Nakajima (1982)

Nakajima (1982) classifies adverbial subordinate clauses into four groups according to the following criteria:

Table 2. (cf. Nakajima 1982: 366 (56))

Group					
Behavior	I	II	III	IV	NSC
a) within <i>do so</i>	OK	*/OK	*	*	*/OK
b) within scope of neg	OK	OK/ *	*	*	OK/ *
c) cleft	OK	OK	*	*	OK
d) occurrence in gennuds	OK	OK	*	*	OK
e) missing subject	OK	OK	OK	*	*
f) transposability	OK	OK/ ?	OK	*	OK/ ?
g) occurrence in question	OK	OK	OK	*	OK

Table 3. (cf. Nakajima 1982: 359 (36))

- Group IV: because (nonrestrictive), although, for, so that (result)  
 Group III: while (contrast), whereas, though, if, unless, since (reason)  
 Group II: because, when, after, before, while (duration), since (time), so that (purpose)  
 Group I: as if (as in *He treated us as if we were beasts.*)

In the following, we shall find out how NSCCs behave according to the criteria mentioned above.

### a) within *do so*

Nakajima (1982: 360) argues that the subordinate clauses headed by Group I subordinators are within the scope of *do so*, while the subordinate clauses headed by Group II subordinators are sometimes out of the scope of *do so*, for example, (21b), and

sometimes within the scope of *do so*, for example, (22).

- (21) a. \* John treated us as if we were beggars, but Mary did so as if we were aristocrats. (I)

b. John came here before I arrived, but Mary did so after I arrived. (II)

(Nakajima 1982: 360 (37a, b)): *but* = contrastive

- (22) John left here before I arrived, and Mary did so, too.

(=left here before I arrived)

(Nakajima 1982: 360 (38b)): *and* = uncontrastive

NSCCs behave like the subordinate clauses headed by Group II subordinators in this respect as follows.

- (23) John came here to see me before I arrived, but Mary did so the moment I arrived.

- (24) Basin people say that drinking it brings good luck.

She makes tea with it every time her father comes home.

Her sister does so, too.

(=makes tea with it every time her father comes home)

(cf. Bosse 1986: 221)

b ) within scope of neg

Nakajima (1982: 361) suggests that the subordinate clauses headed by Group I subordinators are within the scope of negation, for example, (25a), while the subordinate clauses headed by the Group II subordinators are interpreted as either within or out of the scope of negation, for example, (25b).

- (25) a. They didn't treat us as if we were babies. (in)

b. They have not been living here since their father died. (in/out)

c. She is not beautiful whereas her sister is beautiful. (out)

d. He can't speak Japanese well, because he lived in the U. S. for a long time.

(out)

(Nakajima 1982: 361 (43))

We realize that NSCCs exhibit the same behavior as the subordinate clauses headed by Group II subordinators. *Every time we have a fight!* in (26) is within the scope of negation, while *each time you spray* in (27) and *each time they begged* in (28) are out of the scope of negation.

- (26) I wish you wouldn't throw things at me every time we have a fight!

- (27) Miller:..., and it's that spray which you can see in the figure which is releasing

this chemical that is affecting the ozone layer.

Bisch: So each time you spray it's not only the hair spray or whatever it is that comes out but it's also part of this propellant that also is released.

: Gloria Bisch=An interviewer in NHK TV English Conversation II.

(TV-EC-II November, 1987: 30)

(28) They could eat out of your hands, they could dance, they were very cute and very rude if you didn't give them a penny each time they begged.

(Trapp 1953: 59)

c ) cleft

It is possible for NSCCs to be in a focus position of cleft sentences.

(29) That's advertising—a business expense, so it is every time I smoke a cigar that I've the satisfaction of knowing it's on Uncle Sam.

(cf. Hailey 1975: 307)

d ) occurrence in gerunds

It is possible for NSCCs to occur in gerunds.

(30) No one laughed; no one believed it; it was an old joke to all of them, except to Homer Wells; and the idea of people having babies every time they turned around was not especially funny to Homer.

(Irving 1985: 249)

(31) Two months later she had conquered Neville—simply by not saying "yes" every time he asked her out!

(Sato et al. (eds.) 1986: 92)

e ) missing subject

See 2. 3. 1.

f ) transposability

See the criteria (b) in 2. 2. 1.

g ) occurrence in question

It is possible for NSCCs to occur in matrix questions.

(32) Where did you go last year or last time that you went to Spain?

: DATE OF RECORDING: 4. 7. 78.

(Fawcett and Perkins (eds.) 1980: 177)

(33) And the last time we discussed it, why they had made other—

: Henry E. Petersen

= Assistant attorney general, headed the Justice Department's Watergate inquiry.

: Meeting: The President, Petersen and Ziegler,

Oval Office, April 27, 1973. (6: 04–6: 48 p. m.)

(The New York Times (ed.) 1974: 785)

## 2. 2. 3. Another similarity

We can find another similarity between subordinators and NSCs in VP deletion, as in (34)–(38)<sup>5</sup>.

(34) One of the less–wild national generalizations is that we tend to turn our pets into human beings whenever we can.

: Ray Miles=BBC seconded to NHK Radio Japan

(TV–EC–II June, 1988: 84)

(35) One of the less–wild national generalizations is that we tend to turn our pets into human beings any time we can.

(36) One of the less–wild national generalization is that we tend to turn our pets into human beings every time we can.

(37) ?One of the less–wild national generalizations is that we tend to turn our pets into human beings each time we can.

(38) "Call me the moment you can," she said. Toby kissed her and danced out the door.

(Sheldon 1976: 92–93)

## 2. 3. Differences between subordinators and NSCs

### 2. 3. 1. Missing subject<sup>6</sup>

In the subordinate clauses headed by typical subordinators, for example, *when*, *while*, *if*, and *though*, the subject can be deleted and the main verb can be changed into participle, when the subject in the subordinate clause is identical with the one in the main clause.

(39) When (he was) discovered, he was almost frozen to death.

(40) Do not read while (you are) eating.

(Yasui 1982: 303)

We usually cannot find this phenomena in NSCCs, as in (41)–(42).

(41) \*That's advertising—a business expense, so every time smoking a cigar

I've the satisfaction of knowing it's on Uncle Sam.

(cf. Hailey 1975: 307)



- (42) \*I'll just have to go on scanning the horizon every time letting him off the lead.  
(cf. Herriot 1987: 321)

However, there is one such example, that is, (43)<sup>7</sup>.

- (43) Every time around the Sun, Halley was remolded—and diminished—by the solar fires.  
(Clarke 1987: 71)

## 2. 3. 2. Modification of nominals

Ohna (1990b: 70) points out the fact that the acceptability of the sentence with NSCCs lowers in such a position as modification of nominals, which is a derivative position as a occurrence of adverbial clauses, when compared with other temporal adverbial clauses:

- (44) His reaction (when/?the moment/?/\*immediately) he saw Jane was quite strange.  
(Ohna 1990b: 70 (28))

## 2. 3. 3. Co-occurrence with SAdv<sub>1</sub> *however*

Kajita (1968: 75) notes as follows:

It is striking to observe that, despite the fact that the occurrence of *however* in the Standard Sample is by far the most frequent among the examined items, it appears only in independent sentences, and never in embedded sentences, except for the following three cases:...

However, there is one example in which NSC *the minute* co-occur with *however*.

- (45) "How does it happen," mused Agathe thoughtfully one day while we were riding through the endless pine forests in North Carolina, admiring the bright red soil, "that I feel at peace and quite at home here in America as long as I am in the wilds? The minute, however, traces of civilisation appear, these roadside advertisements, for instance, or these ugly wooden houses—oh, it makes me so unhappy! It spoils the countryside, and then I don't like America."  
(Trapp 1953: 149)

## 2. 4. Adverbial property of NSCC

NSCC can be coordinated with an adverbial NP as in (45).

- (46) Where did you go last year or last time that you went to Spain?  
: DATE OF RECORDING: 4. 7. 78.

(Fawcett and Perkins (eds.) 1980: 177)

### 3. Dynamic approach to the derivation of NSC

In section 2, we have observed NSCs share some syntactic properties with NPs in terms of internal structure and many with subordinators in terms of distribution. However, they still exhibit some differences from typical subordinators. Then how can we derive NSCs?

Quirk et al. (1985: 1002) suggests as follows:

Type 2 consists of noun phrases that commonly function as temporal adverbials; for example, *the moment (that)* and *every time (that)*. We consider these to be more like free syntactic constructions than like complex subordinators. The relationship between *the moment* and the following clause, for example, can be explained as the head of a noun phrase modified by a restrictive clause, the noun phrase functioning as adverbial of time. Compare:

(47) I recognized him *that moment*.

(48) I recognized him *the moment I saw him*.

However, in order to explain the syntactic behavior which we have observed in section 2, we should regard NSC as a complex subordinator derived from NP and NSCC as derived from NP + restrictive relative clause. NSCCs as a whole function as adverbials. Then we propose (49) as the structure of NSC and NSCC.

(49) I recognized him [ADV[CP[CONJ[NPthe moment]]][IP I saw him]]

In order to explain the derivation of NSC and NSCC, we employ Kajita's (1977, 1983a, b) "dynamic model of syntax"<sup>8</sup>. Kajita (1983b: 4) notes that any theory of grammar so far assumes the following theory format (50).

(50) Theory—Format (I):

Rules of type W are possible in G.

(W makes no reference to pre—adult grammars.)

Kajita (1983b: 4) proposes (51) instead of (50).

(51) Theory—Format (II):

(II—A) Rules of type X are possible in G.

(X: far more restrictive than W)

A hypothetical example:

X: rules that combine one predicate—constant with at most two individual—constants.

(All other elements: to be introduced by non-X rules.)

- (II-B) If rules of type Y are in  $G(j, i)$ , then rules of type Z are possible in  $G(j, i+1)$ .<sup>9</sup>  
 (j: particular languages; i: stages of acquisition)
- (II-C) If rules of type Y' are in  $G(j, i)$ , then rules of type Z' are impossible in  $G(j, i+1)$  (even if they are permitted by (II-A))<sup>10</sup>.

Kajita claims that (51), according to the theory format, which includes his theory, is much more plausible than (50), that is, any other linguistic theory, for the following reasons.

First, the set of possible rules of  $G(j, i+1)$  is much smaller than the set of type-W rules. This means the success of language acquisition despite the poverty of information is easier to account for with (51) rather than with (50). Second, course of development should be accounted for more directly in terms of the general theory of grammar.

As one type of extension (II-B), Kajita mentions "model-dependent extension." The derived rule (R') is derived from the basic rule (R<sub>1</sub>) with reference to the model (R<sub>2</sub>) in model-dependent extension.

Going back to our topic, that is, NSC and NSCC, we propose the following process for deriving NSCC from NP+S.

- (52) a. BASE: [NP[NPthe moment] [CP[IP I saw him]]]  
 b. MODEL: [CP[CONJ when] [IP I saw him]]  
 c. DERIVED 1: [CP[CONJ[NPthe moment]] [CP[IP I saw him]]]  
 d. DERIVED 2: [CP[CONJ[NPthe moment]] [IP I saw him]]

Suppose an English-speaking child has already acquired the construction of NP+restrictive relative clause (52a) and the construction of adverbial subordinate clause (52b) at a certain stage of acquisition of English,  $G(e, i)$  and suppose the child gets a desire to express more specific and/or vivid time reference rather than using *when*, *while*, *before*, *after*, etc. at a later stage of acquisition of English,  $G(e, i+1)$ . Then we consider the syntactic reinterpretation rule is invoked by "the principle to fill the gap in the grammar"<sup>11</sup> and "the principle to spell out the form which does not exist for the meaning in the grammar at the stage of language acquisition in question"<sup>12</sup> to produce NSC and NSCC (52d) in the English grammar of the child. In other words, the derivative construction (52d) is derived from (52a) on the model of (52b). We consider (52c) to be in the intermediate stage on the way from (52a) to (52d).

We regard the two principles mentioned above as a couple of the motivations to derive NSCs from a certain set of NPs. We consider there are some other motivations for English-speaking children to invoke the extension. First, there exists flat-structure similarity between the MODEL (52b) and the DERIVATIVE (52d): X+S. Second,

there is semantic similarity between the MODEL (52b) and the DERIVATIVE (52d), that is, expressing time. Third, Ohna (1986) suggests that the grammar makes use of some members of open classes, that is, N, V, etc. when there are not enough members in a closed class, in this case, a class of typical subordinate conjunctions<sup>13</sup>.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this paper, an analysis of NSCs within the framework of the "non-instantaneous" model of grammar is proposed. Though some of the notions exploited in our analysis may require further considerations, we believe we have initiated a promising line of argument for the analysis of NSCs.

#### NOTES

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- 1 Among 185 examples of NSCs, which I collected at random, there are 27 examples of *the moment*, 2 of *the minute*, 2 of *the instant*, 72 of *every time*, 15 of *each time*, 9 of *any time*, 13 of *the first time*, 22 of *last time*, and 23 of *next time*.
- 2 All underlines in the examples are mine.
- 3 There are 9 examples with *that* and only one example with *when* in the 185 examples in my corpus.
- 4 *Every time* in (19) is not an adverbial NP but an NSC.
- 5 James D. McCawley (personal communication) commented that this is not much of a similarity since VP deletion is largely unrestricted.
- 6 The difference between typical subordinators and NSCs in this respect was pointed out to me by Tsutomu Ohna. Nakajima (1982: 362) calls this phenomenon "Missing Subject." McCawley (1988a: 141) calls it "Adverbial Equi."
- 7 This example was pointed out to me by Tsutomu Ohna. James D. McCawley (personal communication) suggested that (43) is not the case of "Adverbial Equi" and is very marginal.
- 8 "Dynamic model of syntax" is sometimes called "extension theory," "is based on theory," or "non-instantaneous theory."
- 9 (II-B) is the process of extension.
- 10 (II-C) is the process of blocking.
- 11 See Suzuki (1985a, b) and Hale (1975) for details.
- 12 See Suzuki (1985a, b) for details.
- 13 See Ohna (1985, 1986) for details.

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#### DATA AND ABBRIVIATION

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