

The Development of Conjunctions Introducing an Adverbial Clause of Time from the Second Half of the 18th Century until the First Half of the 19th Century in English Prose Works

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1. Introduction

This paper discusses the development of subordinate conjunctions from the second half of the 18th century until the first half of the 19th century that introduce adverbial clauses of time to narrate two actions or events that happen one after the other within a very short time. In order to make their development clear, I shall examine which conjunctions are used in each half century and what kind of changes take place after a lapse of a half century.

The data are taken from 19 texts from 1759 until 1800 and 13 texts from 1801 until 1850. These 32 texts are listed at the end of this paper.

Conjunctions are classified into three major groups as follows:

GROUP I : *as soon as, so soon as, as fast as and soon as*

GROUP II : *no sooner ... but, no sooner ... than, scarce ... when, scarce ... before, scarce ... ere, scarcely ... when, scarcely ... before, scarcely ... ere, scarcely ... than, hardly ... when, hardly ... before and barely ... when*

GROUP III : *the moment, the moment that, the instant, the instant that, and the minute*

No sooner ... but and no sooner ... than in GROUP II, will be referred to as the *no sooner group*. *Scarce ... when, scarce ... before and scarce ... ere*, are referred to as the *scarce group*, while *scarcely ... when, scarcely ... before, scarcely ... ere, and scarcely ... than*, are referred to as the *scarcely group*. As for *hardly ... when and hardly ... before*, they are referred to as the *hardly group*.

The moment, the moment that in GROUP III, are referred to as the *moment group*. while *the instant and the instant that*, are referred to as the *instant group*.

I shall discuss the following matters: 1) the usage of GROUP I conjunctions; 2) the usage of GROUP II conjunctions; 3) the usage of GROUP III conjunctions; 4) the tenses in the first and second clauses; 5) variants of *as soon as, the moment, and immediately*; 6) *as soon as, almost as soon as, so soon as, as fast as and almost as fast as* that function as adverbial modifiers to indicate the same degree or as intensifiers in the form of *as soon as possible or as soon as one can/could and as fast as possible or as fast as one can/could*.

Before starting the discussion of the above matters, I shall give a brief explanation of the history of the con-

junctions from the beginning of the Early Modern English period until the first half of the 18th century on the basis of my previous researches.¹ *As soon as* and *so soon as*, which belong to Group I, have been used since the Middle English period. According to *OED*, the first citation of *as soon as* is from *South English Legendary* (c1290),² while the first citation of *so soon as* comes from *Assump. Virg.* (c1330).³ Although *as soon as* and *so soon as* are said to compete with each other, the first competition takes place in the second half of the 16th century (109 vs. 31) and the second one happens in the second half of the 17th century (105 vs. 27). This competition has not occurred since then, because *as soon as* becomes much more dominant than *so soon as* in the 18th century. *As soon as* is always more dominant.

As for *as fast as*, it first appears in *Nine daies wonder* (1600) and it occurs again in *The Life of St. Francis Xavier* (1688). After that its usage slightly increases and occurs 8 times in 6 texts in the first half of the 18th century. In addition to *these*, *anon as* occurs 3 times in 2 texts in the first half of the 16th century and it becomes obsolete after that.

As for the *no sooner* group in GROUP II conjunctions, *no sooner ... but* first appears in 1528 and then is constantly used from the second half of the 16th century until the first half of the 18th century (55, 33, 62 and 36 times respectively). On the other hand, *no sooner ... than* first occurs in the second half of the 16th century (3 times). After that, it is used from the first half of the 17th century until the first half of the 18th century (2, 19 and 98 times each). They first compete with each other in the second half of the 17th century (62 vs. 19) and *no sooner ... than* finally gains dominance in the first half of the 18th century (36 vs. 98). Moreover, in the second half of the 17th century *no sooner ... when* first occurs 4 times in 3 texts but it has not occurred since then.

In the *scarce* group, *scarce ... than* first occurs in 1530. In the second half of the 16th century its usage increases dramatically as follows: *scarce ... before*; *scarce ... but*; *scarce ... but that*; *scarce ... ere*; *scarce ... when* (2, 6, 1, 2 and 3 times each), but in the first half of the 17th century it decreases drastically: *scarce ... that* (2). In the second half of the 17th century it slightly increases as follows: *scarce ... when*; *scarce ... before*; *scarce ... but* (6, 1 and 1 time each) and in the first half of the 18th century it increases dramatically again as follows: *scarce ... when*; *scarce ... before*; *scarce ... but* (11, 9 and 8 times each).

As for the *scarcely* group, *scarcely ... when*, *scarcely ... before* and *scarcely ... but that* first occur in the second half of the 16th century as follows: 4, 2 and 2 times respectively. Their second occurrences take place in the second half of the 17th century as follows: *scarcely ... when* (12 times) and *scarcely ... before* (once). However, this group never occurs in the first half of the 17th and 18th centuries.

In the *hardly* group, *hardly ... when* (3 times) and *hardly ... e're* (4 times) first occur in the second half of the 17th century, while the first half of the 18th century saw the occurrence of *hardly ... when* (2 times) and *hardly ... before* (3 times).

Regarding the occurrence of *barely ... when*, we need to wait until the 19th century.

As for the *moment* group, the *moment* first occurs in the first half of the 18th century and its occurrence is considerable (74 times in 7 texts). On the other hand, *the instant* first occurs only once in 1743. Concerning the occurrence of *the minute*, we have to wait until the second half of the 18th century.

In describing the syntactic features of these conjunctions, I shall quote historical grammars such as Jespersen's *Modern English Grammar* or Poutsma's *Grammar of Late Modern English*, historical dictionaries such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, reference books and dictionaries on Present-day English grammar or usage such as Quirk's *Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* and Konishi's *Sanseido Dictionary of Present-day English Usage*. I am obliged to do so because the grammars published in the Early Modern English period or the

Late Modern English period do not deal with these conjunctions.

I shall specify the tenses in the first and second clauses when citing examples in sections 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 in order to support the discussion of section 6.

As for the citation of examples, page reference is given when they are from a book. However, page reference is not given when it is from an electronic text.

In regard to the title of the texts, some of them are so long that they are shortened as follows: *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* [Rasselas]; *A Political Romance* [Political]; *The Castle of Otranto* [Otranto]; *The Vicar of Wakefield* [Wakefield]; *A Sentimental Journey* [Journey]; *The Man of Feeling* [Feeling]; *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* [Clinker]; *Everina, or, The History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* [Evelina]; *The Old English Baron* [Baron]; *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* [Hebrides]; *A Sicilian Romance* [Sicilian]; *A Simple Story* [Simple]; *Caleb Williams* [Caleb]; *Memoirs of Emma Courtney* [Courtney]; *Of History and Romance* [H. and R.]; *Maria or The Wrongs of Woman* [Maria]; *The Three Original Publications on Vaccination Against Smallpox* [Smallpox]; *Jane Austen's Letters* [Letters]; *Tales from Shakespeare* [Tales]; *History of a Six Weeks' Tour 1817* [Tour]; *Northanger Abbey* [Northanger]; *Confessions of An English Opium-Eater* [Confessions]; *The Voyage of the Beagle* [Beagle]; *Wuthering Heights* [Wuthering]; *David Copperfield* [Copperfield].

2. The Usage of Group I

Table 1 shows the distribution of these four conjunctions, *as soon as*, *so soon as*, *as fast as*, and *soon as*, in each text both in the second half of the 18th century and in the first half of the 19th century.

Table 1. The Distribution of Group I in each text

the second half of the 18th century 1751 — 1800		the first half of the 19th century 1801 — 1850	
<i>as soon as</i>		<i>as soon as</i>	
S. Johnson (1759) <i>Rasselas</i> ⁴	1 ⁵	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	20
H. Walpole (1764) <i>Otranto</i>	9	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	6
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	8	Sir W. Scott (1814) <i>Waverley</i>	13
L. Sterne (1768) <i>Journey</i>	7	M. & P. B. Shelley (1817) <i>Tour</i>	3
H. Mackenzie (1771) <i>Feeling</i>	1	J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	16
T. Smollett (1771) <i>Clinker</i>	7	J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	11
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	34	M. Shelley (1818) <i>Frankenstein</i>	8
C. Reeve (1778) <i>Baron</i>	22	T. De Quincey (1822) <i>Confessions</i>	3
J. Boswell (1786) <i>Hebrides</i>	7	C. Darwin (1839) <i>Beagle</i>	27
W. Beckford (1786) <i>Vathek</i>	5	A. Brontë (1847) <i>Agnes Grey</i>	10
A. Radcliffe (1790) <i>Sicilian</i>	2	C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	13
E. Inchbald (1791) <i>Simple</i>	34	E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	24
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	20	C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	13
M. Hays (1796) <i>Courtney</i>	1		
M. Lewis (1796) <i>The Monk</i>	42		
M. Wollstonecraft (1797) <i>Maria</i>	2		
E. Jenner (1798-1800) <i>Smallpox</i>	4		
Subtotal	206	Subtotal	167

<i>so soon as</i>		<i>so soon as</i>	
E. Jenner (1798-1800) <i>Smallpox</i>	1	M. & P. B. Shelley (1817) <i>Tour</i>	2
		J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	1
		M. Shelley (1818) <i>Frankenstein</i>	4
		C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	1
Subtotal	1	Subtotal	8
<i>as fast as</i>		<i>as fast as</i>	
W. Godwin (1797) <i>H. and R.</i>	1	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	1
		J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	1
		C. Darwin (1839) <i>Beagle</i>	1
		E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	1
Subtotal	1	Subtotal	4
<i>soon as</i>		<i>soon as</i>	
H. Walpole (1764) <i>Otranto</i>	1	C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	2
M. Lewis (1796) <i>The Monk</i>	1		
Subtotal	2	Subtotal	2

As for *as soon as*, it is most frequently used of all the conjunctions in GROUP I, II and III. It occurs 206 times in the second half of the 18th century and 167 times in the first half of the 19th century. It is employed in 17 texts out of 19 and in 13 texts out of 13 in each half century. *As soon as* is usually employed to describe a sequence of two events.

- (1) Ordering the litter to stop, *as soon as* Hippolita was brought to herself, she asked for her father.

[*Otranto*, 110: the simple past + the simple past]

- (2) *As soon as* we had passed the opposite promontory, we saw the river Drance, which descends from between a chasm in the mountains, and makes a plain near the lake, intersected by its divided streams. [*Tour*; 114: the past perfect + the simple past]

As for *so soon as*, it occurs only once in Jenner's work in the second half of the 18th century and it is used in a situation in which the relationship between cause and effect is very clear. In the first half of the 19th century, its usage slightly increases and occurs 8 times in 4 texts. In (4) the causality between the actions can be seen. Nevertheless, it seems to be often used to describe a sequence of two events, as shown in (5). Inoue states in *A Dictionary of English and American Usage* that "*so soon as* is sometimes used to express causality between two actions or events."⁶

- (3) on the fourth day afterwards, *so soon as* the efflorescence [= redness of the skin] began to die away upon the arm and the pustule [= spot on the skin containing pus] to dry up, the *scarlatina* [= scarlet fever] again appeared, her throat became sore, the rash spread all over her. [*Smallpox*: the simple past + the simple past]

- (4) but *so soon as* the syndic [= government official] heard my companion's [= P. B. Shelley] rank and name, he apologized for the circumstance. [*Tour*, 116: the simple past + the simple past]

- (5) *So soon as* I could at all collect my thoughts, I sent for Joram, and begged him to provide me a conveyance in which it could be got to London in the night.

[*Copperfield*, 741: the simple past + the simple past]

Concerning *as fast as*, it occurs only once in one text of the 18th century and 4 times in 4 texts of the 19th century. It appears to be commonly used to describe a sequence of two events, as (6) and (7) show.

(6) The mass, *as fast as* he endeavours to cement and unite it, crumbles from his grasp, like a lump of sand.

[*H. and R.*: the simple present + the simple present]

(7) We then returned, *as fast as* the ponies would go, to Porto Praya.

[*Beagle*: the simple past + the simple past]

Regarding *soon as*, it occurs twice each in 2 texts of the 18th century and in 1 text of the 19th century. The *OED* comments that *soon as* is now poetical, dialectal, and colloquial.⁷ *Soon as* in (8) is used in the poem titled *Love and Age*, while *soon as* in (9) is used to indicate that Mr. Peggotty is a speaker of the class dialect.

(8) *Soon as* that name was heard, the Woods / Shook off their snows; The melting floods/ Broke their cold chains, and Winter fled away.

[*The Monk*, 197: the simple past + the simple past]

(9) but all the way to England she had thowt [= thought] to come to her dear home. *Soon as* she got to England she turned her face tow'rds it.

[*Copperfield*, 676: the simple past + the simple past]

3. The Usage of Group II

Table 2 shows the distribution of these five conjunctions, *no sooner ... but/than*, *scarce ... when/before*, *scarcely ... when/before*, *hardly ... when/before* and *barely ... when*, in each text both in the second half of the 18th century and in the first half of the 19th century.

Table 2. The Distribution of Group II in each text

the second half of the 18th century 1751 — 1800		the first half of the 19th century 1801 — 1850	
<i>no sooner ... but</i>			
L. Sterne (1759) <i>Political</i>	1		
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	2		
<i>no sooner ... than</i>		<i>no sooner ... than</i>	
S. Johnson (1759) <i>Rasselas</i>	1	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	7
H. Walpole (1764) <i>Otranto</i>	3	W. Scott (1814) <i>Waverley</i>	9
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	2	J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	2
H. Mackenzie (1771) <i>Feeling</i>	2	J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	2
T. Smollett (1771) <i>Clinker</i>	22	M. Shelley (1818) <i>Frankenstein</i>	1
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	19	T. De Quincey (1822) <i>Confessions</i>	1
J. Boswell (1786) <i>Hebrides</i>	1	C. Darwin (1839) <i>Beagle</i>	8
W. Beckford (1786) <i>Vathek</i>	14	A. Brontë (1847) <i>Agnes Grey</i>	1
E. Inchbald (1791) <i>Simple</i>	14	C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	6
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	29	E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	1
M. Lewis (1796) <i>The Monk</i>	26	C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	3
W. Godwin (1797) <i>H. and R.</i>	2		
M. Wollstonecraft (1797) <i>Maria</i>	1		
Subtotal	136	Subtotal	41

<i>scarce ... when</i>		<i>scarce ... when</i>	
L. Sterne (1759) <i>Political</i>	2	M. & P. B. Shelley (1807) <i>Tour</i>	1
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	5	C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	1
L. Sterne (1768) <i>Journey</i>	3		
H. Mackenzie (1771) <i>Feeling</i>	4		
T. Smollett (1771) <i>Clinker</i>	4		
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	3		
E. Inchbald (1791) <i>Simple</i>	2		
M. Lewis (1796) <i>The Monk</i>	3		
Subtotal	26	Subtotal	2
<i>scarce ... before</i>		<i>scarce ... before</i>	
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	1	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	1
L. Sterne (1768) <i>Journey</i>	1		
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	3		
Subtotal	5	Subtotal	1
<i>scarce ... ere</i>			
W. Beckford (1764) <i>Otranto</i>	1		
L. Sterne (1768) <i>Journey</i>	2		
Subtotal	3		
<i>scarcely ... when</i>		<i>scarcely ... when</i>	
S. Johnson (1759) <i>Rasselas</i>	1	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	2
H. Mackenzie (1771) <i>Feeling</i>	1	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	1
W. Beckford (1786) <i>Vathek</i>	2	J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	3
A. Radcliffe (1790) <i>Sicilian</i>	5	M. Shelley (1818) <i>Frankenstein</i>	2
E. Inchbald (1791) <i>Simple</i>	1	C. Darwin (1839) <i>Beagle</i>	1
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	5	C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	2
M. Hays (1796) <i>Courtney</i>	2	E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	2
M. Lewis (1796) <i>The Monk</i>	8	C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	2
M. Wollstonecraft (1797) <i>Maria</i>	1		
Subtotal	26	Subtotal	15
<i>scarcely ... before</i>		<i>scarcely ... before</i>	
W. Beckford (1786) <i>Vathek</i>	1	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	2
E. Inchbald (1791) <i>Simple</i>	1	J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	4
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	6		
M. Lewis (1796) <i>The Monk</i>	1		
Subtotal	9	Subtotal	6
<i>scarcely ... ere</i>		<i>scarcely ... ere</i>	
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	2	C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	1
Subtotal	2	Subtotal	1
<i>scarcely ... than</i>		<i>scarcely ... than</i>	
M. Lewis (1796) <i>The Monk</i>	1	J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	1
Subtotal	1	Subtotal	1
<i>hardly ... when</i>		<i>hardly ... when</i>	
H. Mackenzie (1771) <i>Feeling</i>	1	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	1
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	4	W. Scott (1814) <i>Waverley</i>	1
A. Radcliffe (1790) <i>Sicilian</i>	2	J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	1
		J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	3
		M. Shelley (1818) <i>Frankenstein</i>	1
		C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	1
Subtotal	7	Subtotal	8

<i>hardly ... before</i>	
J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	1
J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	1
M. Shelley (1818) <i>Frankenstein</i>	1
Subtotal	3
<i>barely ... when</i>	
J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	1
Subtotal	1

As for *no sooner ... but* and *no sooner ... than*, they compete with each other in the second half of the 17th century and in the first half of the 18th century. However, this *competition* comes to an end when *no sooner ... but* begins to go out of use in the second half of the 18th century and finally ceases to occur in the first half of the 19th century. *No sooner ... than* is most frequently used among GROUP II and occurs 136 times in 13 texts out of 19 in the second half of the 18th century. In the first half of the 19th century, its frequency becomes far lower and occurs 41 times in 11 texts out of 13, though the number of occurrences is still the largest among GROUP II.

In the *scarce* group (*scarce ... when*, *scarce ... before* and *scarce ... ere*), the number of occurrences of *scarce ... when* in the second half of the 18th century (26 times) is much larger than any other half-century from the first half of the 16th century until the first half of the 18th century (0, 3, 0, 6 and 11 times respectively). However, its occurrence drops sharply in the first half of the 19th century (2 times). Moreover, of the *scarcely* group (*scarcely ... when*, *scarcely ... before*, *scarcely ... ere* and *scarcely ... than*) the same is true of *scarcely ... when* in the second half of the 18th century (26 times vs. 0, 4, 0, 12 and 0 times respectively), but in the first half of the 19th century it again drops considerably (15 times).

In the *hardly* group, the number of occurrences of *hardly ... when* is comparatively small both in the second half of the 18th century (7 times) and the first half of the 19th century (8 times), while *hardly ... before* never occurs in the second half of the 18th century and occurs only 3 times. Compared with the occurrence of *hardly ... when* in the second half of the 17th century (3 times) and the first half of the 18th century (2 times), its frequency is still not so high in the first half of the 19th century as well as the second half of the 18th century.

Lastly, *barely ... when* first occurs only once in *Northanger Abbey* in 1818.

Concerning the *no sooner* group, the *scarcely* group and the *hardly* group, Swan states “These three expressions [*hardly ... when/before*, *scarcely ... when/before* and *no sooner ... than*] can be used (often with a past perfect tense) to suggest that one thing happened very soon after another.” Furthermore, *Sanseido’s Dictionary of Present-day English Usage* comments that “*hardly/scarcely ... when/before* has almost the same syntactic function as *no sooner ... than* does.” Thus, it can be assumed that the *no sooner* group, the *scarce* group, the *scarcely* group, the *hardly* group and *barely ... when* have almost the same syntactic function.

In addition, the description of the usage of *hardly ... when*, *scarcely ... when* and *no sooner ... than* in *Collins COBUILD English Usage* is almost the same as follows: “**Hardly** is sometimes used in longer structures to say that one thing happened immediately after another. In stories, **hardly** is sometimes put at the beginning of a sentence, followed by ‘had’ and the subject.”; “**Scarcely** is sometimes used in longer structures to say that one thing happened immediately after another. In stories, **scarcely** is sometimes put at the beginning of a sentence, followed by ‘had’ and the subject.”; “**No sooner** is also used, especially in writing, to say that one event happens immediately after another. In stories, **no sooner** is sometimes put at the beginning of a sentence, followed by an auxiliary and the subject.” From this, it can be assumed that *hardly ... when* and *scarcely ... when* prefer the past

perfect tense when they are used in the structure with inverted word order, whereas *no sooner ... than* can co-occur with either ‘had’ or ‘did’ or ‘do/does’ when it is used in the structure with inverted word order.

- (10) We were *no sooner* returned to the inn, *but* numbers of my parishioners, hearing of my success, came to congratulate me, [*Wakefield*, 188: the past perfect (BE-Perfect) + the simple past]
- (11) for *no sooner* did the distinct Words—*Petticoat*—*poor Wife*—*warm*—*Winter* strike upon his Ear,—*but* his heart warmed, [*Political*, 153: the simple past + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (11) the event that happened immediately after he heard the distinct words seems to be connected with surprise.
- (12) You were very impatient in the morning: but *no sooner* do you find yourself in good quarters, *than* you forget that you are to move.’ [*Hebrides*, 352: the simple present + the simple present, Inversion]
- In (12) the speaker makes a judgment about the hearer’s behavior and then makes a suggestion but nothing surprising takes place as a result of it.
- (13) *No sooner* were Othello and his lady landed in Cyprus, *than* news arrived, that a desperate tempest had dispersed the Turkish fleet, and thus the island was secure from any immediate apprehension of an attack. [*Tales*, 186: the past perfect (BE-Perfect) + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (13) they are very much relieved to hear the unexpected news in Cyprus.
- (14) *Scarce* had he settled this knotty point, *when* a strange kind of thumping and bouncing was heard right overhead, in the second floor, so loud and violent as to shake the whole building. [*Clinker*, 29: the past perfect + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (14) a worse situation unexpectedly develops right after he escapes from a bad situation. This situation is similar to the one depicted in the proverb ‘out of the frying pan into the fire.’
- (15) We climbed the highest of these [hills], but *scarce* had we reached the top, *when* a mist descended upon every thing, and the rain began to fall: we were wet through before we could reach our inn. [*Tour*, 29: the past perfect + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (15) they do not expect that it will begin to rain heavily when they reach the top of the hill.
- (16) but *scarce* had I parted with it, *before* I regretted having written at all, and I was flying down stairs to recover it, when the voice of Sir Clement Willoughby stopped me. [*Evelina*, 208: the past perfect + the simple past, Inversion]
- (17) Proteus now rescued her from the hands of the robber; but *scarce* had she time to thank him for the service he had done her, *before* he began to distress her afresh with his love suit. [*Tales*, 58: the simple past + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (17) she is dismayed by Proteus right after she is rescued by him.
- (18) She had *scarce* got twenty paces distant from me, *ere* something within me called out for a more particular enquiry— [*Journey*, 20: the past perfect + the simple past]
- (19) *Scarcely* had She reached the middle of the room, *when* the Latch was lifted up a second time. An involuntary movement obliged her to turn her head. [*The Monk*, 317: the past perfect + the simple past, Inversion]
- (20) *Scarcely* were these words uttered, *when* I recollected the association of Heathcliff’s with Catherine’s name in the book, which had completely slipped from my memory, till thus awakened. [*Wuthering*, 22: the simple past + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (20) the utterance suddenly reminds the speaker of something unpleasant.

- (21) This operation was *scarcely* completed, *before* we were directed to be ushered into his worship's apartment.
[*Caleb*, 242: the simple past + the simple past]
- (22) The two dances were *scarcely* concluded *before* Catherine found her arm gently seized by her faithful Isabella. [*Northanger*, 56: the past perfect (BE-Perfect) + the simple past]
- In (22) Catherine is delighted to find Isabella seizing her arm, though the sentence doesn't have inverted word order.
- (23) *Scarcely* could I recollect where, or indeed, what I was, *ere* they poured upon me such a torrent of questions and enquiries, that I was almost stunned by their vociferation [= shout]. [*Evelina*, 152: the simple past + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (23) the speaker is shocked by the people's shouting.
- (24) She had *scarcely* finished *ere* the bell announced bedtime: no delay could be admitted; Miss Temple embraced us both, saying, as she drew us to her heart—"God bless you, my children!" [*Jane Eyre*, 62: the past perfect + the simple past]
- (25) *Scarcely* had He succeeded in his design, *than* He shuddered at himself and the means by which it was effected. [*The Monk*, 384: the past perfect + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (25) he is bewildered by the unexpected situation produced through his design.
- (26) Such she believed were his words; but *scarcely* had she received their sound, *than* her attention was caught by other sounds immediately behind her, which rendered every thing else trivial. [*Persuasion*, 188: the past perfect + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (26) she is overwhelmed by other sounds which she suddenly hears.
- (27) But she had *hardly* shut the door of the room *when* she heard her lady's voice recalling her. [*Sicilian*, 193: the past perfect + the simple past]
- (28) Darkness then came over me, and troubled me, but *hardly* had I felt this, *when*, by opening my eyes, as I now suppose, the light poured in upon me again. [*Frankenstein*, 68: the past perfect + the simple past, Inversion and surprise]
- In (28) the speaker is surrounded with darkness and then suddenly he feels the gleam of light.
- (29) One of the best of these I entered, but I had *hardly* placed my foot within the door, *before* the children shrieked, and one of the women fainted. [*Frankenstein*, 70: the past perfect + the simple past]
- In (29) *hardly* is not placed at the beginning of the clause, though something unpredictable happens in the second event and the incident is a shock to him.
- (30) he accordingly set off by himself, and Catherine had *barely* watched him down the street, *when* her notice was claimed by the approach of the same two open carriages, containing the same three people that had surprized her so much a few mornings back. [*Northanger*, 84: the past perfect + the simple past]
- As illustrated in the above examples, the second event often seems to show or predict something surprising when a clause or sentence has inverted word order.

Table 3 shows how often inverted word order occurs when one of the adverbs with a negative meaning such as *no sooner*, *scarce*, *scarcely*, *hardly*, *barely* is placed at the beginning of a clause or sentence.

Table 3. The Number of Inverted Word Order

the second half of the 18th century 1751 — 1800		the first half of the 19th century 1801 — 1850	
<i>no sooner ... but</i>	1 out of 3		
<i>no sooner ... than</i>	50 out of 206	<i>no sooner ... than</i>	22 out of 41
<i>scarce ... when</i>	6 out of 26	<i>scarce ... when</i>	1 out of 2
<i>scarce ... before</i>	2 out of 5	<i>scarce ... before</i>	1 out of 1
<i>scarce ... ere</i>	1 out of 3		
<i>scarcely ... when</i>	7 out of 26	<i>scarcely ... when</i>	4 out of 15
<i>scarcely ... before</i>	0 out of 9	<i>scarcely ... before</i>	3 out of 6
<i>scarcely ... ere</i>	2 out of 2	<i>scarcely ... ere</i>	0 out of 1
<i>scarcely ... than</i>	1 out of 1	<i>scarcely ... than</i>	1 out of 1
<i>hardly ... when</i>	0 out of 7	<i>hardly ... when</i>	3 out of 8
		<i>hardly ... before</i>	1 out of 3
		<i>barely ... when</i>	0 out of 1

Swan comments that “in a formal or literary style, these structures [*hardly ... when/before*, *scarcely ... when/before* and *no sooner ... than*] are sometimes used with inverted word order.”¹³ For *no sooner ... than*, its rate of inversion increases compared with that from 1651 until 1750 (3 out of 19 and 10 out of 98 respectively). For the *scarce* group and the *scarcely* group, it is difficult to state the difference between them because the *scarcely* group never occurs in the period from 1701 until 1750. For the *hardly* group, inversion never occurs in the period from 1651 until 1750. Gothic romance such as *Otranto*, *Vathek*, Radcliffe’s novels, *The Monk*, *Frankenstein* was published from the second half of the 18th century until the first half of the 19th century, since the writers’ intention is to entertain and astound the reader at the same time. Probably this may have affected the increase in inverted word order in GROUP II. As illustrated in the above examples, the second event often seems to indicate or predict a surprise when a clause or sentence has inverted word order.

4. The Usage of Group III

Table 4 shows the distribution of these five conjunctions, *the moment*, *the moment that*, *the instant*, *the instant that* and *the minute*, in each text both in the second half of the 18th century and in the first half of the 19th century.

Table 4. The Distribution of Group III in each text

the second half of the 18th century 1751 — 1800		the first half of the 19th century 1801 — 1850	
<i>the moment</i>		<i>the moment</i>	
H. Walpole (1764) <i>Otranto</i>	2	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	1
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	3	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	4
L. Sterne (1768) <i>Journey</i>	8	W. Scott (1814) <i>Waverley</i>	1
T. Smolette (1771) <i>Clinker</i>	12	J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	2
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	34	J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	1
C. Reeve (1778) <i>Baron</i>	1	C. Darwin (1839) <i>Beagle</i>	2
J. Boswell (1786) <i>Hebrides</i>	2	A. Brontë (1847) <i>Agnes Grey</i>	1
W. Beckford (1786) <i>Vathek</i>	3	C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	7
E. Inchbald (1791) <i>Simple</i>	11	E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	6
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	6	C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	6
M. Wollstonecraft (1797) <i>Maria</i>	8		
Subtotal	90	Subtotal	31
<i>the moment that</i>			
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	2		
M. Lewis (1796) <i>The Monk</i>	4		
Subtotal	6		
<i>the instant</i>		<i>the instant</i>	
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	1	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	2
W. Beckford (1786) <i>Vathek</i>	2	C. Darwin (1839) <i>Beagle</i>	3
E. Inchbald (1791) <i>Simple</i>	2	A. Brontë (1847) <i>Agnes Grey</i>	1
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	4	E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	2
Subtotal	9	Subtotal	8
<i>the instant that</i>			
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	1		
Subtotal	1		
<i>the minute</i>		<i>the minute</i>	
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	1	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	1
		C. Darwin (1839) <i>Beagle</i>	1
Subtotal	1	Subtotal	2

The moment and *the instant* among GROUP III begin to be used first in the first half of the 18th century. According to my research, *the moment* first occurs in 1709 and *the instant* in 1743. Moreover, *the moment* occurs 74 times in 7 texts out of 13, whereas *the instant* occurs in only one text. The number of occurrences of both of *the moment* and *the instant* increases in the second half of the 18th century [*the moment*: 74→90; *the instant*: 1→9], but in the second half of the 19th century that of *the moment* rapidly decreases and that of *the instant* remains almost the same [*the moment*: 90→31; *the instant*: 9→8]. In addition, both *the moment that* and *the instant that* first occur in 1778, with *the moment that* occurring 6 times and *the instant that* only once. However, none of them occurs in the first half of the 19th century. Lastly, *the minute* first occurs in 1794 and it continues to be used in the first half of the 19th century in 2 texts out of 13.

Swan comments that “*The moment (that), the instant (that), the second (that) and the minute (that)* can be used in the same way (in both British and American English).”¹⁴ In his comment the phrase “in the same way” means that these four conjunctions can be used to mean ‘as soon as’ as well as ‘likewise.’ Furthermore, from the example ‘*The moment/As soon as I have finished I’ll give you a call.*’¹⁵ in *Practical English Grammar* Fourth edition, the usage of both *the moment* and *as soon as* can be assumed to be the same. Thus, it can be said that all of these conjunctions are used to express a sequence of two events.

For that in the moment that and the instant that, the *Oxford English Dictionary* comments as follows: “Formerly added with a conjunctive force to various words that are now commonly used conjunctionally without it,”¹⁶

(31) *The moment* Edmund entered the hall, every door in the house flew open; the servants all rushed into the hall, and fear was written on their countenances: [*Baron*, 115: the simple past + the simple past]

(32) He may use any means to get at what the law considers as his, *the moment* his wife is in possession of it, even to the forcing of a lock, as Mr. Venables did, to search for notes in my writing-desk— [*Maria*, 91: the simple present + the simple present]

(33) Oh, he set off *the moment* he had breakfasted! He is gone to the Leas, Mr. Eshton's place, ten miles on the other side Millcote; [*Jane Eyre*, 134: the past perfect + the simple past]

(34) *The moment, therefore, that* I could quit the parlour, I ran up stairs for my calash [= woman's hooped silk hood]; [*Evelina*, 294: the simple past + the simple past]

In (34) *the moment that* is separated into two parts because the adverb *therefore* is inserted between *the moment* and *that*.

(35) But *the moment that* the Clock struck ‘One,’ irresistible slumber seized them, nor left them till the departure of the Ghost. [*The Monk*, 163: the simple past + the simple past]

(36) *The instant* she had spoken, the water became smooth; and the fishes, at once, disappeared. [*Vathek*, 96: the past perfect + the simple past]

(37) and he threatened to strangle her, if she was not quiet, but she began again, *the instant* he left the room; moaning, and grieving, all night long, [*Wuthering*, 214: the simple past + the simple past]

(38) *The instant that*, from my window, I saw her returning, I flew down stairs, and met her in the garden. [*Evelina*, 302: the simple past + the simple past]

(39) I understood that *the minute* the affair of the fire was over Mr. Falkland had retired to his own room. [*Caleb*, 134: the simple past + the simple past]

In (39) the noun clause ‘that Mr. Falkland had retired to his own room’ functions as the direct object of the verb ‘understood.’

(40) My mother was the daughter of a king; she died *the minute* I was born, as my good nurse Lychorida has often told me weeping. [*Tales*, 203: the simple past + the simple past]

(41) *The minute*, however, the latter has reached the flock, he turns round and begins to bark, and then all the house-dogs take very quickly to their heels. [*Beagle*: the present perfect + the simple present]

5. The Variants of Conjunctions

As variants, *as soon as* has *as soon as ever* and *almost as soon as*. *As soon as ever* is usually called an emphatic form of *as soon as*, and it is used once in *Evelina*, once in *Letters*, three times in *Wuthering* and once in *Copperfield*. Emphasis is sometimes felt, as exemplified in (42) and (43). On the other hand, *almost as soon as* is used three times in *Caleb* and twice in *Copperfield*. Compared to *as soon as*, clauses beginning with *almost as soon as* at times appear to take slightly longer duration before the second event takes place, as exemplified in (44) and (45). Moreover, *a'most the moment* is used as a variant once in *Copperfield*. The usage of this phrase seems to be similar to that of *almost as soon as*. Lastly, *immediately as* functions as a conjunction and it occurs only once in *Agnes Grey*. Usually *immediately that* is listed in the dictionary. The *Oxford English Dictionary* comments that

“as conj. (*ellipt. for immediately that*) . *The moment that; as soon as.*”¹⁷

(42) “Goodness! that he was,” said young Branghton; “and, I declare, *as soon as ever* I saw him, I thought I knew his face.” [*Evelina*, 172: the simple past + the simple past]

(43) I’ll ask her, if you like, as soon as ever she comes home. [*Copperfield*, 26: the simple present + the simple present]

In (43) the auxiliary *will* shows a strong intention, which appears to be caused by the emphatic usage of *as soon as ever*.

(44) Mr. Falkland entered at one door, *almost as soon as* I entered at the other. [*Caleb*, 163: the simple past + the simple past]

In (44) it takes a little longer for Mr. Falkland to enter after the speaker comes in.

(45) *Almost as soon as* it shone upon the oyster-shell frame of my mirror I was out of bed, and out with little Em’ly, picking up stones upon the beach. [*Copperfield*, 33: the simple past + the simple past]

In (45) the speaker seems to take his time in getting out of bed.

(46) *A’most the moment* she lighted [= alighted] heer [= here], all so desolate, she found (as she believed) a friend; [*Copperfield*, 676: the simple past + the simple past]

In (46) it takes her a little longer to find a friend after she descends from a carriage or something like that.

(47) “Now, Miss Grey,” exclaimed Miss Murray, *immediately as* I entered the school-room, after having taken off my out-door garments, upon returning from my four weeks’ recreation, “Now shut the door, and sit down, and I’ll tell you all about the ball.” [*Agnes Grey*, 68: the simple past + the simple past]

6. The Tenses in the First and Second Clauses

For the conjunctions belonging to GROUP I (*as soon as*, *so soon as*, *as fast as* and *soon as*) and GROUP III (*the moment*, *the moment that*, *the instant*, *the instant that* and *the minute*), when it begins with one of those conjunctions, the first clause is the subordinate clause. Thus, the second clause is the main clause. On the other hand, with the conjunctions belonging to GROUP II (*no sooner ... but*, *no sooner ... than*, *scarce ... when*, *scarce ... before*, *scarce ... ere*, *scarcely ... when*, *scarcely ... before*, *scarcely ... ere*, *scarcely ... than*, *hardly ... when*, *hardly ... before* and *barely ... when*), when it begins with one of *no sooner*, *scarce*, *scarcely*, *hardly* or *barely*, the first clause is the main clause. Firstly because *no sooner*, *scarce*, *scarcely*, *hardly* and *barely* are all adverbs with a negative sense, inverted word order usually occurs when it comes at the beginning of a clause or sentence. However, one of *no sooner*, *scarce*, *scarcely*, *hardly* and *barely* is placed between the auxiliary verb and the main verb when it does not come at the beginning of a clause or sentence. Secondly because *but*, *than*, *when*, *before*, *ere*, *when*, *before*, *ere*, *than*, *when*, *before* and *when* usually comes at the beginning of the second clause, I feel them to be true conjunctions in comparison with *no sooner*, *scarce*, *scarcely*, *hardly* and *barely*. Thus, the second clause becomes the subordinate clause. Similarly, in *Sanseido’s Dictionary of Present-day English Usage*, the first clause beginning with *hardly* or *scarcely* is the main clause, whereas the second clause beginning with *when* or *before* is the subordinate clause.¹⁸

Table 5 is the summary of the above explanation.

Table 5. The Phrase or Word in the Subordinate Clause and those in the Main Clause
in the second half of the 18th century 1751 — 1800

GROUP I		GROUP II		GROUP III	
Subordinate Clause	Main Clause	Main Clause	Subordinate Clause	Subordinate Clause	Main Clause
<i>as soon as</i>	<i>corresponding</i>	<i>no sooner</i>	<i>but</i>	<i>the moment</i>	<i>corresponding</i>
<i>so soon as</i>	<i>clause</i>	<i>no sooner</i>	<i>than</i>	<i>the moment that</i>	<i>clause</i>
<i>as fast as</i>		<i>scarce</i>	<i>when</i>	<i>the instant</i>	
<i>soon as</i>		<i>scarce</i>	<i>before</i>	<i>the instant that</i>	
		<i>scarce</i>	<i>ere</i>	<i>the minute</i>	
		<i>scarcely</i>	<i>when</i>		
		<i>scarcely</i>	<i>before</i>		
		<i>scarcely</i>	<i>ere</i>		
		<i>scarcely</i>	<i>than</i>		
		<i>hardly</i>	<i>when</i>		
in the first half of the 19th century 1801 — 1850					
GROUP I		GROUP II		GROUP III	
Subordinate Clause	Main Clause	Main Clause	Subordinate Clause	Subordinate Clause	Main Clause
<i>as soon as</i>	<i>corresponding</i>	<i>no sooner</i>	<i>than</i>	<i>the moment</i>	<i>corresponding</i>
<i>so soon as</i>	<i>clause</i>	<i>scarce</i>	<i>when</i>	<i>the instant</i>	<i>clause</i>
<i>as fast as</i>		<i>scarce</i>	<i>before</i>	<i>the minute</i>	
<i>soon as</i>		<i>scarcely</i>	<i>when</i>		
		<i>scarcely</i>	<i>before</i>		
		<i>scarcely</i>	<i>ere</i>		
		<i>scarcely</i>	<i>than</i>		
		<i>hardly</i>	<i>when</i>		
		<i>hardly</i>	<i>before</i>		
		<i>barely</i>	<i>when</i>		

The tenses in the main clause and subordinate clause are divided into four types as follows:

TYPE I : the simple present tense + the simple present tense (common) or
the simple present tense + the auxiliary verb + the main verb (rare)

TYPE II : the simple past tense + the simple past tense (common) or
the simple past tense + the simple present tense as historical present (rare)

TYPE III : the present perfect tense + the simple present tense (common) or
the present perfect tense + the present perfect tense (rare)

TYPE IV : the past perfect tense + the simple past tense (common) or
the past perfect tense + the past perfect tense (rare)

Table 6 indicates the number of occurrences of each conjunction in each TYPE.

Table 6. The number of occurrences of each type in individual conjunctions

the second half of the 18th century 1751 — 1800				the second half of the 18th century 1801 — 1850			
TYPE I	TYPE II	TYPE III	TYPE IV	TYPE I	TYPE II	TYPE III	TYPE IV
<i>as soon as</i> 20	129	5	51	<i>as soon as</i> 33	118	1	15
<i>so soon as</i> 0	1	0	0	<i>so soon as</i> 0	5	0	1
<i>as fast as</i> 1	0	0	0	<i>as fast as</i> 0	4	0	0
<i>soon as</i> 0	1	0	1	<i>soon as</i> 0	2	0	0
<i>no sooner...but</i> 0	1	0	2				
<i>no sooner...than</i> 4	91	1	40	<i>no sooner...than</i> 3	20	1	17
<i>scarce...when</i> 0	6	0	20	<i>scarce...when</i> 0	0	0	2
<i>scarce...before</i> 0	1	0	4	<i>scarce...before</i> 0	1	0	0
<i>scarce ... ere</i> 0	0	0	3				
<i>scarcely...when</i> 0	7	0	19	<i>scarcely...when</i> 0	4	1	10
<i>scarcely...before</i> 0	5	0	4	<i>scarcely...before</i> 0	1	0	5
<i>scarcely...ere</i> 0	2	0	0	<i>scarcely...ere</i> 0	0	0	1
<i>scarcely...than</i> 0	0	0	1	<i>scarcely...than</i> 0	0	0	1
<i>hardly...when</i> 0	1	0	6	<i>hardly...when</i> 0	3	0	5
				<i>hardly...before</i> 0	0	0	3
				<i>barely when</i> 0	0	0	1
<i>the moment</i> 9	63	1	17	<i>the moment</i> 5	20	0	6
<i>the moment that</i> 1	5	0	0				
<i>the instant</i> 0	5	0	3	<i>the instant</i> 2	6	0	0
<i>the instant that</i> 0	1	0	0				
<i>the minute</i> 0	0	0	0	<i>the minute</i> 0	1	1	0

As soon as co-occurs most frequently with the tenses in TYPE II both in the second half of the 18th century [129 times out of 206] and in the first half of the 19th century [118 times out of 167]. In addition, its co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE IV [51 times out of 206] ranks second in the first half of the 18th century, whereas its co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE I [31 times out of 160] ranks second in the first half of the 19th century. Moreover, its co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE III [5 times out of 206 and once out of 160 each] ranks

fourth in each period. However, *so soon as*, *as fast as* and *soon as* are difficult to comment upon here because their number of occurrences is quite small.

No sooner ... than co-occurs most frequently with the tenses in TYPE II both in the second half of the 18th century [91 times out of 136] and in the first half of the 19th century [18 times out of 41]. Its co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE IV [40 times out of 136 and 16 times out of 41 each] ranks second in each period. Its co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE III [once out of 136 times and once out of 41 each] ranks fourth in each period. However, *no sooner ... but* is used only in the second half of the 18th century and its number of occurrences is very small, therefore it is difficult to make a comment upon.

Regarding the *scarce* group, the *scarcely* group and the *hardly* group in the second half of the 18th century, their co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE IV [27 times out of 34, 24 times out of 38 and 6 times out of 7 each] ranks first, while the co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE II [7 times out of 34, 14 times out of 38 and once out of 7 times each] ranks second. On the other hand, concerning the *scarcely* group and the *hardly* group in the first half of the 19th century, their co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE IV [17 times out of 23 and 8 times out of 11 each] ranks first, whereas their co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE II [5 times out of 23 and 3 times out of 11 each] ranks second. However, it is difficult to comment on the *scarce* group and *barely ... when* in the first half of the 19th century, because their number of occurrences is very small.

The moment co-occurs most frequently with the tenses in TYPE II both in the second half of the 18th century [63 times out of 90] and in the first half of the 19th century [20 times out of 31]. Regarding *the moment that* co-occurs most frequently with the tenses in TYPE II [5 times out of 6], while its co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE I [once out of 6] ranks second. *The instant* co-occurs most frequently with the tenses in TYPE II both in the second half of the 18th century [5 times out of 8] and in the first half of the 19th century [6 times out of 8 each]. Its co-occurrence with the tenses in TYPE IV ranks second in the second half of the 18th century [3 times out of 8], whereas its occurrence with the tenses in TYPE I ranks second in the first half of the 19th century [2 times out of 8]. *The instant that* and *the minute* in the second half of the 18th century are difficult to comment on because the number of occurrences of each is quite small. Similarly, *the minute* in the first half of the 19th century is difficult to comment on since the number of occurrences is very small.

There are five instances which cannot be classified into any of the above four types. Usually, the first event begins before the second event starts. Moreover, the first event ends before the second event does. In these instances, the first event is depicted in the simple past tense, while the second event is in the past perfect tense. Thus, the second event ends first and then the first event ends. The speaker notices that the second event has already finished, immediately after the first event ends. *Copperfield* has one instance of *as soon as*, *Persuasion* and *Frankenstein* have one instance of *so soon as* respectively and *Caleb* has one instance of *the instant* and *the minute* respectively. In any one of these five instances, the following phrase such as “the speaker noticed that” or “the narrator noticed that” can be added to the clause which includes the verb phrase *had + the past participle*. Thus, it is probably safe to say that each of them can be classified to TYPE II [the simple past tense + the simple past tense].

- (48) The greater part of the guests had gone to bed *as soon as* the eating and drinking were over; and we, who had remained whispering and listening half undressed, at last betook ourselves to bed, too. [*Copperfield*, 84: the simple past + the past perfect]
- (49) Anne had been ashamed to appear to comprehend *so soon as* she really did; but now she could safely

suggest the name of “Louisa.” [*Persuasion*, 170: the simple past + the past perfect]

(50) As I stood at the door, on a sudden I beheld a stream of fire issue from an old and beautiful oak, which stood about twenty yards from our house; and *so soon as* the dazzling vanished, the oak had disappeared, and nothing remained but a blasted stump. [*Frankenstein*, 23: the single past + the past perfect]

(51) *The instant* I declared myself, his transport had been at the highest, and was, to any power he was able to exert, absolutely uncontrollable. [*Caleb*, 272: the simple past + the past perfect]

(52) I understood that *the minute* the affair of the fire was over Mr. Falkland had retired to his own room. [*Caleb*, 134: the simple past + the past perfect]

7. Other Usage: function as an intensifier or the comparison of an adverb to indicate the same degree

Table 7 indicates how often each adverbial phrase is used as an intensifier or to indicate the same degree in each text.

Table 7. The number of occurrences of each adverbial phrase

the second half of the 18th century 1751 — 1800		the first half of the 19th century 1801 — 1850	
<i>as soon as one can</i>		<i>as soon as one can</i>	
J. Boswell (1785) <i>Hebrides</i>	1	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	5
E. Inchbald (1791) <i>Simple</i>	1	W. Scott (1814) <i>Waverley</i>	1
		J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	2
Subtotal	2	Subtotal	8
		<i>as soon as one possibly can</i>	
		J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	1
		E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	1
		Subtotal	2
<i>as soon as one could</i>		<i>as soon as one could</i>	
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	1	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	2
C. Reeve (1778) <i>Baron</i>	1	J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	1
J. Boswell (1786) <i>Hebrides</i>	1	J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	2
		C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	1
Subtotal	3	Subtotal	6
<i>as soon as one possibly could</i>			
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	1		
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	1		
Subtotal	2		
		<i>as soon as may be</i>	
		C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	1
		Subtotal	1
<i>as soon as might be</i>			
W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	1		
Subtotal	1		
<i>as soon as possible</i>		<i>as soon as possible</i>	
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	1	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	5
T. Smollett (1771) <i>Clinker</i>	1	W. Scott (1814) <i>Waverley</i>	1
C. Reeve (1778) <i>Baron</i>	2	J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	3
A. Radcliffe (1790) <i>Sicilian</i>	1	J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	5
E. Inchbald (1791) <i>Simple</i>	2	C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	1

W. Godwin (1794) <i>Caleb</i>	2	E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	1
M. Wollstonecraft (1797) <i>Maria</i>	1	C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	1
Subtotal	10	Subtotal	17
<i>as fast as one can</i>		<i>as fast as one can</i>	
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	1	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	1
L. Sterne (1768) <i>Journey</i>	1	W. Scott (1814) <i>Waverley</i>	1
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	2	M. Shelley (1818) <i>Frankenstein</i>	1
		C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	1
Subtotal	4	Subtotal	4
<i>as fast as one could</i>		<i>as fast as one could</i>	
L. Sterne (1768) <i>Journey</i>	1	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	1
C. Reeve (1778) <i>Baron</i>	2	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	2
		J. Austen (1818) <i>Northanger</i>	2
		J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	1
		T. De Quincey (1822) <i>Confessions</i>	1
		E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	3
		C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	2
Subtotal	3	Subtotal	12
<i>as fast as ever one could</i>			
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	1		
Subtotal	1		
<i>as fast as possible</i>		<i>as fast as possible</i>	
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	3	W. Scott (1814) <i>Waverley</i>	5
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	1		
C. Reeve (1778) <i>Baron</i>	1		
Subtotal	5	Subtotal	5
<i>as soon as</i>		<i>as soon as</i>	
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	2	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	1
J. Boswell (1786) <i>Hebrides</i>	1	J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	1
		C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	2
		Subtotal	4
<i>almost as soon as</i>			
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	1		
Subtotal	1		
		<i>so soon as</i>	
		J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	2
		J. Austen (1818) <i>Persuasion</i>	1
		M. Shelley (1818) <i>Frankenstein</i>	2
		C. Darwin (1939) <i>Beagle</i>	1
		Subtotal	6
<i>as fast as</i>		<i>as fast as</i>	
O. Goldsmith (1766) <i>Wakefield</i>	1	J. Austen (1796-1817) <i>Letters</i>	2
F. Burney (1778) <i>Evelina</i>	1	C. & M. Lamb (1807) <i>Tales</i>	1
C. Reeve (1778) <i>Baron</i>	2	A. Brontë (1847) <i>Agnes Grey</i>	1
		C. Brontë (1847) <i>Jane Eyre</i>	1
		E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	4
		C. Dickens (1850) <i>Copperfield</i>	1
Subtotal	4	Subtotal	10
		<i>almost as fast as</i>	
		E. Brontë (1847) <i>Wuthering</i>	1
		Subtotal	1

As soon as and *as fast as* are sometimes used as intensifiers when modifying the verb. In addition, *as soon as*,

so soon as and *as fast as* are used as expressions of the comparison of adverbs to indicate the same degree. When used as intensifiers, *as soon as* and *as fast as* usually take one of the following forms: 1) *as soon as one can*; 2) *as soon as one possibly can*; 3) *as soon as one could*; 4) *as soon as one possibly could*; 5) *as soon as may be*; 6) *as soon as might be*; 7) *as soon as possible*; 8) *as fast as one can*; 9) *as fast as one could*; 10) *as fast as ever one could*; 11) *as fast as possible*.

(53) as for myself, You may be sure I shall return *as soon as I can*. [Letters, 292]

(54) I'll do both, *as soon as I possibly can*. [Wuthering, 254]

(55) and I begged Dr Robertson might be with us *as soon as he could*. [Hebrides, 171]

(56) He was confounded at seeing me, and hastened to withdraw *as soon as he possibly could*. [Caleb, 164]

(57) you would wish, I see, to dispense *as soon as may be* with my sister's compassion, and, above all, with my charity [Jane Eyre, 297]

(58) The old woman had been preparing during the night for the meal to which they would expect to sit down, *as soon as might be after their return*. [Caleb, 229]

(59) Well, Sir, I will see him if you desire it; and I will come to you *as soon as possible*. [Baron, 43]

(60) Get home, write letters, and make friends as many and *as fast as you can*; [Waverley, 225]

(61) My first task was to reduce it to forty, to thirty, and, *as fast as I could*, to twelve grains. [Confessions, 79]

(62) and she proceeded to tell us how ill she had been used, and that two young men had been making her walk up and down the dark walks by absolute force, and *as fast as ever they could* tear her along; [Evelina, 170]

(63) I caught them both in my arms, and snatched them through the fire *as fast as possible*, while just as I was got out, the roof sunk in. [Wakefield, 126]

As soon as, *so soon as* and *as fast as* function as adverbial phrases to indicate the same degree. In addition to these three, there are two more phrases serving the same function: *almost as soon as* and *almost as fast as*.

(64) I could wish it done *as soon as* it can be done, Wickfield, [Copperfield, 213]

(65) you will reach Queen-Ann street *almost as soon as* Mrs. Mirvan, [Evelina, 80]

(66) Now it is known that in the shallow sea on the Arctic coast of America the bottom freezes, and does not thaw in spring *so soon as* the surface of the land, moreover, at greater depths, where the bottom of the sea does not freeze, [Beagle]

(67) you can't walk *as fast as* we do; [Agnes Grey, 126]

(68) he had no idea that the latter was failing *almost as fast as* himself, nor had any one, I believe: [Wuthering, 198]

8. Summary and Conclusion

So far I have discussed the conjunctions introducing an adverbial clause of time that are used to describe two actions or events that take place one after the other on the basis of 19 prose texts in the second half of the 18th century and 13 prose texts in the first half of the 19th century. The points I have clarified could be summarized as below.

For GROUP I, *as soon as* most frequently occurs in both periods [206 times and 167 times each]. *So soon as*

recovers but its number of occurrences is quite small in both periods [once and 8 times each]. *As fast as* is still used very infrequently in both periods [once and 4 times each]. Moreover, *soon as* occurs twice each in both periods, it is used either in a poem or to express a class dialect. The chief function of these four conjunctions is to describe a sequence of two events.

For GROUP II, *no sooner ... than* most frequently occurs in both periods [136 times and 41 times]. The *scarce* group and the *scarcely* group are used more frequently in the 18th century [34 times and 38 times each] than in the 19th century [3 times and 27 times each]. On the contrary, the *hardly* group is more frequently in the 19th century than in the 18th century [11 times and 3 times each]. In addition, *barely ... when* first occurs in the 19th century. The use of converted word order often seen is possibly due to the influence of the popularity of Gothic romance in both periods.

For GROUP III, *the moment* is most frequently used in both periods [90 times and 31 times each]. *The instant* is more often used in both periods [9 times and 8 times each] compared with the first half of the 18th century [once]. *The moment that* and *the instant that* are used only in the 18th century [6 times and once each]. In addition, *the minute* appears first in 1778 and it is also used in the 19th century [once and twice each].

The variants *are as soon as ever*, *almost as soon as*, *a'most the moment and immediately as*.

Concerning the relationship between the tenses and conjunctions in the first and second clauses, TYPE II ranks first in *as soon as*, *no sooner ... than* and *the moment* in both periods [129 times, 91 times and 63 times each; 112 times, 18 times and 20 times each], while TYPE IV ranks second in both periods [51 times, 40 times and 17 times each; 15 times, 16 times and 6 times each]. TYPE IV ranks first in the *scarce* group in the 18th century [27 times], the *scarcely* group in both periods [24 times and 17 times each] and the *hardly* group in both periods [6 times and 8 times each], whereas TYPE II ranks second in the *scarce* group [7 times], the *scarcely* group [14 times and 5 times each] and the *hardly* group [once and 3 times each]. In addition, there are five instances that cannot be classified into any type [one each in *as soon as*, *the instant* and *the minute* and 2 in *so soon as*].

Adverbial phrases that function as an intensifier are as follows: *as soon as one can*, *as soon as one possibly can*, *as soon as one could*, *as soon as one possibly could*, *as soon as may be*, *as soon as might be*, *as soon as possible*, *as fast as one can*, *as fast as one could*, *as fast as ever one could* and *as fast as possible*. Moreover, adverbial phrases that are used to indicate the same degree are as follows: *as soon as*, *almost as soon as*, *so soon as*, *as fast as* and *almost as fast as*.

NOTES

*I would like to thank Ms. Catherine Allen for her valuable suggestions and proofreading my draft.

1. See Haraguchi (2013-a) and (2013-b).

2. See *OED* (s.v. *soon adv.* B. 4. c.).

3. See *OED* (s.v. *soon adv.* B.4.d.).

4. The information of the text includes the name of the author, the publication date and the name of the text.

5. The number of the column refers to the number of occurrences in each text.

6. See Inoue (1960: 138).

7. See *OED* (s.v. *soon adv.* B.4.e.).

8. See Swan (1995: 237).

9. See Konishi (2006: 107).
10. See *Collins COBUILD English Usage* (1992: 286).
11. See *Collins COBUILD English Usage* (1992: 613).
12. See *Collins COBUILD English Usage* (1992: 645).
13. See Swan (1995: 237).
14. See Swan (1995: 267).
15. See *Practical English Grammar* (1984: 342).
16. See *OED* (s.v. that conj. II.7.).
17. See *OED* (s.v. immediately adv. 3.b.).
18. See Konishi (2006: 107-108).

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The second half of the eighteenth century:

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Ed. Ian Jack and Tim Parnell. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. Rep. of 1984.

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Ed. Ian Jack and Tim Parnell. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. Rep. of 1984.

pp. 3-104. [40,749 words]

Mackenzie, Henry (1771). *The Man of Feeling*. Ed. Brian Vickers. New York: Oxford University

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Smollett, Tobias (1771). *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*. Ed. Lewis M. Knapp. Oxford: Oxford

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- Wollstonecraft, Mary (1798). *Maria or The Wrongs of Woman*. Ed. William Godwin. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994. Rep. of 1975. pp. 7-134. [43,541 words]
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<http://www.bartleby.com/38/4/3.html>

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