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THE UNDERLYING CONDITIONALITY OF CONDITIONALS WHICH DO NOT USE *IF*[*]

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ABSTRACT In addressing a question at the semantics-pragmatics interface of how conditionals in English should be categorised, this paper addresses the underlying question: what is a conditional? Conditionals in English are very often associated with the canonical pattern 'if *p* then *q*'. But while the word *if* provides a simple function to aid us in expressing our conditional thought, it goes without saying that conditional thought does not go hand in hand with the single word *if*. This paper explores some of the ways that conditionals may be expressed in English without using *if* by presenting observations obtained from the International Corpus of English (ICE-GB) combined with results from previous empirical studies (e.g. Declerck & Reed 2001). In doing so, this paper considers the question what exactly it is to be a conditional, proposing some criteria to guide the categorisation of conditional expressions. In turn, this paper aims to shed some light as to why conditionals using *if* are so often focussed upon.

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to extend the investigation into the semantics of natural language conditionals by addressing the underlying question: what is a conditional? While the word *if* provides a simple function to express conditional thought, the class of expressions using *if* are not wholly representative of conditionals at the level of conceptualisation. This paper explores some of the ways that conditionals are verbalised in English by presenting observations obtained from the International Corpus of English combined with results from previous empirical studies (e.g. Declerck & Reed 2001).

This paper suggests some semantic criteria to guide the categorisation of expressions when taking observations from the corpus. By assuming that conditionality is a conceptual notion, it becomes evident that the class of conditionals is broader than much of the literature on *if* supposes. Furthermore,

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since no lexical item alone can dictate the category of conditionals, this paper also shows that there is no clear-cut category of conditional expressions.

By adopting semantic contextualism, where the logical form of the utterance may be enriched (e.g. Recanati 2010) or even overridden (e.g. Jaszczolt 2010) to give the speaker's intended meaning, this paper shows that a conditional may either be expressed overtly via the construction used, or implicitly, where the intended conditional meaning has to be recovered pragmatically. There is thus a crucial interaction between semantics and pragmatics in generating a conditional, since the conditional implicature may be the main, intended meaning (cf. Default Semantics, Jaszczolt 2010). This suggests that conditionality is dependent on an interaction between various sources of communication, from the lexicon and grammar, to the speaker's intentions and the topic of conversation.

Finally, while conditionals may be expressed either directly or indirectly, this paper shows that in each conditional expression there is an underlying expression which uses *if*. Since in all conditional expressions *if* is present as a concept, utterances using *if* express conditional thought directly using the default, most common conditional marker. This paper thus shows how conditionals which overtly use *if* fit into a broader semantic category.

2 Criteria for classifying conditionals

In order to grasp how conditionals are expressed in English, we must first obtain a better grasp of what exactly a conditional is. I start by outlining three standard ways of approaching the study of conditionals before proposing some criteria that may guide the classification of conditionals in English.

2.1 Conditionals in logic

The construction 'if p then q' is said to be the natural language equivalent of the material conditional $p \rightarrow q$. The material conditional is truth functional, in that the conditional is false *if and only if* the antecedent p is true and the consequent q is false. The most commonly cited problems in classing natural language conditionals with material conditionals stem from the fact that the truth function states that a false antecedent is sufficient for the truth of a conditional. For example, inputting (1) into the truth function yields a true conditional, but is deemed to be intuitively false or unassertable in ordinary discourse.

(1) If grass is blue, then grass is green.

Some of these reported problems pose genuine concerns when constructing a definition of natural language conditionals. However, it should be noted that this paper is concerned with actual usage of conditionals. Therefore, with the aim of observing natural language communication, spurious examples which would not be asserted by a rational communicator, such as (1), are not considered a concern.

Among potentially genuine concerns are cases where the results obtained by the truth function conflict with speakers' intuitive truth conditions. Take (2).

(2) I'm pretty sure John is at home, but if he's not, he's still at the office.

Here we are presented with a situation where the speaker believes the antecedent of the conditional to be false. However, interlocutors do not blindly accept the conditional *because* of the falsity of the antecedent; rather, the antecedent is entertained as a possibility on which to evaluate the consequent. If we take the truth function as a starting point for defining conditionality, we would have to look at the truth values of the parts of the expression to see if the pattern fits the truth function. Since, intuitively, many natural language *if*-statements do not match the truth conditions of the material conditional, it is likely that conditionals which do not use *if* will be even more difficult to elicit if we take a truth-functional approach.

2.2 Conditionals and possible-worlds semantics

With the discrepancies between the material conditional and natural language conditionals as motivation, Stalnaker (1975) takes a variant truth-conditional approach to the study of conditionals, arguing that *if* bears a non-truth-functional relation between its antecedent and consequent. In particular, he argues that a conditional is true *if and only if* in the closest contextually available possible world in which the antecedent is true the consequent is also true.

This account fares better than the truth-functional account in following the pattern of our conditional thought in that it restricts our consideration of the consequent to those situations where the antecedent holds. Immediately we have a more intuitive notion of what a conditional is. However, what should be noted here is that Stalnaker does not provide us with a definition for what a conditional *is*, but an account of the truth conditions of already established conditionals. Therefore, on the one hand we do not have a method of deciding whether an expression is conditional, but secondly, this account is only relevant to conditional assertions and won't adequately extend to other

conditional speech acts which are not concerned with truth. We thus require some definition of conditionals which subsume both conditional assertions and conditional speech acts, and furthermore, a definition which will allow us to decide whether an expression falls into the class of conditional expressions.

2.3 Conditionals in grammar

The two approaches outlined above are both truth-conditional accounts of conditionals. However, as we have seen, this will not be helpful in deciding what counts as a conditional. What is needed is an appropriate definition from which we can find principles for delimitation. In his *Dictionary of Grammatical Terms*, Trask (1992) describes the term 'conditional' as:

> A conventional name for certain verb forms occurring in some languages, notably Romance languages, which typically express some notion of remoteness, supposition, approximation or implied conditional.

By defining a conditional as 'certain verb forms' which express an 'implied conditional', it would appear that there is an element of circularity to this definition. Nevertheless, there are more important problems when applying this definition to the current endeavour. Since English does not have any particular tense or inflection depicting conditional mood, to specify that conditionality refers to verb forms is not an appropriate definition when applying to conditionals in English. While we could talk of the conditional tense in English being expressed with *would*, it is obvious that we can construct conditional sentences which do not use *would*, and moreover that *would* is not only used to introduce a conditional. What is required is some definition that will subsume the relevant constructions, but will not limit conditional expressions to specific verb forms.

One aspect of Trask's definition which may prove fruitful in shaping our own definition of conditionals is the notion of 'remoteness'. Employing a Gricean (1967) tack, use of the word *if* typically signifies that the speaker does not know the antecedent to be certainly true, and gives rise to a quantity implicature that the speaker is not in a position to make a stronger statement, for example using *since* in place of *if*. We want to extend this rationale to other conditionals which do not use *if*. While *if* may signify some inherent remoteness from reality, pinning remoteness on the antecedent more generally removes the burden from the word *if*. It should also be noted that by bringing in a notion of remoteness from reality, we implicitly consider the speaker's epistemic stance towards the truth of the antecedent. This turns the focus

away from a grammatical definition of conditionals towards a pragmatic definition, where the speaker's intentions and context of utterance also have to be taken into consideration.

2.4 Proposed criteria for classifying conditionals

The discussion so far has looked at three standard ways of approaching the study of natural language conditionals. While none of the above is appropriate as a definition of conditionals in English, it has been seen that aspects of each may contribute to the definition that we require. Here I propose two criteria that should be sufficient for delimiting the class of conditional expressions.

2.4.1 Antecedent is a supposition

Following the possible-worlds approach of Stalnaker (1975), the truth of the consequent is only evaluated in those situations that the antecedent invokes. Extending this idea beyond cases of conditional assertion, the first criterion is that the antecedent should restrict the consideration of the consequent to the situation the antecedent specifies. This consideration of the consequent need not be in terms of truth and falsity, but may be in terms of the felicity of the main clause utterance. Taking Austin's (1961) example (3), we have a case where the consequent is true in all possible worlds, not just the world where the addressee wants a biscuit.

(3) There are biscuits on the sideboard if you want them.

In this case, the antecedent provides the situation of discourse where the consequent is felicitously uttered, and in this case, denotes the relevance of the main clause utterance. It is for this reason that Austin's 'biscuit conditionals' are often dubbed 'relevance conditionals' in the literature.

2.4.2 Antecedent expresses remoteness

We can now bring the notion of remoteness into the mix. So far, a conditional expresses some relation between two states where the consequent is dependent on the supposition of some condition. The second criterion adds that the truth of that condition should be deemed to be uncertain by the speaker. That is, in terms of a conditional's antecedent and consequent, the antecedent of a conditional is not known to be factual, but the conditional itself is true if, on the supposition of the antecedent, the consequent is true.

As discussed above, this criterion is pragmatic in that it inevitably has to take the speaker's epistemic stance towards the situation described in the

antecedent into consideration. Thus, there is unlikely to be a one-to-one correspondence between any kind of morpho-syntactic properties of particular expressions and the class of conditionals, since the judgement for being conditional will stem in part from the speaker's own judgement in the certainty of the antecedent.

3 Using ICE-GB to search for conditionals

Individually, these criteria do not state anything novel about conditionals themselves, but taken together as a definition of a conditional, we are now in a stronger position to judge the conditionality of individual expressions. Before detailing the kinds of conditionals to be found in the ICE-GB, it is first worth considering the form that these conditionals might be found in.

3.1 Conditionality: a semantic or pragmatic notion?

It has been noted above that while the lexicon may provide a tool for overtly expressing the cognitive function of conditional thought - namely with *if* - it is not clear that there will be a one-to-one correspondence between conditional expressions and conditional thoughts. That is, since the criteria for being conditional do not come directly from the language system itself, this definition does not limit the level at which conditionality may arise. Following the semantic theory of contextualism, where the logical form of the utterance may be enriched (e.g. Recanati 2010) or even overridden (e.g. Jaszczolt 2010) to give the speaker's intended meaning, it is possible that a conditional may either be expressed overtly via the construction used, or implicitly via a conditional implicature. Moreover, even in cases where the utterance is deemed conditional in virtue of its logical form, we may have cases where the primary intended meaning is conditional, as is typically the case with conditional assertions, but secondly we may have cases where the primary meaning is *not* conditional, as is the case with Austin's 'biscuit conditional' discussed above, where the main illocutionary force is not assertion. Thus, these criteria do not limit the extent to which we can go into pragmatic inference in delimiting conditionals.

Adopting a contextualist stance, we may concede that sometimes the most appropriate way to convey the intended message is through an implicature, not through what is said in the sentence. The upshot for distinguishing conditional expressions is that they will not be limited to using particular lexical items in that they are not solely dependent on a single word such as *if*, nor will they be dependent on specific grammatical constructions, in that there is no particular structure that a conditional expression must follow. Rather, we

have to look at various sources of information such as the speaker's intentions, topic of conversation and speaker's background assumptions in order to gauge whether an expression is conditional or not. It is precisely for the reason that conditionality is framed by cognition, that classifying conditional expressions is likely to be a difficult and slippery task.

3.2 Challenges to a corpus study

First, since conditionality could arise at either the level of the sentence or as an implicature, it should be borne in mind that it is unlikely that there will be a clear, finite category of conditional expressions. This is for the two reasons that first, there is possibly an endless number of ways of expressing conditionals and thus the category would be very open, and second, that any morpho-syntactic properties of a particular expression which may be used to express a conditional could plausibly serve other functions in addition to expressing conditionality, such as to perform speech acts other than assertion. In this case, the best that we can hope for is a partial list of the various ways that conditionals may be expressed in English.

In terms of methodology, it must be remembered that grammar and the lexicon alone will not dictate the category of conditionals. However, short of conducting a full manual search of the corpus, it is still most efficient to search for first, individual words, and second, particular grammatical structures in order to find conditional expressions. Thus, when using the corpus to look at the variety of conditional expressions available to us in English in terms of words and structures, it is still necessary to keep the semantic criteria in mind when deciding what is to be classed as conditional.

Having decided on the semantic criteria for being a conditional, namely that the antecedent is not known to be true and that the antecedent should restrict the situations in which the consequent holds, we are now in a position to start considering how conditional thought may correlate with conditional expressions. To do this it is necessary to ask the question as to what may count as a conditional expression which is not denoted by *if*. To aid in answering this question, a pilot study using the ICE-GB was conducted, detailed below.

3.3 Pilot study: methodology

In order to gauge a preliminary idea of how conditionals may be verbalised in English, a pilot study consisting of five conversations from the spoken portion of ICE-GB was conducted. The spoken portion of this corpus is split into different discourse contexts. The four main categories are: private dialogue, public dialogue, unscripted monologue, and scripted monologue. Each cate-

gory is divided according to the different setting in which the speaking takes place. For my study, five conversations were chosen using PPS (probability proportional to size) sampling. This sampling method is useful for the current purposes, as the probability of selecting any conversation is proportional to the number of conversations in each category. In this case, PPS sampling was employed in order to yield conversations over a variety of discourse contexts, yet ensuring that categories which are more extensively represented in the corpus were reflected in the sample.

To do this, each conversation was listed in the order that they appear in the corpus, all of which are pre-grouped by their respective discourse contexts. A sampling interval was then calculated by taking the number of conversations in the corpus (300) and dividing by number of conversations required for the sample (5). A random number between 1 and 60 was then generated using an online random number generator, yielding the number 37. The 37^{th} conversation was thus chosen to be analysed, and each conversation thereafter at intervals of 60. The resulting five conversations are from the following discourse contexts: private dialogue, direct conversation; private dialogue, telephone call; public dialogue, parliamentary debate; unscripted monologue, unscripted speech; scripted monologue, broadcast talk.

To get an idea of some of the ways which conditionals may be externalised in English, I manually searched the five conversations both for conditionals using *if* and for any other conditional constructions. The results are shown in Table 1.

Total conditionals	**61**
Conditionals using *if*	28
Conditionals not using *if*	33

Table 1

These results show that within the five analysed conversations, over half of the instances of conditionals do not use *if*. This highlights that a study of *if* would only account for approximately half of all conditionals. Nevertheless, yielding 46% of all conditionals over the five conversations, it is clear that using *if* is by far the dominant way that conditionals are expressed. This provides some justification for the abundance of literature which focuses on *if*. However, as will become evident, there is also a plethora of ways that conditionals may be formed without using *if*. It is worth looking at some of these other conditional expressions, to confirm that the concept of conditionality is not as clear cut as a study of *if* would suppose.

4 Examples of conditional expressions

The examples to be discussed below have been divided into first, words or phrases that introduce conditionals, and second, structures that give rise to conditionals.

4.1 Conditional words and phrases: when

First, within the five analysed conversations, the only lexical item which can seemingly substitute for *if* is *when*. There are five conditional *when* utterances in total. An example is (4).

(4) When you follow that through you've got the means to give rise to a change in the method. (ICE-GB)

In this example, use of *when* is not necessarily signalling factuality, but is rather describing a hypothetical situation. In this case, *when* can be seen as expressing a general condition, and is equivalent to *whenever*. In their empirical investigation of conditionals, Declerck & Reed (2001:32) call such *when*-clauses 'case-specifying' clauses, in that they specify a case in which the proposition in the consequent applies. They suggest that in such cases *when* means *in a case when*, and *if* could be substituted freely. Recalling our criteria for being conditional, it appears that this use of *when* will adhere to these criteria. This is since the *when*-clause has an element of hypothetical or remoteness from reality. When the surrounding conversation is taken into consideration, it becomes evident that the event in the *when*-clause is not considered to certainly occur, but rather is being expressed to assert the consequence should that event occur. In this case, there does not appear to be any particular semantic difference between *if* and *when*, and paraphrasing (4) with *if* instead of *when* would not alter the conditional meaning of the utterance.

While (4) may be classed as a conditional, it should be noted that it is only conjunctive uses of *when* which may qualify as exhibiting conditional use. In general, *when* differs from *if* in that it expresses factuality, as in (5).

(5) Of course everybody thought he was quite mad but when he lifted a huge block of stone and lifted it above his head then they realised that he was inspired by a great force. (ICE-GB)

Here, *when* signals that the event actually occurred. This is made manifest by the *when*-clause being the past tense; it is clear that the speaker does not

intend to invoke any possibility of alternatives. This is in contrast to (4), where *when* does not invoke such a sense of factuality.

Whether (4) and (5) are conditionals is reasonably clear. However, deciding whether utterances meet the criteria becomes more slippery when considering examples such as (6).

(6) How can I demonstrate a machine when it doesn't work properly? (Declerck & Reed 2001:33)

The use of *when* in (6) is arguably case-specifying since it provides the case that the content of the consequent applies. Moreover, *when* can be substituted for *in a case when*. However, here the antecedent is deemed to be factual, and so by our criterion, should not be classed as a conditional. Declerck & Reed (2001:33) suggest that this case-specifying *when* can be substituted for *if*, even though the antecedent is deemed to be factual. Declerck & Reed do not discuss any criteria for when *when* may felicitously be exchanged for *if*, but an initial hypothesis may be that conditionality is dependent on the intended temporal reference. As noted above, the past temporal reference of the *when*-clause in (5) denotes its factuality. However, (6) does not denote a specific time, but a general state of affairs. This leaves open the possibility for its refutation. The question becomes whether or not the *when*-clause is *intended* to leave open the possibility of alternatives, or whether it is supposed to be taken as factual. It is thus the speaker's intended meaning and epistemic stance towards the *when*-clause that will determine its conditional status.

As noted above, *if* invokes a hypothetical state and leaves open the possibility of alternatives. If substituting *if* for *when* in (6) would leave the utterance semantically unchanged, this would suggest that *when* does not express factual information, and hence that (6) and (7) have the same conditional sense.

(7) How can I demonstrate a machine if it doesn't work properly?

While *if* is usually said to invoke alternatives, it should be noted that the *if*-clause in (7) also appears to be true. Does this mean that factual *if*-clauses do not invoke conditionals? A possible response may be that the reason that the *if*-clause in (7) is deemed to be true is because it is used to echo a previous thought or utterance in the conversation (cf. Carston 1996). In this case, the truth of the *if*-clause is presupposed by attributing the utterance to a previous thought or utterance in the conversation. If the truth of the *if*-clause is taken for granted, by our criterion of remoteness from reality, (7) should not be considered truly conditional.

Dancygier & Sweetser (2000) consider this argument but with reference to the differences between *since* and *if*. Similar to *when*, the affinities between *since* and *if* are evident from (8), taken from Dancygier & Sweetser (2000:119), and paraphrased using *if* in (9).

(8) Since you're a linguist, what's the Russian word for 'blender'?

(9) If you're a linguist, what's the Russian word for 'blender'?

While Dancygier & Sweetser acknowledge that *if* can be used echoically, they stress that *since* expresses positive epistemic stance; it represents factual information. On the other hand, *if* always invokes neutral epistemic stance in that it does not mark any commitment to the truth of its clause. They state:

> Rather than setting up a novel space, they [*if*-clauses] evoke a space already contextually accessible. However, referring to a space available in previous discourse does not necessarily mean that the speaker always aligns herself with its content to the same degree... *if* indicates non-commitment to the clause it marks: but non-commitment covers a wide range of possible attitudes, from strong disbelief to near-commitment. (Dancygier & Sweetser 2000:127)

For them, the fundamental difference between *if* and *since* is that *since* presupposes definite truth of the clause, while *if* maintains an element — however strong or weak — of alternatives. Thus, while the content of an *if*-clause may be echoic, by using *if* rather than *since* the speaker suggests she is not committing her belief in its truth. Rather, as Dancygier & Sweetser (2000:130) suggest, *if* may be used to denote that the utterance is attributed to another person, or that the speaker reserves judgement on its truth. In this way, they suggest that *if* is used as quotative, which is more polite than using *since*. Utilising this rationale, we may conclude that (8) is not conditional due to its factual antecedent, while (9) may be considered conditional on the basis that the speaker is not committed to the truth of its antecedent.

We can apply this argument to the case of *when* in (6). Although the temporal reference of (6) may allow *when* to be substituted with *if*, there is nevertheless a subtle semantic difference between them. Use of *when* in (6) suggests that the speaker believes the state in the clause to be certainly true; using Dancygier & Sweetser's terminology, *when* invokes positive epistemic state. However, in the cases where *when* is replaced with *if*, there is the indication that the speaker is not committed to the truth of the clause, but is attributing the utterance to a previous thought or utterance. Finally, it

appears that both *when* and *since* in these seemingly factual cases denote a *reason* for the assertion of the main clause; they are not invoking a *condition*. While *when* may sometimes invoke some remoteness from reality, it is important to adhere to the semantic criteria and not to allow the lexicon to guide conditionality. Therefore, such factual cases of *when* cannot be counted as conditionals owing to their positive epistemic stance, while their *if* counterparts still invoke some possibility of alternatives.

It is interesting to note that this discussion has highlighted that there may not be a clear factual versus non-factual distinction between conditional and non-conditional expressions. Rather, there may be a gradation of certainty from absolute certainty — where *since* tends to fall — to complete impossibility. The cases of *if* described here which may substitute in a *when*- or *since*-clause appear to fall around the boundary between certain and non-certain. Moreover, the case of *when* also confirms that conditionality does not hinge on the lexical item alone. While conjunctive *when* may sometimes invoke some remoteness from certainty, recovering the strength of certainty is due to an interaction between the lexical item and other factors, such as the temporal reference of the clause and other utterances in the conversation. This interaction from several sources suggests that contextualism is, in fact, the correct semantics to adopt, because we cannot rely on the lexicon alone to recover the intended meaning.

This observation also has some ramifications for the pursuit of delimiting conditional constructions. While English has a default conditional marker, *if*, other words which may perform the same function — such as *when* — may also be used in other roles other than to mark conditionality. Because conditionality may arise through an interaction of various sources of information and thus may not be evident from the logical form or construction of the utterance alone, it is obvious that there will be no clear-cut category of conditional expressions. However, what also becomes obvious is that attempting to devise a list of potentially searchable items for a corpus investigation is not a plausible task, as there is also no clear-cut class of conditional *constructions*, where conditionality is introduced by some particular word or phrase.

4.2 Other conditional words and phrases

Since *when* was the only overt conditional conjunction found in this pilot study, I now turn to Declerck & Reed's (2001) empirical investigation, where they provide an extensive list of possible conditional constructions. Declerck & Reed (2001:9) opt to define conditionality in terms of the form of the sentence, stating that a conditional is "a two-clause structure in which one of the clauses is introduced by *if* [...] or by a word or phrase that has a meaning similar

to *if*." However, through their examples they describe some non-conditional constructions as having some 'conditional connotation' (e.g. Declerck & Reed 2001:28), suggesting that conditionality comes through meaning rather than form, as they had suggested. Nevertheless, regardless of their definition of a conditional, Declerck & Reed's study provides a useful backdrop that can be used as the basis for the discussion of what may potentially be classed as a conditional.

In addition to non-factual *when*, some additional examples of conditional conjunctions that Declerck & Reed list are as follows. First, they suggest that phrases such as *providing*, *provided (that)*, *on condition that*, and *on the understanding that* can all express a necessary condition, and may substitute for *if* (Declerck & Reed 2001:21). On this basis, I searched the whole spoken corpus for the following key words, obtaining the following results:

Key word	**# instances in corpus**	**# of conditional uses**
providing	18	3
provided	34	13
condition	27	0
understanding	36	0

Table 2

The potential conditional uses of *providing* and *provided* are tagged in the corpus as conjunctions, opposed to certainly non-conditional uses which are tagged as verbs, making them easy to elicit. Some conditional examples are:

(10) Why can you not coach every day in half term, providing the children have half term at the same time? (ICE-GB)

(11) The quickest way into the West End from there is Gospel Oak, provided you know the times of the trains. (ICE-GB)

Both *providing* and *provided* appear to invoke some sense of non-commitment towards the state that they describe, so fit with the definition of a conditional given in this paper. Indeed, in (10) it is not taken for granted that the children have half term at the same time, nor is it assumed in (11) that the hearer knows the times of the trains. Rather, each of these clauses serves to provide a condition, which is itself unknown, on which the main clause is intended to hold.

That no conditional instances of *condition* or *understanding* were found in the spoken corpus, where the phrase denoting conditionality might be *on condition that*, or *on the understanding that* respectively, highlights a problem

with focusing on one corpus for a comprehensive description of all conditional uses in English. Since sentences using such phrases sound natural and occur in ordinary discourse, it is not that such phrases are not used in English, but that the corpus does not contain any instances. This confirms that manually searching the corpus for conditional constructions can only yield a partial picture of how conditionals may be expressed in natural language.

The second observation of Declerck & Reed's that I discuss is with *unless*. Declerck & Reed (2001:21) suggest that *unless* is usually understood as being equivalent to 'in a case other than', and in non-counterfactual conditionals, *unless* can be substituted by *except if*.[1] What can be seen from searching the spoken ICE-GB for cases of *unless*, is that *unless* invokes uncertainty on the truth of the clause it introduces. There are 67 cases of *unless* in the spoken corpus, an example of which is (12).

(12) You're very unlikely to get someone to commission you to write something unless you've already written and published quite a lot (which I haven't). (ICE-GB)

Here, it can be seen that *unless* provides a situation which is temporarily assumed to be uncertain, although the speaker later refutes this possibility of alternatives in the following utterance. *Unless* differs from *if* in that the use of *unless* conjoins the meaning of *if* with *not*, resulting in the negation of the *unless*-clause providing the condition for the main clause, as exemplified in (13).

(13) If you haven't already written and published quite a lot, you're very unlikely to get someone to commission you to write something.

Here we have *unless* serving to restrict the situations in which the main clause assertion is intended to hold. This is essentially the same role that *if* plays, except that it provides the opposite effect: *if* suggests that the assertion is only deemed to hold true in the situations that the *if*-clause specifies, while *unless* denotes that the main clause assertion holds in all situations except those the *unless*-clause specifies. We therefore have both the sense of remoteness from certainty and restriction to particular situations from the subordinate clause that conditionality requires.

1 See Declerck & Reed (2000) for a detailed discussion of *unless*.

4.3 The case of IN CASE

The final case in the discussion of conditional words and phrases that I address is that of *in case*. Declerck & Reed (2001:21-5) list five different ways in which *in case* may be used, all of which they suggest have some conditional meaning. The following discussion aims to uncover whether this claim is correct according to the current definition of a conditional.

There are just 13 tokens of *in case* in the spoken ICE-GB, which are grouped by Declerck & Reed's classification in the table below.

Total instances of *in case*	**13**
Precautionary	8
Preventative	1
Reason for emotion	0
If it is the case that	1
Relevance	2
Insufficient data to classify	1

Table 3

The first case is where *in case* has a precautionary meaning, where the speaker describes an action taken as a precaution against a potential consequence.

(14) I kept it in case he wanted to see it. (ICE-GB)

(15) I got my sleeping bag [. . .] in case I needed to be there for some reason. (ICE-GB)

Here, *in case* suggests that the speaker is unsure of whether the event will occur or not, and thus evokes some remoteness from reality. Thus, under one of the current criteria, there is a possible conditional meaning. However, *in case* does not appear to restrict the cases where the main clause holds. Compare the following.

(16) I will take an umbrella in case it rains.

(17) I will take an umbrella if it rains.

While *if* provides the circumstance under which the main clause assertion is supposed to hold, *in case* provides a *reason* for the action, and that reason is owing to the possibility of rain. It may be possible to draw parallels with

relevance conditionals, as the *in case*-clause denotes the relevance of the assertion. However, there seems to be a difference between this case of *in case* and *if*-relevance conditionals in that in the latter, the *if*-clause is said to create the discourse setting where the utterance is relevant, while the *in case*-clause here provides the reason for the action. Thus, whether we class this example as conditional will depend on the reason for the utterance: whether *in case* serves to provide information about the rationale for the speaker's actions, or whether it denotes the relevance for uttering the main clause. The former seems more plausible.

The second use of *in case* which Declerck & Reed describe has a preventative meaning, describing a situation which has not taken place in order to prevent a potential consequence.

(18) She never let the child play in the street in case he was run over. (Declerck & Reed 2001:23)

As with the precautionary meaning, *in case* does not provide a restriction on the situation described in the main clause, but rather provides the reason for the habitual action.

Third, *in case* may be used after expressions of fear or apprehension, and introduces a complement clause to denote the reason for the emotion. In this way, *in case* is equivalent to *that*.

(19) She was concerned in case her cover was blown. (Declerck & Reed 2001:23)

As with the previous two ways of using *in case*, *in case* introduces a reason for the main clause eventuality, and thus the main clause is not restricted to particular circumstances. While the *in case*-clause does denote uncertainty, further information than the structure alone is required to elicit the degree to which the speaker believes the *in case*-clause is likely. Paraphrasing (19) in the following ways highlights this.

(20) She was concerned what would happen if her cover was blown.

(21) She was concerned because it was probable that her cover was blown.

In (20) it may be assumed that the *if*-clause refers to a potential future event (but note that the *if*-clause is a condition for *what would happen*, not the event of being concerned). On the other hand, (21) provides an overt reason for being concerned, because the eventuality in the subordinate clause is considered to be likely. Thus, as with the case of *when* discussed above,

we would appear to have a cline between certainty and uncertainty in the *in case*-clause.

Fourth, *in case* can be used to give rise to the phrase *if it is the case that*.

(22) In case you need any money, I can lend you some. (Declerck & Reed 2001:23)

(23) In case you have any problems, your enumerator has been trained to help. (ICE-GB)

In these cases, Declerck & Reed (2001:24) suggest that *in case* is 'actualisation-conditioning', meaning that the antecedent denotes the situation which triggers the situation in the consequent. As above, *in case* appears to denote a possible future situation, thus leaving open the certainty of its actualisation. However, in this case *in case* could potentially be classed as conditional, as it provides a restricted situation in which the main clause is intended to hold.

It should be noted that both (22) and (23) could be considered speech-act conditionals, as the *truth* of the main clause is not restricted to the situation described in the *in case*-clause. Focussing on (23), it appears that we could get several readings depending on the intended meaning of the utterance. On the one hand, training has already occurred, so *in case* may be providing a reason why the training occurred in the past. Under this interpretation, as with the previous kinds of *in case*, there will be no conditional meaning. Alternatively, as with (16), *in case* may be a kind of relevance conditional, providing a felicity condition for the main clause assertion. Finally, *in case* may denote a conditional proper, but requires enriching to get the conditional meaning, as in (24). Here the utterance would be intended as a conditional directive, but is only recovered through the conditional implicature.

(24) If you have any problems, go to your enumerator.

We thus have another case where the speaker's primary meaning will provide the relevant interpretation, and in turn will depend on whether the utterance is conditional or not. This reinforces the difficulties with placing conditionality on a lexical item alone.

Finally, *in case* may be used to express relevance.

(25) In case you're wondering, that's not to the loo. (ICE-GB)

Here *in case* provides a situation which denotes the relevance of asserting the main clause. This has clear affinities with *if*-relevance conditionals, where the

antecedent supplies the relevance of asserting the consequent, even though the truth of the consequent is not dependent on the truth of the antecedent. It is only when the antecedent is true that the consequent is appropriately asserted. *In case* performs the same role in delimiting the situations in which the main clause is felicitous, and can be seen as exhibiting conditional meaning in the same way as *if*-relevance conditionals.

Related to *in case*, *lest* is said to be an alternative to *in case* in the preventative sense, although it is only expected to be found in formal or literary contexts. Indeed, only one case of *lest* is found in the spoken corpus, which comes from a scripted lecture:

(26) Yiddish speakers and authors [...] often signed their Yiddish pieces with pseudonyms lest the fact that they had stooped to write in the colloquial language damaged their reputations. (ICE-GB)

As above, however, this sense of *lest* is not considered to be conditional, because it merely provides a reason for an action which is certain, even though that reason itself is uncertain. In particular, it does not delimit the situation in which the main clause holds, so does not fit with that criterion for being conditional.

To sum up so far, while it is obvious that grammar and the lexicon do not dictate conditionality, this discussion has shown through various examples that there are nevertheless certain words or phrases that do typically invoke some conditional sense, even if this conditionality also arises from other aspects of communication. Therefore, while there is clearly no systematic correspondence between elements of the English language system and conditional thought, the lexicon nevertheless plays a part in generating this conditional meaning.

To round off the discussion of various words and phrases that may introduce a conditional, I list the following examples from the ICE-GB.

(27) Suppose you hadn't been able to raise finance at all.

(28) Supposing she'd said that to a psychiatrist, what would they say?

(29) That is correct assuming his face was pointing forwards.

(30) Let's assume that was a noun phrase.

(31) Given that linguistics is not democratic, we can't necessarily accept that.

Each of these examples restricts the situations that the hearer is asked to consider, and secondly, these situations are expressed with an element of

uncertainty. Each of these thus appears to fit with the current concept of a conditional. Other possible expressions may be the exhortative *let's assume* or *say*, and imperative *imagine* (Declerck & Reed 2001:26). It should be noted that the exhortative and imperative versions of *suppose* and *assume* form a syntactically independent clause, thus making for two independent sentences rather than conjoined ones. While each of these examples has a particular lexical item that may invoke a conditional sense, we can see that there is no definite line between a conditional with an overt conditional conjunction, and a conditional construction which is not a conjoined conditional sentence.

The following discussion turns to conditional constructions which do not have an overt conditional conjunction, but whose conditionality may be elicited in part through their clausal constructions.

4.4 Conditional expressions with no conditional conjunction

In the pilot study of five conversations detailed above, there were three instances where the grammatical structure gives rise to a conditional reading in light of having the form of a coordinate sentence. Following Haiman (1983) I call these 'paratactic conditionals'.

(32) Here on this dry desert it's searing, but mix it with a little water and life flourishes. (ICE-GB)

Paratactic conditionals are obviously not identified by the conjunction *and*, but can be elucidated by the conditional criteria. In particular, it is the fact that the first conjunct is not put forward as a statement of truth, and secondly that the situation described in the second conjunct is dependent on that of the first conjunct, that we are able to interpret the conditional meaning of the utterance.

The second construction found in the five conversations is one case where a restrictive relative clause could function as the *if*-clause:

(33) Let me also point out what could happen to companies that don't innovate. (ICE-GB)

Here, the sentence is not semantically a conditional, because 'companies that don't innovate' is a description, not a condition. However, it is possible that with pragmatic enrichment conditional meaning could be uncovered, and could be paraphrased as (34).

(34) Let me also point out what could happen to companies if they don't innovate.

The conditionality may come from the speech act or purpose of the utterance, which in this case may be to provide a warning against potential consequences of not innovating. It should also be noted that it is only the paraphrased *if*-clause which gives rise to the possibility of alternatives. Use of *if* does not assume that any particular company is innovative or not, but rather, it provides the situation in which the main clause holds. This enriched utterance is thus clearly conditional. However, it should be noted that it is only when the *if*-clause is taken to be true that the sentence can be felicitously translated using *that*, as in (33). This provides further evidence that conditionality may arise at the level of pragmatic inference, and need not be overt from the logical form alone. Thus, the main message intended by the speaker may be different from the uttered sentence, as it may be the enriched or modulated proposition which is the primary meaning (cf. Recanati 2010).

Fillmore (1990:141) briefly suggests that the following grammatical constructions give rise to alternative worlds:

(35) Do you like it? It's yours.

(36) With his hat on he would look older.

(37) Then / In that case / Otherwise (etc.), I wouldn't be here.

Fillmore does not discuss in virtue of what components or structures these examples invoke alternative possibilities. However, it can be conjectured that first, in (35), the nature of a question is to invite alternative possibilities. It is then the assumption of the affirmative which allows the conclusion to be drawn. This can easily be seen as conveying an underlying conditional, which may be paraphrased as (38).

(38) If you like it, it's yours.

We thus have conditionality arising at the level of implicature, which highlights that the consequent is only deemed to hold on the assumption of the antecedent. However, it should be noted that the main message of this utterance is presumably not conditional at all, but is intended to convey (39).

(39) You can have it.

This is a clear example of how conditionality may arise at the level of implicature, but is itself a conversational device used to trigger further pragmatic inference to yield the speaker's intended message.

In (36) we have our first counterfactual construction. It is presupposed by the tense and mood of the modal verb that the man does not currently have his hat on, and moreover, 'with his hat on' provides the situation in which the conclusion is deemed to hold. By following the pattern of our conditional thought, it appears that (36) directly expresses conditionality without any pragmatic inference. Nevertheless, the sentence can be paraphrased using *if* to highlight its conditional meaning.

(40) If he had his hat on he would look older.

Similarly in (37), it is the modal verb which gives rise to the feeling of the impossibility of the truth of the assertion. The anaphoric devices provide the situation which denotes the belief in the consequent. However, these devices alone do not give rise to the possibility of alternatives; rather, there is an implied indirect conditional thought which is expressed. This may be paraphrased as:

(41) If that were the case, I wouldn't be here.

It should be noted that it is the element of complete counterfactuality as supposed by the speaker which is generated by the modal verb which gives rise to a possible indicative versus subjunctive conditional distinction. It is common to all conditionals that there is an element of uncertainty in the antecedent. While there may be a gradation from near-certainty to complete disbelief in an indicative, what is apparently unique to subjunctives is the belief in its impossibility. Thus, it is not the fact that an antecedent may give rise to the possibility of *alternatives* which gives rise to its conditionality, but simply in its uncertainty. A subjunctive conditional thus holds the extreme end of the spectrum.

5 Conclusion

This paper has proposed some criteria to guide the classification of conditionals. Through discussion of various examples found in the ICE-GB which adhere to these criteria, this paper has also highlighted that conditionality may arise at any level of communication, be it from the logical form of the uttered sentence, through pragmatic enrichment, or by overriding the logical form of the utterance altogether. While the lexicon and grammar may have a role to play, it has been seen that conditionality may be formed through an interaction of different sources of communication conspiring to generate the intended conditional meaning. Because there is no one-to-one correspondence

between particular constructions and conditional thought, it is no surprise that conditionals can be expressed in such a wide variety of ways.

It has been suggested that inherent in the meaning of the word *if* is an appeal to alternatives. Therefore, regardless of whether a conditional is expressed directly through functions of grammar or the lexicon, or indirectly, where the intended conditional meaning has to be recovered pragmatically, in each conditional expression there is an underlying expression which can use *if*. If we accept that in all conditional expressions *if* is present as a concept, we can suggest that utterances using *if* simply express conditional thought directly, using the default, most common conditional marker. This paper has thus shown how conditionals using *if* fit in the broader semantic category.

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