

Article

## Conditional Relationships: Philosophical Approach to its Semantic Content

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**Abstract:** This study explores the philosophical and linguistic dimensions of conditional relationships, focusing on their semantic content and syntactic structures. The objectives are to analyze the classification and interpretation of conditional sentences, investigate their cognitive and pragmatic functions, and evaluate their philosophical implications. A qualitative research approach was adopted, utilizing a comprehensive literature review of linguistic and philosophical texts. The findings reveal that conditional sentences are multifaceted, conveying meanings such as real/unreal, hypothetical/imaginary, and indicative/subjunctive. These classifications are grounded in logical reasoning and pragmatic functions, emphasizing their relevance in cognitive and philosophical contexts. The study concludes that the interpretation of conditional sentences remains complex, necessitating further interdisciplinary inquiry to address unresolved semantic challenges.

**Keywords:** Conditionality, Conditional Relationship, Conditional Meaning, Conditional Structure, Cognitive Reasoning, Indicative Condition, Subjunctive Condition.

### 1. Introduction

The problem of conditionality is topical in linguistics. There are a number of research works on this problem. It has been studied from different viewpoints: semantic, structural, functional, pragmatic, linguocultural and so on. A conditional sentence is a sentence which is comprised by a condition and a consequent. The consequent is realized as a main clause, and the condition is realized as a subordinate clause (Ida Larsson, 2014, 287).

### Literature review

Indicative and subjunctive conditionals are common types of conditionals among other types. The main difference between indicative and subjunctive conditionals lies in the grammatical aspect: while a subjunctive conditional is characterized by some auxiliary elements such as 'would', 'were' (plus infinitive), 'has', 'had', or 'have', yet an indicative conditional is not characterized like this (Kelly Marie Weirich, 2015, 2). As I. Minnikulov (2021) claim, conditionals perform some speech acts in a certain communicative context: permission giving and asking, hesitation, strong assertion, offer, persuasion, advice. The problem of conditionality has been issued by a number of scholars on a monographic plan as following linguists: R. Carla (2013), A. Richard (1989), T. Virpi (2007), Kai von F. (2009), Sadam H.R. (2017), Chi-Hé Elder (2015), Hilde H. (2016), Demet S. (2008), Luu T.T. (2012), Supakorn Ph. (2014). It should be noted that they have investigated the issue from different viewpoints.

In addition, the problem of conditionals has partially been addressed by the following scholars in their grammar books: Каушанская В.Л. Ковнер П.Л. et al. (2008), Иванова И.П., Бурлакова В.В. et al. (1981), Крылова И.П. (2007), Ирискулов А.Т. (2006),

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Кутузов Л. (1998), Каменский А.И., Каменская И.Б. (2002), Крылова И.П. (2003), Блох М. Я. (1983), Вейхман Г.А. (1990), Гордон Е.М., Крылова И.П. (1968), Alice M. (1992), Хаймович Б.С., Роговская Б.И. (1962), Хорнби А.С. (1957), Reznik R.V. Sorokina T.S. (1999), Хошимов Ў. Буранов Ж. (1989), Ilyish A.B. (1971), Graham L. (1996), Jim Scrivener, Suzanne W. Woodward (1997), Григорьева М.Б. (2012), Kamalja M. D., Khatik S. F., Hitesh T. G. (2016), Rod E. (2006), Tim T. (2014), Newby D. (1998), Irina M. (2016), Tamilla M. (2016).

Many scholars have discussed the meaning of conditional sentences, their structures, the main aims (Al Rdaat & Gardner, 2017). In grammar, conditional sentences refer to the discussion of factual implications or imaginary or hypothetical situations and their results. They express something that must happen or be true if another thing is to happen or be true (Hornby, 2000). Generally, conditional is a declarative sentence which has two propositions by using the connective “if”. It has a main clause and a subordinate clause (if clause) (Espino & Santamaria, 2008). The order of the two clauses can appear interchangeably. When the if-clause leads the sentence, normally a comma is used. However, when the conditional sentence takes the lead, no comma is found after it. In certain cases, the way we use this comma in conditional sentences lies ‘partly on their length and partly on personal preference’ (Essays, UK, 2018). More specifically, forms, meanings and time-tense relationships cause the major difficulties in conditional sentences (Nekoueizadeh and Bahrani 2013).

It is argued that the temporal and aspectual information contained in subjunctive conditionals is essential in the formation of the modal interpretation and it plays a role in the construction of relation of accessing within the category (Michela M. Ippolito, 2002, 19). It is concluded that a subdivision of the expressions of insistent polarization configuration with main clause case and are unharmonious with conditional/temporal adverbial clauses, while others are not limited to source domains (Lieven Danckaert, Liliane Haegeman, 2012, 23).

It is studied that conditional particles in the Arabic language and other particles which do not directly give the meaning of conditionality are interacted. As a result, it leads to changes in the semantics of conditionals (Tareq Rubaye Khalaf Alfraidi, 2017, 275). Yale Weiss regard the most popular semantics for conditional logic as a worlds semantics and so, it is developed under the semantics of world (Yale Weiss, 2019, 20). The main gainings from the research are the basic syntax in and a referential theory of tense with a sequence of tense style zero tense in the antecedent of conditionals, and a theory of counterparts that allows for an analysis of conditionals that cares about close enough accessible possible worlds, rather than closest accessible possible worlds.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The research adopts a qualitative methodology to investigate the semantic and philosophical aspects of conditional sentences. The study is structured around an extensive review of existing literature, including linguistic, cognitive, and philosophical perspectives. Key sources include seminal works on conditional logic, syntax, and pragmatics, as well as recent scholarly contributions addressing the classification and functions of conditional sentences.

### Data Collection

The data for this research were derived from:

- a. Linguistic Texts and Grammar Studies: A comprehensive analysis of works by prominent linguists, including studies on the indicative and subjunctive conditionals, their structures, and functional aspects.
- b. Philosophical Treatises: Examination of philosophical approaches to reasoning, modal interpretations, and the relationship between conditional sentences and natural laws.

- c. Semantic and Pragmatic Analyses: Review of texts focusing on the pragmatic functions and logical meanings of conditional sentences, with a specific emphasis on their application in various communicative contexts.

### Analytical Framework

The study employs the following analytical methods:

- a. Semantic Analysis: Classification of conditional sentences based on their indicative/subjunctive nature, real/unreal contexts, and hypothetical/imaginary scenarios.
- b. Structural Analysis: Examination of the syntactic features of conditional sentences, focusing on the relationship between the main clause and the subordinate (if) clause.
- c. Cognitive Reasoning: Evaluation of the cognitive basis for interpreting conditional relationships, highlighting their role in reasoning and hypothetical thinking.
- d. Pragmatic Functions: Identification of the pragmatic roles of conditionals in communication, such as persuasion, advice, and assertion.

### Study Parameters

The study specifically investigates:

- a. The interplay between temporal and aspectual elements in subjunctive conditionals.
- b. The impact of conditional particles on the semantics of conditionality in different languages.
- c. The application of logical frameworks, such as "if p, then q," in analyzing conditional meanings.

### Tools and Techniques

The research utilizes comparative analysis to draw parallels between various linguistic and philosophical approaches. It also incorporates tabular representation to categorize the semantic content of conditionals, facilitating a clear understanding of their diverse interpretations.

By synthesizing insights from multiple disciplines, this study provides a holistic understanding of conditional relationships, their linguistic structures, and their philosophical implications.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Conditional sentences are syntactic structures with presuppositions that convey distinct meanings, as is well known. English conditional phrases are expressed as complicated sentences from a cognitive and linguistic standpoint because they transmit several meanings in different ways. The intricacy of conditional phrases stems from the interdependence of situations. Conditional statements can have a variety of meanings, including hypothetical, real and unreal, feasible and impossible, and cognitive reasoning. The acts in the main clause that may take place if the particular circumstance in the if clause is met are another crucial aspect of conditional sentences. English conditionals apply several terms, such as reasoning and imagination correlations, and convey the logical meaning "if p, then q."

**Table 1:** Semantic content of conditional relationships

Types of meanings	Description
Indicative/subjunctive	Factual content/non-factual
Cognitive reasoning	Cognitive basis
Possible/impossible	Possibility and impossibility

Real/unreal	Real/unreal action
Hypothetical/imaginary	Hypothetical/imaginary situation
Logical	Logical meaning
Pragmatic	Pragmatic function

#### 4. Conclusion

A variety of fundamental philosophical issues, including the nature of reasoning, the possibility of knowing, and the standing of natural laws, are connected to the interpretation of conditional sentences. Therefore, philosophers focus on conditionals a lot and try to find answers to problems pertaining to their meaning. As a result, the general issue of how to interpret conditionals remains challenging.

Conditionals can be classified in terms of its semantic content in the following way: indicative/subjunctive, cognitive, real/unreal, hypothetical/imaginary, logical-philosophical, pragmatic and so on.

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