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constructional analysis of pleonastic conditionals“

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1. Introduction

Conditionals have been of interest to scholars from various fields for a long time, above all philosophy. In recent years, researchers from the field of linguistics have also taken to investigate this complex but fascinating topic, albeit most of the work has focused on theory only, first and foremost Kratzer (2012). Only a few researchers (e.g. Gabrielatos 2021, Declerck & Reed 2001) have used corpora to empirically test the many hypotheses postulated. In this thesis, I aim to investigate a subgroup of conditionals, namely pleonastic conditionals, as exemplified in (1) and (2) empirically by a corpus study for Present Day English.

(1) A: Maybe she was forgetful. Maybe she was desperate. We can never leave her alone again.

B: We can't be here morning, noon and night, the three of us.

A: **If we have to, we have to**, because this is a cry for help. (Movie Corpus)

(2) **When you have a sore throat, you have a sore throat**, but once the adrenaline would kick in for a show, I didn't ever feel any pain. I never felt pain onstage, ever. (Movie Corpus)

The examples above show that pleonastic conditionals are a type of conditional in which the antecedent and the consequent are identical in form and meaning. In other words, the consequent is a mere repetition of the antecedent. This already suggests that the truth or interpretation of the consequent is not dependent on the evaluation of the antecedent given that antecedent and consequent have the same propositional content. Rather, the antecedent and the consequent are identical in meaning. It therefore follows that the function of the pleonastic conditional construction must be more complex than merely expressing the propositional content of the antecedent/consequent. If this was the speaker's only communicative intention, it would suffice to utter the propositional content only once and the conditional packaging would be redundant.

The existing literature on pleonastic conditionals is limited. Declerck and Reed (2001: 360) only define the function of the construction very broadly. They maintain that pleonastic conditionals function to convey that the hearer should not doubt the inevitability of the consequent following from the antecedent or that the speaker expresses acceptance of the propositional content as an inescapable fact. The study at hand, however, aims to provide a more detailed account of the potential pragmatic functions of the pleonastic conditional construction. Four categories for pragmatic function are postulated: SPECIFICATION, INDIFFERENCE, ACCEPTANCE and CERTAINTY. The study

shows that syntactic patterns exhibit notable preferences for particular pragmatic functions.

Due to the formal and semantic identity of antecedent and consequent in the pleonastic conditional construction, the question arises whether it is possible or even plausible to analyze instances of the construction using existing theories, such as the material approach (Grice 1989). Moreover, given this unique characteristic of pleonastic conditionals it remains to be analyzed how this subtype fits into existing categorizations of conditional constructions.

To investigate the construction quantitatively and qualitatively, I use offline text data from three BYU corpora that approximate informal everyday speech: the Movie Corpus (Davies 2019), TV Corpus (Davies 2019), and Corpus of American Soap Operas (Davies 2011). The offline data purchased is manipulated using Python 3.0 to investigate formal as well as semantic tendencies of the pleonastic conditional construction. The study seeks to examine whether pleonastic conditionals show a preference for a particular syntactic pattern. Furthermore, it asks the question whether pleonastic conditionals can be introduced using any connector, among others *if* and *when*, that is permissible in non-pleonastic conditionals. While the question about the semantics of pleonastic conditionals is answered using a theory-based approach, the pragmatic functions of the construction are investigated empirically.

The thesis is structured as outlined: Before presenting and discussing the research findings, section 2 of this thesis aims to familiarize the reader with the foundations of Construction Grammar, more specifically, Usage-Based Cognitive Construction Grammar – the theoretical approach used to analyze and interpret the result of the empirical study on pleonastic conditionals. Section 3 offers an overview of the vast amount of literature available on conditionals in general and it elaborates on the issue of categorizing conditionals. Section 3.4 focuses especially on the phenomenon of pleonastic conditionals and presents insights from past research by Declerck and Reed (2001). Moreover, I provide a theoretical analysis of the pleonastic conditional construction using existing approaches and typologies to illustrate idiosyncratic characteristics of this conditional type. In section 4, the thesis introduces the research questions and hypotheses before elaborating on the overall methodological setup of the study including a discussion of the corpora and queries used. The study seeks to answer questions about the formal as well as semantic and pragmatic nature of pleonastic conditionals. The empirical findings are

presented in section 5 and 6. The last main section of this thesis (7) then focuses on the interpretation of the results from a Construction Grammar perspective. Section 7 aims to offer a detailed account of the individual constructional nodes found in the Pleonastic Conditional network and furthermore intends to provide a sketch of said network. To end the paper a conclusion will be drawn (8).

2. Construction Grammar

The following chapter intends to outline the basic assumptions and concepts at work within the framework of Construction Grammar – a relatively new linguistic framework that first came into being in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Hoffman & Trousdale 2013: 4). The term ‘Construction Grammar’ refers to a variety of related, yet distinctive, approaches to language that differ with regard to numerous characteristics, such as the level of formalism incorporated. These approaches include but are not limited to Cognitive Construction Grammar (Goldberg 2006), Radical Construction Grammar (Croft 2013), Berkeley Construction Grammar (Fillmore 2013), and Fluid Construction Grammar (Steels 2013). While the subsequent paragraphs aim to offer an overview of the commonalities shared by all construction grammars to establish a sufficient understanding of the general ideas at work, a major focus will be put on Usage-Based Cognitive Construction Grammar (Bybee 2013), henceforth also UCCxG, which represents the approach used to analyze and interpret the results of the empirical research presented in section 5 of this thesis. It should be acknowledged that the following section offers a mere introduction to the constructional endeavor and concentrates on theoretical concepts of particular importance to the study on pleonastic conditionals.

2.1 What is a construction?

Arguably, the most important aspect shared by all theories assembled under the umbrella term ‘Construction Grammar’ is the utilization of the Saussurean linguistic sign - a signifier-signified pairing - to not only describe words and morphemes but also more abstract phrasal and syntactic structures (Hoffmann & Trousdale 2013: 1). Constructions, which can vary with regard to their level of schematicity and complexity (as will be discussed in more detail down below), are conventional, learned form-function pairings (Goldberg 2006: 5). The nature of such a form-function pairing implies that “a construction is a *unit* of knowledge” [emphasis added] (Hilpert 2014: 10); hence, a speaker’s linguistic knowledge about a construction is a combination of function *and* form.

Construction Grammar postulates a continuum of grammar and lexicon incorporating all constructions (Hoffmann & Trousdale 2013: 1). In other words, no distinct differentiation between grammar and the lexicon is made, as opposed to most formal models. Moreover, constructional status is granted to linguistic units that exhibit a level of unpredictability with respect to an aspect of meaning and/or form (Hilpert 2014: 10, Croft & Cruse 2004:

257). The aforementioned characteristics of a construction are presented in a widely cited condensed formal definition by Goldberg (1955: 4):

C is a CONSTRUCTION iff_{def} C is a form–meaning pair $\langle F_i, S_i \rangle$ such that some aspect of F_i or some aspect of S_i is not strictly predictable from C's component parts or from other previously established constructions.

Capital *F* and *S* in this definition refer to form and semantics (or meaning/function) respectively. In her later work Goldberg (2006: 5) includes another characteristic when defining constructions, namely frequency. She argues that even fully predictable linguistic units may be granted constructional status, if “they occur with sufficient frequency”. This aspect will be discussed in more detail in section 2.4 about Usage-Based Cognitive Construction and the importance of frequency in this approach.

Any construction, i.e. form-meaning pair, includes, as can be inferred from the term, a form and a meaning component. The form side of a construction includes information about syntactic, morphological, and phonological properties, while the meaning side refers to semantic, pragmatic, and discourse-functional properties (Croft & Cruse 2004: 257) as is visualized in Figure 1 below.

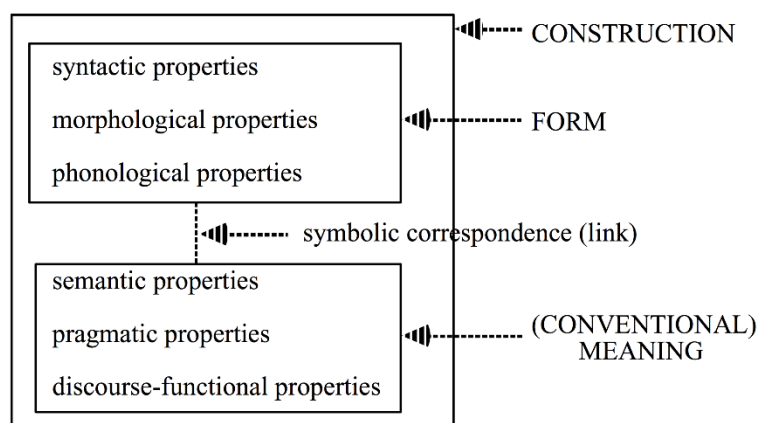


Figure 1 Form-Meaning Pairing (Croft & Cruse 2004: 258)

Figure 1, furthermore, indicates a symbolic linking between the two elements of a construction, i.e. form and meaning (Croft & Cruse 2004: 260). Considering that a construction does not necessarily consist of one word only but might be significantly more complex and abstract, the *internal* symbolic link allows for a mapping of such complex constructions as whole, for example grammatical patterns, to a particular meaning or function (Croft & Cruse 2004: 259). Implied is therefore the possibility for a formally complex construction, such as an idiom or an abstract syntactic pattern, to be linked with

a meaning side that is independent of the meaning of the individual words of which it consists of (Goldberg 2013: 16), as exemplified in the figure below.

NP V NP
X acts on Y

Figure 2 Example Symbolic Link (Diessel 2015: 302)

Figure 2 shows the abstract transitive construction. The form of this construction is highly abstract consisting of open slots for the subject noun phrase, the verb, and the object noun phrase. Accordingly the meaning 'X act on Y' is also abstract and independent of the individual words that fill the open slots.

Constructions can be differentiated on two levels, namely complexity and schematicity. Complexity, refers to the morphological structure of constructions (Fillmore et al. 1988: 501), which can be either atomic or complex. Constructions that cannot be further split into meaningful parts, and are thus morphologically simple, are termed 'atomic' (Croft & Cruse 2004: 255). Complex constructions, however, are, as the term suggest, morphologically more elaborate (Croft & Cruse 2004: 255). What is traditionally referred to as 'syntactic pattern' in traditional more formal approaches to language and grammar would therefore be considered a complex, (mostly) schematic construction.

With regard to schematicity, an atomic construction can either be substantive or schematic. In a substantive, in other words non-schematic, construction, slots are fully filled and fixed, i.e. lexical items such as *blue*. An atomic construction may also be of schematic nature, for example abstract word categories such as PREP 'preposition' (Sommerer & Smirnova 2020: 5). The schematicity of complex constructions can be describes as fully specified, semi-specified, or fully schematic (Sommerer & Smirnova 2020: 5). An example for a complex fully specified construction is the frozen idiom *It takes one to know one* (Croft & Cruse 2004: 233) as it does not allow for any variation whatsoever. However, not all idioms are fully specified constructions but may also exhibit a schematic tendency. This is due to the possibility to fill specific slots of an idiom, such as the noun phrase slot in *to spill the beans* with items that are appropriate with regard to form and meaning, e.g. *to spill the tea* (Croft & Cruse 2004: 233). Such a construction would be classified as semi-specified [*spill the X*]. Completely schematic constructions are

sequences of lexically open slots representing abstract structures, for example the transitive construction, see Figure 2. Hence, schematic constructions are constructions “where at least part of the [construction] can be filled by the usual range of expressions that are syntactically and semantically appropriate” (Croft & Cruse 2004: 233).

A speaker’s entirety of linguistic knowledge is thus a two-dimensional continuum along the axis of schematicity and complexity. Figure 3 (Sommerer & Smirnova 2020: 6) aims to provide an overview of the categorization presented above.

M	{proximal demonstrative/ marker of proximity}	M	{demonstrative}
F	[<i>this</i>] _{determinative}	F	[DEM]
atomic, substantive		atomic, schematic	
M	{Season greeting}	M	{state of being X}
F	[Merry Christmas!]	F	[ADJ-ness] _N
complex, fully-specified		complex, semi-specified	
M	{proximal entity}	M	{deictic entity}
F	[[<i>this</i>] + [CN]] _{NPdef}	F	[[DEM] + [CN]] _{NPdef}
complex, semi-specified		complex, schematic	

Figure 3 Construction Types (Sommerer & Smirnova 2020: 6)

Having discussed the nature of the concept of a construction as well as the possible categorization with regard to characteristics of complexity and schematicity, the following subsection intends to elaborate on how these constructions are interlinked to form a network referred to as the construct-i-con.

2.2 The construct-i-con and types of links

Constructionist approaches postulate that “the totality of our knowledge of language is captured by a network of constructions, called the ‘construct-i-con’” (Goldberg 2003: 219), including words, idioms, and less-specified abstract patterns. Hence, a speaker’s knowledge about language “is thought to be represented directly at the level of constructions” (Hilpert 2014: 2). In other words, “constructions form a structured inventory of a speaker’s knowledge of the conventions of their language” (Langacker 1987:63-76). Each construction represents a node in said inventory (Croft & Cruse 2004:

262). This network is modeled and presented as two dimensional. The nodes within are structured hierarchically and are interlinked vertically and horizontally in various ways (Hilpert 2014: 57).

With regards to the types of links among constructions to be found in the construct-i-con and viz. the possible kinds of relations among nodes, scholars have postulated several classifications (see Goldberg 1995, Diessel 2019). The variety of classifications has had significant effects on the modeling of phenomena using CxG, given that the types of links undeniably influence the sketches that are proposed (Sommerer & Smirnova 2020: 19). However, most scholars agree on a distinction between vertical links, linking less abstract with more abstract constructions, and other horizontal relational links.

Vertical inheritance describes the relation between more abstract nodes positioned on a relatively higher level in the network and more concrete nodes situated on a relatively lower level (Hilpert 2014: 57). Such a connection can hold between two constructions (whereby one is more abstract than the other and, hence, situated above that construction) or a construction and a construct, linking the lowest level in a network and an token of linguistic experience.

A vertical inheritance relation can hold between two constructions situated at different levels of abstraction in the construct-i-con (Diessel 2019: 17). Higher level constructions abstract away from more concrete nodes on lower levels, which in turn instantiate the schematic abstract patterns situated above (Diessel 2019: 16). In other words, “constructional generalisations are situated along a continuum from very abstract schemas down to lexically specified patterns” (Hilpert 2014: 58), such as exemplified in the figure below.

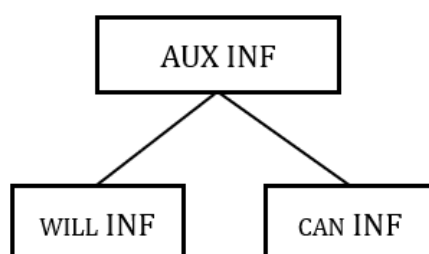


Figure 4 Example Inheritance Link

Figure 4 shows an instance of inheritance relation that can be found in the construct-i-con. The abstract auxiliary construction on the upper level, [AUX INF], represents an abstraction of the semi-specified constructions on the bottom, [WILL INF] and [CAN INF]. The two lower nodes inherit characteristic features of form and meaning from the more abstract auxiliary construction situated above.

Characteristics of form and/or meaning of abstract constructions are passed on vertically to more specific, less-schematic ones. However, this relation is not commutative, i.e. characteristics cannot be passed on from lower-level nodes to higher level nodes but only the other way around. Inheritance is hence a unidirectional relation that extends downwards in the network (Hilpert 2014: 58-59). While inheritance extends from top to bottom, abstraction happens in the opposite direction: abstract schemas emerge and stabilize through the encounter of multiple stimuli, i.e. constructs, as speakers abstract away from them. The construct-i-con is thus constructed from the bottom-up as people abstract away from frequent stimuli and these abstract constructions become entrenched. The importance of frequency and entrenchment will be discussed in further detail in section 2.4 below.

Constructions on the lowest level of the hierarchy are instantiated by constructs which are situated outside of the construct-i-con (Hilpert 2014: 12). Constructs are “phrases and sentences that instantiate more general constructions” (Hilpert 2014: 12). In other words, constructs are actual tokens of linguistic experience, that inherit various aspects from the nodes positioned above (Boas 2013: 8). Traugott and Trousdale (2013: 16) define constructs as “empirically attested tokens [...], instances of use on a particular occasion, uttered by a particular speaker (or written by a particular writer) with a particular communicative purpose”. It is of importance to note that constructs are *not* identical to constructions, given that a construct is an actual token of linguistic output that instantiates a more abstract construction. However, constructs function as the basis from which speakers abstract away to form constructions.

Goldberg (1995) differentiates between different types of vertical inheritance links, i.e. instance links and polysemy links. The most basic kind of link to be found in the construct-i-con is termed instance link. It is defined as the relation holding between two constructions “iff [viz. if and only if] one construction is a more fully specified version of the other” (Goldberg 1995: 79). For example, the idiom *to face the music* is a more fully specified version of the transitive construction (Hilpert 2014: 60). If two or more

constructions are conceptually related with regards to their meaning, they are connected via a polysemy link. The semantics of the relatively higher node is referred to as the ‘central sense’, whereas the relatively lower node carries an extended sense (Goldberg 1995: 75). A daughter node connected to its mother via a polysemy link inherits all syntactic characteristic from its dominating mother (Goldberg 1995: 75) and semantically “represent[s] a scenario that inherits central parts of the scenario that is associated with the basic sense” (Hilpert 2014: 61). To illustrate this relation, consider the ditransitive construction, the meaning of which can be generalized to be ‘X causes Y to receive Z’ (e.g. *She gave her girlfriend flowers.*) which constitutes the central sense of the construction. Furthermore, the ditransitive construction has extended senses, inter alia ‘X intends Y to receive Z in the future’ (e.g. *She promised her girlfriend flowers.*). These two senses are said to be related via a polysemy link in the construct-i-con as the intended transfer inherits semantic characteristic from the central sense (Hilpert 2014: 60).

Moreover, the existence of horizontal links between construction on the same level of abstraction, termed subpart or lateral links is postulated (Diessel 2019: 22, Goldberg 1995: 79). Horizontal links connect nodes “with partial similarities in their respective forms and meanings” as well as “different constructions on the same level of abstractness” (Diessel & Hilpert 2016: 60). Subpart links do not describe a relation of instantiation whereby one construction is seen as a more concrete instance of the other but link nodes that are recognizably similar with respect to either form or meaning. Consequently, this type of link does not connect constructions vertically, as was the case with links discussed thus far, but horizontally.

The tenets mentioned above, can be regarded to be subscribed to by all construction grammars. In the following, the focus shifts towards Usage-Based Cognitive Construction Grammar, a theory that utilizes the mentioned concepts but, moreover, incorporates aspects found in Cognitive Linguistics and usage-based approaches.

2.3 Usage-based Cognitive Construction Grammar (UCCxG)

Cognitive Construction Grammar, henceforth CCxG, is rooted, as the name suggests, not only in Construction Grammar but also includes major characteristics found in Cognitive Grammar and Cognitive Linguistics more generally (Boas 2013: 11). Like most other constructionist approaches, CCxG is a non-nativist theory. In other words, it does not support the idea of a Universal Grammar, a theory of language coined by Chomsky, that

assumes that “[m]any parts of language are built in, or innate” (Carnie 2006: 15). Contrary to this formalist belief, the framework of interest maintains that language acquisition results from the usage of general cognitive abilities in combination with language input (Tomasello 2003). This assumption reflects one of the key commitments of CCxG, i.e. the cognitive commitment (“to establish [...] general principles for language that are consonant with what is known about the mind and brain from other disciplines” (Evans & Green 2006: 501)). CCxG intends to “offer a psychologically realistic account of language by determining how different more general cognitive principles serve to structure the inventories of constructions” (Boas 2013: 7). While some scholars argue that this is a principle found in all branches of Construction Grammar, Boas (2013: 11) highlights that “whereas in [CCxG] the existence of constructions in the grammar are thought to be motivated by more general properties of human interaction and cognition, [other approaches] do not emphasize the role of motivation”.

Construction Grammars subscribe to the belief that a linguistic model “should in principle be able to account for all facets of a speaker’s knowledge about their language” (Boas 2013: 1). In other words, an approach should incorporate and explain not only regularities and general patterns but, moreover, include irregularities and idiosyncratic properties of a language. With particular reference to CCxG, this entails that “constructions [form] a structured inventory of a speaker’s knowledge of the conventions of their language, and not a random collection of exceptions and irregularities” (Boas 2013: 8). This reflects the second major commitment, i.e. the generalization commitment, which combined with the cognitive commitment forms the basis of the framework. Similarly to the cognitive commitment, it can be argued that not all constructionist models fully commit to this principle, such as Kay and Fillmore’s Construction Grammar (Evans & Green 2006: 661).

Moreover, construction grammars are inventory-based, which implies that “grammar [is] an inventory of symbolic units [rather] than a system of rules or principles” (Evans & Green 2006: 481). In other words, language works predominantly by storing structures (Evans & Green 2006: 481) based on linguistic input, instead of by applying a set of rules as is customary in formal approaches. This is inherently connected to the usage-based nature of CCxG and arguably a characteristic of all constructionist approaches (Goldberg 2013: 1). Diessel (2015: 302) argues that as any network model must account for the processing of learned data and the learning of linguistic input through such processing

and constructions grammars are, by definition, network models, all construction grammars must be usage-based.

2.4 Frequency and Entrenchment

Scholars of Cognitive Linguistics and, by deduction, therefore, also advocates of CCxG, adopt the view that language learning is frequency sensitive. In other words, humans utilize the statistic characteristic of linguistic input to develop a probabilistic system that is based on one's individual language experience (Divjak & Caldwell-Harris 2015: 53). As CCxG is usage-based, it permits not only abstract schemas but also more concrete items that occur with sufficient frequency to be integrated into the network and postulated as individual nodes, rather than being presented as mere constructs. Such highly frequent nodes can be found alongside generalizations despite exhibiting full predictability and complete compositionality (Boas 2013: 10). In this case the term frequency, is relative. The importance lies in how often a stimulus is experienced relative to other input. Generally speaking, the higher the frequency with which a stimulus is encountered, the more prevalent and therefore more entrenched it becomes (Divjak & Caldwell-Harris 2015: 54).

The literature distinguishes between token and type frequency – both of these measures play a distinctive role with regard to the productivity and entrenchment of patterns. Token frequency describes the number of occurrences with which a form is found in a particular environment (Divjak & Caldwell-Harris 2015: 55, Boas 2013: 10). With respect to the focus of this thesis, token frequency for example refers to the total number of instances of a particular pleonastic conditional, e.g. *If it happens, it happens*. (Movie Corpus), found in the data sets investigated. A high token frequency has various effects on a construction. Bybee (2007) distinguishes three: [1] the conserving effect, [2] the reducing effect, and [3] autonomy. The conserving effect [1] of token frequency refers to the strengthening characteristic of repetition. Diessel identifies the same effect but simply refers to it as 'strengthening of linguistic representations' (2007: 123). If a construction is encountered with a high frequency, its memory representation is strengthened, and it becomes more easily accessible (Diessel 2007: 123). Accessibility describes the ease with which a subject in a language experiment can judge whether a given word is a word of their language (Bybee 2007: 10). In further consequence, construction with a high strength representation become more likely to resist reformation and thus less likely to undergo changes (Bybee 2007: 10). The reducing effect [2] describes the phonological

reduction that can be observed with highly frequent words, such as the reduction of *God be with you* to *goodbye* (Bybee 2007: 11), but also incorporates the related effect of chunking (Bybee 2007: 13). Chunking refers to “the perceptual phenomenon of grouping primitive stimuli into larger perceptual and conceptual groups and units” (Schmid 2020: 211). Diessel (2007:124) refers to this effect as the development of automatized chunks and maintains that linguistic expressions “develop into a processing unit in which the boundaries between linguistic elements are blurred and the whole chunk is compressed and reduced”. Lastly, autonomy [3] is related to the conserving effect and might be viewed as an extreme instance of it. Autonomy is defined as “the extent to which a word is likely to be represented in the speaker’s lexicon as a whole and separate unit” (Bybee 2007: 50). While at first this produces the impression that autonomy is equivalent to the conserving effect, the effect of autonomy of token frequency highlights the weakening of connections to other words that can be observed with high frequency constructions. These constructions are, hence, “accessed independently of related items and are thus not interconnected in the network” (Bybee 2007: 14). However, it can be argued that autonomy is a follow up effect of the conserving effect rather than a direct effect of high type frequency. Having discussed the interpretation and effects of token frequency, the following intends to shine light on the nature of type frequency.

Type frequency is distinct from token frequency. Type frequency provides information about the number of items found within a particular pattern (Divjak & Caldwell-Harris 2015: 55, Boas 2013: 10) or “the number of items that exemplify a pattern” (Bybee 2007: 14). Considering the structure under investigation to be pleonastic conditionals of the general abstract form *If X, then X*¹, type frequency sheds light on the number of items that have been recorded to fill the open slots (indicated with *X*) in this construction, such as examples (3) and (4) below. The phrases which fill in the unspecified slot *X* in the construction are indicated in bold.

(3) If **I’m sold**, then **I’m sold**. (Movie Corpus)

(4) If **you aren’t**, then **you aren’t**. (Movie Corpus)

A relatively high type frequency can be regarded as an indicator for increased productivity of a pattern. In this case productivity refers to “the likelihood that a construction will apply to a new item” (Bybee 2010: 94). It has been shown that the higher

¹ This generalization represents a simplification of the construction of interest and will be elaborated on in more detail in section 5.

type frequency of a pattern, the more likely that said pattern will occur with novel items (Boas 2013: 10). Linguistic items with a high token frequency are more easily accessed and used by the speaker and may become entrenched over time (Divjak & Caldwell-Harris 2015: 55).

The phenomenon of entrenchment has been defined in various ways by different scholars. Broadly speaking, it describes a process whereby the reoccurring and highly frequent recording of a stimulus leads to a strengthening of memory representation. Langacker (1987: 59) argues that “with repeated use, a novel structure becomes progressively entrenched, to the point of becoming a unit; moreover, units are variably entrenched depending on the frequency of their occurrence”, thus, highlighting the importance of unification. This definition is similar to the type of representation strengthening and chunking as described by Bybee (2007). However, Bybee refrains from using the concept of entrenchment. In the context of language learning, an entrenched linguistic item is processed and retrieved with less effort and is likely to undergo chunking which might be accompanied by formal reduction (Divjak & Caldwell-Harris 2015: 61), e.g. the greeting phrase *How are you?*. Entrenchment represents a process whereby linguistic structures are created through the statistical processing of input data and is the reason for the occurrence of fully predictable and compositional nodes in the construct-i-con.

This section has aimed to discuss the pillars of construction grammar as well as the most fundamental concepts at work within the realm of Usage-Based Cognitive Construction Grammar more specifically. While the preceding paragraphs have merely served as a general introduction to the theoretical background used for the empirical study conducted in this paper, the focus has been on the most vital aspects that will be of further interest when interpreting the collected data to provide a detailed analysis of pleonastic conditionals in English.

3. Conditionals

The following section will progress to elaborate on conditionals. It intends to familiarize the reader with the basic concept of conditionality and how it is expressed in linguistic form. Conditionals, and particularly their truth-values, have been of interest to philosophers for hundreds of years. In recent years, however, the issue has also sparked interest in linguists and consequently, a vast amount of mostly theoretical linguistic research has been conducted. The following paragraphs offer a mere introduction to the complex issue of conditionality, and the discussion will be limited to the English language. Firstly, a general introduction is provided that elaborates on the material theory – a theory that has been dominant when analyzing the truth-condition of conditionals among philosophers. Secondly, I will provide two of the most commonly used typologies of conditionals. Thirdly, the focus will shift to pleonastic conditionals, which represent the phenomenon of interest.

3.1 The Material Theory and the Truth-Value of Conditionals

Before diving into the numerous typologies of conditionals that scholars have proposed in recent years, it is of utmost importance to give a general account of what constitutes a conditional statement in its most basic form. Among philosophers working in the field of logic, a conditional statement is one, in which there exists a relationship between two propositions P and Q , formalized as $P \Rightarrow Q$. While there exists a vast amount of different types of conditionals, part of which will be discussed in the following, this type of formal conditional is also referred to as material implication and can roughly be translated to natural speech events as ‘If P , then Q ’ (Grice 1989: 77). P and Q denote the antecedent/protasis and consequent/apodosis respectively (Stanford 2003: 3). Henceforth, P and Q will be referred to as antecedent and consequent, given that the terms protasis and apodosis are rather archaic.

As is customary for logicians, they are concerned with the truth-value of such a relation. Within the realm of classic logic, an instance of material implication is said to be true in the following three scenarios: [1] P is true and so is Q , [2] P is false and so is Q , and [3] P is false and Q is true. Considering a classic truth-table where both propositions might only be either true or false, this leaves only one scenario in which an instance of material implication is deemed to be false, namely when [4] P is true and Q is false (Cook 2009: s.v. material conditional). The table below provides an overview of the truth-values of a material conditional dependent on the truth-values of its antecedent and consequent.

	A	B	$A \Rightarrow B$
1	T	T	T
2	F	F	T
3	F	T	T
4	T	F	F

Table 1 Truth-Table Material Conditional

The material approach to the truth-value of conditionals can be applied to some, yet not all phenomena of this kind found in natural language. Consider the following example:

(5) If it is the weekend, then I will be at my parents' house.

Example (5) can be dissected into its two essential parts. Firstly, the antecedent which proposes that it is the weekend and secondly, the consequent which proposes that I will be at my parents' house.² Considering the approach explained above, a logician would hence argue that a conditional statement such as this one³ is only false if it is the weekend and I am *not* at my parents' house. All other scenarios with regards to the possible truth-values of antecedent and consequent would thus render this statement to be judged as true. Applying the material theory of conditionals seems to reflect a person's judgment about whether or not such a statement should be asserted relatively well in this case.

While this approach appears to be clear-cut and clean, it does not necessarily reflect the assertability of all conditionals as is custom on a day-to-day basis. Take into consideration example (6).

(6) If Vienna is the capital of France, then Vienna is the capital of Hungary.

This example suggests a collision between human intuition and theory. Using the material approach to assess the truth-value of this statement, one would have to arrive at the conclusion that the conditional is true: Vienna is *not* the capital of France, hence the antecedent is false; moreover, Vienna is *not* the capital of Hungary, rendering the consequent false as well. This considerably deviates from one's intuition, suggesting that

² Note that the antecedent does not include 'if', as only the proposition 'it is the weekend' can be said to have a truth value.

³ An analysis of conditionals in line with what has been maintained by classic logicians as the one discussed here is only possible for some indicative conditionals. Indicative conditionals are elaborated on in later paragraphs in this section.

the assertability of conditional statements as encountered on a daily basis cannot strictly follow the rules of material implication. This discrepancy between intuition and theory is due to the material theorists' interest in the truth-value of antecedent and consequent only, rather than the two propositions being adequately connected (Bennett 2003: 21).⁴

A realistic analysis of conditionals, hence, requires the postulation of a theory that is more elaborate than the material approach suggested by classic logicians and allows for flexibility to assess numerous types of conditionals. Such attempts have been made by various scholars and include but are not limited to the Possible Worlds theory (Stalnaker 1999), suppositional theory (Edgington 2014), and the hybrid theory (Jackson 1979). While all of these approaches intend to address the shortcomings of the material theory, they all focus on the truth-value of conditionals rather than the form an expression of conditionality may take in any given language.

3.2 Linguistic Definition of Conditionals

The majority of linguists exploring conditionals and conditionality have worked with definitions of conditionals that are broader than the one suggested by the material theory and focus on the form as it can be observed in natural speech events. Declerck and Reed (2001: 9), for example, have adapted a broad definition of a conditional sentence that arguably reflects human intuition: "a conditional is a two-clause structure in which one of the clauses is introduced by *if* (possibly preceded by *only*, *even* or *expect*) or by a word or phrase that has a meaning similar to *if*, *only if* (e.g. *provided*) or *expect if*". Declerck and Reed (2001: 20) argue, based on their empirical analysis, that the most common phrases that conditional constructions are introduced by are the following: *if* (7), *even if* (8), *unless* (9), *providing/provided (that)* (10), *on condition that* (11), *as/so long as* (12), *in case* (13). While this list is not complete, the empirical study in this paper will utilize it to investigate the formal restrictions of pleonastic conditionals.

(7) If she wants our trust back, she's got to earn it. (COCA)

(8) Even if your puppy learns that jumping up on you is not a good idea, he will usually get away with jumping up on everyone else. (COCA)

⁴ Later material theorists tried to explain away the shortcomings of their favorite theory. Grice (1989) did so by using the cooperative principle and combining it with the logical reformulation of a material conditional to a disjunction. Jackson (1997) uses the concept of robustness to shed light on the assertability of conditionals.

- (9) Unless you run a meteorology business, you will never be able to provide up-to-the moment quality information on a storm. (COCA)
- (10) Provided that you know what you are actually carrying out, you are ready to find the revenue you desire. (COCA)
- (11) He would speak to me only on condition that it be filmed. (COCA)
- (12) I get a lot of stuff done in a day, as long as I follow these steps. (COCA)
- (13) In case the manufacturer is not one that you will generally acquire, you can actually wind up wasting funds by using the excellent promotion you might have discovered. (COCA)

The antecedent and consequent of a conditional statement are considered “a proposition which is ultimately expressed by a tensed modalized clause, with a positive or negative polarity value” (Declerck & Reed 2001: 10). Here, polarity value refers to the positive or negative nature of the proposition. While the antecedent and consequent in example (14) a. have a positive polarity value, both have a negative polarity value in b. indicated by the negation. Needless to say, antecedent and consequent might have different polarity values.

- (14) a. If it is winter, she sits in the kitchen and knits. (COCA)
- b. If it is not winter, she does not sit in the kitchen and knit.

With regard to the form of a conditional statement, Dancygier (1999:12) further elaborates that “the conjunction *then* [...] often introduces main clauses of conditional constructions, but is usually not necessary”. She, thus, points out the non-obligatoriness of the conjunction *then* in a conditional statement, which will be of importance when discussing the methodology and resulting data set in section 3 and 4. Similarly to Declerck and Reed, Dancygier’s focus on the presence of *if* in order to define a conditional statement leads her to argue that *if* “seems to signal [...] that at least some of the felicity conditions for asserting do not hold: the speaker does not have enough grounds for asserting *p* [i.e. the antecedent] as a factual statement and may in fact not believe *p* to be true” (1999: 18-19).

A definition such as the one provided by Declerck and Reed appears to be inclusive of all conditionals that have been recorded in natural speech events. However, this impression is misleading. Declerck and Reed’s portrayal of conditionals is centered around the default form in which one expects a conditional to appear and especially on the presence of *if*.

This, however, leads to the exclusion of constructions that might, at first glance, not exhibit a classic conditional form but are semantically clearly related.

In the following I provide a quick analysis of comparative conditionals (also referred to as “The Xer, the Yer”-constructions and exemplified in (15) and (16)) to demonstrate that a definition of conditionals merely focused on form and the presence of *if* is not sufficiently inclusive.

(15) a. The busier it gets, the darker it gets. (SOAP Corpus)

(16) a. The quicker you finish, the faster you get out. (SOAP Corpus)

Examples such as the ones above would not be considered conditional sentences according to the definition proposed by Declerck and Reed. While examples such as these will not be the focus of this thesis, it goes to show the difficulty of providing a definition for conditionals that includes all types of the phenomenon.

In one of the most influential papers on comparative conditionals, Beck (1997: 13) argues that the global structure of a comparative conditional is that of a default conditional. Similarly, McCawley (1988: 176) proposes that comparative conditionals consist of two major constituents, namely an antecedent and a consequent. Considering the above examples, one might thus be inclined to argue that (15) a. The busier it gets, the darker it gets. (SOAP Corpus) consists of the antecedent ‘it gets busier’ and the consequent ‘it gets darker’ and (16) a. can be divided into the antecedent ‘you finish quicker’ and the consequent ‘you get out faster’. These comparative conditionals, thus, can be paraphrased into ‘If..., then...’-statements without sacrificing any semantic meaning or causing semantic oddity⁵. Consider the derived statements (15) b. and (16) b.

(15) b. If it gets darker, then it gets busier.

(16) b. If you finish quicker, you get out faster.

This brief introduction to comparative conditionals has intended to draw the reader’s attention to the complexity and variety of conditional statements and highlight the difficulty of postulating a satisfying definition. Clearly, it has been shown that a mere focus on form, and more specifically the inclusion of *if* (or a similar word or phrase), does not suffice to provide a comprehensive definition of conditional sentences. Others have

⁵ However, note that not all constructions exhibiting the same syntactic form as comparative conditionals can be paraphrased in such a way without causing pragmatic and/or grammatical oddity (Capelle 2011: 106).

consequently turned to function (rather than form) when discussing conditional statements.

3.3 Typologies of Conditionals

Numerous scholars have attempted to provide a satisfying definition for conditionals but, to this day, research has not yet yielded a definition generally agreed upon by the community. Therefore, rather than intending to produce such a result, the following aims to supply a useful summary of the numerous categorizations of conditional statements discussed in the literature produced thus far to deepen the readers understanding about conditionality.

Firstly, the typology by Sweetser (1990), consisting of three categories, namely epistemic, content and speech act conditionals is presented. The general question that arises is: What is the function of conditionals? – A question that is inherently hard to answer. Scholars arguing in line with the material approach (Braine 1978: 20) maintain that a conditional statement represents a universal rule of inference. A conditional in the form of “If P, then Q” means that the consequent Q can be inferred from the antecedent P; in other words, P therefore Q.

(17) If the light is blinking, the ferry's operating. (COCA)

An inference of the form described above can be drawn in an example such as (17). One may observe that the light on a ferry is blinking and infer that therefore the ferry is operating. The blinking of the light constitutes the premise from which we infer a conclusion, viz. that the ferry is operating. Conditionals which allow for such an inference are termed epistemic conditionals by Sweetser (1990). Epistemic conditionals imply “that knowledge of the truth of the hypothetical premise expressed in the protasis would be a sufficient condition for concluding the truth of the proposition expressed in the apodosis” (Sweetser 1990: 117). However, example (18) shows that, clearly, not all conditionals found in natural speech can be analyzed in this way. Henceforth, in all examples the string representing the pleonastic conditionals is indicated in bold.

(18) I won't pry, but **if you need a hand with anything, I'm not far away.** (COCA)

In the case of example (18) one cannot draw such an inference. It would be against one's intuition to claim in any suitable situation that one needs a hand and *therefore* I am not far away. This example goes to show that a conditional cannot only function to produce

an inference from the antecedent to the consequent but may exhibit other functions as well.

In her typology which puts into focus the relationship between antecedent and consequent, Sweetser (1990) hence introduces two more groups of conditionals, namely content conditionals and speech act conditionals. While epistemic conditionals function in a world of reasoning in which the antecedent presents grounds for the inference made in the consequent, content conditionals include statements in which the relationship between antecedent and consequent is one of cause-effect (Sweetser 1990: 115).

Arguably the most salient function of conditionals is that of prediction (Dancygier & Sweetser 2005: 28). This function can be observed with content conditionals, e.g. example (19). In a content conditional “the realization of the event or state of affairs described in the protasis is a sufficient condition for the realization of the event or state of affairs described in the apodosis” (Sweetser 1990: 114). In an utterance such as (19) below, the speaker is predicting that they will get wet in the event that it rains at the described point in time. The event of rain is a sufficient condition to base the truth of the consequent on. The relationship between antecedent and consequent can hence be described as causal as the rain will cause wetness.

(19) If it rains, we will get wet. (COCA)

However, revisiting the counterexample presented above (18), this function of conditional is not strictly inherent to all kinds of conditionals, highlighting the multiplicity of functions of conditionals. When uttering (18) the speaker is not predicting that they will not be far away in the case that the other interlocutor needs help⁶. All will be discussed in detail later in this section, the speaker is offering their help using an if-conditional.

The last category in Sweetser’s typology of conditionals (1990), is that of speech act conditionals. In speech act conditionals “the performance of the speech act represented in the [consequent] is conditional on the fulfillment of the state described in the [antecedent]” (Sweetser 1990: 118). Example (18) above, which has thus far served as a counter example for the other two categories, represents a true instance of a speech act conditional. In example (18), the speaker offers help by stating that they are not far away

⁶ Dancygier (1999) uses predictiveness and non-predictiveness as the main characteristic for her typology of conditionals.

on the condition that the interlocutor needs help. In other words, the fulfillment of the antecedent, hence, needing a hand, causes or enables the offer of helping proposed in the consequent.

While Sweetser's typology of conditionals focuses on the relationship between antecedent and consequent, scholars in the field have preferred one in which the truth-value of the antecedent appears to be of particular interest. Philosophers and linguists alike seem to accept a rough categorization of conditionals that renders four distinct classes: [1] indicative conditionals, [2] non-indicative/subjunctive/counterfactual conditionals, [3] factual/premise conditionals, and [4] speech act/biscuit/relevance conditionals (Fintel 2009: 4-6). These categories will be discussed in the presented order below.

3.3.1 Indicative Conditionals

The difference between the first and second category of conditionals, namely indicative and subjunctive conditionals, is best explained by providing a famous pair of *if*-conditionals called Adam's Pair (Adams 1970: 90).

(20) If Oswald didn't shoot Kennedy, then somebody else did. (indicative)

(21) If Oswald hadn't shot Kennedy, then somebody else would have. (subjunctive)

The semantic difference between the indicative conditional in (20) and subjunctive conditional in (21) appears to be straight forward: While the indicative conditional in (20) provides information about "how the world was, given what we now know plus the supposition of the antecedent" (Khoo 2015: 1), the subjunctive conditional in (21) describes "how the world would have been [...] would its antecedent to have held" (Khoo 2015: 1-2). The indicative antecedent *Oswald didn't shoot Kennedy* represents a real possibility provided our knowledge about the current state of affairs (Johnson-Laird 1986: 65). The subjunctive antecedent *Oswald hadn't shot Kennedy* designates a hypothetical state that might have been possible in the past but is imaginary now provided our current knowledge (Johnson-Laird 1986: 65).

It is reasonable to assert the indicative conditional in (20), given that we know that Kennedy was killed by somebody and reasoning from the truth of the antecedent that it was not Oswald, it must have been somebody else. This kind of assessment of truth-value has been formally phrased early on by Ramsey (1931 quoted in Fintel 2009: 5-6): "If two people are arguing 'If *p* will *q*?' and are both in doubt as to *p*, they are adding *p* hypothetically to their stock of knowledge and arguing on that basis about *q*." In the case

of the first conditional of Adam's Pair, one is thus adding the antecedent *P Oswald didn't kill Kennedy* hypothetically to one's stock of knowledge and contemplating whether the consequent *somebody else did* would be considered true or false on that basis. This thought-process would lead most to the conclusion that the indicative conditional in (20) is true. In any given situation it is reasonable for a hearer to infer that Oswald didn't kill Kennedy and *therefore* somebody else did. The type of reasoning evoked by indicative conditionals is of the rather simplistic nature discussed previously. Indicative conditionals suggest that an inference holds from the antecedent to the consequent and overlaps with the definition of epistemic conditionals we have seen previously.⁷

3.3.2 Subjunctive Conditionals

The assessment of subjunctive conditionals is considerably different from that of indicative conditionals. Considering (21), an interlocutor hearing such a conditional is invited to a thought experiment in which they return to a point in time prior to Kennedy's assassination and contemplate *what would have happened* had Oswald not killed Kennedy (Fintel 2009: 6). In other words, the antecedent of this subjunctive conditional invites the hearer to accept that Oswald did not shoot Kennedy and questions what would have followed. Given that history presents no evidence that Kennedy being killed was inevitable because numerous others were planning on assassinating him as well, one would be likely to reject such a conditional. Thus, one concludes that if Oswald had not killed Kennedy, then nobody else would have and Kennedy would have lived to an old age, rendering the subjunctive conditional in (21) unassertable. More generally: when we assess the assertability of a subjunctive conditional "we tend to hold the past fixed as it actually was up to some time prior to the antecedent, while allowing the future to diverge from actual fact" (Mackay 2017: 520).

Moreover, indicative and subjunctive conditionals are distinct on the level of morphology. Other than the indicative conditional, the subjunctive conditional statement carries an extra layer of past tense (Khoo 2015: 1, Fintel 2009: 24). This extra level of past tense is marked by *had(n't)* in the antecedent and *would* in the consequent of example (21). However, the extra layer of past tense in any subjunctive conditional is nontemporal (Ippolito 2013: 3). In other words, the temporal morphology found in the antecedent of a

⁷ For a discussion about the overlap between epistemic and indicative conditionals see Cantwell (2008). Operating under the assumption that indicative conditionals can have a truth-value, Cantwell claims that an indicative conditional does not have a truth-value, if the antecedent is false (Cantwell 2008: 158) and thus, "the indicative conditional must have an epistemic ingredient" (Cantwell 2008: 159).

subjunctive conditional “is not interpreted as locating the eventuality described in the antecedent clause in time” (Ippolito 2013: 2). Consider the example below:

(22) If my dog died tomorrow, I would be incredibly sad.

In such a sentence the past tense *died* in the antecedent must be nontemporal as it occurs in the same clause as the future adverb *tomorrow*. Given that we know that an event cannot be simultaneously in the past and in the future and that one merely supposes in that my dog will die tomorrow the antecedent, the past tense morphology cannot be temporal.

The following two examples (from Mackay 2017: 523) exemplify two types of subjunctive conditionals frequently encountered in English.

(23) If I were outside, I would be cold.

(24) If I had been outside, I would have been cold.

Example (23) carries only one layer of past tense. This type of subjunctive conditional is therefore termed simple past subjunctive conditional (Ippolito 2013: 3). Example (24), however, carries two layers of past tense. Such a conditionals is referred to as past perfect subjunctive conditional (Ippolito 2013: 3). The nontemporal nature of the past tense morphology in subjunctive conditionals is yet again undeniable when examining example (24). This subjunctive conditional is not about events that occurred at a point in time prior to the moment of utterance. The second layer of past tense in example (24), however, situates the antecedent and consequent in the past (Mackay 2017: 523). The nontemporal past tense morphology in subjunctive conditionals codes a kind of hypotheticality or ‘unreality’ (Ippolito 2013: 24). The discussion about how exactly one is to arrive at the interpretation that the nontemporal past tense layer of subjunctive conditionals is to be interpreted as coding hypotheticality is still ongoing among scholars in the field (see Mackay 2017 or Ippolito 2013).

3.3.3 Factual/Premise Conditionals

The next category to be discussed is factual conditionals, also referred to as premise conditionals. Considering that some scholars refer to indicative conditionals as factual conditionals, given that they assume the clear opposite of an indicative conditional to be a subjunctive also termed counterfactual conditional, this paper will use the term ‘premise conditional’ to describe conditional statements as discussed below.

Unlike in any category of conditionals described so far, the antecedent of a premise conditionals serves to structure the discourse of a conversation (Heageman 2003: 319). This type of conditional “makes manifest a proposition that is the privileged context for the processing of the associated clause.” (Heageman 2003: 319) In other words, in a premise conditional the antecedent “often echo[s] someone else’s introduction to the antecedent” (Fintel 2009: 4). Consequently, in a premise conditional the antecedent is “not known to be a fact but is accepted” (Declerck & Reed 2001: 81). Thus, unlike indicative conditionals, the antecedent of a premise conditional is not claimed to be factual by the speaker but is rather taken for granted to suspend disbelief. This type of conditional is exemplified in (25).

(25) If it is really that early, we should go back to bed.

The speaker of such an utterance is arguably assuming the truth of the antecedent for the sake of making the argument (Declerck & Reed 2001: 81) that they and their conversation partner should go to bed. This kind of antecedent found in premise conditionals is always echoic (Declerck & Reed 2001: 83). The echoic nature can be more easily observed by exploring example (26) taken from Declerck and Reed (2001: 83).

(26) (watching the clock) If it is already 8.45, I’d better hurry up.

In the above example, the speaker is echoing their own perception of time and assuming it to be true. Consequently, the speaker commits to a line of reasoning which nudges them to hurry up. This goes to show that premise conditionals differ from indicative conditionals in that one does not fully commit to the truth of the antecedent which then indicates the truth of the consequent but rather assumes the antecedent to derive the consequent.

3.3.4 Biscuit Conditionals

Lastly, we will progress to discuss so-called ‘biscuit’ conditionals which are also referred to as speech act or relevance conditionals (see Sweetser (1990) as discussed previously). The name for this category of conditionals arises from utterances such as (27) a.

(27) a. The biscuits are on the table if you want some.

This type of conditional undoubtedly differs from the categories discussed so far as the truth-value of the antecedent clearly does not represent a condition for the truth or falsity of the consequent. Considering example (27) a. above, one would argue that in a suitable situation in which a speaker utters such a sentence, the biscuits are to be found on the

table independently of whether the other interlocutor would like one or not. Generally, it can be said that the antecedent of a biscuit conditional does not describe a scenario under which the consequent is true (Fintel 2009: 4).

The defining property of a biscuit conditional is the independence of the truth condition of the antecedent P and the consequent Q (Elder 2019: 57). In other words, biscuithood arises when a speaker's belief about the truth condition of the consequent is not affected upon learning that the antecedent is either true or false (Elder 2019: 58). This characteristic can easily be explored by subjecting a given conditional statement to the question and contraposition test. The former requires the researcher to ask the question "What if not- p ?", while the latter test reverses and negates p and q to form a sentence of the general type "If not- q , then not- p " (Elder 2019: 58). If a conditional fails these tests, it is (likely to be) a biscuit conditional.⁸ Applying this to example (27) a. above one would ask "What if you don't want any biscuits?" – in this case the negated antecedent would not lead to the conclusion that therefore the biscuits are not on the table. Furthermore, the contraposition test would render the following statement: "If there are no biscuits on the table, then you do not want any". Given that there is high possibility that my wanting the biscuits is independent of any biscuits being nearby, one would not assert the statement resulting from the contraposition test. This highlights the independence of the antecedent and consequent of example (27).

Hence, the primary meaning of a biscuit conditional is not conditional. Conditional statements such as example (27), primarily function as an offer (Elder & Jaszczolt 2016: 42). While it can be argued that the antecedent of a biscuit conditional does not contribute to the primary meaning of the sentence, Elder & Jaszczolt (2016: 43) maintain that a conditional relation between the antecedent and the consequent exists and becomes apparent when enriching the consequent. In other words, "the illocutionary goal can be made explicit by enriching the consequent to highlight the intended conditional relationship" (Elder & Jaszczolt 2016: 42), made overt by reformulation, such as in example (27) b.

(27) b. There are biscuits on the table which you may have if you want some.

⁸ Consider the following: "What if a conditional does not fail these tests?" and "If it is not a biscuit conditional, then it does not fail these tests". Clearly, the conditional "If a conditional fails these tests, it is a biscuit conditional" is not a biscuit conditional.

The distinction between biscuit conditionals and indicative and subjunctive conditionals (“where the truth of q is contingent on p ” (Elder 2019: 44)), is considerably more complex as can be shown when exploring other conditional categories. The antecedent in numerous types of biscuit conditionals does not simply serve to signal the relevance of the consequent but may fulfil various other functions (see Elder 2019: 89). In any type of metalinguistic conditional, which is considered a subtype of biscuit conditional, the antecedent P “puts some aspect of the consequent q into metalinguistic focus, with the purpose of commenting on some non-propositional aspect of q ” (Elder 2019: 73). Among others, metalinguistic conditionals prove that the question and contraposition test can fail to provide evidence for epistemic (in)dependence and, furthermore, that some conditionals which would have originally been classified as biscuit conditionals, allow for a canonical conditional reading suggesting a relation of dependence between antecedent and consequent.

3.4 Pleonastic Conditionals

After having covered the main types of conditionals as discussed and roughly agreed upon by numerous scholars, the following paragraphs progress to provide an overview of the little research that has thus far been conducted on pleonastic conditionals and discuss other issues arising around the form and function of this construction. This type of conditional constitutes the focus of the empirical study presented in section 4 of this paper. The term ‘pleonastic conditional’ incorporates two features which are then to be combined, namely pleonasm and conditionality.

A pleonastic expression is one in which the speaker uses more words than necessary to express the sense. In other words, a pleonasm describes the stacking of words without adding further semantic content. A classic example often found in the literature about pleonasms is the phrase *free gift*. As will be known by the reader, the definition of the noun *gift* includes the receiver of such an entity not having to pay anything in exchange for the entity, i.e. the entity is given to the receiver for free. Thus, combining this noun with the adjective *free* is arguably redundant from a purely propositional point of view as the meaning of the adjective is already included in the semantics of the noun.

Pleonastic conditionals are conditional statements in form in which the antecedent and the consequent are identical. In other words, the consequent is the repetition of the antecedent (Declerck & Reed 2001: 359). Consider example (28) and (29).

(28) I mean, **if that's what he said, then that's what he said.** (SOAP Corpus)

(29) Now the bottom line is, **if you have nothing to hide, then you have nothing to hide.** (SOAP Corpus)

Declerck and Reed (2001: 360) call this kind of pleonastic conditional the standard form, as the consequent, e.g. *that's what he said*, is a precise echo of the antecedent. They argue that there exists a tendency for pleonastic conditional statements to occur in standard form which “overrule[s] the normal grammatical tendency to replace noun phrases by proforms on their second occurrence” (Declerck & Reed 2001: 360). Compare examples (30) a. and (30) b.

(30) a. I mean, **if I've seen the inside of his house, I've seen the inside of his house**, but a lot of people have seen the inside of that guy's house. (standard form) (SOAP Corpus)

b. I mean, **if I've seen the inside of his house, I've seen it**, but a lot of people have seen the inside of that guy's house. (non-standard form)

Following Declerck and Reed's observation, it can be maintained that more often than not pleonastic conditionals occur in standard form, in which antecedent and consequent are not only identical in meaning but also in form. In further consequence, one can abstract away from examples such as (28), (29) and (30) a. to postulate a general form of pleonastic conditionals, i.e. 'If X^i , (then) X^i ', where X denotes a proposition made that can either have a positive or negative polarity value and represents a clause unit. Using the capital letter X as both the antecedent and consequent highlights the identical nature of the two as does the superscript indexing the proposition. The variable X is thus subject to a coupling condition – “the same proposition is substituted for [a particular] variable in all positions” (Reichenbach 1947: 12). Moreover, the parentheses indicate the discussed optional occurrence of *then*. Other implications that this abstract template carries will be discussed in section 7.

While both examples (30) a. and (30) b. are naturally occurring forms of pleonastic conditionals, Declerck and Reed moreover postulate the existence of other variants, such as example (31) below.

(31) **If I say I will help you, I will help you.** (Declerck & Reed 2001: 359)

However, I am inclined to argue that such an example should not be considered a pleonastic conditional. Clearly, example (31) does not fit the criteria of a pleonastic conditional, if one maintains that, in order for an utterance to be classified as such,

antecedent and consequent must be identical in form *and* meaning. However, even a loose interpretation of the definition provided above that dismisses the condition of identical form, would arguably not be applicable as there exist a distinct and observable semantic difference between *saying* that one will help the other and *actually doing* so. This argumentation considerably impacts the methodology used to conduct the research presented in this paper as only tokens that are identical in form and meaning are investigated (see section 5 & 6).

Given the definition of pleonasm, one could infer that the conditional form in a pleonastic conditional does not add anything to the meaning of the proposition in the antecedent/consequent and therefore, equate the semantic meaning of a pleonastic conditional to the semantic meaning of the proposition. While this issue has not been discussed in the literature to this day, I would support such a claim for reasons laid out later in this section. What has, however, been superficially investigated are the potential pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals by Declerck & Reed (2001). The basic function of the phenomenon can be identified as “conveying the message that the speaker accepts what she considers as an inescapable fact” (Declerck & Reed 2001: 360), such as the example below.

(32) Sweetheart, I understand. **If you have to go, you have to go.** (SOAP Corpus)

In example (32), the speaker expresses their understanding over the fact that the other person must leave using the pleonastic conditional construction. The speaker signals that they accept the obligatoriness of the proposition and hence considers the proposition as an inescapable fact.

Moreover, some instances of pleonastic conditionals may convey an additional message, signaling that “the hearer should not doubt the inevitability of Q following from P” and/or “that there are no alternative conclusions to be drawn from P” (Declerck & Reed 2001: 360), as exemplified in example (33).

(33) A: Those euphemisms sound so made up, make it sound like it means something. It doesn't mean anything.
 B: Means in a better place.
 A: **When you die, you die.**
 B: Then?
 A: That's it. Nothing. (TV Corpus)

Speaker A in example (33) uses the pleonastic conditional construction to stress that nothing follows after death. In other words, the speaker signals that there are no

alternative conclusions to be drawn from the antecedent such as the existence of an afterlife. Furthermore, speaker A uses a pleonastic conditional to persuade B to accept the inevitability of the proposition following from the antecedent, viz. that no other conclusion is permissible.

While the presented list of pragmatic functions proposed by Declerck & Reed (2001) offers a convenient starting point for the pragmatic analysis of the corpus data, it is by no means fully comprehensive, given examples such as (34) below.

(34) Boy, when I take a bath, I want hot water. **When I mean hot water, I mean hot water.** (Movie Corpus)

In this case, I am inclined to argue that the speaker is using the pleonastic conditional construction to specify an aspect of the meaning of the antecedent/consequent proposition. In other words, the speaker of utterance (34) uses the pleonastic conditional to intensify the meaning of the adjective *hot* – hence, what is implied is that the speaker means *really hot* water. Thus, the original research presented in section 6 aims to further explore the pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals using the existing literature as the basis and establish a relation between the meaning of non-pleonastic conditionals and this subtype.

Given the importance of the material theory with regards to the topic of conditionality, I provide an analysis of pleonastic conditionals using the material approach. While it can be argued that the approach is outdated, I shall show that applying it to pleonastic conditionals leads to an interesting insight regarding the construction's semantic and pragmatic meaning. For the sake of argument, I assume that any naturally occurring pleonastic conditional, albeit presupposing the propositional identity of antecedent and consequent, can be formally reformulated into a material conditional of the form $A \Rightarrow A$. The truth table for such a pleonastic conditional would look as follows:

	A	A	$A \Rightarrow A$
1	T	T	T
2	F	F	T

Table 2 Truth-Table Pleonastic Conditional

Table 2 highlights that no matter the content and truth value of the proposition A, a pleonastic conditional is always logically true. Given the rules of inference for material implication discussed previously (see Table 1), there are three possibilities in which a non-pleonastic conditional may be true, two of which are relevant for pleonastic conditionals. Hence, pleonastic conditionals are a logical tautology. In other words, a pleonastic conditional is never logically false.

To demonstrate this claim, consider example (35).

(35) But **if you're right, you're right**, and you 've got to take a stand, otherwise everybody will just walk all over you. (Movie Corpus)

The pleonastic conditional in the example above is true regardless of the truth value of the proposition 'you're right'. Even if it were to be false, viz. the interlocutor is actually not right, the resulting pleonastic conditional statement, *If you are not right, you are not right*., would be true. The negation of the antecedent/consequent proposition does not render the conditional logically false.⁹

The tautological nature of pleonastic conditionals appears to have considerable effects on the pragmatic meaning of the construction. For example, it is very unlikely for a speaker to utter a pleonastic conditional and flaunt the maxim of quality (stating that you should "not say what you believe to be false" and you should "not say that for which you lack adequate evidence" (Grice 1975: 46)). There is no situation in which one can believe a pleonastic conditional to be false, as it is logically always true. To believe a pleonastic conditional to be false would mean believing that the truth of the proposition P in the consequent, does not follow from the truth of the proposition P in the antecedent.

One could maintain that the semantic, literal meaning – the "face-value interpretation" (Leech 1983: 30) – of a pleonastic conditional is independent of the conditional form of the sentence. Consider example (36) below.

(36) If that's what you decide on, that's what you do. **If you got to do it, you got to do it**. I just hope you know what you're doing. (Movie Corpus)

The conditional 'packaging' in (36) does not add to the semantic meaning of the sentence and the face-value interpretation would be the content of the proposition made in the antecedent/consequent, namely that the addressee has got to do it. In such a case,

⁹ Note that the logical negation of a pleonastic conditional as a whole would read as follows: 'It is not true that if A, then A.'

however, what renders a pleonastic conditional useful to a speaker is its pragmatic meaning, viz. its illocutionary force. This line of argumentation is supported by Geis & Lycan (1993: 43). They state a generalization for non-conditional conditionals, such as biscuit conditionals (but arguably also pleonastic conditionals), according to which “a [non-conditional conditional’s] consequent is itself used to perform the main speech act, while the antecedent either picks out and articulates some illocutionary or linguistic felicity condition on the performance of the main speech act, or helps to redress or mitigate a face threat associated with the main speech act”.

Applying this generalization to (36), I would argue that the consequent does in fact perform the main speech act. However, unlike in biscuit conditionals, the antecedent in the above example does not per se pick out and articulate an illocutionary or felicity condition itself. The mitigation of the face threat associated with the main speech act, namely the prompt to do something, can be ascribed to the conditional structure. Recall Dancygier’s (1999:18-19) statement about the presence of *if*, presented earlier: “[if] seems to signal [...] that at least some of the felicity conditions for asserting do not hold: the speaker does not have enough grounds for asserting *p* [i.e. the antecedent] as a factual statement and may in fact not believe *p* to be true”. This, however, is not strictly true for pleonastic conditionals. I argue that the antecedent in pleonastic conditionals is asserted in any case, given that it is identical to the consequent. Merging this argument with the generalization by Geis & Lycan (1993: 43), I arrive at the following conclusion for the pleonastic conditional construction: In any pleonastic conditional the main speech act is performed in the consequent. *If* does not signal that some of the felicity conditions for asserting the antecedent do not hold, but rather articulates some illocutionary or felicity condition on the performance of the main speech act in the consequent. Consequently, the antecedent only functions to fill a slot that is required by the general form of any if-construction. Providing a categorization of possible pragmatic meanings of pleonastic conditionals is thus a focus in this paper and presented in section 6.

In the following, I aim to provide an argument for the uniqueness of pleonastic conditionals and lay out reasons as to why this subtype does not belong to any of the four main classes of conditionals introduced. The analysis is based on one representative example of pleonastic conditionals (37). This example has been chosen due to the identical nature in form and meaning of the antecedent and the consequent.

(37) So **if we're gonna die, we're gonna die.** (Movie Corpus)

It has been established that an indicative conditional licenses a line of reasoning of the form “P therefore Q”, where the truth value of the antecedent P is an indication for the truth value of the consequent Q. However, considering example (37) this would lead to a considerably odd line of reasoning, viz. We are gonna die, therefore we are gonna die. To highlight this point, let us consider Ramsey’s formal phrasing of the meaning of indicative conditionals, “If two people are arguing ‘If p will q ?’ and are both in doubt as to p , they are adding p hypothetically to their stock of knowledge and arguing on that basis about q .” The question that arises if one were to apply this analysis to pleonastic conditionals is whether anybody would ever argue ‘If p will q ’, given that P and Q are identical. Even if, however, this were to happen, should one add the antecedent *we are gonna die* to their stock of knowledge, assuming it to be true, no possible line of argumentation would lead to the conclusion that the consequent *we are gonna die* is false given the identity of the propositions. In short, pleonastic conditionals are semantically different from indicative conditionals and, therefore, do not fall under this category.

It is also not possible to fit pleonastic conditionals into the category of subjunctive conditionals. The antecedent *we are gonna die* can hardly be said to represent a hypothetical state of how the world would have been, which we would further take as the basis for reasoning about the consequent. Not only is hypotheticality not indicated on a morphological level in this example but, what is more, no reasoning can happen given that antecedent and consequent are identical.

Given the categories of conditionals discussed, one might be inclined to present an argument for pleonastic conditionals falling under the category of biscuit conditionals, as the truth-value of the antecedent of a pleonastic conditional and the truth value of the consequent of the same statement are not only dependent but are necessarily equivalent due the equivalence of the proposition made in either clause. Applying the question and contraposition test would further reinforce the conclusion that a pleonastic conditional is of hypothetical nature as no oddity arises from this exercise. However, this line of inference is flawed considering that the relationship of antecedent and consequent is not best described as one of dependence per se but one of sameness. Upon learning whether the antecedent is true or false, an interlocutor will not adjust their belief about the truth-value of the consequent. The equivalence of the propositional content of both clauses renders the interlocutor simultaneously informed about the truth-value of both the antecedent and consequent upon learning the truth-value of either of them.

Thus, the question that must thus be answered is the following: What is the pragmatic meaning of pleonastic conditional and can pleonastic conditionals be considered conditionals given that their pragmatics appear to be unrelated to any form of conditional meaning?

4. Methodology

Having discussed the theoretical background relevant to the topic of interest, this section focuses on the methodology used to obtain the data as well as methods used to analyze said data set. Before examining the procedures and methods utilized to extract and analyze the relevant data, the research questions posed, and all related hypotheses proposed will be presented.

4.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ 1: What restrictions can be identified with regards to form of the pleonastic conditional construction?

RQ 1.1: Given that conditionals can be expressed using multiple syntactic patterns, which syntactic variation is most often used to form pleonastic conditionals?

H 1.1: Assuming that pleonastic conditionals are a phenomenon mostly found in informal spoken language, the syntactic variant in which the antecedent precedes the consequent and the consequent is not introduced by the conjunction *then* is most commonly used with pleonastic conditionals.

RQ 1.2: Which conditional connecting device(s) are recruited to formulate a pleonastic conditional?

H 1.2: While all connecting devices as listed by Declerck and Reed (2001: 20) can be found in the pleonastic conditional construction, pleonastic conditionals show a strong preference for the connecting devices *if* and *when*.

RQ 2: What kind of meaning/function does an abstract pleonastic conditional construction of the form [CONNECTOR X^i , (then) X^i] express?

RQ 2.1: Which polarity value do pleonastic conditionals occur with most often?

H 2.1: Pleonastic conditionals do not show any preferences with regard to positive or negative polarity value.

RQ 2.2: What are the functional differences between the variants of the pleonastic conditional construction [If X^i , then X^i .] and [When X^i , then X^i] and their respective variants?

H 2.2: There exists a difference with regard to pragmatic function between if- and when-pleonastic conditionals due to the difference in meaning of the connectors.

RQ 3: How is the pleonastic conditional construction related to other conditional constructions and how can it be integrated in a constructional network of conditionals?

H 3: The pleonastic conditional construction is merely related to other conditionals by form but not by meaning as the antecedent cannot be interpreted as a condition under which the consequent is true.

4.2 Corpora

This section elaborates on the corpora used and their respective structure. To investigate the phenomenon of pleonastic conditionals three BYU corpora were used, namely the Corpus of American Soap Operas (henceforth SOAP) (Davies 2011), the TV Corpus (Davies 2019), and the Movie Corpus (Davies 2019).¹⁰ While the SOAP offers a collection of transcripts of soap operas, the TV Corpus and the Movie Corpus are a collection of transcripts of TV shows and movies respectively. The SOAP includes texts from a relatively short time span of twelve years from 2001 to 2012, compared to the TV Corpus which includes movie transcripts from texts between 1950 and 2019 and the Movie Corpus, a collection of transcripts from movies made between 1930 and 2019. Nevertheless, the Movie Corpus is only the second largest data set, including approximately 200 million words, preceded by the TV Corpus (approximately 325 million words) and followed by the SOAP, which is the smallest collection (approximately 100 million words). The combined data used for analysis therefore amounts to approximately 625 million words. No samples were created when extracting instances of the pleonastic conditional construction. In other words, the entirety of all three corpora functions as the basis for the investigation of the phenomenon.

Unlike the SOAP which only encompasses American shows, hence, representing only American English, the TV and Movie Corpus include transcripts from a wider range of varieties, including British English, Canadian English, New Zealand English and Australian English. These three corpora were chosen as the basis for the data analysis due to the relative informality of the texts and the assumption that the phenomenon of interest is most common in informal speech. While they represent different varieties of English and

¹⁰ <https://www.english-corpora.org/>

time spans, these corpora provide a substantial collection of texts that may be considered a close representation of informal speech and hence, they lend themselves perfectly to investigate pleonastic conditionals.

4.3 Queries

Given that the web-interface, through which all BYU corpora are accessible, does not allow for the complexity of queries required to detect instances of pleonastic conditionals (as will be discussed shortly), offline data sets were purchased through the BYU platform. In the files used for investigation every 200 words 10 words were removed for copyright reasons. Nevertheless, the remaining 95% of the data remains intact. The acquired data of the SOAP, TV, and Movie Corpus exists in simple text format and was manipulated using Python 3.0¹¹.

To answer the first general research question [RQ1], aiming to identify formal properties and tendencies of the pleonastic conditional construction, the possible syntactic variations as described below as well as the frequency of various connecting devices was investigated. The conjunction *if* was chosen to elaborate on the issue around possible syntactic variants of pleonastic conditionals as it “is by far the commonest means to express conditionality” (Declerck & Reed 2001:35). However, as has been discussed previously, pleonastic conditionals appear to mostly be formally related to stereotypical conditionals rather than showing a tight semantic resemblance, given that the construction does not necessarily express conditionality. Nevertheless, to answer RQ1.1. I operate on the assumption, that, as the conditional connecting device *if* is the most frequent and versatile conditional conjunction (Declerck & Reed 2001:19), there exists a high possibility that it is also most frequently used to form pleonastic conditionals. Moreover, thus far no literature has been published that discusses pleonastic conditional constructions including any other connecting device but *if*.

Given the non-obligatoriness of connector *then* in any conditional (Dancygier 1999:12) types were extracted from the data to allow for the identification of a most common syntactic variation including the connecting device *if*, providing the basis of discussion for RQ1.1.

[V1a] If X, then X.

[V1b] If X, X.

¹¹ <https://www.python.org/download/releases/3.0/>

[V1c] X if X.

To do so, regular expressions approximating these variants were used as presented below.

[R1a] if (.{2,}) , then (\1) (![a-zA-Z])

[R1b] if (.{2,}) , (\1) (![a-zA-Z])

[R1c] (?<![if|when]) \b(.{2,}) if (\1) (![a-zA-Z])

A closer look at [R1a] shows that the antecedent and the consequent must be an identical sequence of string characters. This is ensured by using groups. The antecedent represents a group indicated by “(.{2,})”. This group of string characters, as indicated by “.”, must take a length of at least two characters but is not restricted with regards to an upper limit in length, indicated by “{2,}”. The antecedent group has to be matched exactly in the consequent which is indicated by “(\1)”. Consequently, any pleonastic conditional which deviates from this condition is not matched, such as examples (38)-(40) below. In other words, pleonastic conditionals in which a component of the antecedent is substituted by a pro-form in the consequent is not included in the analysis. This condition holds true for all regular expression used in the empirical investigations.

(38) **If Sarah has moved on, she has moved on.**

(39) **If Sarah likes apples, Sarah likes them.**

(40) You do what you have to do to survive, and **if what you have to do sucks, well, then it sucks.** (Movie Corpus)

The regular expression [R1a] purposefully does not match any examples in which the repetition of the antecedent as the consequent is followed by any element that is a letter. This measure aims to exclude examples in which the antecedent is repeated as part of the consequent but is then further specified, such as (41) below.

(41) Right, but **if you were there, you were there with him**, right? (Movie Corpus)

Therefore, [R1a] was designed to only match examples in which the repetition of the antecedent after the connector *then* is followed by any symbol that is not a letter (expressed by “ (![a-zA-Z])”), including but not limited to a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark. This regular expression, hence, returns examples such as (42) and (43) below.

(42) **If this is your family, then this is your family.** (Movie Corpus)

(43) Hey, well, listen, **if that's who you are, then that's who you are.** (TV Corpus)

The second variant [R1b] works almost identically, with the exception that the connecting device *then* was not included, resulting in the return of examples such as the following:

(44) **If it's your thing, it's your thing.** (Movie Corpus)

(45) **If you didn't wanna see me, you didn't wanna see me.** (TV Corpus)

The third regular expression [R1c] is coded to match examples of the form [V1c], in which the consequent is followed by the antecedent. This regular expression is relatively more complex than [R1a] and [R1b]. In order to avoid matches, such as (46), which can best be described as accidental repetition, stutter, stumble or a false start on behalf of the speaker, the expression does not allow the connecting device *if* to precede the consequent.

(46) You told me **if I killed him, if I killed him**, I 'd make the break. (TV Corpus)

Furthermore, [R1c] does not allow for the consequent to be preceded by the connecting device *when*, considering the frequency of constructions such as (47) and (48), in which the interlocutor intends to draw attention to the possibility that the event described in the *when*-clause might not occur after all by addition of an *if*-clause with the same proposition.

(47) **When we win this thing if we win this thing**, you'll be my chief assistant.
(Movie Corpus)

(48) **When she gets back if she gets back**, the divorce papers are waiting for her
(Movie Corpus)

Given the restrictions put in place as discussed above, as well as an additional word-boundary restriction (indicated by “/b”) to avoid matches such as example (49), the regular expression used to match pleonastic conditionals of the form [V1c], correctly returns tokens such as (50) below.

(49) How **many if any** do you sell to men? (TV Corpus)

(50) **You can't tell me if you can't tell me.** (Movie Corpus)

Despite these precautionary measures taken to prevent the extraction of strings that exhibit a formal similarity to pleonastic conditionals but are not examples of the pleonastic conditional construction, such as (51), each extracted token was manually inspected to ensure it was indeed a construct of the construction of interest. False positives were consequently removed from the data.

(51) Well, if you 'd rather wait till **he comes back if he comes back**. (Movie Corpus)
 Moreover, the list of extracted tokens was checked against itself in order to ensure that the data is clean of doubles, given a suspected overlap between the corpora.¹²

Given the results to RQ1.1, which will be discussed in detail in the following section, it follows that pleonastic conditionals including the connector *if* are most often expressed in the form in which the antecedent *if*-clause precedes the consequent and the conjunction *then* is omitted, i.e. [V1b] – referred to as if-excl-then pattern henceforth. Under the assumption that any conditional utilizing a different connecting device, viz. not *if*, is likely to show a similar tendency to occur in this syntactic variant, the following list of regular expressions was formulated to investigate which conditional conjunctions can be used to form a pleonastic conditional. The inspected connectors are based on a list of conditional connecting devices by Declerck and Reed (2001:19-28), including *even if*, *only if*, *unless*, *providing/providing that*, *on condition that*, *so/as long as*, *in case*, and *when*. The regular expressions presented below are formally identical to [R1b] with exception to the connector used.

- [R1g] even if (. {2,}) , (\1) (?![a-zA-Z])
- [R1h] only if (. {2,}) , (\1) (?![a-zA-Z])
- [R1i] unless (. {2,}) , (\1) (?![a-zA-Z])
- [R1j] (providing|providing that) (. {2,}) , (\1) (?![a-zA-Z])
- [R1k] on condition that (. {2,}) , (\1) (?![a-zA-Z])
- [R1l] [as|so] long as (. {2,}) , (\1) (?![a-zA-Z])
- [R1m] in case(. {2,}) , (\1) (?![a-zA-Z])
- [R1n] when (. {2,}) , (\1) (?![a-zA-Z])

The resulting hits represent the basis for discussion aiming to provide an answer to RQ1.2.

Given the results to RQ1.2, the three possible syntactic variants including the connector *if* [V1a], [V1b], and [V1c] were additionally extracted using the second most common connecting device *when*, resulting in [V1d], [V1e], and [V1f].

- [V1d] When X, then X.
- [V1e] When X, X.
- [V1f] X when X.

¹² Checking the data against itself has been done when investigating all further subsets to ensure clean data.

The regular expressions utilized to do so are formally identical to [R1a], [R1b], and [R1c] with exception to the connecting device used. The returned tokens were manually checked to ensure that only true instances of pleonastic conditionals were used for further research. In this process tokens that formally appear to be pleonastic conditionals but are not semantically, such as (52) below, were eliminated.

(52) Even when he's lying, he's lying. (Movie Corpus)

Although example (52) shares formal properties with a pleonastic conditional, such as the connecting device *when* and the repetition of the antecedent as the consequent, it cannot be classified as such. In this sentence the speaker appears to convey that a lie uttered by a given individual is a lie itself, implying that one cannot even trust in the untruthfulness of the uttered lie, rather than highlighting that if the individual lies there is no other conclusion to be drawn from this than the individual lying.

Any further queries designed to investigate the dataset are explained in more detail in section 5.

5. Empirical Data Analysis

The subsequent part of this paper moves on to present and discuss the results of the empirical data analysis. The corpus data was analyzed to answer the research questions stated in section 4.1.

5.1 Research Question 1 – The Form Side of Pleonastic Conditionals

The following section sets out to explore formal tendencies of pleonastic conditionals.

5.1.1 Research Question 1.1 – Syntactic Variants and their Distribution

As discussed in section 4.2, three possible syntactic variants were investigated [V1a]-[V1c] – these will henceforth be referred to as if-incl-then, if-excl-then, and if-reverse¹³ and are again exemplified by examples (53)-(55) below.

(53) **If it is war, then it is war.** (TV Corpus)

(54) **If there is a spark, there is a spark.** (TV Corpus)

(55) **Nothing changes if nothing changes.** (TV Corpus)

The three regular expressions used ([R1a]-[R1c]) resulted in a return of 2631 hits total. After manual checking, the number of correctly returned instances of if-pleonastic conditionals amounted to 1275 (48.5% of the originally returned tokens). Hence, 1356 tokens (51.5%) were returned incorrectly (see section 4.3 for excluded examples). Examples which adhere to the formal restrictions imposed on pleonastic conditionals, i.e. formal identity of antecedent and consequent, but could not be considered pleonastic conditionals due to potential different referents of antecedent and consequent, were excluded from the data. I elaborate further on the exclusion of tokens due to semantic reasons in section 6.2.

Taking a closer look at the distribution of error rate across the three syntactic variants, one can identify the regular expression [R1c], matching if-reverse structures, as the driving force for noise¹⁴. In order to approximate how frequent if-pleonastic conditionals, and by deduction, pleonastic conditionals in general, are in the corpora, the number of total sentences in the data set was determined. The data consists of 99.541.545 sentences,

¹³ Non-connector-specific syntactic variants are referred to as connector-incl-then, connector-excl-then and connector-reverse.

¹⁴ The regular expression [R1c] decreases query precision due to its high error rate. Approximately 97% of tokens returned by this regular expression were not judged to be true instances of pleonastic conditionals (see also **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**). Hence, this regular expression should be edited in further studies.

whereby a sentence is defined as ending with either a full stop, exclamation point, or question mark. Given 1292 correctly returned if-pleonastic conditionals, the per million sentences frequency in the combined data set amounts to 12.979.

The following table shows the total number of matches for each syntactic variant as well as the total number of correctly and incorrectly returned hits.

	if-incl-then	if-excl-then	if-reverse	
correctly returned	98	1169	8	1275
incorrectly returned	3	53	1300	1356
	101	1222	1308	2631

Table 3 RQ 1.1 if-PC Syntactic Pattern Total Numbers

Most importantly, a clear tendency towards one syntactic pattern, namely the if-excl-then pattern is detectable, with 1169 correctly returned hits. This is further highlighted by the relative numbers (see Table 4 below).

	if-incl-then	if-excl-then	if-reverse	
correctly returned	7.69%	91.69%	0.63%	100%
incorrectly returned	0.22%	3.91%	95.87%	100%

Table 4 RQ 1.1 if-PC Syntactic Pattern Relative Numbers

Pleonastic conditionals appear to show a distinct preference for the if-excl-then pattern, considering that over 91% of if-pleonastic conditionals appear in this syntactic variation. While if-incl-then variants are not uncommon, making up almost 8% of the cleaned data, if-reverse structures are extremely rare with a total of only eight hits amounting to less than 1% of the data. In further consequence hypothesis 1.1, stating that if-pleonastic conditionals are most commonly found in combination with the if-excl-then pattern, cannot be falsified.¹⁵

To compare the distribution with regards to syntactic pattern of if-pleonastic conditionals to regular conditionals, if-conditionals of non-pleonastic nature were extracted from the data. This was done using the regular expressions below.

[R1d] if [\w\s]+ , then [\w\s]+

[R1e] if [\w\s]+ , [\w\s]+

¹⁵ Note that while the data set seeking to answer RQ1.1 only includes if-pleonastic conditionals and therefore does not allow statements about pleonastic conditionals more generally, we encounter a very similar pattern with when-pleonastic conditionals as discussed later.

[R1f] `[\w\s]+ if [\w\s]+`

These regular expressions are similar to [R1a]-[R1c] respectively with the exception that they do not utilize groups which do have to be identical, thus, antecedent and consequent may differ. Formally, these regular expression use “`[\w\s]+`” to allow for any unlimited sequence of words and white space. Consequently, they return if-conditionals such as the following:

(56) Alright, alright, well, if you love cars, then you can think about Engineering at Melbourne. (TV Corpus)

(57) If I graduate, I can go to whatever college I want to. (TV Corpus)

(58) I'll do your homework if you don't speak to me again. (TV Corpus)

Considering the vast number of returns (over 1.7 million hits were recorded), a random sample of 1000 was selected and manually checked.¹⁶ In this process, only conditional statements were considered while conditional questions, such as example (59), were disregarded, as were sentence in which *if* serves to express yes/no-questions in reported speech (see example (60)) or introduces a phrase after a verb, as exemplified in (61) a. and (62) a. In the latter case, *if* is likely to be replaceable with *whether* (see (61) b. and (62) b.). The investigated sample serves as an approximation of the 1.7 million hits returned.

(59) What 's everybody gonna think if they think you 're going? (Movie Corpus)

(60) I was just going to ask you if you wanted to elope with me. (SOAP Corpus)

(61) a. I cross-referenced all the data on Liam's phone to see if I could find any correlation with Paul Kirkeby. (TV Corpus)

b. I cross-referenced all the data on Liam's phone to see whether I could find any correlation with Paul Kirkeby.

(62) a. Now we'll see if that gun of yours still works. (Movie Corpus)

b. Now we'll see whether that gun of yours still works.

Out of 1000 tokens, 605 were identified as true instances of if-conditionals. Given the error rate elicited in the sample, which amounts to 39.5%, one can estimate the total number of if-conditionals in the data set to be 1,038,221.14.¹⁷ The per million sentence

¹⁶ The sample was selected using the random package for Python. The likelihood to select an observation from one of the three corpora was not adjusted by corpora size.

¹⁷ This number was derived by multiplication of the total number of conditionals returned with the error rate recorded in the sample. For a more statistically precise measure the 95% confidence interval of the fraction of correct tokens was calculated assuming a normal distribution. The lower boundary lies at

frequency of if-conditionals can thus be estimated at about 10.430 hits per one million sentences. This allows for a calculation of the share of if-pleonastic conditionals in if-conditionals: if-pleonastic conditionals amount to only about 0.12% of all if-conditionals.

Table 5 below compares the syntactic pattern distribution of pleonastic if-conditionals and the more general group of if-conditionals.¹⁸ The reader is reminded that while the total numbers of the general group of if-conditionals lead to believe that the construction is less frequent than the pleonastic conditional construction in the corpora of interest, the absolute numbers are based on a representative sample of 1000 tokens that were manually checked after machine tagging for syntactic pattern.

connector/ syntactic pattern	connector-incl-then	connector-excl-then	connector-reverse	
if-PC absolute	98	1,169	8	1,275
if-GEN absolute	42	385	178	605
if-PC relative	7.69%	91.69%	0.63%	
if-GEN relative	6.94%	63.64%	29.42%	

Table 5 RQ 1.1 if-PC and if-GEN Syntactic Pattern Distribution Compared

The most striking difference in distribution of syntactic pattern between if-pleonastic conditionals and if-conditionals is the high frequency with which if-conditionals occur in the connector-reverse pattern compared to pleonastic conditionals. While only less than one percent of if-pleonastic conditionals exhibit this pattern, the connector-reverse pattern can be found with almost 30% of if-conditionals. The high percentage of connector-reverse occurrences appears to be mostly driven by biscuit conditionals (i.e. conditionals in which the antecedent does not represent a true condition for the truth of the consequent) such as examples (63) and (64) below. However, in order to confirm this first impression more research needs to be conducted in the future.

(63) I want to help if there's any way I can. (TV Corpus)

(64) I'll be outside if you need me. (Movie Corpus)

While the frequency of connector-incl-then constructions for both if-conditionals and if-pleonastic conditionals hovers around the 7% mark, the two categories differ with

approximately 59% while the upper boundary lies at approximately 62%. Using the lower and upper boundary the number of correct if-conditionals in the corpus lies between 1,012,803.043 and 1,063,639.237 with a 95% chance.

¹⁸ The differences distribution of syntactic patterns among if-pleonastic conditionals are significant at the 0.5 level using Fisher's exact test using extrapolated total numbers derived from the distribution in the sample of if-conditionals.

regards to how often connector-excl-then patterns occur. While a striking 91.69% of if-pleonastic conditionals occur with the connector-excl-then pattern, only around 63% of the more general group of if-conditionals do. The difference can almost be entirely explained by the high frequency of connector-reverse patterns in if-conditionals.

While the results presented in Table 5 provide further evidence for a tendency of if-pleonastic conditionals to occur in the connector-excl-then type considering the deviation from the distribution in the underlying if-conditional subset, the comparison needs to be treated with caution. The sample of if-conditionals used to investigate the underlying distribution of syntactic pattern in the more general group includes a number of different types of if-conditionals, such as biscuit conditionals, of which some might be more frequently used than others and a preference by one of these high frequency subtypes might be the driving force for the difference in distribution.

5.1.2 Research Question 1.2 – Connectors and their Distribution

To investigate whether pleonastic conditionals can only be used with the conditional connector *if* and which connecting device is most often found in the construction (RQ 1.2.), the data was sifted to match the regular expressions [R1g]-[R1n]. Given that the data has shown that if-pleonastic conditionals prefer the if-excl-then structure, I operate on the assumption that this is likely to be true for all other potential connectors used to form pleonastic conditionals for this investigation. Consequently, the possible connectors were investigated in the connector-excl-then syntactic variation only.

The following table shows the total number of hits returned for each regular expression (post manual checking) as well as the relative percentages for each investigated connector.

connectors	correctly tagged	%
<i>if</i>	1169	59.46%
<i>even if</i>	1	0.05%
<i>unless</i>	0	0.00%
<i>providing</i>	0	0.00%
<i>on condition</i>	0	0.00%
<i>as/so long as</i>	2	0.10%
<i>in case</i>	0	0.00%
<i>when</i>	794	40.39%
<i>only if</i>	0	0.00%
total	1966	

Table 6 RQ 1.2 Connectors Total and Relative Numbers

The regular expressions [R1g]-[R1n] returned a total number of 2077 hits, of which 1966 were true instances of the pleonastic conditional construction. Table 6 above shows that the connector-excl-then pleonastic conditional pattern was observed most often with the connecting device *if*. If-pleonastic conditionals make up 59.46% of all correctly tagged hits, followed by the connector *when*, such as example (65) below, amounting to approximately 40% of the data subset. Only two other possible connectors were found in the connector-excl-then pleonastic construction, *even if* (66) and *as long as* (67). However, these amount to a mere 0.05% and 0.1% of the investigated tokens.

(65) **When he's right, he's right.** (Movie Corpus)

(66) **Even if it's late, it's late.** (Movie Corpus)

(67) a. **As long as nothing happens, nothing happens.** (Movie Corpus)

b. All I know is that **as long as you're married, you're married.** (SOAP Corpus)

The results show that pleonastic conditionals most frequently occur with the connecting devices *if* and *when*. This is positive evidence for H1.2, albeit not supporting the claim that all connectors are regularly used with the pleonastic conditional construction.

5.1.3 Research Question 1.1 – Syntactic Variants Revisited

Given the above presented evidence, pleonastic conditionals using the conditional connector *when* were further explored, to check whether H1.1., stating that the connector-excl-then syntactic variant is most frequent in pleonastic conditionals, can be further supported. Using the same regular expressions as for RQ1.1, with the exception of *if* being substituted by *when*, Table 7 shows the total number of hits returned as well as the diffusion of incorrectly and correctly tagged tokens.

	when-incl-then	when-excl-then	when-reverse	
correctly returned	2	794	88	884
incorrectly returned	0	52	1359	1411
	2	846	1447	2295

Table 7 RQ 1.1 when-PC Syntactic Pattern Total Numbers

A total number of 884 true instances of when-pleonastic conditionals were detected. With regards to incorrectly returned tokens, viz. error rate, a similar pattern as in the results for RQ 1.1, which investigates if-pleonastic conditionals, is observed. The most error-

prone regular expression is the one corresponding to when-reverse pleonastic conditional tokens.

The relative numbers in Table 8 reinforce the claim that when-pleonastic conditionals exhibit a tendency for the connector-excl-then variant similar to if-pleonastic conditionals.

	when-incl-then	when-excl-then	when-reverse	
correctly returned	0.23%	89.82%	9.95%	100%
incorrectly returned	0.00%	3.69%	96.31%	100%

Table 8 RQ 1.1 when-PC Syntactic Pattern Relative Numbers

Almost 90% of when-pleonastic conditionals occur in the when-excl-then syntactic variation. The when-incl-then variant only amounts to 0.23% of the data. This is a considerably lower frequency than is observed in if-pleonastic conditionals (7.69%). The when-reverse pattern is more frequently observed. Above 10% of all when-pleonastic conditionals occur in the when-reverse syntactic pattern. A when-pleonastic conditional is thus more than 16 times more likely to occur in this syntactic variation than an if-pleonastic conditional.

The following chart shows percentages for if- and when-pleonastic conditionals and the three investigated syntactic variations as well as the distribution in the more general category if-conditionals.

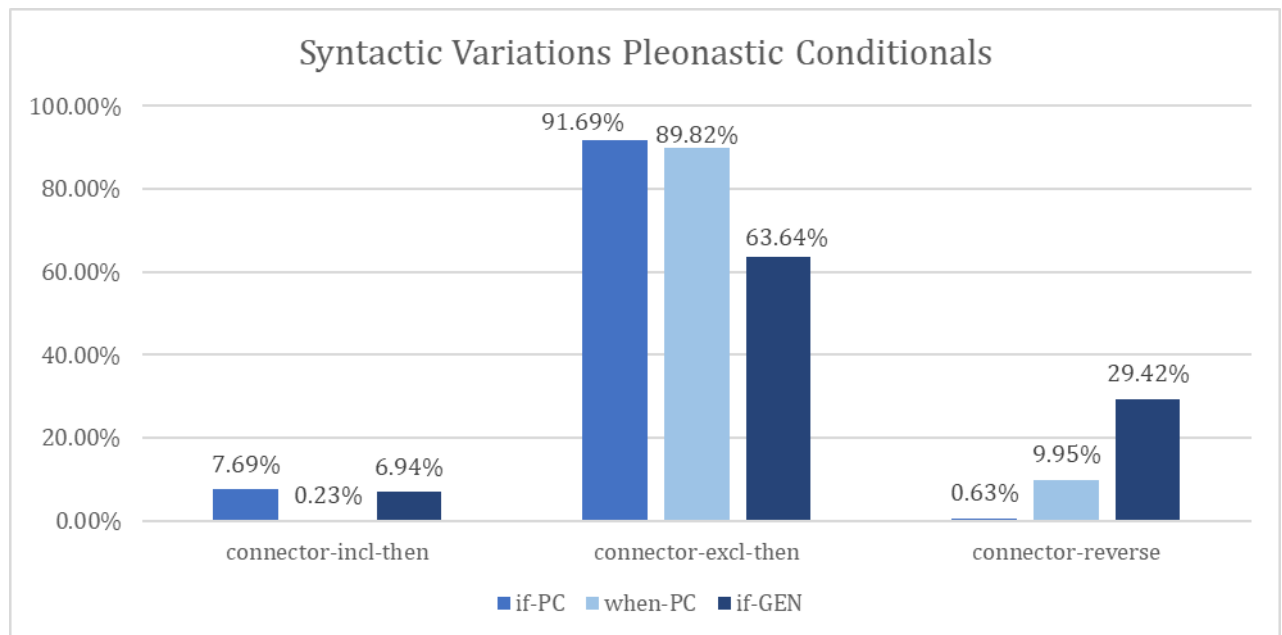


Figure 5 RQ 1.1 Comparison All Syntactic Patterns Relative Numbers

Despite the difference in frequency of connector-incl-then and connector-reverse patterns found in *if*- and *when*-pleonastic conditionals, Figure 5 clearly shows a tendency for both types of pleonastic conditionals to occur in the connector-excl-then pattern. Given that *if* and *when* are the most common connecting devices to be found in the pleonastic conditional construction, one can maintain that pleonastic conditionals in general are most commonly found with the connector-excl-then syntactic pattern. Moreover, a comparison between the distribution among *if*-conditionals, shown in dark blue, supports the hypothesis that pleonastic conditionals show a tendency for the connector-excl-then pattern that cannot simply be explained by the underlying distribution of syntactic patterns in *if*-conditionals.

5.2. Research Question 2 – The Meaning Side of Pleonastic Conditionals

Having discussed the empirical results with regard to formal restrictions and tendencies, I turn to the exploration of the construction's semantics.

5.2.1 Research Question 2.1 – Polarity Value Distribution

The manually checked examples of the two most common connectors, namely *if* and *when*, in all three investigated syntactic variations provide the basis to answer RQ 2.1, which asks if a preference for a particular polarity value can be identified. Considering the structure of the formal string, true pleonastic conditionals, including six variants [V1a]-[V1f], were automatically tagged according to polarity value. The following three elements were used as indicators for sententially negated context and in further consequence for negative polarity value: “n’t” (68), “not” (69), “never”¹⁹.

(68) a. **If you don't have it, you don't have it**, ok? (Movie Corpus)

b. **If I ain't on any list, I ain't on any list**. (Movie Corpus)

c. **If you won't, you won't**. (Movie Corpus)

(69) Hey, come on, **if you're not in the mood, you're not in the mood**. (Movie Corpus)

To investigate any tendencies towards negative or positive polarity value, the hits for the two most common connectors, viz. *if* and *when*, in all three possible syntactic variations were combined. Table 9 shows the structure of the data which underlies the investigation of polarity value in pleonastic conditionals.

¹⁹ No example can be provided given that the data set does not include any pleonastic conditionals which are sententially negated by *never*.

connector/ syntactic pattern	connector-incl-then	connector-excl-then	connector-reverse	
if	98	1,169	8	1,275
when	2	794	88	884
total	100	1,963	96	2,159

Table 9 RQ 2.1 Data Structure

A total of 2159 pleonastic conditionals were automatically tagged for polarity value. Needless to say, that in the case of pleonastic conditionals antecedent and consequent must have the same polarity value, either positive or negative, considering that antecedent and consequent carry the same proposition (see examples (70) and (71)).

(70) **If he's dead, he's dead.** (TV Corpus)

(71) I don't want to take secret exits, **I don't want to smile when I don't want to smile.** (TV Corpus)

Table 10 displays the total as well as relative number of sentences with and without sentential negation for the subset of pleonastic conditionals.

	total numbers	%
neg PV PC	314	14.54%
pos PV PC	1,845	85.46%
	2,159	100.00%

Table 10 RQ 2.1 Polarity Value PC Total and Relative Numbers

Around 85% of pleonastic conditionals are found in non-negated context, while 15% of the pleonastic conditionals examined carry negative propositions. Therefore, one can maintain that pleonastic conditionals more often carry a positive than negative polarity value. However, the relative numbers by themselves do not allow for a justified statement about a tendency of pleonastic conditionals to occur with either negative or positive polarity value relative to the general conditional construction. To be able to do so, more substantial research is needed to investigate the polarity value distribution among non-pleonastic conditionals in order to be able to compare it with the distribution of pleonastic conditionals. Only then would it be possible to determine whether the polarity value distribution of pleonastic conditionals is idiosyncratic to the construction. However, such an investigation exceeds the scope of this thesis as it would require an elaborate program that successfully detects clauses in sentences and tags each clause according to polarity value. Therefore, the hypothesis according to which pleonastic conditionals do not prefer

a particular type of context with regard to polarity value can neither be falsified nor verified.

Nevertheless, in order to exclude an effect of syntactic pattern on the frequency to occur in sentential negated context, the distribution of negative and positive polarity value of each syntactic pattern was analyzed. Table 11 below shows the percentage of (non-) negated pleonastic conditionals for each syntactic variation relative to the total number of returns for that variation.

variant	% pos PV PC (relative to total hits of syntactic variation)	% neg PV PC (relative to total hits of syntactic pattern)
connector-incl-then	77.45%	22.55%
connector-excl-then	84.87%	15.13%
connector-reverse	95.00%	5.00%

Table 11 RQ 2.1 Polarity Value acc. to Syntactic Variation

Given the high frequency of connector-excl-then pleonastic conditionals (1963 tokens out of 2159 pleonastic conditionals), it is unsurprising that the distribution of this syntactic variant is closest to the one observed for the set of all pleonastic conditionals. Hence, one can maintain that the distribution of polarity value in the general group of pleonastic conditionals is mostly driven by the distribution of polarity value of connector-excl-then pleonastic conditionals. In comparison to connector-excl-then pleonastic conditional constructions, connector-incl-then pleonastic conditionals are more likely to be found in sententially negated context (22.55%), while connector-reverse pleonastic conditionals are less likely to carry a negative polarity value (5%). This shows that the likelihood with which a pleonastic conditional occurs in sententially negated context varies across syntactic patterns.

Finally, to further enhance the validity of the results, the distribution of polarity value according to connector was examined. Table 12 below shows the results of this investigation.

variant	% pos PV PC (relative to total hits of <i>connector</i> - PCs)	% neg PV PC (relative to total hits of <i>connector</i> - PCs)
<i>if</i> -PCs	76.01%	23.99%
<i>when</i> -PCs	97.89%	2.11%

Table 12 RQ 2.1 Polarity Value acc. to Connector

While *if*-pleonastic conditionals occur in non-negated context above 76% of the time, pleonastic conditionals introduced by the connector *when* do so in almost 98% of all cases. The difference in distribution between *if*- and *when*-pleonastic conditionals with regard to distribution of polarity value seems striking and further leads to the question whether and, if so how, this distribution is related to the overall semantics of each construction. *If*-pleonastic conditionals are more likely to occur in sententially negated context compared to *when*-pleonastic conditionals. Regardless of the underlying distribution of polarity value of conditionals, pleonastic and non-pleonastic, the data shows a tendency for *when*-pleonastic conditionals to carry a positive polarity value relative to *if*-pleonastic conditionals. While it is not possible to conclude anything about idiosyncratic tendencies of all pleonastic conditionals, one can maintain that there exists a difference in polarity value distribution between *if*- and *when*-pleonastic conditionals.

Given that constructions in the sense of Construction Grammar include not just formal but also semantic idiosyncratic tendencies, it is of interest to investigate the polarity value distribution of the pleonastic conditional construction. The research suggests that speakers of English are more likely to opt for the connector *if* when using a proposition carrying a negative polarity value.

This section has elaborated on formal tendencies of the pleonastic conditional construction. The data offers evidence for a preference of *if*-pleonastic conditionals to occur in the connector-excl-then syntactic pattern. Moreover, it has been shown that connector-excl-then pleonastic conditionals most frequently occur with the connectors *if* and *when*. Furthermore, research about the meaning side of the pleonastic conditional construction shows that there exists a recognizable difference in distribution of polarity value between *if*- and *when*-pleonastic conditionals, indicating an idiosyncratic preference for polarity value for each construction.

6. Pragmatic Functions

This section provides insights into the pragmatic meaning of pleonastic conditionals. I present and describe in detail the four pragmatic categories established before offering a thorough analysis of the corpus data tagged according to said categories.

6.1 The Four Categories Explained

As has been mentioned previously, only limited research has been done on the possible functions of the pleonastic conditional construction. Thus, the data extracted from the corpora, including if- and when-pleonastic conditionals, has been analyzed according to their pragmatic function, taking into account the context in which the constructions occur. The context is restricted to four sentences before and after the sentence which includes the pleonastic conditional wherever possible²⁰. Four possible functions have been established: [1] SPECIFICATION, [2] INDIFFERENCE, [3] ACCEPTANCE, and [4] CERTAINTY. In the following, each function will be explained and exemplified. Only context that is relevant to understand the function of a pleonastic conditional construction will be provided.

6.1.1 Specification

SPECIFICATION is identified as a pragmatic function of instances in which the speaker specifies the meaning of the proposition in the antecedent/consequent using the pleonastic conditional construction, as exemplified in (72) and (73).

(72) And when it comes to relationships I am one hundred percent. I am one hundred percent monogamous. You stay with one guy. Exactly! **If I'm with you, then I'm with you.** And I don't want anybody else. (Movie Corpus)

(73) You think Steve buys you flowers? Ha! A sickly little bunch of violets. **When I buy flowers, I buy flowers.** He takes you out and buys you a filet mignon. Well, take a look at this! A whole turkey! (Movie Corpus)

In (72) the speaker uses the pleonastic conditional construction to specify that if they are with a person, they are with this one person only and nobody else as is also hinted at in the sentences preceding the construction. While the proposition *I'm with you* may be interpreted in various ways, such as being with a person momentarily only or romantically, the speaker rules out these possible denotations by using the pleonastic conditional construction. This set-shrinking effect often functions to single out a

²⁰ The corpus data is provided in text format consisting of various files when purchased for offline use. Hence, there exists a possibility that less than four sentences prior or after the sentence including the pleonastic conditional construction can be extracted if the construction of interest is to be found in the first or last four sentences in a file.

stereotypical meaning of a lexical item, or in this case entire clause. The speaker intends to convey that the proposition is to be interpreted by the listener considering the prototype of a monogamous romantic relationship and all it entails. In order for this effect to be achieved, the interlocutors must share knowledge about the existing prototypes or norms in a given culture.

Although no audio is available for the examples investigated, it can be assumed that in the case of using a pleonastic conditional to specify an aspect of a proposition, this aspect receives extra stress to highlight the function. In example (72) extra stress would most likely be placed on *you*. To further demonstrate that specification is indeed the pragmatic function at work, given the lack of audio material, one may add the intensifier 'really' to the consequent (74) or substitute the subject complement in the consequent with a construction that also has a set-shrinking effect, such as Contrastive Focus Reduplication (75), without giving rise to semantic or pragmatic oddity.

(74) If I'm with you, I am really/fully with you. (intensifier)

(75) If I'm with you, I am with you-with you. (Contrastive Focus Reduplication)

Example (73) is to be interpreted similarly. The speaker stresses that when they buy flowers for somebody it ought to be a grandiose bouquet rather than *a sickly little bunch of violets*, hence, implying that such flowers are not the prototypical flowers appropriate in the described situation. The pleonastic conditional construction in this example functions to shrink the set of possible referents of the word *flowers*, excluding *a sickly bunch of violets* and highlighting that a bunch of different flowers, such as roses, are more appropriate/prototypical. In other words, the speaker narrows down the meaning of the word *flowers* using the pleonastic conditional construction and hence conveys that they would by flowers more appropriate for the situation. Correspondingly, the intensifier 'real' can be integrated into the consequent without giving rise to semantic or pragmatic oddity.

While the examples of SPECIFICATION shown thus far are easily interpretable mostly due to the context which overtly supports the function of the pleonastic conditional, other examples are not as straightforward:

(76) **If you're for the death penalty, you're for the death penalty.** Even if the condemned murderer is cute and cuddly. (TV Corpus)

The speaker in example (76) uses a pleonastic conditional to specify that a person who is for the death penalty is in favor of such a punishment regardless of the identity of the accused. In other words, the speaker narrowing down the meaning of the proposition *you are for the death penalty* to the one in which one can either only be for or against it, excluding the possible meaning of being for the punishment only in particular cases. While the test discussed above, including the intensifier ‘really’, does work in this case, it does not seem to capture the meaning precisely as it would allow for multiple interpretations, e.g. one feels particularly strongly about their believes. However, considering the sentence following the pleonastic conditional, one can eliminate any interpretation but the one in which the speaker explains to the addressee that one can only be for or against the death penalty and all it entails and cannot change their stance according to who might be affected.

6.1.2 Indifference

Any examples in which the speaker expresses indifference or downplays the importance of the proposition by using the pleonastic conditional construction is recorded to belong to the second category INDIFFERENCE.

(77) Yeah. Good. That's good. I don't care. **If we don't get anything, we don't get anything.** If they cancel the show, that's no big deal. (Movie Corpus)

(78) A: Are you afraid somebody might find out his big brother faked his own death?
B: Jonathan is alive and that is all that matters. **If I get caught, I get caught.** I'll take my punishment. (SOAP Corpus)

(79) Edison and Tesla could not be more different in the way they handled their self, appearance, and their manners, and the way that they constructed a public image for themselves. Edison couldn't care less about the clothes he had on and **if he spilt chemicals on his good Sunday suit, then he spilt chemicals on his good Sunday suit.** (TV Corpus)

In example (77), the pleonastic conditional expresses the speaker's indifference about whether they get anything or not. This indifference is further stressed by the sentence preceding the construction, i.e. *I don't care*. In example (78), speaker B foregrounds that they do not care about whether they get caught given that *all that matters* is that Jonathan is alive. Using the signal phrase, *I don't care*, from the previous example and adding the antecedent as a dependent (see example (80)) without severely changing the pragmatic meaning further illustrates that the pleonastic conditional functions to convey indifference toward the proposition on behalf of speaker B.

(80) I don't care if I get caught.

Similarly, in example (79) the indifference on behalf of Edison toward the condition of his suit is double marked by the phrase *Edison couldn't care less about the clothes he had on* as well as the pleonastic conditional.

However, the function of indifference may also be at work without any overt signal phrase.

(81) We are not racing them. **If they pass us, they pass us.** (TV Corpus)

The speaker in example (81) expresses their indifference over whether another party passes them or not by using the pleonastic conditional construction. Even in the absence of a signal phrase this can be interpreted as functioning to do so, given that the speaker clarifies that the situation they are in is not a race and therefore passing has no significance whatsoever. In consequence, the speaker is indifferent about whether the proposition 'they pass us' is true in the present or will be so in the future. Whenever a notion of disregard concerning the occurrence of an event is expressed by using the pleonastic conditional construction, the respective examples is said to belong to the category *INDIFFERENCE*.

6.1.3 Acceptance

Pleonastic conditionals appear to often function to express a notion of acceptance. In such instances, the speaker uses the construction to either signal their own acceptance of the proposition (82), to voice acceptance of the obligatoriness of the proposition (83), to signal acceptance of the possibility of the event described in the proposition (84), or nudge the addressee to accept the possibility of occurrence of the proposition (85).

(82) A: Never bring up the matter again! It's private.

B: Well, **if it's private, it's private.** (Movie Corpus)

(83) I don't care what it takes to get it. **If we gotta get dirty, we gotta get dirty.** (Movie Corpus)

(84) A: We made a decision. No pills.

B: I mean, I don't want anything to happen, but **if it does, it does.** I'm okay with it. (TV Corpus)

(85) There's nothing you can do. **If he leaves, he leaves.** (Movie Corpus)

In (82) above, speaker B signals that they accept the privacy of a certain matter by using a pleonastic conditional. Speaker B uses A's last proposition, *It's private.*, as the antecedent and consequent of the pleonastic conditional to stress that nothing else can follow from a

matter being private but it being private and, thus, B accepts the proposition as true. Similarly, in example (83) the pleonastic conditional functions to express acceptance of the obligatoriness of the proposition, namely *we gotta get dirty*. However, as the obligatoriness of the proposition is overtly expressed, it can be said that as in the previous example, the speaker uses the pleonastic conditional to express acceptance of the proposition in the antecedent/consequent.

Speaker B in example (84) does not accept the proposition 'it happens' as a factual truth but rather accepts the possibility that something might happen and voices it using a pleonastic conditional. Moreover, B appears to imply that they are not in the position to influence whether it will or will not happen. They stress their acceptance of this possibility further by stating *I'm okay with it*. In example (85), however, the speaker does not voice their own acceptance of the proposition. Rather, the speaker seems to ask the addressee to accept the possibility that he might leave while not necessarily making a statement about what they personally believe or accept.

While it might be argued that an interpretation as presented for example (84) is merely due to the word semantics of the verb *happen*, which inherently carries a notion of not being able to alter the course of events, this interpretation can also apply to pleonastic conditionals including a verb whose word semantics does not include any such notion, as exemplified in example (86).

- (86) A: Papa, you know I am better than anyone with these horses.
 B: You know, I try to choose what's best for both of you. **If I fail, I fail.** So be it.
 (Movie Corpus)

Generally speaking, any instance of a pleonastic conditional in which the speaker uses the form to convey some aspect of acceptance, often also with regards to the incapability to influence the course of events in the future, is recorded to belong to the category ACCEPTANCE.

Note that semantic categories might overlap as they are not strictly mutually exclusive:

- (87) A: But I'm not teasing about how I don't want to go swimming, 'cause running is my exercise, anyway, so swimming is not really my thing.
 B: **If you don't like swimming, you don't like swimming.** Hey! Oh - I know someone who likes swimming, though. (SOAP Corpus)

Given the context provided, the pleonastic conditional in this example may express a notion of acceptance on behalf of the speaker, i.e. they accept that the addressee does not

enjoy swimming, or it may voice that the speaker is indifferent toward the proposition. However, one cannot exclude the possibility that the speaker aims to convey both either. Hence, examples such as (87) are not included in either category but are categorized as miscellaneous.

6.1.4 Certainty

The pleonastic conditional construction can also be used to express a notion of certainty. A speaker may opt for this construction to highlight their certainty about the objective or subjective factuality of a proposition (88) or indicate certainty about the fact that nothing can follow from the antecedent but the antecedent itself (89).

- (88) A: And as for climate change, we're in the middle of it right now.
 B: It's called winter into spring. For him to say that we need to change the conversation is to cave into these liberals and their way of thinking. **When they're wrong, they're wrong.** (Movie Corpus)

- (89) I just always assumed **if you win, you win.** Despite how you got there, you know. (SOAP Corpus)

In example (88), speaker B uses the pleonastic conditional construction to present the proposition in the antecedent/consequent as a fact to the hearer(s) and stresses their certainty about the factuality of the proposition. By using the pleonastic conditional construction speaker B stresses the believed factuality of the proposition. Albeit it can be argued that speaker B simultaneously asks the listener(s) to accept the proposition, this is not the main function of the conditional given that any proposition is made in the hope that the listeners accept it. If this were the only intention, to adhere to Grice's Maxims, the speaker should merely state the proposition rather than the pleonastic conditional including it.

While the pleonastic conditional construction in example (88) stresses the factuality of the proposition, example (89) appears to slightly deviate from this interpretation. The speaker does not signal their certainty about the truth of the very generic proposition *you win* as this general statement has no direct referent. Rather the speaker implies that they assume that the circumstances of winning are not of importance. Thus, if one wins, nothing else can follow but a win. In other words, the speaker suggests that they assume that any conditional such as *If you win, you still lose because you played dirty.* is not permissible as nothing else can follow from the antecedent *you win* but the antecedent itself.

To further demonstrate this kind of certainty, consider the example below:

(90) I guess like most people, I don't like to believe that **we die when we die**. I prefer to believe that our consciousness lives on. (TV Corpus)

The speaker in example (90) denies that nothing can follow from the antecedent *when we die* but that same proposition, hence, denying the factuality of the pleonastic conditional as a whole. They even suggest a possible consequent, namely *our consciousness lives on*, and express that they prefer to believe that it is possible to say that 'When we die, our consciousness lives on'.

Given the examples discussed for the category CERTAINTY thus far, the interpretation of the speaker signaling certainty about the truth of the proposition is related to the lexical semantics of the proposition. More often than not, examples conveying a notion of certainty include lexical items that have a clear antonym such as *right/wrong*, *live/die*, *win/lose*, *soft/harsh*, or *sick/healthy*. Thus, the speaker signals objective or subjective certainty of the appropriateness of one of these binary items in a given situation.

As has been mentioned, there exist intersections between the established categories. Consider the following examples:

(91) **If she doesn't want to see you, she doesn't want to see you**. She's not a sweet, little girl anymore. She has a mind of her own. (SOAP Corpus)

(92) A: I don't know him.

B: Are you sure? Look again, properly. It's important.

A: **If I don't know him, I don't know him**. (TV Corpus)

The pleonastic conditionals in example (91) and (92) may be categorized as expressing acceptance or certainty. While it can be argued that in both examples the speaker tries to nudge the addressee to accept the proposition, it is also possible to establish a line of argumentation in which the speaker aims to convey certainty about the factuality of the antecedent/consequent in the given situation. These and similar examples received a miscellaneous tag. Given the relatively high frequency of such examples the following subsection further elaborates on them.

6.1.5 Miscellaneous Tokens

Any pleonastic conditional which could not be unambiguously sorted into one of the categories explained above, was tagged as miscellaneous. This includes examples which show characteristics in line with the definitions of multiple categories as previously stated. Thus far, only tokens in which two possible interpretations are possible have been

presented. The pleonastic conditional in (93) below may even be interpreted in three ways – each interpretation is sound in itself and would sort the conditional into a specific category. However, I define unambiguously tagged as being able to construct a sound argument which leads to the conclusion that a token must be sorted into a distinct category and being able to establish sound counter arguments for all other categories. Therefore, examples, such as the one below, are not sorted into multiple categories but receive a miscellaneous tag.

- (93) A: What 's going on with your face?
 B: It's my game face.
 A: Take it off and put it away.
 B: No can do. **When it's on, it's on.** (TV Corpus)

In example (93), the pleonastic conditional may be interpreted to intensify an aspect of the proposition as one can construct the variation *When it's on, it's really on.* without giving rise to semantic or pragmatic oddity. Moreover, we may arrive at an interpretation in line with the category ACCEPTANCE: speaker B is asking speaker A to accept the proposition. Lastly, one might be inclined to argue that B aims to express certainty about the factuality of the proposition and its applicability to the situation. Hence, this example was sorted into the miscellaneous category.

Moreover, examples which did not allow for an informed judgement about the function of the construction due to restricted context or involuntary gaps in the context²¹, indicated by multiple at-signs, were considered to be miscellaneous.

- (94) Do you want to get pissed or not? Behold the mother lode. Is this @ @ @ @ @
 @ @ @ @ @ **If he is, he is.** (TV Corpus)

Given the gap of context directly preceding the pleonastic conditional construction in example (94), it is impossible to know what the proposition is in reference to and therefore it could not be classified as belonging to any of the categories explained above.

Examples in which the function appeared to lie outside of any of the categories established were recorded as miscellaneous.

- (95) A: A man just tried to rape me. I shot him in self-defense and I think he might be dead.

²¹ The reader is reminded that gaps in the data are due to restrictions placed on offline data for copyright reasons.

B: Word perfect. **When she's good, she's good.** When she's bad, she's a murderer. (TV Corpus)

(96) I'm saying I don't believe in ceremonies. **If it works, it works.** If it doesn't, not all the vows and pretty poetry in the world can change that (SOAP Corpus)

The two examples above include pleonastic conditional constructions that may at first sight appear to function to convey indifference about the proposition. However, I am inclined to argue that these pleonastic conditionals cannot be categorized as such. Both examples should be considered as part of a more elaborate construction which also includes the sentence following the pleonastic conditional. In examples (95) and (96), the sentence following the pleonastic conditional construction is yet another conditional. The antecedent of which is the negation of the antecedent/consequent in the pleonastic conditional, while the consequent is an extreme conclusion that follows. I am inclined to argue that, in such cases, the speaker uses the pleonastic conditional to highlight the extremeness of the consequent of the conditional that follows.²² Therefore, such examples were not sorted into a pragmatic category but were considered part of the miscellaneous group.

6.2 Distribution of Pragmatic Functions

The combined data of if- and when-pleonastic conditionals from all three corpora, i.e. a total of 2159 tokens, served as the basis for analysis of the distribution of pragmatic function in pleonastic conditionals.

Examples that formally adhere to the restrictions established for the pleonastic conditional construction, namely morphological and formal identity of antecedent and consequent, but are arguably not a pleonastic conditional construction with regards to their semantic properties were excluded from the data. Consider the examples below:

(97) Have you ever noticed how we have 1,000 words for being drunk in this country, and only one for being sober? **If you're sober, you're sober.** If you're drunk, you 're pissed, you 're trashed, you 're hammered, you 're wasted, you 're wellied, you 're shit-faced. (Movie Corpus)

(98) A: What? If I don't leave with you now, it's over?
B: Yeah, that's pretty much it. **If you 're not with me, you 're not with me.** (SOAP Corpus)

(99) I gotta be involved. **If I'm gonna be a father, then I'm gonna be a father.** (TV Corpus)

²² This type of construction was detected 16 times in the data.

In examples (97) to (99), the antecedent and the consequent show formal identity but arguably not semantic identity. In example (97), the antecedent refers to the state of being sober while the consequent refers to the expression 'sober'. Similarly, in example (98) speaker B tries to convey the meaning that if A is not with them physically then they are not with them romantically – hence, referring to two different kinds of being with a person. In example (99) the conditional is used to describe that what follows from biological fatherhood is also a social everyday involvement in a kid's life. Hence, the references for the two phrases are not identical. Therefore, such examples cannot be considered constructs of the pleonastic conditional construction and were excluded from the data. The remaining 2159 tokens were tagged according to their pragmatic function.

The following figure shows the frequency distribution of the four distinct pragmatic categories SPECIFICATION, INDIFFERENCE, ACCEPTANCE, and CERTAINTY as well as the percentage of tokens tagged as miscellaneous across the 2159 examples that are considered to be pleonastic conditionals formally and semantically.

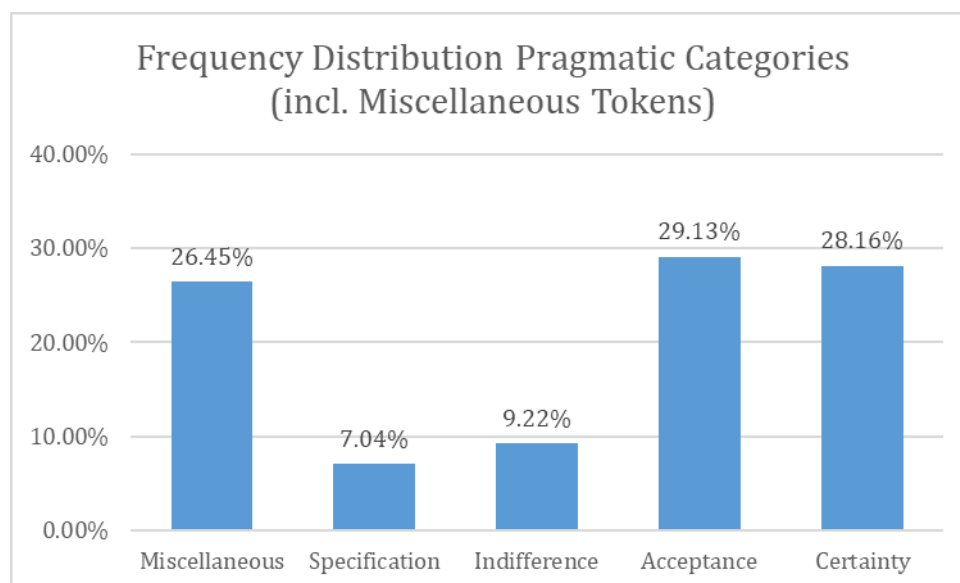


Figure 6 RQ 2.2 Frequency Distribution Pragmatic Categories (incl. Misc Tokens)

Over one quarter of the data was assigned to the miscellaneous group as these examples could not be placed into any of the four distinct categories. The highest number of intersections between two categories were found for the categories INDIFFERENCE and ACCEPTANCE (approximately 7% of all miscellaneous tokens) and ACCEPTANCE and CERTAINTY (about 6% of all miscellaneous tokens). Figure 6 demonstrates that the highest number of examples could be categorized as belonging to ACCEPTANCE (29.13%) and CERTAINTY (28.16%). The function of signaling indifference was recorded for just below 10% of all

examples. Only about 7% of all 2159 tokens were recorded to belong to the category SPECIFICATION. If- and when-pleonastic conditionals mainly function to express notions of acceptance and certainty. In approximately 29.13% of all cases the pleonastic conditional construction conveys an aspect of acceptance and in a little over 28.16% of all tokens the main function is to express certainty. Indifference is conveyed in 9.26% of all constructs. The least used function is specification which was recorded for almost 7% of all pleonastic conditional that could be sorted into a distinct category. Therefore, one may conclude that pleonastic conditionals are most often used to express a notion of acceptance and certainty, while the construction is only infrequently used to code specification or indifference.

6.3 Preferences of Connectors for Pragmatic Functions

It is of interest to investigate whether some categories show a preference for either *if* or *when*. The following chart shows the percentages of if- and when-variants for each category as well as the distribution in the accumulated sample (including miscellaneous tokens) indicated by the dark blue horizontal line. In this case, the three syntactic variants, i.e. connector-incl-then, connector-excl-then, and connector-reverse, are collapsed into the more general categories *if* and *when*.

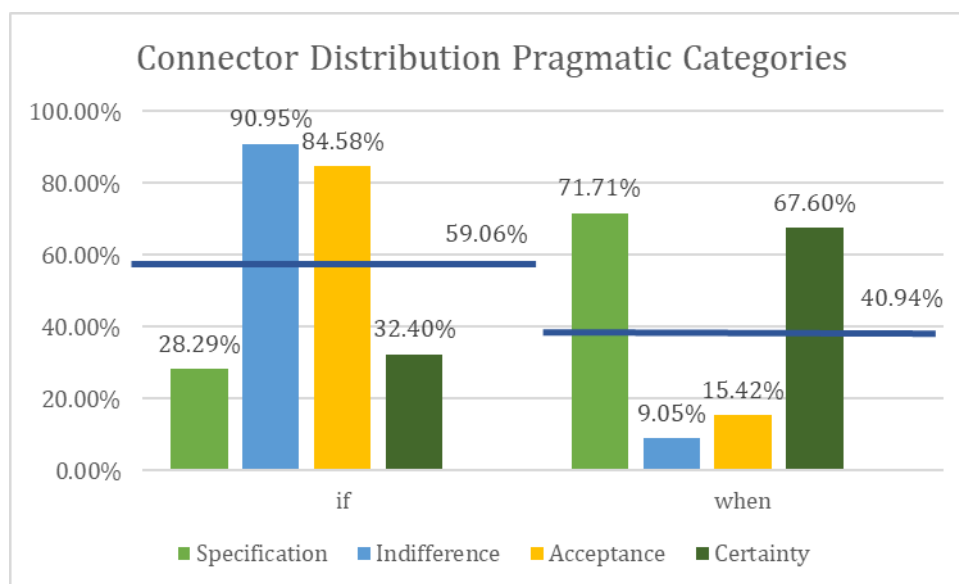


Figure 7 RQ 2.2 Connector Distribution Pragmatic Categories

The relative numbers in Figure 7 are based on clear cases only (as is indicated by the absence of the miscellaneous group). The graph demonstrates that the categories INDIFFERENCE and ACCEPTANCE show a preference for if-pleonastic conditionals, while the pragmatic categories SPECIFICATION and CERTAINTY are mainly recorded with when-

pleonastic conditionals. Over 90% of all examples that received the tag INDIFFERENCE occur with if-pleonastic conditionals, such as the example below.

- (100) Human life don't mean as much to them as it does to us. They're lushing it up and fighting all the time, and **if somebody gets killed, somebody gets killed.** They don't care. (Movie Corpus)

Example (100) shows an instance of an if-pleonastic conditional used to express indifference. The speaker aims to convey that somebody has no regard for the life of others and underlines this notion of indifference by adding *They don't care*. The preference for the connector *if* when conveying indifference is unsurprising considering that one usually expresses indifference about whether or not a certain event is to happen, albeit speakers also use when-pleonastic conditionals to convey a notion of indifference, see example (101). However, the example below demonstrates that the connector *when* may still carry a temporal meaning although used in a pleonastic conditional construction. In this case, the speaker appears to convey indifference with regard to the point in time at which the event is to happen, rather than whether or not it will happen at all. By using the connector *when* the speaker expresses that they already operate on the assumption that the event will happen, but the exact time of occurrence is unclear.

- (101) A: The grass won't necessarily be greener, Rebekah.
B: You're probably right. But I don't care. I want to live a simple life as a normal person. And **when it ends, it ends.** (TV Corpus)

The ACCEPTANCE category exhibits a preference for the connector *if*. Almost 85% of all examples in this category occur in the form of an *if*-syntactic variant, while only approximately 15% occur in the form of one of the *when*-variants. Like the pragmatic category INDIFFERENCE, one is likely to express acceptance for the possibility of the occurrence of an event as exemplified in (102).

- (102) A: Then why do I get the feeling you'd like to make it permanent? Which is fine.
B: **If you're done, you're done.** Just say it, and I'll leave (SOAP Corpus)

Speaker B in example (102) uses the pleonastic conditional construction to code that they accept the possibility of them being done with supposedly their relationship. However, acceptance may also be expressed using the connector *when*. In such a case, *when* appears to signal the speakers positive stance towards the occurrence of the event stated in the proposition.

(103) Even when it does go wrong, these guys are mentally so strong. You know, **when it goes bad, it goes bad**. There's nothin' you can do about it. (Movie Corpus)

(104) A: All open cases are assigned.

B: Come on, there's gotta be something I can investigate!

A: No, there's nothing.

B: All right, well, **when there's nothing, there's nothing**, you know. (TV Corpus)

In example (103), the speaker seems to express acceptance of the inevitability of 'it going bad' – this might be due to their personal beliefs about the future or due to the event in reference already having happened in the past. Speaker B in (104) codes a form of factuality using the connector *when*. Nevertheless, the pleonastic conditional as a whole is used to signal acceptance of the factuality of the proposition rather than signaling acceptance towards a possibility. Note that this is a considerably different interpretation than the one presented for pleonastic conditionals that fall into the category CERTAINTY which are used by speakers to stress the factuality of a proposition.

Moreover, Figure 7 illustrates the preference for the categories SPECIFICATION and CERTAINTY to occur with the connector *when*. The percentages of occurrence for both categories, approximately 72% and 68% respectively, are considerably higher than the one recorded in the sample as a whole (40.94%). The tendency of SPECIFICATION to be coded in pleonastic conditionals including the connector *when*, could be interpreted to mean that speakers are more likely to specify an aspect of a proposition which they assume to already have occurred or which they are positively convinced will occur in the future. In such cases the pleonastic conditional functions as a specifier as in example (105) below. The speaker highlights that once they are done, they are done completely.

(105) A: I fall for the wrong guy - I find out they 're with a girl, a bottle, needle, I move on. And sometimes I use a bottle to help me do it. Or a needle. Or a girl. **But when I 'm done, I 'm done.**

B: That's it, you 're just over it? (TV Corpus)

(106) A: Captain, we leave at 0800 tomorrow morning?

B: Don't wait for a fetching committee. 0800- if you 're not on board, you 'll never be on board. **If you take off at 0800, you take off at 0800.** (TV Corpus)

SPECIFICATION is less often found coded in a pleonastic conditional including the connector *if* (106) - only about 9% of all cases of SPECIFICATION are coded using such a construction. Speaker B stresses that take off is at a very exact time of day and implies that late-comers will not be permitted on board. In this particular case, the if-pleonastic conditional is used

to specify and thereby also intensify an aspect of a general proposition. However, in order to allow for more general statements, a closer look needs to be taken at all specifying if-pleonastic conditionals.

Like the category SPECIFICATION, the category CERTAINTY exhibits a preference for the connector *when* over *if*, albeit less distinctly so than SPECIFICATION. This can be interpreted as speakers more often expressing certainty over a proposition which they already assume or know to be true rather than over a general proposition which they do not know to be or become true.

(107) Well, ordinarily, I'd disagree with you just on principle, but **when you're right, you're right**. (SOAP Corpus)

(108) A: What are you gonna do? Are you gonna chase down every crazy lead that comes in?

B: **If it's a lead, it's a lead**, yes. (SOAP Corpus)

In example (107) the speaker expresses certainty over the proposition *you're right*. By using the when-pleonastic conditional the speaker signals that the interlocutor's statement is true as a matter of fact – hence, expressing certainty over a proposition they assume or subjectively know to be true. The connector *if* in example (108) is used to stress the factuality of a general proposition about every incoming tip indeed representing a lead worth investigating. While it can be argued that speaker B also expresses certainty over a proposition, namely any incoming tip being a lead, which they assume to be true, the speaker's assumption about the truth of the proposition is irrelevant. The speaker cannot know or assume anything about the truth of the proposition in reference to every single incoming tip and thus offers only a general statement using the connector *if*.

Considering all of the above, the hypothesis according to which if- and when-pleonastic conditionals show differences in pragmatic function cannot be falsified on the basis of the data. If-pleonastic conditionals are distinctly more often used to convey notions of indifference and acceptance, while when-pleonastic conditionals are more frequently observed intensifying an aspect of the proposition in the antecedent/consequent or denoting certainty.

6.4 Preferences of Pragmatic Functions for Connector-Specific Syntactic Patterns

As each example was not only tagged according to connector but also for syntactic variant, i.e. connector-incl-then, connector-excl-then and connector-reverse, the data allows to investigate whether a pragmatic category shows a tendency to occur with a connector-specific syntactic variant. The table below provides absolute and relative frequency of each pragmatic category to occur with a connector-specific syntactic pattern.

Pragmatic Category/ Connector Specific Syntactic Pattern		if			when			total absolute numbers
		connector- incl-then	connector- excl-then	connector- reverse	connector- incl-then	connector- excl-then	connector- reverse	
Specification	absolute	3	40	0	0	105	4	152
	relative	1.97%	26.32%	0.00%	0.00%	69.08%	2.63%	
Indifference	absolute	11	169	1	0	12	6	199
	relative	5.53%	84.92%	0.50%	0.00%	6.03%	3.02%	
Acceptance	absolute	42	489	1	0	56	41	629
	relative	6.68%	77.74%	0.16%	0.00%	8.90%	6.52%	
Certainty	absolute	20	177	0	2	395	14	608
	relative	3.29%	29.11%	0.00%	0.33%	64.97%	2.30%	

Table 13 RQ 2.2 Preferences of Pragmatic Categories for Connector-Specific Syntactic Patterns

As has been discussed above, instances of the pleonastic conditional construction of the category SPECIFICATION are more likely to be observed with when-pleonastic conditionals. Nevertheless, the pragmatic function can be found in all but two syntactic variants, namely the if-reverse and the when-incl-then structure. Strikingly almost 70% of all examples in this pragmatic category occur in the when-excl-then syntactic variant. This finding is however not surprising given that the data shows that pleonastic conditionals with either connector are most likely to be expressed using the connector-excl-then variant. While more than half of the tokens of all pleonastic conditionals investigated occur in the if-excl-then syntactic variant, this variant is only observed with 26.3% of SPECIFICATION-pleonastic conditionals. The data thus allows to conclude that pleonastic conditionals coding specification exhibit a clear idiosyncratic tendency to occur in the when-excl-then syntactic variant that cannot be fully ascribed to the underlying distribution across pleonastic conditionals of all functions.

Across the full sample including all pragmatic categories and the miscellaneous group, we observe a preference for the if-excl-then variant (about 55%), see Figure 5. This tendency is also observed when singling out the pragmatic group INDIFFERENCE. Approximately 85% of INDIFFERENCE-pleonastic conditionals occur in the if-excl-then syntactic structure.

While the function of indifference was recorded for examples of all syntactic variants, but the *when-incl-then* structure, the remaining percentages across these structures are extremely low. The pragmatic function is also most likely to occur in the *connector-excl-then* pattern in *when-pleonastic* conditionals. As has been discussed, the *connector-excl-then* pattern is the most frequently used pattern not only in *pleonastic* conditionals but also in conditionals in general. Therefore, one cannot rule out that the preference for this pattern in *INDIFFERENCE-pleonastic* conditionals is not simply caused by the underlying distribution.

The syntactic category distribution observed in the pragmatic category *ACCEPTANCE* is similar to the one discussed for *INDIFFERENCE*. Over three quarters of the examples tagged for the pragmatic function *ACCEPTANCE* occur in the *if-excl-then* pattern. All other syntactic patterns are observed at least once in this category, with the exception of the *when-incl-then* pattern. As has been mentioned when discussing the category *INDIFFERENCE*, a tendency for *connector-excl-then* patterns is observed in the more general category of *if-conditionals* as well as all *pleonastic* conditionals. Hence, this tendency cannot be deemed idiosyncratic to the pragmatic category *ACCEPTANCE*.

CERTAINTY is most often coded in *when-pleonastic* conditionals – more specifically, in *when-excl-then-pleonastic* conditionals (65%). The second most common structure in this pragmatic category is *if-excl-then* pattern with just below 30%. All other syntactic structures are either not found coding this pragmatic function or are only observed a handful of times as indicated by the relatively low percentages. Considering that only a little over 35% of all *pleonastic* conditionals occur in the *when-excl-then* structure, one can assume this tendency to be idiosyncratic. Hence, there appears to exist a preference to code notions of certainty in *pleonastic* conditionals using the *when-excl-then* syntactic pattern.

This section has presented the results from the empirical study undertaken to investigate pragmatic functions of *pleonastic* conditionals. Four pragmatic functions were established: *SPECIFICATION*, *INDIFFERENCE*, *ACCEPTANCE*, and *CERTAINTY*. It has been shown that the *pleonastic* conditional construction is most often used to express either a notion of acceptance or certainty. Moreover, each pragmatic function shows a tendency towards a connector. While *INDIFFERENCE* and *ACCEPTANCE* appear to prefer the connector *if*, *SPECIFICATION* and *CERTAINTY* show a preference for the connector *when*. The next section will analyze the presented data using the Construction Grammar framework.

7. Constructional Analysis

In the following, I offer an interpretation of the empirical findings discussed above from a Construction Grammar perspective. I translate the results into sketches of the pleonastic conditional network, moving from the top-most, thus most abstract level in the hierarchy, to the lowest, least abstract level. Lastly, a full sketch of the network will be provided.

7.1 The Uppermost Levels of the Pleonastic Conditional Network

The pleonastic conditional construction can be considered a construction in the sense of Construction Grammar as the symbolic link between form and meaning is non-compositional, i.e. “the knowledge of the individual words is not sufficient to work out the intended interpretation” (Hilpert 2014: 86). All pleonastic conditionals, independent of the syntactic variant, connector, and pragmatic meaning inherit from an abstract node, as presented in the figure below. The meaning side of the abstract pleonastic conditional construction includes semantic properties which are the same for all pleonastic conditionals (as mentioned in section 3.4) as well as all pragmatic categories discussed. Note that the list of pragmatic functions to be found on the meaning side of the abstract pleonastic conditional construction is not exhaustive, given the existence of miscellaneous tokens.

form	$\{\text{CONNECTOR}\}^j X^i <, (\text{then}) >^i \{\text{CONNECTOR}\} X^i$
meaning	semantics: propositional content of X pragmatics: Specification, Indifference, Acceptance, Certainty

Figure 8 RQ 3 Pleonastic Conditional Construction Abstract Node (Constructeme)

The form side of the abstract pleonastic conditional construction is based on the discussion about allostructions by Cappelle (2006). Cappelle argues for the existence of so called ‘allostructions’ – “variant structural realizations of a construction that is left partially underspecified” (2006: 18). I will elaborate on such allostructions of the abstract pleonastic conditional construction below. The construction generalizing over allostructions is termed ‘constructeme’ (Perek 2015: 153), by analogy to the concepts of phoneme and allophone or morpheme and allomorph (Cappelle 2006: 21). Perek (2015: 153) describes the relation between constructemes and allostruction as follows: “the constructemes capture the level at which constructions are semantically equivalent and the allostructions specify exactly how these constructions differ”. Given that it is

impossible to generalize over the form of all syntactic variations and include a fixed word order, the concepts of constructemes and allostructions lend themselves perfectly to the analysis of pleonastic conditionals as the focus lies on semantic equivalence.

As is the case in Cappelle's representative example of particle placement (Cappelle 2006: 18), the form of the pleonastic conditional constructeme displayed in Figure 8 is underspecified with regard to word order. In other words, the word order of the constructeme is not fully fixed. This must be the case in order for the constructeme to be able to license all three syntactic patterns discussed: the connector-incl-then, connector-excl-then, and connector-reverse variant. The curly brackets enclosing the connector slot(s) on the form side of the pleonastic conditional constructeme indicate that this slot can occur in various positions in the word order. In the case of the pleonastic conditional constructeme, the open connector slot is, syntactically speaking, either the first item, in the case of connector-incl-then or connector-excl-then syntactic variants, or the second item, as is the case for the connector-reverse pattern. The connector slots are mutually exclusive.

Note that the connector slot is indexed if it occurs as the first item of the construction. The index of this open connector slot is identical to the index of a group of linguistic material enclosed by angle brackets including the comma and the adverb *then* (the non-obligatoriness of the adverb is indicated by parentheses). These indices function to represent the following condition: The comma and optional adverb *then* are found in the indicated position if and only if the connector is syntactically the first item of the construction. Moreover, the open slots for the antecedent and consequent are indicated by X^i , highlighting the formal identity. The form side of the constructeme therefore represents an underspecified generalization of all other lower-level pleonastic conditional constructions.

The pleonastic conditional constructeme licenses two "more fully specified implementations" (Cappelle 2006: 18). These allostructions are presented in Figure 9 and Figure 10. In contrast to the constructeme, the word order on the form-side of both allostructions is fixed. However, both allostructions inherit the meaning of the more abstract constructeme.

CONNECTOR X ⁱ , (then) X ⁱ
semantics: propositional content of X pragmatics: Specification, Indifference, Acceptance, Certainty

Figure 9 RQ 3 Pleonastic Conditional Construction Connector-Incl/Excl-Then

X ⁱ CONNECTOR X ⁱ
semantics: propositional content of X, tendency for positive polarity value (relative to connector-incl/excl-then construction) pragmatics: Specification, Indifference, Acceptance, Certainty

Figure 10 RQ 3 Pleonastic Conditional Construction Connector-Reverse

Figure 9 shows the pleonastic conditional construction which licenses pleonastic conditionals that occur in the connector-incl-then and connector-excl-then syntactic variation. This is indicated by the parentheses placed around the adverb *then* on the form side of the node. The first slot in the construction is not filled but specified to be a suitable connector. The empirical investigation shows that this slot may be filled by *if*, *when*, *even if*, and *as long as*. As is the case for the pleonastic conditional constructeme, the open slots for the antecedent and consequent are indicated by Xⁱ.

The functional side of the node includes the semantic and pragmatic properties of the construction. As has been discussed in section 3.4, elaborating on the theoretical account of pleonastic conditionals, I argue that the semantics of the construction are merely the propositional content of the antecedent/consequent. The semantic identity of antecedent and consequent, which leads to exclude examples such as (97)-(99), is presupposed as coded in the singular use of the noun *content* (rather than the plural form *contents* which would allow for differences in semantic meaning). The pragmatic meaning of the pleonastic conditional arises through the repetition of the antecedent as the consequent in a formally conditional syntactic environment. As all four distinct pragmatic functions investigated have been found in tokens that syntactically fit the form of the node presented in Figure 9, the functional side includes the pragmatic functions SPECIFICATION, INDIFFERENCE, ACCEPTANCE, and CERTAINTY. The reader is reminded that for reasons discussed

in previous sections this list is unlikely to be fully exhaustive. Moreover, this construction allows for any suitable connector. To provide a full list of possible functions, all possible connectors would have to be investigated regarding their pragmatic function. However, at least concerning the connectors *if* and *when*, numerous miscellaneous examples appear to function at the intersection of two or more of the four distinct categories. Therefore, the list is considered to be representative.

Figure 10 illustrates the node encompassing all pleonastic conditional constructions occurring in the connector-reverse pattern. As has been discussed, the open slot for the proposition in the antecedent and consequent is indicated by X_i , which denotes formal identity. Consider that what would be considered the consequent in a non-pleonastic conditional precedes the antecedent in this construction. The connector slot is open and may be filled with suitable connectors. While the results with regards to possible connectors presented in section 5.1.2 only allow to draw conclusions with regard to the connector-excl-then syntactic variant, the investigation of the distribution of syntactic variants allows to maintain that at least the connectors *if* and *when* may fill the open connector slot in the pleonastic conditional connector-reverse construction.

The semantics and pragmatics of the node presented in Figure 10, are almost identical to the one presented in Figure 9 and are elaborated on in detail above. The connector-reverse construction includes information on the tendency for positive polarity value relative to its sister node as presented in Table 11. The research findings discussed in section 6.2 provide empirical evidence to postulate that the pragmatic function of the pleonastic conditional connector-reverse construction includes SPECIFICATION, INDIFFERENCE, ACCEPTANCE, and CERTAINTY as each function is recorded at least once occurring with this syntactic pattern. The same argument is true for the pleonastic conditional connector-reverse construction as for the pleonastic conditional connector-incl/excl-then construction: to provide a fully exhaustive list of possible functions more research is needed in order to investigate whether other connectors may fill the open connector slot in this construction and, in further consequence, what their possible pragmatic functions are. Nevertheless, considering that *if* and *when* appear to be among the most commonly used connectors in the connector-excl-then construction, this is likely to be the case for the connector-reverse construction. I therefore consider the list of possible function representative although not all-inclusive.

Figure 11 shows the two uppermost levels of the pleonastic conditional network including the constructeme and the two allostructions.

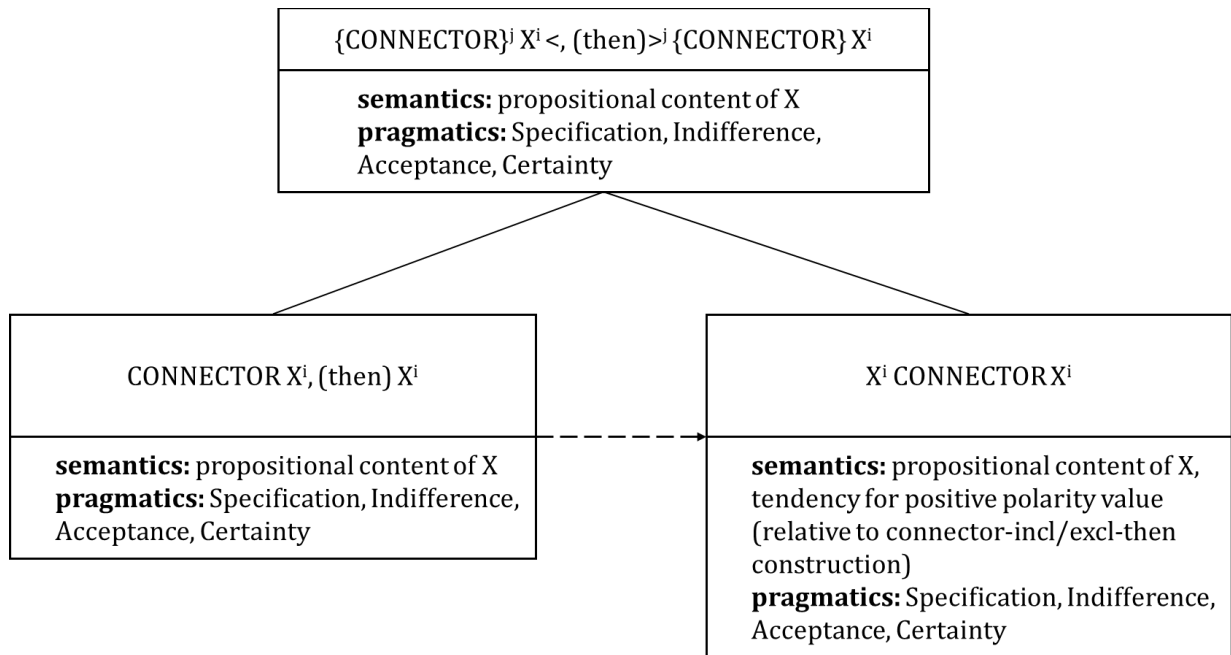


Figure 11 RQ 3 Uppermost Level of the Pleonastic Conditional Network

The two allostructions are connected to the constructeme via inheritance links. However, they are not connected to each other via a horizontal link. Perek (2015: 152) argues that this is the benefit of using the concepts of constructeme and allostruction as it relies only on the more widely accepted taxonomic link between constructions on different levels of abstractness. The two allostruction are thus not horizontally linked but linked “via a common ‘supercategory’” (Cappelle 2006: 19). The horizontal arrow between the two allostructions represents a uni- rather than bidirectional relation between the two elements – a distinction established by Langacker (1987). A bidirectional relation would indicate that “the speaker perceives the similarity of each element to the other without attributing primacy to either one” (Langacker 1987: 380). This, however, is not the case for the pleonastic conditional allostructions. The relation between the two elements is unidirectional because one is perceived as the prototype while the other is perceived as the peripheral element. Given that the connector-incl/excl-then construction is considerably more frequent than the connector-reverse construction (see Figure 5), the connector-incl/excl-then construction can be considered prototypical, while the connector-reverse construction is the more marked peripheral element.

For the sake of completeness, mention needs to be made that, using the idea of subpart links as discussed in section 2.2, postulating the existence of such a horizontal link between the two lower-level constructions would be valid nevertheless, as they show “partial similarities in their respective forms and meanings” (Diessel & Hilpert 2016: 60). The constructions are undeniably similar with regards to the formal and semantic identity of antecedent and consequent as well as pragmatic function. Moreover, the two constructions are situated on the same level of abstractness, namely on the second most abstract level of the pleonastic conditional network. However, what remains to be investigated is whether the open connector slot in these two constructions can be filled by the same expressions or whether the slot becomes idiosyncratically specified in the less abstract allostructions.

The postulation of distinct connector-incl/excl-then and connector-reverse constructions might mislead one to argue that they represent a contradiction to Goldberg’s principle of no synonymy. Goldberg (1995: 67) argues that “[i]f two constructions are syntactically distinct, they must be semantically or pragmatically distinct”. While the constructions as presented in Figure 11 appear to only be formally distinct, this is not the case albeit admittedly not visible in the network sketch. Although the constructions share the same semantic properties (with exception of the information on polarity value provided), the distribution of pragmatic categories is not identical, and hence, allows to maintain that they are pragmatically distinct. The table provided below aims to demonstrate the difference in distribution.²³

Construction/ Pragmatic Function	Specification	Indifference	Acceptance	Certainty	
connector- incl/excl-then construction	9.73%	12.62%	38.59%	39.05%	100.00%
reverse construction	5.97%	10.45%	62.69%	20.90%	100.00%

Table 14 RQ 3 Pragmatic Category Distribution Connector-Incl/Excl-Then vs. Connector-Reverse Construction

Table 14 demonstrates that while the connector-incl/excl-then construction is used in almost equal shares to express notions of acceptance and certainty, the connector-reverse

²³ Note that Table 14 shows the percentages for each pragmatic function relative to the total number of tokens that could be sorted into a distinct category. In other words, miscellaneous tokens are excluded.

construction shows a clear tendency to be used to convey a notion of acceptance. Although the data for the connector-reverse construction needs to be treated with caution due to the relatively low number of tokens (a total of 67), it nevertheless shows that the pragmatic functions of the constructions are distinct.

7.2 Daughters of the Connector-Incl/Excl-Then Construction

The connector-incl/excl-then construction has two daughter nodes, namely the connector-incl-then and the connector-excl-then construction, as shown in the following sketch.

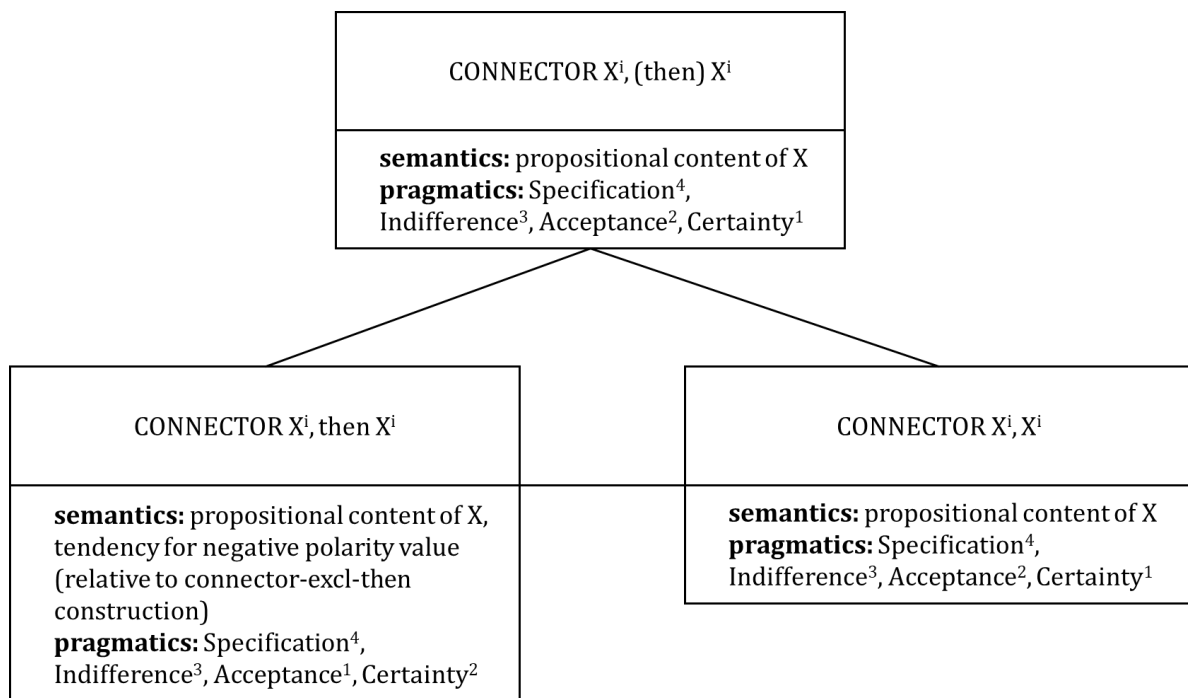


Figure 12 RQ 3 Connector-Incl/Excl-Then Network

The top node in the network shown in Figure 12 is identical to the connector-incl/excl-then node presented above with exception to the indexing found on the meaning side of the construction. Henceforth, indices with regard to pragmatic characteristics are used to represent the ordinal frequency with which a function occurs, from most frequent (1) to least frequent (4), whenever possible. The indexing shows that the connector-incl-then and the connector-excl-then construction are distinct in their distribution of pragmatic functions, e.g. the connector-excl-then construction is more often found denoting notions

of certainty.²⁴ The two constructions show clear similarities with regard to form and function and are therefore horizontally connected.

The identity in order of most to least frequent pragmatic functions of the more general connector-incl/excl-then construction and its daughter node connector-excl-then is driven by the high number of constructs of the daughter node (a total of 1443) – in particular, when compared to the number of constructs of its sister, the connector-incl-then construction (a total of only 78). The reader is reminded that the network is constructed from the bottom up and frequency is taken into account when doing so. One needs to consider that the data for the constructions and their pragmatic functions is not exhaustive because, as has been mentioned previously, not all connectors, but only *if* and *when*, are investigated in the empirical research which provides the basis for this sketch. However, should further research incorporating all possible connectors also indicate that the abstract connector-incl/excl-then and its daughter, the connector-excl-then construction, are similar with regard to the distribution of pragmatic functions, the postulation of the more abstract node would need to be reconsidered in order not to violate the principle of no synonymy. In further consequence, the constructions that are presented as daughters of the connector-incl/excl-then construction (see Figure 12) would then be located on the same level of abstractness as the connector-reverse construction.

7.3 Sisters at the Lowest Level of the Pleonastic Conditional Network

The lowest and thus least abstract nodes in the hierarchy of the pleonastic conditional network constitute the constructions for each connector-specific syntactic variant as discussed and presented in Table 13.

The empirical findings allow to postulate two daughter nodes of the connector-incl-then construction, in which the open connector slot is filled with *if* and *when* respectively.

²⁴ While the nodes provided in the sketches only include the ranking from most to least frequent pragmatic function for each node, the differences in percentages can be of interest as well. For example, while SPECIFICATION is the least frequent function observed with both constructions, the percentage only amounts to less than 4% for the connector-incl-then construction but to over 10% for the connector-excl-then construction.

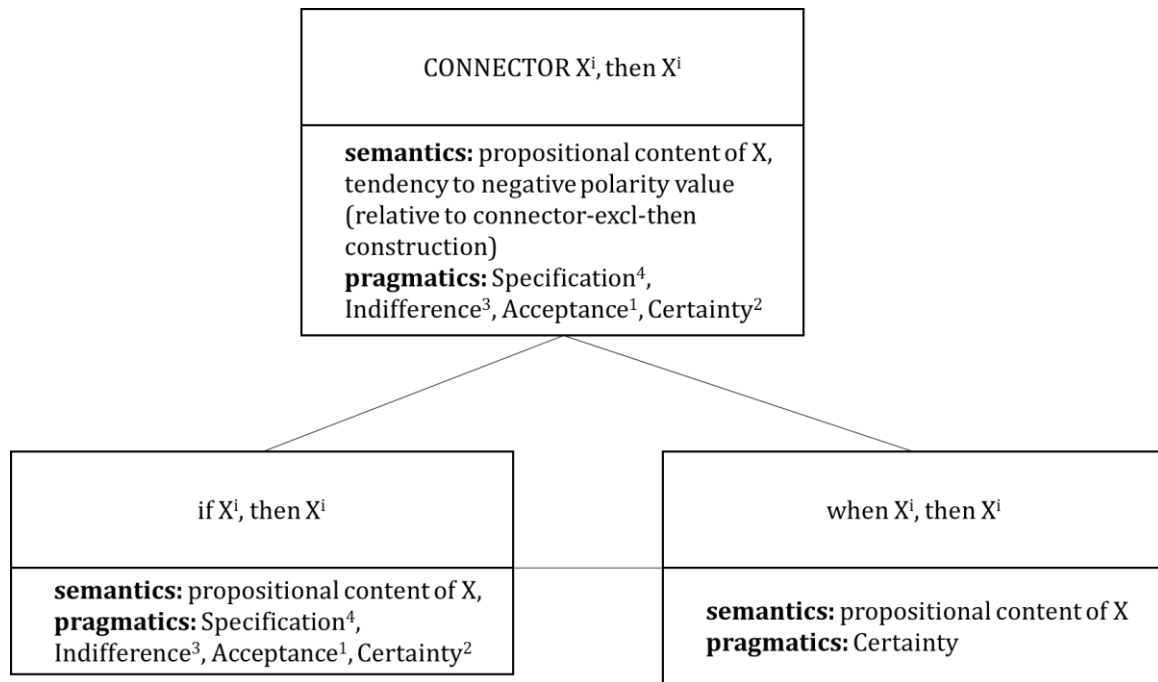


Figure 13 RQ 3 Connector-Incl-Then Network

Figure 13 shows the connector-incl-then construction and its daughters the if-incl-then and the when-incl-then construction. The when-incl-then construction is only observed with the category CERTAINTY. The construction thus appears to only inherit one pragmatic function from its mother unlike its sister. However, given the extremely low number of constructs investigated for this construction (only 2 were detected in the data), see example (109), the results cannot be considered robust. Consequently, the distribution of pragmatic functions in the mother node is driven by the constructs of the if-incl-then construction which explains the almost-identity in pragmatic characteristics between the mother and daughter node.

(109) **When you're gifted, then you're gifted.** (TV Corpus)

The extremely low number of occurrences of this construction might also be an indicator for it not being a construction at all. In other words, there exists a possibility that speakers use the more abstract connector-incl-then construction to form when-incl-then pleonastic conditionals, rather than using the more specified when-incl-then template. The question that arises in the course of this discussion is how representative of the speech community the data truly is. Assuming that it is perfectly representative, one would have to conclude that when-incl-then pleonastic conditionals are not frequent enough to be considered to be formed from a when-incl-then template and therefore the when-incl-then pattern would be granted constructional status. However, assuming that the data is not perfectly

representative, one would maintain that, consequently, neither is the recorded frequency for when-incl-then pleonastic conditionals and hence there still exists the possibility that these sentences are formed from a more specified when-incl-then pleonastic conditional construction. As the data shows that the when-incl-then construction functions to convey a notion of certainty in both recorded examples, this might be an indicator for pragmatic specialization, and I therefore postulate it as a daughter node of the abstract connector-incl-then construction until sufficient evidence against such a postulation can be provided.

Like the connector-incl-then construction, the related connector-excl-then construction has two daughter nodes as illustrated in the figure below.

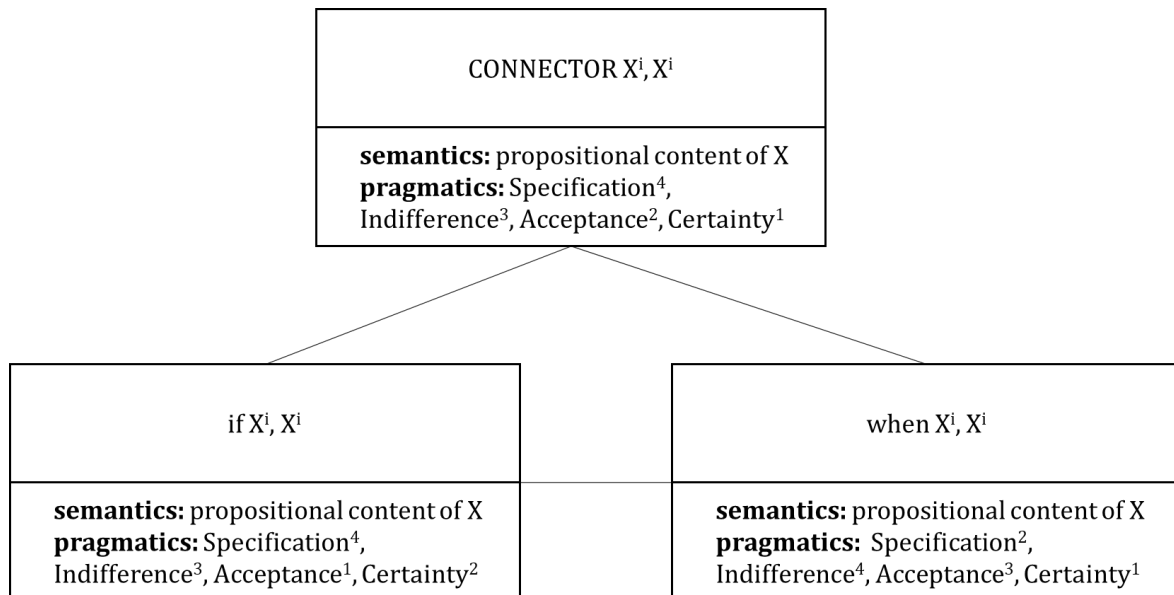


Figure 14 RQ 3 Connector-Excl-Then Network

The connector-excl-then construction shows that the differences in pragmatic function distribution between mother and daughter nodes are considerably distinct when the number of tokens investigated for each daughter construction is relatively balanced.²⁵ While both daughter nodes inherit the possibility to function to express SPECIFICATION, INDIFFERENCE, ACCEPTANCE and CERTAINTY from their mother, there exists a considerable difference in probability to express each function in the daughter nodes. This allows to argue for a specialization of the daughter nodes with regard to pragmatic function. Most

²⁵ The total number of tokens investigated for the if-excl-then and when-excl-then construction amounts to 1169 and 794 respectively.

notably, the when-excl-then function is most often used to specify an aspect of the proposition of all connector-specific syntactic variants.

The research shows that it is possible to form a pleonastic conditional of the connector-excl-then type using two other connectors, namely *even if* and *as long as*. However, the two connectors are extremely infrequent in the data – found only once and twice respectively. Moreover, considering that these examples are not included in the subset investigated for pragmatic function, it is impossible to postulate a tendency towards any pragmatic function. In consequence, one cannot argue for a pragmatic specialization in respect to the connector-excl-then construction and it is assumed that constructs including these connectors are not formed on the basis of a connector-specific template but rather are direct constructs of the abstract connector-excl-then constructions.

Two daughter nodes of the connector-reverse construction are postulated: the if-reverse and the when-reverse construction, as shown in the figure below.

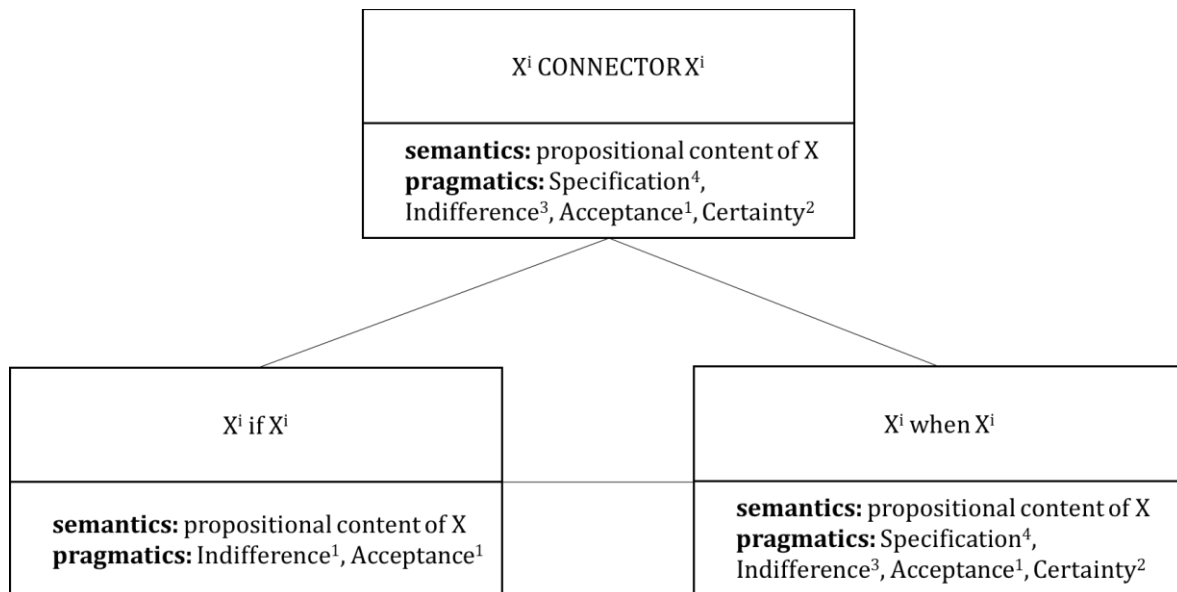


Figure 15 RQ 3 Connector-Reverse Network

The if-reverse daughter node inherits only two pragmatic functions from its more abstract mother, namely those denoting notions of indifference and acceptance which are equally frequent as indicated by identical indices. However, the same issues as discussed above occur in the case of this construction: due to the relatively low number of constructs that could be sorted into a distinct pragmatic group, the result cannot be considered to be robust. However, there exists a possibility that the if-reverse construction exhibits pragmatic specialization and can therefore be postulated as an individual node.

Nevertheless, the low number of constructs for this construction could be interpreted as evidence for these constructs to be formed based on the schema of the abstract connector-reverse construction.

The when-reverse node exhibits the same pragmatic function as its mother which is due to the high frequency of when-reverse constructs relative to if-reverse constructs in the data set. Nevertheless, postulating an abstract mother node is of importance as it allows to form connector-reverse constructions in which the open connector slot is filled by potential other connectors.

Having discussed the individual nodes and relations, the following sketch combines these to illustrate a full sketch of the pleonastic conditional network (Figure 16). To increase readability, information about polarity value tendencies has been omitted. Note that the connector-reverse construction is positioned at the same level of abstractness as the connector-incl/excl-then construction. However, were one to argue that it is not permissible to postulate a connector-incl/excl-then construction, the connector-reverse construction would be located on the same level of abstractness as the connector-incl-then and the connector-excl-then construction. In such a case, these three constructions would still be connected horizontally, as they share formal as well as functional properties. Constructs for each node at the lowest level of the pleonastic conditional network are presented below the respective construction in cursive.

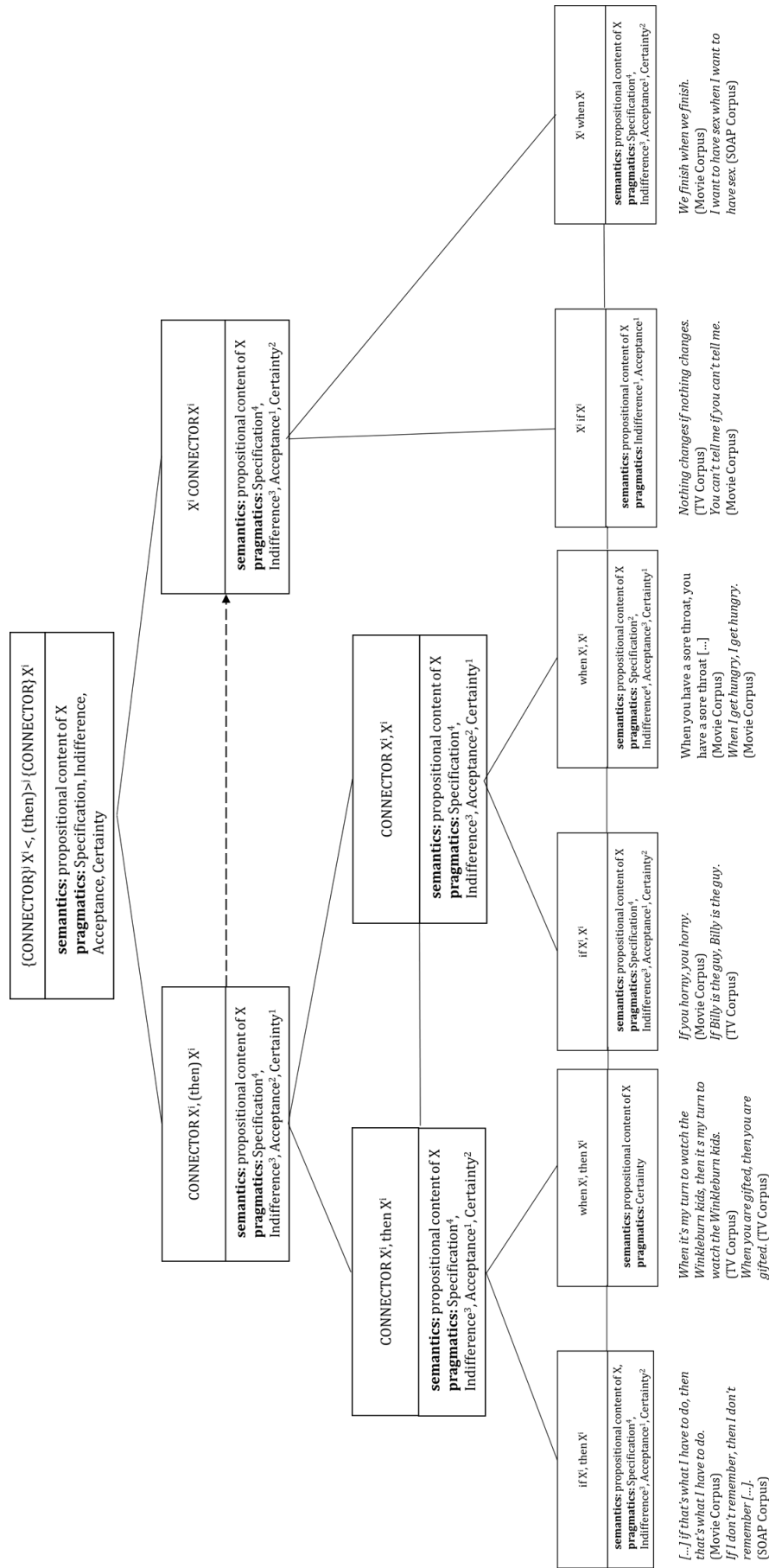


Figure 16 RQ 3 Pleonastic Conditional Network

Before finally answering the question how pleonastic conditionals are related to non-pleonastic conditionals mention needs to be made of the [when N^i BE^j right, N^i BE^j right]-construction, see example (110) to (112). The open noun slots in the antecedent and consequent of this construction are identical with regard to form and meaning as indicated by the index i , as is the form of the verb *to be* indicated by the index j .

(110) **When you are right, you are right.** (Movie Corpus)

(111) Hey, **when he's right, he's right.** (TV Corpus)

(112) I know, **but when it's right, it's right.** (TV Corpus)

This construction is highly frequent in the data set. The total token frequency amounts to 218. Due to its high frequency of occurrence, it can be argued that this construction has been entrenched as a whole and is consequently retrieved as a whole by the speaker. If a sequence of units is encountered with sufficient frequency, it is likely to be represented as one single unit and in further consequence, is accessed as a chunk rather than multiple individual units (Bybee 2007: 13). Consequently, the [when N^i BE^j right, N^i BE^j right]-construction can be considered an individual node situated one level below the more abstract when-excl-then construction.

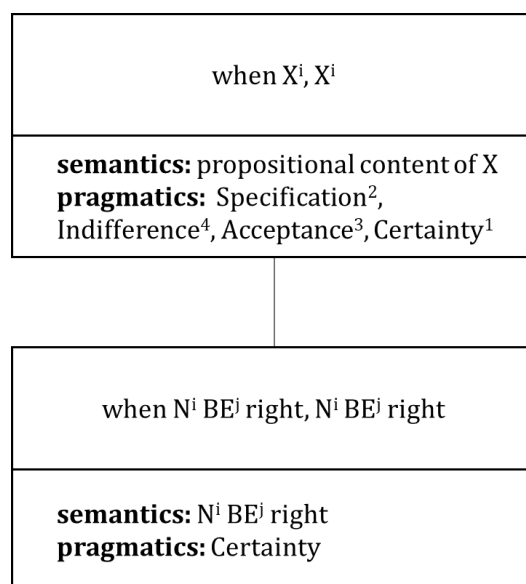


Figure 17 [when N^i BE^j right, N^i BE^j right]-Construction

The [when N^i BE^j right, N^i BE^j right]-construction inherits part of its form and meaning from the when-excl-then construction. However, virtually all instances of the [when N^i BE^j right, N^i BE^j right]-construction function to denote a notion of certainty – a characteristic which further supports the postulation of an individual node for this construction as this

is evidence for pragmatic specialization. Therefore, instances of the [when N^i BE j right, N^i BE j right]-construction should be excluded when investigating the syntactic variation distribution of pleonastic conditionals in future research.

7.4 The Unobserved Conditionality of Pleonastic Conditionals

As has been shown in section 3.4 when discussing pleonastic conditionals from a theoretical perspective, there appears to be little functional resemblance between pleonastic conditionals and non-pleonastic conditionals. Not only is the truth-table of a pleonastic conditional severely different from that of a regular conditional but what is more, pleonastic conditionals cannot be sorted into any of the common conditional categories postulated in the literature thus far.

The difference in the distributions of syntactic variants between pleonastic conditionals and if-conditionals provides further evidence for the two groups being distinct from one another. The empirical findings have shown that pleonastic conditionals show different syntactic tendencies than non-pleonastic conditionals, occurring less frequently in the connector-reverse syntactic pattern (see Figure 5). Nevertheless, it is undeniable that non-pleonastic conditionals and pleonastic conditionals are related in form to some extent, given the intersection of possible connectors that can fill the open connector slot and the existence of an open antecedent and consequent slot.

Moreover, while it cannot be suspended that regular conditionals never function to convey any of the pragmatic notions observed with pleonastic conditionals, consider the biscuit conditional in (113), which functions to convey a notion of acceptance. It is safe to argue that this potential lies mostly in biscuit conditionals as the primary meaning of a biscuit conditional is not conditional.

- (113) If you still want to, we can see him Wednesday night at the funeral home.
(COCA)

Consequently, while there are overlaps between the pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals and non-pleonastic conditionals, these are marginal at best (considering that the primary function of a pleonastic conditional is never to convey conditionality). Hence, I argue that pleonastic conditionals are not true conditionals with regard to their meaning.

The question that thus arises is whether pleonastic conditionals inherit their conditional form from a very abstract conditional construction, which not only includes all syntactic variations but also all possible functions. This, however, is unlikely as the mother

construction must be underspecified with regards to word order, connector, as well as meaning of antecedent and consequent. Consider that the form side of this construction would have to include information about the (non-)identity of antecedent and consequent. Moreover, it is almost impossible to generalize over the meaning of pleonastic and non-pleonastic conditionals given that the overlap is marginal at best. Hence, I am inclined to argue that there exists a horizontal link between the abstract pleonastic conditional construction and the non-pleonastic conditional construction, approximately exhibiting the following form: $[\{\text{CONNECTOR}\}^i \{X\}^i \{Y\}^j <, (\text{then})>^i \{\text{CONNECTOR}\}^j \{Y\}^i \{X\}^j]$. Note that in this case the antecedent and the consequent are represented using different letters because they are not identical in form or meaning. Moreover, the order in which antecedent and consequent are presented is different depending on which connector slot is filled. This is indicated by the different indices in the form. Nevertheless, the constructions are clearly related in form albeit only marginally in meaning and are hence positioned on the same levels of abstractness and connected via a horizontal link.

8. Conclusion

This paper has aimed to investigate formal and functional features of pleonastic conditionals in the English language by an empirical corpus study extracting data from the TV Corpus, Movie Corpus, and SOAP corpus. The phenomenon was analyzed from a Construction Grammar perspective.

When discussing the theoretical account of the construction of interest, it has been shown that using the material theory to approach pleonastic conditionals renders interesting insights into its semantics and pragmatics. Given that the antecedent and consequent are identical in form and meaning, the truth value must be identical as well. Further taking into account the truth table for material implication, one arrives at the conclusion that pleonastic conditionals are logical tautologies. In other words, they are always logically true. A speaker can therefore never flaunt the maxim of quality using this construction. However, if the meaning of pleonastic conditional were to only be considered the proposition of the antecedent/consequent, then any user would flaunt the maxim of quantity using such a construction. Consequently, the meaning of pleonastic conditionals must encompass more than the propositional content of the antecedent/consequent. The empirical research conducted has, thus, aimed to identify the pragmatic functions of the pleonastic conditional construction.

With regard to form, the study has shown that pleonastic conditionals are more likely to occur in the connector-excl-then syntactic variation and less likely to occur in the connector-reverse pattern than other non-pleonastic conditionals. Moreover, the construction is most often used with the connectors *if* and *when*. With regard to function, it has been established that if-pleonastic conditionals exhibit a tendency for positive polarity value, while when-pleonastic conditionals exhibit a tendency for a negative polarity value. Moreover, four pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals have been established and discussed: SPECIFICATION, INDIFFERENCE, ACCEPTANCE and CERTAINTY. Each pragmatic functions appears to prefer a particular syntactic environment. The data allows to conclude that pleonastic conditionals are most frequently used to express notions of acceptance or certainty.

The constructional analysis in section 7 of this thesis has attempted to sketch the pleonastic conditional network and depicts how the individual nodes are vertically and horizontally connected. The analysis shows that on the uppermost and thus most abstract

level of the pleonastic conditional network, there exists a pleonastic conditional constructeme which is underspecified with regard to word order. This constructeme formally licenses all three syntactic variants and includes all four established pragmatic functions on the meaning-side. The constructeme passes on formal and functional characteristics to two allostructions, namely the connector-incl/excl-then and the connector-reverse construction. These allostructions are connected via their shared constructeme, which generalizes over the meaning-side of both allostructions. I maintain that the pleonastic conditional constructeme is horizontally linked to an abstract (non-pleonastic) conditional node. I argue against the existence of a common mother node as it would be impossible to generalize over the meaning of pleonastic and non-pleonastic conditionals. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the two abstract nodes are related given the formal similarities.

As has been mentioned throughout the paper, the methodology used in this thesis can be enhanced by increasing the precision of the connector-reverse query. Moreover, to increase the validity and robustness of the conclusions drawn, bigger or more data sets should be included, such as the Corpus of Contemporary American English. In order to allow for a better comparison between pleonastic and non-pleonastic conditionals, a sample of non-pleonastic conditionals, similar in size to the one used for pleonastic conditionals, should be analyzed according to the same criteria.

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Abstract English

This thesis investigates so-called ‘Pleonastic Conditionals’ in Present Day English (e.g. *Hey, when you are cool, you are cool.* (TV Corpus)). These constructions can roughly be defined as conditionals in which the antecedent and consequent are formally and semantically identical. This type of conditional has only received limited attention in the literature. To fill this research gap, this usage-based thesis uses offline text data from three corpora (the Movie Corpus (Davies 2019), TV Corpus (Davies 2019), and Corpus of American Soap Operas (Davies 2011)) to empirically investigate idiosyncratic formal and functional tendencies of the pleonastic conditional construction qualitatively and quantitatively. Firstly, it is shown that if-pleonastic conditionals exhibit a preference for a particular syntactic variation in which the if-clause precedes the conclusion, and the conjunction *then* is omitted. Secondly, the data provides evidence for a tendency of the pleonastic conditional construction to be used with the connectors *if* and *when*. Thirdly, the study offers an analysis of the polarity value of pleonastic conditionals. It shows that the distribution of polarity value differs according to syntactic pattern and connector. Lastly, an investigation of the pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals concludes that they are most commonly used to express notions of acceptance or certainty. The results are interpreted using the framework of Usage Based Cognitive Construction Grammar (UCCxG) and the study provides an informed constructional sketch of the Pleonastic Conditional network and discusses if and how it can be integrated into a larger network of conditional constructions.

Abstract Deutsch

Diese Arbeit untersucht sogenannte „pleonastischen Konditionale“ in der englischen Sprache (z. B. *Hey, when you're cool, you're cool.* (TV Corpus)). Diese Konstruktionen lassen sich grob als Konditionale definieren, bei denen Bedingungsteil und Aktionsteil formal und semantisch ident sind. Diese Art von Conditional hat in der Literatur bisher nur wenig Beachtung gefunden. Um diese Forschungslücke zu schließen, verwendet diese Arbeit Offline-Textdaten aus drei Korpora (The Movie Corpus (Davies 2019), TV Corpus (Davies 2019) und Corpus of American Soap Operas (Davies 2011)), um idiosynkratische formale und funktionellen Tendenzen der pleonastischen Konditionalkonstruktion qualitativ und quantitativ empirisch zu untersuchen. Zunächst wird gezeigt, dass if-pleonastische Konditionale eine Präferenz für eine bestimmte syntaktische Variante aufweisen, bei der der Bedingungsteil dem Aktionsteil vorangeht und das Adverb *then* ausgespart wird. Zweitens, liefern die Daten Hinweise auf eine Tendenz der Pleonastischen Konditionalkonstruktion mit den Konnektoren *if* und *when* vorzukommen. Drittens, bietet die Studie eine Analyse des Polaritätswerts von pleonastischen Konditionalen. Es wird gezeigt, dass sich unterschiedliche Verteilungen des Polaritätswerts zeigen je nach syntaktischer Variation und Konnektor. Schließlich kommt eine Untersuchung der pragmatischen Funktionen pleonastischer Konditionale zu dem Schluss, dass die Konstruktion am häufigsten verwendet wird, um eine Form von Akzeptanz oder Gewissheit auszudrücken. Die Ergebnisse werden im Rahmen der Usage Based Cognitive Construction Grammar (UCCxG) interpretiert. Die Studie liefert eine fundierte Konstruktionsskizze des Pleonastischen Conditional Netzwerks und diskutiert, ob und wie es in ein größeres Netzwerk konditionaler Konstruktionen integriert werden kann.