CHAPTER II: THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF IF-CONDITIONALS IN ENGLISH

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NALS IN ENGLISH

1. Introduction

Conditional sentences in English present a variety of

structures. Generally a conditional sentence is a complex

sentence with a main clause and a subordinate clause expressing

condition. The subordinate clause is an adverbial clause; it may

be a finite clause, nonfinite clause or a verbless clause.

Sometimes the conditional sentence does not have an overt

adverbial clause at all. The condition is then said to be

suppressed. Two important grammatical properties have been

recognised to be associated with conditional sentences. They

are 'mood' and 'tense'. Both mood and tense systems in English

are complex. Firstly, these two grammatical categories are not

always expressed by morphological changes or variations. The

only surviving marker of mood is in the subjunctive. Even the

subjunctive form of the verb is being replaced by modal

auxiliaries. There are only two tense forms of the verb in

English — past and non-past. The so called future tense has

no morphological form, it is expressed with the help of auxilia-

ries and/or adverbials. Aspects — progressive and perfective —

are expressed with the help of a combination of auxiliaries

and nonfinite forms of the verb. The most striking feature

of the verb system in English is that there is no necessary

one-to-one equivalence between time and tense (Hornby, 1954).
However, there are restrictions on the tense forms of verbs
that can occur in the clauses of complex or compound sentences.
There are also restrictions on the tense forms of verbs that can
occur in the sentences that make up a discourse. This phenomenon is
generally known as 'sequence of tense'.

So, two grammatical features, mood and tense, are
associated with the structure of conditional sentences in English.

Coming to the 'function' of conditional sentences, its
main function is obviously to express a 'condition', and the
statement of event in or under the specified condition. Grammarians
have identified several different kinds of conditions. The most
common types are, real and unreal conditions, unreal conditions
are further subdivided into theoretical and factual (Leech, 1971).
Another classification of conditionals recognizes three different
types — open condition, rejected condition and imaginary
condition (Wood, 1965). Various other labels such as unfulfilled,
counterfactual and hypothetical and so on have also been used to
describe types of conditions in terms of their function. If is not
the only marker of conditional sentences. Other items like 'unless',
'except', 'without', 'suppose', 'provided' and 'in case'
(Jespersen, 1954); 'although', 'imagine', 'if only' and
'eventhough' (Leech, 1971) are also used. If, however, is the
most obvious marker of conditional clauses. It may be mentioned

that _if_ is also used in reported questions.

In the following sections we shall attempt a short review of literature on _if_-conditional constructions.

2. Jespersen

Jespersen's (1931) is perhaps the most comprehensive and the most influential grammar of modern English. His analysis of _if_-constructions is scattered over different volumes under different heads. We have noted that conditional constructions are associated with tense and mood. Jespersen illustrates his grammatical analysis with examples from Old English to Modern English. Considering 'mood' in English, he notes that the distinction between the subjunctive and the indicative form of the verb has practically disappeared in modern English. The only verb which still retains this distinction is the verb _be_. Even in the case of this verb the distinction gets neutralized in the case of past plural i.e., _were_. He has treated the use of _was_ and _were_ in conditional constructions extensively. According to him, "There is now a tendency towards an emphatic use of _was_ referring to the actual past, while _were_ refers to imaginative or unreal, generally with an implication of negation." (Jespersen, 1954, VII: 629). The present subjunctive is also frequent in conditional clauses but they do not refer to conditions contrary to fact implying a negation. In all other cases the indicative mood is used in conditional clauses.

It was mentioned by way of introduction that time and tense in English do not have one-to-one equivalence. As a rule, the present tense form of the verb indicates either present or future time or is neutral as to time reference. Similarly, the past tense form refers to past events. But both these forms, present and past, are used for a variety of time references other than these also. Wood (1965) illustrates this as follows:

1) We shall not go out, if it <u>rains</u>.

   (Future time reference)

2) If I <u>had</u> time, I should visit the exhibition

   (Present time reference = I do not have the time)

3) If you <u>were</u> attacked by bandit ... (imaginary)

   (Wood, 1965: 101-103)

Sometimes past subjunctive is used for imaginary conditions, e.g.:

If I <u>were</u> a millionaire, I would give generously to good causes. (p. 103)

Jespersen has discussed imaginative use of tenses in great detail. According to him "Verbal forms which are primarily used to indicate past time are often used without that temporal import to denote <u>unreality, impossibility, improbability</u> or <u>non-fulfilment</u>. In such cases we speak of imaginative tenses." (Jespersen, IV: 112). Among the examples he has given, the

following are of _if_-clauses:

> If I _had_ money enough, I should pay you.
>
> You speak as if I _had_ money enough. (p. 113)

Both these sentences are examples of rejected condition or condition contrary to fact. They imply that 'I do not have the money'. In other words, the proposition is imaginary. The meaning of time in this past tense form is completely removed as we can see that If I had money enough now and If I had money enough tomorrow (p. 114) are both possible, referring to the present and the future respectively. But without the adverbs now and tomorrow the past tense has no time indication.

Coming to the form of the verb in the main clause, Jespersen discusses the use of past forms of the modals in great detail. According to him, the modals could and would are often used to indicate rejected condition. Also could is used in questions to convey politeness. Other modals like might, should and must also occur in the main clause. These forms are required in the main clause in all the cases where the if-clause contains the past form.

The imaginative use of tenses can be seen in the case of pluperfect also. It is used to refer to some past event which is represented as not having taken place. For example:

If he **had not married** her, he would have

been happier. (p. 125)

It is also used to refer to unrealized wishes in the

past, e.g.:

If I had only known ... (p. 125)

The most interesting point that Jespersen makes is that

"Sometimes **if**, followed by **was** does not really mean a condition":

'If the offer was rejected, it was because people

distrusted him' (p. 134)

is a rhetorical device of expressing the reason why the offer

was rejected.

An **if**-clause may also serve to point out a contrast in

two statements which are equally true. For example:

1) If I was a bad carpenter, I was a worse tailor.

2) If her mouth was rather large, everybody allowed

that her smile was charming.

3) If Socrates was as innocent as this at the age of

seventy, it may be imagined how innocent Joan was

at the age of seventeen. (p. 134)

This observation of Jespersen's viz., that sometimes **if**

followed by **was** does not really mean a condition, is a very

important observation which has perhaps missed the attention of

many grammarians. This idea seems to have been noticed by Bell
(1974) and Declerck (1984) in different forms of if-conditional
constructions.

3. Leech

Leech (1971) distinguishes between real and unreal
conditions and indicates the most common grammatical markers
of these different types. The following table shows the
grammatical markers of real conditions:

	Past Time	Present Time	Future Time
Real	Past Tense Pres. Perf. Tense Past Perf. Tense	non-perf. Pres. Tense	Will/Shall + Infin. etc. non-pref. Pres. Tense.

(Reproduced from Leech, 1971: 115)

According to him, in real conditions both the main clause
and the dependent clause are truth-neutral. Although the most
common type of real condition refers to the future, there are
no special restrictions on the time reference of conditions or
on the tense forms used to express them. He gives the following
examples to illustrate this:

If you're happy, you make others happy.

(Simple Present + Simple Present)

If John told you that last night, he was lying.

(Simple Past + Simple Past)

If my son is a genius, I've underestimated him.

(Simple Present + Present Perfect)

If they left at nine, they will certainly be

home by midnight.

(Simple Past + will 'future')

(Leech, 1971: 110-111)

All the sentences above are expressive of factual
meaning. Leech also admits of real conditionals expressing
theoretical meaning with the help of present subjunctive or
should + infinitive constructions.

The following are his examples:

1) If the server serve a fault twice, he shall

   lose a point.

2) If you should hear news of them, please let

   me know. (p. 111)

Thus real conditions may express both factual and
theoretical meaning.

Similarly, he has indicated grammatical markers of unreal conditionals thus:

	Past Time	Present Time	Future Time
Unreal	(1) <u>Would</u>/<u>Should</u> + Perf.Infin.	(1) <u>Would</u>/<u>Should</u> + Infin.	(1) <u>Would</u>/<u>Should</u> + Infin. etc.
	(2) Past Perif. Tense	(2) non-Pref. Past Tense	(2) non-Perf. Past Tense
	(3) <u>Was</u>/<u>Were</u> to + Perf. Infin.	(3) <u>Was</u>/<u>Were</u> to + non-Perf. Infin.	(3) <u>Was</u>/<u>Were</u> to + non-Perf. Infin.

(Reproduced from Leech, 1971: 116)

The items against the numerals (1), (2) and (3) are explained as follows:

1) <u>Would</u>/<u>Should</u> + Infinitive occur (a) in main clauses; (b) in reported speech clauses which would be main clauses if converted into direct speech; (c) but not in any clause (main or dependent) containing a modal auxiliary, as modals have no infinitive form. These are illustrated as follows:

(1a)   I <u>would love</u> to live abroad.

        (if I had the money).

(1b)   She claims that she <u>would love</u> to love abroad .

(1c)   *If I could drive a car, I <u>would</u> <u>can</u> teach you. (p. 114)

2) Past Tense (Indicative or Subjunctive) occurs (a) in other

dependent clauses; (b) in any clause containing a modal auxiliary. These are illustrated as follows:

(2a)   He talks as if he was/were my rich uncle.

(2b)   If I could drive a car, I could teach you. (p. 114)

3) The Past Tense construction was/were to + Infinitive (Indicative) or were to + Infinitive (Subjunctive) as an alternative to the plain Past Tense occurs (a) in conditional clauses; (b) in clauses following suppose/imagine; (c) but not (at least not in BE) with 'state verbs'.

These are illustrated as follows:

(3a)   If you were to learn Spanish, you might get a better job.

(3b)   Just suppose that crocodile were to escape!

(3c)   *If you were to know Spanish, you might get a better job.

(p. 114)

Leech observes that in unreal conditions there is no difference between the expression of present and of future time.

He illustrates this with the following examples in which present and future adverbials are inserted:

If you were happy today, you would make others happy.

If you were happy next week, you would make others happy.

(p. 116)

Leech considers that the distinguishing mark of hypothetical meaning is its implication of <u>negative truth-commitment</u>. When hypothetical conditionals have reference to imaginary past events they normally have the categorical sense of '<u>contrary to</u> fact', e.g.:

> If your father had caught us, he would have been furious
> (... but in fact he didn't). (p.116)

But non-past imaginary happenings do not usually have such uncompromising implications. In the present, the sense is not so much contrary to fact as <u>contrary to assumption</u>; in the future, it is weakened further to <u>contrary to expectation</u>:

Present Time Reference:

> If you really loved me you would buy me everything I want.
> (... but I <u>assume</u> that you do not love me)

Future Time Reference:

> If it snowed tomorrow, the match would have to be
> cancelled (... but I don't <u>expect</u> it will snow). (p. 117)

Thus it would appear that Leech's 'real' condition corresponds to <u>open</u> condition (sub-divided into theoretical and factual) and his 'hypothetical' includes both <u>hypothetical</u> and <u>counter-factual</u>. He has also used the term imaginary <u>happenings</u> without restricting it to past tense form, as Jespersen has done.

4. Coates

Coates (1983) has devoted a whole chapter to the consideration of hypothetical modals in her corpus-based description of the semantics of the modal auxiliaries in English. She has analysed all the modal auxiliaries that occur with hypothetical meaning in the LOB corpus and the Survey of English data of spoken English. Following Leech, she has classified conditions into 'real' and 'unreal' conditions. Her study is restricted to modal auxiliaries, and therefore, she considers only those conditional sentences in which modal auxiliaries occur.

According to her, would, should, could and might all express hypothetical meaning but of these would is the most common. Again like Leech, she demonstrates that these modals are back-shifted forms like in the case of reported speech and they express hypothetical meaning. When transformed into the present tense forms these modals will have the simple real conditional meanings. For example:

God knows what would happen to me if I ever got caught.
(hypothetical condition),

when transformed into:

God knows what will happen to me if I ever get caught.

will become a real condition (Coates, 1983: 213). She finds that the modals must, should, ought, can, may, will and shall all occur in if-clauses of real condition. The following are some

of the examples:

> If that (i.e., disease) <u>should</u> happen the entire
>
> crop is lost ...
>
> If it (i.e., school) <u>must</u> make a choice ... there is no
>
> question as to what it will have to choose.
>
> If one <u>ought to</u> have conscription for labour in Peace,
>
> why not conscription for war? (p. 224)
>
> In the case of 'unreal conditions' only the three modals

<u>could</u>, <u>might</u> and <u>would</u> occur in if-clauses.

5. <u>Quirk et al.</u>

A Grammar of Contemporary English (Quirk <u>et al</u>., 1972)
has been recognized as the most influential grammar in recent
times. It would, therefore, be worth noting what this grammar
has to say about conditional constructions.

To begin with, it recognizes two classes of clauses —
conditional and concessive — like:

> If you treat her kindly, she will do anything for you.
>
> and
>
> Although he hadn't eaten for days, he looked strong
>
> and healthy. (Quirk <u>et al</u>., 1972: 745)

There is very often an overlap between conditional and

concessive clauses which are called conditional-concessive clauses. For example:

Even if he went down on bended knees I would not forgive him. (p. 746)

For the rest the conditional clauses are classified into two types -- 'open' and 'hypothetical' -- and a further distinction is made between hypothetical conditionals in the present and future time on the one hand and past time on the other. The grammatical markers of hypothetical if-clauses are past tense forms of the verb (including was/were + Infinitive). The grammatical markers of hypothetical conditions referring to past time are past perfect tense of the verb. This gives us the popular three-fold classification of conditionals into

(1) open condition

(2) hypothetical condition and

(3) counterfactual condition.

6. Grammars for Foreign Students

Most grammars of English for foreign students pay special attention to the structure and function of conditional clauses. The three-fold classification mentioned earlier under Quirk et al. (1972) is the most common form in which the conditionals are considered. As we have seen earlier the functions of conditional sentences are very complex and different scholars

have characterized them in different ways. We shall note below
the treatment of conditionals in two well-known grammars for
foreign students.

Eckersley and Eckersley (1960) distinguish between two
types of conditional clauses:

(1) open conditions

(2) hypothetical conditions, suppositions.

The tenses permissible in the two clauses of the two types of
conditionals are elaborated and their functions are described.

The following are some of the examples of type 1:

Open Conditions (Type 1)

If John works hard he will pass his examination.

If you are right, then I am wrong.

If you meet Henry, tell him I want to see him.

If the train should be late, what will you do?

If I said that, I was mistaken.

If you have done your work you may go to the cinema.

(Eckersley and Eckersley, 1960: 347)

Hypothetical Conditions (Type 2)

Hypothetical conditions are treated under three separate
heads — present time, future time and past time. While the

present and future time types correspond to simple hypothetical conditionals the past time type corresponds to counterfactual. The following are some of the examples:

Present Time

If Henry were here he would know the answer.

If I had the money, I should buy a new car.

(p. 349)

Future Time

If Richard worked hard next term, he would pass the examination.

If you went there, you would see what I mean.

(p. 350)

Past Time

Hypothetical sentences in the past time usually imply a negative meaning, that is to say they are counterfactual because we can always know the facts about past. For example:

If you had asked me, I would have helped you.
(but you didn't ask me)

I should never have done that work if you had not helped me.

If you hadn't told me about it, I might never have

gone to see it.

(p. 350)

In conclusion a reference is made to conditions expressed by inversion e.g., 'Had you asked me I would have told you the answer'. (p. 351)

Wood (1965) has three kinds of conditional sentences — open condition, rejected condition and imaginary condition. The open condition corresponds to Eckersley's type 1 however, rejected condition and imaginary condition overlap with the different forms of hypothetical condition. Rejected condition includes all the three hypothetical conditions i.e., referring to present, past and future time. Imaginary condition also has a negative implication. His example is:

If I were a millionaire ... (Wood, 1965: 103)

It appears that there is some overlap between rejected and imaginary condition because there are no distinct grammatical markers to set them apart. In the following examples the first is said to be a rejected condition, while the second an imaginary one:

If I had had the time, I should have visited the exhibition.

and

What would you have done if you had been attacked by

a bandit.

(p. 102-3)

Thus the classification of conditionals based on their function
(meaning) presents problems.

7. Logicians on if-clauses

Language has been of interest not only to linguisticians
but also to philosophers and logicians. While linguisticians have
been predominantly interested in describing the structure and
function (more particularly grammatical function), philosophers
and logicians have been interested in language as an instrument
of thought. Both linguisticians and philosophers have pursued their
goals more or less independently of each other (Dudman, 1984).
However, at least one philosopher (as far as we know) has applied
himself to the linguistic analysis of if-conditional sentences in
English. Bell (1974) has identified some of the facts about if
as part of a theory of if-clauses. He argues that if-clauses are
subordinate adverbial clauses in conditional sentences on the
basis of syntactic analysis and finally points out two problems
with certain sentences containing if-clauses. According to him,
if-clauses in conditional sentences are sentence adverbials as
they can be replaced by other adverbial clauses. For example:

$$\text{Sam smokes pot} \begin{Bmatrix} \text{if} \\ \text{when} \\ \text{because} \end{Bmatrix} \text{he can get it cheap.}$$

(Bell, 1974: 131)

But he says "Although if-clauses usually express conditions or
stipulations relating to the main clause, there are cases where
they do not." His examples are:

> If I may be frank, the man is a fool.
>
> There are biscuits on the table, if you want them.
>
> I was flummoxed, if that's the right word.
>
> (p. 130)

He suggests that "there appear to be two possible explanations of
the occurrence of if-clauses" in these sentences. "One possibility
is that what appears as the main clause in surface structure
originated as embedded under a higher clause which has been
deleted. In this case the if-clause is still regarded as an
adverbial clause, but attached to the original highest S, and not
to the S that appears as surface main clause." (p. 137-38).
However, he feels that in many cases the if-clause is not
adverbial at all, it occurs as a parenthetical sentence.

This observation of Bell's together with similar
observations made by Jespersen points to the need for looking at
if-clauses in English in a more comprehensive way. Most grammarians
have confined their analysis to if-clauses only as components of
conditional sentences. In the process, it would appear that they
have often missed the distinction between conditional sentences
and others containing if-clauses.

8. The Problem of 'will' in if-clauses

Conflicting opinions have been expressed by different grammarians about the function of 'will' (and 'would') in if-conditional clauses. Jespersen (1931) seems to shift his ground in different parts of his work. As Close (1980) has pointed out Jespersen has two interpretations of will + infinitive in the if-clause; in the case of:

If any man will come after me, let him denie himself,

he says that a modern translation of _if any man will_ is _if any man wishes to_, that is, 'will' here is volitional (modal). In the case of:

If he'll only turn out to be a brave, truth-telling
Englishman ... that's all I want,

he says that _will turn_ refers to the future and does not convey volition. However, Jespersen says in Part IV (16.5) that _if it's any use to you_ would be decidedly more natural than _if it will be any use to you_ in:

I will come if it will be any use to you.

Towards the end of Part IV he feels 'troubled' (according to Close, 1980) and concedes that 'will' is quite natural with non-personal subject in:

'I will come if it will be (of) any use to you'.
In support of this he quotes from J.B. Priestley:

Now if all the dresses will be finished by next Monday,
why don't you bring them yourself?

As we have pointed out earlier, Jespersen had recognized
the occurrences of if-clauses in sentences which could not be
strictly fitted into the category of conditional sentences. This
fact was to be identified in more specific terms later by Bell
(1974) and Declerck (1984).

Coming back to the problem of 'will' in if-conditional
clauses Close (1980) argues that 'will' can be a clear marker
of future in certain sentences. He also concedes that 'will' has
the other function, that is of willingness or volition (modal).
After reviewing a number of examples of if-conditionals with
'will', he comes to the following conclusion: Both constructions
if + non-volitional will and if + the will of volition are
basically realizations of assumed predictability as against
assumed future actuality.

R.A. Close has a number of examples of assumed predictability
(pure future) e.g., 'If the slick will come as far as Stavanger,
then of course I must take precautions on a massive scale' (Close,
1980: 103). However, he has not illustrated 'assumed future
predictability' with volition in conditional sentences.

Assumed future actuality is illustrated following earlier
scholars. This is realized by if + infinitive as in the following
examples:

If the slick <u>comes</u> as far as Stavanger, hundreds
of miles of our coast line will be spoiled.

If he <u>isn't</u> here by nine, we will start without him.

(p. 109)

Most handbooks of grammar simply disallow the use of 'will'
as future time marker in if-conditional clauses (e.g., Eckersley
and Eckersley, 1960: 349). They allow only the volitional
(modal) use of 'will'.

Declerck's (1984) is an extensive study of the so-called
exceptional cases of 'will' for futurity in if-clauses. To begin
with, he rejects R.A. Close's hypothesis that the difference
between a normal if-clause such as:

If he comes tomorrow, she will tell him everything.

and

an exceptional case such as:

If the lava will come down as far as this, all these
houses must be evacuated at once.

(p. 280)

is that the first expresses 'assumed future actuality' whereas
the second expresses 'assumed future predictability'.

According to Declerck, the first expresses an open
condition (i.e., the person may or may not come tomorrow) whereas
the second one expresses 'closed condition' (i.e., the speaker

assumes that it is undoubtedly the case that the lava will come

down as far as this). He has argued with explanation that some

of R.A. Close's examples do not conform to his own rule.

Declerck makes a clear distinction between what he calls

'standard conditionals' and others with will and would.

Standard conditionals according to him have the following

characteristics: They are of the cause-effect type: 'if p, then

q'. The occurrence of p is represented as a sufficient condition

for the occurrence of q. Further the condition may be 'open',

'hypothetical' or 'counterfactual' as in the following examples:

Open Condition

> If you answer/*will answer/*are going to answer that
> question, you will win a prize.

Hypothetical

> If you answered/*would answer/*were going to answer
> that question you would win a prize.

Counterfactual

> If you had answered/* would have answered that question
> you would have won a prize.
>
> (p. 283)

Declerck further notes that in all these conditionals "there is

a close modal and temporal relation between p and q ... it is

because of this close relationship that English has adopted a

simplified tense system in the if-clause ... what is typical

of these conditionals is that (a) the condition is open,

hypothetical or counterfactual and (at the same time) (b) there is

a close temporal relation between p and q (i.e., p is situated

temporally with respect to q and not with respect to the moment

of speaking)". (p. 284).

Earlier theories of if-conditional sentences considered

the tense/mood restrictions on the main and if-subordinate

clauses as the rule of English grammar, that is the simple present

tense form of the verb in the if-clause of open condition could

refer to present or future time. The past tense/past subjunctive

referred to either present or future time or imaginary/unreal

event. And the past perfect tense in the counterfactual

conditional referred to unfulfilled or unreal condition.

The use of 'will/would' in if-conditional clauses was

considered to be exception to the rule of English grammar and

needed explanation.

As against this Declerck considers the use of will and would

in if-conditional clauses as the rule and the restrictions on the

use of verb forms in 'standard conditionals' as exception. The

reason he gives is that there are a number of if-conditional

sentences which do not conform to the rules of standard conditionals

the bulk of his article is devoted to the analysis of a number of

conditional sentences with will and would. These sentences are

characterized by (a) lack of necessary cause-effect relationship between p and q and (b) lack of close temporal and modal relationship between p and q. The tense system of the conditional clause (as well as the head clause), are temporally situated with respect to the moment of speech. Therefore, according to him, it is only natural for <u>will</u> to occur as 'pure future' marker in if-clauses also. He has classified a number of examples of if-clauses with <u>will</u>/<u>would</u> into nine different types and discussed the characteristics of each type. They are as follows:

Type I
'Closed Condition'

It is 'deductive'; q is deduceable from p. But there is no close relation between p and q. <u>If</u> can be substituted by <u>since</u>, e.g.

> Now if all the dresses will be finished by about next Monday, why don't you bring them yourself?
>
> (Jespersen, 1931: 400)
>
> (Reproduced from Declerck, 1984: 285)

Type II
'Utterance Condition'

It is 'not deductive' but can be either 'closed' or 'open' condition, e.g.

If you will see him tomorrow, why are you
phoning him now?

(Closed) (p. 287)

The next king — if there will be a next king —
will have no power whatever.

(Open) (p. 287)

That these are not deductive can be seen from the fact that we
cannot insert <u>then</u> before the head clause. The if-clause explains
why the speaker considers it relevant to utter the statement or
question in q.

Type III
'q-primary'

It is an open condition. This applies to q (head clause).
The tense system is related to the moment of speaking as point
orientation, e.g.

If it'll be of any help, I'll come along

(Palmer, 1974: 148)

(Reproduced from Declerck, p. 289)

Both Type I and III are open conditions. But in Type I
p is a fact while in Type III, p is a possibility.

Type IV
'p-primary'

It is deductive. It is of the form, 'If p really happens

q will be the consequence', e.g.:

> If you will be alone on Christmas Day, let us know now .
>
> (Close, 1980: 104)
>
> (Reproduced from Declerck, p. 293)

Types III and IV are alike in respect of 'possibility' or 'expectation'. But Type IV is a p primary because the expectation or possibility that p will happen is foremost in the speaker's mind.

Type V

'q-primary'

It is not deductive and has an appended 'free clause' expressing a 'sceptical comment'. It also has the present point of orientation, e.g.:

> I'll come down to your office after one o'clock,
> if it will suit you. (Poutsma, 1926: 190)
>
> (Reproduced from Declerck, p. 296)

The if-clause does not have a conditional meaning in this type, whereas in Type III it is strongly conditional.

Type VI

It expresses 'strong wish' or 'feeling of indignation' etc. The if-clause can often be independent.

If he'll only turn out a brave truth-telling
Englishman (...) that's all I want.

(expression of wish) (Jespersen, 1931: 252)

Hang it all! If that idiot won't be there as well!
who the hell sent him an invitation?

(expression of indignation) :

If I'll be allowed to speak at all!

(independent if-clause)

(Reproduced from Declerck: p. 299)

Type VII

It is 'deductive' and comes close to standard conditionals
(open condition 'possibility' not 'fact'). Present tense verb
is likely to be substituted for will. However, only stative
verbs are possible:

I'll write down how much petrol I'll need to make
the journey.

You will be given exactly the same amount when you
start. If say, 500 gallons will be sufficient for me, I
don't see why it should not be sufficient for you.

If Jones is the new chairman, the annual
meeting of the board will be no laughing matter.
(pp. 300-301)

Type VIII

It is the most 'complex as far as time references are
concerned'. However, both the expectation and conclusion lie in

future. Here the if-clause expresses the present expectation
(assumption) that p will occur in the future and the head clause
expresses the present conclusion that q must therefore be done,
e.g. ,

> How far the flood of molten rock behind me will spread
> is any body's guess. If it will come down to where
> I am standing now
>
>> (a) all the villas are doomed
>>
>> (b) all the lovely villas will have to be evacuated
>>
>> (Close, 1980: 103)
>>
>> (Reproduced from Declerck , p. 302)

Type IX

It is also an 'utterance conditional' like Type II. But
there is another -- conditional embedded (or implied) within the
conditional. The 'sequence of tense' rule does not appear to
hold for them, e.g.:

> If there is going to be/will be trouble if
> we attend the meeting, we had better stay at home
>
> (embedded condition within condition)

> If a loan would have saved, why didn't you give him one?
> (= if it would have saved him if you had given him
>   a loan ... i.e., implied embedded condition)
>
>> (p. 304)

Declerck concludes that the use of will or would to

express future time or to render a hypothetical meaning in the if-clause is quite grammatical. Commenting on the nine types of if-conditionals with <u>will/would</u>, he says that they represent all sorts of differences but "what is common to them all is that they use the tense system of head clauses, ·some of them because they really are head clauses ... others because the point of orientation determining the tense system in the if-clause is the moment of speaking rather than the future time referred to in the head clause." (p. 309)

9. Conclusion

From the above discussion it appears that there is a need to make a distinction between if-clauses that occur in conditional sentences and those that occur in other sentences. Right from Jespersen it was noticed that certain kinds of if-conditionals did not conform to the rules that were proposed. This was particularly in the case of the verb forms used in the if-clauses. Jespersen felt a particular set of sentences containing a past tense verb was not conditional at all like e.g.:

> If the offer was rejected, it was because people distrusted him

> or

> If he was yesternight in Sir Daniel's mansion, it was I that brought him there

> or

If he were great as a principal, he was unrivalled
as confidant.

(Jespersen, 1931, IV: 134)

It was also noticed that he shifted ground in explaining
the role of <u>will</u> in if-conditional clauses.

Bell (1974) made a clear point that all sentences
containing if-clauses are not necessarily conditionals basing
his arguments on syntactic evidence.

Finally, Declerck (1984) made a distinction between three
types of standard conditionals and all sorts of other sentences
containing if-clauses. He classified these other sentences into
nine different types. Some of these were characterized as not
conditionals at all, while some were found to have some
characteristics of conditionals. He was concerned with if-clause
containing 'pure future' <u>will</u> only, and his analysis is based
more on meaning than strictly on form.

All this points to the fact that this area of English
grammar has not been sufficiently explored. For the purposes
of this dissertation, we may take note of a major distinction
between 'standard conditionals' and others. Within the standard
conditionals we may take note of the three types — open,
hypothetical and counterfactual conditions. However, there
would always be cases of overlap.