

Conditional clauses as adverbial clauses: typology and external syntax

In this presentation the general approach to the syntax of conditional clauses will be to assimilate them maximally to that of other adverbial clauses. Therefore, conditional clauses will be viewed as a subcase of adverbial clauses and arguments will be based on the overall patterns displayed by adverbial clauses

(1) The typology of conditional/adverbial clauses

The presentation looks at the typology of conditional clauses as part of the wider typology of adverbial clauses. Like other adverbial clauses, clauses introduced by the condition *if* also display (at least) three readings, encoding (i) a condition on the **event** expressed in the matrix clause, (ii) a conditional **assertion** echoing a background assumption which serves as the basis for the processing of the matrix proposition or (iii) a **condition on the speech event**.

The presentation will initially mainly be based on English data and will investigate the external syntax of adverbial clauses focussing on the extent to which the three types of clauses can/must be given different syntactic representations in terms of the formal relation with the associated clause.

(2) The typology and interpretation of adverbial clauses and Verb Second transgressions

The typology developed in the first presentation will be applied to evidence from the Germanic languages, illustrated on the basis of Dutch and Flemish, with particular attention being paid on the behaviour of initial conditional (and adverbial) clauses in the Germanic ‘Verb Second’ pattern.

The focus of this presentation will be on a set of unusual so called ‘Verb Third’ patterns which are considered unacceptable by speakers of standard Dutch but which have been reported as fully acceptable for speakers of the West Flemish dialect.

The presentation will reveal that there exists a complex and unexpected interaction between the internal V2 syntax and interpretive properties of conditional clauses in initial position.

(3) Adverbial *die* resumption in the Ghent variety

(time permitting)

The third presentation further explores the nature of micro-variation in word order variation among Dutch and Flemish dialects and focusses on the patterns in (iii):

- | | | | | |
|-------|----|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (iii) | a. | % Als het regent
If it rains | die
<i>die</i> | blijven we thuis.
stay we home |
| | b. | % Als het regent
If it rains | dan
<i>then</i> | blijven we thuis.
stay we home |
| | c. | % Als het regent
If it rains | | blijven we thuis.
stay we home |

(iia) is unique to the Ghent dialect of Dutch: the finite verb *blijven* is preceded by a conditional clause *als het regent* ('if it rains') and what looks like a demonstrative pronoun *die*. In all other varieties of Dutch (iia) is impossible. (iib) is accepted throughout all varieties of Dutch: here a conditional clause is followed by a resumptive adverb *dan* ('then'). (iic) is also acceptable throughout the linguistic area. It is an example of a regular Verb Second pattern: the finite verb *blijven* ('stay') is preceded just by the conditional clause.

The pattern in (iia) is not unique to conditional clauses and part of a larger pattern: central adverbial clauses and adjuncts may all give rise to this kind of *die* insertion. At first sight, one might consider the pattern in (iia) as a dialect-specific alternative of (iib). This is the position taken in Zwart (1997), who assimilates (iia) to (iib). It will be shown, however, that the superficial similarity between (iia) and (iib) is deceptive and that, rather than being more like (iib), (iia) should be seen as a variant realisation of (iic).

The implications of this finding for the formal syntax of word order in Dutch, in particular for the derivation of Verb Second word order patterns will be explored from a cartographic perspective.