



Bibliography of Conditionals

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Introduction

The following bibliography is designed to provide translators working in the New Testament a broad and diverse collection of resources for engaging with the Greek source language and for gaining some insight into how conditionals function in the linguistic diversity of the world's languages. We have separated the bibliography into a few sections. The first section attempts to be as comprehensive as possible in its presentation of the research on conditionals in Ancient Greek. The second section presents a wide array of publications and research into conditionals in specific languages. We have focused this section primarily on local languages and have organized them on the basis of the geographic regions used in the *Ethnologue*.¹ This is followed by one non-geographic section presenting research on conditionals in sign languages around the world. Finally, the third and last section presents a selection of important, or in some way salient, publications on conditionals in linguistics generally. We have prioritized functionalist, typological, and cognitive linguistic resources.

Each section begins with a short introduction to the material included and lays out the purpose and scope of resources included. The introduction to conditionals in Ancient Greek also presents a brief history of research that details how Bible translation, biblical studies, and linguistics have intersected (or not intersected) over the past 150 years. Each introduction also highlights a selection of the content for the reader's benefit. The subsection on sign languages receives its own brief introduction, as well.

¹ Eberhard, David M., Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig, eds. 2022. *Ethnologue: Languages of the world*. 25th ed. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Online version: <https://www.ethnologue.com>.

As editors and compilers of this bibliography on conditionals in the world's languages, we want to keep adding entries as we find them. If you have suggestions (especially works on languages other than English), please submit further entries to: rachel_aubrey@sil.org; mike_aubrey@sil.org. We have not tried to be exhaustive for languages that have many works on conditionals (e.g., Korean, Japanese), but we have tried to offer a representative sample with a focus on diversity of languages represented.

It is our hope that this bibliography submitted to the *Journal of Translation* will help to launch new possibilities for research and dialogue about diversity among conditionals and how this diversity intersects with language analysis and translation practices.

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1 Conditionals in Ancient Greek

Our bibliography on Greek conditionals does not limit itself to the New Testament but contains a wide array of research on Ancient Greek from Homer through the medieval era. There is an unfortunate pattern in biblical studies to ignore research on Greek grammar that is not specifically tied to the New Testament or Septuagint. In that context, we want to highlight some of the broader trends and salient entries in the publications included here. First, late nineteenth century classicists saw a growth of interest in studying Greek conditionals, particularly as an outworking of the research of Basil L. Gildersleeve and William W. Goodwin. While their respective proposals were viewed as in competition with each other (see Alica Braunlich [1956], whose title explicitly asks: “Goodwin or Gildersleeve?”), their work sets the tone for how Greek conditionals were viewed in terms of “conditional classes” for both classicists and New Testament scholars throughout the twentieth century. An idea that continues to linger today—Boyer’s articles in *Grace Theological Journal* on

conditional classes in the New Testament in the 1980s have maintained a strong influence on scholars' exegetical discussions of conditionals, even today. Notably, Boyer represents the Goodwin side of the debate, whereas the NT grammarian Daniel Wallace (1997), represents the Gildersleeve side (Entz 2020:21).

Outside the New Testament, we can observe a few important trends. First, French and Dutch classicists, beginning in the 1970s, initiated a multidecade collaboration effort with Simon Dik and other linguists working in European functionalism, which led to long term and fruitful work in Classical Greek linguistics for many areas of grammar, including conditionals. Important contributors in this vein of research include: Egbert Bakker, Louis Basset, J. Brunel, Albert Rijksbaron, C. M. J. Sicking, and Gerry C. Wakker, who published the seminal monograph on Classical Greek conditionals in *Functional Grammar* in 1994. Parallel with these efforts was also a renewed interest in Greek and linguistics in Spain, with Ignacio Rodríguez Alfageme, Luis Miguel Pino Campos, Emilio Crespo, and Jesús de la Villa Polo. These two communities actively engaged with each other through the 1980s and 1990s.

Another trend around the same time came from North American linguists who found Ancient Greek language data relevant to their larger work in the field, such as Jan Gonda (1956) on diachronic development of Indo-European mood, Hansjakob Seiler's (1971) analysis of how past tense interacts with hypothetical expressions, David Lightfoot's (1975) *Generative Semantics* monograph *Natural Logic and the Greek Moods*, and Joseph Greenberg (1986), who used Classical Greek to illustrate the realis-irrealis typological continuum.

The third trend involved those who saw a need for better analyses of conditionals to serve Bible translation, like Harold Greenlee (1962, 1985), J. J. Kijne (1962), Lithgow (1972) or Steve Kempf in his (1977) thesis, "Conditional Sentences in the Lukan Writings: A Study in Form and Meaning." Lithgow focused on how the formal glossing tradition in English translation created a false sense of equivalence between Greek and English. Similarly, Kempf, though writing before much of the progress in pragmatics, discourse, and cognition, clearly emphasized that organization of conditionals on the basis of meaning first, rather than form, constituted a better and more effective strategy for their analysis, especially in the domain of minority language Bible translation. Had biblical studies paid more attention to these early meaning-focused studies in Greek conditionals, as well as the larger community of classicists and linguists, our current state might look different.

Richard Young's (1989) attempt to integrate speech act theory into the analysis of conditionals represents the first clear attempt by a biblical scholar to look at New Testament Greek conditionals through the lens of linguistic research. His analysis brings a number of good insights, but also fits a trend of biblical scholars only showing interest in linguistics within a narrow theoretical domain.

At this point, there was already a growing bibliography of Greek linguistic work on conditionals from Europe, but Young focused on a narrow set of literature on speech acts and logic. The siloed nature of how biblical studies interacts with linguistics is illustrated by the way Young's work was, for many years, not expanded on by anyone else in New Testament studies—even L. W. Ledgerwood III (1992), whose own application of Gricean pragmatics to New Testament conditionals in the same journal only a few years later, makes no reference to Young's work. Not until David Armitage's (2007) *Biblica* article does this change.

With the beginning of the twenty-first century, New Testament studies have slowly been improving with more people realizing the need to engage to some degree in linguistics. Michael J. Thate (2007) and Mark A. Proctor (2019), for example, are still primarily focused on the classes of conditions, but their own citations and bibliographies are more diverse than the previous generation of scholarship. Likewise, Toshikazu S. Foley (2009) and Rocky H. Fong (2014) each adopt a variation of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, but their work is more influenced by Stanley Porter than Halliday. The larger positive change has come from Septuagint studies, which is more fully engaged with the broader field of linguistics than before. Tjen's (2012) monograph on conditionals in the Greek Pentateuch represents one of the strongest steps forward for Greek conditionals and the Bible, interacting with much of the Classical Greek linguistics literature, as well as a broader set of general linguistics work.

The interaction and engagement between classics and linguistics has only increased, with important contributions from a wide and growing body of scholars primarily from across Europe. In Greek conditionals and language, this includes: Perelmouter (2005) and Kotin (2014) on Greek conditionals and typology, Luis Miguel Pino Campo (2006), Jordi Cors Meya (2006), and Jana E. Beck, Sophia A. Malamud, and Iryna Osadcha (2012) on specific grammatical issues in Greek conditionals, Nikolaj N. Kazanskij (2014) on Greek conditionals and dialectal variation, and Ezra la Roi (2021) on conditionals in insubordinate constructions, among others. Additionally, major reference grammars of Classical Greek with strong discussions of conditionals have been published in the past two decades in Spanish, such as Crespo, Conti and Maquieira (2003), and M. Dolores Jiménez López (2022)—the relevant chapters in the latter being de la Villa Polo (2022) and Puigdollers (2022), and in English, such as Van Emde Boas, Rijksbaron, Huitink, and Bakker (2019).

Finally, this issue of the *Journal of Translation* continues the tradition of Bible translators thinking about Greek conditionals within a much more linguistically diverse space, alongside the more recent contributions of Margaret Sim (2016) and most recently and insightfully Entz (2020). We look forward to where the field goes in the coming years and hope this bibliography will encourage others

to cast a wider net in their studies so that we all end up with a richer and more engaged scholarly community.

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2 Conditionals in the world's languages

The works in this section represent an array of approaches to the study of conditionals in languages other than English, ranging from older contributions, such as Günther (1949) on Sinhalese [Sri Lanka], to more recent ones, such as Visser (2022) on Kalamang [Indonesia, Northwestern Papua]. Some papers are individual accounts of single languages (Jaszai and Tóth [2005] on Hungarian). Others are comparative in nature (Kramer [1988] on Bulgarian, Macedonian and Albanian and Reprina [2018] on Catalan, Spanish, and French). Likewise, papers are drawn from a variety of sources, including: a grammar of individual languages (Shimelman [2017] Yauyos Quechua); chapters in edited volumes (McGregor [1988] on Kuniyanti in *Complex Sentence Constructions in Australian Languages*, edited by Peter Austin); journal articles (Eifring [1988]) on Chinese counterfactuals in the *Journal of Chinese Linguistics*, and Nau [2018] on Latgalian in *Baltic Linguistics*); an MA thesis (Fish [2020] on Swahili); a PhD dissertation (Kuo [2006] on Mandarin); a paper from a conference (Martin [2015] on French, from a meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society); a crosslinguistic survey (Kawachi [2018] on Sidaama, from *Levels in Clause Linkage: A Crosslinguistic Survey*, edited by Tasaku Tsunoda); and an SIL publication (Krajinović, Boerger, and Unger [2018] on conditional clauses in Nafsan). The focus of each paper may vary slightly, including those on particular conditional types, such as: Inoue (1983) on cleft

conditionals in Japanese, Filtchenko (2008) on syntax of adverbials in Eastern Khanty, or Haiman (1980) on the semantics of conditionals in Hua.

What ultimately draws these works together is our desired focus: to provide an assortment of in-depth descriptive analyses of conditional constructions from a wide variety of languages and language families from around the world.

For the sake of organization, we have structured the bibliographical entries into broad geographical regions, representing (2.1) Languages of Africa, (2.2) the Americas, (2.3) Asia, (2.4) Europe, and (2.5) the Pacific. For each entry, we include the name of the language in bold, along with its three-letter ISO code (from the *Ethnologue*), used to identify each language uniquely.² Of final note is the concluding section (2.6) on conditionals in sign languages, with its own introduction and discussion.

Noteworthy items include contributions from crosslinguistic studies:

- Xrakovskij (2005) is an edited volume produced by the St. Petersburg Institute of Linguistic Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences, as a translation from an earlier Russian book. Part 1 provides an overview of the theoretical concepts and methodology for finding conditionals. Part 2 offers a wealth of descriptive data from a variety of differently structured languages, including languages in which conditionals are expressed as complex clauses (e.g., Bulgarian, Dari, Armenian, Hindu, Old Greek, Archaic Latin, French, German, English, Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian, Hausa, Klamath, Indonesian, Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Ancient Chinese) and languages in which they are expressed as converbal/infinitival phrases (e.g., Even, Evenki, Eskimo, Aleut, Yukaghir, and Japanese).
- Many of the works in the Languages of Africa subsection are taken from a special issue on conditional constructions in African languages in the journal, *Studies in African Linguistics*.
- The “Introduction” from Steve Nicolle’s (2017) *Conditional Constructions in African languages*, in *Studies in African Linguistics* 46 (1, 2), <https://doi.org/10.32473/sal.v46i1.107239>.
- Tasaku Tsunoda (2018), in *Levels of Clause Linkage: A Crosslinguistic Survey* [<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110519242>], makes a point to discuss conditional constructions in each language surveyed.

² The three-letter ISO code is assigned to each language by the ISO 639-3 standard (ISO 2007) using lower-case letters in square brackets.

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2.6 Sign languages

Sign languages and spoken languages rely on different modalities: visual-gestural signals for sign languages vs. oral-auditory signals for spoken languages (although visual-gestural signals remain a key ingredient in all communication). Despite differences in modality, decades of research documents that sign

languages are fully functional languages, just as grammatically complex as spoken languages. Deaf communities around the world employ manual and nonmanual signals in the signing space. Nonmanual signs include movements of the eyes, nose, mouth, head, and shoulders as well as combinations, resulting in overall facial and bodily configurations (Tomaszewski and Farris 2010:289–290). Works in this section focus on the function of nonmanual signals in conditional clauses among a variety of sign languages.

Coulter (1979) describes the combinations of nonmanual signals involved in relative and conditional clauses in American Sign Language (ASL), including raised eyebrows, raised chin, forward leaning head nod, spread lips, raised upper lip, wrinkled nose, and boundary marking. Liddell (1986) points to the significance of the head thrust as a final sign in ASL conditionals.

Overall, conditional constructions represent an underresearched area among sign languages, though significant recent progress has been made: Pfau (2008) on topics and conditionals in sign languages, Tomaszewski and Farris (2010) on Polish Sign Language, and Paulus (2022) on German and Brazilian sign languages. Quer (2006) analyzes the brow raise in Catalan Sign Language conditionals as a portmanteau marker in the left periphery of the clause. Dachkovsky (2008) and Klomp (2019) distinguish between the expression of distinct conditional clause types in Israeli and Dutch sign languages.

Coulter, Geoffrey Restall. 1979. Facial expressions in relative clauses and conditionals. In *American Sign Language typology*, 16–40. PhD dissertation. University of California, San Diego. **American Sign Language [ase]**

Dachkovsky, Svetlana. 2008. Facial expression an intonation in Israeli Sign Language: The case of neutral and counterfactual conditionals. In Josep Quer (ed.), *Signs of the time, selected papers from TISLR 2004*, 61–82. Hamburg: Signum Verlag. **Israeli Sign Language [isr]**

Jarque Moyano, Maria Josep. 2016. What about? Fictive question-answer pairs for non-information-seeking functions across signed languages. In Esther Pascual and Sergei Sandler (eds.), *The conversation frame: Forms and functions of fictive interaction*, 171–192. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/hcp.55.09jar>. **Catalan Sign Language [csc]**

Klomp, Ulrika. 2019. Conditional clauses in sign language of the Netherlands: A corpus-based study. *Sign Language Studies* 19(3):309–347. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sls.2019.0000>. **Dutch Sign Language [dse]**

Liddell, Scott K. 1986. Head thrust in ASL conditional marking. *Sign Language Studies* 52:243–262. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sls.1986.0003>. **American Sign Language [ase]**

- Paulus, Liona. 2022. Conditional clauses in German Sign Language (DGS) and Brazilian Sign Language (Libras): An empirical sociolinguistic study. *Sign Language & Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/sll.00066.pau>. **German Sign Language [gsg]; Brazilian Sign Language [bzs]**
- Pfau, Roland. 2008. Topics and conditionals in sign languages. Paper presented at the 30th Annual Conference of the German Linguistic Society (DGfS), University of Bamberg, Germany, February 28, 2008.
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- Tomaszewski, Piotr, and Michael Farris. 2010. Not by the hands alone: Functions of non-manual features in Polish Sign Language. *Studies in the psychology of language and communication* 2010:289–320. **Polish Sign Language [psl]**

3 Conditionals in linguistics and typology

Differences in natural languages arise at every level of linguistic organization. And yet structural similarities in the world's languages abound across a variety of expressions. Recognizing such similarities and differences is what enables scholars to make generalizations about conditional constructions across languages while also noting formal and semantic-pragmatic differences among them. Works in this section represent a selective bibliography of conditionals in linguistics, with particular interest in those that contribute to our typological understanding of conditional constructions.

The goal for conditional typology is to determine (1) the extent to which conditionals vary across languages, and (2) what remains stable in their function and expression. To that end, Traugott (1985) examines similarities in conditional marking, the formal marking used across languages to express the conditional protasis. Her interest is in the shared factors relevant to their historical origins and development with an illustration of the common lexical sources for conditional markers. Her work contributes to a theory of semantic change rooted in iconic motivations in language. Van linden and Verstraete (2008) explore how counterfactual conditionals are commonly marked across languages. Typically, the grammatical markers used to express counterfactuality in languages are used to express other functions as well.

Included in our bibliography are two significant collections on the study of conditionals. In order to save space, we have listed only the edited volumes

themselves and have not included individual chapters for each set. Readers are encouraged to explore their full contents.

- Traugott et al. (1986) *On Conditionals* is a collection of interdisciplinary perspectives written by leading scholars in a variety of fields. Chapters include some of the following topics: mental models (P. N. Johnson-Laird), a typology that seeks to establish the core features of conditionals that remains stable crosslinguistically (Bernard Comrie), semantics and pragmatics (Frank Veltman, Ernest W. Adams), speech acts (Johan van der Auwera), the realis-irrealis continuum (Joseph H. Greenberg, listed in section 1. Conditionals in Ancient Greek), and discourse (Noriko Akatsuka, Cecilia E. Ford, and Sandra A. Thompson).
- Athanasiadou and Dirven (1997) “On Conditionals Again” is a follow-up to Traugott et al. (1986). Built on the same model, the edited volume provides a collection of papers from a symposium on conditionality at the University of Duisburg in March 1994. Papers include: hypotheticality and counterfactuality (Athanasiadou and Dirven), past time reference in counterfactuals (Östen Dahl), mood and tense (John Tynan and Eva Delgado), ‘unless’ and ‘but’ conditionals (Elizabeth Traugott), cognitive distance (Paul Werth), figure/ground alignment (Elżbieta Tabakowska), and conditional reasoning (Noriko Akatsuka).

The opening chapters of Xrakovskij’s (2005) *Typology of Conditional Constructions* offer remarks on the theoretical description of conditional clauses and their meaning, along with a questionnaire on investigating conditionals across languages. Athanasiadou and Dirven (1996) consider four primary types of conditionals, arguing that each type relies on different cognitive motivations (with respect to perspective, conceptualization, construal, and epistemic distance). Bossuyt (2022) offers a survey of concessive conditionals, examining coding strategies in the protasis of three types of concessives (scalar, alternative, and universal) among a sample of seventeen languages.

In addition to typological examinations, there are a number of seminal works that represent significant contributions to the investigation of conditional constructions: Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser provide foundational observations on conditionals within cognitive linguistics, exploring notions of causality, epistemic stance, prediction, and mental spaces in grammar (via Fauconnier). Haiman (1978) is influential in establishing a link between conditionals and topics in discourse, a paper that Caron (2006) refers to when discussing conditionals and focus structures in Chadic South Bauchi West languages (see 2.1 Languages of Africa). As pertains to the study of conditionals in discourse, Ramsay (1987) provides a helpful investigation of preposed and

postposed conditional clauses in discourse. Philosophical inquiries into conditionality include Lycan (2001) as well as Evans and Over (2004) who bring to bear philosophical logic as well as studies in psychology to present a new approach to hypothetical thought. Research that treats conditionals within pragmatics moves beyond logical relations. Björnsson (2011) argues that conditionals are only truth-evaluable in terms of a contextually provided relation between “antecedent and consequent.” Liu (2019) provides a useful review of current issues in conditionals, including morphosyntax, semantics and pragmatics, and conditional reasoning.

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