# THE HYPOTHETICAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Prof. Stefano Cucugliato

#### THE HYPOTHETICAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Conditional tenses are used to speculate about <u>what could happen</u>, <u>what might have happened</u>, and <u>what we wish would happen</u>. In English, sentences using the conditional are usually divided into a <u>main clause</u> (a sentence with a proper meaning) and a <u>subordinate one</u> (a sentence that depends on the previous) usually introduced by <u>if</u> (or other words)

There are five main ways of constructing conditional sentences in English.

The zero conditional is used for when the time being referred to is **now or** always and the situation is real and possible. The zero conditional is often used to refer to general truths. The tense in both parts of the sentence is the simple present. In zero conditional sentences, the word "if" can usually be replaced by the word "when" without changing the meaning.



If clause	Main clause
<u>If + simple present</u>	simple present

If + base form,

subj. + base form





Subordinate

it melts



Main clause

#### If it rains



Subordinate

the grass gets wet

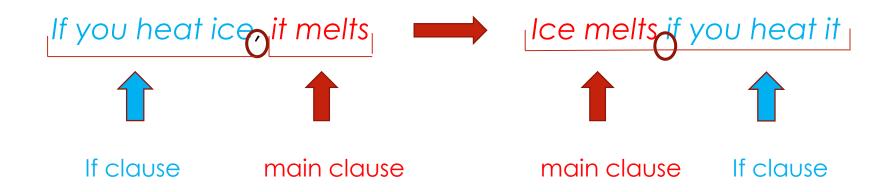


Main clause



Pay attention!

The position of the if clause and the main clause are interchangeable, but in the second case the coma disappears.



The type 1 conditional is used to refer to the **present or future** where the **situation is real**. The type 1 conditional refers to a possible condition and its probable result. In these sentences the if clause is in the simple present, and the main clause is in the simple future.

It is called the conditional of probability

If clause	Main clause
<u>If + simple present</u>	<u>simple future</u>



Subordinate

If you don't hurry you will miss the train



Main clause

If it rains today



Subordinate

you will get wet



Main clause

The type 2 conditional is used to refer to a time that is **now or any time**, and a situation that is **unreal**. These sentences are not based on fact. The type 2 conditional is used to refer to a hypothetical condition and its probable result. In type 2 conditional sentences, the if clause uses the simple past and the main clause uses the present conditional.

It is called the conditional of the improbability/unreality

If clause	Main clause
<u>If + simple past</u>	<b>Present conditional</b>

If + base form + -ed, subj. + would + base form

If you went to bed earlier



Subordinate

If it rained



Subordinate

you would not be so tired



Main clause

you would get wet



Main clause

#### **CONDITIONALS: THIRD TYPE**

#### CONDITIONALS: THIRD TYPE

The type 3 conditional refers to an impossible condition in the past and its probable result in the past. These sentences are truly hypothetical and unreal, because it is now too late for the condition or its result to exist. There is always some implication of regret with type 3 conditional sentences. The reality is the opposite of, or contrary to, what the sentence expresses. In type 3 conditional sentences, the time is the **past** and the situation is **hypothetical**. In type 3 conditional sentences, the if clause uses the past perfect, and the main clause uses the perfect conditional.

### CONDITIONALS: THIRD TYPE

If clause	Main clause
If + past perfect	perfect conditional or
	perfect continuous
	<u>conditional</u>

# CONDITIONALS: THIRD TYPE (with perfect conditional)

If clause	Main clause
<u>If + past perfect</u>	perfect conditional

If + had + past participle, subj. + would + have + past participle

# CONDITIONALS: THIRD TYPE (perfect conditional)

If I had worked harder



Subordinate

I would have passed the exam\*



Main clause

If I had known you were coming



Subordinate

I would have baked a cake\*\*



Main clause

\*(But I didn't work hard, and I didn't pass the exam)

\*\* (But I didn't know and I didn't bake a cake)

# CONDITIONALS: THIRD TYPE (perfect continuous conditional)

It refers to the unfulfilled result of the action in the if-clause, and expresses this result as an unfinished or continuous action.

If clause	Main clause
<u>If + past perfect</u>	<u>perfect continuous</u> <u>conditional</u>

If + had + past participle, subj. + would + have + been + -ing

### CONDITIONALS: THIRD TYPE (perfect continuous conditional)

If the weather had been better, I'd have been sitting in the garden when he arrived



Main clause

If she hadn't got a job in London,



she would have been working in Paris



Main clause