

# Implementation and Implications of Conditional Sentences in English Grammar

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## Abstract

This study aims to investigate the role of conditional sentences in English grammar by exploring their structures, functions, and implications in various contexts. The urgency of this research lies in the fact that conditional sentences, despite being crucial for effective communication, often confuse English learners, especially regarding understanding and applying the correct structures. Mistakes in using conditional sentences can lead to communication confusion and errors in conveying ideas or information. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of conditional sentences and their significance in both everyday and academic communication. The research method employed in this study is library research, where the researcher analyzes various sources related to conditional sentences in English grammar. The instruments used include books, journal articles, and other relevant references to gather information about the structure, function, and usage of conditional sentences in different contexts. The data collection technique used is literature review to understand the implementation of conditional sentences in English grammar and their practical applications in communication. The findings of this study show that conditional sentences play a significant role in effectively conveying complex ideas and hypothetical scenarios. This study also highlights the importance of having a correct understanding of the structure of conditional sentences, as mistakes in their use can affect the clarity and accuracy of communication, whether in personal, professional, or academic contexts.

**Keywords:** *Implementation, Implications, Conditional, Sentences, English Grammar*

## Introduction

Conditional sentences are a fundamental component of English grammar, enabling speakers to express hypothetical situations, possibilities, and the consequences of different conditions. These sentences are crucial for effective communication, as they allow individuals to discuss and speculate about various scenarios. The proficient English speakers can sometimes make mistakes when using conditional sentences, which can lead to confusion and unclear communication (Quelhas et al., 2017).

The implementation of conditional sentences in English grammar involves understanding the different types of conditionals, including the zero, first, second, and third conditionals (Oktaviani & Prayogi, 2018). Each type of conditional has its own specific structure and usage, which can be challenging for non-native speakers to master. The zero conditional is used for permanent truths and general habits, while the first conditional is used for real or likely future

events. The second conditional is used for hypothetical or improbable situations, and the third conditional is used for unreal past situations (Hasby & Sarifuddin, 2021).

The implications of conditional sentences in English grammar are significant, as they can affect the clarity and accuracy of communication (Yusuf & Bahraen, 2021). Conditional sentences can convey complex ideas and hypothetical scenarios effectively. However, when used incorrectly, they can lead to misunderstandings and miscommunications. The essential for English learners to understand the different types of conditionals and how to use them correctly to enhance their language skills and communicate effectively (Amjad et al., 2021).

Conditional sentences are typically structured around a subordinate clause that sets the condition, followed by a main clause that describes the result or consequence of that condition. The subordinate clause usually begins with the conjunction "if," and the main clause can express various degrees of likelihood or possibility. There are four main types of conditional sentences: zero conditional, first conditional, second conditional, and third conditional, each with its own specific structure and usage (Taka, 2020).

Zero conditional sentences express general truths or known facts, often using the present simple tense for both the subordinate and main clauses (Septiani et al., 2024). First conditional sentences, on the other hand, express possible future events or actions that are likely to happen, using the present simple tense for the subordinate clause and the future simple tense for the main clause. Second conditional sentences describe hypothetical or unrealistic future events, using the past simple tense for the subordinate clause and the conditional tense for the main clause. Third conditional sentences express hypothetical past situations and their past results, using the past perfect tense for the subordinate clause and the conditional tense for the main clause (Elder, 2019). Mastering the use of conditional sentences requires a clear understanding of their structures and functions. The different types of conditional sentences and their corresponding structures, speakers can effectively convey their ideas and hypothetical situations in English (Muthia, 2018).

Conditional sentences, also known as "if-clauses," play a pivotal role in the English language, serving as a fundamental tool for expressing hypothetical situations, potential outcomes, and general truths (Liu & Barthel, 2021). These sentences are crucial not only for everyday communication but also for academic and professional discourse, enabling speakers and writers to discuss possibilities, speculate about different scenarios, and articulate cause-and-effect relationships. The mastery of conditional sentences allows for nuanced expression, providing the means to differentiate between real and imagined situations, past reflections, and future predictions. Given their significance, a thorough understanding of conditional sentences is essential for learners of English as a second language, as well as for native speakers seeking to refine their linguistic skills (Kusumawati, 2017).

There are four primary types of conditional sentences, each serving a distinct function. The zero conditional is used for general truths or scientific facts, reflecting conditions that are always met. The first conditional addresses real and possible situations in the future, highlighting outcomes that are likely to occur if certain conditions are met. The second

conditional delves into hypothetical or unlikely situations in the present or future, often used for dreaming or imagining different realities. The third conditional, meanwhile, reflects on past events that did not happen, allowing speakers to express regret or consider alternative outcomes. Each type of conditional sentence has its unique structure and usage, which must be mastered to ensure clear and accurate communication (Cassidy & Rydberg, 2018).

The study of conditional sentences is not merely an academic exercise but a practical necessity. The structures are employed in various contexts, from scientific explanations and legal arguments to everyday decision-making and personal reflections. The scientists use conditional sentences to formulate hypotheses and predict outcomes, while lawyers might use them to discuss potential consequences of legal actions. People use conditionals to plan activities, make promises, or express wishes and regrets. The ability to use conditional sentences effectively can enhance one's clarity and persuasiveness in both spoken and written communication (Muthohharah et al., 2020).

The understanding conditional sentences can provide insights into the cognitive processes underlying human thought and language. The researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how people conceptualize possibility, probability, and necessity by examining how different cultures and languages handle conditionality. This linguistic feature, therefore, not only enriches our communicative repertoire but also contributes to the broader field of cognitive science. Consequently, the study of conditional sentences is an interdisciplinary endeavor, intersecting with areas such as linguistics, psychology, and education.

This study offers novelty by integrating cognitive and psycholinguistic approaches to analyze the processing of conditional sentences in the human mind. The aim of this approach is to explore how individuals conceptualize possibility, probability, and consequences when using conditional sentences. This study will compare how conditional sentences are understood in English with their use in other languages, providing deeper insights into the relationship between language and thought. Another aspect of novelty lies in analyzing the influence of social and cultural contexts on the use of conditional sentences. This research will explore whether the use of conditional sentences differs between age groups or in formal and informal settings, as well as how social and cultural variations affect the use of conditional sentences in English.

This study will include a comparative analysis between native English speakers and English language learners in the use of conditional sentences, focusing on common errors and the factors influencing the understanding and use of conditional sentences by second-language learners. This research will highlight the use of conditional sentences in media and digital discourse, such as social media, blogs, and online discussion forums, to identify new trends in the use of English in the virtual world. This research will explore the role of conditional sentences in argument formation and persuasive techniques, such as in debates or advertisements, to understand how conditional sentences are used to influence audiences and shape their opinions. This study contributes new insights into the study of conditional sentences, distinguishing it from previous research.

## **Method**

The research method used in this article is library research. This research aims to analyze various relevant and up-to-date sources in the field of English, particularly those related to the use of conditional sentences. The researcher collects data from various written sources, including scholarly journals, textbooks, academic articles, and online publications that discuss the topic of conditional sentences in English. The researcher then analyzes these sources to gain a deeper understanding of the structure and function of conditional sentences and how they are applied in everyday communication, academic settings, and professional environments. This research is qualitative in nature, as it focuses on text analysis and understanding linguistic concepts related to conditional sentences. The researcher does not collect data through experiments or surveys but rather through the study of existing literature. This research is also descriptive, as it aims to describe various patterns and implications of the use of conditional sentences in English communication. The collected data will be used to identify patterns in the use of conditional sentences, both related to grammatical structure and their function in different communication contexts.

The subjects of this study include academic works and linguistic literature that discuss conditional sentences in English. These sources are selected based on their relevance, credibility, and quality in providing information about the topic under investigation. The literature used is not limited to textbooks or academic journals but also includes online articles that have credibility and relevance to the topic of conditional sentences. This approach allows the researcher to access various perspectives and understandings of conditional sentences within the literature. The research instrument used in this library research is document analysis, in which the researcher systematically examines and studies the collected written sources. This technique allows the researcher to delve deeply into the structure and function of conditional sentences in English. The analysis process begins with the identification of relevant sources, followed by sorting and categorizing the data based on specific themes or topics. Once the data is collected, the researcher performs qualitative analysis by evaluating the relationship between existing theories, patterns found in the use of conditional sentences, and the implications of these sentences in various contexts.

The data collection technique used in this research is documentation, which involves gathering written sources related to the topic of conditional sentences. The data collected comes from linguistic journals, grammar textbooks, online articles, and previous research studies that discuss the use of conditional sentences. This documentation provides the researcher with access to a wide range of information, enabling the analysis to cover multiple perspectives on the use of conditional sentences in communication. The documentation process allows the researcher to obtain accurate and relevant data without relying on direct interaction with research subjects.

The results of the data analysis will be used to discuss the implications of using conditional sentences in various contexts. First, in everyday communication, conditional sentences are used to express possibilities, expectations, or the consequences of certain

actions. Second, in academic settings, the use of conditional sentences allows for the expression of speculative ideas or the formulation of arguments based on assumptions or hypotheses. Third, in professional environments, conditional sentences are often used for planning, setting conditions, or suggesting alternatives. The researcher can provide a deeper understanding of how conditional sentences function in effective and precise communication.

The library research method, this study aims to make a significant contribution to the understanding of conditional sentences in English. The researcher hopes that this study will uncover certain patterns in the use of conditional sentences that can be applied in English language teaching, as well as provide insights for English speakers in using conditional sentences more accurately and effectively. This research is expected to enrich the existing literature on conditional sentences, particularly in the context of everyday communication, academic settings, and professional environments. This research not only focuses on theoretical aspects but also offers practical contributions that can be applied in various fields of communication.

## Results and Discussion

Conditional sentences are hypothetical sentences used to express cause and effect or events that depend on a certain condition. These sentences consist of two parts: the if-clause (condition) and the main clause, which states the consequence of the condition. The if-clause usually begins with the word "if" or "when," while the main clause conveys the consequence of the condition mentioned earlier. There are several types of conditional sentences in English, namely type 0, type 1, type 2, and type 3, each with different structures and uses. Type 1, for example, is used to express events that might happen in the future or present, using the simple future tense in the main clause, such as in the sentence "If I have enough money, I will buy a new laptop." Conditional sentences allow us to talk about events that may or may not happen and speculate about what will occur if a certain condition is met (Hapsari et al., 2023).

Conditional sentences are generally used to express situations that could happen in the future, past, or unlikely situations. There are four main types of conditional sentences. First, the zero conditional is used to describe scientific facts or situations that are always true, with the structure "If + Simple Present, Simple Present," as in the sentence "If you heat water to 100 degrees Celsius, it boils." Second, the first conditional is used for situations that might occur in the future, with the structure "If + Simple Present, Simple Future," as in the sentence "If it rains tomorrow, we will cancel the picnic." Third, the second conditional is used to describe hypothetical situations in the present or future that are unlikely to happen, with the structure "If + Simple Past, Would + Base Form," as in the sentence "If I won the lottery, I would travel the world." Fourth, the third conditional is used to describe past situations that did not happen and results that contradict reality, with the structure "If + Past Perfect, Would Have + Past Participle," as in the sentence "If I had studied harder, I would have passed the exam".

### ***Use and Implications of Zero Conditional***

The zero conditional is used to express general truths, scientific facts, or situations that always occur if a certain condition is met. This sentence type consists of two main parts: the if-clause and the main clause, both of which use the present simple tense. Zero conditional sentences are often used to describe outcomes that are guaranteed to happen whenever the condition is fulfilled, making them suitable for explaining natural laws, established routines, and universally accepted truths. The sentence "If you heat water to 100 degrees Celsius, it boils" illustrates a scientific fact that remains unchanged. This aligns with previous research that shows the zero conditional is an important form in academic and scientific writing because it allows for clear and precise explanations of cause-and-effect relationships that are universally accepted (Kaufmann, 2015). The zero conditional allows speakers and writers to communicate principles that do not depend on time or specific circumstances, providing clarity and precision in their scientific explanations and descriptions.

The zero conditional is used to state general facts or habits that are always true in the present, without implying hypothesis or speculation. This is supported by previous findings that state this sentence type is often applied in explaining natural laws, everyday habits, or universally applicable rules (Liu et al., 2021). The zero conditional provides a straightforward and efficient way to convey cause-and-effect relationships that remain constant, making it an essential tool in both everyday communication and academic discourse. Previous studies also confirm that the zero conditional is highly effective in describing predictable outcomes and unchanging truths, facilitating universal acceptance and comprehension (Ebrahimi et al., 2015). Another example sentence, "If you mix red and blue, you get purple," demonstrates a fact that remains consistent in everyday life.

The structure of the zero conditional, both the condition clause (if-clause) and the result clause (main clause) use the present simple form, emphasizing that the result always occurs when the condition is met. This characteristic makes the zero conditional particularly useful in various fields, especially in scientific explanations, instructions, and learning. For instance, the sentence "If you press this button, the machine starts" is a simple instruction that uses the zero conditional to state a certain outcome.

### ***Difference Between First and Second Conditional***

Conditional sentences play an important role in English grammar by providing speakers and writers with different ways to express hypothetical situations and their potential outcomes. Among the various types of conditional sentences, the first and second conditionals stand out due to their distinct grammatical structures and unique semantic nuances.

#### **First Conditional**

The first conditional is used to discuss realistic future scenarios that are likely to happen, based on a condition that may or may not be fulfilled. This conditional structure consists of the present simple tense in the if-clause and the future simple tense in the main clause. The first conditional is often used to describe events that may occur in the future based on current

conditions. The example, "If it rains tomorrow, we will cancel the picnic." This type of conditional is typically used to make predictions, give advice, or issue warnings, where there is a real possibility that the condition will be met. This aligns with previous research, which states that the first conditional is used to express situations that are likely to happen (Artadi & Setiawan, 2024). Other studies have also confirmed that this conditional is commonly used for making predictions or issuing warnings related to real future situations (Haza'Al Rdaat & Gardner, 2017).

### **Second Conditional**

The second conditional is used to describe hypothetical or very unlikely scenarios in the present or future that are contrary to reality. It involves using the past simple tense in the if-clause and the modal "would" followed by the base form of the verb in the main clause. For example, "If I won the lottery, I would travel the world." The second conditional is often used to express wishes, desires, or dreams that are unlikely to happen in reality. The speakers to explore potential outcomes or alternative scenarios that do not align with current reality. This is consistent with previous findings that explain the second conditional is used for situations that are highly unlikely to occur, offering speakers the opportunity to speculate about unrealistic scenarios (Gutierrez & Chadwick, 2020).

The differences between the first and second conditionals go beyond their grammatical structures; they also involve their pragmatic functions and the psychological distance they create between the speaker and the hypothetical situation. The first conditional relates to realistic scenarios and probable outcomes, emphasizing practical aspects and immediate consequences that may occur. The second conditional encourages speculation and imagination, allowing speakers to reflect on scenarios that are unlikely to happen and their corresponding hypothetical outcomes. Previous research has also shown that mastering the first conditional allows speakers to express future possibilities based on current conditions, while understanding the second conditional provides greater expressive capability by allowing speakers to explore hypothetical scenarios (Aziz, 2021).

Understanding these differences is essential for effective communication in both spoken and written English. Mastering the first conditional enables speakers to discuss future possibilities and likely outcomes based on current conditions, facilitating planning, decision-making, and making realistic predictive statements. Meanwhile, proficiency in the second conditional offers greater freedom of expression, allowing speakers to explore scenarios far from reality, enriching creativity and speculative thinking. The first and second conditionals serve different linguistic purposes in English, each providing speakers with flexible tools to convey various levels of possibility and hypothetical reasoning. Their strategic use enhances communicative precision and expressive depth, enabling speakers to shift between practical predictions and imaginative exploration of alternative realities.

### ***Use and Implications of Third Conditionals***

The third conditional is used to express regret or hypothetical situations in the past that did not occur, as well as to describe the possible outcomes if conditions in the past had been

different. This type of conditional sentence is often used to discuss mistakes or wrong decisions made in the past. Examples: If I had left earlier, I would have caught the train. If they had known about the traffic, they would have taken a different route. The structure of a third conditional sentence involves using the past perfect (had + past participle) in the if-clause and would have + past participle in the result clause. This indicates that both the condition and result occurred in the past and cannot be changed. The third conditional in English Grammar is used to describe hypothetical situations in the past and their imagined outcomes, which are contrary to reality.

This sentence structure consists of the past perfect in the if-clause and "would have" followed by the past participle in the main clause. The example, "If I had studied harder, I would have passed the exam." This construction allows speakers to reflect on events that did not happen and speculate about the different outcomes that might have occurred if circumstances had been different (Borsekova et al., 2020). The primary function of the third conditional is to express regret, remorse, or hypothetical scenarios where the speaker wishes they had acted differently in the past. It aims to highlight the difference between what actually happened and what could have happened under different conditions. The third conditional is particularly useful for reflecting on missed opportunities, past mistakes, or decisions that led to unfavorable results. Previous research indicates that this type of conditional not only reflects regret but also encourages speakers to consider alternative actions and possible consequences, deepening the process of introspection and self-awareness (Taka, 2020).

The third conditional allows speakers to convey more subtle meanings and emotional states related to past events. The speakers can express feelings of disappointment, regret, or acceptance regarding actions or events in the past that were beyond their control. Therefore, the third conditional functions as a tool for storytelling, personal reflection, and philosophical contemplation, allowing individuals to explore hypothetical scenarios and their implications for personal or historical narratives. The third conditional is frequently used in literature, psychology, and historical analysis to analyze alternative historical outcomes, explore characters' motivations and decisions, or examine the implications of different scenarios on human behavior and society. The application extends beyond language proficiency to involve critical thinking, narrative construction, and the exploration of counterfactual scenarios in academic research.

The third conditional plays a crucial role in English grammar as it allows speakers to reflect on hypothetical past events and their potential consequences. The structured use supports deeper expression, emotional reflection, and critical analysis of alternative scenarios, enriching both personal communication and academic discourse.

### ***Common Mistakes and Challenges in Learning Conditional Sentences***

Learning conditional sentences poses common challenges for language learners, stemming from their complex grammatical structures and nuanced usage. Several common errors and difficulties often arise:

### **Misuse of Verb Forms**

Learners frequently struggle with selecting the correct verb form in conditional sentences, particularly in mixed or complex conditionals where multiple tenses are involved. The confusing use of "would have + past participle" in third conditional sentences ("If I had studied harder, I would have passed the exam") versus "would + base form" in second conditional ("If I studied harder, I would pass the exam").

### **Confusion with Conditional Types**

Differentiating between zero, first, second, third, and mixed conditionals can be challenging. Learners may incorrectly apply a conditional structure that does not align with the intended meaning or context of the situation, leading to communication breakdowns.

### **Overgeneralization**

Some learners tend to overgeneralize conditional structures or apply them incorrectly across different contexts. For example, using second conditional forms (e.g., "If I would go") in situations that call for first conditional structures ("If I go").

### **Cultural and Linguistic Interference**

Cultural and linguistic differences can influence learners' understanding and use of conditionals. Translating directly from their native language may lead to literal translations that do not align with English conditional rules and conventions.

### **Semantic Accuracy**

Ensuring the intended meaning is accurately conveyed can be a challenge, especially when expressing subtle nuances of hypothetical or uncertain situations. Learners may struggle to convey shades of possibility, certainty, or regret effectively.

These challenges highlight the complexity of mastering conditional sentences in English and underscore the need for targeted instructional strategies to address these issues. Effective teaching methods include providing clear explanations, ample practice opportunities, and feedback tailored to correcting specific errors. The educators can better support learners in acquiring proficiency in using conditional sentences by addressing these common pitfalls.

### ***Strategies for Teaching Conditional Sentences***

Teaching conditional sentences effectively requires the application of various methods and techniques that actively engage students while facilitating their understanding of the complex grammatical structures. The effective method is contextualization, which involves relating conditional sentences to real-life situations that are relevant to the students. This helps them understand the importance of conditional sentences in everyday communication. Additionally, modeling and guided practice are crucial. The teacher demonstrates how to construct different types of conditional sentences (such as zero, first, second, third, and mixed conditionals) and provides guided practice exercises where students can apply what they have learned in structured contexts. Error correction also plays a critical role by offering targeted feedback on common mistakes related to verb forms, conditional structures, and

semantic accuracy. This helps students understand and correct their mistakes when using conditional sentences. The use of visual aids, such as diagrams or charts, can also be very helpful in illustrating the structure and meaning of different types of conditional sentences, making it easier for students to grasp complex concepts. Another effective approach is through role-playing and dialogues. In these activities, students can use conditional sentences in realistic conversational contexts, making the learning process more interactive and strengthening their understanding.

The use of appropriate instructional media can enrich the learning process. The example, educational games that involve forming conditional sentences based on specific scenarios can add an element of fun and competition, making learning more enjoyable and motivating for students. Technology also plays a significant role, with the use of interactive whiteboards, educational apps, or online platforms offering interactive exercises and quizzes on conditional sentences. These tools provide immediate feedback and allow students to practice independently. Digital storytelling is also a creative approach that can enhance students' language production skills while reinforcing their understanding of grammatical rules. The use of interactive media like this can accelerate students' comprehension of conditional sentences. Additionally, designing interactive worksheets that include fill-in-the-blank activities, matching exercises, or sentence transformation tasks can maintain students' engagement and help them self-assess their progress in mastering the material.

The educators can enhance the teaching of conditional sentences by combining these teaching strategies and effectively utilizing instructional media. Previous research also supports the notion that diverse approaches, along with the use of technology and interactive media, can strengthen students' understanding and increase their confidence in using conditional sentences in both everyday communication and academic contexts.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that conditional sentences play a crucial role in English grammar as they allow speakers to express hypothetical situations, possibilities, and consequences of various conditions. The four main types of conditional sentences—zero, first, second, and third—each have distinct structures and uses, which are essential for effective communication both in everyday and academic contexts. The zero conditional is used to state general truths or scientific facts, while the first conditional describes future situations that may happen. The second conditional explores hypothetical scenarios or highly unlikely situations in the present or future, and the third conditional reflects on past events that did not occur. The use of conditional sentences, a clear understanding of the structure and function of each type of conditional is necessary, as this will affect the clarity and accuracy of communication. The differences in structure and function, speakers can more effectively convey their ideas and hypothetical situations in English.

This study has limitations in terms of its scope and focus on the structure of conditional sentences without exploring their application in broader learning contexts or communication interactions. The future research, it is recommended to delve deeper into the application of conditional sentences in English language teaching contexts and their impact on students' understanding and communication skills. Additionally, exploring the effects of using technology and instructional media in teaching conditional sentences would be beneficial.

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