linguæ & litterae

Publications of the School of Language & Literature
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6

Constructions:
Emerging and Emergent

Edited by Peter Auer and Stefan Pfänder

De Gruyter
# Table of Contents

**Peter Auer and Stefan Pfänder**
Constructions: Emergent or emerging? .................................................. 1

**Paul Hopper**
Emergent grammar and temporality in interactional linguistics ............. 22

**Simona Pekarek Doehler**
Emergent grammar for all practical purposes: the on-line formatting of left and right dislocations in French conversation ............................. 45

**Arnulf Deppermann**
Constructions vs. lexical items as sources of complex meanings.
A comparative study of constructions with German verstehen .................. 88

**Wolfgang Imo**
Online changes in syntactic gestalts in spoken German.
Or: do garden path sentences exist in everyday conversation? .................. 127

**Susanne Günthner**
Between emergence and sedimentation. Projecting constructions in German interactions ................................................................. 156

**Thieme Breyer, Oliver Ehmer and Stefan Pfänder**
Improvisation, temporality and emergent constructions .......................... 186

**Peter Auer and Jan Lindström**
Verb-first conditionals in German and Swedish:
convergence in writing, divergence in speaking ..................................... 218

**Dagmar Barth-Weingarten and Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen**
Action, prosody and emergent constructions: The case of *and* .............. 263

**Yael Maschler and Susan Shaer**
On the emergence of adverbial connectives from Hebrew relative clause constructions .......................................................... 293
Verb-first conditionals in German and Swedish: convergence in writing, divergence in speaking*

1 Introduction

Like all Germanic languages, German and Swedish have at least two ways of encoding conditional relations between two propositions, which are often taken to be functionally and semantically equivalent. One is based on the canonical subordinate clause pattern that makes use of a conjunction (wenn and om, respectively); the other is based on the clause-initial placement of the finite verb. These verb-initial conditional clauses (henceforth: V1-C) show strikingly similar patterns in both languages according to the grammar books. In this paper, we will first show that, other than expected, the usage patterns of Swedish and German V1-C are quite different when the difference between written and spoken language is taken into account: While the construction is frequent in certain written genres in both languages, it is almost absent from modern spoken German, but widely used in spoken Swedish. Comparing the same construction in two closely related languages therefore sheds light on processes of language change, but only when genre differences are taken into consideration. Secondly, we will argue that the on-line emergence of the V1-C and the conditional conditional constructions in spoken interaction is subject to different regularities in the two languages. The advantages and disadvantages of the V1-C construction’s on-line processing in spoken German and Swedish come to the fore as soon as the constructions are analysed from the point of view of interactional linguistics. We conclude by arguing that the disadvantages of the on-line processing of the V1-C in spoken German are a major reason why these seem to be disappearing from the language, with the exception of some fossilised variants which structurally resemble those of English.

* We wish to thank Martin Hilpert and Stefan Pfänder for their comments on a previous version.

2 What the grammar books say

Verb-first constructions are a versatile resource with a bundle of parallel functions in German and Swedish (Auer 1993; Diesel 1997; Lindström and Karlsson 2005; Önnerfors 1997). The V1 pattern is used at least as the normal form of polar question (1), in the conditional protasis as an alternative to a conjunctive conditional (2), as a possible form for declarative sentences, most typically in a responsive dialogue position (3), and in a number of special pragmatic functions such as for optatives, adhortatives, exclamatives, and desideratives (4).

1. *Haben Sie Fragen?*
   *Har ni frågor?*
   ‘Do you have questions?’

2. *Haben Sie Fragen, können Sie mit mir Kontakt aufnehmen.*
   *Har ni frågor, kan ni kontakta mig.*
   ‘If you have questions, you can contact me.’

   ‘Do you have questions? – ‘Yes, we do.’
   *Skap vi gör det? – Ja, kan vi göra.*
   ‘Shall we do it?’ – ‘Yes, we can.’

4. *Wäre das nur so einfach.*
   *Vore det så enkelt.*
   ‘Were it so simple.’

Standard grammars mention V1-Cs but have very little to say about them. For example, the Swedish Academy Grammar (Telem, Hellberg and Andersson 1999: 647–648) mainly notes that the V1-C construction is an alternative to the regular om-conditionals and that both of these conditional constructions are syntactically and semantically similar. The DUDEN grammar of German (2005: 1093) merely lists V1-C as an alternative to conjunctive conditionals, and so does the monumental *Grammatik der deutschen Sprache* (Zifonun et al. 1997 vol. 3, 2281). Weinrich (2003: 743) goes a step further towards a genre differentiation and points out that V1-C is typical of scien-
scientific prose, and that in spoken German, the construction is often linked to the use of the "restrictive conjunctive of the modal verb soll" (translation PA/JL), i.e. *sollte. The only structural difference between Swedish and German, from the point of view of the grammars, is that in German, V1-C can be postponed, while this is not possible in Swedish:²

(4) Sie können gern mit mir Kontakt aufnehmen, **sollten** Sie noch Fragen haben.

*Ni kan kontakta mig, skulle ni ännu ha frågor.

“You can contact me, should you still have questions.’

V1-Cs do not thus look like a terribly exciting phenomenon at first glance. When we widen the scope of comparison to include more Germanic languages, however, an interesting imbalance between conjunctional and V1-Cs emerges (see table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of V1-Cs in some Germanic languages (adapted and supplemented from Iatridou/Embick 1994)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Prepositioned (counterfactual)</th>
<th>Prepositioned (non-counterfactual)</th>
<th>Postpositioned (counterfactual)</th>
<th>Postpositioned (non-counterfactual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old English</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle English</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern English</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod. German (written)</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yiddish</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Swedish</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Swedish</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icelandic</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There seems to be a tendency to restrain the contexts in which V1-C can be used, as compared to those in which the conjunctional conditional is possible. Modern English has gone furthest by restricting V1-C to counterfactuals (and in fact, only when applied with a limited set of auxiliaries like **bad**)

² The Swedish Academy Grammar (vol. 4: 467) notes that a concessive conditional clause (e.g. “even if”) in V1 form which also contains the emphatic adverb *så*’’so’’ may stand in postposition: *Det klarar hun inte, häller hun så på i tio år* ‘He won’t make it, even if he (then) continued for ten years’. This is not, strictly speaking, the V1-C construction we are investigating here, since an additional adverbial element (e.g. *så*) must be present to explicate the special concessive reading. Hilpert (2010) also cites a few constructed Swedish examples of postpositioned V1-C.

3 The more restricted nature of V1-C is also due to the fact that it cannot be used in some syntactic contexts. For instance, it is impossible as an answer to a question:

A: *Kommt du auch rechtzeitig?*

‘Will you be on time?’

B: (a) *Kann ich ein Auto mieten*

(b) *Wenn ich ein Auto mieten kann.*

‘If I can rent a car’

or when the protasis is in the scope of a focus or negation particle (Iatridou and Embick 1994: 197):

(a) *Ich hätte **nur** dann rechtzeitig kommen können, hätte ich ein Auto gemietet.*

(b) Ich hätte nur dann rechtzeitig kommen können, wenn ich ein Auto gemietet hätte.

‘I would have only arrived on time if I had rented a car.’
(5) (van den Nest 2009) (source: St. Galler Tagblatt 24.4.98, "Schalmeien laden ein zum Fest")

Sind Sie neugierig auf die Schalmeien-Musik geworden? have you curious about the shawm music become?

Dann lobt sich ein Besuch am 3. Mai, ab 10.30 Uhr am Krummensea-Mannli-Fest.

Then rewards REFL a visit on 3 May, from 10:30, at Kummensea- Mannli festival.

‘Have you become curious about shawm music?’

‘Then you will enjoy a visit to the Kummensea-Mannli festival on May 3, from 10:30 on.’

Van den Nest believes that the existence of all three points on the cline in modern German is evidence for their synchronic emergence. His empirical argument is that earlier stages of the language still dominantly adhere to the structure of the V1-question in coding realis protases and using non-integrated syntax. Investigating similar parameters, Hilpert (2010) argues on the basis of the structure of V1-C in modern German that V1-Cs are less grammaticalized in this language than in Swedish, and that German still shows traces of the Q/A-sequence from which they developed.

Other writers have taken different views. For instance, Erdmann (1886: 188) observes:

Seit ältester Zeit dient ferner das vorangestellte Verbum zur Bezeichnung eines nur angenommenen Vorganges in conjunctionslosen Bedingungssätzen. Ursprünglich wurden sie wol selbständig dem folgenden Satze vorangestellt: kommt er (=ich will annehmen, dass er kommt), so seh ich ihn. Dann wurde das vorangestellte Verbum als besonderes Kennzeichen dieses Satzverhältnisses angesehen und machte jede Conjunction einbehrrlich.

Here, conditional V1-placement is not linked to Y/N-questions but treated as a general coding device for a ‘presumed process’: an epistemic status that applies to both conditional protases and questions. Behaghel (1928: 637) dis-

---

4 A point that may be raised against this argument is that clause integration in general is much weaker in OHG than in modern German. OHG examples of V1-C (see the list in Blatz 1896: 1171) often seem to be less integrated than modern examples because the protasis does not occupy the position before the finite verb (the “front field” of modern German). This makes it look less integrated, but this lack of integration does not reflect the old question format, and is rather due to the lack of a field structure and the lack of integration of subordinated-into-matrix clauses in general. We can give some examples of Old Swedish below, and the same type of structures can be found in OHG.

Verb-first conditionals in German and Swedish

Distinguishes between realis (indicative present tense) conditionals for which he assumes that ‘derartige Sätze gehn zweifellos auf alte fragesätze zurück’; present tense conjunctive conditionals the origin of which he sees in Aufforderungen (e.g. sei getrenn bis in den Tod, so wil ich dir die Krone der Lebens geben – Luther Offenb. 2, 10); and past conjunctive conditionals, which he traces back to optatives (Wunschnähte, e.g. o biete ich Flügel wie Tauben, siehe, so wolte ich mich ferne wagen machen. Luth., Ps. 55, 7). Here, a variety of old V1 structures is believed to have influenced the V1 conditionals in their various meanings.

Erdmann’s claim that questions and protases in conditional clauses share a common feature of non-assertiveness (both questions and protases have no fixed truth value), and that V1-conditionals code their non-assertiveness, has been taken up by Harris and Campbell (1995). Even more generally, Hopper (1975: 51) argues that in Old Swedish (as presumably in OHG and Old English), the “clause-initial verb was a possible emphatic alternative to the final and enclitic verb”, i.e. it was one of the normal ways to encode a relationship between two propositions. In this theory, there is no need to derive V1 conditionals from questions or any other specific sentence mode. Wessén (1956: 215ff) also points out that verb-initial clausal syntax occurred generally in Old Swedish main clauses, for instance in a kind of presentational construction (often called “narrative inversion”), which had to be followed by another sentence. In this stage of development, the first (V1) clause was an independent clause juxtaposed to another main clause that contained a formulation of a consequence of the information expressed in the initial clause:

(6) Gangår at stjäl bryti ok þräl. bryti skal uppi hängjä ok eigþ þräl. (VgL I)

Go and steal villain and slave. Villain shall be hanged and not slave.

‘A villain and his slave go there and steal. The villain shall be hanged and not his slave.’

(7) Vil konungin af landit fara. Ángin af idar skal bonum fólja. (Birg, aut.)

Wants king from land go. No one of you shall him follow.

‘The king wants to leave the land. No one of you shall follow him.’

This paratactic construction consisting of two juxtaposed main clauses in principle has the semantics of a V1-C in modern Swedish, but there is no structural integration yet. The second clause, semantically the consequence, begins with the subject (non-inverted word order, first clause is outside the front field). In the next phase, the second clause tends to be introduced by a resumptive, anaphoric ha ‘then’, þar ‘there’ or þat ‘that’ (Wessén 1956: 218):

(8) Ár eig sun. Þa är dotter. (VgL I)
Is no son. Then is daughter.
'Is there no son. Then it is the daughter (whose turn it is).'

(9) Dräp der majör man i kirkj. Det är niphingsvärt. (Vgl. I)
Kills another man in church. That is villain's work.
'Kills a man another man in a church. That is a villain's work.'

This can be seen as a step towards a hypotactic construction in which the antecedent is understood to be subordinate to the subsequent clause. The modern, fully integrated V1 construction is reached when the anaphoric marker is dropped, in which case the antecedent is interpreted as a subordinate clause that inhabits the front field of a main clause, followed by the finite verb (in the standard V2 position) of the superordinate clause:

(10) Finns det ingen son, står dottern i tur.
'If there is no son, it is the daughter's turn.'

Even though we believe that there are good reasons which support the Hopper-Wessén theory on the historical emergence of V1-C (which is fully compatible with the findings which we will present in the following sections), we will not make any strong claims about this historical aspect here. Rather, we will focus on the second phase of the history of the V1-C, and particularly on an explanation of the differences between spoken Swedish (which we take to represent the older state) and spoken German (which we claim to represent a newer state, closer to modern English). These differences have to do with a certain narrowing down of the contexts in which V1-Cs can be used.

3 V1 conditionals in written German and Swedish

In this section we explore the use of V1-C in modern written German and Swedish in quantitative and qualitative terms. In both languages, the construction is quite frequent and occurs in a variety of grammatical shapes, although usage is heavily influenced by text genre.

For written German, we performed a corpus search in the annotated database of the IDS Mannheim (TAGGED – Archiv der morphosyntaktisch annotierten Korpora) in two subcorpora: the LIMAS subcorpus of ca. 1970, which is a 1.23-million-word “balanced” corpus modelled on the American English Brown corpus, and the much larger (19.25-million-word) newspaper corpus Mannheimer Morgen (1991–1996). The LIMAS-corpus contains a variety of written genres, from novels to newspaper ads to religious treatises and instruction leaflets. The newspaper corpus also contains a variety of genres,

but only those that can be found in a modern, regional, daily newspaper. The search algorithm we used looks for initial verb forms in the beginning of a sentence (approximated by verbs after !, ?, .), followed in a distance of no more than 20 words by a comma, which in turn is followed by a verb. This, of course, gives a high number of irrelevant hits; therefore all hits in the LIMAS subcorpus were checked manually. In the case of the MM corpus, 756 examples (all instances extracted from the 1991 subcorpus) were checked manually and the total number was estimated on this basis (cf. Table 2).5

Table 2: Occurrence of prepositioned V1-C and wenn-C in two German written corpora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LIMAS</th>
<th>Mannheimer Morgen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total words</td>
<td>1.23 m.</td>
<td>19.25 m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hits</td>
<td>1.23 m.</td>
<td>19.25 m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>errors</td>
<td>4577</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V1-Cs</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>2092 (estimated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per 1000 words</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.11 (estimated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wenn-Cs</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>4004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per 1000 words</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is tempting to compare this value with the likelihood of the occurrence of initial wenn-clauses in the same corpus,6 here approximated by the number of occurrences of the conjunction wenn in sentence-initial position. Prepositioned wenn occurs about as frequently as (initial) V1-Cs in the LIMAS-corpus, but about twice as frequently as V1-Cs in the newspaper corpus. Despite the obvious limitations of such a comparison, the numbers make it clear that V1-Cs are a relevant alternative to prepositioned conjunctive conditionals in written German.7

V1-Cs are much less frequent in the newspaper corpus than in the LIMAS-corpus (in a ratio of almost 1:4). Why this difference? First of all, comparison with the wenn-conditionals (ratio 1:2) shows that conditional re-

5 We also checked the occurrence of conjunctions before initial verbs (und V1-C, aber V1-C) but they only occur with negligible frequency.
6 Since we only looked at prepositioned German V1-Cs (and since the postpositioning of Swedish V1-Cs is impossible), it seemed useless to compare the V1-C data to the totality of conjunctional conditionals.
7 Since German wenn-clauses are often used with a temporal meaning, the number of conditional wenn-clauses is in fact even lower than the number suggest. Note that in written German (unlike in spoken German), wenn-clauses are often postpositioned (Auer 2000).
Verb-first conditionals in German and Swedish

Table 3: V1-C and prepositioned conjunctival protases in written Swedish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corpus</th>
<th>SUC 2.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total words</td>
<td>1.03 m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V1-C Instances</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per 1000 words</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-initial om-instances</td>
<td>667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per 1000 words</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to calculate Swedish om-conditionals, our search target was om-subordinators that inhabit the beginning of a graphical sentence. We thus eliminated adverbal and prepositional uses of om, but the search nevertheless resulted in some noise—approximately 15% of the results consisted of sentence-initial embedded polar questions and postpositioned conditional protases that were given a graphical sentence slot of their own. The errors were again eliminated by hand, which eventually left us with 525 instances of om-conditionals. Also, instances in which a conjunction or the subordinator att preceded the sentence-initial om-protasis were targeted, resulting in a further 142 instances (Table 3).

When compared to our German data, the SUC corpus has a higher frequency of V1-C than the Mannheim newspaper corpus but only a slightly lower frequency than the LIMAS corpus. The latter comparison seems particularly relevant since both corpora were composed according to the same principles. Conjunctival om-protases are clearly more favoured in SUC, whereas in LIMAS the distribution between V1-C and sentence-initial venn-protases was practically even.

Since SUC can be broken down into text types (other than LIMAS), the Swedish data nicely show the genre dependency of V1-Cs (cf. Table 4). This calculation is based on the results of the first search which gave 507 instances, i.e. instances in which V1-C initiates a graphical sentence without a preceding conjunction.

As in German, newspaper texts (reviews, reportage, editorials) do not have considerably high frequencies of V1-C (the combined V1-C frequency for the three newspaper genres is 0.2), and the frequency is equally low in the superordinated category "imaginative prose", i.e. texts mostly from novels. The construction is particularly common in legal, administrative, regulatory, and instructive texts, which are found in the genre categories "administration" and "skills, trades and hobbies".10 Surprisingly, however, the con-

8 We would like to thank Lars Borin at Språkbanken, Gothenburg University, who conducted the basic searches in the version of SUC that is stored in the Språkbanken on-line services (http://sprakbanken.gu.se).
9 We utilized a variety of search strings that were based on the morphological coding of SUC and lexical specifications, for example [word= "och""][msd= "V[OIPAS.*][msd= "P.*"]", i.e. the word och followed by a verb in active present tense followed by a pronoun. This yielded instances such as ... och där man lång- fjärdsbus, tar det lång tid... and goes one by long voyage bus (i.e. if one goes), it takes a long time.
10 Indeed, in a Swedish handbook for authors of legal texts it is noted that conditional clauses with inverted word order (i.e. V1-C) are a "classic", often "practical" device and should not be condemned as old-fashioned (Brønn et al. 2004: 76).
Table 4: Conditionals in written Swedish according to genres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>V1-C/1000 words</th>
<th>Om-C/1000 words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Press: Reviews</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginative prose</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned and scientific writing</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biographies, essays, memoirs</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press: Reportage</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press: Editorial</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular lore</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration etc.</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills, trades and hobbies</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

struction does not seem to be typical of Swedish academic writing. One reason may be that this corpus category does not contain texts from natural sciences and technology, since these are almost exclusively written in English; instead, natural sciences and technology are represented in the category "popular lore" (popularised scientific texts), which is the third-highest genre regarding the frequency of V1-C. In most text types, the om-conditional is considerably more frequent than the V1-C. In the top frequency category "skills, trades and hobbies", however, V1-C are more frequent than conjunctional conditionals (this is also the case in the newspaper genre "reportage"). A plausible explanation for this is that the texts in this heterogenic category often have an instructive character; the sources include books and handbooks on interior decorating, pets, sports, food and wine, travel, motor vehicles, outdoor activities, computers, gardening, private finances, religion, as well as publications from non-governmental organisations of various types and trade unions (see Gustafson-Capkova and Hartmann 2006).

In the following, we take a brief look at the most distinct functional characteristics of verb-first conditionals in the German and Swedish written data. Typical German examples of V1-C expressing law-like regularities are the following ((11) is from a legal text, (12) from a physics text, and (13) from instructions on how to play a card game):


'The representatives have to come to two different decisions: a decision about joining the association of the savings banks and a decision about the unification of the savings banks. If the declarations of will of all the involved parties correspond with each other, then two public contracts have come into existence, which are the foundation of the formation of the association of the savings banks and the agreement about the unification of the savings banks respectively.'


'The highest field strength occurs where the conduct type of the material changes. If the field strength reaches values above approximately ((formula)), then multiplication of conduct carriers by shock ionisation begins.'

(13) As ist die niederste Karte, dann folgen Sieben, Acht, Neun, Zehn, Bube, Dame und zuletzt der König als die höchste Karte. Haben zwei Spieler die gleiche niedrigste Karte, so zahlen beide. (LIM/L11.00090, Grupp, C., 99 Karten spiel; p. 68–76)

'Ace is the lowest card, then seven, eight, nine, ten, jack, queen follow, finally the king as the highest card. If two players have the same lowest card, then both pay.'

A special case of this usage is the V1-C with the verb sein ('to be') in the present subjunctive which is only used in logical and mathematical texts (in the sense of English 'let X be Y: then ...');

(14) Sei auf Sigma (über ((Term))) eine Metrik γ erklärt, dann kann man γ zu einer Metrik omniron auf ((Term)) erweitern. Seien ((Formel)) und (Formel), dann ist omniron erklärt durch ((Formel)) und ((Formel)). (LIM/L11.00103, Ratschek, H.*, Über die ...; Archiv für el. Rechnen: Vol.7, 3–4, p. 172–180)

'Let a metric γ be explained by a (over ((term))). Then γ can be expanded to a metric V on ((term)). Let there be ((formula)) and ((formula)). Then V is explained by ((formula)) and ((formula)).'
Like English, Swedish uses the imperative låt ‘let’ and a free-standing consequen-
tial clause containing a resuming då ‘then’ in corresponding contexts:

(15) Först, låt det vara ett primtal. Vi har då funnit ännu ett primtal utöver de
givna A, B och C. Därefter, låt EF vara ett sammansatt tal. Det har då
enligt kommentaren önsat en delare som är ett primtal. Kalla detta primtal G.
(SUC-jf; Mathematics)

‘First, let it be a primary number. We have then found yet another
primary number apart from the given A, B and C. Thereafter, let EF
be a compound number. It has then, according to the commentary
above, a divisor which is a primary number. Call this primary number
G.’

Swedish – like German – favours the V1 construction in instructive and
regulatory texts. Typical instances are (16) which is from a food recipe, (17)
which concerns private finances, and (18) which is a legal text showing a
series of coordinated V1-Cs within one sentence frame.

(16) Portionsbröd gräddas i varmare ugn, ca 225°, i 10–15 minuter. Låt helst bröden
svälta på ett galler. Får de kallna utan handdukar blir brödskörtan knappt
och samtidigt lite gry. Vill man ha mjukare yta på brödet är det bättre
tillda in tyvärr bröd i handdukar och låta det svalna så. (SUC-ea; Hobbies,
amusements)

‘Portion bread is baked in a warmer oven, ca. 225°, for 10–15 minutes.
Let the bread cool off on a wire rack. If they are allowed to cool off
without a towel, the crust will become hard and also a bit tough. If
you want to have a softer surface on the bread, it is better to wrap a
newly baked bread in a towel and let it cool off like that.’

(17) Den effektiva räntan är garanterad om spararen behåller obligationen ända tills den
löses in. Men skulle den säljus före den löses in kan räntan bli lägre eller
börje. Allt beror på hur marknadsräntorna utvecklas under tiden. Går ränt-
torna upp efter det att obligationen köpts sänker värden på obligationen,
och skulle räntorna gå ner ökar värden på obligationen. (SUC-ea; Hobbies,
amusements)

‘The effective interest is guaranteed if the saver keeps the bond until
it is cashed. But should it be sold before it is cashed, the interest can
be lower or higher. It all depends on how the market interests are
developing during the time. If the interests go up after the obligation
has been bought, the value of the obligation will decrease, and should
the interests go down, the value of the obligation will increase.’

(18) Anlämnas inte varan eller anlämnas den för sent och beror det inte på
köparen eller något förhållande på hans sida, får köparen enligt 23–29§§
kräva fullgörelse eller häva köpet samt dessutom kräva skadestånd. (SUC-ha;
Government publications)

‘If the article is not delivered or if it is delivered too late and if it
does not depend on the buyer or some condition on his side, the
buyer can, according to 23–29§§, claim discharge or cancel the pur-
chase and in addition claim damages.’

Among the remaining cases of non-counterfactual V1-C in German, we
often find metalinguistic, text-organising uses such as in the following
examples (a total of 6% of all the examples in the LIMAS corpus):

(19) Analysiert man den Begriff des Kerygmas bei Bultmann, so gewinnt
er die für Bultmanns Denken typische und notwendige Formalität zurück,
die ihm allein rechtferigt. (LIM/LI1.00056, Sölle, D., Politische Theologie; Hoff-
nung verändert die Welt)

‘If one analyses the notion of kerygma in Bultmann’s writings,
then it regains the kind of formality typical and necessary for Bult-
mann’s thinking which alone can justify it.’

(20) Als neue Sportart aus Übersee schwappet die Inline-Skater-Welle nach Deutsch-
land. Glaubt man den Sportgeschichten, so sind bereits zwei Millionen
Skater auf den Straßen unterwegs. (MM/606.24052: Mannheimer Morgen,
17.06.1996, Lokales; Für Oppauer reichte es nur zu Platz zwei)

‘A new kind of sport from overseas: the wave of inline skating reaches
Germany. If one believes the (reports of the) sports shops, then two
million skaters are skating in the streets already.’

Metalinguistic uses are not uncommon in written Swedish either, especially
in scientific texts:

(21) Betraktar vi dagens våldsamma nationella eruptioner, möter oss mönster
som ter sig egendomligt välbevakan. (SUC-ic; Social sciences)

‘If we look at recent violent national eruptions, we encounter pat-
terns that seem strangely familiar.’

(22) Slår man upp blyg i Svensk Handordbok står det förlagen, försåg, skrygg,
genredad; ord som alla uttrycker en känsla av obehag tillsammans med andra män-
niskor. (SUC-fb; Behavioural sciences)
‘If you look up shy in the Swedish Handbook Dictionary it says awkward, self-conscious, timid, embarrassed: words all of which express a feeling of discomfort together with other people.’

However, not all V1 subordinate clauses code conditional relationships in written German. In some rare cases, a temporal relation (‘as soon as’, ‘once’) is expressed by the same construction:

(23) (instructions on how to build a model aeroplane)

_Sind die beiden Tragflächenhälfte verleimt und trocken, können wir die Flügel zusammensetzen._ (LIMTG/LI1.00044 hobby, 1970, Nr. 9; Nr. 16, S. 136–144; S. 115–118; [Zwei Bastelratgeber])

‘Once the two sides of the wing have been glued and are dry, we can start to attach them (the wings).’

Also, there are some rare instances in which the V1-C expresses a concessive relationship in German:


‘The first five years of independent Kenya are recorded in Gertzel’s study “The politics of Independent Kenya 1963–8”. Even though this book is written in a somewhat complicated and sometimes abstract way, the six chapters analyse in great detail, and for the first time so comprehensively, the political happenings in Kenya during this decisive phase from new perspectives (only chapter 5 is a reprint).’

Clearly, the clause introduced by V1 contains a proposition, the truth of which is taken for granted by the author, i.e. its semantics is completely different from that of the protasis in a conditional relationship, the truth of which is not presupposed. This also holds for another non-conditional use of V1 dependent clauses in German, which is much more frequent than temporal or concessive ones. We can call it an adversative use:


‘This time of the ill people, most of whom have been living in the sanatorium for several years with the same daily rhythm, is entirely different from the time of the people on the open plains. While there is activity, change, and events on the one side, there is inactivity, sameness, and quiet on the other.’

There are also a few V1-C instances in the Swedish data which could be classified as concessive-adversative, or which at least only vaguely resemble a conditional meaning, but this use seems to be less widespread than in German:

(26) _Har spelarna höga löner så innebär det också att deras publik och sponsorer ställer högre krav._ (SUC/eb; Society press)

‘While the players have high wages, it also means that their audience and sponsors demand a lot of them.’

(27) _Blir vi vad vi tänker, blir vi förvisso också vad vi äter._ (SUC/ga; Biographies, memoirs)

‘While we become what we think, we definitely also become what we eat.’

Note that adversativity is a very weak semantic relationship, much less precise than conditionality or concessivity. This renders the V1 construction semantically flexible, and in newspaper German, there is a tendency for it to turn into a mannerism, i.e. a semantically vague way of formally linking two propositions whose actual relationship remains unclear. An example follows in which it is difficult to replace the V1-clause by any more semantically exact conjunction:

(28) _Hier wie auch bei Volksweisen aus Italien und Rußland gab Sensibilität und Ausdruckskraft der beiden ideal harmonierenden Künstler den Vorträgen die besondere Note. Stand die Virtuosität stets im Dienst stilistisch ausgewogener Interpretation, so feierte sie Triumph in der faszinierenden Wiedergabe von Maurice Ravel’s “Piec en forme de Habanera”. (MM/606.23143: Mannheimer Morgen, 08.06. 1996, Feuilleton; Exotische Klangfarben)_

‘Here like in the folk songs of Italy and Russia, the sensibility and expressivity of the two perfectly harmonizing artists gave a special note to the performances. While (?) virtuosity always served the stylistically balanced interpretation, it achieved triumph in the fascinating rendition of Maurice Ravel’s “Piec en forme de Habanera”.’
Table 5 and Figures 1 and 2 summarise some of the semantic features of German V1-dependent clauses for each of the two subcorpora (for the newspaper corpus, the numbers refer to one year only). Conditionality is more typical of the LIMAS corpus, while advernative V1-dependent clauses are more frequent in the newspaper corpus. As Fig. 2 shows, the percentage of potentialis and realis constructions coded as V1-C also differs considerably, and this is mainly due to the high number of *sollte-introduced potentialis V1-Cs in MM91.

Table 5a/b: The profiles of V1 subordinate clauses in the LIMAS corpus and in the MM corpus (top: total of semantic relationships coded; bottom: only conditionals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LIMAS</th>
<th>MM91</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concessive</td>
<td>11 (2%)</td>
<td>1 (&lt;1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adversative</td>
<td>23 (5%)</td>
<td>41 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
<td>1 (&lt;1%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>472 (93%)</td>
<td>266 (86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>507 (100%)</td>
<td>308 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LIMAS</th>
<th>MM91</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realis conditionals</td>
<td>412 (87%)</td>
<td>148 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrealis conditionals</td>
<td>22 (5%)</td>
<td>14 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potentialis conditionals</td>
<td>38 (8%)</td>
<td>104 (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− of these: *sollte/*wollte</td>
<td>14 + 3</td>
<td>77 + 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>472 (100%)</td>
<td>266 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 2: Irrealis, potentialis, and realis conditionals in written German

A comparison between the German and Swedish balanced corpora LIMAS and SUC reveals that the use of V1-C across the general semantic domains realis—irrealis—potentialis is roughly identical in German and Swedish (see Table 6). As in written German, V1-C expressing a realis conditional relation occurs most frequently in written Swedish, whereas V1-C with an irrealis meaning is used more seldom.

Table 6: The general semantic profiles of V1-C in the LIMAS corpus and in the SUC corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LIMAS</th>
<th>SUC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realis conditionals</td>
<td>412 (87%)</td>
<td>326 (88%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrealis conditionals</td>
<td>22 (5%)</td>
<td>17 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potentialis conditionals</td>
<td>38 (8%)</td>
<td>25 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>472 (100%)</td>
<td>368 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Potentialis conditionals in Swedish are signalled with the verb *skulle* 'should' in the protasis (ex. 29), and their rate in SUC is steady albeit not very high (7% of all V1-Cs).

(29) *Skulle jag få chans att välja så vill jag antingen ha ett byggsjobb eller bli bilmekaniker.* (SUC/ec; Occupational and trade union press)

'Should I get the chance to choose, I want to either have a construction job or become a car mechanic.'
In sum, the frequency of V1-Cs in the two most comparable corpora from Swedish and German (SUC and LIMAS) is quite similar, and this also holds for their basic semantic properties. However, the Swedish construction seems to be somewhat more focussed semantically, i.e. it is more exclusively used in order to code conditional relations, while the German construction is less specialised and open to non-conditional readings. This may support Hilpert’s hypothesis (2010) that V1-Cs are more grammaticised in Swedish than in German.

For German, a comparison between the balanced LIMAS corpus and the more biased newspaper corpus (MM) reveals a further genre difference. Not only are V1 subordinate clauses much rarer in the newspaper corpus, but they also have different semantics (more adversative uses, less realis constructions) and different structures (more solle-introduced potentialis forms). Given the magnitude of the difference, it cannot be explained in onomasiological terms alone, although conditionality plays a larger role in LIMAS than in the newspapers. Other explanations are therefore needed. As our genre analysis of the occurrence of V1-Cs in the German LIMAS and the Swedish SUC corpora has shown, realis V1-Cs occur predominantly in scientific, institutional, legal, administrative, as well as instructive texts which are less frequent in a newspaper than in the two balanced corpora. However, there may also be an element of language change involved, since LIMAS is twenty years older than the MM corpus. The argument here must be an indirect one. As we will show in the following section, the sparsity of V1-C in the MM corpus brings it closer to spoken German. Arguably, newspaper German has moved towards spoken language over the last decades, which has implied a continuous divergence from the traditional written style represented by the LIMAS corpus. This may be the basis of the generally low percentages of realis V1-Cs in MM. The convergence between newspaper German and spoken German is also reflected in the tendency observed in both to use potentialis forms introduced by the modal verb solle ‘should’, if V1-C is used at all. A more oral newspaper style does not however explain journalists’ tendency to use V1 subordinate clauses for adversative functions, which is completely lacking in spoken German. Here, it is tempting to argue for the persistence of an old, predominantly written, semantically open construction in German. It remains to be investigated whether this semantic vagueness has persisted throughout the history of V1 subordinate clauses in German.\(^{11}\)

\(^{11}\) Surely, we are not dealing with a recent innovation, as frequent cases of V1-clauses with vaguely adversative meaning in older texts prove. The following example is from 1809 (Goethe, Wahlverwandtschaften, Suhrkamp/Insel 1972: 30):

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5 V1 conditionals in spoken Swedish and German

As we have seen, conditional V1-Cs are frequent in Swedish and German written texts. The spoken data, to which we now turn, present a different picture, however (see Table 7 and Figure 3). Since no suitable annotated corpora of spoken language are available for either German or Swedish, all searches here had to be done by hand. For German, a collection of transcripts from TV reality shows (Big Brother), job interviews, therapeutic interviews, informal chats at a kiosk (Schmitt 1992), informal face-to-face and telephone conversations, and the available corpora of spoken language at the IDS, a total of at least 450,000 words, were searched. This resulted in nine clear examples. On the contrary, a search in a 205,000 word corpus of spoken Swedish (GSM, ca. 20 hours) consisting of 27 group discussions with high school students on music styles and their musical tastes resulted in 88 hits (see Wirdenäs 2002: 49–52). This gives the following percentages:

Table 7: Occurrence of V1-C in spoken and written German and Swedish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Limas/Suc</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Spoken Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>German: per 1000 words</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish: per 1000 words</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>(0.2)(^{12})</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequency of V1-C in the corpus of spoken Swedish used here is even slightly higher than that in the written SUC corpus, which points to the fact that the construction is similarly available in both modalities for coding conditionality. In sharp contrast, V1-C is virtually absent in spoken German, i.e. there is a huge contrast between the spoken and the written modality.

\[^{12}\] Here, we additionally give the frequency count for the newspaper texts contained in SUC in a separate column. It should be kept in mind, however, that this count is based on a quite limited sample; the three newspaper genres (reportage, editorial, reviews) amount to 176,000 words.
realistic possibility. The initial finite verb is in the present tense, and there are no obvious restrictions on the lexical choice of the verb. Admittedly, the construction type clusters around a few common verbs like är ‘is/are’, har ‘has/have’, finns ‘is, exist’, ska ‘shall, will’ and blir ‘become’, but this is largely because these verbs are generally frequent and necessary in many basic grammatical constructions expressing existence, possession, perfective tense, and different modalities. Indeed, these verbs have the character of operators or auxiliaries. Typical examples are found in (30) and (31). The former is taken from a recording in which a midwife (M) is talking to a pregnant woman, and the latter is from a corpus of medical telephone communication in which the conditional construction is used by the counselling pharmacist (P) at a poison emergency centre.13

(30) Tema K:KBU 3. A midwife’s consultation; M=midwife, W=pregnant woman. The midwife is informing the pregnant woman when she can be reached by phone.

M: ä de så att inte ja har mammor här inne,
and is it so that I don’t have mothers here inside
‘and in case I don’t have any mothers in here’
så bruka ja sätta på telefon,
‘I usually switch on the telephone’

(31) GIC:19242. Call to a Poison Control Centre, P=pharmacist. The caller’s child has licked some lamp oil.

P: ehm har de gått mer än sex timmar å ingenting har hänt,
erm has it been more than six hours and nothing’s happened,
‘ehm if six hours have passed and nothing has happened’
då kan man i princip gyskriva de hela,
‘then one can in principle write off the whole thing,’

Full content verbs also occur. Example (32) is taken from an informal group interview. The speaker describes the appropriate mental state when looking for a job in terms of a generally accepted rule (note the parallelism that gives the utterance an air of a proverb; cf. the examples in (48) below):

(32) HUSA:19. Two high-school students are being interviewed about their prejudices, future plans, and media consumption; R=student, I=interviewer.

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13 Transcription conventions follow those of the respective corpora for Swedish and German. Note that in the Swedish data, ‘’ denotes a slightly rising final intonation contour while this is marked by ‘‘’ in the German conversational data. In the Swedish transcription, the comma ‘,’ denotes level intonation contour.
Verb-first conditionals in German and Swedish

As in writing, the verb-first construction is also found in potentialis conditionals with the modal auxiliary skulle ‘should, would’. The condition that is expressed in the protasis is oriented to as being more unlikely than in the realis case; typically it builds upon what has been brought into the discourse earlier. Extract (33) is again from the counselling pharmacist (P) on a poison hotline. It is likely that the use of a V1-C here lends itself to directive formality to the utterance, and therefore contextualises a voice of authority and expertise.

(33) GIC:19242. Call to a Poison Control Centre, P=pharmacist, C=caller.

The caller’s child has licked some lamp oil.

P: men skulle man innan, eh tiden har gått ut här (0.4)
but should one before the time has gone out here (0.4)
'but should you start vomiting or coughing before the time is up'

gått (0.4) kärningar, eller hósta
‘vomiting, or coughing’

eller barnet verkar tyngandat,
or the child seems short of breath’

C: ja [feber (eller nåt sånt där)]
‘yes fever (or something like that)’

P: [eller verkar ha besvär från luftvägarna]
‘or seems to have trouble in the airway’

på nåt sått, då måste man omedelbart jn ti sjukhus
‘in some way, then you must immediately (go) to the hospital’

Verb-first conditionals of the counterfactual, irrealis type, and the realis type in the past tense occur more rarely in our data although there is nothing which makes them ungrammatical. The sporadic examples we have encountered use the auxiliary hade ‘had’ in clause-initial position to form the past perfect tense with a content verb. Extract (34) is taken from an informal get-together among four elderly ladies and shows a counterfactual use. Their conversation contains many short narratives; one of them,

about a dancing event for the elderly, is brought to a conclusion by the following utterance:

(34) SÄINF:2–1. Four elderly women are gathered around coffee and some food.

B: men de va som ja sa att (.) hade de varit för fem år sen
‘but it was as I said (.) had it been five years ago’
då hade ja nog taggat jg:
then I would have surely said yes’

One could argue that the sparsity of counterfactual and past tense V1-Cs in our data may be due to a genre imbalance. For example, there are not many conversations in which story-telling takes place and the speakers are engaged in reporting past events and possibilities. However, written fiction in the SUC corpus also contains few counterfactual V1-Cs and only slightly more past reals V1-Cs than other genres. It seems that irrealis and past reals conditionals are needed fairly seldom in general.

What is significant about the spoken Swedish data is that verb-first conditionals clearly cluster in expert discourse of different types in institutional settings. The construction is usually used by the representative of an institution, i.e. an official or expert. The expert is giving descriptions of standard procedures which eventually lead to standard, even law-like consequences, especially in medical contexts (for example, in descriptions of the effect of different medicines). We have already seen examples of this ‘institutional’ use in (30), (31), and (33). A further example is provided in extract (35), where an environmental advisor is talking with a farmer and describing what he normally observes when examining pastures.

(35) Bergeå et al. 2008. Conservation advisor visits a farmer; A=advisor, F=farmer. The farmer wants to know what the advisor is looking for in his pastures.

A: Vi tittar ju på hur eh (.) närings- (.) hur mycke närings
‘We look at how (.) nutrient- (.) how many nutrients’
de är i marken,
‘there are in the soil’

F: Åja.

A: Äre väldigt näringsrika så (1.2) >äre ju så att.
‘Are very nutrient-rich then (1.2) is of course so that’

så att (1.2) >äre ju (1.2) så att
‘If it is very rich in nutrients’

nåra få (0.8) växter (0.8) klarar sej väldigt bra:
‘only a few (0.8) plants (0.8) manage very well’
Verb-first conditionals in German and Swedish

P: borta i den stolen där borta.
   'back in that chair back there'
S: "jaha du"
   'right'
   (2.2)
P: vill du hänga av dej kappan så går de bra de.
   want you hang up your coat then goes it well
   'if you want to hang up your coat then please do'
S: jae

In cases such as this one there is some ambiguity between a conditional and
an interrogative reading of the first clause; that is, the conditional clause
“asks” what the other would like to do. The offer is then explicitly
commented as something unproblematic in the apodosis (så går det bra ‘then
please do’). It is noteworthy that parallel uses are found in instructive written
texts like (38), in which the reader is referred to an institution or an expert
for further information.14 Formal politeness is further underlined by the
capitalization of the second person singular pronoun du (in different
morphological forms):

(38) Vill Du veta mer kan Du vända Dig till personalfunktionen, den nybil-
dade omställningsgruppen, Din chef eller Dina fackliga företrädare.
(SUC/hb; Municipal publications)

   'If you want to know more you can turn to the personnel department,
the newly established adjustment group, your head of the unit, or your
trade union representatives.'

In sequential terms, V1-Cs are sometimes deployed by speakers to state their
definitive stance on a subject matter. These definitive formulations close
the argument and sequence. In the following example, a farmer (A) formulates
the irrefutable consequences of an old-fashioned, toxic way of cultivating
the ground if practiced today; this line ends his argument about cultivation
methods:

(39) TemaK:GML.4. Five farmers discussing in a focus group about geneti-
cally modified food and new cultivation methods.

A: man skulle göska mycke man skulle spryta mycke å
   'one would fertilize a lot one would spray out a lot and'

14 The conditional–interrogative ambiguity together with the second-person form
of address seems to be frequently exploited in various informational leaflets and
advertisements (cf. Lassus 2010). For a further discussion, see extract (51) below.
Verb-first conditionals in German and Swedish

B: nå radion ja (...) om man kör bil

‘no the radio yes (...) if you are driving a car’

C: kommer de på radion så stänger ja inte av

‘if it comes on the radio I don’t turn it off’

men ja skulle inte (...) lyssna på de själv så (...) självmant

‘but I would not (...) listen to it myself so (...) of my own accord’

Evidence for the closing effect of the V1-C in line 9 comes from the subsequent pause and the other parties’ supportive acknowledgment tokens (ja ‘yes’). Similar cases were found in the corpus of discussions with Swedish high school (gymnasium) students (GSM). The students were asked to give their opinion about different musical styles and to justify their opinions. V1-Cs surface when a definitive stance and argument closure are reached, as in C’s second utterance in extract (40):

(40) GSM:2. High-school students are being interviewed about musical styles. I=Interviewer.

I: men tycker ni att de e bra? (...) ä de nånting ni

‘but do you think it is good? (...) is it something you’

I: lyssnar på hemma

‘listen to at home’

A: ja

‘yes’

B: nå

‘no’

A: nå ( ) radion

‘no ( ) the radio’

C: nå

‘no’

D: nå ja sätter inte på de själv de e om de e på radion

‘no I don’t put in on myself it is if it is on the radio’

C’s conclusion is not formulated out of the blue, but the ingredients are offered by the previous speakers D and B.

*om*-conditionals behave differently in sequential terms. Extract (41) is a case in point: The *om*-conditional is used by a first speaker (A) to present and explore an option. The second speaker (D), using a verb-first variant of the same proposition, coins the suggested option as something of a rule without exceptions.

(41) GSM:20. High-school students are being interviewed about musical styles. I=Interviewer.

I: ä de nåt som ni skulle kunna lyssna på hemma?

‘is it PART something you could listen to at home?’

A: mm

B: mm

C: aa

‘yes’

A: a om de kommer på radio så stänger ja ju inte av den typ

‘yes if it comes on the radio I won’t of course turn it off like’

D: a kommer den på radion så skulle ja ju inte stänga av den nå

‘yes if it comes on the radio I wouldn’t of course turn it off no’

The rewording of the argument as a V1-C thus facilitates a definitive closure of the on-going argumentation.

Cases like these raise the more general question of the distribution patterns of conjunctural *om*-conditionals and V1-C. It seems fair to say that regular *om*-conditionals have a more or less neutral, generic scope of use. There are no conditional uses in which the *om*-conditional would clearly not
fit on semantic grounds. But there are some subtle stylistic and contextual factors that seem to call for the use of V1-C. V1-Cs are well-suited as strong case formulations, viz. for the formulation of a rule, a recommendation or the “last word” in an argument. It seems that V1-C renders the consequences indisputable, whereas the om-construction focuses more on the condition, and its outcomes can be understood to be more optional, hypothetical, or something to be negotiated. This also explains the frequent occurrence of V1-C in “expert talk”, which is part of a long discourse tradition of using the construction in legal and instructive texts, even in proverbs (see ex. 48). As noted in conversation analytic work, expert status is not an essentialist property of individuals but rather needs to be created and recreated in the course of an interaction (Lindström 2003). That is, in some segments of an interaction, institutional roles such as that of an expert may be foregrounded whereas they are backgrounded in other segments. We contend that V1 conditionals may be used as a device with which speakers of Swedish can create an expert status during talk. Hence, the construction is a locally sensitive resource that signals a shift not only into a specific topic, but also into a specific social role and discourse mode. These factors are clearly oriented to also by the high school students in the corpus GSM where they are expected to formulate stances towards music styles as some sort of “expert consumers” of music in their generation.

Let us now look at the spoken German data. When compared to spoken Swedish, V1-Cs are not only very rare, but also show different patterns. The protases in the few examples found are always introduced by the modal verb sollen, which, just like Swedish skulle, marks a high degree of uncertainty with respect to the protasis; alternatively, they are of the irreals type and are introduced by the past conditional form of the verbs haben or sein (i.e. hätte, wäre). The reals conditions so frequent in written language, as well as postpositioned conditionals, are absent. These restrictions on the use of V1-C have brought spoken German close to (written and spoken) standard English, where, as indicated earlier, only irreals conditional constructions (predominantly – 52% of all tokens – with the verb had, cf. Declerk and Reed 2001: 27) and should-introduced V1-C are allowed.

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On the other hand, V1-C may be favoured in certain contexts where the conjunction om could be ambiguous; notoriously, om can be an adverb, a preposition, an embedded question initiator, and a conditional protasis initiator. If the polysemy/homonymy of om may cause confusion, it is recommended that a V1-C be used instead (Bruun et al. 2004).

(42) Psychotherapeutic interview (the client has chronic pain and finds it hard to cope with her day-to-day duties as a housewife in a big house).

\[
P \quad \text{aber-} \quad () \quad \text{`but'}
\]
\[
\text{hätt ich zu DEM zeipunkt gewUSST}
\quad \text{`had I known at that time'}
\]
\[
dass es mir (.) IRgendwann so SCHLECHT geht,
\quad \text{`that I would eventually be this bad off'}
\]
\[
T \quad \text{hmhm,}
\quad ()
\]
\[
P \quad \text{a !HÄTT! ich mir vie!LLEICHT! für uns ne !WOHN!ung!} \quad () \quad \text{gesucht;=}
\quad \text{`then I would have maybe looked for a flat for us'}
\]

(43) Discussion about the good and bad side of great inventions (Big Brother).

\[
J \quad \text{also ick gloob-}
\quad \text{`well I think'}
\]
\[
\text{hätte einstein det damals allet so jewusst,}
\quad \text{`had Einstein known about all this at the time'}
\]
\[
hätt er dat für SICH behalten.
\quad \text{`he would have kept it to himself'}.
\]

(44) Sabrina is sulking, Jürgen doesn’t know why (Big Brother).

\[
Sbr: \quad . \quad \text{ich SPIEL doch garnich die beleidigte leberwurst.}
\quad \text{`I’m not acting like a prima donna'}
\]
\[
\text{ich REDE doch mit dir.}
\quad \text{`I’m talking to you'}
\]
\[
Jrg: \quad \{\text{giggling}\}
\]
\[
Sbr: \quad \text{wär ich ne beleidigte LEBERWURST;}
\quad \text{were I a prima donna;}
\]
\[
\text{`If I were acting like a prima donna,'}
\]
\[
da würd-isch doch gar nisch mit dir REDe.
\quad \text{`then I PART not to you talk.}
\]
\[
\text{`then I wouldn’t be talking to you'}.
\]

The irreals conditionals in these three examples could be replaced by the conjunctional conditionals (wenn) without a semantic change. This does not always apply to sollte-introduced V1-Cs:16

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16 In colloquial German, the /-e/ suffix marking the first-person singular is usually omitted, i.e. sollte is realised as soll.
(45) About emotions (Big Brother).

Mar: .h äh sollt ich irgendwann mal <<laughing>>n nächster zeit hier dastehe n und heulen
‘uhm should I at some point in the future be standing here crying’
.h ähm <<embarrassed laughter>> ehehe
‘uhm’
<<f>>dann ist das nicht weil ich traurig bin sondern
‘then it is not because I’m sad but’
Wal: –weil du: (.voll emotionen (.) vollgepumpt bist
‘because you are pumped up with emotions’

As in Swedish (and, for that matter, in Modern English), the past tense of the auxiliary sollen has developed into a potentialis marker in spoken German. Since the clause-initial sollen already marks the potentiality in a relatively unambiguous way, no conjunction is necessary (although it may occur). The difference between a present tense (reals) conditional introduced by wenn and a sollen-introduced potentialis is shown by the following example in which the two variants occur in close vicinity:

(46) Role-played job interview – I2 is the interviewer, B the job applicant.

I2: eh (.v) (diese) situation.
‘uhm ((imagine)) (the following) situation.’

I2: eh (.v) sie arbeiten in einem TEAM
‘uhm you are working in a team’

und ein mitarbeiter fühlt sich ungericht von ihnen: beHANdelt.
‘and one of your team members feels he has been treated unfairly’

wie (.v) <<geh=n sie mit dem problem UN.>>
‘how do you deal with the problem’

B: (1.9) ja;
‘yes’

ich mEhE- ICH persönlich würde damit (.v) auf jöden fall
eine aussprache mit dem MITarbeiter führen.
‘I mean I personally would in any case try to talk things out’

und würde versucht (in dieser) aussprache letzten

endes (.v) auf: (.v) sam=ma den HINtergrund (-) dieser:
situation (.v) eh (.v) zu KÖmmen.
‘and I would try well let’s say to get to the bottom of this situation in this talk.’

und: (.v) ich würde sagen;
‘and I would say’

The speaker distinguishes between two alternatives in dealing with a hypothetical situation in which one person in her team “feels unfairly treated”. In the formulation of the first alternative (‘acceptable reasons for failure’) she makes use of a wenn-clause and a present tense verb, while in the formulation of the second alternative (‘interpersonal or job-related reasons’) she uses a potentialis V1-C marked by sollen. The first alternative is surely the less problematic one in terms of the activity described. There is, therefore, an interactive reason to present the second, more problematic alternative as the more unlikely one. This is what the choice of the sollen-conditional achieves.

In sum, the most important qualitative difference between spoken Swedish and spoken German is the absence of reals V1 conditionals in spoken German. While Swedish seems to make use of this construction’s affinity with (written) genres in which laws and regularities are expressed and instructions given in order to achieve expert status in interaction, no such “transfer” can be shown for modern spoken German. There are, however, some reflexes which might point to an older use of this type of reals V1 conditional construction in oral language. In particular, it may be noted that V1-C (with present tense verb) provides a standard format for proverbs, weather rules (Bauernregeln) and sayings in German, formats which surely reflect traditional oral language use. Examples17 are:

17 From www.sprichwoerter.net/content/category.
V1-C in German proverbs and sayings:

(a) **Kannst du nicht Pfiff werden, so bleibe Küster.**
   can you not parson become, so remain sexton.
   'If you can't become the parson, remain the sexton.'

(b) **Kennst du einen, so kennst du alle.**
   know you one, so know you all.
   'If you know one (of them), you know them all.'

The same holds for Swedish as shown in (48).

(48) V1-C in Swedish proverbs and sayings:

(a) **Faller man, så reser man sig igen.**
   falls one so gets one up again
   'If you fall (i.e. fail), you pick yourself up again.'

(b) **Känner du en, så känner du alla. (=47b)**
   know you one, so know you all.
   'If you know one (of them), you know them all.'

These uses of the construction again prove that it is associated with law-like regularities or irrefutable truths in spoken Swedish. Indeed, speakers seem to use the pattern productively, to produce proverb-like, new V1-C utterances like the one in (49), taken from a high school student discussion (cf. extract 32 above with the original context):

(49) **Söker du jobb så får du jobb.**
   Seek you job so get you job
   'If you (really) look for a job, you will get a job.'

Like in many V1-C proverbs, the whole expression is compact and there is structural and lexical parallelism between the protasis and apodosis.

6  Emergent syntax and V1 conditionals in spoken German and Swedish

In his emergent grammar hypothesis, Hopper (1987, 1998, in this volume) argues that grammar is constantly in the making. We build new utterances by making use of ready-made, i.e. formulaic chunks of talk; but these ready-made chunks do not determine the shape of our utterances. The outcome of what we "stitch together" from various patterns, the linguistic utterance which finally appears, is not a trivial realisation of a mental model, but rather

"ad hoc, disparate, and worked out 'on stage' in an improvised fashion" (1989/90: 5). The underspecified nature of constructional routines also means that the boundaries between one constructional scheme (routine) and the neighbouring ones are sometimes unclear, and that ambiguities between and blendings of constructions occur frequently.

Since utterances emerge in a linear process of (co)construction in which a principal speaker, but also his or her coparticipants are involved, time and speaker/hearer cooperation are of principal importance to such an approach to linguistic structure. In this time course, emerging structures project options for continuation which may be stronger or weaker. As a rule, the range of possible continuations becomes narrower towards the end of an utterance. But even a fully produced utterance may in retrospect be turned into something different by the same speaker or his or her coparticipants who may add further elements which recategorize the already-produced ones.18

How can this idea of the emergent character of linguistic structure be applied to our case? We argue that the idea of emergent syntax and on-line processing can help us to explain the restrictions on the use of V1-C in spoken German.

No doubt prepositioned conjunctional conditionals have a strong projecting force which is used for all sorts of conversational tasks (cf. Auer 2000; Lerner 1996). Do verb-initial clauses have an equally strong projecting force which makes a subsequent conditional apodosis likely? The question must be answered separately for **sollte**-conditionals, irrealis conditionals, and realis conditionals.19 V1 clauses introduced by **sollte** have indeed a strong projecting force. After an initial V1 clause such as

...h äh **sollte** ich irgendwann mal <<laughing>>n nächster zeit hier dastehein und heulen
   'uhm should I at some point in the future be standing here crying'

the likelihood of a following clause which can count as a matrix clause and the apodosis of a conditional construction is very high. The auxiliary is already a marker of conditionality, and the placement of the finite verb in the initial position of the syntagma does not carry that functional load alone. The only alternative would be to treat the clause as a self-contained unit, i.e. a question, and such **sollte**-introduced questions are rare. An initial clause

18 See Auer 2009a,b; Auer and Pfänd 2007.
19 Potentialis conditionals introduced by a full verb are exceedingly rare since the synthetic form of the conditional is hardly used in spoken language anyway; they can be neglected in this discussion.
which is introduced by the auxiliaries hätte/wäre to form an irrealis construction, such as

\[ \text{hättete einstein det damals allet so jewusst,} \]
\[ \text{‘had Einstein known about all this at the time’} \]

is already somewhat more ambiguous. It may seem that hätte also enforces a conditional reading. However, consider the following example:

(50) Sitting in the garden, the inhabitants of the Big Brother house talk about their most bizarre eating experiences.

\[ \text{Jhn:} \]
\[ \text{ah ick gloob det SCHLINDste was ick jemals jemacht hab} \]
\[ \text{war irgendwie (–) n=scheißDING gewesen;} \]
\[ \text{‘uhm I think the most awful thing I’ve ever done was some} \]
\[ \text{kind of shitty thing’} \]
\[ \text{ick weiß gar nicht wie ick zu jeKONvten bin} . h \]
\[ \text{‘I don’t even remember how I came to do that’} \]
\[ \text{auf jeden fall hab ick n=1EBenden fisch den KOPF} \]
\[ \text{abgebissen.} \]
\[ \text{‘in any case, I bit off the head of a live fish’} \]

\[ \text{Jrg:} \]
\[ \text{[((giggling gently))] } \]

\[ \text{Sbr:} \]
\[ \text{[((giggling, chokes))] } \]
\[ \text{[hättete was jesAGT hörmal]} \]
\[ \text{‘had you said something, hey!’} \]
\[ \text{Jrg:} \]
\[ \text{[[(laughs)]]} \]

\[ \text{→Sbr:} \]
\[ \text{hätt} \]
\[ \text{[ich den immer RAUSgeholt;]} \]
\[ \text{‘I would always have taken it out’} \]
\[ \text{Jrg:} \]
\[ \text{[[(laughs)]]} \]

\[ \text{<<,laughing>holt dein FREUND n=GOLDFisch ausm (h)} \]
\[ \text{aQUArum>} \]
\[ \text{‘your friend takes a goldfish out of the aquarium’} \]
\[ \text{Sbr:} \]
\[ \text{und ich schmeiß [den kopf immer WEG;]} \]
\[ \text{‘and I always throw away the head’} \]
\[ \text{Jrg:} \]
\[ \text{[<<,laughing>und er kommt .h]} \]
\[ \text{‘and he comes (back)’} \]
\[ \text{der war auf toilette,} \]
\[ \text{‘he was in the bathroom’} \]
\[ \text{und kommt der WIBder, schwimmt der fisch ohne KOPF rum>} \]
\[ \text{‘and he comes back and the fish is swimming around without} \]
\[ \text{its head’} \]
\[ \text{Sbr→J:} \]
\[ \text{[(laughing inbreath))] } \]
\[ \text{boah warum haste DAS denn gemacht;} \]
\[ \text{‘wow why did you do that’} \]

When analysed ex post, after its full production, Sabrina’s utterance

\[ \text{hättete was jesagt hörmal / hätt ich den immer rausgeholt} \]
\[ \text{‘had you said something I would always have taken it out again’} \]

can be understood as a V1-C in which the first clause occupies the syntactic front field of the second one. However, in the course of its emergence, there are other options, and there is evidence that it is not planned as such. The context is rather complicated since narrative, fiction, and references to common experiences interact in an intricate way. Sabrina is responding to John who has just told the story of how he once bit off a live fish’s head. She ironically suggests that since John seems to be fond of fish heads, she should not have thrown away the head of the fish which he has cooked in the house, but rather should have taken it out of the bin. The first clause

\[ \text{hättete was jesagt} \]
\[ \text{‘had you said something’} \]

is open to at least two interpretations, none of which is excluded by context. In particular, the meaning oscillates between a syntactically non-projecting interpretation as a slightly reproachful appeal (“why didn’t you say something”), and a conditional meaning in the sense of “if you had said something” in this case projecting an apodosis. The first reading is supported by the final particle hörmal which usually occurs utterance- (and even turn-) finally and also marks the utterance as a reproach. The second reading is supported by the actual continuation of the utterance, with another ambivalent V1 clause:

\[ \text{hätt ich den immer rausgeholt} \]
\[ \text{‘I would always have taken it out’} \]

This utterance can be understood as a continuation of the first (providing the matrix clause) or as a second self-contained V1 clause (see below). The point is that the pattern is neither fixed nor predictable, and the conditional reading competes, perhaps even from the speaker’s perspective, but surely from that of her co-participants, with other interpretations.

This ambiguity of V1 clauses multiplies in the case of indicative, present tense V1 constructions. It is clearly visible in Swedish where it is even used as a rhetorical device:

(51) GIG:16634. Call to a Poison Control Centre, P=pharmacist, C=caller.

The caller from a daycare centre suspects that one of the children has eaten seeds from a plant.
What at first is constructed as a V1-C (kan de vara mer än fem frön) is in the subsequent course of the pharmacist's turn repeated (the arrowed line), but this time transformed into a regular question. That is, the pharmacist first formulates an instruction on the basis of what she generally knows about possibly hazardous amounts of a plant's seeds. Having delivered the instruction, the pharmacist seems to realize that she in fact does not know the specific amount of the seeds in the case at hand; thus, she moves on to gather information on the factual amount in the current case.

Against this background, the avoidance of reals V1-C in spoken German can be seen as a way of avoiding an unclear projection, since questions play a much larger role in face-to-face interaction than in written texts. But the use of V1 in spoken German goes far beyond the question format and extends to many cases which are impossible in written German. At least two such cases have to be distinguished. In the first case, the V1 clause reports an event. Sometimes, these "narrative" V1 clauses occur in asyndetic pairs in which the parallelism created by the verb-first placement establishes a relatively strong coherence between the two parts. Pragmatically, the construction is highly reminiscent of the Old Swedish (or similar OHG) examples discussed above. Formally, the structure is (on the surface\(^{20}\)) identical to that of a realis V1-C. Take the following examples:

(52) John has discovered a push-up bra in a box and shows it to Andrea (Big Brother)

Jrg: kummal burns test DU das=s sOWas gibt? 'look; did you know that this exists?' bheeHAAS schon mit silikon drinne? 'bras that already contain silicone?' (0.5)

In the first example the asyndetic double V1 clause construction marked by the arrow can be paraphrased as "you take it all off and then you have nothing left underneath", in the second case as "he comes back from the bathroom and the fish is swimming around in the aquarium without its head". The verb-initial prepositioned clause is followed by, and provides some kind of background for, another V1 clause. These narrative V1 clauses are widely used in spoken German, and the paired (asyndetic) construction is only one rather densely-structured manifestation. In the following example, the speaker uses three V1 clauses in a row:

(54) Sabrina imagines how she (mis)treats Jürgen like a piece of meat on a hook (Big Brother).

Sbr: ich hab da sowas haken und DU hängst dann da dran so. 'I have this kind of hook and you will be hanging on it.' a=b-Saharan.
Verb-first conditionals in German and Swedish

?Är man rikare, tror du att man lyssnar på?

The initial V1 clause is not heard as a pre-fronted protasis preparing a question but rather as a Y/N-question. The whole utterance could then be interpreted as a series of polar questions (albeit not a very natural one).

The preference for conjunctival conditionals in syntactically loose positions (pre-front field) is contrary evidence for a tight constructional integration between the protasis and apodosis in the V1 construction. This view is also supported by the fact that if the speaker initiates a turn with a protasis followed by several parentheses and/or reformulations as in (56), the protasis is more likely to be coded with an om-conditional. This is arguably due to the stronger semantic projection of om- conditionals that prepares the listener for the apodosis even in cases where it does not follow immediately. V1-C, on the other hand, requires an immediate realisation of the projected apodosis in order to minimise confusion with competing construction types such as polar questions or V1 declaratives.

(56) GSM:24. High-school students are being interviewed about musical styles.

A: för do- dom hänger ju me va, till exempel om man gillar, 'cos the- they hang around right, for example if one likes,' om vi gillar nån artist mycke då va, till exempel E-type då 'if we like some artist a lot, then right, for example E-type then' som ja tycker å grym, så ja kommer lyssna på han 'who I think is awesome, then I am going to listen to him' når ja blir äldre också 'when I get older too'

The speaker in (56) presents an example in the guise of a conditional construction. It is initiated by an om-conditional (om man gillar 'if one likes'); this protasis is then followed by a parenthetical (till exempel E-type då som ja tycker e grym 'for example E-type who I think is awesome'), which in turn is followed by the projected apodosis (så ja kommer lyssna på han när ja blir äldre också 'then I am going to listen to him also when I get older'). There seems to be some on-line speech planning involved, as suggested by the rephrasing of the start of the protasis, and the switch from the generic-person reference in the protasis (man 'anyone', ni 'we') to the first-person reference in the apodosis. V1-C does not lend itself easily to such exploratory structural revisions and ambiguities, but are rather delivered in "one go". This in turn relates to the finding presented above that we frequently find V1-Cs in conclusions. They often involve a summary, sometimes even reworking what has been said.

If V1 clauses were also widely used for coding (realis) conditionality in spoken German, they would in many contexts be ambiguous between the "narrative" (temporal) and the conditional meaning. Modern spoken German has resolved this ambiguity by reducing the likelihood of V1 clauses occurring in conditionals to almost zero. Initial present tense verbs are therefore free to function as in the three examples above. In spoken Swedish, V1 can also code a declarative, but these contexts are rather restricted to a responsive sequential position (cf. ex. 3), i.e. a position in which an interrogative or conditional construction is less likely to occur (Lindström and Karlsson 2005). These V1 responses often have elliptic qualities; for instance, some of them lack a subject, which also distinguishes them from interrogative and conditional V1 constructions (Mörnso 2002).

There are some further regularities in the discourse emergence of V1-C in German and in Swedish which constrain their occurrence. They point to a stronger integration of protasis and apodosis in V1-C when compared to conjunctival conditionals. One observation is that V1-Cs occur frequently in the front field, but are found to a lesser degree in the pre-front field, particularly when the following clause is an interrogative:

(55) GSM:21. High-school students are being interviewed about musical styles.

B: men så om man e rikare, tror du att man lyssnar på?
'but so if you're richer, do you think that you'd be listening?'

Compare (55) including a conjunctival protasis with a fabricated V1 version:
(cf. ex. 41), i.e. the utterance consists of material which is already available and does not require much planning.

In sum, V1 conditionals are fragile objects for on-line emergence. Their projecting force is weak when compared to conjunctural conditionals since they compete with other constructions (more in German than in Swedish). As a result, they are avoided in spoken German unless introduced by an unambiguous modal verb (sollte), and they are produced in Swedish and German in tight packages which minimise ambiguity.

7 Conclusions

In this paper, we have shown that V1 conditionals are used in written Swedish and German with similar frequencies and for the same functions. However, we have also shown that in the spoken language, German has diverged from Swedish both quantitatively and qualitatively and is now similar to (spoken and written) English:

| English V1-C | spoken German V1-C | written German V1-C | Swedish V1-C |

On the basis of an emergent, on-line approach to syntax, we argued that the narrowing down of the V1 conditional construction to irrealis and sollte-constructions in spoken German is driven by the need to turn a highly ambiguous first clause, which could trigger multiple projections, into a projecting clause which is less ambiguous.

In written German as well as in Swedish, this is partly achieved by making the V1 conditional format genre-dependent (legal, scientific, and regulatory texts) as well as activity-dependent (stating a law-like regularity, making a metapragmatic statement, etc.). Here, the ambiguity of V1 clauses is low since the projections that compete with the conditional one are less frequent (questions) or hardly existent (V1 declaratives). This explains the “survival” of the more traditional pattern in written German (and Swedish).

In speaking, German has restricted the V1 conditional format to those verbs which rarely occur in Y/N questions, particularly to sollte, as well as hätt and wäre. Due to a different use of declarative V1 constructions (relative rarity of German “narrative V1”), Swedish does not show the same amount of ambiguity of the V1 construction. When V1 conditionals are used in this language, they give the utterance an institutional, normative overtone.

Our study has shown that grammar is not restricted to syntax and semantics. The distinctive features of a construction like V1-C also involve its sequential position, discourse function, and the genre and modality in which the construction occurs. However, these are not static features but constantly in the making as part of the dynamics between the discourse participants and their roles in an interaction. Verb-first conditionals thus serve to enlighten different facets of construcional emergence: as an emerging construction with a path of evaluation and functional specification through language use in time, and as an emergent construction with versatile functional potentials that are specified and negotiated in the local, individual contexts of language use in real time.

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Verb-first conditionals in German and Swedish

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Action, prosody and emergent constructions: The case of and

1 Introduction

As Bybee has pointed out, language may have evolved from a set of relatively short utterances consisting of first one and then two units which bind together “via the concatenation of preformed chunks” to produce much longer utterances (2002: 131). Bybee proposes a Linear Fusion Hypothesis to capture this process, claiming that “elements that are frequently used together bind together into constituents” (2002: 109). It is repetition, she claims, which serves as the “glue” that binds the items into an emergent constituent (2002: 111). And because the amount of repetition encountered with units which are used together can vary, i.e. be gradient, so too the constituency which emerges from this repeated togetherness is gradient.

These observations are highly pertinent for the topic of our paper, the emergence of constructions with and. The point we wish to make, both with respect to and-patterns and in general with respect to emergent constructions, is that as a contributor to structural emergence togetherness implicates not only syntactic/semantic cohesion but also two further dimensions: (a) togetherness of action, and (b) togetherness in prosodic/phonetic form. We will present evidence to support the argument that these other forms of togetherness are also necessary for the emergence of structure in use, using data from a collection of ands culled from a set of American English telephone conversations.1 For present purposes, we restrict ourselves to cases of and conjoining verb phrases only.2 That is, we include predicate conjunction as e.g. in “the little edge had curled up and was showing red” (SBL 2:1:8:6) or “Missix Kelly looks a little younger when you get in and kind of size her up” (SBL 2:1:8:4) but exclude clausal conjunction as found in “I used a suppository yesterday morning and nothing happened” (SBL 2:1:8:2).

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1 Our primary source has been 29 transcripts from the CallHome corpus, a set of telephone calls recorded in the US in the middle of the 1990s, supplemented by the SBL and NB corpora, two collections of telephone calls recorded in California in the early 1960s.

2 Many of our findings hold as well for conjoined noun phrases, but for reasons of space we are unable to treat them here (see Barth-Weingarten, 2010, under revision).