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# Constructions: Emerging and Emergent

Edited by Peter Auer and Stefan Pfänder

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# 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 coding 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 conjunctive 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; Diessel 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).<sup>1</sup>

- (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.'
- (3) *Haben Sie Fragen? – Ja, haben wir.*  
'Do you have questions?' – 'Yes, we do.'  
*Ska vi göra 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 (Teleman, Hellberg and Andersson 1999: 647–648) mainly notes that the V1-C construction is an alternative to the regular *om*-conditional 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-

<sup>1</sup> Directives with the verb in the imperative are, of course, another type of a V1 clause (*Gib mir das Buch, Ge mig boken*). Since these constructions are characterized by a special verb mood and in most cases by the omission of the subject, imperatives are different from the other V1 constructions in (1)–(4). Admittedly, the constructions in (4) also have some distinct properties, including special verb forms like the conjunctive; however, this verb form was used regularly in conditional clauses in older Swedish and is still used in German.

tific 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:<sup>2</sup>

- (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 conjunctive and V1-Cs emerges (see table 1).

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

	Prepositioned (counterfactual)	Prepositioned (non-counterf.)	Postpositioned (counterfactual)	Postpositioned (non-counterf.)
Old English	+	+	+	+
Middle English	+	+	+	+
Modern English	+	<i>should</i>	+	<i>should</i>
Middle High German	+	+	+	+
Mod. German (written)	+	+	+	–
Dutch	+	+	+	–
Yiddish	+	+	–	–
Old Swedish	+	+	+	–
Modern Swedish	+	+	–	–
Icelandic	+	(+)	+	–

There seems to be a tendency to restrain the contexts in which V1-C can be used, as compared to those in which the conjunctive 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 *had*

<sup>2</sup> 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 han inte, håller han 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.

and *were*) and *should*-introduced protases, and Yiddish and modern Swedish only allow prepositioned V1-C. In general, postpositioned V1-Cs are often restricted to counterfactuals. Older stages of English and German show the widest distribution of the construction (cf. Molencki 1999). In sum, V1 clauses have been losing their ability to express conditionality. We argue that spoken Modern German is in fact in the process of restricting V1-C as well, in ways similar to Modern English.<sup>3</sup>

### 3 Historical background

The history of V1-C has two phases. In the first phase, the construction grammaticizes; in the second phase, its scope narrows down. The existing literature has exclusively been concerned with the first phase.

There is general agreement that the V1 conditional construction has emerged out of other uses of V1 already available in the languages. However, there is considerable disagreement about which of these constructions grammaticized. One immediately appealing theory – Jespersen (1940: 374) probably being its most famous proponent – holds that V1-C emerged from question/answer sequences. With respect to Old High German (OHG) and Middle High German (MHG), already Paul (1920: 270) writes: “Doch besteht seit ahd. Zeit eine Konkurrenz [for conjunctive conditionals, PA/JL] durch Sätze ohne Konjunktion, die aus der direkten Satzfrage hervorgegangen sind (...), z. B. *gîst du mir dîn swester, sô will ich ẽz tuon*, Nib”. This view is supported by the fact that V1-C seems to occur exclusively in languages in which polar questions are marked by verb-initial syntax. Recently, van den Nest (2009) has revisited Paul’s thesis. He argues for a grammaticalization cline from pseudo-dyadic sequences as in the following examples, over V1-Cs with realis meaning to non-realis, non-resumptive V1-Cs.

<sup>3</sup> 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: *Kommst 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 lobnt sich ein Besuch am 3. Mai, ab 10.30 Uhr am Kummensea-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.<sup>4</sup> Investigating similar parameters, Hilpert (2010) argues on the basis of the structure of V1-C in modern German that V1-Cs are less grammaticized 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 sehe ich ihn*. Dann wurde das vorangestellte Verbum als besonderes Kennzeichen dieses Satzverhältnisses angesehen und machte jede Conjunction entbehrlich.

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-

<sup>4</sup> 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 give some examples of Old Swedish below, and the same type of structures can be found in OHG.

tinguishes 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 *Auforderungen* (e.g. *sei getreu bis in den Tod, so wil ich dir die Krone des Lebens geben* – Luther Offenb. 2, 10); and past conjunctive conditionals, which he traces back to optatives (*Wunschsätze*, e.g. *o hette ich Flügel wie Tauben, siehe, so wolt ich mich ferne wegmachen* 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) *Gangär at stiälä bryti ok þräl. bryti skal vppi hängiä ok eigh 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. Ängin af idar skal honum fölgia.* (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 *þa* 'then', *þär* 'there' or *þät* 'that' (Wessén 1956: 218):

- (8) *Är 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) *Dräpär mapär man i kirkin. Dät är nöpingsvärk.* (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).<sup>5</sup>

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

	LIMAS	Mannheimer Morgen
	("Lim-tagged")	("MM-tagged")
Total words	1.23 m.	19.25 m.
hits		4577
errors		60 %
V1-Cs	507	2092 (estimated)
per 1000 words	0.41	0.11 (estimated)
<i>wenn</i> -Cs	537	4004
per 1000 words	0.44	0.21

It is tempting to compare this value with the likelihood of the occurrence of initial *wenn*-clauses in the same corpus,<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup>

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-

<sup>5</sup> We also checked the occurrence of conjunctions before initial verbs (*und* V1-C, *aber* V1-C) but they only occur with negligible frequency.

<sup>6</sup> 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 conjunctive conditionals.

<sup>7</sup> 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).

lationships play a more important role in this corpus (due to certain genres which frequently code conditionality, see below); however, this imbalance only partly explains the difference. In order to answer the question more precisely, it is instructive to have a look at the text genres in the LIMAS corpus and the pragmatic status of the sentences with verb-initial conditional clauses. V1-Cs occur frequently in legal, scientific and regulatory texts. In legal and scientific texts, they are used to express law-like regularities. Regulatory texts give instructions or rules (how to use a typewriter, how to play a card game, etc.). Other genres, particularly literary texts, are notoriously lacking in the list of V1-C examples. Since law-like regularities and instructions are true regardless of the time of their utterance, the V1-Cs often occur in the present tense (realis conditionals), although potentialis and irrealis conditionals can be found in small numbers as well (see Table 5 below). Regulatory, scientific and legal texts are much less common in a daily newspaper, which is the reason for the higher proportion of V1-Cs in the LIMAS corpus as compared to the *Mannheimer Morgen*.

With regard to Swedish, we performed a corresponding search in the Stockholm-Umeå corpus (SUC). This one-million-word corpus from ca. 1990 is also balanced according to the principles of the Brown corpus. The search procedure benefited from the detailed morphosyntactic coding of SUC; the target of the search was verbs in the indicative (or conjunctive) mood, in the present or past tense, and that occurred in the beginning of a graphical sentence which did not end with a question mark.<sup>8</sup> This resulted in much less “noise” than in the German data, but approximately 10% of the hits had to be eliminated by hand (mainly verb-first declaratives and questions). All in all, the search yielded 307 instances of V1-C. This search was then followed by another one in which a coordinating conjunction or the subordinator *att* was allowed to precede a verb-noun/pronoun combination.<sup>9</sup> After sorting by hand, a further 61 V1-C were detected, i.e. a considerably higher count for conjunction + V1-C than in German (see note 5 above).

<sup>8</sup> 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://spraakbanken.gu.se>).

<sup>9</sup> 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@IPAS.\*”][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 åker man långfärdsbuss, tar det lång tid* ‘... and goes one by long voyage bus (i.e. if one goes), it takes a long time’.

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

Corpus	SUC 2.0
Total words	1.03 m.
V1-C instances	368
per 1000 words	<b>0.36</b>
S-initial <i>om</i> -instances	667
per 1000 words	<b>0.65</b>

In order to calculate Swedish *om*-conditionals, our search target was *om*-subordinators that inhabit the beginning of a graphical sentence. We thus eliminated adverbial 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. Conjunctive *om*-protases are clearly more favoured in SUC, whereas in LIMAS the distribution between V1-C and sentence-initial *wenn*-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 307 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”.<sup>10</sup> Surprisingly, however, the con-

<sup>10</sup> 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 (Bruun et al. 2004: 76).

Table 4: Conditionals in written Swedish according to genres

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

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 conjunctive 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-Capková 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):

- (11) *Die Vertretungen haben zwei verschiedene Beschlüsse zu fassen: den Beschluß über den Beitritt zum Sparkassenzweckverband und den Beschluß über die Vereinigung der Sparkassen. beide Beschlüsse sind rechtsgeschäftliche Willenserklärungen. **Korrespondieren diese Willenserklärungen aller Beteiligten miteinander, so sind zwei öffentlich-rechtliche Verträge zustande gekommen, die die Grundlage für die Bildung des Sparkassenzweckverbandes bzw. die Vereinbarung über die***

*Vereinigung der Sparkassen bilden.* (LIM/LI1.00136, Rothe, K., Sparkassengesetz für Nordrhein-Westfalen. Kommentar; p. 218–226)

‘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.’

- (12) *Die höchste Feldstärke tritt jeweils dort auf, wo der Leitungstyp des Materials wechselt. Erreicht die **Feldstärke dort Werte oberhalb von etwa ((Formel))**, so setzt für Ladungsträger, die dieses Gebiet hoher Feldstärke durchqueren, Ladungsträgermultiplikation durch Stoßionisation ein.* (LIM/LI1.00095, Krumpholz, O.\*, Avalanche ...; Wissenschaftliche Berichte (AEG):44, 2, p. 73–78)

‘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/LI1.00090, Grupp, C., 99 Kartenspiele; 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 Ö erklärt, dann kann man Ö zu einer Metrik omicron auf ((Term)) erweitern. **Seien ((Formel)) und ((Formel))**, dann ist omicron erklärt durch ((Formel)) und ((Formel)).* (LIM/LI1.00103, Ratschek, H.\*, Über die ...; Archiv für el. Rechnen: Vol.7, 3–4, p. 172–180)

‘Let a metric  $\sigma$  be explained by  $\sigma$  (over ((term))). Then  $\sigma$  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 consequential 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 ovan 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 svalna på ett galler. Får de kallna utan handduke blir brödskorpan knaprig och samtidigt lite seg. Vill man ha mjukare yta på brödet är det bättre att linda in nygräddat 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 säljas före den löses in kan räntan bli lägre eller högre. Allt beroende på hur marknadsräntorna utvecklas under tiden. Går räntorna upp efter det att obligationen köpts sjunker värdet på obligationen, och skulle räntorna gå ner ökar värdet 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) *Avlämnas inte varan eller avlämnas 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 purchase 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 ihn allein rechtfertigt.* (LIM/LI1.00056, Sölle, D., Politische Theologie: Hoffnung 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 Bultmann's thinking which alone can justify it.'

- (20) *Als neue Sportart aus Übersee schwappt die Inline-Skater-Welle nach Deutschland. Glaubt man den Sportgeschäften, 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 välbekanta.* (SUC-jc; Social sciences)

'If we look at recent violent national eruptions, we encounter patterns that seem strangely familiar.'

- (22) *Slår man upp blyg i Svensk Handordbok står det förlägen, försagd, skygg, generad: ord som alla uttrycker en känsla av obehag tillsammans med andra människor.* (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 Tragflächenhälften verleimt und trocken, können wir die Flügel zusammenbauen.* (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:

- (24) *Die ersten fünf Jahre des unabhängigen Kenya sind in der Studie von GERTZEL: "The Politics of Independent Kenya 1963–8" aufgezeichnet. Ist dieses Buch auch ein wenig kompliziert und bisweilen abstrakt geschrieben, so vermögen die 6 Kapitel doch sehr eingehend das politische Geschehen Kenyas in dieser entscheidenden Phase unter neuen Gesichtspunkten (nur das Kapitel 5 ist ein Nachdruck) und zum ersten Mal so umfassend zu analysieren.* (LIM/LI1.00194, Goswin, Grundzüge der Geschichte und politischen Entwicklung ...; p. 54–63)

'The first five years of independent Kenya are recorded in Gertzels 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:

- (25) *Diese Zeit der Kranken, die bei stets gleichem Tageslauf meist mehrere Jahre im Sanatorium leben, unterscheidet sich weitgehend von der Zeit der Menschen im Flachlande. Gibt es auf der einen Seite Tätigkeit, Veränderung, Ereignis-*

*nisse, so stehen dem im Sanatorium Untätigkeit, Gleichmaß, Ruhe gegenüber.* (LIM/LI1.00014, Karthaus, U., Der Zauberberg; DVJS 44, 2, p. 269–275)

'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 gaben Sensibilität und Ausdruckskraft der beiden ideal harmonisierenden Künstler den Vorträgen die besondere Note. Stand die Virtuosität stets im Dienst stilistisch ausgewogener Interpretation, so feierte sie Triumphe in der faszinierenden Wiedergabe von Maurice Ravels "Piece 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 "Pience 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 adversative 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)

	LIMAS	MM91
Concessive	11 (2%)	1 (<1%)
Adversative	23 (5%)	41 (13%)
Temporal	1 (<1%)	0
Conditional	472 (93%)	266 (86%)
Total	507 (100%)	308 (100%)
Realis conditionals	412 (87%)	148 (56%)
Irrealis conditionals	22 (5%)	14 (5%)
Potentialis conditionals	38 (8%)	104 (39%)
– of these: <i>sollte/wollte</i>	14 + 3	77 + 0
Total	472 (100%)	266 (100%)

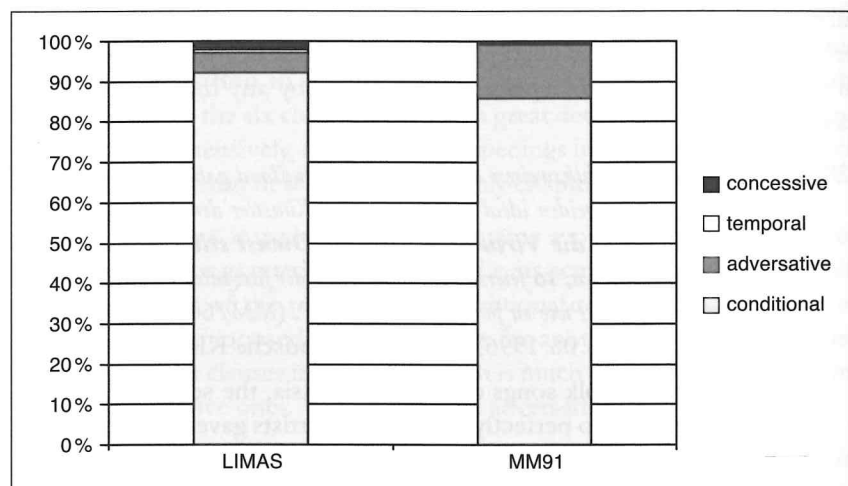


Fig. 1: Semantic relationships coded by V1 in the LIMAS and MM91 corpora

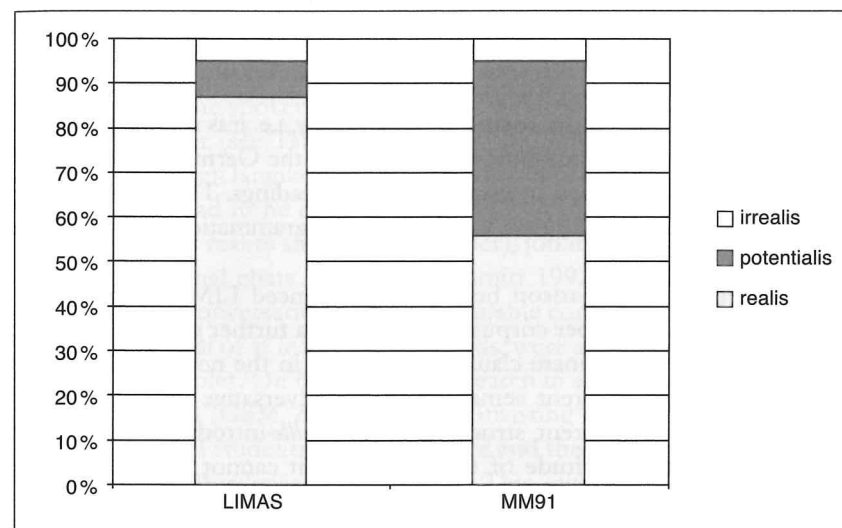


Fig. 2: Irrealis, potentialis, and realis conditionals in written German

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

	LIMAS	SUC
Realis conditionals	412 (87%)	326 (88%)
Irrealis conditionals	22 (5%)	17 (5%)
Potentialis conditionals	38 (8%)	25 (7%)
Total	472 (100%)	368 (100%)

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 byggjobb 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 *sollte*-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 *sollte* '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.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> 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):

## 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 Wirdeñäs 2002: 49–52). This gives the following percentages:

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

	LIMAS/SUC	NEWSPAPER	SPOKEN LANGUAGE
German: per 1000 words	0.41	0.11	0.02
Swedish: per 1000 words	0.36	(0.2) <sup>12</sup>	0.43

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.

*Hatten auf diese Weise die beiden Freunde am Gegenwärtigen manche Beschäftigung, so fehlt es nicht an lebhafter und vergnüglicher Erinnerung vergangener Tage, ...*

'While (?) the two friends thus had much to do at this time, there was no lack of vivid and pleasant memory of past days ...'

<sup>12</sup> 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.

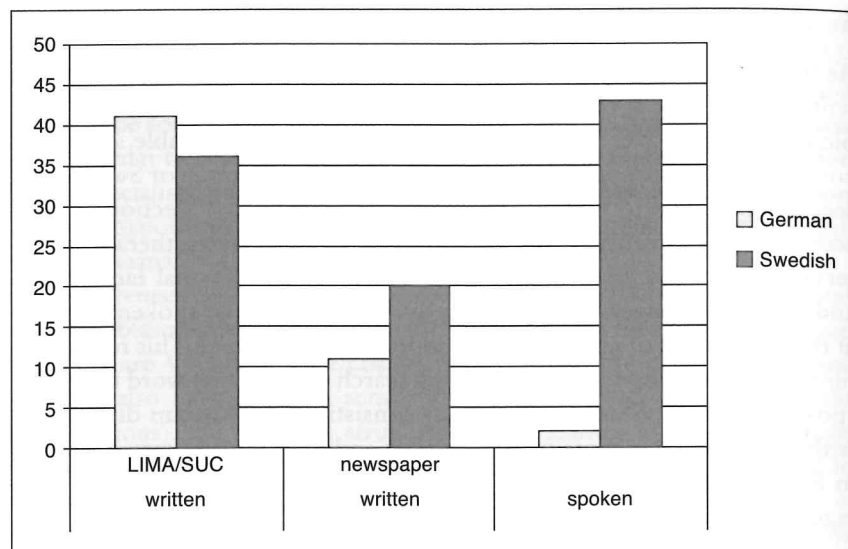


Fig. 3: Number of V1 subordinate clauses in spoken and written German and Swedish per 100,000 words

The German newspaper corpus holds a middle position: it is closer to the spoken language than the LIMAS corpus.

For a first explanation of the low frequency of V1-C in spoken German, one could argue that in face-to-face communication, interactants do not code the conditions and circumstances under which a certain proposition is true as often as writers do. If this were true, we would expect fewer conditional clauses in spoken German in general. However, we know from other studies that *wenn*-clauses are even more frequent in spoken than in written German (5.4 vs. 3.3 per 1,000 words, cf. Auer 2000). Also, the Swedish data show that speakers also need to express conditional relations in face-to-face interaction. An onomasiological explanation therefore fails.

Before we turn to an alternative interpretation, let us first take a closer look at the functional characteristics of V1-Cs in the Swedish data. In order to broaden the number of contexts, topics, and interactional genres, additional types of collections of conversational Swedish were scanned for V1-C: mundane conversation, medical telephone conversations, consultation with a midwife, police interrogation, courtroom interaction, discussions with young people; the total amount of spoken data thus reached ca. 450,000 words. In all these data sets, V1-Cs are predominantly of the factual, realis type, i.e. the speaker orients to the condition expressed in the protasis as a

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.<sup>13</sup>

- (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: *å e 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 brukar 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: *e:h 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 avskriva 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.

<sup>13</sup> Transcription conventions follow those of the respective corpora for Swedish and German. Note that in the Swedish data, 'ç' denotes a slightly rising final intonation contour while this is marked by 'ç' in the German conversational data. In the Swedish transcription, the comma 'ç' denotes level intonation contour.

- R: *ja ha int haft personli kontakt men ja tycker fortfarande*  
 'I have not had personal contacts but I think still'  
*att (.) att de e så att (.)*  
 'that (.) that it is so that'  
*söker du jobb så får du jobb*  
 search you job then get you job  
 'if you (really) search for a job you'll also get a job'  
*liksom [när du söker tiräcklit bra på rätt sätt*  
 'like when you search well enough in the right way'
- I: [mm

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 stylistic 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 erm the-time has gone out here (0.4)  
 'but should you start vomiting or coughing before the time is up'  
*få (0.4) kräkningar, eller hosta*  
 get (0.4) 'vomiting, or coughing'  
*eller barnet verkar tungandad,*  
 'or the child seems short of breath'
- C: *ja [feber (eller nåt sånt där)*  
 'yes fever (or something like that)'
- P: *[eller verkar ha besvä:r från luftvägarna*  
 'or seems to have trouble in the airway'  
*på nåt sätt, då måste man omedelbart in 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) SÅINF:2-1. Four elderly women are gathered around coffee and some food.

- B: *men de va som ja sa att (.) hade de vari för fe:m år sen*  
 'but it was as I said that (.) had it been five years ago  
*då hade ja nog ta:ckat ja:.*  
 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 realis V1-Cs than other genres. It seems that irrealis and past realis 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 she 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 näring*  
 'We look at how erm (.) nutrient- (.) how many nutrients'  
*de ä: i marken,*  
 'there are in the soil'
- F: *Aja.*
- A: *Äre väldigt näringsrikt så (1.2) >äre ju så att<*  
 Is it very nutrient-rich then (1.2) it is of course so that  
 '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'

å konkurrerar ut dom andra.=  
'and drive out the others.'

F: =A.

V1-C may also be used by laypersons when they are referring to routine procedures in their own professions. In extract (36), taken from courtroom interaction, a truck driver gives a description of how one should drive a big vehicle in a roundabout:

(36) TemaK:A 51. Layman being expert on his topic in a courtroom process on a traffic offense; T=defendant, a truck driver. Description of a professional traffic practice.

T: därför håller ja mej i ytterfilen.  
'that's why I keep to the outer lane'

ska man följa eh:: (.) praxis totalt  
shall one follow erm (.) the practice totally  
'if one follows this practice completely'

så ska man ju hålla se i vänsterfilen me ett sånt fordon  
'one keeps to the left lane with such a vehicle'

Significantly, the truck driver uses the word *praxis* 'practice' in the conditional protasis. We may also note the use of the habitual verb *brukar* 'be used to' in the midwife's description in (30), which similarly refers to some routine.

If the relationship between protasis and apodosis is presented as a routine or as a rule, the latter can be presupposed to be known by the recipient. This high degree of epistemic certainty is often marked explicitly, for instance by the modal particle *ju* 'of course, as we know' that refers to shared knowledge among the interlocutors; examples are found in (35, *är det ju så att* 'it is of course so that ...') and (36), ... *ska man ju hålla sej i vänsterfilen* 'one is of course supposed to keep to the left lane'.

What is routine is also uncomplicated. This is probably the basis for the use of V1-Cs in polite (or routine) offers, implying that it will be unproblematic to deliver whatever is being offered. An example is given in (37), where a police officer urges the client to hang up her coat at the station.

(37) TemaK:P5. Police interrogation. P=police officer, S=the suspected.

P: varsågod å sitt.  
'please do sit down'  
(0.5)

S: ska ja sitta här °eller där°?  
'shall I sit here or there?'

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.<sup>14</sup> 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 nybildade 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:GML4. Five farmers discussing in a focus group about genetically modified food and new cultivation methods.

A: =man skulle gössla mycke man skulle spruta mycke å  
'one would fertilize a lot one would spray out a lot and'

<sup>14</sup> 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.

- .hh allt de där man lärde så:<sub>2</sub> .hh å: liksom om  
 'everything one had learned. hh like about'  
 va dukti bonde så va man (0.6) gjorde man allt de där:<sub>2</sub>  
 'what a good farmer did (0.6) one did all that'  
 (0.4) ni vet va ja menar:<sub>2</sub>=  
 '(0.4) you know what I mean'
- B: =mm[:.
- A: [.h[hhh å nu e de ju ingenting av de där som: (0.2)=  
 'and now there is nothing of that which'
- C: [ja:<sub>2</sub>
- A: =man va dukti bonde tdåt (0.4)  
 'made you a good farmer then (0.4)'  
gör man de nu så e man ju väck:?  
 do you it now then are you PART gone  
 'if you do it now you're out of the game'  
 (0.4)
- B: ja:<sub>2</sub>
- C: ja:.

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: *nä*  
 'no'
- A: *nä ( ) radion*  
 'no ( ) the radio'
- C: *nä*  
 'no'
- D: *nä 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'

- B: *nä 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*  
 comes it on radio then switch I not off  
 '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'
- A: *nä*  
 'no'
- B: *nä*
- D: *nä*
- A: *nä*
- B: *nä*

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 nä*  
 yes comes it on the-radio  
 '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 conjunctive *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.<sup>15</sup> 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 *sollt(en)*, which, just like Swedish *skulle*, marks a high degree of uncertainty with respect to the protasis; alternatively, they are of the irrealis type and are introduced by the past conditional form of the verbs *haben* or *sein* (i.e. *hätt-*, *wär-*). The realis conditions so frequent in written language, as well as post-positioned 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 irrealis conditional constructions (predominantly – 52% of all tokens – with the verb *had*, cf. Declerck and Reed 2001: 27) and *should*-introduced V1-C are allowed.

<sup>15</sup> 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).

Here are some of the examples:

- (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 *aber- (--)*  
 ‘but’  
***hätt ich zu DEM Zeitpunkt gewusst***  
 ‘had I known at that time’  
*dass es mir (.) IRGendwann so SCHLECHT geht,*  
 ‘that I would eventually be this bad off’  
 T *hm=hm,*  
 (–)  
 P *a !HÄTT! ich mir vie!LLEICHT! für uns ne !WOHN!ung (–) gesucht;=*  
 ‘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 *also ick gloob-*  
 ‘well I think’  
***hätte einstein det damals allet so jewusst,***  
 ‘had Einstein known about all this at the time’  
*hätt er dat für SICH behalten.*  
 ‘he would have kept it to himself’.

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

Sbr: *.h ich SPIEL doch garnich die beleidigte leberwurst.*  
 ‘I’m not acting like a prima donna’  
*ich REDE doch mit dir.*  
 ‘I’m talking to you’  
 Jrg: ((giggling))  
 Sbr: ***wär ich ne beleidigte LEberwurst;***  
 were I a prima donna;  
 ‘If I were acting like a prima donna,’  
*da würd=isch doch gar nisch mit dir REden.*  
 then would I PART not to you talk.  
 ‘then I wouldn’t be talking to you’.

The irrealis conditionals in these three examples could be replaced by the conjunctive conditionals (*wenn*) without a semantic change. This does not always apply to *sollte*-introduced V1-Cs:<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> In colloquial German, the /-e/ suffix marking the first-person singular is usually omitted, i.e. *sollte* is realised as *sollt*.

## (45) About emotions (Big Brother).

- Mar: .h äh **sollt ich irgendwann mal <<laughing>in> nächster zeit hier dasteh=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 e:motionen (.) 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 *sollte* already marks the potentiality in a relatively unambiguous way, no conjunction is necessary (although it may occur). The difference between a present tense (realis) conditional introduced by *wenn* and a *sollte*-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 (.) (diese) situatiON.  
 'uhm ((imagine)) (the following) situation.'  
 eh (.) sie arbeiten in einem TEAM,  
 'uhm you are working in a team'  
 und ein mitarbeiter fühlt sich ungerecht von ihnen:  
 beHANDelt.  
 'and one of your team members feels he has been treated unfairly'  
 wie (.) <<p>geh=n sie mit dem problem UM.>  
 'how do you deal with the problem'  
 B: (1.9) ja;  
 'yes'  
 ich mEIne- ICH persönlich würde damit (.) auf jEden fall eine aussprache mit dem MITarbeiter führen,  
 'I mean I personally I would in any case try to talk things out'  
 und würde versUchen (in dieser) aussprache letzten endes (.) auf: (.) sam=ma den HINtergrund (-) dieser: situation (.) eh (.) zu kOmmen.  
 'and I would try well let's say to get to the bottom of this situation in this talk.'  
 und:: (.) ich würde sagen;  
 'and I would say'

**wenn es: (.) akzepTAbLe gründe sind, (.)**  
 'if there are acceptable reasons,'  
**dann würd=ich schon versuchen die erst mal bei MIR z:'**  
 ABzustellen,  
 'then I would surely try to remedy the situation myself'  
**sollten es aber ANDere gründe sein,**  
 'should it be other reasons however,'  
 die jetzt (.) in den zwischenmenschlichen beZIEHungen sind;  
 'regarding interpersonal relations'  
 oder die FACHlicherseits sin(d); ('h)  
 'or something work-related'  
**da müsst=ich dann entsprEchend (-) mir überLEgen**  
 'then I would have to think about it accordingly'  
 eh eh müßt ich mir überLEgen,  
 'uhm uhm I would have to consider'  
 <<f>WANN.> WIE kann ich das jetzt stEuern;  
 'when. how can I manage it.'  
 =wie kann ich das ABstellen;>  
 'how can I make it stop'

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 *sollte*. The first alternative is surely the less problematic one in terms of the activity described. There is, therefore, an interactional reason to present the second, more problematic alternative as the more unlikely one. This is what the choice of the *sollte*-conditional achieves.

In sum, the most important qualitative difference between spoken Swedish and spoken German is the absence of realis 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 realis 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. Examples<sup>17</sup> are:

<sup>17</sup> From [www.sprichwoerter.net/content/category](http://www.sprichwoerter.net/content/category).



(47) V1-C in German proverbs and sayings:

- (a) *Kannst du nicht Pfaff 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.<sup>18</sup>

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 conjunctive 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.<sup>19</sup> V1 clauses introduced by *sollte* have indeed a strong projecting force. After an initial V1 clause such as

.h äh *sollt* ich irgendwann mal <<laughing>>in nächster zeit hier dastehen 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

<sup>18</sup> See Auer 2009a,b; Auer and Pfänder 2007.

<sup>19</sup> 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

*hätte* einstein det damals allet so jewusst,  
'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.

- Jhn: *ah ick gloob det SCHLIMMste was ick jemals gemacht hab  
war irgendwie (-) n=scheißDING gewesen;  
'uhm I think the most awful thing I've ever done was some  
kind of shitty thing'  
ick weiß gar nicht wie ick zu jeKOMMEN bin .h  
'I don't even remember how I came to do that'  
auf jeden fall hab ick n=leBenden fIsch den KOPF  
abgebissen.  
'in any case, I bit off the head of a live fish'*
- Jrg: [((giggling gently ))]
- Sbr: [((giggling, chokes ))]  
[*hättste* was jeSAGT hörmal]  
'had you said something, hey!'
- Jrg: [((laughs)) ]
- Sbr: *hätt [ich den immer RAUSgeholt;]  
'I would always have taken it out'*
- Jrg: [((laughs)) ]  
<<*f, laughing*>holt dein FREUND n=GOLdfisch aus=m (h)  
aQUarium>  
'your friend takes a goldfish out of the aquarium'
- Sbr: *und ich schmeiß [den kopf immer WEG; ]  
'and I always throw away the head'*
- Jrg: [(<<*f, laughing*>und er kommt .h)  
'and he comes (back)'  
  
der war auf toiLEtTe,  
'he was in the bathroom'  
  
und kommt der WIEder, schwimmt der fIsch ohne KOPF rum>  
'and he comes back and the fish is swimming around without  
its head'
- Sbr→J: ((laughing inbreath))  
*boah warum haste DAS denn gemacht;  
'wow why did you do that'*

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

*hättste was gesagt hörmal / hätte ich den immer rausgeholt  
'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

*hättste was gesagt  
'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:

*hätt ich den immer rausgeholt  
'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) GIC: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.

- P: *kan de va mera än fe:m frön då* ska man in ti sjukhu:s,  
 can it be more than five seeds  
 'if there is a possibility that it was more than five seeds,  
 then one has to go to hospital'
- *kan de vara mer än fem frön?*  
 'can it be more than five seeds?'
- (1.3)
- C: *ja de vet >ja inte< ja ska gå: å fråga (dom e) i matsalen*  
 'well I don't know about that I'll go and ask (they're) in the  
 dining room'

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 realis 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<sup>20</sup>) 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;=wusstest DU das=s sowas gibt?*  
 'look; did you know that this exists?'
- beeHAAS schon mit siliKON drinne?*  
 'bras that already contain silicone?'
- (0.5)

<sup>20</sup> The first clause does not occupy the front field of the second; therefore the resemblance is superficial.

- Adr: <<p> nee;> (-)  
 'no'  
 ((...))
- Adr: <<p> (-) wat n beSCHISS;=ne,>  
 'what a scam, huh,'  
 (0.5)
- Jrg: *ja:=alles [für Mogelpackung(en;*  
 'yes, all false promises (lit.: misleading packages)'
- Adr: [ (ae) [ja
- Adr: (.) TOLL;  
 'great.'
- *packst dich AUS hast nix me d (.) [DRUNter.*  
 'you take it all off and have nothing left underneath'
- Jrg: [ ((laughs))

- (53) John's story in (50) about biting off a live fish's head has now turned into a fictitious story about a fish in an aquarium at John's friend's house (Big Brother).

- Jrg: <<f,laughing>und er kommt .h  
 'and he comes'
- der war auf toiLEtTe*  
 'he was in the bathroom'
- *und kommt der WIEder, schwimmt der fIsch ohne KOPF rum>*  
 and comes he again swims the fish without head around  
 'and he comes back and the fish is swimming around without  
 its head'

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 so=n haken und DU hängst dann da dran so.*  
 'I have this kind of hook and you will be hanging on it.'  
*a=hohoho.*

- **lass** ich dich dann so in der sonne trocknen.  
let I you then like-that in the sun dry.  
'then I'll let you dry in the sun.'
- **mach** ich vorher hier n glatten SCHNITT,  
make I before here a clear cut,  
'first I'll make a clean cut here'
- **blutest**=de noch n <<lachend>bisschen> ahaha  
bleed you still a bit  
'then you'll bleed a bit longer'
- Jrg: ((laughs))
- Sbr: so hier n schnitt,  
'like a cut here'
- dann nehm ich dich verKEHRT rum,  
'then I'll hold you upside down'
- dann blutest de richtig schön aus an meinem arm.  
'then you will bleed to death on my arm.'

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 (Mörnsjö 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 conjunctive 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 conjunctive protasis with a fabricated V1 version:

?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 conjunctive conditionals in syntactically loose positions (pre-front field) is e contrario 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 ä grym, så ja kommer lyssna på han  
'who I think is awesome, then I am going to listen to him'  
när 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* '(any)one', *vi* '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 rewording what has been said

(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 conjunctive 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 *hätte* 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 se-

quential 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 constructional 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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 MM-Corpus = Mannheimer Morgen (<http://www.ids-mannheim.de/kl/projekte/korpora/archiv/mm.html>): newspaper corpus.  
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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.<sup>1</sup> For present purposes, we restrict ourselves to cases of *and* conjoining *verb phrases* only.<sup>2</sup> 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 “Missiz 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).

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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).