

A. Introduction: This paper investigates differences in pragmatic inferences arising from conditionals across standard and non-standard varieties of English. We show how the availability of a richer set of morphosyntactic options in non-standard varieties explains differences in the properties of pragmatic inferences.

B. The phenomenon: Standard English expresses subjunctive conditionals in structures like (1a) (SC). Non-standard varieties allow two additional alternatives (NSSCs) seen in (1b) & (1c) (which appear in English when the subjunctive voice disappears (15th C)).

- (1) a. If Sarah had eaten bread, she would have had an allergic reaction [SC]
b. If Sarah had've eaten bread, she would have had an allergic reaction [NSSC]
c. If Sarah would've eaten bread, she would have had an allergic reaction [NSSC]

NSSCs are usually identified with a less prestigious dialect but otherwise no difference has been pointed out between NSSCs and SCs. However, a survey of 13 speakers of NSSCs varieties examining examples like (2) shows that speakers of NSSCs dialects are aware of a meaning difference between NSSCs and SCs.

- (2) The family doctor is talking to Sarah's parents trying to find out why Sarah has a rash on her skin:
a. If Sarah had eaten bread, she would have had an allergic reaction, so she probably ate bread
b. If Sarah had've/would've eaten bread, she would've had an allergic reaction, so she probably ate bread

We follow [1] in treating counterfactuality in SCs as an implicature that can be canceled: given SC *If p, q*, the counterfactual inference is that $\neg p$. In (2) the statements explicitly contradict such an inference. As expected given [1], participants accepted the (a) version, canceling the implicature. However, all participants rejected the (b) versions (there was no difference between the two varieties of NSSCs). The conclusion is in (3):

- (3) **Novel empirical observation:** Given NSSC *If p, q*, the counterfactual inference $\neg p$ ('counterfactuality') cannot be canceled (contrary to what we find in SCs).

Theoretical Proposal: We propose a semantic-pragmatic account of (3) based on the idea that NSSCs embed a simple subjunctive ([4]) in the antecedent clause and principles of pragmatic economy.

C. Preliminaries: We adopt [7]'s morphosyntactic arguments that *had* in (1b) and *would* in (1c) are modals and not vacuous words (contra [3, 6, 8]) (indeed, since there is no difference between the two varieties of NSSCs we treat them as the same modal and mostly exemplify with *would*).

D. The puzzle: In line with [1], we characterize counterfactuality in SCs as an implicature. Following [5] (see also [2]) we consider it an anti-presupposition triggered by the use of *would* vs. *will* bundled together with the choice of aspect. If counterfactuality were an implicature in NSSCs as well, we would naturally expect it to also be cancelable, contrary to our observations. We argue for an implicature analysis and derive the difference in cancelability from the fact that NSSCs have a simple subjunctive (SiSU) in the antecedent whereas SCs have a regular indicative clause. **D1. Simple subjunctives:** An example of SiSU is given in (4).

- (4) Your brother would have passed the exam [SiSU(p)]
[*p = that your brother passes the exam = the 'pendant'*]

We adopt/adapt the quantificational modal analysis of SiSUs in [4]: SiSU(*p*) is true iff in the most similar worlds to the actual world in which the necessary pre-conditions for *p* ($Prec_p$) are satisfied, *p* is true (roughly) [(SiSU(*p*) = *would*($Prec_p$)(*p*))]. We also follow [4] in claiming that SiSUs are distinct from SCs (either with overt or discourse-given antecedents): (i) Necessary vs. sufficient conditions: The (implicit) restrictors in SiSUs are necessary preconditions ($Prec$) for the truth of the pendant, whereas in SCs restrictors are sufficient conditions. (ii) Differences in implicatures: As in SCs, the restrictor in SiSUs is implied to be false. Thus, SiSUs imply that $Prec_p$ are false (see [4]) (we extend [5] to claim that the counterfactual implicature in SiSUs is an antipresupposition arising from the competition between the SiSU (*would* + *perfect aspect*) and the plain indicative). Since the preconditions are necessary conditions for the truth of the pendant, if the preconditions are false, the pendant is also false. However, in negated SiSUs, the negated pendant is taken to be true ([4]):

- (5) John would not have bought a Japanese car

As [4] argues, in (5) it is implied to be true *that John did not buy a Japanese car*: \neg SiSU(*p*) implies $\neg p$

D2. Differences in truth-conditions between NSSCs and SCs: The differences in the make up of the antecedent in NSSCs and SCs bring about different truth conditions. While the SC *If p, q* claims that in the *p*-worlds

most similar to the actual world, q is true (roughly, a Lewis-Stalnaker type analysis), NSSC *If* p , q impose a further condition on the domain, quantifying over the p -worlds most similar to the actual world in which the necessary preconditions of p guarantee the truth of p . The claim is that in those worlds, q is true. Hence, overall, NSSCs are less informative than SCs (the domain of quantification of SCs include p -worlds in which $Prec_p$ guarantee the truth of p , but also p -worlds in which the $Prec_p$ don't guarantee the truth p).

D3. Differences in implicatures between NSSCs and SCs: The proposal that NSSCs have a SiSU in the antecedent clause allows us to predict differences between NSSCs and SCs:

- (6) a. Truth-conditions for SCs: *would* [p]_{restrictor} [q]_{nuclear scope}
- b. Implicatures (\rightsquigarrow) arising from SCs being subjunctive conditionals (falsity of the antecedent): $\rightsquigarrow \neg p$
- (7) a. Truth conditions for NSSCs: *would* [SiSU(p)]_{restrictor} [q]_{nuclear scope}
- b. Implicatures arising from NSSCs being subjunctive conditionals (falsity of the antecedent):
 $\rightsquigarrow \neg \text{SiSU}(p)$, hence, $\rightsquigarrow \neg p$ (similar to (5))
- c. Implicatures arising from simple subjunctive in NSSCs:
 - i. $\rightsquigarrow \neg Prec_p$ (falsity of necessary pre-conditions for pendant)
 - ii. Since $Prec_p$ is necessary for the truth of p , $\neg Prec_p \longrightarrow \neg p$

Intuitively, SCs suggest that p is false, whereas NSSCs go a step further, suggesting that even the necessary conditions for p are false.

E. Canceling implicatures in subjunctive conditionals: E1. SCs: Given the SC-claim *If* p , q , the counterfactual implicature ($\rightsquigarrow \neg p$) can be canceled by claiming that p is true (2a) [or, alternatively, by claiming that q is true (Anderson examples) and assuming that it is only if p is true that q is true, (conditional perfection), which leads to the truth of p]. **E2. NSSCs:** Given the NSSC-claim *If* SiSU(p), q , claiming also that p is true does not directly conflict with the SiSU-implicature $\rightsquigarrow \neg Prec_p$. However, the SiSU-implicature entails $\neg p$ (see (7c-ii)), which contradicts the claim that p . So, given the conflict with the SiSU-implicature, why doesn't the claim that p is true cancel $\rightsquigarrow \neg Prec_p$? To understand this we must compare the effects of SCs and NSSCs. The truth-conditions of the SC-claim *If* p , q and the NSSC-claim *If* SiSU(p), q are different. However, if either conditional is followed by p , the conversational common ground will end up including the propositions corresponding to $Prec_p$, p and q (the informational impact of the sequences ends up being the same). The speaker was taken to be justified in using a less informative and more complex construction (both in terms of morpho-syntax and in terms of the pragmatic implicatures that are triggered), a NSSC, because by doing so s/he further marked the propositions $Prec_p$ (and p) as false. However, given the sequence NSSC+ p , using the more complex form did not result in any gain (the meaning for which NSSC is specialized was not relevant after all). There is a conflict between the 'move' made by a speaker in choosing the NSSC and the move made in claiming p . The speaker is not allowed to get away with this uneconomical use of a less informative and more complex structure given that exactly the same results could be achieved with a more informative and less complex construction. Since speakers of NSSC dialects have available the SC form, they should choose it if, in the end, they wish to claim is that p is true. Listeners refuse to cancel $\rightsquigarrow \neg Prec_p$ because it is a pragmatic contradiction. A principle of pragmatic economy and discourse rationality is at work. Cancelling $\rightsquigarrow \neg Prec_p$ would amount to characterizing the speaker as irrational.

F. Conclusion: The availability of a richer set of morpho-syntactic options in non-standard dialects provides an ideal vantage point from which to investigate counterfactuality implicatures in conditionals. We have shown that not all implicatures behave alike. Principles of pragmatic economy come into play to seemingly hard-wire certain implicatures in view of the total range of alternative constructions available to the speakers of a particular dialect. And, as we have shown (contra to other work), speakers of non-standard dialects are very aware of the differences, making conscious and clear choices when uttering a SC or NSSC.

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