

TOWARD A FUNCTIONAL DESCRIPTION OF NEW TESTAMENT GREEK  
CONDITIONALS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

by

Rocky H. Fong, B.A.S., Th.M., M.A.

A thesis submitted to  
the Faculty of McMaster Divinity College  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Christian Theology)

McMaster Divinity College  
Hamilton, Ontario  
2014

Doctor of Philosophy (Christian Theology)  
Hamilton, Ontario

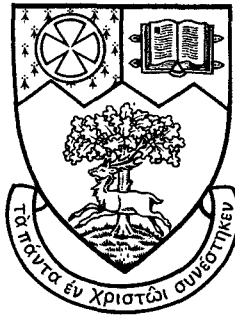
McMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE

TITLE:                                    **Toward a Functional Description of New Testament  
Greek Conditionals with Special Reference to the Gospel  
of John**

AUTHOR:                                 **Rocky H. Fong**

SUPERVISORS:                         **Dr. Stanley E. Porter**  
  
  **Dr. Cynthia Long Westfall**

NUMBER OF PAGES:                 **xi + 295**



## McMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE

Upon the recommendation of an oral examining committee,  
this dissertation by

**Rocky H. Fong**

is hereby accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY)**

Primary Supervisor: Stanley E. Porter  
Stanley E. Porter, Ph.D.

Secondary Supervisor: Cynthia A. Westfall  
Cynthia Long Westfall, Ph.D.

External Examiner: R. Alan Culpepper  
R. Alan Culpepper, Ph.D.

Academic Dean Designate: Phil C. Zylla  
Phil C. Zylla, D.Th.

Date: November 11, 2013

## ABSTRACT

Toward a Functional Description of New Testament Greek Conditionals  
with Special Reference to the Gospel of John

Rocky H. Fong  
McMaster Divinity College  
Hamilton, Ontario  
Doctor of Philosophy (Christian Theology), 2014

Historically, the study of NT Greek conditional statements has predominantly set its focus on the Mood and Tense of the protasis. More recently, semantic approaches based on the speaker's viewpoint, or attitude, have also been adopted, to classify conditionals either as statements of assertion or projection. As such approaches are based on a limited number of linguistic features and functions, they offer only a partial understanding of conditionals. Most grammarians also largely ignore the wider contexts of the biblical texts and conditionals' rhetorical function.

The purpose of this study is twofold: to critically examine current methods of describing and classifying conditionals to propose a new method based on theory of language and the analytical framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL); and to apply the proposed interpretive framework to analyze selected conditionals found in the Gospel of John, exploring how Jesus uses conditionals to persuade his audience and how conditionals serve the persuasive purpose of the Gospel. Instead of following the conventional lines of investigation, this thesis adopts Systemic Functional Linguistics' multi-stratal structure and multi-functional concept of language. Structurally, the

interpretive framework expands from the units of words and clauses to those of clause complexes. All three major functions of language (ideational, interpersonal, and textual) are included as part of the total meaning. An analytical interpretive framework is then set up and applied to selected conditionals in John 3-11.

Based on the evidence such as the choice of the Mood, thematic structure, logico-semantic relation, grammatical intricacy, clustered and consecutive conditionals, and conditionals as topic and summative statements, it is concluded that the conditionals Jesus uses present a strongly persuasive case for the author's purpose of writing. On one hand, the conditionals that Jesus uses rebut the Jews' charge of blasphemy and make a convincing case for his Christological claim. On the other hand, conditionals by Jesus also provide his audience and the reader of John with a different viewpoint (an alternate world) to understand the deeper meaning of faith and discipleship. Johannine conditionals perform the function of persuading the reader of John toward faith and spiritual growth in Jesus (20:31).

## Acknowledgements and Dedication

It is such a wonderful feeling to see this thesis finally reach its successful completion. I want to acknowledge the following people for their prayers, encouragement, and personal support during this long process. Through arrangement by McMaster Divinity College, I was able to spend the Spring of 2010 at the University of Vienna, Austria, and used their library facilities for my initial research. Dr. Hans Förster was very helpful and made my visit very fruitful. Those few months in Europe were also an unforgettable cultural experience. Later, he also kindly provided feedback for a chapter of an early draft.

Professor Dr. Jonathan Webster of City University of Hong Kong has been very encouraging and supportive of my linguistic approach to studying the Word of God, especially in using Systemic Functional Linguistics. He also read some of the sections and chapters of an early draft and provided very helpful feedback. For a number of years, we served together in the same church. When I left Hong Kong, little did I know that we would connect again and that I would get to know him also as a linguist. It adds another enriching dimension to our relationship.

I would like to thank my supervisors, Professor Dr. Stanley Porter and Dr. Cynthia Westfall, for their patient guidance and helpful criticism, especially Professor Porter for introducing me to the field of linguistics. I have to admit that I was rather reluctant to embrace the idea at first. It took me some time to become familiar with its basic concepts, but now I find it very interesting and even exciting. In addition, I also want to thank Dr. Phil Zylla. As his Teaching Assistant in my first year, I learned a great deal from him how to be a teacher. He instilled in me the concept of “Pastor-

Theologian” that I have found very valuable. Lastly, thanks to Dr. Alan Culpepper, the external examiner, for his interest in my work and his insightful comments and suggestions.

During the entire course of my studies, I have been privileged to be able to teach at the Canadian Chinese School of Theology at Tyndale Seminary, Toronto. It has been an enriching and rewarding experience. I am grateful to Dr. Peter Au and Rev. Paul Wang, Principal and Vice-principal of the School, for their constant encouragements.

Credits must also be given to my wife, Denise, for her support in countless ways during my long pursuit of another academic degree. Her patient endurance was deeply appreciated during the prolonged period of time when I was preoccupied with writing of what she called the “love letter.” Thanks also to my son, James, who proofread several earlier chapters and the final draft of the entire thesis.

Finally, I thank God for my dear mother and her model of childlike faith. She sacrificed a great deal to raise our family, especially in looking after me in the early years of my life. It is with much love and the deepest gratitude I dedicate this thesis in memory of her.

## Table Of Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Introduction	
1.1 Purpose of Study and Thesis	3
1.2 State of Research	6
1.2.1 New Testament conditionals	
1.2.2 Johannine conditionals in context	
1.3 Organization of This Study	41
Chapter 2 Description and Procedure	45
Introduction	
2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics: An Overview	47
2.1.1 System	
2.1.2 Function	
2.1.3 Text	
2.2 Conditional Statement: A Functional Approach	60
2.2.1 Ideational function	
2.2.2 Interpersonal function	
2.2.3 Textual function	
2.3 Procedure	73
Chapter 3 Nicodemus, The Samaritan Woman, The Royal Official, and The Jews	81
Introduction	
3.1 Nicodemus (3:1-15)	83
3.2 The Samaritan Woman and the Royal Official	96
3.2.1 The Samaritan woman (4:7-12)	
3.2.2 The royal official (4:43-54)	
3.3 The Jews (5:19-47)	104
3.3.1 Jesus and the Father (5:19-30)	
3.3.2 Witnesses to Jesus and unbelief of the Jews (5:31-47)	
Summary and Conclusion	124
Chapter 4 The Bread of Life Discourse and Final Debate with the Jews	129
Introduction	
4.1 The Galilean Jews (6:41-59)	131
4.2 The Early Disciples (6:60-65)	145
4.3 The Final Debate with the Jews (10:22-39)	152
Summary and Conclusion	172



Chapter 5 The Followers of Jesus, and the Grammar of Conditionals	177
Introduction	
5.1 The Disciples, Martha, and Mary	179
5.1.1 The Disciples (11:9-15)	
5.1.2 Martha and Mary (11:21-40)	
5.2 The Grammar of Conditionals	203
5.2.1 Conditionals and the construal of reality	
5.2.2 Johannine conditionals and antilanguage	
Summary and Conclusion	227
Chapter 6 Summary and Conclusion	230
Introduction	
6.1 Summary of Results	231
6.1.1 Ideational function	
6.1.2 Interpersonal function	
6.1.3 Textual function	
6.2 Conclusion	258
6.2.1 Methods of description	
6.2.2 Toward a functional description of conditionals	
6.2.3 Johannine conditionals and John's persuasive purpose	
6.3 Implications and Future Research	266
Appendices	270
Appendix 1 Distribution of conditionals in the Gospels	
Appendix 2 Distribution of conditionals in Galatians and 1 John	
Appendix 3 A comparison of Jesus' conditionals in John's Gospel	
Appendix 4 A comparison of Jesus' conditionals in Matthew's Gospel	
Bibliography	277

## Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
AB (SBL)	Academia Biblica
ADP	Advances in Discourse Processes
<i>AJP</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
ASCP	Amsterdam Studies in Classical Philology
BBB	Bonner Biblicische Beiträge
BDAG	A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3 <sup>rd</sup> ed.
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
BLG	Biblical Languages: Greek
BTNT	Biblical Theology of the New Testament
BtS	Biblisch-theologische Schwerpunkte
CBNTS	Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CCL	Classic Commentary Library
CCS	Cambridge Classical Studies
CSL	Cambridge Studies in Linguistics
CSCRS	Calcutta Sanskrit College Research Series
<i>CSR</i>	<i>Christian Scholars Review</i>
CTL	Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics
<i>CTR</i>	<i>Canadian Theological Review</i>
CW	Collected Works of M. A. K. Halliday
ELL	Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics
<i>ET</i>	<i>The Expository Times</i>
<i>FL</i>	<i>Folia Linguistica</i>
FG	In Introduction to Functional Grammar, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed.
<i>FN</i>	<i>Filologia Neotestamentaria</i>
FS	Foundations of Semiotics
<i>GTJ</i>	<i>Grace Theological Journal</i>
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
ICC	The International Critical Commentary
IFG	An Introduction to Functional Grammar, 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JLIABG</i>	<i>Journal of the Linguistic Institute of Ancient and Biblical Greek</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LLL	Longmans' Linguistic Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
NA <sup>28</sup>	Novum Testamentum Graece, 28 <sup>th</sup> edition
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
N-HLS	North-Holland Linguistic Series
NICNT	The New International Commentary on the New Testament

NICOT	The New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
<i>NT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NTM	New Testament Monographs
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
OHLA	Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Analysis
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
<i>PRS</i>	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
<i>RQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
RTT	Research in Text Theory
SBG	Studies in Biblical Greek
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SGVSGTR	Sammlung Gemeinverständlicher Vorträge und Schriften aus dem Gebiet der Theologie und Religionsgeschichte
SNTG	Studies in New Testament Greek
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SPIB	Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
<i>TB</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
TD	Theologische Dissertationen
TLL	Topics in Language and Linguistics
<i>TThZ</i>	<i>Trier Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UB	Urban-Taschenbücher
UBSGNT	United Bible Society Greek New Testament, 4 <sup>th</sup> rev. ed.
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZThK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Introduction

Conditional statements have always posed significant difficulty for grammarians,<sup>1</sup> particularly those who study New Testament Greek. At the end of their introductory paragraph on the classification of NT conditional sentences, Blass-Debrunner state, “The lack of any generally accepted terminology (in classical and NT studies) makes easy reference difficult. The classical grammars are also hopelessly at variance.”<sup>2</sup> Another NT grammarian, A. T. Robertson begins his discussion on conditionals sentences as follows: “No hypotactic clause is more important than this. For some reason the Greek sentence has been very difficult for students to understand. In truth, the doctors have disagreed themselves and the rest have not known how to go.”<sup>3</sup> More recently, in concluding his discussion on conditional statements in the context of Greek verbal aspect, Stanley Porter adds,

There probably will never be a scheme for conditionals that will meet with the approval of all grammarians, but formal criteria utilizing attitudinal and aspectual semantics provide a helpful basis for advancing discussion of the protasis. Establishing the exact relation between protasis and apodosis is more difficult, since there are no firm criteria by which such an analysis may be made.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Haiman writes, “Neither linguists nor philosophers have suggested a coherent explication for ordinary-language conditionals; most have not even entertained the notion that such an explication is possible.” Haiman, “Conditionals are Topics,” 564. Likewise Funk states, “It has always been a task, both attractive and difficult, for linguists to determine basic categories of conditional sentences which are specific enough to be helpful in the description of a particular language and, at the same time, broad enough to make languages comparable and to enable the transfer of complex meanings from one language to another.” Funk, “Semantic Typology,” 365.

<sup>2</sup> Blass-Debrunner, *Greek Grammar*, 189.

<sup>3</sup> Robertson, *Greek Grammar*, 1004.

<sup>4</sup> Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 320.

The challenge to describe conditionals in a coherent manner stems from a number of sources. First, the nature of conditionals is inherently complex. All conditionals by their very nature involve statements that may or may not be true. That is why “if” is chosen to signal the uncertainty. The uncertainty involved may be due to a number of reasons: ignorance of the speaker, the nature of the supposition, the choice by the hearer, the course of events, or simply a matter of futurity.<sup>5</sup>

The other challenge comes from the complex phenomenon of human language. In understanding the meaning of language in use, linguists have recognized the significant relationships between meaning, form and function, and how meaning is expressed in various linguistic constructions or levels, such as the clause and the units that are below and above the clause, and in different context of situations.<sup>6</sup> The study of NT conditionals is further complicated by the fact that NT Greek is an ancient language and the modern method being used may not be totally applicable.

Simply from the point of view of linguistics, it requires the mobilization of a lot of grammatical resources to express the meaning of *if*. And it requires at least the same amount of resources, if not more, to explain and understand how a speaker uses *if* in various communication contexts. The level of complexity and challenge is even higher when we are studying an ancient language like NT Greek.

---

<sup>5</sup> See Boyer, “Second Class,” 84. For an overview of how various disciplines (linguistics, psychological, and philosophical and logical) approach conditionals, see Ferguson, et al., “Overview,” 3-20.

<sup>6</sup> For example: Berry et al., *Meaning and Form*; and Martin, *English Text*; Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, 35-67.

## 1.1 Purpose of Study and Thesis

### 1.1.1 Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is twofold. The first purpose is to take a critical look at some of the methods of describing or classifying conditionals. These approaches include: the temporal and probability approach based on Moods and Tenses of the protasis,<sup>7</sup> the attitudinal or aspectual approach,<sup>8</sup> classification based on Speech Act Theory,<sup>9</sup> and most recently, conditionals as framing devices based on discourse grammar.<sup>10</sup> Then a new proposal is offered based on the theory of language and the analytical framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).<sup>11</sup> The goal is not necessarily to overturn existing classification schemes, but to demonstrate that they only describe some of the linguistic features and functions of New Testament conditionals and these classifications are done without a central, unified framework.

In order to understand conditionals fully, an approach that is based more on a comprehensive linguistic theory, such as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), is needed. By adopting a SFL approach, the primary apparatus for describing the meaning of conditionals includes not just the grammatical features of Moods and Tenses of the protasis. The analysis is carried out with the underlying premise that the “architecture” of language consists of different strata: expression, content, and context. And meaning is expressed through three primary functions: Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual Functions.

---

<sup>7</sup> For example: Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, 100-12; Blass-Debrunner, *Greek Grammar*, 188-91; Boyer, “First Class,” 75-93; “Second Class,” 81-88; and “Third (and Fourth) Class,” 163-75.

<sup>8</sup> Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, 100-13; Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 291-320.

<sup>9</sup> Young, “Classification of Conditional Sentences,” 29-49.

<sup>10</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 227-33.

<sup>11</sup> See p. 46 below.

As NT Greek grammarians typically focus on how conditionals are classified according to grammatical forms, rather than on how they function in context, the second purpose of this study is to apply the new interpretative framework to the conditionals of John's Gospel in context. What has also been overlooked is the important function of conditionals as rhetorical or persuasive devices especially in John's Gospel, where the highest frequency of conditionals among the four Gospels occurs.

As the following chart shows, John contains a total of 102 conditional statements, or 41% of the total number of conditionals in all the Gospels.<sup>12</sup> The frequency is 4.9 conditionals per chapter, also the highest among the four Gospels.

	Matt	Mark	Luke	John	Total
Conditional	71	29	49	<b>102</b>	251
Chapter	28	16	24	21	--
Cond./Chap.	2.5	1.8	2.0	<b>4.9</b>	--

In order to understand the persuasive power of conditionals, one can turn to Gamaliel's speech to the Jewish council in Acts 5. To respond to his fellow Jews concerning the apostles' preaching, Gamaliel first cites previous failed political attempts by rebels (5:36-37). After stating that the council should leave the apostles alone (v 38a), he puts forward two consecutive conditionals to support his case, a Subjunctive in v 38b, immediately followed by an Indicative in v 39:

Acts 5:38b-39

ὅτι εἰ ἂν ᾗ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἡ βουλή αὕτη ἢ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο, καταλυθήσεται, εἰ δὲ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐστίν, οὐ δύνησεσθε καταλῦσαι αὐτούς

*...for if this plan or this action should be of human origin, it will be overthrown, but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them*

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix 1, p. 268, for the distribution of the conditionals in each Gospel.

A more detail analysis of these two conditionals is found in section 2.2.1 of this study. But at this point, it is noted that Gamaliel's use of conditionals is deliberate. He makes indirect statements based on different kinds of suppositions or conditions. The sequence and the supposition of an ἐάν + Subjunctive conditional ("of human origin"), followed by an εἰ + Indicative conditional ("of God") is intentional. He first makes a hypothetical case (v 38b) concerning the human origin of the apostles' preaching and evangelising without personally committing to whether or not the supposition is true. Then, he presents another case as an assumed to be true situation,<sup>13</sup> that is, the divine origin of their action (v 39), and warns his audience of the dire consequence of disobedience (that is, fighting against God). As a result of Gamaliel's speech, the members of the Council were persuaded (ἐπείσθησαν *they were persuaded*). Other NT examples of the persuasive function of conditionals include: Matt 12:26-29; 18.1-20; 1 Cor 15 12-19; and Gal 1 8-10.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is two-fold. to develop a new model of interpreting conditionals, and to apply the knowledge of conditionals based on the new model to Johannine conditionals, particularly how Johannine conditionals in context achieve the persuasive purpose of John's Gospel (John 20:31).<sup>14</sup>

### 1 1.2 Thesis

The descriptions of New Testament conditionals based on Moods and Tenses, attitudinal semantics, Speech Act Theory, and discourse grammar do not adequately model a unified and coherent conceptualization of what language is and how it functions. The general task of interpreting conditionals is also weakened by its lack of

<sup>13</sup> More about this type of Indicative conditional (type 1) will be explained later in this study

<sup>14</sup> For rhetorical studies of John's Gospel, see Warner, "Rational Persuasion," 153-77; and Edwards, "The World Could Not Contain," 178-94.



in-depth understanding of how they function as clause complexes in context. To remedy the situation, Systemic Functional Linguistics' stratum-function analytical framework is used in this study. Johannine conditionals will be studied primarily on the content stratum (consisting of semantics and lexicogrammar) and according to language functions (Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual). This study argues that Jesus uses conditionals to persuade his audience and Johannine conditionals are used polemically and didactically to persuade the readers of John to put their faith in Jesus.

## 1.2 State of Research

### 1.2.1 Greek New Testament Conditionals

*Conceptualization of language.* Before reviewing the state of research of New Testament conditionals, it will be helpful to first understand how grammarians conceptualize the language of NT Greek as a whole and how they organize conditionals in their grammars. This will enable the conditionals to be located in their wider linguistic context.

New Testament Greek textbooks and studies primarily adopt three different conceptualizations of language. The first is a word-based approach. Divided into different "parts of speech," it focuses on words as the fundamental unit of description. E. D. Burton's grammar is an example,<sup>15</sup> Zerwick<sup>16</sup> and Turner<sup>17</sup> also adopt a similar approach. With this kind of language conceptualization, the Mood and Tense in the protasis occupies the central role in the understanding of conditionals. Therefore, it is

---

<sup>15</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*.

<sup>16</sup> Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, 100-13.

<sup>17</sup> Turner, *Syntax*, 113-16, where conditional sentences are subordinated under "Subordinate Clauses," which in turn is subordinated under "The Subjunctive," and "Moods" respectively.

not difficult to see that the description of conditionals suffers due to the omission of other equally important linguistic features.<sup>18</sup>

The second kind of conceptualization is the compositional approach, under which the framework of analysis uses such divisions as word groups, simple clauses, and sentences, including simple and complex sentences as the unit of composition. Such a view is reflected in Stanley Porter's NT Greek grammar where he divides his work into two main sections: Part 1 "Words and Phrases" and Part 2 "Clauses and Larger Units." "Conditional Clauses" is located between "Relative Clauses" and "Indirect Discourse" in Part 2.<sup>19</sup> According to such organization, the general division moves up from smaller to larger units of composition, with Discourse Analysis (Chapter 21) being last.

Blending the parts of speech with the compositional approach, K. L. McKay emphasizes the verb, as is suggested by the title of his work, *A New Syntax of the Verb in New Testament Greek*, and shown by the contents of the first six chapters. These chapters include Voice, Aspect, Tense, and Mood.<sup>20</sup> From Chapter 7 ("Sentences, Simple and Complex") he adopts the compositional approach; Conditional Clauses follow the chapter on Relative Clauses and precede the final chapter on Concessive Constructions.<sup>21</sup> Conditional clauses are thus a subcategory of complex sentences. And in Daniel Wallace's Greek grammar textbook, the section on "Syntax of Words and Phrases" takes up the bulk of the work (the first 655 of a total of 764 pages), with "Syntax of the Clause" taking up the last approximately 110 pages, under which

<sup>18</sup> See critical reviews by Porter in *Verbal Aspect*, 292-93, and Tjen in *On Conditionals*, 56, 62-63.

<sup>19</sup> Porter, *Idioms*, 254-67.

<sup>20</sup> McKay, *New Syntax*, 1-66.

<sup>21</sup> McKay, *New Syntax*, 163-74. Likewise, Moule begins the study of sentences in Chapter XIII Relative Clauses in his grammar, *Idiom Book*, 130. Chapter XIX Conditional Clauses is found on pp 148-52.

conditional clauses, along with volitional clauses, are grouped under “Special studies in the Clauses.”<sup>22</sup>

The shift from word-based analysis to composition unit conceptualization is characterized by two main features. First, the unit of analysis expands from primarily single words (class of speech) to larger word groups such as clauses and sentences. Language is properly conceptualized based on its overall architecture. Larger spans of text (clauses, for example) are instead considered the basic units of meaning. Conditional statements are analyzed not only according to the Mood and Tense of the protasis, but also according to how clauses are semantically related. But there lacks a central, theoretical linguistic underpinning and methodology to organize language and, in particular, to place the conditional statements within the scheme of organization. As Louw lamented in the 1990s, New Testament Greek grammars suffer from, “a lack of proper methodology and a satisfactory linguistic theory.”<sup>23</sup> Such a deficiency is evidenced by Peter Cotterell and Max Turner’s *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*. Their work utilizes a topical approach to language and lacks a proper rationale explaining how language or meaning is organized. Discussions of semantics, words, discourse, and sentences crisscross one another.<sup>24</sup> The theoretical framework adopted is eclectic and random. Linguistics topics include the meaning of discourse, lexical

---

<sup>22</sup> Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 679-712. It is not clear why conditionals and commands and prohibitions are “special.” The predominant focus on parts of speech can also be seen in older grammars such as Blass-Debrunner’s *Greek Grammar*. Of the total 500 pages, only the last 20 pages (pp. 239-63) deal with features that are under the broader framework of sentences. Cf. Funk, *Beginning-Intermediate Grammar*, 2:679-88, who subordinates conditionals as follows: Short Syntax > Adverbial Clauses > Conditional Sentences. Likewise, Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, 512-36: Syntax > Complex Sentence (hypotaxis) > Conditionals Clauses.

<sup>23</sup> Louw, “New Testament Greek,” 165.

<sup>24</sup> For example, semantics in Chapter 2 “Semantics and Hermeneutics,” discourse in Chapter 3 “Dimensions of the Meaning of a Discourse,” and word study in Chapter 4 “The Use and Abuse of Word Studies in Theology.” Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 37-128.

semantics, discourse analysis, including Speech Act Theory, and non-literal or metaphorical language.<sup>25</sup> Along with the previously mentioned Greek grammars, it can be concluded that the phenomenon of language is still not fully comprehended. And the description and understanding of conditionals suffer from a lack of a scientific linguistic framework that is principled and systematic.<sup>26</sup>

The third and final approach to language and its use is based on the semantic concept of text or discourse.<sup>27</sup> While some NT grammarians are reluctant to explore discourse analysis,<sup>28</sup> others have made some notable contributions.<sup>29</sup> For example, in Steven Runge's *Discourse Grammar*, grammatical features are organized into three main groups of discourse devices, namely, forward-pointing, information structuring (emphasis and framing), and thematic highlighting. Accordingly, "Conditional Frames" belong to one of the information structuring devices that provides an explicit frame of reference that sets the stage for the clause that follows. Runge writes, "Positioning the conditional as a frame of reference highlights the contingency of the main clause, which otherwise might have sounded like an affirmation until the condition or exception was read at the end."<sup>30</sup> He illustrates the strength of adopting discourse grammar as follows,

---

<sup>25</sup> See also Black, *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation*.

<sup>26</sup> Louw also writes, "various grammars after Debrunner all merely repeat what has been said and what is already known. Consequently, it stands to reason that people would think that we have all the facts.... While publications (articles, monographs, books) with a modern linguistic approach are no longer rare, commentaries and publications on Biblical theology reflect only a superficial acquaintance, if any, with modern linguistics." Louw, "New Testament Greek," 162, 163-64. For an example of a linguistic model, particularly on the representational function, see Bühler, *Theory of Language*, 30-39.

<sup>27</sup> "The fundamental starting point of discourse analysis is that language is not used in isolated words or even sentences, but occurs in larger units called discourses." Porter, *Idioms*, 298. See also Louw, "Reading a Text," 17-30.

<sup>28</sup> For example, Matthews, *Syntax*, xix; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, xv.

<sup>29</sup> See Porter, *Idioms*, 298-207; Callow, *Discourse Considerations*; Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*; Porter and Carson, *Discourse Analysis*.

<sup>30</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 228.

Much of the grammatical discussion can be compared to trying to use only one adjective to describe a plastic drinking straw. Some might argue it is long, other might say it is round, while still others might insist it is hollow. Each viewpoint looks at only one aspect and thus fails to capture an accurate representation of the whole.<sup>31</sup>

Unlike most grammarians, who consider conditional statements individually, Runge includes consecutive conditionals (Rom 8:13a, 13b; 1 John 1:6-10) as well as conditionals with multiple clauses (Jas 2:2-4). In his analysis, such conditionals allow the speaker to ensure that the audience will not miss the point and make the overall proposition compelling.<sup>32</sup> However, Runge does not explore how conditionals, single or multiple, function within sections of texts. Moreover, what he classifies as the function of “information structuring” or framing is only one of the many functions of conditionals. As will be shown later in this study, at different levels of the text, Johannine conditionals also function as what Runge calls “thematic highlighting” devices.

This brief survey shows that the conceptualization of the language in NT Greek is typically fragmented and compartmentalized. NT grammarians tend to treat conditional statements solely according to the grammatical concepts of Moods and Tenses, or the basic composition unit such as the clause. Even with the broader framework of discourse, the description does not do justice to the multifaceted meanings that these conditional sentences express.

*Definition of conditional statement.* The complex nature of conditional statements does not allow a simple description to capture its full range of meaning. The following survey shows that while only some NT grammarians include conditionals

---

<sup>31</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, xviii.

<sup>32</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 231.

statements in their works, the task of describing or defining conditional statements is far from being simple. For the ease of discussion, the survey is divided according to two main complementary concepts in conditionals. grammatical and rhetorical functions.

(i) *Grammatical definition.* In general, conditionals are defined by identifying their two-part construction or structure, consisting of the protasis and the apodosis:

The protasis. the conditional, or subordinate, clause, expressing a supposed or assumed case (*if*). The apodosis: the conclusion, or principal clause, expressing what follows if the condition is realized. The truth of the conclusion depends on the truth or fulfillment of the conditional clause.<sup>33</sup>

Wallace attempts to make the semantic relation between the protasis and the apodosis more explicit as follows. “[C]onditions can be defined semantically in terms of the overall construction (cause-effect, evidence-inference, etc.) as well as the individual components (supposition and consequence).”<sup>34</sup> His description highlights the logical or semantic relation that constitutes the statement as a whole, in addition to simply relying on the features of Mood and Tense of the protasis. Similarly, Funk also points out that the semantic relations of conditionals may be broadly categorized under logic, time, “reason and consequence,” etc.<sup>35</sup> Later in this study, these semantic categories will become the subject of further investigation.

---

<sup>33</sup> Smyth, *Greek Grammar* 512. See also Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, 100; Funk, “Semantic Typology,” 369-70; Porter, *Idioms*, 255, McKay, *New Syntax*, 163.

<sup>34</sup> Wallace, *Greek Grammar* 682.

<sup>35</sup> Funk, “Semantic Typology,” 370.

Instead of following the terminology of first, second, third, and fourth class conditionals that many New Testament grammarians adopt,<sup>36</sup> this study will adopt the following description: the Indicative type 1 and type 2 conditionals (replacing the first and second classes), the Subjunctive conditional (replacing the third class); and the Optative (replacing the fourth class). The Indicative Future will be considered as a separate class. In naming it according to the Mood, the misconception of these classes as hierarchical (first, second, and third class) is avoided. The new terminology also makes the kind of supposition that these conditionals are based more explicit (Indicative = real, Subjunctive = hypothetical or notional).

In addition, the distinction between “particular” and “general” conditionals is also to be discarded.<sup>37</sup> Such a categorization has no basis in grammar and adds an unnecessary distinction to the understanding of conditionals.<sup>38</sup> The same also holds true for the so-called implied or implicit conditionals, with constructions such as circumstantial and substantival participles (Heb 2:3; Matt 5:6), and the imperative (John 2:19).<sup>39</sup> They do not exhibit the formal markers such as the conditional particle (ἐάν or εἰ [*if*]), nor do they follow the normal selection of Moods and Tenses in the protasis. There is no need to interpret these statements as conditionals. For example, it is better to

---

<sup>36</sup> For example, Funk, Boyer, Porter, and Wallace. See also Ledgerwood, “Greek First Class Conditional,” 99-118 and Armitage, “Exploration,” 365-92.

<sup>37</sup> “A particular supposition refers to a *definite* act or to several definite acts, supposed to occur at some definite time (or times)...A general supposition refers indefinitely to any act or acts of a given class which may be supposed to occur or to have occurred at any time.” Goodwin, *Syntax*, 139. See also Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, 100-101; McKay, *New Syntax*, 142-45, 167-73.

<sup>38</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, 1005-1006. Boyer also finds “no discernable distinction” in form in the NT Greek that identify these two types. The distinction, if exists, depends on the subject matter and the interpreter’s opinion. Boyer, “Third Class,” 172-75. See also Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, 111.

<sup>39</sup> For example, Boyer, “Other Conditional Elements,” 184-86; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 687-88.

interpret Matt 5:6 *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied* as: the reason those who hunger and thirst are blessed is because (ὅτι [for]) they shall be filled. The formal choices by the author should be respected and maintained. If the writer wanted to use a conditional, he or she would have done so. There is no need to reframe the statement as an “explicit” conditional or to create such a category.

(ii) *Rhetorical definition*. The “meaning” of conditionals goes beyond what is expressed by the grammatical features of the protasis and the semantic relation of the compound clause structure. Conditionals are also rhetorical devices for argument and persuasion. People use conditionals to influence personal beliefs and actions through logic and hypotheses, and the audience is expected to make inferences, draw conclusions, or act in particular ways. A rhetorical description of conditional statements is given by Ferguson et al.:

Conditional (*if-then*) constructions directly reflect the characteristically human ability to reason about alternative situations, to make inferences based on incomplete information, to imagine possible correlations between situations, and to understand how the world would change if certain correlations were different.<sup>40</sup>

In other words, not only do conditionals portray events and reality, they also have equally important social and personal dimensions. People use conditionals to persuade others to think or behave in certain ways. Conditionals are often used in debates and arguments to prove what is right, what is wrong, and what such conclusions entail. One finds many examples of conditionals in polemic and didactic settings in the

---

<sup>40</sup> Ferguson, et al., “Overview,” 3.



New Testament, including John's Gospel.<sup>41</sup> However, NT grammarians have overlooked such rhetorical functions of conditionals. This study will attempt to remedy this deficiency by analyzing selected conditionals of John within the context of its purpose (20:31).

The above description of conditionals shows that conditionals have multiple functions. In addition to the grammatical features of Moods and Tenses that depict reality (events and happenings), additional clausal or semantic relations should also be considered. Moreover, as language in use, these clause complexes, as single or multiple statements, also play a very important rhetorical role in debates and expositions. A fuller description or definition that takes into consideration all of the above-mentioned aspects in relation to the functions of language is therefore needed.

*Theories and classifications.* This section will examine seven (7) major theories on conditionals. With the exception of some of the earlier theories by Farrar, Goodwin, and Gildersleeve that deal with ancient Greek in general, the remaining theories are directly applicable to the Greek New Testament. Furthermore, most of these theories do not operate in isolation. They are often included or refined by later grammarians as part of their grammatical analyses. For example, the attitudinal-based classification is closely related to the Mood-based classification (see *Mood-based classification* and *Attitudinal semantics* below). For the sake of clarity, they are treated as separate entities. Similarly, although these theories are organized chronologically in the main, in reality they do not follow an exact sequential order.

---

<sup>41</sup> Other NT writings that contain high frequencies of conditionals include Galatians (20 conditionals in six chapters) and the letter of 1 John (22 conditionals in five chapters).

(i) *Probability-based classification* (1876). The four classes of conditionals according to Farrar are as follows. (a) εἰ + Indicative: the likelihood of fulfillment is not indicated by the speaker, (b) εἰ + Subjunctive: the fulfillment of the conditional is considered “plausible,” (c) εἰ + Optative the fulfillment is simply considered “possible,” and (d) εἰ + secondary Indicative—Indicative + ὅτι the fulfillment is considered impossible.<sup>42</sup> They are listed as follows.

	Protasis	Apodosis
Possibility/ <i>neutral</i>	εἰ + Indicative	--
Slight probability/ <i>perspective</i>	εἰ + Subjunctive	--
Uncertainty/ <i>potential</i>	εἰ + Optative	Optative + ὅτι
Impossibility	εἰ + secondary Indicative	Indicative + ὅτι

Farrar lays the ground for future classification schemes along the lines of the mood of the protasis. However, as will be adopted later in this study, his “Possibility” and “Impossibility” in fact are not separate categories of conditionals. The latter belongs to a subcategory under the Indicative mood. Although he did not cite biblical texts, Farrar’s notion of fulfillment appears to be generally in line with NT conditionals. The significance of the choice of Mood in conditional statements is further developed by grammarians such as Robertson, Boyer, and Porter (see sections *Mood-based classification* and *Attitudinal semantics* below). But in spite of the significance of Mood in the protasis, it must be noted that Mood is only one of the many key linguistic features that constitute NT conditionals.

(ii) *Time-based classification*. It was W Goodwin (1873) who divided conditionals into two main temporal groups. The first group consists of present and past

<sup>42</sup> Farrar, *Greek Syntax*, §§194-213. See also Robertson, *Grammar* 1005, Wakker, *Conditions*, 111-12; Tjen, *On Conditionals*, 60-61

conditions. They include: (1) those that imply nothing as to the fulfillment of the condition, further subdivided into “particular” and “general” conditionals, and (2) those that imply that the condition is not or was not fulfilled, or future conditionals, further subdivided into “more vivid” and “less vivid.”<sup>43</sup> They are tabled as follows.

	Protasis	Apodosis
<b>Present and Past</b>		
1/ Implying nothing as to fulfillment	<i>Particular</i> εἰ + Indicative <i>General.</i> (i) ἐάν + Subjunctive (ii) εἰ + Optative	Unrestricted (i) Present Indicative (ii) Imperfect
2/ Non-fulfillment	εἰ + past form Indicative	ἄν + past form Indicative
<b>Future</b>		
1/ More vivid	ἐάν + Subjunctive (incl. εἰ + Future)	Future
2/ Less vivid	εἰ + Optative	αἶν + Optative

The problem with Goodwin’s theory is that it adopts a strictly temporal approach to the Greek tense, that is, the present tense represents present action, the imperfect tense depicts past action, and the future tense (and Subjunctive mood) expresses the future. Such a narrow view of the Greek tense fails to acknowledge how tenses can be used to express actions of more than one temporal reference. For example, the present tense can be used as a historical present: John 6:5 *Jesus said* (λέγει Pres. Act. Ind.) *to Philip*, and 6:12 *he said* (λέγει Pres. Act. Ind.) *to his disciples*. Furthermore, Subjunctive conditionals do not necessarily imply future events, as the following conditionals show:

1 Cor 13 1-3

Ἐάν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ (Pres Act. Subj)  
καὶ ἐάν ἔχω (Pres. Act. Subj.) προφητείαν  
καὶ ψωμίσω (Pres Act. Subj.) πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου

<sup>43</sup> Goodwin, *Syntax*, 139-42. His discussion is based on Attic Greek. Greek grammarians who have adopted his approach include Burton (New Testament) and Smyth.

*If I speak with the tongues of human  
if I have the gift of prophecy  
if I give all my possessions*

Furthermore, Goodwin also tends to assume that the Greek language operates very much like English and Latin. In only four pages, he refers to “as in English or Latin” or “the Latin” or “in English” four times, drawing comparisons between two ancient and one modern languages. Such an assumption prevents understanding of Greek as a language that possesses unique grammatical categories and structures that may not have counterparts in English or Latin.<sup>44</sup> Goodwin takes into account neither the verbal system of Mood nor other grammatical and semantic features of Greek conditionals.

(iii) *Mood-based classification.* Subsequent to Goodwin’s theory, Gildersleeve (1876) advances a different classification scheme for four different types of conditionals based on the Mood of the protasis, namely, Logical, Anticipatory, Ideal, and Unreal.<sup>45</sup> (a) The Logical conditional (εἰ + Indicative) is based on fact, and asserts an “inexorable connection” between the two parts of a statement. (b) The Anticipatory conditional (ἐὼς + Subjunctive) describes the action in the protasis as “anticipated,” or yet to happen in the future. This type of conditional is preferred whenever the temporal relation of the actions is to be emphasized.<sup>46</sup> (c) The Ideal conditional (εἰ + Optative) describes what is possible or what the speaker wishes for. And finally, (d) the Unreal conditional (εἰ +

---

<sup>44</sup> See also the critique of the distinction between the Subjunctive and Optative mood by Pritchett in “Conditional Sentence,” 1-4. See also Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 291-93; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 706-707. For a discussion on whether the imperfect tense is used for a present contrary to fact (non-fulfillment) condition and the aorist and pluperfect for a past contrary to fact condition, see Boyer, “Second Class,” 85-86.

<sup>45</sup> Gildersleeve, “Future Indicative...and the Subjunctive,” 5-23.

<sup>46</sup> See also examples in Pritchett, “Conditional Sentence,” 7, f.n. 20.

secondary Indicative + ᾗν) expresses what is contrary to fact or unrealized. These four types of conditionals are summarized below

	Protasis	Apodosis
Logical	εἰ + Indicative	Unrestricted
Anticipatory	ἐάν + Subjunctive	Unrestricted
Ideal	εἰ + Optative	Optative with ᾗν
Unreal	εἰ + secondary Indicative	Indicative with ᾗν

Gildersleeve's theory has become influential among classical and NT Greek grammarians.<sup>47</sup> The choice of Mood (Indicative, Subjunctive, Optative) in conditionals clearly reflects how a speaker adopts a particular viewpoint of what is being described in the protasis. Recent New Testament Greek grammarians also adopt a similar approach in their research on conditional statements. Boyer (1981-83) identifies the two types of Indicative conditionals as the first and second class conditionals, with the Subjunctive and Optative as the third and fourth class respectively as follows:<sup>48</sup>

Class	Protasis	Apodosis
First class/ <i>logical connection</i>	εἰ + <b>Indicative</b>	Unrestricted
Second class/ <i>contrary to fact</i>	εἰ + secondary <b>Indicative</b>	Indicative with ᾗν
Third class/ <i>future</i>	ἐάν + Subjunctive	Unrestricted
Fourth class	εἰ + Optative	Optative with ᾗν

A number of Boyer's findings are particularly noteworthy. First, the first class conditional does not mean "true to fact" but mainly affirms a *logical connection* between the protasis and apodosis. If the former is true, the latter is logically true also.

<sup>47</sup> Grammarians influenced by him include, Pritchett, "Conditional Sentence," 1-17; Robertson, *Grammar* 1004; Blass-Debrunner, *Greek Grammar* 188-91, and Cooper III-Krüger, *Attic Greek*, 1:730-41, 2:1053-61

<sup>48</sup> Boyer, "First Class," 75-114; "Second Class," 81-88; "Third (and Fourth) Class," 163-75; "Other Conditional Elements," 173-88.

Sometimes the connection is that of cause and effect, but not always, as the following example shows:

1 Cor 15:44

**Εἰ** ἔστιν σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἔστιν καὶ πνευματικόν.

*If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual [body].*

According to this example, Paul's statement obviously does not mean that the natural body causes or produces the spiritual one, but he simply affirms the logical connection between the two phenomena.<sup>49</sup>

Second, Boyer maintains that in most cases, a Greek imperfect tense in the second class protasis indicates a present-time condition, with emphasis on its durative verbal aspect; an aorist or pluperfect verb simply indicates a past-time condition. As the following example illustrates, the imperfect tense verb depicts the Jews' state of unbelieving as present and continuing.<sup>50</sup>

John 5:46

**εἰ** γὰρ ἐπιστεύετε (Impf. Act. Ind.) Μωϋσεῖ, ἐπιστεύετε (Impf. Act. Ind.) ἂν ἐμοί: περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν.

*If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote about me.*

Boyer also overturns Dana and Mantey's hypothesis that the third class conditional is the "more probable future conditional," in contrast to the fourth, or the "Less Probable Future Conditional."<sup>51</sup> He also successfully demonstrates that while the third class conditional fits the category of "doubtful, contingent, or potential," it does not support the idea that different degrees of potentiality exist among these conditionals.

<sup>49</sup> Boyer, "First Class," 81-82.

<sup>50</sup> "(John 5:46) is speaking of a present situation which is not true; (the Jews) are not at that moment believing. The Imperfect tense used is a durative tense. They are in a state of unbelieving which is presently continuing but of course it has already been in existence long enough to be known as untrue." Boyer, "Second Class," 85.

<sup>51</sup> Boyer, "Third Class," 167-70; Dana and Mantey, *Grammar*, 165-67.

Out of a total of 277 examples, 120 (42%) are shown to support such a conclusion. In other words, the *degree* of probability or potentiality is not inherent to the third class (Subjunctive) conditional, but instead is based on other contextual features.

However, Boyer's characterization falls short of exhibiting a central, unified linguistic framework. The term "logical connection" (first class conditional) is used to describe the semantic relationship between the protasis and the apodosis. Yet, there is no mention of the nature of the same relation in other types of conditionals, that is, the second and third class. And unlike the first and the second class conditionals that primarily adopt the category for portraying reality or experience, the term "future" adopted for the third class conditional suggests a temporal category.

Boyer has convincingly demonstrated that the third class (Subjunctive) conditional does not express the degree of potentiality or probability. However, naming such conditionals as "future" conditionals<sup>52</sup> is inconsistent with the type of category used in the first and second class conditionals and does not accurately describe its function. The atemporal aspect of the Subjunctive conditional is illustrated as follows:

Matt 5:13

Υμεῖς ἐστε τὸ ἅλας τῆς γῆς· ἐὰν δὲ τὸ ἅλας μωρανθῇ, ἐν τίνι ἀλισθήσεται;

*You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty again?*

Matt 5:23

ἐὰν οὖν προσφέρῃς τὸ δῶρόν σου ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον κἀκεῖ μνησθῆς ὅτι ὁ ἀδελφός σου ἔχει τι κατὰ σοῦ,

*If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you*

The phenomenon of losing of saltiness (5:13) and the act of presenting an offering and remembering an offense (5:23) simply depict hypothetical situations without any

---

<sup>52</sup> Boyer, "Third Class," 166.

temporal distinction. They may take place in the past, present, or future. In sum, Boyer's analysis shows that conditionals have multiple functions that operate on different levels. However, his analysis and classification scheme lacks a coherent linguistic theoretical framework.<sup>53</sup>

(iv) *Attitudinal or aspectual semantics*. Instead of classification schemes based simply on temporality (Goodwin) and Mood (Gildersleeve), recent research in conditionals has adopted the linguistic category of attitude or modality. As Palmer (2001, 2007) explains, aspect is concerned with the nature of event, particularly in terms of its 'internal temporal constituency,' and modality is concerned with the status of the proposition that describes the event.<sup>54</sup> In a similar vein, Gonda also utilizes the Greek mood as a linguistic category that characterizes the speakers' subjective attitudes and opinions.<sup>55</sup> And among NT grammarians Zerwick was one of the first to apply attitudinal semantics to conditionals. He states,

The 'moods' or manners of envisaging the action regard the degree of actuality which is attributed to it, or rather, its relation to actuality... The 'moods' thus express various mental attitudes to the reality of the act in question. It is of great importance not to lose sight of this subjective character possessed by the moods no less than by the aspects. What matters is how the act is conceived by the speaker, not its objective nature."<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> Like many other grammarians, Boyer approaches conditionals with somewhat pre-determined categories and uses generally accepted examples to support his argument. There is no general theory of language to explain or support his approach or his analytical framework. Unlike Boyer, Funk's (1985) approach is more inductive and theoretical. He begins his discussion with three conditionals by Jesus: (i) Luke 6:32 *And if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you?* (ii) John 14:28 *If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I.* and (iii) John 14:15 *If you love me, you will keep my commandments.* He then uses formal linguist categories to show how these three "if you love" conditions are different from one another. Funk, "Semantic Typology," 365-413.

<sup>54</sup> Palmer, *Mood and Modality*, 1. He goes on to write that the use of the Indicative and the Subjunctive moods in many European languages can be accounted for the classification of "assertion" and "non-assertion" respectively. *Mood and Modality*, 3. See also, Lunn, "Evaluative Function," 419-49.

<sup>55</sup> Gonda, *Indo-European Moods*, 3.

<sup>56</sup> Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, 100.



Most recently Porter (1989) has further developed this concept as part of his aspectual approach to Greek verbs. He describes Greek conditionals under two broad categories. The first category is Assertion which is further subdivided into (a) assertion for the sake of argument ( $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$  + Indicative) and (b) assertion to the contrary ( $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$  + secondary Indicative). The second category is Projection, which he subdivides it into three groups. (a) with no reference to fulfillment ( $\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\nu$  + Subjunctive), (b) with contingency for fulfillment ( $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$  + Optative), and (c) of expectation of fulfillment ( $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$  + future Indicative).<sup>57</sup> These categories are summarized below

	Protasis	Apodosis
<b>Assertion</b>		
(a) <i>for the sake of argument</i>	$\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ + Indicative	Unrestricted
(b) <i>to the contrary</i>	$\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ + secondary Indicative	Indicative with $\acute{\alpha}\nu$
<b>Projection</b>		
(a) <i>with no reference to fulfillment</i>	$\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\nu$ + Subjunctive	Unrestricted
(b) <i>with contingency for fulfillment</i>	$\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ + Optative	Optative with $\acute{\alpha}\nu$
(c) <i>of expectation of fulfillment</i>	$\epsilon\dot{\iota}$ + future Indicative	Unrestricted

The following conditionals by Jesus are used by Porter to illustrate the assertions for the sake of argument.

Matt 26:39, 42

πάτερ μου, **εἰ** δυνατόν ἐστίν, παρελθάτω ἅπ' ἐμοῦ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο

πάτερ μου, **εἰ** οὐ δύναται τοῦτο παρελθεῖν ἐὰν μὴ αὐτὸ πίο

*My Father if it is possible, let this cup pass from me*

*My Father if it is not possible for this to pass by unless I might drink it*

In Jesus' consecutive conditional statements ( $\epsilon\dot{\iota}$  + Indicative), the possibility that the "cup" (the cross) will be taken from him is simply assumed (humanly speaking). There

<sup>57</sup> Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 294-320.

is no factual evidence concerning whether or not the Father will indeed remove his suffering.<sup>58</sup>

An illustration of an assertion to the contrary conditional is found in the Pharisee's conditional in Luke 7:39.

Luke 7:39

εἰ ἦν προφήτης, ἐγίνωσκεν ἂν τίς καὶ ποταπὴ ἢ γυνὴ ἣτις ἅπτεται αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἁμαρτωλὸς ἐστίν.

*If this man were a prophet he would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching him, that she is a sinner.*

In the above conditional (εἰ + secondary Indicative), the way the speaker (the Pharisee) frames his statement implicitly denies Jesus is a prophet, even though he is truly one.

The difference between assertion and projection is illustrated in the following examples, both of which consist of double (Assertion and Projection) protases:

Luke 16:31

εἰ Μωϋσέως καὶ τῶν προφητῶν οὐκ ἀκούουσιν, οὐδ' ἐάν τις ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆ πεισθήσονται.

*If they did not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither if someone might rise from the dead will they be convinced.*

John 13:17

εἰ ταῦτα οἴδατε, μακάριοί ἐστε ἐάν ποιῆτε αὐτά.

*If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.*

Regarding Luke 16:31, Porter remarks,

[T]he first protasis, using the Indicative, is the unmarked of the two hypotheses, asserting for the sake of argument an event that is within the realm of possibility (and quite possible of past reference)...The second protasis, using the Subjunctive, projects an event not only beyond the

---

<sup>58</sup> In trying to illustrate the point that conditionals are often used to communicate *indirectly* what would be harsh if communicated directly, Wallace sees the Matthean parallel (Matt 26:39) as “an expression of agony” and “an implicit request that already knows it cannot be filled.” Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 703-704. But such an interpretation is unnecessary. The plain and direct interpretation of these statements as (first class) conditionals in fact portrays the very difficulty of Jesus’ not knowing whether the impending suffering of the cross is avoidable or not.

realm of the brothers' experience, but an event beyond the expected, with no comment on whether in fact it could occur.<sup>59</sup>

Similarly, in John 13:17, the second protasis (doing what Jesus says) is a projected thought. There is no comment on whether the disciples will indeed do so or not (of course, ideally they will). In the second protasis (ἐὼς + Subjunctive) of both conditionals, projections are made without reference to fulfillment.<sup>60</sup>

The aspectual approach has advanced another aspect of the use of Mood as the formal feature for understanding Greek conditionals. The meaning of conditionals is understood in addition to the purely referential meaning in terms of time and type of action to personal or attitudinal meaning. And the meaning of a conditional has less to do with objective reality and more to do with how a speaker chooses to frame his or her argument. How a speaker "frames" his or her attitudes and opinions is an appropriate starting point for understanding the semantics of conditionals.

The following chart is based on Porter's aspectual approach and shows the various conditionals in relation to the continuum of degrees of hypotheticality, originally adopted by Tjen.<sup>61</sup> It represents the range of the possibility of realization of the protasis from neutral (Indicative I.) to "possible and not more than that" (Optative). But as there is no Optative conditional in John's Gospel, the attention of this study will be given to the Indicative and Subjunctive conditionals.

---

<sup>59</sup> Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 309.

<sup>60</sup> A complete form of projection *with contingency for fulfillment* (εἰ + Optative) conditional is not found in the NT mainly due to the fading out of the Optative in Koine Greek. See Tjen, *On Conditionals*, 48-55. And only approx. 12 examples of projection *of expectation of fulfillment* (εἰ + future Indicative) are found in the Greek NT. See Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 312-16. The majority of them appear in Pauline letters: Rom 11:13-14; 1 Cor 3:15; 9:11; 2 Tim 2:11-13; and 2 Cor 5:1-3. None of these appear in John's Gospel.

<sup>61</sup> Tjen, *On Conditionals*, 67.

	Description	Degree of Hypotheticality
Indicative	I. Unmarked or neutral condition	unmarked, neutral
	II. Counterfactual condition	not possible
Subjunctive	III. Projection	very well possible
Optative	IV. Projection with contingency for fulfillment	possible and not more than that

The strength of Porter's description of conditionals lies in the attention that looks beyond probabilities and tenses. What occupies a central role in the meaning of conditionals is the attitude of the speaker or the way the speaker "frames" the state of affair or action aspectually in the protasis. However, since meaning does not reside in single words (or lexis) alone and since conditionals typically include two or more clauses, the understanding of the fuller and more complex meaning of conditionals lies beyond the verb of the protasis or even the protasis itself. As this survey continues, the focus will shift from the protasis and its referential meaning to the entire conditional construction, including the semantic relation between the protasis and the apodosis.

(v) *Semantic relation.* The classification of the semantic relation between the protasis and the apodosis in conditionals appears to be one of the most challenging areas for NT grammarians. The key issue lies in the lack of a unified linguistic framework for describing this category and connecting it with other grammatical features of conditional statements, as Boyer's study indicated. What some have done is primarily to analyze the semantic relation based on logic but without giving any attention to the conditionals' grammatical features such as Mood and Tense.

But published in 1903, H. C. Nutting studied the order and modes of conditional thought, and identified three kinds of conditional sentences: (a) the Consequence and

Proviso are that which “flash through the speaker’s mind simply and naturally” (b) the “artificial” conditional, where a person “thinks up” but does not express his true sentiment at all, and (iii) that which is comparable to a mild prohibition (“I would not do that, if I were you”), and strictly speaking, is not an expression of conditional thought.<sup>62</sup> Nutting also identified three modes, or manners, of conditional thought, but did not explain how these manners of thoughts are applicable to the conditionals. But he seems to suggest that these manners of conditional thoughts belong to the first two kinds of conditionals (Consequence and Proviso, and “artificial”). Consequently there exist some confusion and misapplication of categories in subsequent studies of conditionals and semantic relation.

The three types of conditional thought are: (a) The cause and effect relation, which is simply “the coming to pass of one event is (will be, etc.) followed by the coming to pass of another.” (b) The ground and inference relation, which is the opposite of cause and effect, and (c) the relation of equivalence, which takes the form of “A is B,” with the subject matter of the conditioning group defined or characterized by that of the conditioned group.<sup>63</sup> It must also be noted that Nutting also includes a section on “An application to Latin and Greek,”<sup>64</sup> but discussion on Greek conditionals is minimal. The great majority of his examples, however, are English sentences. There was no mention of any significant differences between English and NT Greek, such as the Greek Mood (Indicative, Subjunctive, Optative), Tense, and verbal aspect.

---

<sup>62</sup> “The third category contains those conditional sentences which are not the expression of conditional thought at all. We may even question whether we should not include in this class such stock expression as, ‘I would not do that, if I were you.’” Nutting, “Order,” 160.

<sup>63</sup> Nutting, “Modes,” 284-95.

<sup>64</sup> Nutting, “Order,” 149-57.

Over half a century later, G. van W. Kruger (1966) applied Nutting's concept to his study of NT conditionals, adding the additional category of "Adversative" or "Concessive." The following lists these categories with examples.<sup>65</sup>

(i) Cause and Effect

Matt 4:3

εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰπέ ἵνα οἱ λίθοι οὗτοι ἄρτοι γένωνται.

*If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.*

(ii) Ground and Influence

Matt 11:23

καὶ σύ, Καφαρναούμ...εἰ ἐν Σοδόμοις ἐγενήθησαν αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ γινόμεναι ἐν σοί, ἔμεινεν ἄν μέχρι τῆς σήμερον.

*And you, Capernaum...if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day.*

(iii) Equivalence

Jas 1:23

εἴ τις ἀκροατὴς λόγου ἐστὶν καὶ οὐ ποιητὴς, οὗτος ἔοικεν ἀνδρὶ κατανοοῦντι τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ

*if someone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he or she is like a person recognizing his natural face in the mirror*

(iv) Adversative/Concessive

John 1:25

τί οὖν βαπτίζεις εἰ σὺ οὐκ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς οὐδὲ Ἠλίας οὐδὲ ὁ προφήτης;

*Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?*

The few grammarians who use these categories are somewhat tentative toward the validity of the classification scheme. Porter writes, "a number of examples could be categorized differently," and "a number to which these categories do not seem to apply."<sup>66</sup> Likewise, in his use of Nutting and Kruger's categories, Wallace also concludes, "these (semantic categories) are not entirely distinct," "there is much overlap

<sup>65</sup> Kruger, *Conditionals*, 101-115.

<sup>66</sup> Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 320. Examples include John 4:10 (cause and effect?); 8:36 (equivalence?); 21:22-23 (adversative?).

between them,” and it is important for the student “to *try* to distinguish, if possible, these three nuances.”<sup>67</sup>

Such uncertainty and lack of clarity arise from at least two sources. First, Nutting’s method of categorization is inconsistent. The first two types, cause and effect and ground and inference, are *logical* connections. But the third type of connection, equivalence, is *grammatical*: the grammatical subject of the protasis and the apodosis are the same. The two different types of connection are therefore not consistent. Second, Nutting’s analysis is based on the English language, not on Greek texts. NT grammarians have uncritically accepted his schema without carefully examining the semantic relation between the two languages. They have also overlooked Nutting’s basis for such categories, as primarily from his first group of conditionals (Consequence and Proviso). The result has been the exclusion of the Greek Subjunctive (hypothetical) conditional from Nutting’s original discussion.

Pritchett and others have noted that unlike the Indicative conditional, the Subjunctive conditional typically features a temporal, rather than a logical, semantic relation.<sup>68</sup> However, this has yet to be tested. Thus, as complex clauses, the NT Greek conditionals (Indicative, Subjunctive, and Optative) lack an accurate and coherent theoretical framework that describes their semantic relations. The interpretation of conditionals is a complex task. A complete understanding requires more than simply applying the referential meaning of the protasis or how the speaker frames it; complete understanding requires a more principled description of the semantic relation between the two parts of the statement.

---

<sup>67</sup> Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 684.

<sup>68</sup> Pritchett, “Conditional Sentence,” 7.

(vi) *Speech Act Theory*. Richard Young (1994) describes the essence of Speech Act Theory in the following statements: “The meaning of an utterance is conveyed through the interaction of many components. Language is merely one part of the whole process, a part that cannot be isolated from other parts if the intent is to discern meaning.”<sup>69</sup> He also writes,

Speech act theory is concerned more and more with what people do with language than with what the words mean. For example, an utterance may request, instruct, assert, or command something... In Mark 15:18 the soldiers were not honoring Jesus when they cried out, ‘Hail, King of the Jews’; they were mocking Him. The words were used to perform a particular act. What the words literally mean is something quite different from what the speaker meant by them.<sup>70</sup>

In his NT Greek grammar textbook, rhetorical questions, relative clauses, and conditional sentences are grouped together in Chapter 15 under the title, “Special Sentences and Clauses.” Conditional sentences are further subdivided into traditional classification and semantic analysis (real and rhetorical conditionals).<sup>71</sup>

Real conditionals are based on “the real world of action or thought that one may have to deal with.” They are divided into Confrontation and Projection as follows.

---

<sup>69</sup> Young, *NT Greek*, 2. His Greek grammar textbook may be roughly divided into three parts: parts of speech (chaps. 1-13), sentences (chaps. 14-15), and linguistic analysis (chaps. 16-18).

<sup>70</sup> Young, *NT Greek*, 265. See also Austin, *How to Do Things*; and Grice, “Logic and Conversation,” 41-58. Recent application of Speech Act Theory in NT conditionals includes works by Ledgerwood, “Greek First Class Conditional,” 99-118, and Armitage, “Exploration,” 365-92.

<sup>71</sup> Young, *NT Greek*, 225-30. A similar approach is found in Dik’s semantic study of conditionals where he adopts the two main categories of Propositional conditionals and Illocutionary conditionals. Dik, “Semantics of Conditionals,” 233-61. Dik states, “Propositional conditionals present the truth of one proposition,  $\alpha$ , as a sufficient condition for the truth of a second proposition,  $\beta$  (cf. Van der Auwera 1985). In other words, they claim that in a picture in which  $\alpha$  is true,  $\beta$  is also true... Illocutionary conditionals specify a condition with respect to properties of the speech act currently performed by the speaker. They thus have a ‘meta-communicative’ character.” 242-43, 53. See also Wakker, *Conditions and Conditionals*, 227-74.



Type	Description	Example
Confrontation	Indicative mood; confrontational situation; second class excepted	Gal 1:9
Projection	Subjunctive, optative, future protasis; the speaker projects the situation beyond what is normally expected	Gal 1.8

Rhetorical conditionals, on the other hand, are those in which the speaker is not posing a conditional on the real world but is using the form and logic of a conditional for other purposes. And there are at least eight types of rhetorical conditionals.<sup>72</sup> Two types of conditionals, Argumentation (Luke 7:39) and Manipulation (Matt 4:3), are discussed below

Type	Description	Example
1 Assertion	A type of strong assertion, when the “then” clause does not logically follow the “if” clause.	Heb 4:5
2. Argumentation	The conditional is false and is used to persuade the listener of its falsity, or it is true and is used as a basis for a conclusion.	Luke 7:39
3. Manipulation	To get someone to do something that he or she normally would not do or thinks is wrong.	Matt 4:3
4. Request	To frame a request or command for the sake of being polite.	Matt 17:4
5. Mockery	To boast about being correct or deride others for being wrong.	Luke 23:35
6. Rebuke	To soften the message and make it more respectful.	John 11:21
7 Lament	To convey sorrow indirectly by stating the event the speaker would like to have happened.	Matt 11:21
8. Justification	To justify one’s behavior.	Matt 23:30

Young has rightly pointed out that the use of language is only a part of the total communication act. The total meaning of an utterance is more than just its referential

<sup>72</sup> Young, *NT Greek*, 228. See also Young, “Classification,” 29-49.

meaning.<sup>73</sup> Attempting to study conditionals in terms of what they *do* (the illocutionary force) is a step in the right direction. Armitage also points out the significance of such an interpretive framework. By virtue of the fact that they express meaning with a degree of uncertainty or hypotheticality, conditional statements “intrinsically necessitate the drawing of inferences by the hearers.”<sup>74</sup>

However, Young has yet to make a convincing case for the distinction between real and rhetorical conditionals. For example, Luke 7:39 is categorized as

Argumentation as a rhetorical conditional:

Luke 7:39

οὗτος εἰ ἦν προφήτης, ἐγίνωσκεν ἂν τίς καὶ ποταπὴ ἡ γυνὴ ἣτις ἄπτεται αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἁμαρτωλὸς ἐστίν.

*If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him, that she is a sinner.*

However, the context indicates that the Pharisee is using this Indicative conditional to confront or rebuke Jesus, that is, it also falls under Young’s categories of Confrontation and Rebuke. And the conditional statement can also be understood in terms of the speaker trying to avoid an unequivocal statement or to create misunderstanding.<sup>75</sup>

In addition, the conditional of Matt 4:3 with an Imperative apodosis can in fact be interpreted more appropriately with a new category of “challenge” instead of Manipulation.

Matt 4:3

εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰπὲ (Aor. Act. Imp.) ἵνα οἱ λίθοι οὗτοι ἄρτοι γένωνται.

*If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.*

---

<sup>73</sup> As Brown and Yule point out, “It is clearly the case that a great deal of everyday human interaction is characterized by the primarily interpersonal rather than the primarily transactional use of language. When two strangers are standing shivering at a bus-stop in an icy wind and one turns to the other and says, ‘My goodness, it’s cold’, it is difficult to suppose that the primary intention of the speaker is to convey information.” *Discourse Analysis*, 3.

<sup>74</sup> Armitage, “Exploration,” 387.

<sup>75</sup> McKay, *New Syntax*, 163.

Furthermore, Young also does not discuss the real possibility that utterances, including conditionals, often have more than just one illocutionary force. In fact, his emphasis on indirect utterance or implicature, and the intention of the speaker, though legitimate, lacks a vigorous theoretical underpinning. Among other things, human psychology and motives are often subtle and mixed, and they cannot be conveniently grouped under a limited number of simple categories. Even if one considers the entire context of a piece of writing, gaps still exist and the reader simply cannot be quite certain how statements are to be interpreted.<sup>76</sup>

Young's application of Speech Act Theory will be further discussed in Chapter 5 of this study, in which Martha and Mary's identical conditionals (11:21, 32) will be examined in relation to Young's partial classification scheme.<sup>77</sup> But as Martin has noted, it is very important to have a *complete* set of speech act types in order to understand speech act properly and accurately. He writes, "Partial lists are of no interest because they cannot be used to analyze all the speech acts in a given text, and a partial coding could be extremely misleading."<sup>78</sup>

In summary, two primary aspects related to the meaning of conditionals have been surveyed so far. First, the referential or experiential meaning of conditionals is used to describe things, happenings, and phenomena. It is expressed through the choice of Moods and Tenses of the protasis. Second, the personal meaning of conditionals is also used to do things (Speech Act Theory). Conditional statements can be used to

---

<sup>76</sup> This is particularly true concerning the specific matters or questions that Paul refers to in 1 Cor 7:1 *Now concerning the things about which you wrote*. There is also a certain level of uncertainty regarding exactly what those questions were.

<sup>77</sup> Young, "Classification," 39.

<sup>78</sup> Martin, *Register Studies*, 14-15. Coding is the semantic variation according to the speaker (such as age, gender, and social class).

challenge and confront people, to arouse different emotions, potentially changing people's ways of seeing and doing things (Matt 4:3; Luke 7:39). In the next and final classification, language, including conditional statements, is conceived in terms of the function of a building block in the larger semantic structure called "text."<sup>79</sup>

(vii) *Discourse grammar*. Steven Runge's work on the Greek NT discourse grammar represents an approach to language that emphasizes how information structure is set up through "frames of reference."<sup>80</sup> By applying the theoretical linguistic framework of Simon Dik and Knud Lambrecht, Runge distinguishes the order of linguistic items (words, clauses) in terms of P1 (the first item) as establishing a frame of reference for P2 (the second item) as the emphasis.<sup>81</sup> He further classifies conditionals as one of the framing devices as follows.

Positioning the condition as a frame of reference highlights the contingency of the main clause, which otherwise might have sounded like an affirmation until the condition or exception was read at the end. Thus, the semantic importance of the condition to the proper processing of the main clause is the primary motivation for its initial placement.<sup>82</sup>

Thus, with the consecutive conditionals in 1 John 1:6-10 there is a noticeable contrast between the clauses based on the semantics of the content, but it is highlighted through the use of frames to juxtapose opposite conditions with their correlating

---

<sup>79</sup> The linguistic description of text will be further explained in Chapter 2 ("Description and Procedure").

<sup>80</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 193-95. "Frames of reference play a very important role in helping readers successfully break down and organize their mental representation of a discourse. The reader needs to know who is doing what to whom, to be able to track changes in time, place, and circumstance, and to know where one part of the story ends and another begins. Frames of reference are commonly used to attract extra attention to such changes." (195)

<sup>81</sup> "By definition, P1 refers to placing known or knowable information in a marked position, resulting in an *explicit frame of reference* for relating what follows to what precedes. P2 refers to placing newly asserted information in a marked position and has the effect of emphasizing it." Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 194. Italics added. Cf. Dik, *Theory of Functional Grammar*, and Lambrecht, *Information Structure*.

<sup>82</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 228.

consequences. “Each conditional frame of reference provides a state of affairs for which the main clauses applies. The prominence assigned to the conditional alerts the reader that this must hold true before the main proposition holds true.”<sup>83</sup>

1 John 1:6-10

v. 6 **If** we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth.

v. 7 **But if** we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

v. 8 **If** we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

v. 9 **If** we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

v. 10 **If** we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.<sup>84</sup>

For example, with reference to v. 6 there may be other contexts where we might lie, but the author is focusing on only one of them: saying we have fellowship and not practicing the truth. Similarly, the conditional frame in v. 10 “allows the writer to examine the corollary of confession: saying that we have not sinned.”<sup>85</sup>

Furthermore, Runge also points out that a complex conditional frame with multiple clauses such as Jas 2:2-4 introduces “a very involved state of affairs” and presents a proposition that is more compelling.<sup>86</sup> In the following text, each clause is numbered.

<sup>83</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 229.

<sup>84</sup> Greek text: v. 6 Ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ σκότει περιπατῶμεν, ψευδόμεθα καὶ οὐ ποιοῦμεν τὴν ἀλήθειαν. v. 7 ἐὰν δὲ ἐν τῷ φωτὶ περιπατῶμεν ὡς αὐτός ἐστιν ἐν τῷ φωτὶ, κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' ἀλλήλων καὶ τὸ αἷμα Ἰησοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ καθαρίζει ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἁμαρτίας. v. 8 ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔχομεν, ἑαυτοὺς πλανῶμεν καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἡμῖν. v. 9 ἐὰν ὁμολογῶμεν τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν, πιστός ἐστιν καὶ δίκαιος, ἵνα ἀφῆ ἡμῖν τὰς ἁμαρτίας καὶ καθάρισις ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀδικίας. v. 10 ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι οὐχ ἡμαρτήκαμεν, ψεύστην ποιοῦμεν αὐτὸν καὶ ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἡμῖν.

<sup>85</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 229.

<sup>86</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 231. Clause numbering is added.

Jas 2:2-4

v.2 [1] *If a person comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, [2] and a poor person in filthy old clothes also comes in, v. 3 [3] and you pay special attention to the person wearing fine clothes [4] and say, [5] "Here's a good seat for you," [6] but say to the poor person, [7] "You stand there" or [8] "Sit on the floor by my feet," v. 4 [9] have you not discriminated among yourselves [10] and become judges with evil thoughts?*<sup>87</sup>

The long and complex conditional statement consists of a total of 10 clauses in a complex relationship with one another. From a grammatical point of view, James uses the multiple protases as frames of reference to make sure that there is no room to miss his point as well as to make his case compelling.

Runge has advanced the application of discourse concepts and terminology, such as information structure and framing devices, to the study of conditionals. As illustrated by the consecutive conditionals in 1 John 1:6-10, each conditional is to be understood in the broader text span. Runge has also drawn attention to the complex clauses in conditionals, expanding the linguistic unit of investigation from words, word groups, and clauses to multiple clause complexes and how they function within a text span.

While Runge has made some contribution to placing conditionals within the framework of discourse analysis, the scope of his contribution is limited to conditionals' cognitive processing function. Despite his criticism of Systemic Functional Linguistics,<sup>88</sup> Runge fails to address the equally important grammatical and semantic features such as the choice of Mood and Tense, modality, thematic structure of clauses, semantic relation between protasis and apodosis, and the other aspects of the complex

<sup>87</sup> Greek text: v. 2 [1] *ἐὰν γὰρ εἰσέλθῃ εἰς συναγωγὴν ὑμῶν ἀνὴρ χρυσοδακτύλιος ἐν ἐσθῆτι λαμπρᾷ, [2] εἰσέλθῃ δὲ καὶ πτωχὸς ἐν ῥυπαρᾷ ἐσθῆτι, v. 3 [3] ἐπιβλέψητε δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν φοροῦντα τὴν ἐσθῆτα τὴν λαμπρὰν [4] καὶ εἶπητε· [5] σὺ κάθου ὧδε καλῶς, [6] καὶ τῷ πτωχῷ εἶπητε· [7] σὺ στῆθι ἐκεῖ [8] ἢ κάθου ὑπὸ τὸ ὑποπόδιόν μου, v. 4 [9] οὐ διεκρίθητε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς [10] καὶ ἐγένεσθε κριταὶ διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν;*

<sup>88</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 200-204.

clausal relationships that comprise the total meaning of conditionals. The information processing function of conditionals is only one of the many, multi-faceted functions of conditionals. His description of the function of conditionals, therefore, remains incomplete.

*Summary.* There lacks a general consensus and there exists some confusion among NT grammarians in the definition and function of conditionals. However, despite such confusion, the body of work on conditionals may be divided into two aspects: the level of the linguistic unit and the primary function of language. Older studies by Goodwin, Gildersleeve, Robertson, and to some degree Boyer approached the meaning of conditionals with the focus primarily on the mood and tense of the main verb of the protasis.<sup>89</sup> Other grammarians include Kruger (semantic relation), Young (Speech Act Theory), and Runge (discourse grammar) approach conditionals as clause complexes. At the same time, these grammarians also describe the meaning of conditionals according to the different functions of language (Referential, Interpersonal, Textual). Their works are located in the following matrix accordingly.

---

<sup>89</sup> This is reflected by their descriptions of conditionals. But in doing so, other important features such as the semantic relation between the protasis and apodosis and the function of the apodosis are often overlooked. Moreover, it is not unusual for conditionals to have multiple protases and/or multiple apodoses, for example, Matt 5:23-24; Gal 6:1; and Heb 3:7-11, and these features also need to be included in the description.

	Referential, Logical	Interpersonal	Textual
<b>The simple clause</b> (protasis)	(i) Probability: <i>Possible, Neutral, Impossible</i> (ii) Temporal. <i>Past; Present; Future</i> (iii) Mood. Indicative; Subjunctive; Optative (iv) Aspectual. <i>Assertion, Projection</i>		
<b>The complex clause</b>	(v) Semantic relation. <i>Cause and Effect, etc.</i>	(vi) Speech act: <i>Real, Rhetorical</i>	(vii) Discourse grammar: <i>Framing device, complex argument</i>

The Referential and Logical function is used to depict events and phenomena (real or imagined). Grammarians adopt temporal classifications, Mood and aspectual-based categories as well as the semantic relations of conditionals for this purpose. The Speech Act Theory approach, under which conditionals are either *real* or *rhetorical*, is an attempt to describe the Interpersonal function, and discourse grammar is targeted toward how information is structured in conditionals as complex clauses. Each type of classification only focuses on one or two key “slots” of the unit-function matrix. A classification scheme encompassing the entire matrix has not yet been developed. It is therefore the aim of this study to adopt and test a linguistic model that can serve as an analytical framework for understanding NT Greek conditionals and their meaning in context. To accomplish this task, selected conditionals in John’s Gospel will be analyzed.

The following section will look into the present state of research on conditionals in John’s Gospel and explain why they have been chosen for analysis by this study

### 1.2.2 Johannine Conditionals in Context

The purpose of this section is to survey relevant literature to show that there is little discussion about the function of the conditionals in John, let alone how the



conditionals contribute to its rhetorical purpose. The survey includes Greek commentaries and monographs on John, and relevant studies and articles that represent the state of research of Johannine conditionals.

Despite the high number of occurrences of conditionals in John's Gospel, a survey of a sample of "standard" Greek commentaries by Westcott (1881), Wellhausen (1908), Bernard (1928), Barrett (1978), Haenchen (1980, [Eng. 1984]), Carson (1991), Thyen (2005), and McHugh (2009) fails to show that any of them includes any major discussion on Greek conditionals.<sup>90</sup> Wellhausen discusses John's *Sprachliches* (linguistic matters) such as *Einfacher Satz* (simple sentence), *Beiordnung von Sätzen* (coordination of sentences), and *Unterordnung und Conjunctionen* (subordination and conjunctions).<sup>91</sup> While Haenchen includes quite a lengthy discussion of "The Language of the Gospel of John," Barrett's commentary contains a brief section on "Literary Characteristics (and Structure)."<sup>92</sup> But none of the commentaries pays any attention to Johannine conditional statements.

A random sample of three conditionals by Jesus at the end of the Sabbath healing debate (5:43, 46, 47) and three others at the end of his final public discourse with the Jews (10:35-36, 37, 38) is also selected. Among the commentaries by Westcott, Bernard, Barrett, Carson, Thyen, and McHugh, only Barrett makes note of the conditional in 5:43 and comments that the statement "leaves open the question whether such an 'other' would or would not come."<sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>90</sup> Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Johannis*; Westcott, *Gospel according to St. John*; Bernard, *Gospel according to St. John*; Barrett, *Gospel according to St. John*; Haenchen, *John 1*; Carson, *Gospel according to John*; Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*; McHugh, *John 1-4*.

<sup>91</sup> Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Johannis*, 133-46.

<sup>92</sup> Haenchen, *John 1*, 52-66; Barrett, *Gospel according to St. John*, 5-11.

<sup>93</sup> Barrett, *Gospel according to St. John*, 264.

As far as full-length monographs are concerned, A. E. Harvey's (1977) study on the trial of Jesus in the Gospel of John points out the significant role of persuasion in the Gospel. Although the work focuses on the historical events surrounding the trial, Harvey's comment related to the persuasive purpose of John is worth quoting at length:

*In the last analysis it is still the reader or the hearer who has to make up his mind whether Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God... We have seen how the author of the Fourth Gospel accomplishes this task with particular sharpness and expertise, exploiting as none of the others did those occasions and issues which placed Jesus on trial before those of his contemporaries who were competent to judge him. But it is in the nature of the case that no evidence can be decisive, no evidence is unassailable. The case is still open, the trial is still on. No one can pronounce the verdict for us: each of us has to determine it for himself.<sup>94</sup>*

Harvey's focus is on the trial of Jesus, he also makes no mention of the conditionals in the Gospel, not even those that are found in Jesus' trial (18:23a, 23b, 30, 36; 19:11, 12).

Finally, two recent works also underscore the persuasive purpose of John's Gospel. Martin Warner (1990), in his article on John and rational persuasion, rightly emphasizes that the purpose of John's Gospel is persuasive in nature.<sup>95</sup> He also points out that many of dialogues in John involve Jesus' shifting of the terms of discourse. In doing so, Jesus' "answers" effectively force his audience to think more deeply.<sup>96</sup> But along with Harvey, Warner fails to include any discussion of the rhetorical role played by the conditionals, Jesus' and other characters' alike.

---

<sup>94</sup> Harvey, *Jesus on Trial*, 121-22. Emphasis added. On the relationship between the lawsuit and the reader, see also Lincoln, *Truth on Trial*, 171-82. He writes, "The injunction of 7:24—'Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment'—is, in effect, addressed also to the readers." (174)

<sup>95</sup> Warner, "Rational Persuasion," 154.

<sup>96</sup> For example, after the feeding of the 5000, when the people find Jesus in Capernaum they ask, "When did you come here?" He replies, "You seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves." Warner, "Rational Persuasion," 169.

On the other hand, in his study on conditionality in John's Gospel, Michael Thate (2007) aims "to investigate the function of conditional clauses with an indicative in the protasis in John's Gospel, and to see if, after all, 'a conditional is a conditional is a conditional.'" <sup>97</sup> His examination of the first and second class conditionals leads him to two conclusions. First, he affirms Porter's conclusion that the first class conditionals in John show that "[c]onditionals that are past-referring virtually always have clear temporal deixis." <sup>98</sup> Second, based on closer examination of second class conditionals such as 9:41 and 14:28, he asserts that gaps exist in the approach to making them a subcategory of the first class. <sup>99</sup> However, Thate's study also does not relate conditionals to the purpose of the Gospel. He does not deal with how conditionals are used for persuasive purposes, or how Johannine conditionals in context contribute to the overall argument of John. <sup>100</sup>

*Conclusion.* Current approaches to NT conditionals generally treat the complex clauses in a piecemeal fashion. This deficit necessitates a more linguistically rigorous framework to enable deeper understanding of the meaning of NT conditionals. At the same time, works that address the rhetorical purpose of John (20:31) fail to give sufficient attention to Johannine conditionals. <sup>101</sup> A coherent linguistic framework is

---

<sup>97</sup> Thate, "Conditionality," 561.

<sup>98</sup> Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 300; Thate, "Conditionality," 567.

<sup>99</sup> Thate, "Conditionality," 567. Thate concludes, "Following the preliminary work of D. A. Carson, I suggest that Porter's first and second class conditionals be lumped into a single group where the assertive attitude—the indicative—appears or is assumed (e.g. 18:23b) in the protasis, excluding the future." 571.

<sup>100</sup> For a brief discussion of the rhetoric of John's Gospel, see also Kennedy, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 73-85, 108-13. Along with other rhetorical and linguistic studies mentioned above, conditional statements do not form part of Kennedy's analysis.

<sup>101</sup> In SFL, rhetoric is closely related to the concept of the texture, that is, the semantic relations between individual parts of a text. See Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, Text*, 70-96. In the same vein, Halliday and Matthiessen discuss Rhetorical Structure Analysis (RST) as part of a text's texture, working under the principle that the text is organized semantically as a complex of rhetorical relations. Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 579-85. For an earlier version of RST, see also Mann and Thompson, "Rhetorical

required to more comprehensively interpret conditionals on multiple language levels and with respect to multiple language functions. Such a model can also be applied to demonstrate the rhetorical role of conditionals in John's Gospel. The present study aims to bridge this gap.

### 1.3 Organization of Study

The rest of this study is divided into five chapters. Sections 2.1 and 2.2 of Chapter Two give an overview of some of the key concepts of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and provide an interpretative framework for analyzing conditionals. Key concepts include the metafunctions of language, namely, the ideational function of construing reality or experience, the interpersonal function of enacting interpersonal and social relationships, and the textual function of creating text. In terms of language unit, SFL divides language into word/word group, clause, clause complex, text, and social semiotics (language and the society).<sup>102</sup> A new set of semantic categories between the protasis and apodosis (Causal and Correlative) will be introduced and tested throughout the study. These two sections thus set the stage for a more coherent and comprehensive approach to understanding language in general and describing Greek conditional statements.<sup>103</sup>

---

Structure Theory," 243-81. In all of the above works, rhetorical function is regarded as part of the textual function of language

<sup>102</sup> Halliday, "Text as Semantic Choice," *CW* 2:23-81; Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 128-51; Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 19-31.

<sup>103</sup> For examples of application of SFL in languages other than English, for example, Chinese and Greek, see Halliday, *Studies in Chinese Language*; and Reed, "Discourse Analysis," 189-217; Martin-Asensio, "Hallidayan Functional Grammar," 84-107; Porter and O'Donnell, "Greek Verbal Network," 3-41; and Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*.

Based on the theoretical groundwork in Chapter 2, attention will turn to selected conditionals in John from dialogues between Jesus and other participants. Participants in the dialogues include individuals and groups, Jews and non-Jews, opponents of Jesus and those whom Jesus loves. Following the narrative flow of the Gospel, the participants are Nicodemus (John 3), the Samaritan woman and the royal official (John 4), the Jerusalem Jews (John 5), the Galilean Jews (John 6), the Jerusalem Jews (John 10), and finally the disciples, Martha, and Mary (John 11). The goal is to understand the conditionals of Jesus and the participants, in context, and to understand how they contribute to the overall persuasive purpose of John's Gospel.

Chapter Three consists of three major sections. Section 3.1 analyzes the first discourses of Jesus in John with Nicodemus (3:1-15), followed by Section 3.2, his conversations with two foreigners, namely, the Samaritan woman and the royal official (4:10, 45-64). Jesus' conditionals with Nicodemus and the other two participants indicate a sharp contrast. While Nicodemus fails to understand (3:9) Jesus' several attempts to explain eternal life (3:3, 5 both Subjunctive conditionals; see also 3:12, 13 mixed protasis and Indicative conditionals), both the Samaritan woman and the royal official respond to Jesus' conditionals, 4:10 (Indicative) and 4:48 (Subjunctive), positively. The next section, section 3.3, consists of Jesus' Christological defense against the charges of the Jews. In addition to three other conditionals (5:19, 31, 43), Jesus concludes the debate with two consecutive conditionals that pronounce judgment against the Jews for their unbelief of Moses (5:46, 47).

In Chapter Four, Jesus' conditionals in the bread of life discourse with the Jews (6:41-59) and the disciples (6:60-65) are examined in sections 4.1 and 4.2 respectively.

The narrative indicates that not only do the Galilean Jews fail to understand Jesus, even Jesus' disciples decide not to follow him, all because of Jesus' difficult sayings (6:51, 53 Subjunctive conditionals). The last section, section 4.3 looks into Jesus' final public debate with the Jews, in which he uses three consecutive Indicative conditionals (10:36-36, 37, 38), with the first and the last conditionals consisting of exceptionally intricate, multiple clauses. These conditionals represent some of the most tightly argued statements that Jesus makes in John.

Chapter Five consists of two main sections. In section 5.1, the audience changes from Jesus' opponents to his disciples, and Martha and Mary whom Jesus loves (John 11). Han Förster's suggestion of the disciples' "untypical" misunderstanding, as indicated by their conditional in 11:12 (Indicative), will be investigated. Richard Young's classification of conditionals based on speech act theory and his interpretation of Martha and Mary's identical conditionals (11:21, 32 both Indicative) will be the focus of the remainder of this section. Section 5.2 ("Grammar of conditionals") summarizes the ideational and interpersonal functions of conditionals, including the discussion on the cline of reality construal by speakers of conditionals:

[-REAL] ————— [±REAL] ————— [+REAL]

By construing reality in different ways, speakers frame their arguments to help them to convince others to believe and/or to behave in certain ways. Typically, conditionals do not function to exclude or alienate others, but rather to convince and persuade. The claim that Jesus and his disciples belong to an antisociety and they use what Halliday

calls “antilanguage”<sup>104</sup> will therefore be examined based on the meaning of selected conditionals found in Jesus’ discourse with various characters.

Finally, in Chapter Six, the concluding chapter, section 6.1 provides a summary of this study under the headings of SFL’s three integrated metafunctions (Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual), with brief summaries on subcategories such as logico-semantic relation, Moods and Tenses (Ideational), collocation with questions, language and social structure (Interpersonal), thematic and summative conditionals, and consecutive conditionals (Textual). The subsequent and final section, section 6.2, applies these categories and underscores the contribution of Johannine conditionals to the Gospel’s persuasive purpose.

---

<sup>104</sup> Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 164-82.

## CHAPTER TWO

### DESCRIPTION AND PROCEDURE

#### Introduction

In the preceding chapter, a survey of the methods of describing NT conditionals has shown that most NT Greek grammarians approach conditionals and their complex grammatical construction from narrow concepts of language. Many of these approaches also lack a general linguistic theory to support their descriptions. Moreover, as rhetorical devices, conditionals in John's Gospel have not received adequate treatment by Greek commentators of John's Gospel, even though it contains the highest frequency of occurrence among all four Gospels, with a total of 102 conditionals and approx. five conditionals per chapter.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce Systemic Functional Linguistic (or SFL) as the theoretical framework that is well suited for the investigation of NT conditionals. As a functional linguistic theory, SFL is oriented to the description of language as a meaning making resource rather than a system of rules. In SFL, the primary attention is not on what one can mean according to the rules of grammar, but to the vast meaning potential of language available to speakers, and as a result, what they can mean as language users. Based on the proposed linguistic framework, the rest of this chapter will proceed to propose a basic interpreting model for NT conditionals. This is followed by the introduction to the procedure of the investigation of selected conditionals of John's Gospel in the rest of this study.



This chapter comprises three main sections. Section 2.1 introduces systemic functional linguistics (SFL), outlining its key assumptions and features. As a functional theory of language it has been compared to formalist theories, particularly those developed within Noam Chomsky's framework. However, functionalist approaches regard human communication as the primary function of language and syntax as not independent from semantics and pragmatics. Language systems and their components are also inextricably linked to the social, cognitive, and historical contexts of language use. To adequately describe and explain language, one must refer to all such functions and contexts.<sup>105</sup> Among the key functional theories of language are those developed by the Dutch linguist Simon Dik, William A. Foley, Robert D. van Valin, as well as the Prague school (Vilem Mathesius, Nikolai Trubetzkoy, Roman Jakobson) and the London school (J. R. Firth, M. A. K. Halliday, W. Haas, and F. R. Palmer).<sup>106</sup> This study will adopt the functional theory that Halliday advances as the chief proponent.

Section 2.2 describes the theoretical foundation and framework for the analysis of NT Greek conditional statements. Early Johannine grammatical studies by scholars such as Edwin Abbott primarily focused on the word as the primary grammatical unit.<sup>107</sup> Others have studied the Greek language of John's Gospel with the goal of discovering how other ancient languages affected its structure and development.<sup>108</sup> SFL provides a

---

<sup>105</sup> The most basic tenet of functionalism, Butler states, "is that the primary purpose of language is human communication, and that this fact is crucial in explaining why languages take the form they do. This view contrasts somewhat starkly with that of Chomsky, for whom language is essentially for expressing thought, with inter-human communication being just one of the uses to which it can be put, and not to be prioritized over other possible functions." Butler, "Functional Theories," 697.

<sup>106</sup> See, for example, Dik, *Functional Grammar*; Foley and van Valin, *Functional Syntax*; Mathesius, "Phenomena of Language," 1-32; Firth, *Selected Papers*; Lamb, *Stratificational Grammar*. See also de Beaugrande, *Linguistic Theory*; and Zhu, *Functional Linguistics*.

<sup>107</sup> Abbott, *Johannine Vocabulary and Johannine Grammar*.

<sup>108</sup> For example, Colwell, *The Greek of the Fourth Gospel* and early commentaries such as Wrede, *Charakter und Tendenz des Johannesevangeliums*.

formal linguistic framework to guide the interpretative process of the conditionals according to the three primary functions of language: Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual functions.

Finally, section 2.3 outlines the procedure that this study adopts to analyze selected discourses in John where conditionals are found. The scope of the investigation is the first half of John (chapters 1-12) where Jesus' public ministry is recorded. Selected speeches or speech segments containing conditionals will be analyzed according to the functional categories provided in section 2.2. In the detailed analysis of conditionals in the rest of this study, comparison and contrasts will also be made between these conditionals and conditionals in the remainder of John's Gospel and the rest of the NT to illustrate some of the prominent system networks and semantic features these conditionals utilize.

## 2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics: An Overview

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a linguistic framework designed to describe and explain how language creates and expresses meaning. Developed by Michael Halliday, a student of J. R. Firth, the basic thrust of SFL is to provide a comprehensive descriptive tool for understanding language. He contends that linguistics should deal with meaning at all level of analysis and should study texts in their contexts of situation.<sup>109</sup> Fundamental to the understanding and the interpretation of language is

---

<sup>109</sup> For a historical background and overview of Halliday's linguistic theory, especially in relation to the Prague school of linguistics and works by Firth, and other functional theories of language, see Kress, *Halliday*, viii-xxi; de Beaugrande, *Linguistic Theory*, 223-64; Butler, *Systemic Linguistics*, 1-13; Butler, "Functionalist Theories," *ELL* 4:696-704; Caffarel, "Systemic Functional Grammar," 797-825; and Bloor and Bloor, *Functional Analysis*, 239-54. Early keys works by Halliday on the concept of language include, *Functional Grammar*; *Social Semiotic*; "Categories," *CW* 1:37-94; "Language Structure," *CW*

how language is conceptualized. Remarking on how he first began to understand the grammar of a language, Halliday writes, "It seemed to me that what was needed to enable us to engage more effectively with language was not so much new theories but new description."<sup>110</sup>

Not only must language be described carefully and properly in order to be understood well, SFL's view of language is also distinctively social and functional in orientation.

Language has evolved to satisfy human needs; and the way it is organized is functional with respect to these needs—it is not arbitrary. A functional grammar is essentially a 'natural' grammar, in the sense that everything in it can be explained, ultimately, by reference to how language is used...Both the general kinds of grammatical patterns that have evolved in language, and the specific manifestations of each kind, bear a natural relation to the meanings they have evolved to express.<sup>111</sup>

SFL attempts to study language as a whole; what is said about one aspect of a text must be understood in the context of the entire text, with the aim of balancing related linguistic concepts such as, language and text, form and meaning, and syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations.<sup>112</sup>

Furthermore, SFL's approach to the study of literary texts, or discourse analysis, is best summarized as follows:

We can therefore define linguistics stylistics as the description of the literary text, by methods derived from general linguistic theory, using the categories of the description of the language as a whole; and the comparison of each text with others, by the same and by different authors, in the same and in different genres.<sup>113</sup>

---

1:173-95; "Architecture," *CW* 3:1-39; "Applicable Description," *CW* 7:xxiii-xxxxi; and "Users and Uses," *CW* 10:5-40.

<sup>110</sup> Halliday, "Applicable Description," *CW* 7:xxxx-xxxxi.

<sup>111</sup> Halliday, *FG*, xiii, xviii.

<sup>112</sup> Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 19-20.

<sup>113</sup> Halliday, "Linguistic Study," *CW* 2:6.

In this section, three general linguistic (grammatical and semantic) concepts significant to SFL and to this study will be introduced, namely system, function, and text. These concepts will be widely utilized in the rest of this study to describe and analyze selected Johannine Greek conditionals, particularly in terms of the three metafunctions of language: Ideational function (consisting of Experiential and Logical functions); Interpersonal function; and Textual function (see section 2.2.2 below). These conditionals will also be compared and contrasted with conditionals in the rest of John and in the NT.

Two other important SFL concepts will also be explicated throughout this study: language as meaning potential and language as social semiotic. The former emphasizes the fact that language is used to communicate meaning. And when people communicate with one another they choose from a huge meaning resource call “language” to express and create meaning. In other words, meaning comes from the choice or choices made in various systems and potentials in language.

The concept of language as social semiotic deals with how language extends beyond the content level of lexicogrammar (patterns of wordings) and semantics to the level of context of situation and context of culture. Language has the power to form and shape how society is structured. In some societies, “antilanguage” is used as a means to exclude outsiders from the communication process in order to maintain their secret identities.<sup>114</sup> Some have claimed the

---

<sup>114</sup> Halliday, *Social Semiotics*. 164-82.

language of John is antilanguage, and their claim will be examined later in this study.

The goal of adopting these SFL linguistic concepts is to attain a more principled and systematic descriptive linguistic framework to better understand the meaning, and meaning potential of conditionals, and how Johannine conditionals contribute to the writer's persuasive purpose (John 20:31).<sup>115</sup> The SFL's concept of "system" and how it relates to this study is explained below.

### 2.1.1 System

According to Halliday, there are four basic categories of grammar in SFL: *unit*, *structure*, *class*, and *system*. Since language operates at different levels of grammar, SFL accounts for linguistic events at these four primary levels. (i) Unit is the "stretch" that carries grammatical patterns such as clauses and phrases/groups. (ii) Structure is the arrangement of elements ordered in linear progression, such as, Subject (nominal), Predicator (verbal), Complement (nominal), and Adjunct (adverbial) in English. (iii) Class describes items that are alike in some respect, such as word classes (nominal, verbal, and adverbial).<sup>116</sup> And finally, (iv) System is the ordering based on the paradigmatic axis (what could go instead of what).<sup>117</sup>

A system network is further defined as a theory of language based on the choice of the speaker.

---

<sup>115</sup> SFL offers a very helpful and comprehensive framework for this study, but this is not to claim that it is the only approach to analyze the biblical texts and Greek conditional statements. For other linguistic approaches, see Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*; Dik, *Functional Grammar*, 1-23; van Dijk, *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, 4 vols.; and Longacre, *Grammar of Discourse*.

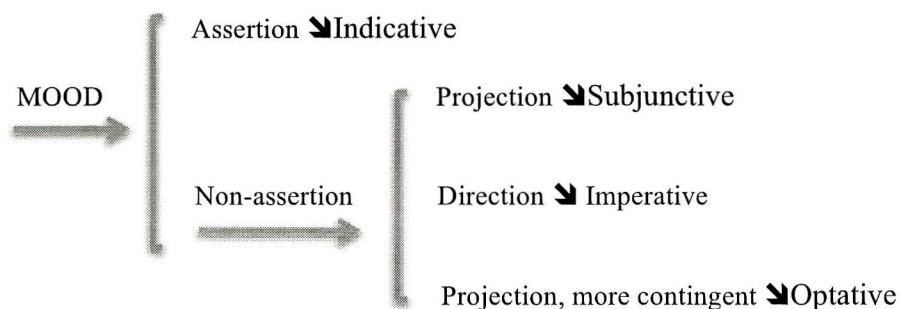
<sup>116</sup> "The fact that it is not true that anything can go anywhere in the structure of the unit above itself is another aspect of linguistic patterning, and the category set up to account for it is the *class*." Halliday, "Categories," *CW* 1:49.

<sup>117</sup> Halliday, "Categories," *CW*, 1:41-55.

[The network] represents a language, or any part of a language, as a resource for making meaning by choosing. Each choice point in the network specifies (1) an environment, consisting of choices already made, and (2) a set of possibilities of which one is (to be) chosen, (1) and (2) taken together constitute a ‘system’ in this technical sense.<sup>118</sup>

It is the system that formalizes the notion of choice in language. Meaning is expressed as, “the product of the interplay of structure and system—of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations.”<sup>119</sup> In other words, meaning is expressed not just by how the sentence or utterance is constructed sequentially. More importantly, meaning is expressed by the choices that are (or are not) made.

To illustrate, for the entry condition of the Greek finite verb, the speaker has to make choices from the system of MOOD which consists of two main choices, representing the speaker’s attitude toward the action. Indicative mood for assertion and non-Indicative moods for non-assertion.<sup>120</sup>



For example, in the following Greek conditional clause (protasis) the Indicative mood is chosen in ἔχεις *you have/consider*. The speaker Paul is making an assertion based on reality and not a hypothesis.

<sup>118</sup> Halliday, *FG*, xxvii.

<sup>119</sup> Halliday, “Methods – Techniques – Problems,” 64.

<sup>120</sup> The term “Mood” representing the Greek verbal mood used in this study is different from SFL’s normal meaning. In SFL “Mood” consists of two parts: (i) the Subject (*he, she, the teapot*), which is a nominal group, and (ii) the finite operator (*is, has, will*), which is part of a verbal group. It grammaticalizes the semantic system of speech function. Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 111-15. In this study, however, MOOD particularly refers to the Greek verbal and its character as a SFL system network, whereas the non-capitalized form (Mood) denotes it as a grammatical feature such as Tense and Voice.

Phlm 17a  
 εἰ οὖν με ἔχεις (Pres. Act. Ind.) κοινωνόν

*So if you consider me a partner*

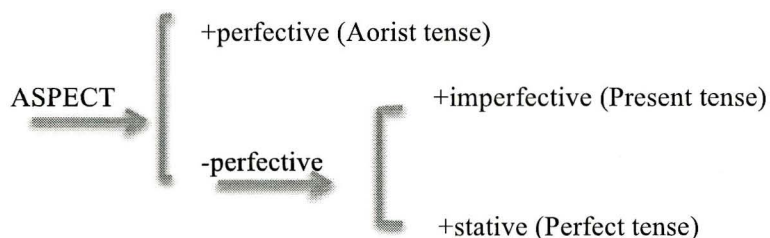
Other choices are possible, for example, the Subjunctive mood (*if you may consider me a partner*) or the Imperative mood (*consider me a partner!*). But the choice here is the Greek Indicative mood. Together with other network systems such as TENSE, VOICE, and POLARITY, distinct meanings are formed.

To further illustrate, the choice of Mood is changed to the Imperative in the subsequent clause in προσλαβοῦ *receive* or *welcome!* expressing a different kind of attitude toward the action.

Phlm 17b  
 προσλαβοῦ (Aor Mid. Imp.) αὐτὸν ὡς ἐμέ

*welcome him as you would welcome me*

The Mood in each clause thus expresses different ways the speaker (apostle Paul) views the action. What makes up the meaning is the sum of the linguistic choice(s) in grammatical features such as, MOOD, ASPECT, and VOICE, that the speaker makes. To illustrate, the NT Greek aspectual system network may be illustrated as follows, with the primary realizations in tense forms in brackets:<sup>121</sup>



In addition, the speaker can also choose the thematic structure of the clause. In SFL, the Theme is the element that serves as the point of departure of the clause. It

<sup>121</sup> See Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 90.

extends from the beginning up to, and including, the first element that has an experiential function. It is that which locates and orients the clause within its context. Everything after the Theme constitutes the Rheme.<sup>122</sup> Assuming a basic pattern of Greek constituent order of the clause as: Subject-Predicator (S-P), Complement (C),<sup>123</sup> if the Complement is placed at the beginning of the clause, it is considered as a marked Theme by virtue of its new position. This is especially true with the Complement. For example, the  $\mu\epsilon$  *me* (Paul the apostle and the writer/sender of the letter) in the Greek clause of Phlm 17a is marked: εἰ οὖν με ἔχεις κοινωνόν *So if me you consider a partner*.

Thematic structure also features in clause complexes.<sup>124</sup> As the following shows, the protasis takes the position of the thematic clause in the first clause complex; in the second clause complex, however, the conditional clause takes the position of the rhematic clause.<sup>125</sup>

Clause complex 1	<i>If he found any belonging to the Way,</i>	<i>he might bring them bound to Jerusalem</i>
Clause complex 2	<i>For I am accomplishing a work which you will never believe,</i>	<i>even if someone describes it to you</i>
	<b>thematic clause</b>	<b>rhematic clause</b>

<sup>122</sup> Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 64-67, 85.

<sup>123</sup> The actual order is far more complicated, and grammarians have not reached a general consensus. For example, instead of Subject-Predicator (S-P), the Subject (S) may become explicit as a personal or proper noun. Embedded and inserted clauses within a ranking clause also do not fit such a simplified order. Moreover, the author's style, genre, and register chosen may also affect the ordering of constituents of a clause in various ways. For a comparison of the constituent order in the writings of Paul, Luke, and Epictetus, including the patterning of modifiers, see Davison, "Greek Word Order," 19-28; see also Dover, *Greek Word Order* (classical Greek); and Porter, "Word Order and Clause Structure," 181-91. Based on his analysis of Paul's letter to the Philippians, Porter notes that there is a "hierarchy of placement possibilities" of grammatical patterning. For an argument for a flexible word order in NT Greek, see Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 200-4. The order of (S-)PC being chosen here as unmarked is because it is generally consistent with the normal pattern of speech communication.

<sup>124</sup> For a discussion on clause sequencing in a clause nexus including the thematic domains in the clause nexus and the simple clause, see Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 392-94.

<sup>125</sup> The two sets of clause complexes are adapted from Acts 9:2 and 13:41 respectively.



Therefore, there are two thematic domains—that of the clause and that of the clause complex. A hypotactically dependent clause, for example, may serve as thematic clause within the clause complex. The thematic clause always serves as the point of departure of the remainder of the clause complex.

In terms of choosing different options from system networks, the choice is not necessarily a conscious effort, but is rather part of the human ability to communicate meaning through language. This kind of ability is normally acquired from early childhood. SFL's concept of system network plays a key role in understanding how speakers choose from different options in the grammar to express and create meaning.

### 2.1.2 Function

The word “function” is often used in language studies in two senses. First, it is used in the sense of grammatical or syntactic function, referring to relations between elements in linguistic structures such as noun, verb, and pronoun. Secondly, “function” is also used to refer to meaning.<sup>126</sup> The second sense, i.e. functions, or metafunctions, of language, is referred to for the majority of this study. In SFL, function is a fundamental principle of language. The concept of function is basic to the evolution of the semantic system and is synonymous with the use or meaning of language.

Halliday relates system and function in terms of the social and personal needs of the speaker as follows,

The particular form taken by the grammatical system of language is closely related to the social and personal needs that language is required to serve. But in order to bring this out it is necessary to look at both the *system* of language and its *functions* at the same time; otherwise we will lack any theoretical basis for generalizations about how language is used.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>126</sup> Halliday, "Linguistic Function," *CW* 2:89.

<sup>127</sup> Halliday, "Language Structure," *CW* 1:174. Italics added.

SFL distinguishes three metafunctions of language, namely, Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual.<sup>128</sup> The ideational function expresses content and construes human experience. It represents the speaker's experience of the real world, including the inner world of his/her own consciousness. It expresses the speaker's view of the world, and helps the hearer to make sense of his/her own experience in the world. Within the ideational function, there are two sub-functions: the experiential and the logical. The experiential is used to portray reality and processes, while the logical is used to characterize the semantic and logical connections between clauses in clause complexes.<sup>129</sup> An illustration of the experiential function of a simple clause in English is mapped as follows:

<i>Today if</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>hear</i>	<i>his voice</i>
<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Circumstance</b>

The second row identifies the formal categories and system networks (Process, Participant, Circumstance) that represent the different components of the clause to show what is going on, that is, the ideational function or meaning of the clause.<sup>130</sup>

The second function is the interpersonal function. It enacts personal and social relationships with other people. It is used to “inform or question, give an order or make an offer, and express our appraisal of and attitude towards whatever we are addressing

<sup>128</sup> Halliday, "Linguistic Function," *CW* 2:89-98.

<sup>129</sup> The two systems in complex clauses are Interdependency or Taxis (Paratactic and Hypotactic) and Logico-Semantic Relation (Expansion and Projection). Hypotaxis is the relation between a dependent element and its dominant, the element on which it is dependent. Parataxis is the relation between two like elements of equal status, one initiating and the other continuing. Expansion relates phenomena as being of the same order of experience, while projection relates phenomena of a higher order of experience (semiotic phenomena—what people say and think). Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 373-83.

<sup>130</sup> This model consists of a process unfolding through time, the participants involved in the process, and circumstances associated with the process. For a discussion of these three elements, see Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 175-78..

and what we are talking about.”<sup>131</sup> The interpersonal function is both interactive and personal. Whereas the ideational function is characterized as “language as reflection;” the interpersonal meaning exhibits the characteristics of “language as action.” To show its interpersonal function the mapping of the above clause will be as follows:<sup>132</sup>

<i>Today if</i>	<i>you hear</i>	<i>his voice</i>
<b>Residue</b>	<b>Mood</b>	<b>Residue</b>

And finally, the textual function organizes the thematic or information structure of the clause, clause complexes, and text (see next section below). It consists of the Theme (the point of departure) and the Rheme (an observation relating to the Theme). In other words, by definition, the Theme takes the clause-initial position.<sup>133</sup> This Theme-Rheme model represents how speakers choose to organize the “message blocks” in the flow of information, as shown below.

<i>Today if you</i>	<i>hear his voice</i>
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Rheme</b>

In summary, SFL emphasizes meaning, especially language as “meaning potential.” The linguistic choices that are made from the ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions are what express and create meaning. As Halliday describes it, “All options are embedded in the language system: the system *is* a network of options,

<sup>131</sup> Halliday and Mattiessen, *IFG*, 31.

<sup>132</sup> SFL’s Mood consists of the Subject (*you*) and the finite operator (*is, was, has, will, etc.*). In this case the finite operator is fused into a single word with the lexical verb *hear*.

<sup>133</sup> For the ongoing debate over language configurationality and its implication on the architecture of language and universal grammar, see Pensalfini, “Configurationality,” *ELL* 3:23-27, and Pensalfini, “Towards a typology of configurationality,” 359-408. The nature and degree of flexibility in configuration in NT Greek, in addition to genre and author’s style, also makes it difficult to characterize the language. In the midst of ongoing research, the clausal configuration of theme-rheme of SFL is adopted in the rest of this study of NT Greek conditionals.

deriving from all the various functions of language."<sup>134</sup> While the above discussion on the concept of function primarily focuses on the simple clause and its wording (lexis and grammar), the following concept focuses on the semantic concept of "text" that normally concerns with other elements in the meaning making process of language.

### 2.1.3 Text

Halliday defines text as "language that is functional," or the use of language in context as opposed to isolated words or unrelated strings of words that are decontextualized. Thus a text is "any instance of living language that is playing some part in a context of situation."<sup>135</sup> A text may be spoken or written, long or short. It is a functional-semantic concept not defined by size.<sup>136</sup>

The location of text in the architecture of language may be shown in the following rank-stratum matrix. The ranks are shown on the vertical axis, and the stratum of content is represented horizontally as "semantics" and "lexicogrammar" (lexis and grammar). An additional column "graphology" is added to locate the graphological units of "sentence" and "sub-sentence" for reference.<sup>137</sup>

semantics	lexicogrammar	graphology
<b>text</b> (rhetorical) paragraph sequence	clause complex clause group/phrase word	sentence sub-sentence

<sup>134</sup> Halliday, "Linguistic Function," *CW* 2:97 For an overview of the systemic functional approach, see also Egins, *Introduction*, 1-24. For examples of Hallidayan functional analysis, see Bloor and Bloor, *Functional Analysis* and Morley, *Lexicogrammatical Analysis*.

<sup>135</sup> Halliday and Hasan, *Language, Context, and Text*, 10.

<sup>136</sup> Halliday, "Linguistic Function," *CW* 2:92. The three factors that distinguish text from "non-text" are: generic structure, textual structure (thematic and informational), and cohesion. Halliday, "Text," *CW* 2:44-45. See also Hasan, "Text in the Systemic Functional Model," 228-47

<sup>137</sup> Halliday and Mattiessen, *IFG*, 371

As semantic concepts that do not necessarily have delineated segment lengths, texts are organized more dynamically in contrast to other clauses and clause complexes. Sometimes texts are organized in paragraph form. The paragraph is then viewed as a functionally-significant text span. In order to appreciate the fuller meaning of language, clauses and clause complexes are to be analyzed within the texts they appear in.

Halliday underscores his method of linguistic study of literary texts as:

...the description of such texts, by methods derived from general linguistics theory, using the categories of the description of the language as a whole; and the comparison of each text with others, by the same and by different authors, in the same and in different genres.<sup>138</sup>

He emphasizes the importance of examining linguistic features of texts in their wider contexts.

Language does not operate except in the context of other events; even when these are, as with written texts, other language events, any one point made about a piece of text which is under focus raises many further points extending way beyond into the context. This does not mean that no linguistic statements can be self-sufficient, but that the only ultimately valid unit for textual analysis is the whole text.<sup>139</sup>

The creation and exchange of meaning takes place in the course of an unfolding text. This on-going process of meaning-creation is called logogenesis, with “logos” referring to the discourse or text.<sup>140</sup> Logogenesis pertains to the entire meaning potential of a text, including the stratum of content (lexicogrammar and semantics), and all the metafunctions (Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual). Logogenesis enables the hearer or reader to see how the local patterning within clauses and other grammatical units

---

<sup>138</sup> Halliday, "Linguistic Study," *CW* 2:6.

<sup>139</sup> Halliday, "Linguistic Study," *CW* 2:9.

<sup>140</sup> Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 43, 530.

build up to create patterns that extend through phases of texts, as well as through the entire texts. It is what Halliday calls the projection of meaning at the higher level.<sup>141</sup>

In SFL, the difference between “text” and “discourse” is a difference in point of view, between different angles of vision on the same phenomena. “Discourse” is a text that is being viewed in its sociocultural context, while “text” is discourse that is being viewed as a process of language.<sup>142</sup>

To illustrate the semantic concept of text, Paul’s defense of his apostleship in 1 Cor 9:1-18 is divided into three functionally-significant texts or text spans. The outline is as follows.

Paul’s defense of his apostleship, 1 Cor. 9:1-18

Text 1 (vv. 1-2) Paul asserts his status as an apostle of Jesus

Text 2 (vv. 3-12a) Paul argues with general and OT scriptural principles

Text 3 (vv. 12b-18) Paul explains his reason for refusing to exercise his rights

The above text segmentation of the English text is based on grammatical and lexical features such as rhetorical questions: vv. 1-2 *Am I not free?...Are you not my work in the Lord?*; v. 3 *My defense* (Ἡ ἐμὴ ἀπολογία) *to those who examine me is this*, and v. 12b *Nevertheless* (ἄλλ), *we did not use this right*. It is also noteworthy that in each text, conditionals form the concluding statements or question. Paul’s conditionals are found in v. 2 (Text 1); vv. 11a, 11b, and v. 12 (Text 2); and vv. 16, 17a, 17b (Text 3). Such a phenomenon indicates the special rhetorical contributions conditionals make in the text.

---

<sup>141</sup> In his study of William Golding's novel *The Inheritors*, Halliday shows that, "the particular impact of this novel on reader is projected simultaneously on to the semantics, in the content of narrative and dialogue, and on to the grammar in the highly untypical transitivity patterns that characterize, not so much individual clauses (none of which is in itself deviant), but the distribution of clause types in the writing as a whole." ("Text," *CW* 2:49) In this study, our focus is Jesus' conditional statements in John, including their distribution in the entirety of the text.

<sup>142</sup> Halliday, *Complementarities*, 78.

In sum, SFL's approach to meaning is characterized by at least three main features. Meaning is achieved through choices from paradigmatic system networks, such as MOOD, ASPECT, and POLARITY. Meaning is also expressed and exchanged through language metafunctions (Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual). Finally, meaning is also created through the on-going development of the text (logogenesis).<sup>143</sup>

## 2.2 Conditional Statements: A Functional Approach<sup>144</sup>

Having introduced SFL's major concepts of language, the next task is to provide an interpretative framework to describe NT conditionals, including Johannine conditionals, from a functional point of view. The basic framework adopted by this study is SFL's metafunctions of language. As clauses and clause complexes, conditionals are used to express and create complex phenomena. As rhetorical devices, they also are used to enact personal and social functions in different kinds of texts or

---

<sup>143</sup> For recent NT studies adopting Halliday's concept of language and text, see Porter and Carson, *Discourse Analysis*, including Porter, "Introductory Survey," 14-35; Reed, "Identifying Theme," 75-101; Porter and Reed, *Discourse Analysis*, including, Porter and Reed, "Discourse Analysis," 15-19; Reed, "Cohesiveness of Discourse," 28-46; and O'Donnell, "Annotated Corpora," 71-119. See also Porter and O'Donnell, *Linguist as Pedagogue*, including the following works: Porter, "Prominence: Theoretical Overview," 45-74; Westfall, "Method for Analysis," 75-94; Tan, "Pauline Epistles," 95-110; Gunderson, "Nicodemus and the Samaritan Woman," 113-26; O'Connell and Smith, "3 John," 127-45; and Westfall, "Romans 7:7-25," 146-58. Other works include Kwong, *Word Order*; Martin-Asensio, *Transitivity-Based Foregrounding*; Black, *Sentence Conjunctions*; Westfall, *Letter to the Hebrews*; O'Donnell, *Corpus Linguistics*; Reed, *Philippians*; and Dvorak, "Thematization, Topic," 17-37.

<sup>144</sup> General linguistic studies of conditionals include Traugott et al., *On Conditionals*, including Ferguson et al., "Overview," 3-20; Comrie, "Conditionals: A Typology," 77-99; Van der Auwera, "Conditionals and Speech Acts," 197-214; Greenberg, "The Realis-Irrealis Continuum," 247-64; and Ford and Thompson, "Conditionals in Discourse," 353-72. See also Haiman, "Conditionals," 564-89; Funk, "Semantic Typology," 365-413; James, "Semantics and Pragmatics," 453-80; Young, "Classification of Conditional Sentences," 29-49.

discourses. The framework proposed below is descriptive of how conditionals draw on multiple grammatical and semantic resources to perform their complex functions.<sup>145</sup>

*Ideational function.* The protasis represents the basis of supposition. Its meaning is expressed through the choice in the Greek verbal system network of MOOD. It indicates the manner of presentation by distinguishing between simple statement of fact or intention, expression of will, wish, generality, and potentiality, etc.<sup>146</sup> Excluding the Optative Mood,<sup>147</sup> the NT contains two basic types of conditional clauses or protases. First, the conditional particle εἰ *if* is used with the Indicative mood, to represent an assertion that is presented by the speaker as certain or “factual” for the sake of argument. It is the subjective relations between the speaker and his or her portrayal of reality.<sup>148</sup> In addition, Indicative conditionals are also sub-divided into two types. With type 1 Indicative conditionals, a speaker can choose any tense form. However, type 2 Indicative conditionals, or counterfactual conditionals, are limited to secondary tenses. Secondly, the conditional particle εἰς *if* is used with the Subjunctive mood, expressing something that is considered notional or hypothetical.<sup>149</sup> It is quite frequent that the εἰς + Subjunctive appears with μὴ (*if...not*), and occasionally as καὶ εἰς or its contracted form, καὶς (*even if*).

---

<sup>145</sup> This important principle is also amply illustrated in Halliday’s articles on the multiple approaches to language teaching and the complexity involved in the construal of pain. Halliday, “The Teacher Taught the Student English” *CW* 7:297-305; “Grammar of Pain,” *CW* 7:306-37.

<sup>146</sup> McKay, *New Syntax*, 53. Wallace defines Mood as the way a speaker uses “to *portray* his or her affirmation as to the certainty of the verbal action or state (whether an actuality or potentiality).” Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 445.

<sup>147</sup> The εἰ + Optative conditional does not appear in John’s Gospel. And no complete form of this type of conditional structure is found in the NT. See 1 Pet 3:14, 17; Acts 24:19; 1 Cor 15:37.

<sup>148</sup> Porter, *Idioms*, 51. Similarly, “The indicative mood is the mood of assertion, or *presentation* of certainty.” Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 448.

<sup>149</sup> “The Subjunctive form is used to grammaticalize a projected realm which may at some time exist and may even now exist, but which is held up for examination simply as a projection of the writer or speaker’s mind for consideration.” Porter, *Idioms*, 57. “The Subjunctive...represent[s] the verbal action (or state) as...probable.” Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 461. See also McKay, *New Syntax*, 53-54.



The Mood of the protasis allows an important way to classify conditionals based on the speaker's presentation or construal of reality, as the following conditionals in Matt 4:3, 6, 9 illustrate.

---

Matt 4:3, 6, 9

εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ,  
εἶπε ἵνα οἱ λίθοι οὗτοι ἄρτοι γένωνται.

*If you are the Son of God,  
command that these stones become bread.*

εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ,  
βάλε σεαυτὸν κάτω

*If you are the Son of God,  
throw yourself down*

ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω  
ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς μοι

*All these things will I give you,  
if you fall down and worship me.*

---

In the first two conditionals, Satan uses Jesus' deity in the Indicative conditional clauses twice (vv. 3, 6) to posit his argument, and uses them for making his demands in the main clause. Framing the conditionals in such a way, with the accompanying fact that Jesus is the Son of God, makes the argument highly compelling. However, after two failed attempts, Satan switches to the ἐὰν + Subjunctive conditional clause in v. 9. Unlike the Son of God Indicative protasis, Jesus' falling down and worshipping Satan is portrayed hypothetically. Satan does not represent it with any certainty, he merely suggests that Jesus may be motivated to do so as a possibility.

In Gal 1:10, Paul uses the Indicative type 2 protasis to depict what might have happened, but did not in reality. He posits that if the protasis was true, the apodosis would also be true.

Gal 1:10

εἰ ἔτι ἀνθρώποις ἠρεσκον (Impf. Act. Ind.), Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἦμην (Impf. Act. Ind.).

*If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.*

The Ideational function is further subdivided into Experiential and Logical functions or meaning. The LOGICO-SEMANTIC RELATION (L-SR) is a system network

under the logical function that describes the semantic relation between the clauses in clause complexes such as conditional statements. In SFL, as hypotactic clause complexes, conditionals (in English) are under the subcategory of “enhancing” which is under “Expansion.” However, Halliday and Matthiessen also point out that these relations are only generalized glosses and should not be used as precise definitions. They further comment that, “It is important to interpret these ‘logical’ relationships in their own terms as part of the semantics of a language, and not to expect them to fit exactly into formal logical categories.”<sup>150</sup>

As surveyed earlier in Chapter 1 of this study, NT Greek grammarians in the past century did not reach a consensus on the classification of the L-SR of conditionals. A number of them left this semantic feature out of their discussion.<sup>151</sup> Moreover, a considerable degree of ambiguity still exists between categories such as Cause-Effect, Evidence-Inference, and Equivalence. The two categories adopted by this study are the Causal and the Correlative relations. They do not neatly follow any particular formal logical classification, but are primarily deduced from the general usage of Greek conditionals themselves. As this study continues, their validity will be further assessed. The Causal relation, such as cause-effect or evidence-inference, is implicit to the Indicative conditional. The Correlative relation, on the other hand, simply suggests co-occurrence of the protasis and apodosis; any causal or logical relation between the clauses, if it ever exists, is minimized.

The distinction between the two relations can be illustrated by Gamaliel’s conditionals in Acts 5:38-39:

---

<sup>150</sup> Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 392.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. Robertson, Zerwick, Moule, McKay, and Runge.

Acts 5:38b-39

ἐὰν ἡ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἡ βουλή αὕτη ἢ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο, καταλυθήσεται,

εἰ δὲ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐστίν, οὐ δυνήσεσθε καταλύσαι αὐτούς

*if this plan should be of people, it will be overthrown* (Correlative)

*but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them* (Causal)

In the first conditional (v. 38b), the implied correlative relation draws the connection between the probable human origin of the preaching of the apostles and its possibility of being overthrown eventually. Although a logical relation between the two exists, such a connection, is not emphasized. The Subjunctive conditional clause and the main clause are stated simply as co-occurrences.

By switching to Indicative in the next conditional (v. 39), and with the accompanying causal relation, Gamaliel's point is that if the apostles' preaching is from heaven, then the Jewish Council's efforts to destroy it are in vain. The Indicative mood portrays something as being certain or "real" for the sake of argument, and the causal L-SR is implicit in the apodosis. By framing his argument it in this way, Gamaliel's stance on this matter is based on sound reasoning. Compared to the first conditional, the second (v. 39) apparently carries much stronger rhetorical force,<sup>152</sup> warning those who are considering drastic actions against the apostles. The rhetorical impact is shown in the subsequent verse (v. 40). Because of Gamaliel's conditionals, the people follow his advice.

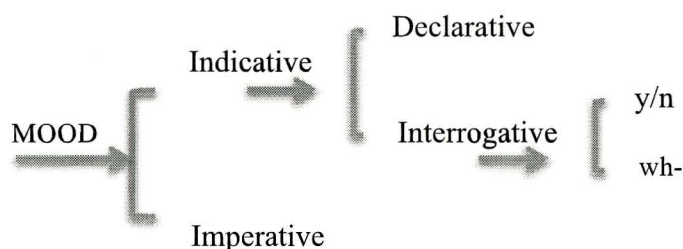
Two key network systems that construe meaning in Greek conditionals are the verbal MOOD of the conditional clause (protasis), and the LOGICO-SEMANTIC RELATION (L-SR) between the conditional and the main clause. Along with other

---

<sup>152</sup> The rhetorical force is also expressed in the use of the Negative Polarity in the apodosis, *you will not* (οὐ) *be able to overthrow them*.

grammatical networks, they are the key grammatical resources that conditions mobilize to express and create meaning.

*Interpersonal function.* Interpersonally, the Greek verbal Mood of the main clause (apodosis) is used similarly to express the attitude of the speaker toward the action in the main clause. In conditionals, the choice mainly consists of Indicative and Imperative. Indicative is subdivided into Declarative and Interrogative, with the Interrogative further divided into polar (y/n) interrogative and wh- interrogative (who, what, when, how), as the following diagram shows.



For example, in the temptation account in Matt 4 cited above, Satan uses Imperative apodoses, 4:3 *command* (εἰπὲ Aor Act. Imp.) *these stones*; 4:6 *throw* (βάλε Aor Act. Imp.) *yourself down* to take advantage of the assumed to be true Indicative conditional protases and to make a compelling case for Jesus to obey him. On the other hand, the future Indicative apodosis in 4:9 *All these things I will give* (δώσω Fut. Act. Ind.) *you* is much less forceful and more contingent.

The interpersonal meaning of condition is expressed through the system network of PERSON. In this study, PERSON is primarily divided into two main choices: speech roles (the speaker *I*, the addressee *you*) and other roles (*he, she, they*), including the generalized *one* or *anyone*.<sup>153</sup> A speaker may switch Person in consecutive conditionals

<sup>153</sup> Halliday & Matthiessen, *IFG*, 41. In this study, “other roles” and the generalized “one” (*IFG*, 325) are merged as one.

for rhetorical impact. In the following example, the third person grammatical Subject of the first conditional *Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him* is changed the second person *you* to address the audience as.

Acts 19:38-39 (choice of Person)

εἰ μὲν οὖν Δημήτριος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ τεχνῖται ἔχουσι πρὸς τινα λόγον

εἰ δέ τι περαιτέρω ἐπιζητεῖτε

*So then, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a complaint against any person*

*But if you want anything beyond this*

The change of Person reflects the rhetorical strategy of using the first conditional to set the stage for the second conditional. In order to calm down the riotous crowd (cf. v. 36), the speaker (the town clerk of Ephesus) deliberately switches from the third to the second Person in the second conditional to address the crowd (*you*) and dissuade them from troublemaking.

Furthermore, the interpersonal meaning of conditionals is expressed through their *grammatical intricacy*, or the degree of personal involvement by the speaker measured by the total number of clauses and their interconnectedness in each clause complex. "[T]he more the speaker is 'wrapped up' in the discourse, the more complex the sentence grammar becomes. ... What makes the grammar stretch in this way is the *unconscious* rhetoric of sustained commitment: to a topic, a position, or a goal."<sup>154</sup>

Grammatical intricacy can be measured numerically as the total number of ranking

---

<sup>154</sup> Halliday, "So you say 'Pass'...", *CW* 2:244; "Spoken and Written," *CW* 1:331-35 for further discussion on this topic.

clauses in a clause complex,<sup>155</sup> as the following example based on the Greek text illustrates.

1 Cor 13:1-3 (grammatical intricacy)

*Clause complex 1*

- [1] Ἐὰν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων,
- [2] ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω,
- [3] γέγονα χαλκὸς ἤχων ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον.

*Clause complex 2*

- [1] καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω προφητεῖαν
- [2] καὶ εἰδῶ τὰ μυστήρια πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γνῶσιν
- [3] καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω πᾶσαν τὴν πίστιν
- [4] ὥστε ὄρη μεθιστάναι,
- [5] ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω,
- [6] οὐθέν εἰμι.

*Clause complex 3*

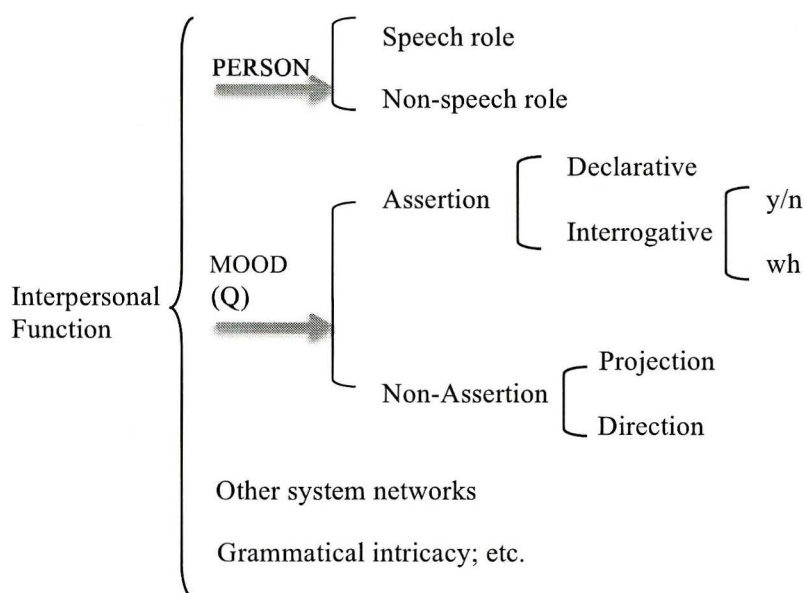
- [1] κἂν ψωμίσω πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου
- [2] καὶ ἐὰν παραδῶ τὸ σῶμά μου
- [3] ἵνα καυχῆσωμαι, ἀγάπην
- [4] ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω,
- [5] οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι.

Unlike many conditionals that consist of two simple clauses (protasis and apodosis), some conditionals such as 1 Cor 13:1-3 appear in intricately constructed clause complexes, with the grammatical intricacy values of three (3), six (6), and five (5) respectively. Generally speaking, the higher the value of the intricacy, the more the speaker is committed to his speech. In addition to the number of clauses, the logical relations between clauses (paratactic, hypotactic) and their grammatical functions (content, purpose, result) are also significant indicators of the personal meaning of the conditional. In this section of the letter to the Corinthians, the high grammatical intricacy values are indicators of the degree of importance of love in the Christian community the writer (Paul) assigns.

---

<sup>155</sup> Grammatical intricacy seems to occupy a complementary role between the Interpersonal and Textual functions. Textually, the intricacy is an indication of how complex information is being structured.

As part of the interpretative framework for NT conditionals, meaning is expressed and created through choices in systemic networks such as the Greek verbal MOOD of the apodosis, the choice of the PERSON as the grammatical subject especially in consecutive conditionals, and the grammatical concept of grammatical intricacy. These selected features are diagrammed below, with Assertion realized by the Indicative Mood, and Projection and Direction (non-Assertion), realized by the Subjunctive and Imperative Moods respectively.



*Textual function.* Textually, meaning is also expressed in the thematic structure of the clause, that is, the Theme and Rheme construction as discussed in the above section. In any clause (protasis or apodosis), a Theme is “marked” when it is not the grammatical subject of the clause.<sup>156</sup> Marked Themes in a clause include an adverbial

<sup>156</sup> Four basic constituent orders of a simple clause in NT Greek may be considered as follows: PC, CP, PS, and SP, with P = Predicator, C = Complement, and S = Subject. A comprehensive analysis of the probability of the order in the entire NT or John’s Gospel is beyond the scope of this study. But based on John 1:1-34 (total: 99 ranking clauses), the following is found (in descending order): others (35 clauses), SP (31 clauses), PC (16 clauses), PS (10 clauses), and CP (7 clauses). The CP clauses are found in v. 1 *the*

group (Adjunct) and nominal group (Complement). To illustrate from 1 Cor. 13 again, the marked Themes (clausal) are underlined. To make the subject matter of love prominent, Paul repeats the clause with the Complement *love* as the marked Theme three times.

1 Cor 13:1, 2, 3 (marked Theme)

v. 1 ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω *but love I do not have*

v. 2 ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω *but love I do not have*

v. 3 ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω *but love I do not have*

Clause configuration also determines the textual meaning of conditionals. The normal configuration is protasis first, followed by the apodosis, or  $P \wedge Q$ , reflecting the thematic structure of the conditional clause complex. The protasis normally functions as the thematic clause as the point of departure for the rest of the clause complex.

However, the clause order may be reversed as  $Q \wedge P$ . In other words, the apodosis assumes the position in the clause complex as the thematic clause. By virtue of its position, the fronted apodosis becomes the point of departure for the rest of the clause complex. The two kinds of clause configuration are shown below.

1 John 2:1 ( $P \wedge Q$ )

*But if anybody does sin we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.*

1 John 2:3 ( $Q \wedge P$ )

*We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands.*

In relation to text, the textual function of conditionals is also expressed where they are located in the text span, for example, the paragraph. Depending on their location, conditionals also function as introductory or concluding statements. For example, in Gal 6:1-10 the apostle Paul continues to exhort the church to live by the

---

*Word was God, v. 14 and the Word because flesh, v. 19 and this is the witness of John, v. 21 Are you Elijah? Are you the prophet? v. 22 Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us?*



Spirit. The opening conditional statement introduces the subject matter of believers being caught in sin. Paul then continues to elaborate in the rest of the paragraph (text):<sup>157</sup>

Gal. 6:1 (introductory conditional)

Ἀδελφοί, **εἰ**άν καὶ προλημθῆ ἄνθρωπος ἐν τινι παραπτώματι, ὑμεῖς οἱ πνευματικοὶ καταρτίζετε τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος

*Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently.*

The *sin* that Paul refers to in the introductory conditional forms the first item of a lexical chain in the subsequent verses, for example, *burden* (v. 2), *deceive* (v. 3), *boasting* (v. 4), and *load* (v. 5), with the paragraph ending with the exhortation of doing good to all people (v. 10).

Conversely, a concluding conditional is used at the end of the paragraph (text) in Gal 2:11-14, where Paul records the incident took place in Antioch where he rebuked Peter for hypocrisy (v. 11 *But when Cephas came to Antioch*). The final statement of this event concludes with Paul's conditional to Peter.

Gal 2:14b (concluding conditional)

**εἰ** σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων ἐθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆς, πῶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαΐζειν;

*If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?*

In addition, consecutive conditionals are frequently used for exposition, comparison and contrast. In the Sermon on the Mount, two consecutive Indicative conditionals are found in Jesus' teaching about adultery:

Matt 5:29, 30 (consecutive conditionals)

**εἰ** δὲ ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς σου ὁ δεξιὸς σκανδαλίζει σε

καὶ **εἰ** ἡ δεξιὰ σου χεὶρ σκανδαλίζει σε

<sup>157</sup> Unless otherwise stated, the rest of this study will adopt the paragraph division by *UBSGNT*, 4<sup>th</sup> rev. ed. If necessary, distinctive lexicogrammatical patternings will be searched to check against the paragraph division. Any major variation with other critical editions will also be noted.

*If your right eye makes you stumble*

*And if your right hand makes you stumble*

Later, Jesus also uses three consecutive conditionals in his teaching on "the light of the body":

Matt 6:22, 23a, 23b (consecutive conditionals)

ἐὰν οὖν ᾗ ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου ἀπλοῦς

ἐὰν δὲ ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου πονηρὸς...εἰ οὖν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἐν σοὶ σκότος ἐστίν

*if therefore your eye is clear*

*But if your eye is bad...If therefore the light that is in you is darkness*

Jesus and other NT writers often use consecutive conditionals to provide a more layered understanding of the teaching or a stronger argument in formal arguments and legal debates. A number of these conditionals are found in Acts 18:14, 15 (Gallio); Acts 19:38, 39 (the town clerk in Ephesus); and Acts 25:11a, 11b (Apostle Paul).

Finally, highly clustered conditionals in functionally-significant text spans present complex arguments that cannot be achieved by a single conditional. For example, in Matt 12:22-32, Jesus uses four consecutive conditionals to debate the Jews. Against their accusation, Jesus repeatedly underscores his divine power over satanic power. The consecutive conditionals are thus used for presenting a sustained argument that cannot be accomplished by a single condition. Similarly, in Matt 18:1-20 Jesus teaches his disciples on humility, forgiveness, and spiritual restoration, expounded through the highly clustered conditionals. These closely clustered conditionals help him to elaborate, compare, and contrast the related lessons. They are listed below.

Text (Matt 18)	Teaching	Clustered/consecutive conditionals
vv 1-5	Humility	vv 3, 5
vv 6-9	Temptations	vv 8, 9
vv 10-14	Finding the lost	vv 12, 13
vv 15-20	Restoring believers	vv 15, 16, 18a, 18b, 19

To present meaning textually, NT conditionals also mobilize a number of grammatical resources. They include, on the rank of clause: thematic structure; on the rank of clause complex: clause configuration, and in texts: introductory and concluding conditionals, as well as consecutive and clustered conditionals. These and other grammatical resources are utilized in the NT to present the textual meaning of conditionals. Together with the Ideational and Interpersonal features provided above, they will be used to investigate the meaning of Johannine conditionals.

In sum, instead of approaching NT conditionals from a piecemeal fashion and without a principled linguistic theory, this interpretative model adopts three main grammatical categories. the ranks of the clause and clause complex on the lexicogrammar stratum, and the semantic concept of text. Key system networks and linguistic features according to the metafunctions (Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual) are then applied.

As this section has already shown, the conditional “if” is a complex notion that takes more than one or two grammatical features to understand fully. The amount of grammatical resources mobilized and how they interact with each other to express and create meaning in conditionals is complex and extensive. This study will adopt the above functional approach to investigate the meaning of the conditionals in John.

### 2.3 Procedure

The following procedure is set up to examine select Johannine conditionals in context using the proposed functional framework delineated above. As in the rest of the NT, almost all the Johannine conditionals are found in speeches and conversations, mostly of Jesus and other characters. The procedure will pay special attention to the speech participants (for example, the Jews or the disciples) in terms of their general attitude toward Jesus and how it may affect the conditionals that are recorded in the conversation. Closely related to the speech participants is the type of dialogue that is being exchanged. The procedure will pay attention to any kind of pattern that exists between the dialogue and conditionals.

Johannine conditional statements will be examined according to three general steps. Step 1 states the rationale for the selection of texts and conditionals. Step 2 accounts for the linguistic framework for the analysis for the selected conditionals. Finally, Step 3 investigates related linguistic issues and claims that are pertinent to the meaning of Johannine conditionals or the rhetorical purpose of John.

*Step 1.* The scope and arrangement of discourses and conditionals are based on the Gospel narrative. The first discourse is located in John 3 and the last discourse in John 11. They represent Jesus' first speech (with Nicodemus) in John that contains conditionals and the first extended speech with his followers (the disciples, Martha, and Mary) at the close of his public ministry. However, in the first 10 chapters of John, Jesus' major conversation partner is the Jews. Jesus' debate with them concerning Sabbath healing (John 5) and his final public debate during the Feast of Rededication (John 10) are included. John 7:10-8:59 represents Jesus' longest series of discourse with

the Jews. However, since the Sabbath healing debate (5 19-47) and the final debate (10:22-39) are included in the analysis, this series of discourses and their conditionals will be referred to throughout the study but will not form a part of the main discussion.

As part of the transition between Jesus' public ministry and his final week, John 11 1-44 records the dialogue of Jesus with the disciples, Martha, and Mary. In contrast to the Jews, they are audiences whose attitude to Jesus are much more positive. The discourse also contains one of the highest number of conditionals Jesus has with his followers. Conditionals subsequent to John 11 will not be included in the main discussion, but they will be cited throughout the discussion for comparison and illustrative purposes.

The following chart shows these discourses and the conversation partners. Conditionals by other people are marked by the symbol \* (e.g. \*3:2 is a conditional spoken by Nicodemus), and Indicative conditionals (type 1 and type 2) are underlined.

Text	Audience	Conditionals	Total
3 1 15	Nicodemus	vv *2, 3, 5, <u>12</u>	4
4:7-15	The Samaritan woman	<u>4:10</u>	1
4:46-54	The royal official	4:48	1
5 19-47	The Jews	vv 19, 31, 43, <u>46, 47</u>	5
6:41-65	The Galilean Jews and disciples	vv 44, 51, 53, 62, 65	5
10:22-42	The Jews	vv *24, <u>35-36, 37, 38</u>	4
11 1-44	The disciples, Martha, and Mary	vv 9, 10, * <u>12</u> , * <u>21</u> , 25, * <u>32</u> , 40	7
Grand total.			27

Of the 27 conditionals that have been selected, eight were spoken to the Jews, the highest number of conditionals spoken to a group or audience. This number does not

include those that are spoken in John 7 and 8 (an additional of 15 conditionals). The discourse between Jesus and the Jews (5:19-47) contains the highest number of conditionals (total. 5). The least number of conditionals that are spoken in the above discourses are found in Jesus' discourses with the Samaritan woman (4:7-15) and the royal official (4:46-54). In each of the discourses, Jesus only speaks one conditional. However, other than the disciples and the man who was born blind (John 9), these are the two individuals in John who after encountering Jesus, subsequently put their faith in him. The implication of their belief will be examined in the next chapter, Chapter 3, of this study. The final section of Chapter 5 will be devoted to a description of the grammar of Johannine conditionals.

The organization of the analyses of the discourses is shown below

Chapter	Contents
Three	3.1 Nicodemus 3.2 The Samaritan woman and the royal official 3.3 The Jews
Four	4.1 The Galilean Jews 4.2 The Early disciples 4.3 Final debate with the Jews
Five	5.1 The disciples, Martha, and Mary 5.2 The grammar of Johannine conditionals

*Step 2.* Selected systemic networks and grammatical features will be applied to these conditionals.<sup>158</sup> Relevant systems and features under the three metafunctions of

<sup>158</sup> Halliday writes, "The guiding principle is to select and develop whatever is needed for the particular purpose in hand. There are many different purposes for analyzing a text, and the scope and direction of the analysis will vary accordingly. Often we may want to scrutinize only one or two features, but to follow

language will be used to examine the conditionals in context. The primary focus is on the content stratum, that is, properties connected to either the lexicogrammar or the semantics of Johannine conditionals. Linguistic units that are below the rank of the clause, such as word and word groups, will not be included in the main discussion.

Selective analyses will be carried out based on the following rank-function matrix, including the semantic concept of text.

	Ideational		Interpersonal	Textual
	Experiential	Logical		
(Text)			Collocations with questions	Introductory and concluding conditionals; lexical tie
				Consecutive, identical, & clustered conditionals
Clause complex		L-S RELATION		Clause configuration; grammatical intricacy
The clause <sup>159</sup>	MOOD; ASPECT; PERSON		MOOD, ASPECT, PERSON; POLARITY	THEME

Generally in each discourse, the conditionals will be examined in the order of the Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual functions. However, in some cases such as 10:35-38, where the analysis concerns grammatical intricacy, the clause-by-clause approach will be used instead. They will also be compared and contrasted with selected conditionals in the rest of the NT. Any significant lexical ties or patterns of grammatical collocation will also be analyzed.

---

them through to a considerable depth.” Halliday, “Dimension of Discourse Analysis,” *CW* 1:285. Bloor and Bloor also write, “In actual analysis, language is so complex and the options available to the speaker/writer (of any clause) are so many that it is too ambitious to expect the analyst to consider all optional systems at a paradigmatic level. Nevertheless, there are often clear alternative available that are relevant to the significance of the message.” Bloor and Bloor, *Functional Analysis*, 236.

<sup>159</sup> The system networks listed under the Ideational function belong to the protasis, and those under the Interpersonal function belong to the apodosis.

The general principle behind the selection of items in the matrix for investigation is the degree that an individual system network or a particular linguistic feature is perceived to contribute significantly to the overall meaning of the conditionals.<sup>160</sup> Observations such as the overall distribution of conditionals, and conditionals that are clustered or consecutive, will also be noted. In particular, their textual meaning and rhetorical impact will be explained.

*Step 3.* While Step 2 focuses primarily on the description and meaning of Johannine conditionals in terms of lexicogrammatical systemic networks and semantic features located in the content stratum, Step 3 analyses the conditionals in their broader contextual setting in the text of Gospel of John. For example, section 5.1 will respond to the research on Johannine misunderstanding by Hans Förster, who claims that the disciples' conditional in 11:12 constitutes what he calls an "untypical" misunderstanding in John's Gospel.<sup>161</sup> His claim will be examined along with two other conditionals found in John 11 by Martha (v. 21) and Mary (v. 32).

In addition, the classification of conditionals by Richard Young according to Speech Act Theory will also be tested in section 5.1. Young claims that the conditional by Martha (11:21) belongs to the classification of "Rebuke;" while an identical conditional by Mary (11:32) belongs to "Lament."<sup>162</sup> The presupposition and validity of

---

<sup>160</sup> In analyzing William Golding's *The Inheritors*, Halliday divides the text into three passages (Passage A, B, and C) and analyzes the patterns of transitivity. As a result, he concludes that the story underscores a fundamental shift of world-views. Halliday, "Linguistic Function," *CW* 2:88-125. In another instance, by investigating system networks such as Modality/Modulation, and thematic pattern and semantics of time, Halliday points out J. B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*' two main themes, namely, interdependence and social responsibility, and time. See Halliday, "The De-automatization of Grammar," *CW* 2:126-48.

<sup>161</sup> Förster, "Johannes 11:11-14," 338-57; see also Carson, "Understanding Misunderstanding," 59-89.

<sup>162</sup> Young, *NT Greek*, 225-30.



such a claim will be examined according to the functional interpretative framework of this study.

In section 5.2, Johannine conditionals will be used to respond to the sociolinguistic argument put forward by Bruce Malina and others that the language of John is “antilanguage.”<sup>163</sup> The term antilanguage is used by Halliday to describe any language that is characterized by secrecy for the purpose of excluding those who are not part of the speaker’s social group.<sup>164</sup> The meaning of Johannine conditionals and their persuasive function in John will be used to respond to such sociolinguistic claim in this final section of Chapter 5.

Finally, in our understanding of meaning, Halliday characterizes language as being “ferociously complex,” and is perhaps “the single most complex phenomenon in nature.”<sup>165</sup> Even to give an account of the grammatical construction of conditional statements is a highly complicated task, as indicated by this chapter. It requires a rigorous general linguistic theory such as SFL as the theoretical foundation. The SFL approach is also based on the premise that language is less concerned with the restrictions imposed by grammatical rules and regulation but is a deeply rich resource of meaning making. The procedure for analyzing conditionals in John is based on such a premise. The goal is to develop a fully functional framework for describing and explaining conditionals in John’s Gospel, and with special attention to how they are used to persuade the reader to put their faith in Jesus, the Son of God (20:31).

---

<sup>163</sup> Malina, *Gospel of John in Sociolinguistic Perspective*; Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Gospel of John*; Petersen, *Gospel of John*. See also Neyrey, *Gospel of John and Ideology of Revolt*.

<sup>164</sup> Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 164-92.

<sup>165</sup> Halliday, “Computing Meanings,” *CW* 6:243.

Throughout this study, the closely related concepts of describing and explaining the meaning of language go hand in hand. As Halliday writes,

The purpose of functional labeling is to provide a means of interpreting grammatical structure, *in such a way as to relate any given instance to the system of the language as a whole*... The description of a language, and the analysis of texts in the language, are not—or at least should not be—two distinct and unrelated operations; they are, rather, the two aspects of the same interpretative task, and both proceed side by side.<sup>166</sup>

*Delimitation.* There are three delimitations to this study. Firstly, the study of conditional statements is limited to the linguistic approach. Other approaches, such as the psychological, philosophical, and logical, are beyond the scope of this research. Secondly, the corpus under examination is based on the Greek of the New Testament—Koine Greek of the first century; conditionals in the Septuagint and in classical Greek literature are not the main focus of the study.<sup>167</sup> The present study mainly adopts a synchronic approach to language, based on the corpus of the Greek New Testament. The basic text for this study is the United Bible Society's *The Greek New Testament* 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (*UBSGNT*). Other critical editions such as Westcott and Holt's *Greek New Testament* (W-H) and Nestle-Aland's *Novum Testamentum Graece* 28<sup>th</sup> ed. (N-A 28<sup>th</sup>) will also be consulted. Thirdly, the study is limited to conditionals with the conditional particles εἰ and εἰάν. The so-called implicit conditionality without the conditional particles, expressed through relative clauses, participles, and questions is not considered formal

---

<sup>166</sup> Halliday, *FG*, 32.

<sup>167</sup> For studies on those conditionals, see Lightfoot, *Natural Logic*; Greenberg, "The Realis-Irrealis Continuum," 247-64; Wakker, *Conditions and Conditionals*; Willmott, *Homeric Greek*; and Cooper, *Attic Greek*, I:730-741 ("Moods"), 2:1053-61 ("Hypothetical Sentences").

conditionals, and are consequently excluded because they do not always function as conditional statements.<sup>168</sup>

In the following chapter, Chapter 3, the first four major discourses of Jesus, i.e. with Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the royal official, and the Jews that contain conditional statements will be examined.

---

<sup>168</sup> Grammarians whose' discussions are based on the conditional particles: Robertson, Blass-Debrunner, Moule, Turner, Zerwick, Porter, and Runge. But see McKay, *New Syntax*, 174 (circumstantial participle) and Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 687-89 (circumstantial participle, substantival participle, imperative, relative clause, question).

CHAPTER THREE  
NICODEMUS, THE SAMARITAN WOMAN, THE ROYAL OFFICIAL,  
AND THE JEWS

Introduction

This chapter will investigate the meaning of Johannine conditionals recorded in the early chapters of John's Gospel by adopting the interpretative framework proposed in the preceding chapter. In addition to examining the conditionals as a grammatical construction, attention will be given to how the author of John uses these conditionals as rhetorical devices to motivate and persuade the reader. The chapter includes the first four discourses of Jesus. These four discourses are divided into three sections. Section 3.1 contains Jesus' discourse with Nicodemus (3:1-15). Section 3.2 includes discourses with the Samaritan woman (4:7-26) and the royal official (4:46-54). Section 3.3 examines Jesus' defense against the charge of violating the Sabbath after he healed a man (5:19-47).

The nature of the discourses and the responses of Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, and the royal official are generally more receptive toward Jesus. In fact, at the end of their respective narratives, the Samaritan woman and the royal official independently put their faith in Jesus and influence their kinsfolk to do the same. However, unlike these early characters, the Jews are far from receptive toward Jesus. As a result, Jesus' speech represents his argument to support his Sabbath healing as well as his divine relationship with the Father. It also represents the first extended public discourse of Jesus in John.

To study the fuller meanings of conditional statements, the investigation is carried out based on two approaches. First, they will be described according to their linguistic functions: ideational (including experiential and logical), interpersonal, and textual. In this chapter, grammatical resources that the conditions realize include system networks of MOOD, TENSE, LOGICO-SEMANTIC RELATION, PERSON, and POLARITY. Other linguistic features that have also been used include apodosis-fronted conditionals (3:3, 5), marked (clausal) Theme (4:48; 5:19), grammatical intricacy (5:19), consecutive conditionals (5:46, 47), and introductory (3:3; 5:19) and concluding conditionals (5:46, 47). Reference to co-texts will also be made to see how they assist the reader to gain a deeper understanding of John's argument.

Secondly, the conditionals will also be examined rhetorically. The purpose will be to determine how the author of the Gospel presents his account of Jesus,<sup>169</sup> particularly, how the author uses conditionals to persuade the reader to form an accurate perception of Jesus, so that he or she will believe in him (20:31). The rhetorical analysis is primarily based on inferences and deductions. This is mainly because rhetorical strategies are often carried out not explicitly but implicitly. Both Jesus and the author of John present issues in ways that the hearer will gain insight and understanding through the process of internal dialogue.<sup>170</sup>

The purpose of John's Gospel has attracted much scholarly attention over the years. Opinions are divided on whether it was written for evangelism, or for deepening

---

<sup>169</sup> For a scholarly discussion on the authorship, see Keener, *Gospel of John*, 1:81-139. In this study, "the author" or "John" will be used as short hands for the author of this Gospel.

<sup>170</sup> Willard, "Jesus the Logician," 607.

the faith of its readers who were already believers.<sup>171</sup> As the two positions are not necessarily incompatible, this study adopts the view that the Gospel was written to a wide-ranging audience in order that their understanding of the Christian faith be established and deepened. It uses conditionals to accomplish this goal.

### 3.1 Nicodemus (3:1-15)

John 2:23-25 provides the immediate context to the conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus in Jerusalem. There are apparent word plays by the author of John, which form related lexical ties. First, although many in Jerusalem ἐπίστευσαν (*they believed*) in Jesus because of his signs (2:23), Jesus οὐκ ἐπίστευεν αὐτὸν (*he would not entrust himself*) to them (2:24). Second, Jesus knew what was in their hearts τί ἦν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ (*what is in a person*) (2:25). In 3:1 Nicodemus enters the scene as a person (ἄνθρωπος) of the Pharisees. Third and finally, throughout the Gospel, the author of John emphasizes the belief that goes much deeper than watching miraculous signs (cf. 2:23 σημεῖα). This is further made explicit in the stories of the royal official in section 3.2 below and in the story of Thomas (20:25, 29). Nicodemus's opening

---

<sup>171</sup> Detailed argument for each option is outside the scope of this study. The following provides a list of representatives of various views. (i) Morris sees the purpose of the Gospel in bringing the reader to a place of faith and a new life in Christ's name. *Gospel according to John*, 34. According to Robinson, the Gospel is an appeal to those *outside* the Church, including the Greek-speaking Diaspora Judaism. "Destination and Purpose," 125. Carson also holds that the Gospel is evangelistic in its purpose, particularly to the Jews and Jewish proselytes. *Gospel according to John*, 91. See also Dodd, *Interpretation*, 8-9. (ii) Brown believes that the Gospel is designed to root the believer deeper in faith. *Gospel according to John*, 1:1xxviii. Keener, likewise, points out that the different levels of belief in John suggests that it is meant to confirm believers in their faith. *Gospel of John*, 1:214. Barrett thinks John's purpose consists in setting forth the full significance of an already existing Christian faith and the composition of the book took place in a setting which was partly Jewish. "Environment and Purpose," 17, 19.

remarks show that he came to Jesus because of Jesus' *signs* (σημεία) (3:2).<sup>172</sup> The stage is thus set for Jesus' first major discourse in John's Gospel.<sup>173</sup>

In this discourse, a total of four conditionals are spoken, one by Nicodemus (v 2), and the rest are by Jesus (vv 3, 5, 12). Selected basic grammatical features of the conditionals are provided in the following chart.

Cond.	Gramm. Subject (P, Q)	Polarity (P, Q)	Mood (Q)
*v 2	<i>no one</i> (Q), <i>God</i> (P)	pos, pos	Ind.
v 3	<i>one</i> (P), <i>one</i> (Q)	neg, neg	Ind.
v 5	<i>one</i> (P), <i>one</i> (Q)	neg, neg	Ind.
v 12	<i>I</i> (P), <i>you</i> (Q)	pos, pos	(interrog.)

The indefinite personal pronoun *τις* (*one*) and *οὐδείς* (*no one*) dominate the discourse as the grammatical Subjects in five clauses out of the four conditional statements in these verses. Such strong presence of the indefinite personal pronoun strongly indicates the people who are addressed in the dialogue go beyond the immediate participant Nicodemus.

There is also a very high occurrence of the negative polarity particles *μή* and *οὐ* (*not*). In fact, each of these conditionals consists of the negative polarity particle at least once. In addition, the semantic feature of “negative” is also present in *no one* (vv 2) and

<sup>172</sup> The meaning of *σημείον* (*sign*) in the OT includes prophetic acts that “corresponds something divinely ordained to happen in the real world. The Johannine *σημείον* is nearer to the prophetic; only it refers to in the first instance, to timeless realities signified by the act in time.” See Dodd, *Interpretation*, 141, 142. Chapter Four of this study will elaborate further on the important function of conditionals in construing reality

<sup>173</sup> Other than the disciples, Martha, Mary and Lazarus, Nicodemus is the only other named person in John that Jesus speaks to in the first half of John. Nicodemus appears again in 7:45-52 and then in 19:38-42 to prepare the body of Jesus with Joseph of Arimathea, a *secret* (κεκρυμμένος) disciple of Jesus. For a discussion of Nicodemus's role as a disciple, see Renz, “Nicodemus: An Ambiguous Disciple?” 255-83. Cf. de Jonge, “Nicodemus and Jesus,” 337-59.

implied in the rhetorical questions in v. 12 *How (πῶς) will you believe?* Such a high concentration of the negative also reflects what is being discussed are matters that tend to be misunderstood, treated with suspicion, or discredited by people. Repeated statements in the discourse that Nicodemus did not understand or believe also confirm this view (vv. 9, 10, 12).

For the sake of discussion, the discourse is divided into two parts. The first part consists of vv. 1-8, which consists of the following three conditionals (vv. 2, 3, 5).

\*3:2 [Nicodemus]

ῥαββί, οἶδαμεν

ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλήλυθας διδάσκαλος·

οὐδεὶς γὰρ δύναται ταῦτα τὰ σημεῖα ποιεῖν ἃ σὺ ποιεῖς (Q)

ἐὰν μὴ ἦ ὁ θεὸς μετ' αὐτοῦ. (P)

3:3

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι,

ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν, (P)

οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. (Q)

3:5

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι,

ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος (P)

οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. (Q)

*Rabbi, we know*

*that you are a teacher who has come from God.*

*For no one can do these signs that you do*

*if God is **not** with him/her.*

*Very truly I say to you,*

*if one is **not** born again*

*he/she cannot see the kingdom of God.*

*Very truly I say to you,*

*if one is **not** born of water and the Spirit,*

*he/she cannot enter the kingdom of God.*



*Ideational Function.* It is apparent that the language of birth dominates Jesus' conditionals in vv. 3 and 5.<sup>174</sup> The passive voice in both conditionals underscores the motif of the powerlessness of humans to gain access into the kingdom of God. The same motif is underscored throughout the text by finite verbs such as vv. 3, 5 γεννηθῆ (Aor. Pass. Subj. *he/she be born*), infinitive construction v. 7 γεννηθῆναι (Aor. Pass. Inf. *to be born*), and participle constructions v. 6 τὸ γεγεννημένον (Perf. Pass. Ptcp. *that which is born*) and v. 8 πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος (Perf. Pass. Ptcp. *everyone who is born*). The passive voice in all these constructions emphasizes that the choice to attain life, physical or spiritual, is beyond people's powers.

The text is also dominated by the presence of Greek negative polarity particle. In 3:2-5 only, a total of 12 ranking clauses (speech section only), οὐ and μή *do not* occur a total of five times. With the exception of the question by Nicodemus v. 4 μή δύναται εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν *he/she cannot enter a second time into the womb*, the rest are spoken by Jesus, including his two conditionals,

3:3 ἐὰν μή...οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν *if...not...he/she is not able to see*

3:5 ἐὰν μή ...οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν *if...not...he/she is not able to enter*

These negative particles serve two main purposes. On one hand they express Nicodemus's lack of understanding. On the other hand, as the above conditionals show, they are used by Jesus to point out the misunderstanding of how one may enter the kingdom of God.

---

<sup>174</sup> The description "water and Spirit" in v. 5 alludes to the rich theological concepts of water and Spirit in OT scripture, especially Ezek 36:25-27, where God promised the exiled Jews to use water to cleanse them from their sins and give them a new spirit. The language of a new birth also resonates with the new heart as also promised by God in the new covenant with his people in Jer 31:31-33. For summaries of various interpretations, see commentaries by Brown, *John*, 1:141-44; Carson, *John*, 191-96; and Keener, *John*, 1:544-55.

Furthermore, as Subjunctive conditionals, vv. 3 and 5 exhibit the correlative or conjunctive logico-semantic relation. As such, the conditional clause (protasis) poses a hypothetical protasis with certain restrictions or qualifications. The apodosis provides a correlative or concurrent situation that accompanies the protasis. The rhetorical effect may be described as, “having a table full of items, sweeping all of them onto the floor, and then placing the one item you are interested in back onto the table all by itself...Removing everything and then adding back the important item that was already there attracts far more attention to it than just pointing to it on the table.”<sup>175</sup> It is a powerful way of comparing two states of affairs, with the protasis positing something that is considered as unexpected or improbable.

For example, according to Nicodemus, someone like Jesus who performs miraculous signs likely has a close relationship with God. It naturally raises the Christological question of whether Jesus is from God. And as far as Nicodemus and the unbelieving Jewish reader are concerned, it is an undisputed fact the Jews, as the descendants of Abraham, are qualified to enter the kingdom of God. However, Jesus places a restriction on their confident belief, namely, v. 3 *if one is not* (ἐὰν...μή) *born again* and v. 5 *if one is not* (ἐὰν...μή) *born of water and the Spirit*. Could Jesus be right? The author of John does not provide an answer here. Both Nicodemus and the reader of John’s Gospel are challenged to personally determine the validity of such a statement, and to think seriously whether they should believe Jesus. As will be further

---

<sup>175</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 84.

discussed in this study, Johannine conditionals thus engage the audience to think deeply in order to understand the nature and requirement of life in Jesus.<sup>176</sup>

*Interpersonal Function.* The Subjunctive Mood in vv. 3 and 5 (γεννηθῆ Aor. Pass. Subj.) *he/she be born* expresses a hypothetical condition. In other words, the new or Spirit birth stated in the conditional clause or protasis is not considered as certain or factual. Unlike later in v. 12 using the Indicative mood εἶπον (Aor. Ind. Act.) *I told*, where Jesus asserts that he did speak with Nicodemus on matters such as the wind and its effect, the statements in vv. 3 and 5 are tentative and hypothetical. The audience is motivated to come to their own decisions about their validity.

The Subjunctive Mood is also complemented by the choice of the Modality expressed by δύναται *he/she is able* in the apodosis in both vv. 3 and 5. The outcome of the new birth, although not a reality at the time of speaking, is a real outcome providing that certain conditions are met.<sup>177</sup> Such “possibility” is indicated by the expression of “being able (to).” Through these Subjunctive conditionals, as well as through the modality of possibility, John argues that Jesus’ miraculous signs are

---

<sup>176</sup> In examining the Johannine style, Louw also concludes that, “John’s gospel is much more theological in orientation than the synoptic gospels...the cryptic nature of Jesus’ replies in his discourse with Nicodemus is indeed rather strange. One would expect a proper explanation. The style of the passage, therefore, suggests once again that the theological reflection is the focal issue in the pericope.” Louw, “Johannine Style,” 11. He also thinks that the purpose of John is deeper theological reflection. Renz also puts it along the same vein, “The Nicodemus-passages could sustain their function within a variety of life-situations, being equally forceful for a non-believing audience (e.g. Jews or Godfearers interested in Christianity), a believing audience (e.g. persecuted Christians) and even those in between (e.g. crypto-Christians).” Renz, “Nicodemus: An Ambiguous Disciple?” 282. But both investigations do not include conditional statements as a rhetorical tool for John’s purpose of writing.

<sup>177</sup> The systemic network for MODALITY in Greek has yet to be thoroughly researched. In English, modality is a grammatical category “that is closely associated with tense and aspect in that all three categories are categories of the clause and are generally, but not always, marked within the verbal complex.” Palmer, *Mood and Modality*, 1. But as Palmer admits, there is more variation with modality than all other grammatical categories. (2) In addition, Halliday also points out that the English Future tense tends to have a modal function, but the precise relationship needs to be further studied. Halliday, “Quantitative Study,” *CW* 6:127-28. For the purpose of this study, the modal feature of *be able to* is simply pointed out without any attempt to locate it in a systemic network.

ultimately directed toward the new, Spirit life that awaits those who are willing to believe in Jesus.

The rhetorical force of Jesus' statements in this discourse is strongly marked by the emphatic saying of ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι *very truly I tell you* immediately preceding the conditionals in vv. 3, 5. It underscores the twin message of these conditionals: the necessity of spiritual birth for people to enjoy the privilege of God's salvation. Later in v. 11, it is also used to highlight Nicodemus's lack of faith. In addition to being the first extended dialogue of Jesus in John, the number of occurrence of such an emphatic saying is among the highest within such a short span of text in the Gospel.<sup>178</sup>

Later in the Sabbath healing debate (5:19-47), the same saying appears in the opening conditional concerning the relationship between Jesus and the Father (5:19). Similarly in the bread of life discourse, the emphasis is also made concerning the importance of "eating and drinking" of Jesus (6:53).

5:19

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν... ἐὰν μὴ τι βλέπη τὸν πατέρα ποιοῦντα  
*very truly I tell you... if it is not something he sees the Father doing*

6:53

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐὰν μὴ φάγητε τὴν σάρκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου  
*very truly I tell you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man*

All these conditional statements address audiences who find it difficult to believe what Jesus is saying and are likely to reject his teaching. In the case of Nicodemus, he simply does not seem to understand Jesus.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>178</sup> See also 8:51; 12:24; 16:23.

<sup>179</sup> See Renz, "Nicodemus: An Ambiguous Disciple?" 259-64. Such ambiguity also weakens the premise of the dichotomy between the "outsider" and "insider" in the discussion of antilanguage in John. See Chapter 5 of this study.

Conditionals in this discourse are also collocated with questions.<sup>180</sup> These questions further reflect the lack of understanding of Nicodemus and his fellow Jews. In response to Jesus' first conditional, Nicodemus raises the questions first in v. 4, and continues again in v. 9.

3:4, 9 (Nicodemus)

*How (πῶς) can a person be born again...? He cannot enter a second time into his/her mother's womb, can he?*

*How (πῶς) can these things be?*

This is followed by Jesus' rhetorical questions in vv. 10, 12.

3:10, 12 (Jesus)

*You are Israel's teacher and you do not know these things?*

*...how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things?*

Such a strong presence of questions also harks back to the first narrative section of the Gospel (1:19-28), in which the Jews repeatedly question John the Baptist. For example,

1:19, 21, 22, 25 (the Jews)

*Who are you?*

*Are you Elijah? Are you the Prophet?*

*Who are you? What do you say about yourself?*

*Why do you baptized if you are not the Messiah...?*

From a rhetorical or persuasive point of view, these closely packed questions and conditionals challenge the reader to probe deeper into the underlying issues of what is being addressed. In the Nicodemus discourse, the question-conditional pattern highlights that it is necessary and possible for people to enter God's kingdom through the new birth that Jesus brings.

---

<sup>180</sup> For a response to Neyrey's view that questions in John are used for secrecy and information control (Neyrey, *Gospel of John*, 11-12), see also the antilanguage discussion in Chapter 5..

Subsequently, the exchange dynamics between Nicodemus and Jesus, especially concerning who is taking charge, or the “interpersonal suspension” of the dialogue, falls under James Martin’s interpersonal category of “challenging.” This dynamic system takes place when one conversational partner refuses to participate in the topics initiated by his or her dialogue partner.<sup>181</sup> In his discourse analysis on Nicodemus’s conversation with Jesus, F. P. Cotterell refers to this as “complex repartee.”<sup>182</sup> While Nicodemus attempts to ground the conversation on Jesus (v. 2 grammatical Subject *you*), Jesus changes its grounding to people (vv. 3, 5 grammatical Subjects of *one, no one*; v. 6 *one who is born of the flesh/of the Spirit*) who are able to enter the Kingdom of God. As the conversation unfolds, Nicodemus gradually loses his ground. The subject matter grows increasingly difficult for him (vv. 9-10), and the number of clauses he speaks shortens: four clauses in v. 2, two clauses in v. 4, and finally only one short clause (question) in v. 9. Nicodemus then fades out of the story.<sup>183</sup> Even as the teacher of Israel, Nicodemus is unable to comprehend the salvation plan of God. By adopting the interpersonal or rhetorical strategy of “challenging,” Jesus presents a strong case that what he offers is more than miraculous signs and wonders.

*Textual Function.* One means to achieve cohesion in the text is through lexical chains.<sup>184</sup> In this dialogue, the first chain depicts Nicodemus, the teacher of Israel, whose knowledge of God is superficial and insufficient to grant him the privilege of entry into God’s kingdom. It consists of words of knowing and understanding that are

---

<sup>181</sup> Martin, *English Text*, 66-76.

<sup>182</sup> Cotterell, “The Nicodemus Conversation,” 239-40. The term is borrowed from Longacre, *Discourse Grammar*, 129-31.

<sup>183</sup> According to Carson, “the words of Jesus probably trail off at the end of v. 15, to be followed by the meditation of the Evangelist in vv. 16-21” Carson, *John*, 185. See also Dodd, *Interpretation*, 303; Keener, *John*, 1:566.

<sup>184</sup> For an example of lexical cohesion, see Halliday, “Text as Semantic Choice,” *CW* 2:41-43.

related to the ways of God (vv. 2, 7, 8, 10, 11), with the closely related titles of “Rabbi” (v. 2) and “teacher” (vv. 2, 10) that Nicodemus and Jesus use to refer to each other.<sup>185</sup>

Lexical chain (i): know/understand/teacher

v. 2 *Rabbi...teacher...we know* (Nicodemus)

vv. 7, 8, 10 *do not marvel...you do not know...the teacher...you do not understand*

The second chain is the word *δύναται* *he/she can*, often accompanied with the particle *οὐ* *not* that appears throughout the dialogue and in many of Jesus’ conditionals. In fact, with the exception of the final conditional, all three other conditionals (vv. 2, 3, 5) contain the finite *δύναται* *is able to*. It is used in relation to the new birth as the qualification for entering God’s kingdom.

Lexical chain (ii): *δύναται* *is able to/can*

vv. 2, 4, 9 *no one can...How can a person...he/she cannot...How can these things*

vv. 3, 5 *he/she cannot...he/she cannot enter*

The two lexical chains form a consistent picture of people not understanding spiritual things and that they are only able to enter God’s kingdom through the new birth.

Moreover, Nicodemus’s conditional in v. 2 exhibits an apodosis fronted (Q ^ P) clause configuration. Instead of the normal order of P ^ Q, the order is reversed and the apodosis (Q) takes the position of the thematic clause in the clause complex. The thematic clause in v. 2 *no one can do these signs* expresses that the signs of Jesus have motivated Nicodemus and others to approach him. Similarly, the Q ^ P configuration appears in the Sabbath healing debate, 5:19 *the Son can do nothing of himself, if he does not (ἐὰν μὴ) see the Father...* The thematic clause (the apodosis) forms the point of departure for the rest of clause complex, describing the relationship between the Son and

<sup>185</sup> For a discussion on learning in the writings of John and how the titles of “Rabbi” and “teacher” are applied, see Untergassmair, “Du bist der Lehrer Israels,” 211-18.

the Father. In terms of the Jews in the Gospel, the notion of signs first appears in the account of Jesus' cleansing of the temple, 2:18 *what sign do you show to us...?* At that time, the Jews were already showing disbelief toward Jesus.<sup>186</sup>

The dialogue continues in v. 9 with Nicodemus's question, *How can these things be?* Jesus' reply consists of the following conditional.

3:12  
 εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν  
 καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε,  
 πῶς « ἐὰν εἶπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια » πιστεύσετε;

*If I told you earthly things  
 and you do not believe;  
 how « if I tell you heavenly things » will you believe?*

*Ideational function.* The conditional statement consists of double protases, an Indicative and a Subjunctive, with the latter being an inserted clause with brackets « ». The author first records Jesus as presenting the situation as factual (Indicative) and the unbelief of Nicodemus (and the Jews) in the first two clauses. A Subjunctive protasis « *if (ἐὰν) I speak of heavenly things* » is then inserted into the apodosis, *how...will you believe?* to strengthen his argument and to heighten its rhetorical effect.

In other words, both the causal and correlative logico-semantic relations are utilized to strengthen the message that the audience simply does not possess the capacity to understand or to believe what Jesus says. John also frames the conditional as a rhetorical question to provoke the reader to think for himself or herself in this matter.

Another double protases is found in 10:38:

10:38  
 εἰ δὲ ποιῶ, **κἄν** ἐμοὶ μὴ πιστεύητε, τοῖς ἔργοις πιστεύετε, ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ  
 γινώσκητε ὅτι ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατὴρ καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ.

<sup>186</sup> The motif of sign appears again in the story of the royal official as the marked Theme in Jesus' Subjunctive conditional clause, 4:48 ἐὰν μὴ σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἴδητε *if you people do not see signs and wonders*. See next section, sect. 3.2 "The Samaritan woman and the royal official".



*But if I do them, **even though** you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I in the Father.*

*Textual function.* Toward the end of the conversation, Jesus also uses two marked Themes (underlined) in the following clauses for emphasis:<sup>187</sup>

3:10, 12 (marked Themes)  
καὶ ταῦτα οὐ γινώσκεις;  
*and you do not understand these things?*

εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε  
*if I told you earthly things and you do not believe*

With these marked Themes, Jesus makes a sharp contrast. Because he speaks earthly things (*these things, earthly things*) to Nicodemus and he does not understand, he will not understand spiritual things.

Finally, some of the wording in 3:1-15 points back to the co-text of the Prologue (1:1-18). In this first extended dialogue, Jesus' conditionals explain and develop key concepts such as *the flesh, new birth, and belief*. John compares those who are only born of natural descent (1:13 *the will of the flesh*) with those who are born spiritually (3:5 *born of water and the Spirit*), and relates this to the absolute necessity of belief (1:12, 3:12), as the following texts show.

(i) Prologue 1:12, 13  
*...even to those who believe (τοῖς πιστεύουσιν) in his name,*

*who were not born (ἐγεννήθησαν) not of blood, nor the will of the flesh (σαρκὸς)*

(ii) Nicodemus discourse 3:3, 5, 12  
*if one is **not** born (γεννηθῆ) again (ἄνωθεν)*

*if one is **not** born (γεννηθῆ) of water and the Spirit (ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος), he/she cannot see the kingdom of God...*

*if I told you earthly things and you do not believe (οὐ πιστεύετε)...how shall you believe (πιστεύσετε)...*

---

<sup>187</sup> As discussed on pp. 52, 68-69, in the constituent order of CP, the Complement (C) is considered to be a marked Theme.

In the Prologue, the author of John introduces the Word who becomes flesh, and draws the reader's attention to the importance of the new birth that is from God and through faith. In the first extended dialogue of Jesus (3:1-15), the author records how Jesus expounded these theological motifs and how they are inextricably bound together. Such a teaching is communicated through the discourse of Jesus that is characterized by the heavy presence of conditionals (vv. 3, 5, and 12).

*Summary.* A total of four conditionals in Jesus' first extended dialogue in John have been analyzed. SFL's functional approach demonstrates that the description and meaning of Greek conditional statements extend far beyond the traditional method of Mood and Tense of the protasis. The analysis based on the metafunctions (Ideational, Interpersonal, Textual) of language shows that the meanings of conditionals are layered and far more complex than can be fully described by just one or two grammatical categories.

It takes a significant amount of grammatical resources to describe what it means by *if*. As meaning derives from choice, the choices that are related to conditionals are many. Lexicogrammatically, they include: Mood (Indicative, Subjunctive), Logico-Semantic Relation (causal or correlative), Polarity (positive, negative), clause configuration (protasis or apodosis-fronted), verbal exchange dynamics (such as challenge), collocation with questions, and clausal Theme (unmarked, marked). Conditionals also semantically develop the motifs in co-texts, for example, the Prologue (1:1-18).

Finally, the conditionals in this discourse show that they construe the "reality" within which the reader may form the right opinion of Jesus and put his/her faith in him

(20:31). The author of the Gospel employs conditionals to prompt the reader to examine the meaning and implications of belief in Jesus.<sup>188</sup> And he strategically places conditionals in the dialogues to achieve his persuasive purpose. In the next section, Jesus' two separate dialogues with two unnamed individuals will be examined. Unlike the dialogue with Nicodemus, the number of conditionals used in each dialogue is much fewer, but yet their outcomes are decidedly more positive.

### 3.2 The Samaritan Woman and the Royal Official

After Jesus' discourse with Nicodemus, he is temporarily absent from the narrative. The author then recounts a conversation between John the Baptist and his disciples (3:22-36).<sup>189</sup> Rhetorically, the account reinforces the argument that Jesus, not John the Baptist, is the Christ (3:28 *I am not the Christ*; cf. 1:20). It also concludes the section that records the words and deeds of John the Baptist that begins in 1:19.

The narrative and dialogue of Jesus picks up again in John 4 when he seeks out the Samaritan woman. The fact that Jews and the Samaritans are enemies (4:9) also makes this extended personal conversation unusual, culturally and theologically. Furthermore, unlike Nicodemus, after this encounter with Jesus the Samaritan woman does not appear in the Gospel again. The entire Samaritan narrative (4:1-42) points to the power of Jesus' word and the universality of the gospel, 4:42 *we have heard*

---

<sup>188</sup> In addition to Renz and Louw mentioned above, see also Burge, "Revelation and Discipleship," 235-54. "I believe that John has a highly formed view on how revelation is the distinguishing mark of normative Christian experience. Some would call it the appropriation of wisdom for a template of discipleship. But perhaps John would be happier if we called it prophetic revelation—or even an awakening to deep insight about commonplace realities." (235) Barrett also thinks that the purpose of John should not be limited to either strengthening believers or evangelism, but as the setting forth the full significance of an already existing Christian faith. Barrett, *John and Judaism*, 17.

<sup>189</sup> For opinions on the paragraph division of John 3, see Barrett, *St. John*, 219-20, who considers vv. 22-36 as a single unit.

*ourselves and know that (Jesus) is the Savior of the world.* It is the Samaritans who first acknowledge this truth.

Immediately after the story of the Samaritan woman, John records Jesus' first sign of healing—the healing of the son of the royal official (4:43-54).<sup>190</sup> Although the son was dying, Jesus refused to go with the father to see his son. Jesus only speaks to the Father and tells him that his son is healed. John also records that Jesus speaks or has spoken (including reported speech) a total of four times: v. 48 *Jesus said*; v. 50 *Jesus says...Jesus spoke*; and v. 53 *Jesus said*. The words of Jesus are thus underscored as having the power to bring life as well as to lead people to put their trust in him.

### 3.2.1 The Samaritan woman (4:7-12)

The immediate context of Jesus' conditional may be summarized as follows;

vv. 4-6 Jesus enters Samaria and sits by a well

vv. 7-8 Jesus asks the Samaritan woman for a drink

v. 9 The woman questions why a Jew would make such a request to a Samaritan

In response to the Samaritan's disbelief, Jesus employs the following conditional

outlined in ranking clauses:

4:10

[1] εἰ ἦδεις τὴν δωρεάν τοῦ θεοῦ

[2] καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ λέγων σοι

[3] δός μοι πεῖν,

[4] σὺ ἂν ἤτησας αὐτὸν

[5] καὶ ἔδωκεν ἂν σοι ὕδωρ ζῶν.

---

<sup>190</sup> Two other long-distance healings are recorded in the Synoptics: (i) Matt 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10 Jesus heals a centurion's servant, and (ii) Mark 7:24-30 Jesus casts out demons from the daughter of a Syrophenician woman. However, in those healings, Jesus did not use any conditional statement, nor did he make direct reference to signs and wonders, or faith versus sight. For the view that the royal official is a Gentile commander of Roman auxiliary forces, see Mead, "John 4:46-53," 203-206. Kysar also suggests that, although it is not totally clear whether this man is Jewish or Gentile, John may be portraying this man as a Gentile to continue to contrast the faith of the Samaritans and the unbelief of the Jews. Kysar, *John*, 73.

*If you knew the gift of God  
and who it is that asks you,  
“Give me a drink,”  
you would have asked him  
and he would have given you living water.*

*Ideational function.* The conditional clause belongs to the Indicative type 2 conditional ( $\epsilon\iota$  + Indicative, secondary tense). It appears here for the first time in John’s Gospel (see also 5:46; 8:19; 9:41). Indicative type 2 conditionals express situations or events that are unrealized or counterfactual. In the first clause of the protasis, the Greek verb ἤδεις (Plpf. Act. Ind. *you knew*) expresses that the Samaritan woman did not know that Jesus was the gift of God to the world. The apodosis (cls. 4, 5) continues to add that, as a result, she did not ask Jesus for the living water.

In terms of semantic relations, the clause complex has a causal logico-semantic relation (L-S R). It means that there is a direct, causal relation between the protasis and the apodosis. In this case, true knowledge of who Jesus is (the protasis) and the woman’s asking and receiving the gift of the living water (apodosis) are causally connected. If the conventional categories are adopted, either the category of Cause and Effect or Ground and Inference may be applied. However, as Porter points out, the conventional semantic categories are inadequate, and in some cases not very helpful.<sup>191</sup> Instead of making two distinct “logical” (in its formal sense) categories of Cause and Effect and Ground and Inference, this study adopts the categories of causal and

---

<sup>191</sup> “Whereas it is clear that these categories are appropriate for discussing a significant number of conditional statements, there are both a number of examples that could be categorized differently and a number to which these categories do not seem to apply.” Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 320. In addition to John 4:10, Porter also includes John 8:36 *If (ἐὰν) the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed* (Equivalence or Cause and Effect) and John 21:22-23 *If (ἐὰν) I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?* (Adversative?). See also Nutting’s classification in “Order of Condition Thought,” 25-39, 149-62, 278-303.

correlative relations that are more accurate in reflecting the relation in Greek conditionals.

*Interpersonal function.* The choice of the emphatic personal pronoun σὺ *you* (*would have asked*) in the first clause of the apodosis also underscores the woman's role in the realization of what can happen, that is, receiving the living water. The use of the personal pronoun also implicitly prompts her to further engage in the dialogue with Jesus. At the end of the extended dialogue, she puts her belief in him (vv.28-29). However, in the Sabbath healing debate (sect. 3.3), although Jesus uses the Indicative type 2 conditional again (5:46), the Jews refuse to trust him.<sup>192</sup>

*Textual function.* The dialogue segment consists of two rounds of exchange. The first round (vv. 7-9) begins with the introduction of γυνὴ ἐκ τῆς Σαμαρείας *a Samaritan woman* (v. 7a), immediately followed by the explicit subject of ὁ Ἰησοῦς *Jesus* (v. 7b) who asks her for water. The second round (vv. 10-12) consists of Jesus' initial reply in the form of a conditional statement (v. 10), also introduced by the explicit subject of Ἰησοῦς *Jesus*, followed by the woman's response (vv. 11-12).

Unlike the conditionals with Nicodemus, 4:10 consists of multiple protases (including one content clause) and apodoses. The multiple references to *water, drink, well* in the conditional form part of the lexical chains in this dialogue segment, including the introduction by the author of John in v. 7. The conditional thus develops the dominant motif of water in this segment and the entire discourse between Jesus and the Samaritan woman. The Samaritan woman's reference to *the well* twice in vv. 11 and 12

---

<sup>192</sup> For a discussion on the significance of tenses in relation to time reference, see Boyer, "Second Class Conditions," 84-88.

shows that she does not really understand what Jesus means by *the gift of God* (v. 10) and the “water” that he gives. The lexical chain is shown below:

	ὕδωρ <i>water</i>	πεῖν <i>to drink</i>	τὸ φρέαρ <i>the well</i>
Author	v. 7		
Jesus	<b>v. 10</b>	vv. 7, 10	
Samaritan woman	v.11	vv. 9, 12	vv. 11, 12

### 3.2.2 The royal official (4:43-54)

The story of the royal official and his dying son echoes the motif of signs that appears in 2:23 *his signs which he was doing*, and in Jesus’ discourse with Nicodemus in 3:2 *no one can do these signs*. At the beginning of this narrative, the author of John makes reference to Jesus’ first sign in Cana, v. 46 *where he had made water wine*. In the concluding statement, he also points to the healing of the royal official’s son as another sign, v. 54 *this is again a second sign*. Signs and wonders also form the key motif in Jesus’ conditional in v. 48, as shown below.

4:48

ἐὰν μὴ σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἴδητε, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσητε.

*If you people do **not** see signs and wonders, you will never believe.*

*Ideational function.* In this short conditional (nine Greek words), Jesus uses a total of three negative particles: ἐὰν μὴ...οὐ μὴ *if...not...never*. Such a high number of negative polarities in a single conditional is rare in John. Together with the marked Theme of *signs and wonders* in the protasis, Jesus uses them to draw additional attention to the danger of simply relying on signs for one’s salvation, or entry into the kingdom of God (cf. 3:3, 5). This is highlighted first in the *if...not* conditional clause, expressing the mostly unspoken expectation of the people. Then it is underscored again with the use of double negative οὐ μὴ *never* in the apodosis.

However the kind of belief that Jesus requires is not solely contingent upon signs. Even with signs some people still refuse to believe him, as the following conditionals concerning the world show. Similar to 4:48, there is also a heavy presence of the negative particles μή and οὐκ in the protasis and the apodosis respectively.

15:22, 24

εἰ μὴ ἦλθον καὶ ἐλάλησα αὐτοῖς, ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ εἶχον·  
*If I had **not** come and spoken to them, they would not have sin*

εἰ τὰ ἔργα μὴ ἐποίησα ἐν αὐτοῖς ἃ οὐδεὶς ἄλλος ἐποίησεν, ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ εἶχον·  
*If I had **not** done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin*

*Interpersonal function.* Although it seems that Jesus is speaking to the royal official, Jesus is in fact speaking to a wider audience. The Greek second person plural verb endings in the protasis, ἴδητε (Subj. Act. Ind. 2p, pl.) *you see* and in the apodosis, πιστεύσητε (Subj. Act. Ind. 2p, pl.) *you believe* possibly imply that Jesus includes the bystanders with the royal official. Perhaps he is using the royal official as the representative of a group of people that relies on signs before they believe.<sup>193</sup> A similar choice of the second person plural ending also appears in the Nicodemus discourse in 3:11 λαμβάνετε (Pres. Act. Ind. 2p, pl.) *you (do not) receive* and 3:12 πιστεύετε (Pres. Act. Ind. 2p, pl.) *you (do not) believe*. In that dialogue, Jesus also makes reference to the Jews of whom Nicodemus, as a teacher of the Law, is a representative. In both discourses, the choice of the second personal plural verb ending implies that Jesus intends for his word to have impact beyond the immediate audience.

*Textual function.* The protasis has a marked Theme of *signs and wonders* that points to what the father and the crowd expect from Jesus: a miraculous healing of the the dying son. Jesus is making the motive of the people for putting their trust in him

---

<sup>193</sup> Westcott, *St. John*, 78.



explicit—trust only after seeing him perform signs (cf. the Jews 2:18; Nicodemus 3:2).

The marked Theme thus places the central question of belief firmly in relation to the performance of miraculous signs. The question for the reader becomes: If Jesus performs more signs, will more people *believe* him? And the even more fundamental question is: Should faith in Jesus depend on signs? Such are the questions on which the audience of Jesus and the reader of John’s Gospel need to reflect.

Moreover, by recording the story at the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry, the author of John appears to set up a verbal parallel and a thematic tension between Jesus’ conditional and Thomas’ at the end of the Gospel. Both protases assert the significance of seeing, and both apodoses are emphasized by the double negative particles οὐ μὴ *never*.

4:48 (Jesus)

ἐὰν μὴ σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἴδητε, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσητε

*If you [people] do **not** see signs and wonders, you will never believe.*

\*20:25 (Thomas)

ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων...οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω

*If I do **not** see in his hands the imprint of the nails....I will never believe.*

In the rest of John, Jesus continues to perform signs, and the reader has the privilege of seeing some who believe and some who do not. And in all these circumstances, Johannine conditionals are used to evoke the consciousness of the reader, motivating them to make the right choice of putting their faith in Jesus (cf. 20:31).

“The words of Jesus” as a word group also forms a lexical tie between the belief of the Samaritan woman and the Samaritans with the story of the royal official. Even though Jesus has come and revealed himself through his words and his works, the world fails to receive him. But the Samaritan believed Jesus, 4:41 διὰ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ *because of his word*. And immediately after Jesus tells the father that his son lives, he

believes Jesus' words, 4:50 τῷ λόγῳ ὃν εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς *the words that Jesus spoke to him*.

The father exercises true faith by believing Jesus' word before he actually sees Jesus' miraculous sign. And the word of Jesus is like the Word of God in creation that imparts life (Gen 1). The motif of Jesus' life-giving word continues in the Sabbath healing and its subsequent debate (5:19-47) as well as Jesus' raising of Lazarus (11:1-44) in sections 3.3 and 5.2 of this study.<sup>194</sup>

*Summary.* The functional analysis of conditionals in Jesus' dialogues with Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, and the royal official has shown that the description and meaning of conditionals are layered and multi-faceted. Selected lexicogrammatical system networks and linguistic features have been applied to these conditionals and have yielded different results. For example, the choice of the Subjunctive in the verbal system of Mood expresses a hypothetical conditionality. The modality expressed by δύνανται *he/she is able* also expresses possibility. In the Nicodemus discourse, these and other grammatical features of Jesus' conditionals are used to explain that people, not just the Jewish nation, receive salvation only through the work of the Spirit. The story and the Indicative type 2 conditional to the Samaritan woman show that asking for and receiving the living water are directly connected with knowledge of Jesus, who is the gift of God to the world. And the story of the royal official, including the Subjunctive conditional, presents a model for the reader to put his/her faith in Jesus not by relying on Jesus

---

<sup>194</sup> Compare also the story of Elijah raising the widow's in 1 Kings 17:17-24. After the child returned to life, the widow said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is the truth" (v. 24). Elijah's word not only healed the child but also authenticated himself as a man of God.

performing miraculous signs, but by trusting his word (v. 48). In these stories, not only did both of these characters believe Jesus, they also led their kinsfolk to do the same.

In John 5, Jesus performs another miraculous sign. However, the Jews in Jerusalem take offence at him. As a result, Jesus gives an extended discourse to defend his action. Five conditionals are used in his defense and they are the subject of analysis in the section below.

### 3.3 The Jerusalem Jews (5:19-47)

In this third and final section of this chapter, systemic networks and linguistic features will continue to be used to describe the functions of conditionals. The author records the conditionals in John 5 to demonstrate that the Jews' case against Jesus' Sabbath healing and his Christological claim cannot be sustained. Jesus' conditionals are used polemically in his defense against the charge laid by the Jews of claiming God as his own Father. At the end of Jesus' defense, John also records the final two conditionals (vv. 46, 47) to show that it is the Jews, not Jesus, who are in fact disobedient to Moses.

After the healing of the royal official's son (4:43-54), John immediately records Jesus' second healing. There are a number of significant differences between the first and the second healing. The first healing takes place in Galilee and the father seeks Jesus' help because his son is dying. The second healing takes place in Jerusalem, and Jesus takes the initiative to approach the sick man. But this man's condition is non-life-threatening. While the reader does not know the exact day of the first healing, the second was performed on the Sabbath.

Therefore, by attending a non-emergency situation, Jesus knowingly violated the law of Sabbath (5:16) and consequently made the man commit the same crime by asking him to carry his pallet (5:10). When confronted by the Jews, Jesus further claims equality with God, v. 17 *My Father is working until now, and I myself is working*. The act of healing on the Sabbath and his Christological claim set up the ensuing speech (vv. 19-47) that forms Jesus' first major public debate with the Jews in John.<sup>195</sup>

Compared with the first healing, the nature and outcome of Jesus' conditionals in the second healing are very different. In the first healing, Jesus spoke only one conditional (4:48), prior to the healing the royal official's son. But in John 5, he speaks five conditionals (vv. 19, 31, 43, 46, 47) *after* the man is healed. Unlike the first healing, Jesus faces a serious accusation from the Jews as a result of the second healing. The discourse, including the conditionals, is thus more argumentative and polemical in nature.

Structurally, the speech can be divided into two main sections.<sup>196</sup> In the first section (vv. 19-30), Jesus delineates his special relationship with the Father and, out of that relationship, the unique authority that he possesses, such as to heal on the Sabbath. In the second section (vv. 31-47), Jesus continues to present witnesses, including John the Baptist and the Father, who support his Christological claim. But even as the

---

<sup>195</sup> The synoptic gospels record other incidences of Jesus violating the Sabbath. All three include the disciples' plucking grains and Jesus' healing a man with a shriveled hand (Matt 12:1-8, 9-14; Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-6; Luke 6:1-5, 6-11). In addition, Luke also includes Jesus' healing the woman who cannot straighten her back (13:10-17) and a man with abnormal swelling (14:1-6). Although Jesus uses conditionals twice, Matt 12:7 *If you had known what these words mean*, and 12:11 *If any of you has a sheep*, they differ from the Johannine conditionals in that the John 5 discourse is much longer and his conditionals play more significant roles in the argument of his speech or defense.

<sup>196</sup> *USBGNT* divides Jesus' speech into two main sections: vv. 19-30 ("The authority of the Son") and vv. 31-47 ("Witnesses to Jesus). Most Greek commentators are also in agreement. Westcott, for example, divides the text into vv. 19-29 ("Nature and prerogative of the Son") with v. 30 as a transition, followed by vv. 31-47 ("Witness to the Son and the ground of unbelief"). Barrett, Thyen, and Carson likewise adopt the segmentation of vv. 15, 16 or 19-30 and vv. 31-47.

disciples of Moses, the Jews refuse to believe and therefore they stand accused by Moses.

An overview of these conditionals is provided below

Text/ conditionals	Gram. subject (protasis, apodosis)	Polarity (protasis, apodosis)	Mood (apodosis only)
I. vv 19-30			
v 19	<i>the Son, (the Son)</i>	neg, neg	Ind.
II. vv 31-47			
v 31	<i>I, (his witness)</i>	pos, neg	Ind.
v 43	<i>a person, you</i>	pos, pos.	Ind.
v 46	<i>you, you</i>	pos, pos.	Ind. + ᾗν
v 47	<i>you, you</i>	neg., pos	(Interrog.)

The grammatical Subject of the first conditional in the first section (vv 19-30) is *the Son* (Jesus). In the second section, after having referred to those who testify to his claim (v 31), Jesus shifts the Subject and speaks directly to the Jews. The three closely clustered *you* (the Jews) conditionals (vv 43, 46, 47) conclude Jesus' defense. In addition, with the negative polarity in both the protasis and the apodosis, the first conditional addresses the Father and Son relationship with a strong rhetorical force. By definition, as an Indicative type 2 conditional the second to the last conditional (v 46) also expresses the semantic feature of "negative," that is, both clauses are unrealized or not true. The argumentative nature can also be seen in the final conditional that Jesus frames as a rhetorical question.

3.3.1 Jesus and the Father (vv. 19-30)<sup>197</sup>

Jesus' opening conditional statement is shown below with marked theme underlined and ranking clauses numbers.

5:19

- [1] ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν,  
 [2] οὐ δύναται ὁ υἱὸς ποιεῖν ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ οὐδὲν  
 [3] ἐὰν μὴ τι βλέπῃ τὸν πατέρα ποιοῦντα·  
 [4] ἃ γὰρ ἂν ἐκεῖνος ποιῇ,  
 [5] ταῦτα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ὁμοίως ποιεῖ.

- [1] *Very truly I tell you,*  
 [2] *the Son can do nothing by himself,*  
 [3] *if he does not see what the Father is doing;*  
 [4] *for whatever (the Father) does,*  
 [5] *these things the Son also does in like manner.*

*Ideational function.* To support his Christological claim (v. 17), Jesus uses the first conditional of his defense to describe his relationship with the Father. The Greek Subjunctive in the protasis, βλέπει (Pres. Act. Subj.) *he sees* is used to construe a hypothetical world. The protasis invites the audience to consider alternate situations that are probable. The audience is asked to temporarily suspend judgment on whether the Son truly sees the Father (protasis), and instead follow Jesus' train of thought.

Furthermore, the case for his sonship is also built on the correlative logico-semantic relation (L-S R) between apodosis and the protasis. *The Son is not able to do anything* and *the Son is not watching the Father* are established as correlative events or phenomena. Simply put, they co-exist. The statement itself does not assert the Son actually sees the Father, but the audience is encouraged to reason in light of Jesus'

<sup>197</sup> Structurally, vv. 19-30 may be divided into two segments; both begin with the emphatic statement *very truly I tell you* (vv. 19, 24). The first segment (vv. 19-23), including the Subjunctive conditional (v. 19), focuses on what the Father does in relation to the Son, with ὁ πατήρ *the Father* as the grammatical Subject in the clauses in vv. 20, 21, and 22. In the second segment (vv. 24-30) the Subject of people in general (v. 24 *he/she who hears*, v. 28 *all who are in the tombs*, and v. 29 *those who do good deeds*) is added. The hearing and believing of Jesus' words is underscored. In other words, because of the Son's special relationship with the Father, whoever listens to and obeys the Son will have eternal life.

healing the man on the Sabbath. Unless Jesus is demon-possessed (cf. 8:48), the evidence supports Jesus' claim that God is his Father (v. 17), and the Jews should have no objection to his claim. The hypothetical conditional is used to express that the case is open. The audience is provided the opportunity to decide.

*Interpersonal function.* The Father and Son relationship and its argument of Jesus' defense in this conditional are also reflected by its grammatical intricacy. The entire clause complex (v. 19) consists of five ranking clauses, including the *very truly I tell you* emphatic statement (cl. 1). The protasis (cl. 3) also contains a downranked or embedded clause. And the final two clauses (cls. 4, 5) are γὰρ *for/ because* explanatory clauses. These clauses (English) are shown below.

- [1] *Very truly I tell you,*
- [2] *the Son can do nothing by himself,*
- [3] *if he does **not** see what the Father is doing;*
- [4] *for whatever (the Father) does,*
- [5] *these things the Son also does in like manner.*

As a conditional statement, 5:19 stands as the most grammatically intricate conditional that Jesus has spoken so far. The metacomment in cl. 1 heightens the rhetorical impact of the statement, while the final two explanatory clauses further support the apodosis, cl. 2 *the Son can do nothing by himself*. The intricacy reflects the depth of Jesus' personal involvement in the subject matter and his careful framing of his argument.<sup>198</sup>

---

<sup>198</sup> In his work on John's Gospel, Jerome Neyrey proposes a model of understanding Johannine Christology based on the motif of ideology of revolt. In addition to the view of multiple redactions of the text, Neyrey asserts that Jesus' claim of being equal to God (5:18, 19-29) suggests some kind of social alienation, more specifically, the estranged relationship between Jesus and his followers and the Jewish synagogue. Furthermore, John is characterized as a high Christology that places a premium on Jesus as "Lord and God, the heavenly figure who is not of this world." (Neyrey, *Ideology of Revolt*, 9, 142). Chronologically, the followers of Jesus moved from making exclusive claims of reform and replacement, to forming a faction round Jesus, and finally to the strategy of "revolt against and withdrawal from the world."

Subsequently, Neyrey also adopts an identical social scientific model and posits certain "strategies of secrecy" in the Gospel that serve as "information control." He writes, "This 'information control' emerges as a central phenomenon in John and provides significant clues to the social dynamics of

The rhetorical force of rebutting his audience and asserting his argument is expressed through the negative particles οὐ and μή *not*. They reflect the Jews' unbelief. Later in v. 30, the central argument of Jesus' defense is further underscored by the apodosis, v. 30 *I can do nothing* (οὐδέν) *by on my own initiative* which is also the concluding statement of this discourse segment (vv. 19-30). Jesus' conditional in v. 19 and statement in v. 30 thus form an *inclusio*.

*Textual function.* The conditional in v. 19 begins with the emphatic statement *very truly I tell you*. Such a statement underscores the solemnity of the assertion. The same emphasis was also added in his conditional statements with Nicodemus on being born again (3:3, 5, 11). In the ensuing statements, Jesus also uses the same emphatic saying to preface the significance of the life-giving power of his words, v. 24 *my word* and v. 25 *the voice of the Son of God*. In recording such a sayings, the author of John wants the reader to know that Jesus is truly the Son of God and he gives life (see also 6:51, 53).<sup>199</sup>

The conditional's apodosis-fronted (Q ^ P) clause configuration also makes the apodosis, cl. 2 *the Son can do nothing by himself* as the thematic clause in the clause

---

the community for which it was written...[It] not only describes Jesus' activity but clues the audience in to distinguishing insiders from outsiders in terms of 'who knows what and when.'" (Neyrey, *Gospel of John*, 9). And one of the means of such information control is the way Jesus asks question. On one hand Jesus controls information when questions are asked of him (3:4; 6:42, 52). On the other hand, by asking his own questions, Jesus also reveals how little his audience knows; that is, how well controlled his information is. Examples he cites include the conditionals in 3:12 and 5:47. And to those who are "outsiders," because they are not Jesus' sheep, information is withheld.

Both the ideology of revolt and the "motif of secrecy" will be treated in Chapter 5, section 5.2 below. But based on our study of 5:19 and the entire section of 5:19-30, there is no evidence of social alienation as Neyrey alleges.

<sup>199</sup> In discussing what he calls metacomments such as *very truly I say*, Runge writes, "A writer [speaker] who desires to attract extra attention to a proposition has the choice to suspend the discourse in order to comment on what is to follow. The writer pauses in what is being said and talks about what is going to be said... They function something like speed bumps to 'slow' the reader and attract his or her attention." Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 107, 111.



complex.<sup>200</sup> The apodosis becomes the point of departure for the rest of the conditional statement. Jesus cannot possibly do anything of importance, if (ἐάν μή lit. *if...not*) as the Son, he does not see the things that the Father God is doing.

*Doing* and *seeing* also feature prominently as interconnected lexical chains in the entire clause complex, for example, cl. 2 *the Son cannot do* (ποιεῖν Pres. Act. Inf.) *anything*; cl. 3 *what he sees* (βλέπει Pres. Act. Subj.)...*what the Father is doing* (ποιούντα Pres. Act. Ptcp.); cl. 4 *whatever he does* (ποιῆ Pres. Act. Subj.); and cl. 5 *these things the Son does* (ποιεῖ Pres. Act. Ind.). Thus, the Father and the Son are jointly at work.

The final clause (cl. 5) also contains a marked theme ταῦτα *these things*, referring to the actions of the Father. Formally, the emphasis is on the Father's work, but there is an inferred connection to Jesus' Sabbath healing as well as to Jesus' obedience his Father (cf. 17:4). Jesus also uses marked themes (underlined) in a number of conditionals to underscore particular points in his arguments: 3:12 *If I told you earthly things*; 4:10 *If you people do **not** see signs and wonders* (see also 5:43 *but **if** someone else comes...you will accept him/her*). Whereas the royal official trusted Jesus' word without seeing signs and wonders, the Jews refused to believe Jesus even after he healed the man. In this final clause of the conditional, Jesus also underscores their unbelief, with Jesus nevertheless still accomplishing the Father's work as the backdrop.

Finally, the conditional in v. 19 also functions as an introductory statement of the sub-text or paragraph of vv. 19-30. It forms the point of departure for the argument in

---

<sup>200</sup> “[C]onditional clauses in the vast majority of instances have the secondary (the protasis) precede the primary clause (the apodosis). Those that reverse the order foreground the conditional nature of the proposition and give prominence to the secondary clause.” Porter, “Prominence,” 73. Other apodosis fronted Johannine conditionals include: 6:44 and 6:65 *no one can come to me, **if** the Father...does **not** draw him/her* and 11:25 *The one who believes in me will live, **even if** they die.*

the rest of this discourse segment. Whatever the Father does or is doing, Jesus does the same. Because he is the Son, the Father loves him and shows him all things (v. 20). As the Father raises the dead and gives life, the Son does likewise, thus justifying healing on the Sabbath (v. 21). Moreover, the Father has also given all judgment to him, and those (the Jews) who do not honor the Son are doing the same to the Father (vv. 22-23). And vv. 24-30 continues to show that those who hear (obey) Jesus' word will receive eternal life.<sup>201</sup>

### 3.3.2 Witnesses to Jesus and the unbelief of the Jews (vv. 31-47)<sup>202</sup>

Jesus' defense heightens in this segment as he confronts the Jews with evidence from the witnesses who testify to support his claim. The author continues to record Jesus' conditionals to advance his argument against the Jews for their accusation against Jesus' Christological claim.<sup>203</sup>

In the remainder of this section, Jesus' conditional in vv. 31-32 is studied first. The closely clustered conditionals (vv. 43, 46, and 47) at the end of the discourse will then be looked into as a group.

<sup>201</sup> With the total of five clauses complexes, three of them refer to grammatical Subjects of those who hear: v. 24 *The one who hears* (ὁ...ἀκούων) *my word and believes*; v. 25 *those who hear* (οἱ ἀκούσαντες); and v. 28 *all who are in their graves will hear* (ἀκούσουσιν).

<sup>202</sup> The paragraph division is consistent among critical editions of Greek texts (*UBSGNT*, W-H, N-A 28<sup>th</sup>) and Greek commentators (Westcott, Barrett, Carson, Thyen). For example, in *UBSGNT* 5:31-47 consists of two paragraphs, vv. 31-40, 41-47. The division in N-A 28<sup>th</sup> consists of vv. 31-35, 36-40, 41-44, and 45-47. As will be shown in this section, in dividing the text into two, Thyen appropriately entitled them as "Jesu Legitimation als der wahrhaftige Zeuge (vv. 31-40)" and "Jesus, der Angeklagte, wird zum Ankläger derer, die ihn anklagen (vv. 41-47)" ("Jesus' legitimation as the truthful witness" vv. 31-40 and "Jesus turns the prosecutor of the ones who accuse him, the accused" vv. 41-47).

<sup>203</sup> Compare the use of conditionals as a rhetorical or persuasive device in Isaiah 1:18-20 (LXX): "*Come now, let us reason together,*" says the LORD. "*Though (καὶ ἐὰν) your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though (ἐὰν δὲ) they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. If (ἐὰν) you consent and obey, you will eat the best of the land; but if (ἐὰν) you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.*"

5:31-32

[1] Ἐὰν ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἐμαυτοῦ,  
[2] ἡ μαρτυρία μου οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθής·

[3] ἄλλος ἐστὶν ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ ἐμοῦ,  
[4] καὶ οἶδα  
[5] ὅτι ἀληθής ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία [ἣν μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ].

[1] *If I testify about myself,*  
[2] *my testimony is not true.*

[3] *There is another one who testifies for me,*  
[4] *and I know*  
[5] *that the testimony [which he bears of me] is true.*

*Ideational function.* The Subjunctive mood of the main verb μαρτυρῶ (Pres. Act. Subj. *I testify*) of the conditional clause expresses a hypothetical situation. In the event that Jesus is self-testifying, under the Jewish law his testimony does not stand. Apparently Jesus is following the Jewish tradition of calling upon two to three witnesses in the court of law to prove one's case.<sup>204</sup> Jesus is in effect posing a case that is open for discussion. The audience is given the freedom and the responsibility to reach his or her own conclusion. Through this type of supposition, the author of John prompts the reader to enter deeper into the evidence of Jesus' Christological claim. The conditional could be framed as an Indicative conditional. However, that would mean Jesus has decided for his audience. But the hypothetical conditional clause leads the audience to follow Jesus' reasoning in vv. 32-47. As Subjunctive conditionals, the correlative logico-semantic relation in this Subjunctive conditional expresses the idea that the phenomena or events described in the protasis and the apodosis take place concurrently and not necessarily causally. In other words, there can be more than one possibility that one's testimony is untrustworthy, but Jesus chooses to use self-testimony (that is, without any witness) to frame his argument of the conditional.

<sup>204</sup> See Num 35:30; Deut 17:6; 19:15.

*Interpersonal function.* The emphatic personal pronoun ἐγώ *I* in the protasis has at least two functions. First, Jesus emphasizes the significance of his own act of self-testifying, and not other people's. His credibility and the validity of his argument are at stake. Secondly, the emphatic personal pronoun ἐγώ *I* (see also v. 36 ἐγώ *I*) also anticipates the grammatical Subject ἄλλος *another* (that is, the Father) in cl. 3. Together with the emphatic personal pronoun ὑμεῖς *you* (the Jews) in vv. 33, 38, 39), the first and second person pronouns are used in Jesus' defense against the hostility of the Jews. In terms of clause structures, cls. 1-2 form the conditional statement proper, while the remaining clauses (cls. 3-5) form another clause nexus that expands the idea in cls. 1-2.

*Textual function.* As the first clause complex of the text that is being analyzed, the conditional in v. 32 functions as an introductory statement or a point of departure for the rest of the text. The lexis "testify" forms the predominant lexical item in the conditional and in subsequent verses. In vv. 31-32, with the exception of cl. 4 *and I know*, the lexis appears in every clause at least once, and twice in the final clause, cl. 5. The lexis is found again in v. 33 μεμαρτύρηκεν (*John the Baptist has testified*) and v. 37 μεμαρτύρηκεν (*the Father has testified*), and v. 39 μαρτυροῦσαι (*the Scriptures testify*). Such strong presence of "testify" indicates that Jesus is presenting an argument concerning the legality of his Christological claim (v. 17).

The final clause (cl. 5) also contains a marked Theme: ἀληθής *true*, referring to the testimony of the ἄλλος *another* in cl. 3.<sup>205</sup> Jesus will further explain that this "another" who testifies to his claim is none other than God himself (v. 36). Furthermore,

---

<sup>205</sup> The reference seems to be deliberately ambiguous. It only becomes clear that Jesus is referring to the Father in v. 37 *And the Father who sent me, he has testified me.*

the embedded or downranked clause ἦν μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ (*the testimony*) which he bears of me, further specifies the divine nature of the testimony.

In sum, the conditional (vv. 31-32) serves as the introductory statement to the entire paragraph of vv. 31-40. Its central motif of *to testify/testimony* is further explicated by the testimonies of John the Baptist (v. 33), the works of Jesus (v. 36), the Father (v. 37), and the Jewish Scriptures (v. 39). Their testimonies support the central argument that Jesus is the Son (v. 17), and healing on the Sabbath is perfectly within his authority. As part of the overall argument, the conditional functions to prompt the audience to reason objectively and to believe that Jesus' claim is credible.

In the remainder of the discourse (5:41-47), the author of John records three more conditionals by Jesus. These conditionals (vv. 43, 46, 47) are among the most clustered conditionals by Jesus. As such, they reflect a more complex argument and a stronger sense of urgency for his audience to probe deeper than the previous segment. A similar phenomenon also appears in Jesus' final public discourse in John 10:22-39 where the author records three consecutive conditionals (vv. 35-36, 37, and 38).<sup>206</sup> Furthermore, a strong presence of emphatic first and second person pronouns continues to indicate the polemic nature of Jesus' speech. These pronouns are found in the following.

v. 43 *I (ἐγὼ) have come...if another shall come*

v. 44 *how are you (ὁμεῖς) able to believe*

v. 45 *do not think that I (ἐγὼ) will accuse you*

---

<sup>206</sup> See Chapter 5, sect. 5.1.2 "Jesus' conditionals".

The two rhetorical questions in vv. 44 and 47, the second of which is also a conditional question, also prompt the audience to think more deeply about whether Jesus is indeed the Son of God as he claims (v. 17).

5:44 *How (πῶς) can you believe, when you...do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?*

5:47 *But if you do not believe his writings, how (πῶς) will you believe my words?*

The final three conditionals of the Sabbath healing debate are now analyzed according to their functions and are listed below (with marked theme underlined).

5:43  
 ἐγὼ ἐλήλυθα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρὸς μου,  
 καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε με·  
ἐὰν ἄλλος ἐλθῆ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τῷ ἰδίῳ,  
ἐκεῖνον λήμψεσθε.

*I have come in my Father's name,  
 and you do not receive me;  
 if another comes in his own name,  
him you will receive.*

5:46-47  
 εἰ γὰρ ἐπιστεύετε Μωϋσεῖ,  
 ἐπιστεύετε ἂν ἐμοί·  
 περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν.

εἰ δὲ τοῖς ἐκεῖνου γράμμασιν οὐ πιστεύετε,  
πῶς τοῖς ἐμοῖς ῥήμασιν πιστεύσετε;

*For if you believed Moses,  
 you would believe me,  
 for he wrote about me.*

*But if you do not believe his writings,  
 how will you believe my words?*

*Ideational function.* In v. 43, Jesus first establishes the fact that the Jews are rejecting him because he has come from the Father. He then poses a contrasting conditional statement. The Subjunctive mood ἔλθῆ (Aor. Act. Subj. *he/she comes*) presents a hypothetical situation that may or may not be realized, but in the event that a

self-commissioned messenger does come, the Jews will accept him, not Jesus who comes in the name of the Father (v. 43a).

As Jesus concludes his defense, the Indicative type 2 conditional in v. 46 points out that the Jews do not understand or believe Moses, so therefore they do not understand or believe Jesus. Then, with an Indicative type 1 or “factual” conditional in v. 47, Jesus frames his final conclusion with a rhetorical question that casts doubt on the possibility that his accusers will ever believe him. The causal logico-semantic relation that characterizes Indicative conditionals also strengthens the rhetorical impact of both conditionals. Had the Jews believed Moses and understood his writings, they would logically be led to the right understanding of Jesus and consequently, belief in him. They would also not have accused Jesus of breaking the law and claiming to be God’s Son.

In presenting the argument in such an order, the author of John appears to adopt a strategy of first presenting the unbelief of the Jews in a milder form (v. 43 Subjunctive conditional) then proceeding to more decisive and conclusive assertions (vv. 46, 47 Indicative conditionals). The author’s goal is to convince the audience that the Jews’ charge against Jesus’ healing on the Sabbath and his subsequent Christological claim is flawed. The accusation against Jesus is to be rejected.<sup>207</sup> And as Thyen puts it, Jesus also turns his accusers into the accused.<sup>208</sup>

*Interpersonal function.* In v. 43 the emphatic first personal pronoun ἐγὼ I continues the antithesis between ἐγὼ I (cf. vv. 31, 34, 36, 45) and ὑμεῖς you (cf. vv. 33,

---

<sup>207</sup> However, in the temptation account in Matt 4:1-11 Satan poses two Indicative conditionals, vv. 3, v. 6 *If* (εἰ) *you are the Son of God*, followed by a Subjunctive conditional, v. 9 *if* (ἐάν) *you fall down and worship me*. The order suggests a different strategy. After failing to tempt Jesus twice by appealing to his divine status, Satan retreats to a purely hypothetical suggestion of Jesus’ bowing down before him and worshiping him.

<sup>208</sup> Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, 327.

35, 38, 39, 44, 45) throughout this debate. The same antithesis is also found in subsequent debates, for example, 8:41 (the Jews speaking) *we* (ἡμεῖς) *were not born of fornication* and 8:42 (Jesus speaking) *for I* (ἐγώ) *have come here from God*. The author of John presents two opposing views in this debate, so that the audience must think and choose carefully for themselves which view is right: the Jews' (*you*) or Jesus' (*I*). The conditional in v. 43 forms part of the extended *I-you* argument.

The question conditional in v. 47 also prompts the reader to probe deeper into the Christological debate. It is part of the argument the author records, with two parallel questions that point to the cause of the Jews' unbelief, and the second of which (v. 47) is framed as a conditional question.

5:44, 47 (rhetorical questions)

*How* (πῶς) *can you believe, when you receive glory from one another...?*

*But if you do not believe (Moses') writings, how* (πῶς) *will you believe my words?*

To both questions, the author does not record the reply of the Jews, but it is obvious that with these questions, Jesus has identified the cause of their unbelief: seeking glory from one another (not God), and not understanding and obeying Moses' teaching.

A question conditional appears again in 18:23, when the servant of the high priest accuses Jesus of being improper or disrespectful, 18:22 *Is that the way you answer the high priest?* to which Jesus replies with two consecutive Indicative type 1 conditionals, the second of which is also a question. In this case, neither the high priest nor the servant gives any explanation or reply.<sup>209</sup>

---

<sup>209</sup> As with most cases in treating Johannine conditionals, commentators such as Barrett and Bultmann offer very short analyses of Jesus' statement, while Carson and Morris make reference to Jesus' response compared with that of Paul in Acts 23:2-5 and Jesus' teaching on turning the other cheek in Matt 5:29 respectively. None of them, however, describe the features and functions of the consecutive conditionals and how they contribute to the argument of Jesus' defense.



18:23a, 23b

*If (εἰ) I have spoken wrongly, testify what is wrong;  
but if (εἰ) rightly, why (τι) do you strike me?*

In both cases, the consecutive Indicative conditionals (including the question conditional) are used to prove that Jesus' opponents have wrongfully accused Jesus. In the Sabbath healing debate, it was revealed to the Jews that Jesus is the Son, but they ignored trustworthy testimonies and sought glory from one another instead of from God. As Jesus points out, the Jews are further indicted for their unbelief by the writings of Moses, leading to their rejection of the words of Jesus (vv. 46, 47). In his reply to the high priest, Jesus' consecutive conditionals (18:23a, 23b) effectively show that it is not Jesus who stands under trial, but the high priest and his servant. In both cases, the conditionals are used as part of the author's persuasive strategy to turn the accusers of Jesus, the Jews, into the accused. The Indicative conditional (including the question conditional) is used in these instances as an effective rhetorical device to rebuke Jesus' opponents.<sup>210</sup>

NT examples of consecutive Indicative conditionals used in strongly argumentative discourses can be illustrated by the following speeches in Acts. The contexts of these speeches are either formal and legal, or highly emotionally charged.

Acts 18:14, 15 (Gallio to the Jews)

*If it were a matter of wrong or of vicious crime, O Jews  
but if there are questions about words and names and your own law*

Acts 19:38, 39 (Ephesus town clerk to the riotous crowd)

*If Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a complaint against any person  
But if you want anything beyond this*

---

<sup>210</sup> In both John 5 and John 10, Jesus uses consecutive Indicative conditionals to conclude his speeches. See also Paul's use of Indicative conditionals in defense of the resurrection in 1 Cor 15:12, 13, 14, 16, 17, and 19.

Acts 25:11a, 11b (Paul to Festus)

*If then I am a wrongdoer, and have committed anything worthy of death  
but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me*

*Textual function.* Two pairs of clausal marked Themes highlight how Jesus' defense is structured. The first pair is found in vv. 41 and 44, where the two verses primarily bracket the conditional statement in v. 43. While Jesus emphasizes his refusal to receive glory or affirmation from people (v. 41), he points out that the Jews' unbelief stems from their unwillingness to seek glory from God (v. 44).

5:41, 44

Δόξαν παρὰ ἀνθρώπων οὐ λαμβάνω

*Glory from people I do not receive*

τὴν δόξαν τὴν παρὰ τοῦ μόνου θεοῦ οὐ ζητεῖτε;

*(How...) the glory that is from the one and only God you do not seek?*

The conditional in v. 43 thus contrasts these two closely related marked Themes: Jesus has come in the name of the Father and is seeking the Father's glory, but the Jews express no interest in Jesus because they are far more concerned with glory from the people. This point is also expressed in the marked Theme *him* in the apodosis in v. 43, *if* (ἐάν) *another comes in his own name, him* (ἐκεῖνον) *you will receive*. Jesus does not expect a reply to his rhetorical question in v. 44 from his opponents. He simply points out their lack of genuine faith in God (cf. 3:12). As Beekman and Callow remark, a rhetorical question does not expect an answer but it demands more attention from the audience to understand what the speaker means.<sup>211</sup>

---

<sup>211</sup> Rhetorical questions that begin with *why* or *how*, "reflect negatively upon the legitimacy of the purpose, reason for, or motive of another's actions or statements." Beekman and Callow, *Translating*, 241, 245. See also Matt 12:27 *And if* (εἰ) *I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your people drive them out?* 1 Cor 15:12 *But if* (εἰ) *it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how* (πῶς) *can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?*

The second pair of clausal marked Themes appears in the final statement of Jesus' defense in 5:47. As marked themes in consecutive clauses, a parallel is set up between Moses' writings and Jesus' word:

5:47  
 εἰ δὲ τοῖς ἐκείνου γράμμασιν οὐ πιστεύετε,  
 πῶς τοῖς ἐμοῖς ῥήμασιν πιστεύσετε;

*But if you do not believe his writings,  
 how will you believe my words?*

The parallel points not only to the object of belief, it also represents the argument from the lesser (Moses' writing) to the greater (Jesus' words).<sup>212</sup> In addition, it is also the first marked theme (v. 47a) that reverses the Jews from being the accusers to the accused.

Furthermore, by virtue of their location in the text, the consecutive Indicative conditionals in v. 46 and v. 47 also serve as the concluding or summative statements. The author uses these two conditionals, a statement and a question, to direct the attention of the audience to the issue of the unbelief of the Jews. Had they understood Moses, they would have understood and believed Jesus. If they truly followed the writings of Moses, they would also obey Jesus' words. The rhetorical effect of the consecutive conditionals is felt more acutely when Jesus poses a question in v. 47b *...how will you believe my words?* The implied answer is that they will not.

Furthermore, the textual meaning of the conditionals in this extended defense by Jesus (5:19-47) also provides the basis for subsequent debates in the remainder of the Gospel. As Halliday puts it, "What can be meant, at any moment in the discourse, is very much a product of history: of what could be meant, and what has been meant,

---

<sup>212</sup> As Morris writes, "Moses' writings were prophetic. They pointed forward to Christ (cf. 1:45). Therefore, those who rejected the Christ did not really believe what Moses had written." Morris, *Gospel according to John*, 295.

before.”<sup>213</sup> The concept being utilized is what Halliday calls “intratextual history” or co-texts of a sentence.

As the Gospel narrative continues to unfold, the author of John continues to develop the arguments that are raised in John 5. Two examples show the importance of co-texts for conditionals. The first is related to the life-giving power of Jesus. The conditional statement that has an intratextual history with John 5 is found in John 7:23, spoken by Jesus during the Feast of Tabernacles.

7:23

εἰ περιτομήν λαμβάνει ἄνθρωπος ἐν σαββάτῳ  
ἵνα μὴ λυθῆ ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως,  
ἐμοὶ χολᾶτε  
ὅτι ὅλον ἄνθρωπον ὑγιῆ ἐποίησα ἐν σαββάτῳ;

*If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath  
so that the law of Moses may not be broken,  
are you angry with me  
because I made an entire man whole on the Sabbath?*

This Indicative conditional question challenges the Jewish reaction toward Jesus for his healing performed on the Sabbath. The protasis asserts the legitimacy and the accepted practice of circumcision on the Sabbath. The apodosis challenges the Jews’ hostility toward Jesus for his act of healing (John 5). As an Indicative conditional with causal logico-semantic relation, the argument is strong and logically sound. The making of an entire person well, even on the Sabbath, is within the purview of the Law of Moses. As a rhetorical question (*are you angry with me...?* cf. 3:12; 5:47), the apodosis in effect reveals that Jesus’ opponents have no reason to be angry with him. The focus of the conditional is directed at their attitude toward Jesus. In John 5, the Jews were

---

<sup>213</sup> Halliday, “History of a Sentence,” *CW* 3:360. Halliday discusses four different sentence histories: intertextual, developmental, systemic, and intratextual.

angry because Jesus healed someone on the Sabbath and made claims that God is his Father.

The continual debate of Jesus' life-giving authority in John 7 can also be seen from a textual function point of view. The marked theme *circumcision* in the protasis is set up to contrast with the marked theme *an entire man* in the explanatory clause of the apodosis. If cutting the foreskin of a boy is lawful, the healing of a whole man ought not to become the reason for the Jewish accusation of Jesus. In other words, Jesus' argument in John 5 is further strengthened by 7:23, reminding the Jews that circumcision is widely practiced on the Sabbath.<sup>214</sup> As the reader continues to follow the rest of John's Gospel, the argument that supports Jesus' claim also becomes stronger. The Indicative conditional in John 7:23 also forms part of the conclusion to the paragraph of vv. 14-24. Like several other Indicative conditionals, 7:23 is located at the end of a speech segment (7:14-24) and draws an argument to a close (cf. 5:46, 47; 10:35-38).<sup>215</sup>

The second co-text is found later in the same discourse, at the feast of Tabernacles. The theme of witnessing that was introduced by the Subjunctive conditional in 5:31 is further elaborated in the Concessive conditional in 8:14.

8:14

[1] **κἄν** ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἐμαυτοῦ,

[2] ἀληθῆς ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία μου,

[3] ὅτι οἶδα

[4] πόθεν ἦλθον

[5] καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγω·

[6] ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ οἶδατε

[7] πόθεν ἔρχομαι

[8] ἢ ποῦ ὑπάγω.

<sup>214</sup> "The Law itself justified an act on the Sabbath which effected the physical and ceremonial perfection of a man, and thereby justified the Sabbath work of Jesus." Barrett, *Gospel according to St. John*, 315.

<sup>215</sup> The *UBSGNT* has 7:10-24 divided into vv. 10-13 and vv. 14-24; N-A 28<sup>th</sup> makes the following divisions: vv. 10-13, 14-18, 19-24. Most commentators (Carson, Barrett, Morris, Brown) also treat 7:14-24 as a unit.

- [1] *And if I testify on my own behalf,*  
 [2] *my testimony is true,*  
 [3] *for I know where I came from*  
 [4] *and where I am going.*  
 [5] *But you do not know*  
 [6] *where I come from*  
 [7] *or where I am going.*

The apparent contradiction between Jesus' conditionals in 5:31 and 8:14 can be resolved as follows. The conditional in 5:31 is spoken from a human point of view. Jesus has the support of witnesses such as John the Baptist, the Father, and the Scripture. However, in 8:14, speaking as the divine Son of God (*for I know where I came from, and where I am going*), he does not require any human witnesses. By acknowledging his opponents' premise (*καὶν ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ and if I testify*), Jesus' position nevertheless remains unchanged, that his testimony remains valid. The same concessive feature also appears again in 8:16 *But even if (καὶ ἐὰν) I do judge, my judgment is true.*<sup>216</sup> The contrast between Jesus and the Jews is drawn sharply by the two emphatic pronouns, cl. 1 ἐγὼ *I* (Jesus), who knows his coming and going, and, cl. 6 ὑμεῖς *you* (the Jews) do not. Jesus once more underscores, with a marked Theme in the apodosis (cl. 2), that his testimony is ἀληθῆς *true*.

Therefore, Jesus' Sabbath healing debate (5:19-47) serves as the core "statement" for his Christological claim. In subsequent debates with the Jews, such as the one at the feast of Tabernacles, some of these themes are further elaborated. Part of such elaboration are the conditional statements of 6:23 and 7:16. These conditionals form the co-texts to the Sabbath debate and motivate the reader to explore and accept the central purpose of the Gospel (20:31).

---

<sup>216</sup> The only other occurrence of *even if* conditional in John is found in Jesus' conditional in 11:25: *even if (καὶν) they die.*

## Summary and Conclusion

This chapter attempts to study the fuller meaning of conditional statements by investigating the first four discourses of Jesus in John's Gospel that contain conditional statements by Jesus. The audiences in the first three discourses (i.e. Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, and the royal official) are receptive to Jesus, with the latter two individuals eventually putting their trust in Jesus. But in the fourth discourse, the attitude of the Jews toward Jesus is quite hostile, resulting an extended defense from Jesus.

The study of conditionals was based on the three main language functions according to SFL: ideational (including experiential and logical), interpersonal, and textual functions. Moreover, instead of approaching conditionals simply as single, individual statements, conditionals selected for this thesis have been studied in context. The goal is to show that classification of conditionals based the Mood and Tense of the protasis is inadequate and often misleading. A closely related goal is to analyze how the purpose of John's Gospel (20:31) is accomplished through the author's organization of Jesus' discourses, including the conditionals selected by the author.

It has been demonstrated that several system networks and grammatical features play major roles in the various functions and meanings of conditionals. For example, negative polarity often accentuates the rhetorical force of the assertion. In the conditional to the royal official and the bystanders, 4:48 *If you people do not* (ἐάν μὴ) *see signs and wonders, you will never* (οὐ μὴ) *believe*, Jesus directly confronts his audience's expectation for signs as the basis for their belief. The categories of Causal and Correlative logico-semantic relations for Indicative and Subjunctive conditionals,

respectively, are also adopted. The former underscores the causal or logical connection between the protasis and apodosis, whereas the latter simply describes the occurrences as either co-occurrence or correlative. The rhetorical impact is significantly increased in one of the final Indicative conditionals to the Jews in the Sabbath healing debate, 5:46 *For if you believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote about me*, because of the causal relation.

The grammatical Subject of conditionals also enables text segmentation. In the Sabbath healing debate (5:19-47), *the Son* is the Subject of both the protasis and apodosis of v. 19, Jesus' first conditional. However, the subsequent conditionals (vv. 31, 43, 46, 47) the Subject predominantly changes to *you* (the Jews), signaling a more direct message toward the Jews. In addition, question conditionals are often used to express undesirability or error committed by the audience. In 3:12 *If I tell you earthly things...how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?* Jesus wants Nicodemus to know that Nicodemus cannot fathom spiritual truth, despite the fact that Nicodemus is the teacher of Israel (cf. the question conditional in 5:47). Such questions also prompt the reader to self-reflect to discern if he/she has a similar lack of understanding. Ideally, after reflection and self-examination, the reader will take the proper course of action and put his/her faith in Jesus. Other interpersonal functions are expressed through the feature of "challenge" in the conversation dynamics between Jesus and Nicodemus, and the emphatic personal pronouns of ἐγὼ *I* and ὑμεῖς *you* that is prominent in Jesus' Sabbath healing defense.

Textually, marked Themes are used to emphasize the point of departure of clauses. In the Nicodemus discourse 3:12 *If I told you earthly things and you do not*



*believe*, the marked theme (underlined) highlights that Nicodemus does not even understand earthly things. The chance of Nicodemus understanding spiritual matters is therefore very low.

Conditionals also function as introductory and concluding statements in paragraphs. For example, the Father and Son conditional in 5:19 forms the point of departure and sets the stage for the rest of the paragraph of vv. 19-30.<sup>217</sup> Meaning of conditionals also enriched by the study of co-texts. Conditionals in the Nicodemus discourse echo motifs such as new birth and belief that are prominent in John 1:1-13. Other textual features such as clause configuration also express the way conditionals are thematized as clause complexes.

To describe conditionals simply based on Mood and Tense ignores the rich and complex nature of language. The functional approach gives the interpreter a more systematic way to describe and understand the complex construction and meaning of NT Greek conditionals. Such an approach also reflects more truly the complex nature and the multiple functions of language.

As persuasive devices, conditionals encourage people to perceive alternative situations and form new perspectives of reality. Greek scholars and commentators in general have overlooked how Johannine conditionals create the environment for the audience to probe deeper and to understand more fully God's salvation plan through Jesus. Conditionals also serve to minimize over-simplification of the message of the Gospel and aid the audience to consider more carefully potential obstacles and implications that the Gospel brings. Regardless of their initial attitude toward Jesus or

---

<sup>217</sup> Text segmentation of the discourses studied in this chapter by critical Greek texts and Greek commentators has been quite consistent.

their level of faith, the audience, both narrative and external, is challenged to move closer to and deeper in their trust in Jesus (20:31).

In polemic situations, the Indicative conditional is used more often than the Subjunctive. Its “factual” supposition, together with the causal logico-semantic relation between the protasis and the apodosis, makes statements compelling. The final conditionals in the Nicodemus discourse (3:12) and the Sabbath healing debate (5:46, 47) are examples of such use. On the other hand, the Subjunctive (including the exceptive) conditional is used more in expository and didactic situations. Such is the case with the two consecutive Subjunctive conditionals (3:3, 5) that introduce the topic of the new birth in the Nicodemus discourse. These conditionals are especially relevant to the purpose of the Gospel because they are the first two conditionals that Jesus speaks in John, and the universal application of the statements is expressed through the grammatical Subject  $\tau\iota\varsigma$  (*one* or *anyone*) in both conditionals.

As a rhetorical device, conditionals can suspend judgment (5:31), expose defective logic (5:47), address objections (5:19), and present counter arguments. They can also solve apparent contradictions, explore plausible situations and outcomes (3:3,5), and deepen convictions for those who have a certain level of faith in Jesus, as in the case with the royal official with the conditional in 4:48.<sup>218</sup> A number of these persuasive roles have been studied in this chapter. Others will be explored in the chapters that follow.<sup>219</sup>

---

<sup>218</sup> For example, Jesus’ Subjunctive conditionals in the teaching of the Vine in 15:4, 6, 7, 10 to his disciples.

<sup>219</sup> It appears that the concept of rhetoric cannot be neatly located in one single language function. On the level of the simple clause, rhetoric is part of the ideational function realized by the choice of Mood in the protasis, representing either a factual or hypothetical condition. On the level of the clause complex, rhetoric can be seen as part of the interpersonal function, realized by the choice of Mood and Person

While the outcome of Jesus' discourse with Nicodemus is not immediately known, the author of John reports the conversion of the Samaritan woman and the royal official. The Samaritans also acknowledge Jesus as *the Savior of the world* (4:42), and the royal official's faith as strictly based on Jesus' words. However, although Jesus performs a miraculous healing sign, the Jews in Jerusalem refuse to receive him. Jesus defends his action and his Christological claim in the extended discourse, accompanied by a number of conditionals. After this first rejection of Jesus, the author continues to recount another miraculous sign of Jesus and an extended speech. The speech and especially its conditionals will be the focus of next chapter.

---

(speech or non-speech function) in the apodosis. The use of rhetorical question or question conditional is a case in point. Furthermore, rhetoric is also part of the textual function. Opening and concluding conditionals in discourses such as Jesus' conditionals in John 5:19 (opening) and John 5:46, 47 (concluding), complement each other in his defense of Sabbath healing and his Christological claim.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## THE BREAD OF LIFE DISCOURSE (6:41-65)

## AND THE FINAL DEBATE WITH THE JEWS (10:22-39)

## Introduction

This chapter will continue to demonstrate that in order to understand NT conditionals, basic descriptive framework based on Moods and Tenses is to be broadened. As a clause complex, both the conditional clause (the protasis) and the main clause (apodosis) have to be included in the description of the meaning of conditionals. As a rhetorical device, conditionals prompt the audience to exercise rationality and imagination. Causal and correlative relations that are present in conditional statements also motivate people to draw conclusions, make inferences, and imagine *different* possible outcomes. The functional approach proposed in this study is based on SFL's theory of language, and especially the metafunctions of language. The descriptions that have been adopted for analyzing conditionals are primarily lexicogrammar and semantics.<sup>220</sup> Through the interactions of these networks of grammatical systems, conditionals construe a multidimensional semantic space that is both rich and complex.

In this chapter, three more discourses are under investigation. The first two discourses found in John 6 are closely connected. The first discourse (6:41-59) belongs to part of the Bread of life discourse with the Galilean Jews, while the second discourse (6:60-65) is a continuation of the discourse with the disciples only.<sup>221</sup> In these two

---

<sup>220</sup> That is on SFL's stratification scheme's "content" stratum. The next higher stratum, or the "context" stratum, will also be briefly considered in the next chapter of this study.

<sup>221</sup> The amount of secondary literature on John 6 is considerable. Among some of the recent contributions include: Culpepper (ed.), *Critical Readings of John 6*; Gärtner, *Critical Readings*; Barrett, "Dialectic Christology," 49-69; Barrett, "The Flesh of the Son of Man," 37-49; Crossan, "It is Written," 3-21; Griffith, "Apostasy," 183-92; Phillips, "'This is a Hard Saying,'" 23-56; Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea*;

discourses (6:41-59; 6:60-65), Jesus addresses audiences who are following him out of curiosity after the sign of the feeding of the 5000. The third discourse forms the final debate between Jesus and the Jews, and is found in 10:22-39. In this discourse however, the scene changes and the audience is the Jews in Jerusalem. For the last time in his public ministry, Jesus engages in a defense against the charge of blasphemy.

A total of nine conditionals are found in these discourses. With the exception of 10:24, which is spoken by the Jews, the remaining are spoken by Jesus (6:44, 51, 53, 62, 65; 10:35-36, 37, 38). The functional analysis of these and their related conditionals will include choices in the systemic networks such as MOOD, ASPECT, TENSE, PERSON, POLARITY, and thematic structure (clause and clause complex). For example, significant shifts appear between 6:51 and 6:53. The grammatical Subjects of the protases of these two consecutive conditionals change from the indefinite third Person *anyone* (v. 51) to the second Person *you* (v. 53). The Complements also change from the *(living) bread to the Son of Man's flesh and blood*. The tense of the apodosis also shifts from the Future tense (*he/she shall live*) to the Present tense (*you have*). These changes will be investigated in our approach to conditionals, and language in general, as a meaning making resource.

Grammatical features such as linguistic patterns of collocation and correlation, ellipsis (protasis-only conditional), introductory and concluding conditionals, and grammatical intricacy will also form the core of the investigation. For example, the concept of grammatical intricacy will be applied to the concluding consecutive

---

Menken, "John 6:51c-58," 1-26; and Anderson, *Christology*, and his bibliography on John 6 (pp. 287-91). As a result of the issues concerning sources, interpolations, and christologies that revolve around John 6, Anderson characterizes John 6 as, "the 'Grand Central Station' of Johannine studies. Anderson, *Christology*, 7. See also Brown, *John*, 1:272-74, 284-85. In spite of the amount of attention given to this chapter, discussion on the Greek conditionals and how they function in context is negligible.

Indicative conditionals with the Jews in 10:35-36, 37, and 38. As will be shown, these conditionals represent the final and climactic statements to support Jesus' Christological claim before the Jews in John's Gospel.

Along with these linguistic investigations, the goal of this chapter is also to observe how the author of John uses conditionals to achieve the persuasive purpose of the Gospel. The aim is to show that with the exception of debates with the Jews, the majority of the conditionals (mostly Subjunctive) motivate the hearer to come to the right or a fuller understanding of who Jesus is and what it truly means to put one's faith in him. This is especially true in the discourses with the Jews and the disciples in John 6, where the audience is urged to embrace the inconceivable notion of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man that apparently draws much misunderstanding.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: section 4.1 will examine Jesus' discourse with the Galilean Jews (6:41-59), section 4.2 will analyze the discourse with his disciples (6:60-65), and section 4.3 will investigate Jesus' final debate with the Jews (10:22-39).

#### 4.1 The Galilean Jews (6:41-59)

In this part of Jesus' Bread of life discourse, the audience shifts from the crowd to *the Jews* (6:41, 52 οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι), presumably from Galilee, the same region where Jesus grew up. The author remarks that the Jews are equally perplexed as the crowd by Jesus' word. Specifically, they grumble at Jesus' statements concerning his origin from the Father, v. 42 *Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph...? How does he now say, "I have come down from heaven?"*

Most critical Greek NT editions and commentators divide Jesus' reply into two paragraphs (vv. 41-51, 52-59).<sup>222</sup> In the first paragraph, Jesus replies with two conditionals, one at the beginning of his speech and the other at the end. The two conditionals, both Subjunctive, utilize network systems and grammatical features that include the metaphorical meaning of "bread," a prominent use of negative polarity (*if...not; no one; not; no*), and grammatical intricacy. Then, Jesus further responds to the Jews' bewilderment with the third and final conditional (v. 53). The layout of these three conditionals in these two paragraphs is shown below.

Text/Paragraph 1 (vv. 41-51) (v. 41 οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι)  
 v. 44 Conditional  
 v. 51 Conditional

Text/Paragraph 2 (vv. 52-59) (v. 52 οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι)  
 v. 53 Conditional

The conditional in v. 53 is a continuation and expansion of the preceding conditional in v. 51 with significant lexical and grammatical changes. These changes are intentional. On one hand Jesus prompts the Jews to look deeper and more seriously into the meaning of the partaking in the Bread of life as well as a positive response to his implicit invitation to eat the Bread. At the same time, the author of the Gospel frames the two conditionals to urge the reader to move from being a spectator to becoming an active participant. They are to involve themselves personally in the eating of the Bread.

---

<sup>222</sup> John 6:41-59 is divided into two paragraphs: vv. 41-51 and vv. 52-59, with the question by the Jews in v. 52 as the beginning of the new paragraph. Such segmentation is consistent among most critical Greek texts, such as *USBGNT*, N-A 28<sup>th</sup>, W-H, and Greek commentators including Morris and Barrett. Brown, however, begins a new paragraph in v. 51 and considers vv. 51-59 as a "duplicate" of the previous discourse. But the notion of duplication is not found in other parts of the Gospel. The material looks similar and yet it is different, and it is not a "duplicate" of Jesus' earlier speech. Carson, on the other hand, begins a new paragraph in v. 49. He posits that from v. 49 Jesus resorts to metaphor. However, Jesus' "bread" metaphor began as earlier as in v. 27 *Do not work for the food which perishes* and v. 32 *it is my Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven*. Therefore, the division vv. 41-51, 52-59 is preferred. Both paragraphs also share the same pattern of the Jews voicing out their misunderstanding (vv. 41-42, 52) followed by Jesus' response. For a defense of the unity of vv. 51c-58 with the rest of the discourse (contra Bultman), see Barrett, *Gospel according to St. John*, 283-84.

In this chapter, conditionals will also be used to analyze the phenomenon of the so-called Johannine “misunderstanding,” where many of Jesus’ audiences fail to understand Jesus or misinterpret his words. The author of John records a number of conditionals such as 6:51, 53, to surprise and challenge the reader to pay closer attention and to look beyond the surface for answers to their lack of understanding.

The first paragraph (vv. 41-51) will be treated first. The conditionals in vv. (43-) 44 and 51 are provided below, with rankshifted clauses marked with brackets [...].

6:43-44

μη γογγύζετε μετ' ἀλλήλων.  
οὐδεὶς δύναται [[ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με]]  
ἐὰν μὴ ὁ πατήρ [[ὁ πέμψας με]] ἐλκύσῃ αὐτόν,  
καὶ γὰρ ἀναστήσω αὐτόν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

*Stop grumbling among yourselves.  
No one can come to me  
if the Father [who sent me] does **not** draw them,  
and I will raise them up at the last day.*

6:51

ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος [[ὁ ζῶν]] [[ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς]:  
ἐὰν τις φάγῃ ἐκ τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου  
ζήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα,  
καὶ ὁ ἄρτος δὲ [[ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω]] ἡ σὰρξ μου ἐστίν [[ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου  
ζωῆς]].

*I am the [living] bread [that comes down from heaven];  
if anyone eats this bread,  
they will live forever;  
and the bread [which I shall give for the life of the world] is my flesh.*

*Ideational function.* In both v. 44 and v. 51, Jesus continues to use Subjunctive conditionals to teach about the role of the Father and the importance of active participation in God’s salvation plan. The apodosis in v. 44 unequivocally states that it is the Father who is at work in saving people, *if the Father does **not** draw* (ἐλκύσῃ Aor.



Act. Subj.) *them*.<sup>223</sup> The Subjunctive mood portrays the action to take place in the realm of projection, as is the case with other Subjunctive conditionals such as 3:3, 5 *if one is not born* (γεννηθῆ Aor. Pass. Subj.) *again...of water and the Spirit*.

Throughout 6:44-46, Jesus underscores the action and presence of the Father, for example, v. 45 *from the Father* and v. 46 *has seen the Father* (twice). From v. 47, however, the grammatical Subjects focus on Jesus (vv. 48, 51) and people in general (v. 47 *he or she who believes*, v. 49 *your Fathers*, and v. 51 *τις anyone*). In v. 51, the emphasis is on people's "eating" of Jesus, the Bread of life. The Subjunctive mood φάγη (Aor. Act. Subj. *he/she eats*) also describes the action as probable or hypothetical. In light of the previous statements made (vv. 47-50), Jesus uses the second conditional (v. 51) to invite his audience to receive life by active participation, that is, eating the Bread of life.<sup>224</sup>

Logico-semantically, one may argue that a casual relation exists in both conditionals, that is, the eating of the Bread causes people to have eternal life. However, as the conditional clause is framed in the Subjunctive mood, it is more likely that Jesus

<sup>223</sup> Gk. ἔλκω *I draw* implies a certain degree of forcefulness. It is found again in 12:32 *I will draw all people to myself*; 18:10 *Peter...drew* (the sword); 21:6 (the disciples) *were unable to haul the net in*; 21:11 *Peter...dragged the net ashore*. See also Acts 16:19; 21:30; Jas 2:6. Here echoes the same word used to describe God's action to Israel in Jer 31:3 LXX *I have drawn* (ἐἴλκυσά) *you with unfailing kindness*. See BDAG, *Lexicon*, 318; Louw-Nida, *Semantic Domain*, vol 1, 15.178; Lust, et al. *Lexicon*, 193.

<sup>224</sup> Brown summarizes four major interpretations for the meaning of *the bread of life* in John 6. (i) The "sapiential view:" the whole discourse (vv. 35-58) refers to the revelation in and by Jesus or his teaching. (ii) Only vv. 35-50 (or 51) belongs to this sapiential theme, vv. 51-58 refers to the bread of the Lord's Supper. (iii) The whole discourse (vv 35-58) refers to the so-called eucharistic bread. Finally, (iv) the bread refers to *both* revelation and the eucharistic flesh of Jesus. And there is "respectable evidence" for a secondary eucharistic reference in vv. 35-50, and a primary reference in vv. 51-58. *John*, 1:272-74, 284-85. However, the eucharistic view is questionable for the following reasons: (i) the word σῶμα *body* not σὰρξ *flesh* is used in the rest of the New Testament for the Lord's Supper (cf. Matt 26:26 par.; 1 Cor 11:24), (ii) the Johannine *Son of Man* refers primarily to Jesus' descent, ascent and glorification (3:13; 6:62; 12:23) and does not fit the sacrificial motif of the Lord Supper, (iii) with v. 63 emphasizing *the Spirit* and Jesus' words as the life-giving agent, *eating and drinking* is best understood as the metaphor for putting one's faith in Jesus and receiving the gift of life. In other words, John 6 is not about the Lord's Supper; rather, the Lord's Supper is about what is described in John 6. See also Keener, *John*, 1:687-91; Menken, "John 6:51c-58," 183-204.

is showing the people how they can have eternal life (apodosis) by projecting a scenario (protasis) that is associated with it. In other texts, for example John 3, eternal life is associated with being born again and believing in the Son of Man, Jesus (cf. 3:3, 5, 15). In other words, these conditionals characterize the nature and the associated phenomenon of God's salvation plan.<sup>225</sup>

*Interpersonal function.* The choice of οὐδείς *no one* (v. 44 apodosis) and τις *anyone* (v. 51 protasis and apodosis) in the network of Person clearly points to the application of the conditionals beyond the immediate audience. In other words, Jesus refers to people in general, not just the Jews or his disciples. As the grammatical Subjects, the third person *all/every* and *one* dominate this discourse segment, for example, v. 45 *they shall all* (πάντες) *be taught...everyone* (πᾶς) *who has heard*; and v. 46 *(not) that anyone* (τις) *has seen the Father*.<sup>226</sup> Both conditionals (vv. 44, 51) also show that Jesus' teaching on the Bread of life has universal application, for Jesus is indeed the Savior of the world (4:42). *All* who come to Jesus must be first drawn by God; and *anyone* who eats Jesus' bread, whether the crowd, the Jews, the disciples, or the reader, receive his life. The conditionals portray salvation from two complementary perspectives, i.e., divine and human. In doing so, the author prevents the reader from

---

<sup>225</sup> On v. 44 Barrett writes, "Hence Jesus merely reiterates the truth and does not seek to establish it by force of argument; those whom the Father gives to him will be drawn to him, with or without argument, and they will not be cast out; those whom the Father does not give will not come." Barrett, *Gospel according to St. John*, 295. Likewise, Carson interprets v. 44 in the broader context of the grace of God and underscores that salvation is impossible without divine help. Carson, *Gospel according to John*, 292-93.

<sup>226</sup> John 6:46 οὐχ ὅτι τὸν πατέρα ἑώρακέν τις εἰ μὴ ὁ ὢν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, οὗτος ἑώρακεν τὸν πατέρα. *Not that any person has seen the Father, except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father.* The use of the particle εἰ (with μὴ) is non-conditional. The statement is made to safeguard the audience from the erroneous conclusion based on v. 45 that a person can enjoy a personal and mystical knowledge of God apart from the revelation of Jesus, who is the only one who has seen the Father (cf. 1:18). Barrett, *Gospel according to St John*, 296.

developing a view of faith that is over-simplified or one-sided.

*Textual function.* The first conditional is structured with a fronted apodosis (Q ^ P), v. 44 *no one can come to me, if the Father...does not draw them*. The apodosis thus represents the thematic clause of the conditional clause complex. Instead of offering an explanation to the Jews' misunderstanding based solely on his earthly origin (v. 42), Jesus goes into the heart of the matter. Those who follow him are those whom have experienced the work of salvation from the Father. The third and final clause v. 44 *and I (κἀγὼ) will raise (ἀναστήσω) them up at the last day*<sup>227</sup> also adds a new dimension to the discourse by referring to the eschatological aspect of believing, that is, the future resurrection (cf. Jesus' conditional to Martha 11:25).

Similar to a number of other conditional statements by Jesus, v. 44 also functions as an introductory statement to the paragraph of vv. 41-51 (cf. 3:3, 5 in Nicodemus discourse; and 5:19, 31). The narrative portion begins with the Jews' grumbling and misunderstanding (vv. 41-42). Immediately after addressing their grumbling (v. 43), Jesus uses a conditional to address their lack of understanding. The grammatical Subject of the first protasis ὁ πατήρ *the Father*, with the embedded clause *[[who sent me]]*, continues to appear in subsequent verses and is repeated five more times, v. 45 *taught of God...learn from the Father*, v. 46 *seen the Father (twice)...from God*. The Father's role in people following Jesus is reiterated again in his final conditional at the end of his discourse with the disciples, 6:65 *no one can come to me, if it has not been granted*

---

<sup>227</sup> Gk. ἀναστήσω (Fut. Act. Ind. or Aor. Act. Subj.) is semantically considered as expectation (Future) or projection (Subjunctive). The feature of expectation is related to the semantic feature of projection, but with a greater sense of certainty. Porter, *Idioms*, 44. The final clause in its entirety may also be seen as part of the double protasis of Jesus' conditional.

*them from the Father.*<sup>228</sup>

As v. 41 functions as the introductory statement to the text of vv. 41-51, Jesus' conditional in v. 51 also concludes the same text (cf. the conditionals 5:46, 47). Moreover, the grammatical intricacy of clauses and embedded clauses reflects a rather complex argument. The clause by clause of the Greek text is shown below, with embedded or rankshifted clauses marked as [...].

6:51

[1] ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος [[ὁ ζῶν]] [[ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς]]·

[2] ἐάν τις φάγη ἐκ τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου

[3] ζήσκει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα,

[4] καὶ ὁ ἄρτος δὲ [[ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω]] ἢ σὰρξ μου ἐστὶν [[ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς]].

The author includes additional elements that are represented by the rankshifted clauses to elaborate and enhance the argument instead of simply saying that Jesus is the Bread and anyone who eats the Bread will live. These added elements include: cl. 1 ὁ ζῶν *the living*, or Jesus has life in himself (cf. 5:26), and he is from heaven, ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς *coming down from heaven*.<sup>229</sup> Furthermore, in cl. 4, Jesus will give the Bread (ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω *which I shall give*) to the world (ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς *for the life of the world*). And it will happen on Calvary.<sup>230</sup>

These added elements reflect the nuances of Jesus' argument in responding to the Galilean Jews' grumbling and misunderstanding (vv. 41-42). The opening conditional statement of the Sabbath debate also exhibits a similar level of grammatical intricacy with five ranking clauses and three rankshifted clauses (see 5:19). Introductory

<sup>228</sup> If taken as the second protasis, the grammatical Subject of the final clause, in the contracted κἀγὼ *and I*, emphasizes the role of Jesus in the raising of the dead in addition to what the Father does.

<sup>229</sup> Morris interprets "coming down" as the incarnation. Morris, *Gospel according to St John*, 331.

<sup>230</sup> The preposition ὑπὲρ *for* is repeatedly found in a sacrificial context in John (cf. 10:11, 15; 11:51-52; 15:13; 17:19; 18:14).

and concluding conditionals with a high level of grammatical intricacy generally reflect the complexity of the argument and the personal involvement of the speaker. The author of John records these conditionals as a means of drawing the attention of the reader so that he or she is able to fully understand Jesus' arguments and their significance in their respective discourses.

Text 2 (vv. 52-59) consists of the response of Jesus to the Jews' question in v. 52

*How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* Jesus replies with the following conditional,

6:53

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν,  
 ἐὰν μὴ φάγητε τὴν σάρκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου  
 καὶ πῖντε αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα,  
 οὐκ ἔχετε ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.

*Very truly I tell you,  
 if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man  
 and drink his blood,  
 you have no life in you.*

Ideationally, the Subjunctive protasis ἐὰν μὴ *if...not* expresses an idea of a situation or event that the audience may think unlikely or impossible. The apodosis will actualize (cf. conditionals 3:3, 5; 5:19) when such a situation takes place. In this case, Jesus is emphasizing that people will receive the life that Jesus imparts by the eating of the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man. Contrary to the Jews' thinking that this as impossible, the Subjunctive or hypothetical framing of the protasis makes it possible. An alternate reality is construed by the Subjunctive mood, and the audience of Jesus and the reader of the Gospel are invited to enter and experience it.

The presence of the negative polarity μὴ (“do *not* eat...drink”) in the protasis and οὐκ (“you have *no* life”) in the apodosis also increase the rhetorical impact of the statement. Earlier in the Nicodemus discourse, Jesus also uses the same kind of double negative conditional statement twice to teach Nicodemus the importance of being born

again (3:3, 5). Earlier in the bread of life discourse, John also records Jesus' conditional statement on the indispensable role of the Father with a similar double negative conditional, v. 44 *no one* (οὐδεὶς) *can come...if* (ἐὰν...μὴ) *the Father who sent me does not draw them.*

The ideational function of conditionals in construing experience and presenting arguments is also seen in the use of lexical metaphor of “bread” by Jesus in John 6, with the metaphor extended in v. 53 to “the flesh and blood” of Jesus.<sup>231</sup> Jesus appears to be deliberate in extending the metaphor to challenge his audience to look deeper into the significance of partaking in the life that he the Bread imparts. The lexis ἄρτους *bread* in 6:5 signifies real loaves and food for the body in the narrative of the feeding of the 5000. In the early part of the discourse, when the crowd asserts that God gave their ancestors ἄρτον *bread* (v. 31 “He gave them *bread* from heaven”), the word referred to manna. However, Jesus further reveals himself as ὁ ἄρτος τοῦ θεοῦ *the bread of God* and ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς *the bread of life* (vv. 33, 35). Instead of the bread in the feeding of the 5000 and manna for the Israelites in times past, the *bread* of Jesus takes on new meaning: something that satisfies the hunger of the world and of the soul. With this change, Jesus' audience and the reader of John are further prompted to explore the meaning and significance of “the living bread” (v. 51) that is steadily pointing to Jesus himself.

The metaphoric change is now complete in the conditional in v. 53, where Jesus

---

<sup>231</sup> In SFL, a metaphor is defined as “a cross-coupling between the semantics and the lexicogrammar, whereby a meaning that is congruently expressed by wording *a* is expressed instead by wording *b*.” Halliday and Webster, *Continuum Companion*, 245. In addition, Halliday also notes that metaphor is “an inherent property of higher-order semiotic systems, and a powerful meaning-making resource.” He also distinguishes between lexical and grammatical metaphor. He describes the latter as follows: “[I]nstead of saying ‘this wording has been shifted to express a different meaning’ (i.e. same expression, different content), I am saying ‘this meaning has been expressed by a different wording’ (same content, different expression).” Halliday, “Architecture,” *CW* 3:20,22. In John 6, we are dealing with lexical metaphor.

uses his *flesh* and *blood* to explain what he means by “the living bread.” What was meant to signify food for the body has now been systematically transformed to signify the believer's spiritual participation in the death of Jesus.<sup>232</sup> As these various levels of signification of *bread* are explained throughout the Bread of life discourse, the audience (the hearer and the reader) is prompted to locate their own understanding of “bread” and, more importantly, their degree of faith commitment in Jesus. One of the effects of metaphors is that they make people think more.<sup>233</sup> Through Jesus' conditionals and use of metaphors, the author of John prompts the reader to pause and reflect on the meaning and significance of the Bread of life. Readers are motivated to look beyond the surface and understand more fully and richly what faith in Jesus entails.

*Interpersonal function.* The author records a change from the third person indefinite Subject in v. 51 *if anyone* (τις) *eats of this bread* to the second person plural in v. 53 *if you do not eat* (φάγητε)...*and drink* (πίητε). Such change from a generalized *one* or *anyone* to the speech role of *you* indicates that the speaker (Jesus) is framing his argument with increasing rhetorical force.<sup>234</sup> The added emphasis of this statement is also seen in the negative polarity of the apodosis *you have no* (οὐκ) *life in you*. From v. 51 to v. 53, Jesus makes his Bread of life assertions more specific and frames them with greater impact.

<sup>232</sup> For an interpretation of bread as wisdom, see Keener, *John*, 1:681, 688-89. Most commentators, however, understand the flesh and blood as the human person of Jesus and his death on the cross. See Godet, *John*, 2:36; Westcott, *St John*, 107; Bernard, *St John*, 1:208; Webster, *Ingesting*, 82-84. The expression “flesh and blood” is used to mean people or humanity in Matt 16:17; 1 Cor 15:50; Gal 1:16; Eph 6:12; and Heb 2:14.

<sup>233</sup> “Metaphor is living not only to the extent that it vivifies a constituted language. Metaphor is living by virtue of the fact that it introduces the spark of imagination into a ‘thinking more’ at the conceptual level. This struggle to ‘think more,’ guided by the ‘vivifying principle,’ is the ‘soul’ of interpretation.” Ricoeur, *Rule of Metaphor*, 303. For a non-SFL approach to metaphors in John 6:41-66, see Webster, *Ingesting Jesus*, 79-87.

<sup>234</sup> Speech exchange is primarily divided into three groups: speech roles (*I, you*), other roles (*he, she, it, they*), and the generalized *one*. See Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 325.

The author also continues to adopt the rhetorical strategy of Jesus using conditionals to respond to questions (see also the Nicodemus discourse). Johannine conditionals, especially those of Jesus, and questions, such as *πῶς how*, *τίς who*, and *πόθεν from where*, are closely collocated. A total of eight questions in rather rapid sequence are raised in Jesus' Bread of life discourse with the crowd (vv. 22-40),<sup>235</sup> the Galilean Jews (vv. 41-59), and the early followers (vv. 60-65). Almost all these groups of people do is ask Jesus questions. Their questions are closely collocated with Jesus' conditionals, as the following shows.

I. 6:22-40 (the crowd)

v. 25 *Rabbi, when (πότε) did you get here?*

v. 28 *What (τί) shall we do, that we may work the works of God?*

v. 30 *What sign (τί) then do you do that we may see and believe you? What (τί) work do you perform?*

II. 6:41-59 (the Galilean Jews)

v. 42 *Is this not (οὐχ) Jesus...we know? How (πῶς) now he says that, "I have come down from heaven?"*

v. 44 [conditional]

v. 51 [conditional]

v. 52 *How (πῶς) is this man able to give us his flesh to eat?*

v. 53 [conditional]

III. 6:60-65 (the disciples)

v. 60 *This is a difficult statement, who (τίς) can listen to it?*

v. 62 [conditional]

v. 65 [conditional]

Through conditional statements, Jesus challenges his audience to reflect on the questions they raise and to grasp the deeper meaning of his signs, such as the feeding of the 5000, and of his teaching. Such a pattern of questions-conditionals makes the audience more eager and more persistent to probe deeper into Jesus' Christological

---

<sup>235</sup> John records two accounts of Jesus encountering the crowd: the Bread of life discourse, 6:22-40 and entry into Jerusalem, 12:12-19. No conditionals are recorded in both accounts. It is possible that, unlike the Jews as antagonist or the disciples, the crowd in John's Gospel do not present any critical Christological issue that needs to be resolved or addressed. The questions by the crowd are included for the sake of completion.



assertions. He asserts that life comes as a result of eating the flesh and the drinking of the blood of the Son of man. What initially appears to be opaque gradually becomes one of the most important Christological teachings, as Peter later discovers (6:68).

*Textual function.* Question-conditional collocation continues throughout the Gospel, including in Jesus' discourse with the Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles and the Light of the world discourse in John 7 and 8, and in his exchange with Pilate in John 18.<sup>236</sup>

I. 7:10-24 (at the Feast of Tabernacles)

v. 11 *Where (ποῦ) is he?*

v. 15 *How (πῶς) has this man become learned, having never been educated?*

v. 17 [conditional]

v. 20 *You have a demon! Who (τίς) seeks to kill you?*

v. 23 [conditional]

II. 8:12-59 (the Light of the world discourse)

v. 19a *Where (ποῦ) is your Father?*

v. 19b [conditional]

v. 22 *Surely he will not kill himself, will he...?*

v. 24 [conditional]

v. 53 *Surely, you are not greater than our Father Abraham...whom (τίνα) do you make yourself out to be?*

v. 54 [conditional]

v. 55 [conditional]

III. 18:18-38 (Jesus and Pilate)

v. 33 *Are you the king of the Jews?*

v. 35 *Your own nation...delivered you up to me; what (τί) have you done?*

v. 36 [conditional]

v. 37 *So are you a king?*

v. 38 *What (τί) is truth?*

The phenomenon may be explained by the author's strategy to record Jesus' conditionals in order to challenge the audience to approach the issue from a different and more meaningful point of view than that of Jesus' original conversation partners. For example, in the Bread of life discourse, the Jews' question focuses on the human

<sup>236</sup> See also the paragraph on the high priest questioning Jesus (18:19-24).18:22 *Is that the way you answer the high priest? 18:23 If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike me?*

origin of Jesus (v. 42). Jesus' conditional turns the attention more to the important aspect of God being at work in salvation and the fact the Jesus indeed comes from heaven (v. 44). Toward the end of the Light of the world discourse, the Jews again adopt an earthly viewpoint toward Jesus in relation to the historical figure Abraham, 8:53; cf. 7:24. In response, Jesus grounds his claim of his special relationship with and his special knowledge of the Father in his conditionals (8:54, 55). A similar effect is intended when the author of John records Jesus' conditionals (18:23a, 23b) after the high priest's servant strikes him. During his trial by Pilate, the sharp contrast between the number of questions posed by Pilate (total: 5) and the conditional given by Jesus (18:36 *If my kingdom were of this world*) highly likely reflects the author's attempt to show that Pilate was unable to exercise authority in the situation, and Jesus was not on trial. Pilate was.

Question-conditional collocation may also be explained in terms of what is commonly called "Johannine misunderstanding." While Carson attempts to interpret the misunderstanding in term of the difference between before and after the resurrection of Jesus, the phenomenon appears to be more complex.<sup>237</sup> On one hand, the texts that Carson uses to support his argument, 2:19-22 (the temple cleansing) and 12:14-16 (entry into Jerusalem), specifically point to the disciples' understanding after Jesus' death and

---

<sup>237</sup> For a good summary on the discussion of Johannine misunderstanding, see Carson, "Understanding Misunderstanding," 60-67. Carson argues that the so-called Johannine misunderstandings are not simply a literary device. He discusses works on misunderstanding by Cullman (ambiguous meanings), Leroy (outsiders and insiders), and Giblin ("implicit misunderstanding") and investigates a total of 64 examples. The problems of understanding, misunderstanding and not understanding, are what John is "mightily concerned" with (83), but at the same time Carson concedes that identifying a particular form is very difficult. He argues that most, if not all, of the Johannine misunderstandings can be resolved after the resurrection of Jesus (see his column 17 "Solution: Depending on the passage of time). He then cites two key examples, namely, the cleansing of the temple (2:19-22) and the triumphal entry into Jerusalem (12:14-16). Both passages record that the disciples did not understand at first. But after Jesus' resurrection or glorification, the disciples' understand Jesus' words and action (2:22; 12:16).

resurrection; on the other hand, not all of these misunderstandings can be explained in the same way. For example, in 5:36-47 the understanding does not predicate Jesus' death and resurrection, as Carson himself indicates. As discussed in the preceding chapter of this study, 5:31-47 is better understood as the Jews' refusal, not misunderstanding, to accept Jesus the Son. Carson's post-resurrection explanation of 6:32-35 is likewise not compelling. Unlike the temple cleansing and the Jerusalem entry passages, many other texts such as 5:31-47 and 6:41-59 do not rely on Jesus' death or resurrection as the central support for Jesus' argument.<sup>238</sup>

A more formal and linguistic approach to Johannine misunderstandings is proposed as follows. Misunderstanding takes place when the following two situations occur. First, it involves people who genuinely seek the knowledge of God through their interactions with Jesus. These characters include Nicodemus (John 3), the Samaritan woman (John 4), and the Galilean Jews in the Bread of life discourse (John 6). Secondly, the expression of their misunderstanding is mostly through their questions they ask Jesus and his response in conditionals.<sup>239</sup> These questions include: Nicodemus 3:9 *How can these things be?* and the Samaritan woman 4:9 *How is it that you, being a Jew, ask me for a drink...?*<sup>240</sup> In other words, the author of John uses the combination of questions by Johannine characters and Jesus' conditionals in his replies to eventually

---

<sup>238</sup> Carson's discussion lacks a formal definition of what constitutes a Johannine misunderstanding. The misunderstanding of the (Jerusalem) Jews is the result of their hardheartedness (12:38, 39). But the misunderstanding of other characters, including the disciples, appears to be of a different kind.

<sup>239</sup> Later, the misunderstanding of the disciples is seen in their conditional (not question) to Jesus in 11:12. See Chapter 5, section 5.2.1 ("Jesus and the disciples").

<sup>240</sup> Culpepper likewise adopts a more formal structure but without reference to conditionals: "(1) Jesus makes a statement which is ambiguous, metaphorical, or contains a double-entendre; (2) his dialogue partner responds either in terms of the literal meaning of Jesus' statement or by a question or protest which shows that he or she has missed the higher meaning of Jesus' words; (3) in most instances an explanation is then offered by Jesus or (less frequently) the narrator." Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 152. He similarly concludes that misunderstandings orient the reader to read at the level that the language of the gospel is to be understood (165).

clarify their misunderstandings and motivate them to follow him.

Collocation of Johannine conditional and question such as 6:51-53 invite those who have ears to hear. Jesus' Subjunctive conditionals, in particular, offer the audience opportunity to further understand what he means. On the other hand, those who fail to respond with faith and trust do not understand, as shown in the next section of the Bread of life discourse (6:60-65). The audience of Jesus and the reader of John are given the opportunity to understand more fully the complexity of faith in Jesus. At the same time, they also carry the responsibility of making the right choice.<sup>241</sup>

#### 4.2 The Early Disciples (6:60-65)<sup>242</sup>

John 6:60-65 records Jesus' speech to his disciples, with conditionals strategically bracketing his speech. As the Galilean Jews grumbled about Jesus' teaching (v. 41), Jesus' speech is also a response to the grumbling of his disciples (v. 61).<sup>243</sup> The disciples consider the teaching of eating the flesh of Jesus and drinking his blood

---

<sup>241</sup> For the use of Indicative conditionals in convicting the unbelief of the Jews, see the discussion of the three consecutive Indicative conditionals 10:35-36, 37, 38 in chapter 4, section 4.3 of this study. See also God's exhortation to Israel in Isa 1:18-20 *Come now, and let us reason together...even if your sins were like scarlet...even if they were red like crimson...If you are willing and listen to me...but if you are not willing nor listen to me...for the mouth of the Lord has spoken these things* (LXX). See Oswalt, *Isaiah*, 100-102.

<sup>242</sup> Barrett and Carson treat vv. (59-) 60-71 as one section without any subdivision. But critical Greek texts including W-H, *USBGNT*, and N-A 28<sup>th</sup> all adopt vv. 60-65 as a single paragraph, as the discourse is related to the disciples, some of whom eventually leave Jesus (v. 66). Perhaps this is why Morris also includes v. 66 in his text division. But the ending at either v. 65 or v. 66 does not really affect our analysis.

<sup>243</sup> The disciples in John are not named as they are in the Synoptics (Matt 10; Mark 3; Luke 6). Here in John 6, they are presumably those who follow Jesus on a superficial level. After the healing of the blind man, the Jews insist they are Moses' disciples and call the man Jesus' disciple (9:28). In the burial of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea is called a "disciple" (18:38). John 6:67, 71 record the first two references of "the twelve." The term indicates that they are a more dedicated group of followers (cf. 20:24). Kysar also observes, "The reading effect of having the hostile opponents suddenly become disciples (v. 60) powerfully suggests that unbelief is not limited to Jesus' opponents. The introduction of the phenomenon of unbelieving disciples blurs the distinction between 'the Jews' and 'the disciples.'" Kysar, "Decisional Faith," 169. For the probable connection between these disciples (not the twelve) and the Jews in 8:31-59, see Griffith, "The Jews," 183-92.

σκληρός *difficult*,<sup>244</sup> or too hard to understand (v. 60). The discourses progress from bigger (the Jews) to smaller (the disciples) audiences, and an unspecified response of the Jews to the many disciples who subsequently stop following Jesus (v. 66).

Jesus' first conditional (6:62) is a protasis-only question conditional. It is a question that expects the disciples and the reader to provide their own answer, or to "fill in the blank."<sup>245</sup> His second and final conditional is recorded in v. 65. It is a conditional that is almost exactly the same as v. 44, underscoring the work of the Father in salvation. To understand the complex ideas and arguments of these two conditionals, we need to go beyond what is expressed through Moods and Tenses. These conditionals contain grammatical features such as ellipsis (the protasis-only conditional) and question conditional. Identical conditionals (6:44, 65) are also used for marking discourse boundary. These conditionals are shown below.

6:61-62

τοῦτο ὑμᾶς σκανδαλίζει;  
 ἔάν σὺν θεωρῆτε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀναβαίνοντα ὅπου ἦν τὸ  
 πρότερον;

*Does this cause you to stumble?*

*Then [what] if you see the Son of Man ascending where he was before?*

6:65

διὰ τοῦτο εἶρηκα ὑμῖν  
 ὅτι οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με  
 ἔάν μὴ ἦ ἡ δεδομένον αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ πατρός.

<sup>244</sup> See Matt 25:24; Acts 26:14; Jas 3:4; and Jude 15. Paul uses the noun form to describe stubbornness of heart of the unbeliever, Rom 2:5 *But because of your stubbornness* (τὴν σκληρότητά) *and unrepentant heart*.

<sup>245</sup> A possible alternative is to treat the two clauses (vv. 61, 62) not as questions and interpret them as an apodosis-fronted (Q ^ P) conditional. If so, Jesus is simply making a statement that relates his future ascension with the disciples' unbelief (or *stumbling*). But this is unlikely for at least two reasons. First, rhetorical questions, not statements, seem to fit better with the strong language in the rest of Jesus' reply: v. 63 *the flesh profit nothing* and v. 64 *some of you who do not believe*. Secondly, Jesus also uses rhetorical questions with Nicodemus (3:12) and the Jews (5:47). Therefore, it seems more likely Jesus is posing two consecutive questions here, as shown in the punctuation by most critical editions, e.g. *UBSGNT* and *N-A*<sup>28</sup>. V. 62 then becomes a question, protasis-only conditional.

*For this reason I have said to you,  
that no one can come to me,  
if it has **not** been granted them from the Father.*

*Ideational function.* With the Subjunctive mood of 6:62 θεωρήτε (Pres. Act. Subj. *you see*), Jesus posits a hypothetical situation (at the time of speaking). The choice of the Present tense makes the action more vivid to his audience. Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension have not yet occurred,<sup>246</sup> but he poses them as hypothetical. It further challenges those followers who are already finding it difficult to eat his flesh and drink his blood. But for those who put their belief in Jesus, the apparent impossibility of the ascension later becomes a deep cause of comfort and assurance. The Subjunctive mood thus tests the audience's depth of belief in Jesus' words.

In the conditional in v. 65, the Father at work in salvation motif is aspectually marked by the periphrastic construction ἡ δεδομένον *it has been granted* in the protasis. In contrast to the Subjunctive in v. 44 *if the Father who sent me does not* (ἐλκύση Aor. Act. Subj. *he/she draw*) *them*, the periphrastic construction in v. 65 ἡ (Pres. Act. Subj. *to be*) δεδομένον (Perf. Pass. Ptcp. *has been given*) grammaticalizes the stative aspect. The grammatical construction is an emphatic way of describing that the work of the Father and its accomplished state. In both form and meaning, 6:44 is very similar to the conditional by John the Baptist in 3:27.

\*3:27 (John the Baptist)  
οὐ δύναται ἄνθρωπος λαμβάνειν οὐδὲ ἐν  
ἐάν μὴ ἡ δεδομένον αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.

*A person can receive nothing  
if it has **not** been given them from heaven.*

In both situations, the speakers (John the Baptist and Jesus) are facing the loss of their

---

<sup>246</sup> According to Morris, the crucifixion and resurrection and ascension are linked in an unbreakable sequence, the one implies the others. Morris, *Gospel according to John*, 340.

followers. Both address the matter by relating it to the sovereign work of God. The author of John also chooses the Greek Imperfect tense in 6:65 *And (Jesus) was saying* (ἔλεγεν Impf. Act. Ind.) to introduce the conditional and to further underscore the significance of the statement.

*Interpersonal function.* John 6:62 is a question conditional. It addresses apostasy for the first time in John's Gospel. It also presents a rare grammatical feature of ellipsis, a protasis-only conditional. In the NT, such breaking-off of speech ("aposiopesis") often suggests intense emotion in the speaker. The following examples are taken from Luke's Gospel, all spoken by Jesus.<sup>247</sup>

Luke 13:9  
 καὶν μὲν ποιήσῃ καρπὸν εἰς τὸ μέλλον  
*And if it bears fruit next year*

Luke 19:42  
 εἰ ἔγνωσ ἔν τῃ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ καὶ σὺ  
*If you, even you, had only known on this day, (the things which make for peace!)*

Luke 22:42  
 πάτερ, εἰ βούλει παρένεγκαι τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον  
*Father, if you are willing to remove this cup*

In all of the above, Jesus' statements are broken off abruptly by strong feelings. In the first conditional (13:9), the unfruitful nation Israel and its future is in view. In the second conditional (19:42), the unrepentant city of Jerusalem is in question. And in the third (22:42), if the more difficult reading of Jesus' prayer is adopted,<sup>248</sup> Jesus' conditional is abruptly cut short by the prospect of the pain and agony of crucifixion.

However, the situation in John 6 is not the same. By only stating the protasis, Jesus forces his disciples to "fill in the blank." By framing the conditional clause as a

<sup>247</sup> Blass-Debrunner, *Greek Grammar*, 255.

<sup>248</sup> Textual support for παρένεγκαι includes ⋈ K L J<sup>3</sup> 579 892 2541; and παρένεγκειν, A N W Γ Δ Ψ 565 700 1424. See Marshall, *Luke*, 831. Given the context of agony of the cross, the case for the εἰ as introducing a direct question (*Are you willing to remove this cup from me?*) is less likely.

question, Jesus is making it a provocative question that is deliberately left unanswered. The reader likewise has to answer this question for himself or herself.<sup>249</sup> There are at least two possible responses to Jesus' question. With some of the disciples, they may finally understand that he is truly the bread from heaven and consequently put their faith in *the Son of Man* if they bear witness to the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, the Son of Man.<sup>250</sup> However, with other disciples, eye-witnessing the ascension may result in further hardening of their unbelief. The Subjunctive mood θεωρήτε (Pres. Act. Subj. *you see*) implies that not everyone, hearer and reader, will witness Jesus' ascension. The semantic feature of possibility is characteristic of the Subjunctive mood, whereas the Indicative expresses certainty. The conditional thus challenges his disciples to think through his words and to decide for themselves the right course of action, with or without witnessing the ascension.<sup>251</sup>

*Textual function.* In Jesus' initial question in v. 61 τοῦτο ὑμᾶς σκανδαλίζει;

*Does this cause you to stumble?*, the personal pronoun ὑμᾶς *you* is emphatic. It

<sup>249</sup> Similarly, in the uproar between the Sadducees and the Pharisees at Paul's trial in Acts 23:9, *We find nothing wrong with this man; what if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?* The hearer is expected to answer the conditional question.

<sup>250</sup> As Jesus' self-designation, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου *the Son of Man* is used 13 times in John. It is used in relation to the food that he gives for eternal life (6:27), his glorification (12:23; 13:31), his ascending into heaven (3:13; 6:62; 8:28), and his authority to judge (5:27). Jesus first refers himself as *the Son of Man* in connection with the open heaven (1:51). In John 6 he makes three references to *the Son of Man*, first in a statement to the crowd (v. 27), followed by two Subjunctive conditionals spoken to the Jews in v. 53 *if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of man*, and to the early disciples in v. 62 *then what if you see the Son of man ascend to where he was before?* Carson comments that as an ambiguous expression it can stand for a human being as well as a title having obvious affinity with the "one like a son of man" in Daniel 7:13-14. He writes, "(other titles) were so loaded with political messianism that they could not be adopted without restraint and appropriate caveats. 'Son of Man', on the other hand, lay ready to hand as an expression that could be filled with precisely the right content." Carson, *John*, 164. For the use of ἀναβαίνειν *to ascend* to refer to Jesus' ascension, see 3:13; 20:17; Acts 2:34; Eph 4:10. The Johannine word for crucifixion is the passive ὑψωθῆναι *to be lifted up* (3:14; 12:32, 34), except 8:28 *when you lift up* (ὑψώσητε) *the Son of Man*. Godet, *John*, 2:43-45.

<sup>251</sup> Other possible lines of interpretation include: "If therefore, one day, after you have heard this saying which is so intolerable to you, an event occurs which renders it altogether absurd, will you not then understand that you were mistaken as to its true meaning?" Godet, *John*, 2:43; or as Barrett paraphrases, "What if you see the Son of man becoming invisible, unseen. For when the Son of Man ascends where he was before, he is no more visible than he was before the incarnation." Barrett, "Dialectical Theology," 60.



underscores the fact that Jesus is distinguishing his followers from the crowd and the Galilean Jews. They are his disciples and they are expected to respond to Jesus' teaching in a more positive manner. Jesus expresses disappointment because, as the Jews did, they also grumble (vv. 60-61a). Later, Jesus asks the twelve with the use of the emphatic personal pronoun ὑμεῖς *you*, v. 67 μὴ καὶ ὑμεῖς θέλετε ὑπάγειν; *You do not want to leave too, do you?*<sup>252</sup> In addition, the Greek verb σκανδαλίζειν in v. 61 means *to cause to sin* or *to give offense to, anger, shock*, and describes the faltering of faith.<sup>253</sup> This question is a leading question to the conditional in v. 62. It expresses concerns that some of the followers or disciples are in danger of leaving Jesus.

The final conditional (v. 65) is an apodosis-fronted, or Q ^ P, conditional. The point of departure of the statement is that Jesus is ineffective apart from the prior work of the Father (cf. 6:44). A similar emphasis was made with regard to the ongoing work of the Father in the world in Jesus' Sabbath healing debate (5:19). The almost identical conditionals by Jesus in v. 44 and v. 65 play the important function as "bookends" to the discourse unit of vv. 41-65 (the Galilean Jews and the early disciples). These two conditionals emphasize the indispensable and sovereign work of the Father in relation to the mission of Jesus whom he sent. Identical conditionals also appear in John 11:21 (Martha) and 11:32 (Mary), but their functions and emphases are not the same (see Chapter 5, section 5.1). The bookend conditionals in John 6 highlight the work of the

<sup>252</sup> See also Peter's confession in v. 69 *We (ἡμεῖς) have come to believe and to know that you (σὺ) are the Holy One of God.*

<sup>253</sup> See "σκανδαλίζω," *BDAG*, 926. The verb is found again only in 16:1 ἵνα μὴ σκανδαλισθῆτε *that you may be kept from stumbling*. Whereas the Present Indicative is used in 6:61 suggesting these uncommitted disciples are already showing lack of faith, the Aorist Subjunctive in 16:1 depicts the possibility of the eleven falling away from their faith due to persecution (15:18-25). Among the Gospels the verb appears most in Matthew (14 times), followed by Mark (eight times). For the use of the verb in Mark's Gospel, see Perkins, "Mark's use of the Verb Σκανδαλίζειν," 23-36.

Father and the need for active participation in order to receive the life that Jesus imparts. The Galilean Jews are unable to accept the words of Jesus, and some of his disciples choose to stop following him because of his difficult teaching. At the end of the discourse, only a small group of disciples (the eleven) remain committed to follow Jesus (vv. 66-71).

*Summary.* Jesus' conditionals in the Bread of life discourse and subsequent dialogue with his disciples continue to show a high level of grammatical complexity. In the Bread of life discourse with the Galilean Jews, Subjunctive conditionals are used to teach the meaning and significance of Jesus, the Bread of life, to the world. Conditionals are used as bookends (vv. 44, 65) to signify the importance of the work of the Father in salvation, with no distinction between the Jews and the disciples. At the same time, the rhetorical force increases when Person changes from *anyone* eating the "living bread" (v. 51), to *you* eating and drinking the "flesh and blood" of the Son of Man (v. 53). Both the audience in the discourse and the reader of the Gospel are thus confronted through the conditionals. Jesus' conditionals motivate them to engage in deeper reflection and more persistent reasoning. In the discourse with the disciples, Jesus' elliptical question conditional requires the audience and the reader, whose faith is wavering, to "fill in the blank." They are to look for an answer for themselves and to take ownership of what they choose.

The mobilization of lexicogrammatical resources and semantic features of conditionals and their interactions in achieving their persuasive function is rich and complex. For example, the speech participant's attitude toward Jesus, and collocations of questions and conditionals (sometimes question conditionals) within a functionally-

significant text span suggests the so-called Johannine misunderstanding. These “misunderstandings” are rhetorical devices that stimulate the reader to play a more active role in trusting in Jesus. It also appears that there is a strong correlation between Jesus’ expository discourses, for example, the Nicodemus discourse, the Bread of life discourse, and the dialogue with the disciples, with the use of Subjunctive conditionals.

In the next and final section of this chapter, the closing conditionals in the final debate between Jesus and the Jews in John 10 will be investigated. They contain four conditionals: one by the Jews (10:24), and three grammatically intricate consecutive conditionals by Jesus (10:35-38). Grammatical networks and features including POLARITY, the function of interrogatives, and marked Themes will be examined to explain the grammatical and rhetorical meaning of these conditionals in context.

#### 4.3 The Final Debate with the Jews (10:22-39)<sup>254</sup>

Between the discourses in John 6 and the final public discourse of Jesus with the Jews, the author of John records four more discourses of Jesus, all of which include conditionals. In the first discourse, Jesus’ brothers express their unbelief in 7:3-4, at the end of which they conclude with a conditional (7:4b).

---

<sup>254</sup> The text segmentation is quite uniform among critical editions of the Greek text and Greek commentators. The text is divided into two paragraphs: vv. 22-30 and vv. 31-39. Jesus’ return to an area near the Jordan River is recorded in vv. 40-42. The debate with the Jews that began in John 5 continues in John 7-10. The following highlight their dialogues with conditionals given in brackets. Some of these conditionals will be included in the discussion of this section.

7:14-24	At the Feast of Tabernacles	(vv. 17, 23)
8:12-30	The Light of the world discourse	(vv. 14, 16, 19, 24)
8:31-47	(Former Jewish believers)	(vv. 31, 36, 39, 42, 46)
8:48-59	(The Jews)	(vv. 51, (52), 54, 55)
9:40-41	The healing of the blind man	(v. 41)
10:7-18	(The Jews)	(v. 9)

\*7:4b (Jesus' brothers)  
 εἰ ταῦτα ποιεῖς, φανέρωσον σεαυτὸν τῷ κόσμῳ.  
*If you do these things, show yourself to the world.*

In the next two discourses (7:14-24; 8:12-59), Jesus debates with the Jews and uses conditionals to conclude these debates (7:23 and 8:54, 55 respectively).<sup>255</sup> The fourth and final discourse is recorded in 9:40-10:18, with two conditionals: 9:41 and 10:9, with the former especially underlines the Jews' spiritual blindness.

9:41  
 εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε, οὐκ ἂν εἶχετε ἁμαρτίαν· νῦν δὲ λέγετε ὅτι βλέπομεν, ἡ ἁμαρτία ὑμῶν μένει.

*If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, "We see," your sin remains.*

In this final debate between Jesus and the Jews (10:22-39), the speech section begins with the Jews' conditional (v. 24) and ends with Jesus' consecutive conditionals (vv. 35-36, 37, and 38). In addition to v. 24, the Jews make only one additional statement in v. 33. The rest of the discourse records Jesus' speech, it is divided into vv. 25-30, v. 32, and vv. 34-38. The speech sections of the debate are outlined below, with conditionals by characters other than Jesus are marked with \*.

10:22-39	
*v. 24	The Jews [conditional]
vv. 25-30	Jesus
(v. 31)	(Narrator)
v. 32	Jesus
v. 33	The Jews
vv. 34-38	Jesus [vv. 35-38 conditionals]

*The Jews' conditional* (10:24). The conditional, including the introductory question, is shown below.

---

<sup>255</sup> John 7:23 Now *if* a boy can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing a man's whole body on the Sabbath? John 8:54, 55 *If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and obey his word.*

\*10:24 (the Jews)  
 ἕως πότε τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν αἴρεις;  
 εἰ σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός,  
 εἰπὲ ἡμῖν παρρησίᾳ.

*How long will you keep us in suspense?  
 If you are the Christ,  
 tell us plainly.*

*Ideational function.* In conjunction with similar conditionals in the synoptic Gospels, the Jews' conditional in v. 24 suggests a special type of "Christological conditional" often used by Jesus' opponents. Porter has observed that virtually all conditionals in the Gospels addressed toward Jesus on his divinity, including John 1:25, use εἰμί.<sup>256</sup> In John 10:24 and Luke 22:67a, the protasis includes a second personal pronoun σὺ *you* for emphasis. These "Messiah conditionals" are listed below.

\*Matt 4:3 (Satan)  
*If (εἰ) you are the Son of God, command (εἰπὲ Aor. Act. Imp.) these stones*

\*Matt 4:6 (Satan)  
*If (εἰ) you are the Son of God, throw (βάλε Aor. Act. Imp.) yourself down*

\*Matt 27:40 (the bystanders)  
*If (εἰ) you are the Son of God, come down (κατάβηθι Aor. Act. Imp.) from the cross*

\*Luke 22:67 (the Sanhedrin)  
*If (εἰ) you (σὺ) are the Christ, tell (εἰπὸν Aor. Act. Imp.) us*

If we take the context and the apodosis' Imperative mood into consideration, such kind of a conditional reflects the speaker's unbelief and rejection of Jesus. The conditional in John 10:24 also echoes the first conditional of John's Gospel in 1:25.<sup>257</sup> In all these cases, the assumed-to-be true Indicative type 1 conditional is spoken by Jesus' adversaries to cast doubt on his divinity. In John's Gospel, even though the Jews do not accept Jesus's claim (cf. 5:17; 8:42), they use the conditional as a pretense for attacking

<sup>256</sup> Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 297, f.n. 11.

<sup>257</sup> John 1:25 *Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?*

him.<sup>258</sup> Jesus' reply to the Sanhedrin in Luke 22:67b, 22:68 using consecutive conditionals, both containing the emphatic negation οὐ μὴ *never*, reveal their hidden agenda.<sup>259</sup>

Luke 22:67b, 68  
 ἔάν ὑμῖν εἶπω, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσητε·  
 ἔάν δὲ ἐρωτήσω, οὐ μὴ ἀποκριθῆτε.

*If I tell you, you will never believe;  
 and if I ask a question, you will never answer.*

John 11:24 strongly indicates that the Jews' are far from acknowledging Jesus as the Christ.

*Interpersonal function.* The interpersonal meaning of the conditional is accented by the emphatic personal pronoun σὺ *you* in the protasis. Similar use of the emphatic personal pronouns (*I, you*) appears in an early debate between the Jews and Jesus in 5:19-47, especially vv. 31-47 and including the conditional in v. 31 *If I (ἐγὼ) testify to myself*. In addition, the Imperative mood of the apodosis in v. 24 εἰπὲ (Aor. Act. Imp. *tell*) expresses strong rhetorical force by demanding an answer from Jesus. As in the Synoptic conditionals mentioned above, as part of the attack by his adversaries, these Imperative conditionals attempt to either force Jesus to succumb to temptation or to put him in a vulnerable position. The scene is very similar to the account in Luke 22, where the Jewish Council attempts to press charges against Jesus using a similar Indicative

---

<sup>258</sup> Similarly, an Indicative type 2 conditional is used by the Jews to falsely accuse Jesus before Pilate in \*18:30 *If (εἰ) this man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered him up to you*. The statement is a deliberate way of implying that Jesus *is* a criminal but without making a direct assertion to that effect. The construal of reality by conditional speakers as the basis of argument will be discussed in Chapter 5 below.

<sup>259</sup> Jesus' answer is both a positive reply and a type of circumlocution. The nature of his messiahship is different from the way the Jewish leaders envision.

condition (Luke 22:67a).<sup>260</sup>

In both Luke 22 and John 10, the Jewish leaders attempt to avoid acknowledging the divinity of Jesus and thus seek to relieve themselves of their responsibility to accept Jesus. But as will be shown later, Jesus also does not give a clear answer to their question. His consecutive conditionals (vv. 35-38) require them to take responsibility for their own decisions and conclusions.<sup>261</sup>

*Textual function.* The opening question in 10:24 continues the series of questions that the Jews began in vv. 19-21:

10:20 *He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to him?*

10:21 *...A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?*

The question: ἕως ποτε τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν αἴρεις; *How long do you keep us in suspense* contains a marked Theme τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν. It can also be translated as *How long are you keeping us in doubt?*<sup>262</sup> The Jews are seemingly at a crossroads. But with all the signs that Jesus has performed, it is unlikely that they are seeking more information. Rather, they are looking for some unambiguous statement from Jesus to use against him.<sup>263</sup>

The conditional that follows also echoes the Jews' conditional in John 1 and the identical question that they pose in 1:19. This question-conditional collocation is characteristic of John's Gospel in prompting the audience to think deeper and to arrive

<sup>260</sup> See also \*Luke 23:35 *He saved others; let him save (σωσάτω Aor. Act. Imp.) himself if (εἰ) this is the Christ of God, His chosen one.*

<sup>261</sup> "Evidently it is not clear to the Jews whether Jesus is or is not claiming messianic status; evidently also he does not intend to give an unambiguous answer to their question." Barrett, *Gospel according to St John*, 378.

<sup>262</sup> Westcott, *St. John*, 157. See also the New King James translation.

<sup>263</sup> Carson, *Gospel according to John*, 392. Likewise Bultmann writes, "They (the Jews) demand an answer which would relieve them of the decision, an answer such as Jesus has till now at most only been able to give the Samaritan woman (4:26) and the healed blind man (9:37)." Bultmann, *Gospel of John*, 362.

at their own conclusions about who Jesus is.

\*1:19

*Who are you?...Why then are you baptizing, if (εἰ) you (σὺ) are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?*

At the end of both dialogues, reference is made to the location where John the Baptist was baptizing (1:28; 10:40). In their first conditional (\*1:25), the Jews seek evidence to identify who the Christ is; in this conditional (\*10:24), they refuse to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. Earlier in John, Jesus' brothers also expressed their unbelief in a similar conditional (\*7:4) Therefore, the Indicative type 1 conditional is not only used by Jesus for polemical and argumentative purposes (3:12; 5:46, 47; 7:23; cf. also 15:22, 24). People also use it to express doubt in and hostility toward Jesus.

In the subsequent verses, Jesus explains the reason for their refusal to believe. In essence, the Jews do not believe because they are not his sheep (v. 26), even though Jesus is the Good Shepherd (10:11). But what further angers the Jews is Jesus' statement v. 30 *I and the Father are one.*<sup>264</sup> Upon hearing this statement, the Jews attempt to stone him and charge him with blasphemy (v. 33). It is apparent that the Jews interpret his statement as Jesus equating rejecting him to rejecting God himself.<sup>265</sup>

*Jesus' conditionals* (10:35-36, 37, 38). To show Jesus' tightly argued defense and its rhetorical impact, analysis will be conducted according to the order of each clause complex, and not the usual ideational, interpersonal, and textual function format.

---

<sup>264</sup> For a discussion on the question of Jesus' nature, see Carson, *Gospel of John*, 394-95. "...[A]lthough the words *I and the Father are one* do not affirm complete identity, in the context of this book they certainly suggest more than that Jesus' will was one with the will of his Father, at least in the weak sense that a human being may at times regulate his own will and deed by the will of God. (395) Morris also points out that the statement does not assert oneness in terms of identity but in unity. Morris, *Gospel according to John*, 465.

<sup>265</sup> Jesus as shepherd in the Gospel of John employs the image of God as Israel's shepherd in the earlier biblical tradition. And the inability of people to snatch sheep from Jesus' hand (10:29) is probably another Johannine allusion to his deity. Keener, *Gospel of John*, 1:825.



After another round of exchange (vv. 32-33), Jesus goes on to make his closing argument (vv. 34-38). Among Jesus' public speeches in John, this segment contains the only occurrence of three consecutive Indicative conditionals. The level of intensity of Jesus' argument also reaches an all-time high, as indicated by the increased level of grammatical complexity and intricacy in his reply, especially in the first (vv. 35-36) and final conditionals (v. 38). Such intricacy and stretching of grammar indicates the high level of rhetoric. It also indicates sustained commitment to a position or a goal by the speaker (Jesus).<sup>266</sup> As Jesus' final statements before he withdraws from Jerusalem, these consecutive conditionals also take on special significance of concluding his Christological defense before the Jews.

The following chart compares the grammatical intricacy, or the mean clause to sentence ratio, of the two segments of the final debate. The first segment (vv. 24-33) records six clauses in three clause complexes for the Jews, and 17 clauses in five clause complexes for Jesus; or grammatical intricacies of 2 and 3.4 respectively. In contrast, vv. 34-38 records 20 clauses in three clause complexes, or a grammatical intricacy of 6.7; three times that of the Jews and twice that of Jesus' in vv. 24-33.<sup>267</sup>

---

<sup>266</sup> Grammatical intricacy highlights process and the interdependence of one process on another. It builds up elaborate clause complexes out of parataxis and hypotaxis. The more the speaker is 'wrapped up' in the discourse, the more complex the sentence grammar becomes. Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 654-56. See also Halliday, "Language and Order of Nature," *CW* 3:130; "So you say 'Pass'..." *CW* 2:240-44; and "Modes of Meaning," *CW* 1:331-35.

<sup>267</sup> From the viewpoint of language as system, an average score of grammatical intricacy based on all the dialogues and/or conditionals spoken by Jesus will provide a perspective and significance of these values represented in this segment (vv. 24-38). However, as average numbers, they do not reveal the various factors that motivate the value to go higher or lower in each situation. The problem with data based on all textual materials assembled in either John's Gospel or even the corpus of the NT is that they are not subject to the detailed investigation that reveals the special features and the uniqueness of the individual text. In this particular case, the approach adopted is primarily language as text. It will be another study for computing the averages and probabilities and using such data for the purpose of comparative studies. For a detail discussion of the two complementary views of language as system and language as text along the cline of instantiation, see Halliday, *Complementarities*, 77-126.

	10:24-33		10:34-38
	The Jews	Jesus	Jesus
clause: sentence	6:3	17.5	30:3
Gramm. intricacy	2.0	3.4	<b>6.7</b>

In addition to the high number of intricately connected paratactic and hypotactic clauses, including content and causal (ὅτι), purpose (ἵνα), and relative clauses, there are also numerous marked Themes, emphatic personal pronouns (ἐγὼ *I*, ὑμεῖς *you*), the Imperative mood πιστεῦετε *believe*, the negative polarity οὐ or μὴ *not*, as well as a double protasis conditional (v 38, *but if* (εἰ) *I do even if* (κἄν) *you do not* ). These and other grammatical features continue to show that the conventional description of conditionals primarily based on Moods and Tenses is limited. Other linguistic descriptions need to be included in fully describing their meaning and functions.

Before Jesus' first conditional, his rhetorical question in v 34 is first analyzed.

10:34

[1] οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένον ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ὑμῶν

[2] ὅτι ἐγὼ εἶπα:

[3] θεοὶ ἐστε;

[1] *Has it not been written in your Law,*

[2] *'I have said*

[3] *you are gods'?*

The rhetorical question in v 34 sets the stage for the subsequent question (vv 35-36) by undergirding the scriptural basis of individuals being described as deity, or gods. It mirrors the question brought before Jesus by the Jews earlier in v 24 and consists of three clauses. Clause 1 begins with the negative polarity *Has it not* (οὐκ) *been written* expecting a positive answer. Jesus is not seeking information from the Jews, but reminding them what they should already know. The periphrastic construction of ἔστιν (Pres. Act. Ind.) γεγραμμένον (Perf. Pass. Ptcp.) *it has been written,*

emphasizes the completed state of the written Law. The second person personal pronoun ὑμῶν *your* in τῷ νόμῳ ὑμῶν *your law* also stresses the fact that the Law should be well known by them.

Clauses 2 and 3 are content clauses taken from Psalm 82:6. The first person pronoun ἐγὼ *I* (God) in cl. 2 is emphatic. It underscores that the one who has spoken is God himself. As the Complement being placed at the beginning of cl. 3, the marked Theme θεοί *gods* emphasizes the addressees' unique identity. Although there is some debate among biblical scholars on the identity of the original addressees,<sup>268</sup> Jesus' rhetorical question clearly asserts that the Law has set the precedent for individuals being called "gods." Then he continues his defense and poses the first of three Indicative conditionals, a conditional question, in vv. 35-36.<sup>269</sup>

10:35-36

[1] εἰ ἐκείνους εἶπεν θεοὺς<sup>270</sup>

[2] πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐγένετο,

[3] καὶ οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή,

[4] ὃν ὁ πατήρ ἡγίασεν καὶ ἀπέστειλεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον

[5] ὑμεῖς λέγετε

[6] ὅτι βλασφημεῖς,

[7] ὅτι εἶπον

[8] υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ εἰμι;

<sup>268</sup> Carson identifies three possible groups of people as the referent in this verse: (i) Israel's judges, (ii) angelic beings who abused God's authority, (iii) Israel at the time of the giving of the law. In light of the fact that Israel is called God's firstborn son (Ex 4:21-22), and the typology that Jesus claims to have fulfilled in 8:31ff., the "sons" here are likely the people of Israel at the time of the giving of the law. Carson, *John*, 397-99. See also Barrett, *Gospel according to St John*, 384. Morris, on the other hand, thinks the passage refers to the judges of Israel, and the expression "gods" is applied to them in the exercise of their high and God-given office. Morris, *Gospel according to John*, 467.

<sup>269</sup> As part of his thesis for Jesus' equality with God, Neyrey's argument for Jesus' power over death in 10:34-36 is not convincing. (i) The argument based on the interpretation of Psalm 82:6 in postbiblical Judaism on one hand, and claiming John 10:34-36 "might well be the earliest witness to this traditional interpretation of Ps 82:6" is circular. (ii) His three-part conclusion that the use of Ps. 82:6 heightens the midrashic interpretation of a/ Jesus has never sinned, b/ his death has nothing to do with sin, and c/ his power over death is radically different from Adam's or Israel's deathlessness is purely conjectural and lacks evidence from the text in question. Neyrey, *Ideology of Revolt*, 72-74.

<sup>270</sup> The Greek clause is a split construction with the two Complements ἐκείνους *them* and θεοὺς *"gods"* with the Predicator εἶπεν *he (God) called* inserted in the middle.

- [1] *If he called them gods,*  
 [2] *to whom the word of God came—*  
 [3] *and the Scripture cannot be broken—*

- [4] *whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world,*  
 [5] *do you say of him,*  
 [6] *“You are blaspheming”*  
 [7] *because I said,*  
 [8] *“I am the Son of God”?*

Here, Jesus poses a tightly argued conditional question that consists of eight ranking clauses. It represents the longest conditional (clause complex), with a total of 36 words, and one of the most grammatically intricate statements that the author of John records as Jesus speaking so far in John's Gospel. The two main clauses are found in cl. 5 *do you say of him* and cl. 6 *“You are blaspheming.”* The protasis consists of the first three clauses (cls. 1-3, v. 35), and the apodosis consists of the remaining five clauses (cls 4-8, v. 36). Jesus argues that on the basis of the word of God, he uses “gods” to describe people. Thus, being sanctified and sent into the world by the Father, he can therefore rightly make his Christological claim (10:30; cf. 5:17). The basic premise is twofold: God himself has spoken (cl. 1) and the Scripture is trustworthy and authoritative (cl. 3). Arguing from the lesser to the greater, as the one whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world (cl. 5), Jesus should not be wrongly accused of blasphemy (cl. 6; cf. 10:33).<sup>271</sup>

Clauses 1 to 3 comprise the protasis. The Indicative mood is chosen to express what the speaker sees as fact. In the case of Jesus, it is also something he establishes in

---

<sup>271</sup> The lack of attention to conditionals and the various linguistic elements that give them the shape and meaning in John's Gospel is acutely felt in a passage like this. Greek grammar textbooks, for instance, Moule, McKay, and Wallace, describe the meaning based on primarily Moods and Tenses with very little reference to the context. Other studies approach conditionals from a special approach. Porter's work is devoted to Mood, verbal aspect, and logical relations, and Runge's grammar is restricted to the information structuring function of conditionals. Greek commentaries, such as Brown, Barrett, Morris, and Carson, give little attention to these statements as conditionals and how they function rhetorically to persuade the reader of John.

the previous verse (v. 34), that is, God has already spoken to the people and has called them “gods” (cl. 1). These are the people who are further described in cl. 2 *to whom the word of God came*. Clause 3 further asserts with the word group (*the Scripture*) cannot be broken placed at the beginning of the clause. Jesus emphasizes the Scriptural basis of his argument, with the underlying belief that God’s word is truly trustworthy and authoritative.<sup>272</sup>

The apodosis framed as a rhetorical question, is made up of the remaining five clauses (cls. 4-8). Clause 4 *whom he sanctified and sent into the world* obviously refers to Jesus himself (cf. 8:42). The argument Jesus adopts is from lesser to greater, moving from people who were called gods (cl. 1) to himself, whom God sanctified and sent into the world. If they are being called “gods,” Jesus ought to occupy a more special position. The emphatic personal pronoun in cl. 5 *do you* (ὁμεῖς) *say of him* emphasizes the fact that the law Jesus refers to is the Scripture that belongs to the Jews (cf. v. 34 τῷ νόμῳ ὑμῶν *in your Law*).

There appears to be a deliberate contrast between ἐγὼ εἶπα *I* (God) *said* in v. 34 and ὁμεῖς λέγετε *you* (the Jews) *say* in v. 36, cl. 5. It shows that what the Jews are accusing Jesus of clearly goes against the direct revelation of God. Finally, in the final clause (cl. 8), the Christological title υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ *the Son of God* is a marked Theme of the clause. Such title, with its closely related concept of divine sonship, represents the crux of not only the current debate in John 10, but the ongoing conflict between Jesus and the Jews throughout his public ministry (cf. 5:17, 19).

---

<sup>272</sup> Jesus' argument from Scripture is also found in the Indicative conditional in 7:23 *If* (εἰ) *on the Sabbath* *a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken* (ἵνα μὴ λυθῇ ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως)...

The point of Jesus' rhetorical conditional question is clear. Based on the evidence of their own Scripture, by rejecting Jesus and his claim, the Jews deny what has been written in the word of God. Taken together, the two rhetorical questions in v. 34 and vv. 35-36 effectively overturn the charge of Jesus' opponents. The Scripture clearly contains statements of God calling individuals gods (v. 34). The Indicative conditional (vv. 35-36) develops the argument further. The assumed to be true (and in fact true) protasis forms the basis of Jesus' Christological claim. Their charge of blasphemy against Jesus has no legitimate ground. A substantial part of Jesus' argument is powerfully communicated through this highly grammatically intricate conditional.

From making his defense by citing Scripture, Jesus then turns attention to his works in the next two conditionals (10:37, 38), in response to the Jews' unbelief. These two conditionals consist of nine ranking clauses. They argue for the case against belief in Jesus (v. 37, cls. 1-2) as well as the case for belief in him (v. 38, cls. 3-9). Verse 37 states the case negatively (assuming Jesus is not doing the works of the Father), while v. 38 states it positively and explains the ramifications for his hearers. The following clause outline represents the hierarchy of the clauses. Cls. 2 and 5 are the main clauses; cls. 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7 are the subordinate clauses; and cls. 8 and 9 the content clauses of cl. 7.

10:37, 38

[1] εἰ οὐ ποιῶ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς μου,  
[2] μὴ πιστεύετε μοι

[3] εἰ δὲ ποιῶ,  
[4] κἄν ἐμοὶ μὴ πιστεύητε,  
[5] τοῖς ἔργοις πιστεύετε,  
[6] ἵνα γνῶτε  
[7] καὶ γινώσκητε  
[8] ὅτι ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατήρ  
[9] κἀγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ.

- [1] *If I do **not** do the works of my Father,*  
 [2] *do not believe me;*
- [3] *but if I do them,*  
 [4] ***and** if you do not believe me,*  
 [5] *believe the works,*  
 [6] *that you may come to know*  
 [7] *and keep on knowing*  
 [8] *that the Father is in me*  
 [9] *and I am in the Father.*

As the middle of the three consecutive conditionals, v. 37 is the simplest and shortest, consisting of two ranking clauses (cls. 1-2). The Indicative mood in the protasis (cl. 1) is used to state what is assumed to be true by the speaker (Jesus) for the sake of argument. It is obviously not true. Although Jesus does the works of his Father, for the sake of argument, he only states the case as if he is not. This kind of supposition aptly illustrates the Indicative type 1 protasis that is used to express conditions and situations *assumed* to be true by the speaker for the sake of argument

The apodosis (cl. 2) is made up of an imperatival clause: *do not believe πιστεύετε* Pres. Act. Imp.) *me*. Jesus argues that in the case of Jesus not doing the Father's work, his opponents should not believe him. In clauses 1 and 2, the negative polarity οὐ and μὴ *not* are used respectively. But as a matter of fact, these two clauses do not apply in reality. But Jesus uses it to set the stage for the third and final Indicative conditional in v. 38, in which he states the situation as it really is, that he is in fact accomplishing the work of the Father and what that implies for audience. As shown above, in the third and last consecutive conditional (v. 38, cls. 3-9), the clause structure becomes grammatically more intricate again.

The language of v. 38 is quite terse; each clause consists of not more than four words. It reflects the seriousness and finality of the message. The clause structure

consists of three levels: (i) the main clause or the apodosis, cl. 5 *believe the works*, (ii) the second level clauses including the double protases of cls. 3 and 4, as well as cl. 6 and 7, and (iii) the third level clauses, cl. 8 and 9.

The protasis consist of two *if* clauses. The first *if* clause is Indicative, cl. 3 *but if I do* (ποιῶ Pres. Act. Ind.) *them*. With the choice of the Indicative mood, Jesus makes the assertion that he does the work of the Father. The clause is followed by an κἄν *and if* Subjunctive clause, cl. 4 *and if you do not believe* (πιστεύετε Pres. Act. Subj.) *me*. Although Jesus knows that that they do not believe him, he states their unbelief explicitly. Despite the Jews' unbelief, what Jesus states in the apodosis holds true.

The Subjunctive appears only three more times in John, all spoken by Jesus, twice to the Jews (8:14, 16) and the third time to Martha (11:25).

8:14, 16 *And if (κἄν) I testify on my own behalf...And if (καὶ ἐάν) I do judge*

11:25 *he/she who believes in me will live even if (κἄν) they die*<sup>273</sup>

These clauses acknowledge the assertions of his opponents and the states of affairs that are perceived by the hearer to be inevitable. In spite of such perceived inevitable or necessary situation or event, the apodosis (major clause) still holds true. In doing so, the argument and its persuasive force are strengthened significantly.

The combination of the Indicative and Subjunctive protasis is rare in John and in the rest of the NT. In the discourse with Nicodemus, Jesus poses a combined Indicative and Subjunctive conditional question toward the end of the discourse:

3:12

εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε, πῶς «ἐάν εἶπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια» πιστεύσετε;<sup>274</sup>

<sup>273</sup> The Gk. καὶ in κἄν (*even if*) here has an emphatic or adverbial function, acknowledging the real possibility that like the non-believers believers also face physical death.



*If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, shall you believe how if I tell you heavenly things?*

The author of John records both double protasis conditionals (3:12; 10:38) toward the end of Jesus' speech in John 3 and John 10, respectively. In both cases, they reflect an acute sense of the misunderstanding of Nicodemus and the unbelief of the Jews, and cause the reader to pause and think through their own response to Jesus. Furthermore, in cl. 4, the negative particle *μὴ* *not* makes its third appearance in four consecutive clauses (see cls. 1 and 2). Such frequent occurrence of the negative particle suggests either strong emotion or direct rebuke, as illustrated in the Apostle Paul's defense of resurrection in 1 Cor 15:12-17.<sup>275</sup>

The apodosis (cls. 5-9) also exhibits a high level of grammatical intricacy. The group of clauses consists of a main clause (cl. 5 *believe the works*), followed by two purpose (*ἵνα*) clauses (cls. 6-7), which are further modified by two content (*ὅτι*) clauses (cls. 8-9). Clause 5 features the marked Theme *τοῖς ἔργοις the works* (of Jesus) (cf. cl. 4 *ἐμοὶ me* (the person of Jesus)). Jesus now underscores his works once more (10:25, 32; cf. 5:36). Furthermore, the verb *πιστεύετε* (Pres. Act. Imp.) *believe* expresses a sense of importance and urgency. Jesus frames it negatively in cl. 2, *μὴ πιστεύετε μοι do not believe me*, but in cl. 5, Jesus strongly asserts that they are to believe his works.<sup>276</sup> The use of the Imperative mood appears to be deliberate. It matches the

---

<sup>274</sup> The Subjunctive protasis «ἐὰν εἴπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια» *if I tell you heavenly things* is an inserted clause in the Greek text.

<sup>275</sup> 1 Cor 15:12-17

v. 12 *how do some among you say there is no (οὐκ) resurrection*

v. 13 *But if (εἰ) there is no (οὐκ) resurrection*

v. 14 *and if (εἰ) Christ has not (οὐκ) been raised*

v. 16 *For if (εἰ) the dead are not (οὐκ) raised*

v. 17 *and if (εἰ) Christ has not (οὐκ) been raised*

<sup>276</sup> Likewise Jesus teaches his disciples, 14:11 *πιστεúετε μοι ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἐμοί· εἰ δὲ μὴ, διὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτὰ πιστεúετε. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in*

intensity of the Jews' strong assertion in v. 24 *If you are the Christ, tell* (εἰπὲ Aor. Act. Imp.) *us plainly*.

The two subsequent purpose (ἵνα) clauses (cls. 6, 7) explicate the purpose of believing Jesus' works: so that the audience may γνῶτε (Aor. Act Subj. *you may come to know*) and γινώσκητε (Pres. Act. Subj. *you may keep on knowing*) that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. As a number of scholars have pointed out, there is a key aspectual distinction between the two verbs. The Aorist Subjunctive γνῶτε *you may come to know* expresses the act of knowing, and the Present Subjunctives γινώσκητε *you may keep on knowing* focuses on the continuing progress in knowing or understanding.<sup>277</sup> Ongoing reverence of God and acting in his will are likewise expressed in the following conditional spoken by the healed blind man.<sup>278</sup>

\*9:31 (the blind man who was healed)  
οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἁμαρτωλῶν ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἀκούει, ἀλλ' ἐάν τις θεοσεβῆς ἢ  
καὶ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιῇ τούτου ἀκούει.

*We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does his will, he hears him.*

In 10:38, the aspectual difference in the two purpose clauses of cls. 6, 7 indicates significant implications for the purpose and the audience of John's Gospel (20:31). The act of trusting Jesus, and the continuing process of believing him, support a major

---

*me; if not, believe on account of the works themselves.* On the possible difference in meaning of μή as opposed to οὐ in Indicative conditionals (see also John 14:2; 15:22, 24), Porter remarks, "Perhaps the difference is between negating the simple supposition and negating the more subjective or notional supposition, although this is difficult to determine." Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 296.

<sup>277</sup> Westcott, *St John*, 161; Carson, *Gospel according to John*, 400; Morris, *Gospel according to John*, 470. Porter writes, "These verses (10:37-38) illustrate well the aspectual and non-temporal basis of Greek tense usage. (1) The parallel Aorist and Present Subjunctives refer to the same process of belief that results from fulfillment of belief in the works of Jesus, and do not have either future reference (there is no necessary correlation with the future), only with result) or past reference (the argument only works if the results are not in existence but solely projected). (2) The aspectual contrast is made between the act of knowing and continuing progress in understanding." (*Verbal Aspect*, 328) Cf. John 17:3, where the Present Subjunctive γινώσκωσιν is also used in Jesus' prayer for his disciples.

<sup>278</sup> For a comparison between the Aorist and Present Subjunctives in John and the rest of the NT, see Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 324-35.

premise of this study. Conditionals in John are used to help people to explore who Jesus is (act of belief) and to understand what faith in Jesus entails (progress in faith). The act of believing γνῶτε (Aor. Act. Subj. *you may come to know*) implies that those who have yet to believe Jesus are urged to do so. And the continuing progress of knowing γινώσκητε (Pres. Act. Subj. *you may keep on knowing*) speaks to those who have already believed him, but need to make progress in their faith. The need to grow in faith is shown in John 11:7-44 in Jesus' teaching to his disciples, and to Martha and Mary prior to his raising of Lazarus (see section 5.1 below).

The final two clauses, cl. 8, *that in me is the Father* and cl. 9 *and I am in the Father*, are content (ὅτι *that*) clauses that explain what people must know and understand: the mutual indwelling and co-existence of Jesus and the Father; or the oneness that Jesus the Son enjoys with the Father (10:30 *I and the Father are one*; cf. 5:17 *My Father is working until now, and I myself am working*).

*Summary.* The discussion of Jesus' three conditional statements (vv. 35-38) again shows that a complete description of conditional statements goes beyond Moods and Tenses. As the concluding argument to his final public debate with his opponents, Jesus' final, consecutive conditionals exhibit a grammatical intricacy that is rare in John's Gospel. Ideationally, the Indicative mood, the Subjunctive mood, and the negative polarity construe different kinds of "reality" or human experience. Interpersonally, the Imperative mood (apodosis), rhetorical questions, and emphatic personal pronouns enact personal relationships. In these final conditionals, Jesus strongly refutes his opponents' charge of blasphemy. Textually, the grammatically intricate clause structure, including double protases, purpose and content clauses, and

the collocation between questions and conditionals allows the reader to understand the information flows in the narrative and dialogues. Rhetorically, these conditionals also form part of the author's strategy to motivate and persuade the reader to avoid the error of the Jews and to put their faith in Jesus. For some, this means the act of belief; for others, it means to grow and persevere in faith, as Jesus teaches the disciples in the upper room discourse that includes the following conditional statements (the teaching on the Vine in 15:4a, 4b, 6, 7a, 7b; and the hatred of the world in 15:18, 19, 20a, 20b, 22, 24).

*Cotexts.* Not only do these concluding conditionals (10:35-38) exhibit a high degree of grammatical intricacy, they are also the most grammatically complex compared with Jesus' two other major discourses, namely, the Sabbath healing debate (5:19-47) and the Feast of Tabernacles debate (8:12-59).<sup>279</sup> The texts of these conditionals are reproduced below.

A. 5:46-47 (Sabbath healing debate)

- [1] εἰ γὰρ ἐπιστεύετε Μωϋσεῖ,  
 [2] ἐπιστεύετε ἂν ἐμοί  
 [3] περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν.

- [1] εἰ δὲ τοῖς ἐκείνου γράμμασιν οὐ πιστεύετε,  
 [2] πῶς τοῖς ἐμοῖς ῥήμασιν πιστεύσετε;

- [1] *For if you believed Moses,*  
 [2] *you would believe me,*  
 [3] *for he wrote about me.*

- [1] *But if you do not believe his writings,*  
 [2] *how will you believe my words?*

B. 8:54-55a, 55b (Feast of Tabernacles debate)

- [1] ἂν ἐγὼ δοξάσω ἑμαυτόν,  
 [2] ἢ δόξα μου οὐδέν ἐστιν  
 [3] ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ δοξάζων με,

<sup>279</sup> Jesus' final statements in the Feast of Tabernacles debate are v. 56 and v. 58 on his divinity in relation to Abraham. But for the purpose of our study, the consecutive conditionals (8:54, 55) prior to these statements can be considered as his closing argument.

- [4] ὃν ὑμεῖς λέγετε  
 [5] ὅτι θεὸς ἡμῶν ἐστίν,  
 [6] καὶ οὐκ ἐγνώκατε αὐτόν,  
 [7] ἐγὼ δὲ οἶδα αὐτόν.

- [1] καὶ εἶπω  
 [2] ὅτι οὐκ οἶδα αὐτόν,  
 [3] ἔσομαι ὅμοιος ὑμῖν ψεύστης·  
 [4] ἀλλὰ οἶδα αὐτόν  
 [5] καὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ τηρῶ.

- [1] *If I glorify myself,*  
 [2] *my glory is nothing;*  
 [3] *but it is my Father who glorifies me,*  
 [4] *of whom you say,*  
 [5] *“He is our God”;*  
 [6] *and you have not come to know him,*  
 [7] *but I know him.*

- [1] *And if I say*  
 [2] *that I do not know him,*  
 [3] *I shall be a liar like you,*  
 [4] *but I do know him,*  
 [5] *and keep his word.*

In, 5:46, 47 and 8:54, 55 there are only two levels of clause subordination, but in 10:35-38 there are three. The mean values of grammatical intricacy (the number of ranking clauses per sentence) of the first two sets of concluding conditionals are 2.5 and 6 respectively. But the final discourse has a mean value of eight (8). Furthermore, among grammatical features such as marked Themes (item (2) below), 10:35-38 also ranks the highest with six, whereas the first two discourses have values of two and one, respectively.

Other grammatical features selected for comparison are listed and explained below: (1) = interrogative (wh- and y/n questions); (2) = marked Themes; (3) = emphatic personal pronouns (ἐγὼ *I*, ὑμεῖς *you*); (4) = the imperative Mood; and (5) =

negative Polarity<sup>280</sup> If we add all these features (items (1) to (5), 10:35-38 has the total score of 13 and ranks the highest of the three, as shown below

Text	Cl.	Clause Comp.	Cl.: Cl. Comp	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(1+5)
5:46-47	5	2	2.5	1	2	1		3	7
8.55-56	12	2	6	-	1	3		2	6
10:35-38	16	2	<b>8</b>	1	6	1	2	3	<b>13</b>

More grammatical features can also be included to demonstrate how they perform various functions in the development of the argument of John's Gospel. One is the choice of the grammatical Subject. For example, according to the grammatical Subject *you* in 5:46, 47 *If you believed .For if you do not believe*, the conditionals clearly address the Jews' response to the writings of Moses and their unbelief toward Jesus. In 8.54, 55b, the grammatical Subject shifts to Jesus and the trustworthiness of his claims and assertions, *If I glorify myself ..even if I say that I do not know him*. Finally, in 10:35-38, the grammatical Subjects change to God and Jesus, *If God called them gods ..If I do not do the works ..but if I do them*. This special emphasis on the unique relationship between the Father and Jesus is also underscored in the final two content clauses in v 38 ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατήρ καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ. *the Father is in me, and I in the Father* Therefore, we can say that as the final argument of the Christological claim to the Jews (and those who reject Jesus), the author of John presents Jesus' works (signs and word) and the mutual dwelling of the Son and the Father as evidence in these concluding conditionals. All these and other grammatical features can be included to

<sup>280</sup> The negative Polarity count includes "negative clauses," or clauses that express an idea negatively, even though they do not have the negative particle οὐ or μή. For example, 5:46 contains two negative clauses [1] *For if you believed Moses* (i.e. you do not believe Moses), [2] *you would believe me* (i.e. you do not believe me).

analyze the grammatical and rhetorical meaning of conditionals in context.<sup>281</sup> As conditional statements in context, there is sufficient evidence to show that 10:35-38 contain the climactic arguments presented to the Jews and to “the world” (cf. Jesus’ conditionals in 15:22, 24).

### Summary and Conclusion

It requires a tremendous amount of work to provide a definition of *if* and how one should categorize NT Greek conditional statements. As expressions of complex phenomena and arguments, conditionals place heavy demands on the grammar of language.<sup>282</sup> Conditionals are often multi-layered in accordance with the metafunctions of language. The method of grammatical description based simply on Mood and Tense is insufficient to understand a conditional’s full import as a linguistic and persuasive device. Understanding that is solely based on one or two features of grammar will always also be incomplete and one-sided.

In John’s Gospel, conditionals are used to challenge and motivate the speech participants and the reader to examine their own worldview in relation to what Jesus reveals through his works and words. In this chapter, the description of conditionals is

---

<sup>281</sup> For example, Jesus’ four consecutive conditionals in Matt 12:26-29, including three Indicative and one Subjunctive mood, four marked Themes (underlined), and three interrogatives. It is also the only occasion in Matthew’s Gospel where Jesus uses the highest number of conditionals.

v. 26 [1] *And if (εἰ) Satan casts out Satan, [2] he is divided against himself; [3] how then shall his kingdom stand?*

v. 27 [1] *And if (εἰ) I by Beelzebub cast out demons, [2] by whom do your sons cast them out?...*

v. 28 [1] *But if (εἰ) I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, [2] then the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

v. 29 [1] *Or how can anyone enter the strong man’s house [2] and carry off his property, [3] if (εἰ) he/she does **not** first bind the strong?...*

<sup>282</sup> As Halliday puts it, in the construal of any complex phenomenon such as pain, or learning and teaching, these complex domains of human experience make “extreme demands” on the grammar of every language. Halliday, *Complementarities*, 4.

primarily based on system networks and grammatical features, including, the choice of Person as the grammatical Subject, negative Polarity, elliptical or protasis-only construction, collocation of questions with conditionals, and grammatical intricacy. The functions of conditionals are summarized below.

*Ideational function.* Conditionals serve what Halliday describes as the reality-making and reality-changing ideational function of everyday language. They are suited to construct a picture of the world we live in or a “virtual reality” for the sake of argument.<sup>283</sup> The Subjunctive conditional is used to put forward a hypothetical reality. The argument is hypothetical or notional and does not depend on evidence or proof. The audience is encouraged to withhold judgment and adopt the hypothesis (protasis) to think through the validity and credibility of the entire statement. Among Jesus’ conditionals, there is a strong correlation between Subjunctive conditionals and didactic or expository discourses, for example: with Nicodemus in 3:1-15 (3 out of 4), the Galilean Jews and the disciples in 6:41-65 (5 out of 5), and the crowd in 7:37-39 (v. 37).

The Indicative conditionals, however, are used for the sake of argument, and are based on the speaker’s portrayal of what is true (Indicative type 1) or untrue (Indicative type 2). There is a high correlation between Indicative conditionals and polemic or argumentative discourses, for example, the Sabbath healing debate in 5:19-47 (2 out of 5), the Jews who used to believe Jesus in 7:31-47 (3 out of 5), and the final debate with the Jews in 10:21-39 (3 out of 3). In these cases, conditionals are used to argue, to frame what is right and what is wrong, such as the culpability of the Jews for their unbelief and

---

<sup>283</sup> “‘Learning through language’ refers to language in the construction of reality: how we use language to build up a picture of the world in which we live. This means the world that is around us and also the world that is inside us, the world of our consciousness and our imagination.” Halliday, “Children’s Language Development,” *CW* 4: 317.



rejection of Jesus (10:35-38; cf. 15:22, 24).

*Interpersonal function.* Along with the Subjunctive mood, the choice of the indefinite third person  $\tau\iota\varsigma$  *anyone* shows that Jesus uses these conditionals to address Jews and Gentiles, believers and non-believers alike. The same purpose is served by the author using the “*anyone*” conditionals to invite or persuade the reader to participate in the process of hearing Jesus’ word, making the right decision, and choosing the right course of action. These Subjunctive conditionals are found in the bread of life discourse, 6:51 *if anyone* ( $\tau\iota\varsigma$ ) *eats of this bread*; as well as the statement to the crowd, 7:37 *If anyone* ( $\tau\iota\varsigma$ ) *is thirsty*, and in the Good Shepherd saying, 10:9 *if anyone* ( $\tau\iota\varsigma$ ) *enters through me* (cf. 3:3, 5). Such open invitation conditionals suggest that the Gospel was probably originally written to people with no or limited exposure to the early Christian faith (cf. 10:38).

Other interpersonal features include the elliptical conditional question in 6:62. Unlike other conditional questions (3:12; 5:47; 7:23), the protasis-only question motivates the immediate and outside audience to think more deeply and to wrestle with the exact meaning of Jesus’ question so that they can and relate it to their own situation (that is, superficial faith). Similar to the Nicodemus discourse, questions and conditionals are highly collocated in the Bread of life discourse. The interlocutors’ questions (6:42, 52, 60) often appear in very close proximity to Jesus’ conditionals (6:44, 51, 53, 62). Jesus’ conditionals are effectively used to respond to his interlocutors’ and audience’s misunderstandings, prompting them to think more deeply. Consequently, their faith will be strengthened (20:31).

*Textual function.* Conditionals are used as introductory and concluding

statements in functionally-significant text spans. For example, as the opening statement with the Jews, 6:44 *if the Father does not draw him or her* addresses the Father's role in salvation. Similarly, 6:53 *if you do not eat the flesh* also begins the subsequent text span (paragraph vv. 52-59). Concluding conditionals are also found in 6:65 and the consecutive conditionals of 10:35-38. Furthermore, in the Bread of life discourse, the sovereign work of the Father in the salvation of the world is "bookended" by the twin conditionals (6:44, 65).

As clause complexes, conditionals also exhibit various values of grammatical intricacy as reflections of their level of complexity in terms of their contents and arguments. Compared with the grammatical intricacy of concluding conditionals in two previous major discourses with the Jews in John 5 and 8, Jesus' conditionals in 10:35-38 rank the highest. In addition to other textual indications, such as Jesus returning to the area of Jordan in 10:40, it is reasonable to deduce that the Jews' unbelief are climactically concluded by these highly grammatically intricate conditionals. The author may have used the number of occurrences of conditionals to indicate the interlocutors' readiness to accept Jesus. The Samaritan woman and the royal official believe Jesus without persistent demand or prolonged debates. However, after extensive dialogues and 20 conditionals,<sup>284</sup> the Jews still refused to accept Jesus.

Finally, the author of John uses conditionals to prompt the audience to engage in "inner languaging,"<sup>285</sup> to persuade the reader to commit fully to the life-giving Christ,

---

<sup>284</sup> They include 5:19, 31, 43; 7:17, 23; 8:14, 16, 19, 24, 31, 36, 39, 42, 46, 51, 54, 55; 10:35-36, 37, and 38.

<sup>285</sup> "Most of our linguistic activity does not result in speech. We are using our language to process information all day long, whether or not we are speaking or listening or reading or writing. Even while we dream we are engaging in linguistic activity. Only a very small fraction of our linguistic activity results in

the Son of God. As the narrative and discourses continue, the reader continues to engage in silent conversation with the text. Rhetorically, the Christological argument expressed through the conditionals motivates the reader to map out their personal response to Jesus, the Christ.

In the next and final chapter of our investigation, the conditionals of Jesus with his disciples, and with Martha and Mary in John 11 will be examined first. This will be followed by a detailed summary of the construal of “reality” through the choices of the systemic network of Mood, then an evaluation of the hypothesis that John’s language is antilanguage, by applying the functional meaning of Johannine conditionals.

CHAPTER FIVE  
THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS  
AND THE GRAMMAR OF CONDITIONALS

Introduction

By their very nature conditionals involve statements that may or may not be true. The meaning of conditionals requires the hearer to exercise rationality or intellect and imagination. As a grammatical construction, a considerable amount of grammatical resources is used by conditionals to construe human experience and to convey interpersonal meaning. As a rhetorical device, conditionals are used for persuasion. This chapter continues to develop the thesis that the description and meaning of Johannine conditionals must move beyond the basic categories of the Mood and Tense of the protasis and linguistic theories that focus on only selected functions of language.

The chapter studies the discourses of Jesus with his followers that take place in Bethany. The characters involved are the disciples of Jesus (vv. 1-16), Martha, and Mary (vv. 17-44). The chapter consists of two main sections. Section 5.1 investigates the discourses of Jesus with his followers in 11:1-44 that includes a total of seven conditionals. In the first of this two-part discourse, Jesus speaks another pair of contrasting (Subjunctive) conditionals to the disciples in vv. 9 and 10 (cf. conditionals 10:37 and 10:38) to encourage the disciples to follow him despite threats to his life. These conditionals are characterized by the form: protasis: *anyone* + Subjunctive mood; apodosis: Future or Imperative mood. The same form appears multiple times in John's Gospel (e.g. 10:9 *I am the door; if anyone enters through me*; see also 6:51; 7:17, 37). Jesus' conditionals in vv. 9, 11 also contain lexical ties: "walk," "day, night," and "Light

(of the world)” that refer back to previous discourses with the disciples in John 6 and 9. The claim by Hans Förster that the disciples’ conditional in v. 12 reflects an “untypical” Johannine misunderstanding will also be examined.<sup>286</sup>

In the second part of the discourse (vv. 17-44), the identical conditionals by Martha and Mary (vv. 21, 32) will be considered from two perspectives. They will be analyzed as part of a pattern of (i) “misunderstanding” conditionals by followers of Jesus in John 11 (vv. 12, 21, 32) and (ii) Jesus’ response to these conditionals. The pattern reveals the followers’ lack of faith and Jesus’ use of the occasion to prompt them to grow deeper in their spiritual understanding and commitment. The identical conditionals by Martha and Mary will also be examined in response to Richard Young’s classification of conditionals, in which Martha’s conditional belongs to the category of “Rebuke” and Mary’s conditional, “Lament.”<sup>287</sup>

As a general summary of the discourses and conditionals that this study has analyzed, section 5.2 contains a detailed description of the Ideational and Interpersonal functions of John’s conditionals, especially in relation to the Gospel’s persuasive purpose. The Greek Indicative and Subjunctive moods are compared and contrasted to show how speakers use them to construe what is real, unreal, and hypothetical. In both polemic and expository discourses, Jesus and other Johannine characters construe reality by using conditionals as effective rhetorical devices. Secondly, the use of questions as part of the Interpersonal function will also be investigated. The relatively high frequency of questions and conditionals will further be addressed. The selected systems of Ideational and Interpersonal meanings of conditionals will also be used to respond to

---

<sup>286</sup> Förster, "Johannes 11:11-14," 338-57.

<sup>287</sup> Young, "Classification," 29-49; *Intermediate Greek*, 225-30.

Bruce Malina and other scholars who claim that Jesus and his disciples adopt an antilanguage in John.<sup>288</sup>

### 5.1 The Disciples, Martha, and Mary (11:7-40)

The raising of Lazarus in John 11:1-44 is a very strong support for Jesus' claim concerning doing the work of the Father in the conditionals in 10:37, 38, towards the end of his debate with the Jews. Jesus indeed does the work of the Father; this is also because he and the Father mutually dwell in each other. However, the speech participant in the section changes from the Jews to his disciples, and Martha and Mary, people whom Jesus loves (11:3, 5). The act of raising Lazarus, however, is recorded in only the last two verses (vv. 43-44).<sup>289</sup> The bulk of the episode records dialogue, including conditionals, among the key participants.

As part of the main thrust of the narrative, conditionals in John 11 also underscore the reason for the followers of Jesus to have deeper faith. This is seen in the following conditional statements (vv. 26, 40) that form part of Jesus' belief statements in his dialogues with his followers and with the Father.

John 11		
v. 15	<i>that you may believe</i> (πιστεύσητε)	(Jesus – the disciples)
v. 26	<i>do you believe</i> (πιστεύεις)	(Jesus – Martha)
v. 40	<i>did I not tell you, if you believe</i> (πιστεύσης)	(Jesus – Martha)
v. 42	<i>they may believe</i> (πιστεύσωσιν)	(Jesus – the Father)

The section is divided into two sub-sections. Section 5.1.1 investigates the dialogue between Jesus and his disciples. Use of *anyone* Subjunctive mood protasis + Future/Aorist tense apodosis as promise conditionals are again seen in Jesus'

<sup>288</sup> Malina, "Gospel of John in Sociolinguistic Perspective."

<sup>289</sup> For an analysis of the raising of Lazarus as the climax of Jesus' signs and that Jesus alone is the mediator of both physical and spiritual life, see Moule, "The Meaning of 'Life,'" 114-25.

conditionals in vv. 9, 10. The disciples' misunderstanding, expressed in their conditional in v. 12 with special reference to the claim that their misunderstanding constitutes a special or an "untypical" Johannine misunderstanding, will also be examined.

Section 5.1.2 continues to analyze the conditionals in the discourse between Jesus, Martha, and Mary. The interpersonal meaning of the identical conditionals by Martha (v. 21) and Mary (v. 32) will be compared, with special reference to Richard Young's classification of conditionals based on Speech Act Theory. SFL concepts of register and context of situation will be used to evaluate Young's claim.

Throughout the section, in addition to describing the lexicogrammatical features and the Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual functions of conditionals, Sydney Lamb's notion of "inner languaging" as a primary linguistic activity will continue to be adopted to explain the persuasive purpose of Johannine conditionals.

#### 5.1.1 The disciples (11:9-15)

Grammatically and rhetorically, the double conditionals by Jesus (11:9, 10) in this segment of the discourse serve a number of important functions. For example, they act as an extension to what Jesus taught his disciples in John 9, where the metaphors of *day* and *night* (9:4), and *the light of the world* (9:5) were also used. While John 9 emphasizes Jesus' *working* (that is, healing the blind man), John 11's focus shifts to the disciples' continual *walking* (with Jesus).<sup>290</sup> As a pair of conditionals, they belong to the group of contrastive conditionals (*if anyone walks in the day; if anyone walks in the night*) that Jesus typically uses to teach his disciples in John and in the Synoptic gospels.

---

<sup>290</sup> Carson comments, "As an answer to the question of the disciples as to why Jesus is determined to go up to Judea (v. 8), these verses (vv. 9-10) metaphorically insist that Jesus is safe as long as he performs his Father's will. The daylight period of his ministry may be far advanced, but it is wrong to quit before the twelve hours have been filled up." Carson, *Gospel according to John*, 409. He seems to suggest Jesus is talking about himself. But *anyone* in John's Gospel always refers to people other than Jesus.

As will be shown below, Jesus typically uses this type of conditional with his disciples in didactic situations. As *anyone* + Subjunctive conditionals, they also serve as an open invitation to immediate and outside hearers alike to participate in the Life of Jesus (cf. 6:51; 7:37).

The clausal structure of these two conditionals, including the opening rhetorical question is shown below with marked Theme underlined.

11:9-10

[-] οὐχὶ δώδεκα ὥραι εἰσιν τῆς ἡμέρας;

[1] ἐάν τις περιπατῆ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ,

[2] οὐ προσκόπτει,

[3] ὅτι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου τούτου βλέπει·

[4] ἐάν δέ τις περιπατῆ ἐν τῇ νυκτί,

[5] προσκόπτει,

[6] ὅτι τὸ φῶς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν αὐτῷ.

[-] *Are there not twelve hours in the day?*

[1] *If anyone walks in the day*

[2] *they do not stumble,*

[3] *because they see the light of this world.*

[4] *But if anyone walks in the night,*

[5] *they stumble,*

[6] *because the light is not in them.*

*Ideational function.* Jesus' question (v. 9) begins with οὐχὶ *not*, the strengthened form of the negative particle οὐ, that expects a positive answer. As a rhetorical question, it is a strong reaction to the disciples' concern over the desire of the Jews to murder Jesus (v. 8). The question also draws the attention of the disciples to what Jesus is about to say. The same emphatic particle is used in the rhetorical questions of Matt 5:46 *Do not even (οὐχὶ) the tax-collectors do the same?* and Matt 6:25 *Is not (οὐχὶ) life*



*more than food, and the body than clothing?*<sup>291</sup> These questions set the stage for and highlight the significance of what Jesus is about to teach his disciples.

The first conditional (cl. 1) is joined with asyndeton (no conjunction) to the rhetorical question. It suggests a logical connection of expansion to the preceding question. The second conditional (cl. 4), on the other hand, has the contrastive conjunction *δέ* *but*. The contents of these two consecutive conditionals are put side by side for a very sharp contrast. Moreover, the choice of the Subjunctive mood *περιπατῆ* (Pres. Act. Subj. *he/she walks*) in both conditionals posits an alternate or a hypothetical reality. It prompts the audience, immediate and outside, to switch the perspective or mode of thinking, and to consider the statement with an open mind. The goal is to motivate the hearer to choose the right course of action. In this case, Jesus pictures walking in two different realms, that is, in light and in darkness, and implies that the disciples should not be afraid of the murderous intent of the Jews, but should instead continue to follow Jesus while Jesus is still with them. These and many other Subjunctive, hypothetical conditionals are very effective teaching devices in John's Gospel for didactic and expository purposes, such as in the Bread of life discourse (6:44, 51, 53, 62, 65) and in the teaching of the Vine in John 15 (see below).

John 15

- v. 4 *if (the branch) does not abide* (μένῃ Pres. Act. Subj.) *in the vine...*  
*if you do not abide* (μένητε Pres. Act. Subj.) *in me*
- v. 6 *If anyone does not abide* (μένῃ Pres. Act. Subj.) *in me*
- v. 7 *If you abide* (μείνητε Aor. Act. Subj.) *in me*
- v. 9 *If you keep* (τηρήσητε Aor. Act. Subj.) *my commandment*<sup>292</sup>

---

<sup>291</sup> Matt 10:29 *Are not (οὐχὶ) two sparrows sold for a cent? See also Luke 6:39 A blind person cannot (οὐχὶ) guide a blind person, can he?; 12:6 Are not (οὐχὶ) five sparrows sold for five cents?; 17:8 But will he not (οὐχὶ) say to him...?*

Along with other contrastive consecutive Subjunctive conditionals by Jesus and other NT writers, these two conditionals further exhibit the characteristics of being used for expository purposes. The contrast is set up as follows:

	11:9	11:10
Realm	walking in the day	walking in the night
Result	do not stumble	stumble
Reason	they see the Light	the Light not in them

Similarly, in John 12, the author also records another pair of contrastive conditionals by Jesus: v 24a *if a grain of wheat does not fail into the earth and die* v 24b *but if it dies*. Many of these contrastive conditionals appear in Jesus' teaching to his disciples.<sup>293</sup>

*Interpersonal Function.* The grammatical Subject of the indefinite third person *anyone* + Subjunctive also characterizes these conditionals as statements concerning events yet to take place. This is especially true if the apodosis uses either the Future or the Aorist tense. Selected Johannine conditionals under this category are listed below<sup>294</sup>

6:51	<i>if anyone (τις) eats of this bread</i>	+	Future Indicative
7:37	<i>if anyone (τις) is thirsty</i>	+	Present Imperative
8:51	<i>if anyone (τις) keeps my word</i>	+	οὐ μὴ Aorist Subjunctive
10:9	<i>if anyone (τις) enters through me</i>	+	Future (Passive) Indicative
12:26a	<i>if anyone (τις) serves me</i>	+	Present Imperative
12:26b	<i>if anyone (τις) serves me</i>	+	Future Indicative

<sup>292</sup> The shift from the Present tense (vv 4-6) to the Aorist tense (vv 7, 9) suggests that the Present tense is used to underscore a higher degree of vividness in the initial conditionals. See the interpersonal function discussion below

<sup>293</sup> For example, Matt 6:14, 15 *For if you forgive...But if you do not forgive*; 7:22, 23 *if therefore your eye is clear...But if your eye is bad*; 18:15, 16 *if he/she listens to you...But if he/she does not listen to you*. See also Gamaliel in Acts 5:38, 39 *for if this plan or action should be of people...but if it is of God*.

<sup>294</sup> See also 3:3, 5, 14:23, and 15:6. Cf. 1 John 2.1 *And if anyone (τις) sins*; 2.15 *If anyone (τις) loves the world*; 4:20 *If anyone (τις) says*; and 5.16 *If anyone (τις) sees his or her brother or sister*

In the apodoses of the first four conditionals (6:51; 7:37; 8:51; 10:9), Jesus presents the hearer (*anyone*) eternal life and spiritual nourishment. In the last two conditionals, his continual presence with the disciples (12:26a) and the Father bestowing honor on them (12:26b) are kept in full view before the disciples. The Future Indicative and the Aorist Subjunctive in the protasis primarily function as modals for statements of potentiality, for example, 6:51 *he/she shall live forever*, whereas the Present Imperative is used in clauses that express necessity, e.g., 7:37 *come* (ἐρχέσθω Pres. Mid. Imp.) *to me*; and 12:26a *follow* (ἀκολουθεῖτω Pres. Act. Imp.) *me*.<sup>295</sup>

Furthermore, within the ASPECT network, the imperfective verbal aspect, as expressed in περιπατῆ (Pres. Act. Subj.) *he/she walks*, emphasizes the action of walking as a continuous process. By choosing the Present tense, the writer also foregrounds the action. As Porter remarks,

[I]n non-narrative sections of the Gospel, as well as most sections of the letters of the New Testament... the mainline of the discourse is carried by a string of present tense-form verbs... The aorist tense-form is used in discursive or expository discourse as a means of backgrounding the discourse in other events often seen to be in the past, while the perfect tense-form is used as a means for the foregrounding of supporting material, including events possibly but usually evaluations and emotive statements.<sup>296</sup>

---

<sup>295</sup> Unlike the system networks such as Moods and Tenses that are more discrete in classification, modality tends to be highly variable and subjective. The distinction made here is only between potentiality and necessity. Other features such as the emphatic negative οὐ μὴ (*shall never*) (8:51) also form what SFL calls “delicacy” of the choices in Modality made by the speaker. For an example of the system network of Modality primarily based on the English language, see Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 150. For the classification of Modality in English into *potentiality*, *possibility*, *necessity*, *likelihood*, and *requirement*, see Yule, *English Grammar*, 85-121. For a discussion of the Greek Future form as Tense, Aspect, or Mood, see Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 403-39. Porter concludes that, “[T]he Future usually derives from modal forms and has predominantly a volitional or desiderative, rather than strictly future, sense.” (439).

<sup>296</sup> Porter, “Prominence,” 58. The topic of prominence is also discussed in Halliday, “Linguistic Functions,” *CW* 2:98-107, where he discusses prominence that is “motivated” in the context of stylistics.

As a contrastive example, the perfective verbal aspect of the protasis in 8:51 *if anyone keeps* (τηρήση Aor. Act. Subj.) *my words* does not express the same degree of prominence in the statement.

8:51  
 ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν,  
 ἔάν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ,  
 θάνατον οὐ μὴ θεωρήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

*Very truly I say to you,  
 if anyone keeps my word  
 he/she shall never see death.*

On the level of the clause, greater emphasis is placed on the marked Theme of *death* and the double negative οὐ μὴ *never* in the apodosis, rather than on the protasis.<sup>297</sup> The same holds true for “enter” in 10:9 *if anyone enters* (εἰσέλθῃ Aor. Act. Subj.) *through me*.

Similar to many of the conditionals in John, the negative Polarity features prominently in these conditionals. Not only the opening rhetorical question, *Are there not twelve hours in the day?* is underscored by the strengthened negative οὐχὶ *not*, both conditionals also contain the negative Polarity, οὐ προσκόπτει *he/she does not stumble* (cl. 2) and οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν αὐτῷ (*the Light*) *is not in him/her* (cl. 6). Therefore, Jesus responds to the disciples’ concern for their lives with the choice of the Present tense, emphasizing the act of continuing to walk with him (following him) (11:9, 10) while he is still with them. The use of three negative Polarities also expresses Jesus’ correction of his disciples.

---

<sup>297</sup> If one departs from the text segmentation by most critical editions of treating 8:47 as the end of the paragraph, and considers 8:47-51 as a single text segment (paragraph), the protasis of 8:51 *if anyone keeps my word* also forms a cohesive tie with the rest of the text span (v. 47 *the words of God*, v. 51 *my word*). The semantic concept of marked Themes that this study adopts, however, is mainly on the clause and not paragraph level.

*Textual function.* Lexically, these two conditionals also form cohesive ties with the discourse of Jesus with his disciples in 9:1-5, and perhaps an allusion to the discourse in 6:60-66.

	6:60-66	9:1-5	11:9-10
walk	<i>Some disciples no longer walked with Jesus (6:66)</i>		<i>If anyone walks (11:9, 10)</i>
day, night		<i>as long as it is day, night is coming (9:4)</i>	<i>in the day...in the night (11:9, 10)</i>
light of the world		<i>the Light of the world (9:5)</i>	<i>the Light of this world (11:9, 10)</i>

Such lexical ties appear to be intentional. On a previous occasion, many disciples stopped “walking with” (following) Jesus. The conditionals in 10:9, 10 strongly encourage the disciples (the Twelve) to continue to follow him. In John 9, the contrast of “day” and “night” is set in the context of Jesus healing the blind. In John 11, the same contrast is made in the context of Jesus about to perform his greatest sign of raising Lazarus. The reader of the Gospel will likely recognize these links and be challenged to form the right opinion of the disciples, and examine their own attitude toward Jesus. The consecutive *anyone* Subjunctive conditionals (vv 9, 10) are spoken to prompt the audience to trust Jesus and to grow deeper in knowledge and faith. Jesus makes clear the purpose of the intentional delay to go to Bethany to see Lazarus in v 15 *so that you (the disciples) may believe (πιστεύσητε)*, and after the sign of raising Lazarus in v 42 *that they (the crowd) may believe (πιστεύσωσιν) that you sent me.*

Subsequently, to fully understand the next conditional by the disciples (11:12), it is necessary to include the text segment from v 11 to v 15. Jesus made a statement on the condition of Lazarus in v 11. He was either speaking of natural sleep or the death of

Lazarus. The (ideational) meaning is initially unclear, and possibly intended to be ambiguous. In v. 12, the disciples respond with a conditional of only three Greek words, the shortest conditional in John. However, their meaning is not clear initially. It is only in v. 13, when the author of John inserts an editorial comment, that the meaning is clarified for the reader. The author then adds Jesus' own clarification to the disciples in vv. 14-15. The meaning of Jesus' initial statement (v. 11) then becomes totally clear.

The organization of the text segment is outlined below.

- 11:11-15
- v. 11 Jesus' speaks of Lazarus's "sleep"
- \*v. 12 The disciples' conditional
- v. 13 (editorial comment)
- vv. 14-15 Jesus clarifies his meaning

The following investigation of Lazarus κεκοίμηται (Perf. Mid. Ind. *has fallen asleep or is dead*) (vv. 11, 12, 13) and the meaning of the passive voice of σωθήσεται (Fut. Pass. Ind.) lit. *he will be saved* (v. 12) will show that Jesus deliberately uses the ambiguity to strengthen the disciples' faith. Furthermore, the meaning of the disciples' conditional will also be studied in a wider context that includes Martha and Mary's conditionals (11:21, 32). Throughout the investigation, the claim that the disciples' conditional represents an "untypical" misunderstanding will also be evaluated.<sup>298</sup>

---

<sup>298</sup> This hypothesis is put forward by Hans Förster in "Johannes 11:11-14—ein typisches johanneisches Missverständnis?" 338-57. His purpose is to investigate if the dialogue between the disciples and Jesus in vv. 11-14, including the disciples' conditional (v. 12), constitutes a typical Johannine misunderstanding. He describes a typical Johannine misunderstanding as follows, "Die Technik des johanneischen Missverständnisses ist bekannt. Formulierungen, denen im folgenden dass tiefere Bedeutungen beigemessen werden, werden zuerst von der Umgebung Jesu missverstanden und dann durch eine Erklärung auf eine höhere Ebene gehoben." "The technique of Johannine misunderstanding is known. Formulations (sayings) with deeper meanings that are first misunderstood by the people around Jesus are later lifted by a statement (by Jesus) to a higher level." (338-39). If the disciples understand Lazarus as being sick and sleeping, and Jesus' supernatural power can and will heal him, it would be a typical Johannine misunderstanding. But the disciples completely miss Jesus' point of Lazarus's death and that he is going to bring him back to life. So the disciples' misunderstanding is far greater than any other Johannine misunderstandings. "Und so kann und muss man getonen, dass die Jünger die hier auf jeden Fall zu findet Anspielung auf den Tod nicht verstehen und stattdessen von einer natürlichen Genesung des

The following is an excerpt from the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples in vv. 11-12.

11:11 (Jesus)  
 Λάζαρος ὁ φίλος ἡμῶν κεκοίμηται  
 ἀλλὰ πορεύομαι  
 ἵνα ἐξυπνίσω αὐτόν.

\*10:12 (The disciples)  
 κύριε, εἰ κεκοίμηται  
 σωθήσεται.

11:11 (Jesus)  
*Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep,  
 but I go,  
 that I may wake him out of sleep.*

11:12 (The disciples)  
*Lord, if he has fallen asleep,  
 he will recover.*

*Ideational function.* Jesus' statement in v. 11 causes a certain degree of misunderstanding among the disciples. The disciples appear to misunderstand Jesus' statement that Lazarus is κεκοίμηται (Perf. Mid. Ind. *has fallen asleep*). In the NT, κοιμάω can be understood literally as *I fall asleep*, or figuratively to mean someone is dead.<sup>299</sup> It is an apparent word play by Jesus, and the disciples take the (ideational) meaning of Lazarus as sleeping (v. 12).<sup>300</sup>

Moreover, the ἐξυπνίσω (Aor. Act. Subj. *I may awake*) in the final purpose clause poses a similar problem. It is the only appearance of the Greek verb ἐξυπνίζω in the entire NT. The adjective form appears once in Acts 16:27 *the jailor had been roused*

---

Lazarus ausgehen. Unter dieser Voraussetzung ist das Missverständnis gröber als die anderen johanneischen Missverständnisse." (341-42)

<sup>299</sup> For literal sleep, see Matt 28:13 *they stole him while we were asleep*; Luke 22:45 *he found them sleeping from sorrow*; Acts 12:6 *Peter was sleeping between two soldiers*. For the figurative meaning of death, see Matt 27:52 *the saints who had fallen asleep were raised*; Acts 7:60 *And having said this, (Stephen) fell asleep*; 13:36 *David...fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers* (see also 1 Cor 7:39; 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thess 4:13-15; 2 Pet 3:4).

<sup>300</sup> The word κοιμάω appears 202 times in LXX. It is used for literal sleep (Gen 19:4) as well as figuratively, death (Gen 47:30; Wis 17:43).

(ἐξυπνοῦς) *out of sleep*. The verb ἐξυπνίζω is used in the LXX to describe both awaking from sleep or one's dream (1 Kings 3:15), and in the context of death (Job 14:10, 12) as shown below.

1 Kings 3:15

*Then Solomon awoke (ἐξυπνίσθη)—and he realized it had been a dream.*

Job 14:10, 12

*But a man once dead, is gone, and a mortal, once fallen, is no more...but a person, once lying down shall never rise again...and they will not be roused (ἐξυπνίσθη) from their sleep.*

In other words, the purpose clause is equally ambiguous and does not help the disciples to understand what Jesus means. The disciples mistakenly assume that Lazarus has literally fallen asleep and will recover from resting.

Does this mean, as Hans Förster claims, that the disciples' misunderstanding constitutes an untypical Johannine misunderstanding? The validity of Förster's argument largely depends on the definition of a Johannine "misunderstanding."

However, a formal definition of this type of misunderstanding has yet to be agreed upon by biblical interpreters. Förster does not appear to have attempted to provide a definition of his own. Rather, his argument for the disciples' misunderstanding as untypical is based primarily on the interpretation that they never thought or expected Jesus to raise the dead. The question becomes whether resurrection belongs in a category separated from other miraculous signs and wonders.

What the disciples do not understand is not necessarily "untypical" in John. In some respects, the raising of Lazarus is different from other signs Jesus has performed. But as Moule points out, it also shares the characteristics of other signs Jesus performed in giving something that belongs to normal, physical life on earth, but giving it in an abnormal, transcendent matter. He writes,



The officer's son was too young to die in the normal course of events; but Jesus, with abnormal authority, gives him the life he would normally enjoy, just when a disaster threatens it. The life-long invalid at the Pool had been robbed of normal health. Jesus wonderfully cures him and makes him whole... The blind man, too, was robbed of a normal faculty. Jesus gives it to him by divinely creative deed and word.<sup>301</sup>

The reader is aware of the disciples' misunderstanding because the author of John points it out in v. 13.<sup>302</sup> However, there is no indication that the author sees the misunderstanding as "untypical."

*Interpersonal function.* There are two interpretative options for the apodosis' Passive voice, v. 12b σωθήσεται (Fut. Pass. Ind.) *he will recover* (lit. *will be saved*). First, it can be interpreted as a divine passive, that is, although the agent is not named, it is understood that the healing is performed by God (cf. the passives in Matt 5:4, 6; Acts 16:31). However, it is highly unlikely that the disciples are discussing the divine intervention here.<sup>303</sup> Alternatively, it is preferable to interpret it as Lazarus recovering after a restful sleep, i.e. *he will recover*. As an Indicative conditional, its Causal logico-semantic relation also supports this interpretation. Although it is not certain if the disciples are thinking of Jesus as performing a (typical) healing miracle, if Lazarus sleeps well and gets better, it will give them comfort to know that there may be no need to travel to a place of mortal danger (v. 8). The author of John also adds that the disciples thought Jesus meant Lazarus was sleeping (v. 13). Jesus then proceeds to tell them plainly that they have not understood correctly; what he meant was Lazarus was

<sup>301</sup> Moule, "The Meaning of 'Life,'" 122.

<sup>302</sup> 11:13 εἰρήκει δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς περὶ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ, ἐκεῖνοι δὲ ἔδοξαν ὅτι περὶ τῆς κοιμήσεως τοῦ ὕπνου λέγει. *Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he was speaking of literal sleep.*

<sup>303</sup> P<sup>75</sup> reads ἐγεροθήσεται *he shall be raised* but the evidence is too slim and is very likely not original.

not sleeping, but dead. Furthermore, Jesus states that he is going to Bethany for the purpose of their faith, ἵνα πιστεύσητε *so that you may believe* (vv. 14-15).

According to Förster, the reason for the disciples' untypical misunderstanding is that they do not expect Jesus to raise Lazarus. The disciples have seen Jesus heal the sick, perform various signs, multiply bread, and feed the crowd, but they consider death as final. Once a person has crossed that line, there is no hope, no return.<sup>304</sup> However, this is only true if the disciples really believed that Jesus meant Lazarus was dead. But as the author explains, that was not what the disciples thought (v. 13). For the sake of argument, even if it were true, the question remains whether death as "unwiderrufliche Grenze" qualifies this misunderstanding as untypical.

*Textual function.* The conditional (v. 12) serves an important textual function in John 11 of being part of a pattern of misunderstanding by followers of Jesus (the disciples and others), expressed in the form of conditionals. The subsequent response by Jesus serves to challenge and build up their faith. Such a pattern consists of a person speaking a conditional statement related to Lazarus's untimely death, and the delayed response by Jesus (vv. 12, 21, 32). The response of Jesus causes their faith to be deepened. Such an interaction takes place between Jesus and the disciples, Martha, and Mary respectively, as shown below (conditionals by these characters are marked by \*).

(A) The disciples and Jesus

\*v. 12 *Lord, if (ἐὶ) he is asleep, he will recover.*

v. 15 *for your sake that I was not there, so that you may believe (πιστεύσητε).*

---

<sup>304</sup> "In der lukanischen Version der Erzählung von der Heilung der Tochter des Jairus wird dies sogar ausdrücklich in Worte gefasst: Weil das Kind tott ist, ist keine Hoffnung mehr." Förster, "Johannes 11:11-14," 351.

## (B) Martha and Jesus

\*v. 21 *Lord if (εἰ) you had been here, my brother would not have died.*

vv. 25-26 *I am the resurrection and the life; he/she who believes (ὁ πιστεύων) shall live...Do you believe (πιστεύεις) this?*

## (C) Mary and Jesus

\*v. 32 *Lord if (εἰ) you had been here, my brother would not have died.*

vv. 33-34 [Jesus was deeply moved in spirit, went to the tomb]

The pattern shows that conditionals are used to show the lack of faith of these characters. The disciples do not understand that Jesus is speaking about Lazarus's death. Martha and Mary expect Jesus to do something before Lazarus dies. The disciples, Martha, and Mary express that the death of Lazarus could have been avoided, had Jesus not delayed his action. Their conditionals reveal the need for their belief in Jesus to grow deeper and stronger.

Based on this conditional-remark pattern, what can also be said is that if the disciples' misunderstanding in v. 12 is "untypical," the same should be applied to Martha and Mary. Like the disciples, they too think Lazarus has crossed the *unwiderrufliche Grenze*. But in spite of the terminology one adopts concerning these misunderstandings, these conditionals are part of the author's persuasive strategy to make the reader aware of the characters' lack of faith, and to follow the narrative to come to realize that they too need to increase their faith.<sup>305</sup>

The author of John plays the role of the reader's mentor. He alerts the reader to meaning that can be missed, and to information lurking beyond his/her grasp by intervening to show them the lesson they need to learn. He prods their curiosity, prompting them to look beyond the surface, to see within the signs what is not

<sup>305</sup> Förster does not include v. 15 in his main discussion but only refers to it in a closing remark. "Es geht also um ein Wachsen im Glauben, das durch ἵνα πιστεύσητε [v. 15] zum Ausdruck gebracht wird." (It is, therefore, for growth of faith, which is brought by the expression ἵνα πιστεύσητε (v. 15).) Förster, "Johannes 11:11-14," 357.

obvious.<sup>306</sup> Conditionals, by Jesus and characters like the disciples, Martha, and Mary, are used to point out a lack of spiritual understanding and the need for growth in faith.

#### 5.1.2 Martha and Mary (11:21-27, 32, 39-40)

Jesus' discourse with Martha and Mary represents the final discourse of our study of Johannine conditionals. The author records an identical conditional, first by Martha (vv. 21-22), and later by Mary (v. 32).<sup>307</sup> As mentioned in the above section, these identical conditionals represent a two-part pattern of (i) conditional by a follower of Jesus expressing lack of faith and (ii) Jesus' response in prompting them to understand more and go deeper in their faith. Grammatical features such as inserted clauses (protasis) for emphatic purposes, and a response to Richard Young's Speech Act Theory approach to conditionals, especially with the identical conditionals of Martha and Mary, will be included in the discussion. SFL concepts of register and context of situation will be applied in the discussion of the semantics of these two conditionals. Rhetorically, the author of John continues to motivate the reader to engage in "inner languaging" toward understanding (in a Johannine sense) through these conditionals.

The four conditionals in this section are designated below alphabetically, with Martha and Mary's conditionals marked with the sign \*.

Dialogue between Martha and Jesus (vv. 21-27)

(A) *Martha's conditional* (\*vv. 21-22)

(B) *Jesus' conditional* (v. 25)

Dialogue between Mary and Jesus (vv. 32-34)

(C) *Mary's conditional* (\*v. 32)

Dialogue between Martha and Jesus (vv. 39-40)

(D) *Jesus' conditional* (v. 40)

---

<sup>306</sup> Burge, "Revelation and Discipleship," 243.

<sup>307</sup> Martha's conditional in v. 21 is exactly identical with Mary's conditional in v. 32. Verse 22 includes Martha's additional comment and is also considered as a part of the conditional.

(A) *Martha's conditional* (11:21-22). Upon Jesus' arrival, Martha greets him with an Indicative type 2 conditional (vv. 21-22).

\*11:21-22 (Martha)

[1] κύριε, εἰ ἦς ὧδε

[2] οὐκ ἂν ἀπέθανεν ὁ ἀδελφός μου·

[3] [ἀλλὰ] καὶ νῦν οἶδα

[4] ὅτι [[ὅσα ἂν αἰτήσῃ τὸν θεὸν]] δώσει σοι ὁ θεός.

[1] *Lord, if you had been here,*

[2] *my brother would not have died.*

[3] *Even now I know*

[4] *that [[whatever you ask of God]], God will give you.*

The Greek verb ἦς (Imperf. Act. Ind. *you had been*) in the protasis portrays an unrealized situation. Jesus did not go to see Lazarus when he was sick and when he eventually died. The Causal logico-semantic relation is expressed in the apodosis, that is, as a result of the delay, Lazarus died. Twice the semantic feature of “negative” appears in the following clauses: *If you had been* (ἦς Imperf. Act. Ind.) *here* (Jesus was not) and *my brother would not* (οὐκ) *have died*. They express a sense of nonfulfillment.

A certain degree of hope is expressed in the next two contrastive clauses (cl. 3 [ἀλλὰ] καὶ νῦν *even now*). As the content clause of cl. 3, cl. 4 begins with an embedded clause ὅσα ἂν αἰτήσῃ τὸν θεὸν *whatever you ask of God*. By virtue of its position in the ranking clause, it also functions as a marked Theme. In spite of Jesus' delay and Lazarus's death, Martha expresses confidence in Jesus because of his special relationship with the Father.<sup>308</sup> But what Martha is expecting from Jesus is not certain. Textually, this is the second of three conditionals that are spoken to Jesus by his followers in John 11. And the death of Lazarus dominates the entire conversation (cf. conditional v. 32 below).

<sup>308</sup> Carson, *Gospel According to John*, 412.

(B) *Jesus' conditional* (11:25-26). In vv. 23-24, Jesus promises Martha that her brother will rise again, but Martha interprets it as taking place in the future, the final resurrection in the last days. Jesus continues to address Martha with a conditional (vv. 25-26) that consists of four clauses, with the third clause (the protasis) inserted in the second clause (apodosis). The conditional is followed by a question about the state of Martha's belief in Jesus.

11:25-26

[1] ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωή·

[2, 3] ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ «**καὶ** ἀποθάνῃ» ζήσεται

[4] καὶ πᾶς ὁ ζῶν καὶ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ οὐ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

[-] πιστεύεις τοῦτο;

[1] *I am the resurrection and the life.*

[2, 3] *The one who believes in me «**even if they die**» will live;*

[4] *and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.*

[-] *Do you believe this?*

Instead of allowing Martha to focus on Lazarus (v. 21 *my brother*), Jesus turns attention to himself with another Johannine Christological *I am* saying (v. 25 ἐγώ εἰμι *I am*; cf. conditional 10:9 *I am the door. If anyone enters through me*).<sup>309</sup> By pointing to the present reality and claiming the resurrection and the life as *I am*, Jesus makes it clear that there is no resurrection, nor life outside of him.<sup>310</sup>

Instead of the typical order of  $P \wedge Q$ , the apodosis appears at the beginning of the conditional. However, rather than a discrete single clause structure, the Subjunctive protasis καὶ ἀποθάνῃ *even if he/she dies* (cl. 3) is inserted in cl. 2. Such an abrupt insertion suggests the emphasis on the conditional clause (protasis). Jesus echoes the

<sup>309</sup> Cf. 6:35; 8:12; 10:9, 11.

<sup>310</sup> As Carson puts it, "Just as he not only gives the bread from heaven (6:27) but is himself the bread of life (6:35), so also he not only raises the dead on the last day (5:21, 25ff.) but is himself the resurrection and the life." *Gospel According to John*, 412.

same emphasis in cl. 5 with the double negative particles: οὐ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα *he/she will never die*.

An inserted protasis also appears in the final two clauses of Jesus' conditional in John 3:12:

3:12

[1] εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν

[2] καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε,

[3, 4] πῶς «ἐὰν εἶπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια» πιστεύσετε;

[1] *If I told you earthly things*

[2] *and you do not believe,*

[3, 4] *how «if I tell you heavenly things» will you believe?*

In this conditional, the inserted protasis «*if I tell you heavenly things*» (cl. 4) also highlights its rhetorical force in the entire conditional statement. Such emphasis is made more evident by the fact that Jesus is posing a rhetorical conditional question.

In the fourth and final clause, Jesus shifts the grammatical Subject to the believers, πᾶς ὁ ζῶν καὶ πιστεύων *everyone who lives and believes in me*. The double negative particle οὐ μὴ *never* is emphatic. It is not simply the dead will rise, but rather death will never take away the believer's life in Jesus. Hope for the future for the believer is realized in Jesus now. By asking Martha *Do you believe this?* Jesus is inviting her to a deeper understanding of faith, eternal life, and resurrection.

At the end of this discourse segment, Martha's reply (v. 27) with the emphatic pronoun *I* (ἐγώ) and the stative verbal aspect of *have believed* (πεπίστευκα Perf. Act. Ind.) *that you are the Christ, the Son of God* represents not simply her confession, but also the state of her confident trust. Earlier, Peter also made a similar kind of emphatic and complete confession at the conclusion of the Bread of life discourse (6:68). These are positive signs that Jesus' followers have gained spiritual understanding and insight.

(C) *Mary's conditional* (11:32). Verse 32 tells the reader that as soon as Mary sees Jesus, she falls at his feet and states the following:

\*11:32 (Mary)  
 κύριε, εἰ ἦς ὧδε  
 οὐκ ἄν μου ἀπέθανεν ὁ ἀδελφός.

*Lord, if you had been here,  
 my brother would not have died.*

Although Martha's (v. 21) and Mary's conditionals are identical in form and addressed to the same person (Jesus), there have been questions about what kind of functions or interpersonal meaning they serve and whether they carry the same meaning. Furthermore, there is a need to address the issues concerning how to interpret a speaker's intent (indirect speech act).<sup>311</sup> The following discussion will respond to associated presuppositions and claims by Richard Young, one of the advocates of Speech Act Theory.

Young classifies conditionals into eight types: Rebuke, Lament, Argue, Request, Assert, Manipulate, Exhort, and Mock. Martha's conditional (11:21) belongs to the "Rebuke" type,<sup>312</sup> and Mary's conditional (11:32) under the category of "Lament."<sup>313</sup> On Martha's conditional, Young supports his case with the notion of "social register."

The most important factor involved in the formation of Martha's utterance was the *social register* between her and Jesus. She was his

<sup>311</sup> Young, "Classification," 29-49.

<sup>312</sup> "When Martha rebuked the Lord for not being there to prevent Lazarus from dying, she used the form of a conditional sentence...(John 11:21). If Martha's utterance is analyzed according to the traditional understanding of second class conditions, her intention will not be understood." Young, "Classification," 37. Young continues, "The necessary conditions (in terms of Searle's theory) for a rebuke are that the hearer performed an act in the past (propositional condition), the speaker does not believe that the act was in his or her best interest (preparatory condition), the act angered the speaker (sincerity condition), and the speaker intends his expression as a reprimand (essential condition)." (40)

<sup>313</sup> "The necessary conditions for a lament are that an event happened in the past (propositional condition), the speaker does not believe that the event (which believes to have occurred) was in the best interest of himself [herself] or the hearer (preparatory condition), the speaker is grieved because of the event (sincere condition), and the speaker counts his [her] utterance as expressing sorrow (necessary condition)." Young, "Classification," 40-41.



devoted follower, having great respect and admiration for him as her teacher. The last thing she would want to do is to offend him. Because of this, she softened her rebuke by avoiding the illocutionary force marker and framing it in the form of a conditional sentence. The explicit form would have been, "I hereby rebuke you for not being here and preventing my brother from dying."<sup>314</sup>

With reference to Mary's conditional, Young further adds the element of "total context."

To say that Martha's utterance was a rebuke and that Mary's was a lament when they say exactly the same thing must rest entirely on the exegete's analysis of the *total context*, including the actions of the speakers and hearers when the utterances were made. For example, a rebuke is rarely given when a person is bowing down before another and weeping (as Mary was). Mary's posture reflects her being deeply grieved rather than resentful and angry.<sup>315</sup>

According to Young, about one-fourth of the Indicative type 2 conditionals belong to the category of Lament. Jesus' conditional in Matt 11:21 against the unrepentant cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida is an example.<sup>316</sup>

Young does not base social register on any formal descriptive apparatus; in fact, his description is rather vague. The fact that Young classifies the two conditionals differently implies that they differ in their social registers. If so, what is the basis for the distinction?

Based on SFL, register belongs to a special use of language when certain features of the lexicogrammar getting mobilized in a particular way. Register also involves some kind of culturally defined forms of social practice.<sup>317</sup> For example, the English Future tense is used frequently in the register of weather forecasting;

---

<sup>314</sup> Young, "Classification," 40.

<sup>315</sup> Young, "Classification," 47.

<sup>316</sup> Matt 11:21 *Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if (εἰ) the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.*

<sup>317</sup> Halliday, *Language, Context, and Text*, 29-43; Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 31-35.

nominalization tends to occur more often in language of science; and wording such as *once upon a time* (children's stories), *this is to certify that* (certification letters), and *Rail strike threat averted* (newspaper headings) help the hearer and reader to make specific inferences about the kinds of meanings likely to be exchanged. In the dialogues between Jesus and his followers (Martha and Mary included) in John 11, the classification of register should be the same. It means that the difference in "meaning" between Martha and Mary's conditionals, if we adopt Young's view, has to be based on other factors, not register.<sup>318</sup>

In terms of what Young calls the "total context," there are indeed differences between the ways Martha and Mary greet Jesus. Martha simply goes out to meet Jesus (v. 20) and engages in dialogue with him. Mary, however, as soon as she sees Jesus, falls at his feet and weeps (vv. 32-33). The exchange between Martha and Jesus in vv. 22-27, however, does not give clear evidence that Martha is rebuking Jesus at all. Twice, she addresses Jesus as *Lord* (vv. 21, 27). She also expresses her state of confident trust in Jesus (v. 22). Furthermore, the wording of Jesus in Matt 11:21 *Woe...Woe... would have repented... sackcloth and ashes* (Lament) contrasts sharply with John 11:32. Mary was kneeling and crying at Jesus' feet without speaking a word. While Young is correct in emphasizing the importance of the situational context in the communication act, his analysis of the context lacks precision.<sup>319</sup> He also relies heavily on the speaker's intent.<sup>320</sup>

---

<sup>318</sup> It is possible that the same structures or features may be used in different registers, such as the English future tense is used in weather forecasting as well as in fortune telling. However, this possibility is unlikely in John 11 since Martha's and Mary's conditionals are spoken in the same context of their brother's death and they practically appear immediately one after the other.

<sup>319</sup> The meaning of an utterance, he writes, depends on two factors, (1) Speakers often allow the context to communicate part of their message for them... The speaker may leave part of his propositional content

In SFL, closely related with to concept of register, the context of situation (or features of the context) is divided into three main components: (i) field of discourse, i.e., what is going on, (ii) tenor of discourse, i.e., who are taking part and their social distance, and (iii) mode of discourse, i.e., the role assigned to language. With the exception of the differences mentioned in the above paragraph, both dialogues between Martha and Jesus and Mary and Jesus appear to be quite similar in terms of context of situation, as the following outline shows:

*Field:* Finding meaning in the untimely death of a loved one

*Tenor:* Jesus and his followers

*Mode:* Everyday conversation (communicating sadness)

Based on the above outline, there is no significant difference between the contexts of situation in the conditionals by Martha and Mary, respectively. However, this does not mean say that there is no difference in the meaning of these conditionals. Instead, Young's classification of these two conditionals as "Rebuke" and "Lament" cannot be justified from evidence from social register and total context as he claims.

This study has observed that the conditionals by the disciples, Martha, and Mary (vv. 12, 21, 32) can be understood in the context of Johannine misunderstandings. The disciples misconstrue Jesus' reference to Lazarus having "fallen asleep," taking the statement literally. Martha and Mary have lost hope, even though Jesus has come, because Lazarus is dead. The functions of their conditionals do not fit into a simple

---

or his intent to be inferred by his audience. (2) The speaker may be influenced by pragmatic concerns and modify how he says something...How much is actually said and how it is said will depend on various pragmatic factors, such as formality and social register. Young, "Classification," 33.

<sup>320</sup> "The goal of biblical exegesis is to understand what the writers of Scripture said; this cannot be done by viewing the text (on any level) apart from the intent of the author/speaker...In order for communication to be effective, the speaker must get the hearer to recognize the intent of his utterance...If Martha's utterance (John 11:21) is analyzed according to the traditional understanding of second class conditions, her intention will not be understood." Young, "Classification," 34, 36, 37. Underlines added.

category such as "rebuke" or "lament." So the description and meaning of these conditionals must be built on a multi-level and multi-functional linguistic framework, based on the concept of language as a meaning making resource.

(D) *Jesus' conditional* (11:40). The setting of the conditional is filled with sorrow. In v. 33, Jesus was *deeply moved in spirit and was troubled* (ἐνεβριμήσατο τῷ πνεύματι καὶ ἐτάραξεν ἑαυτὸν). In v. 38, he is *again being deeply moved within* (πάλιν ἐμβριμώμενος ἐν ἑαυτῷ). In response to Martha's reply v. 39 *Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days*, Jesus addresses Martha with the following conditional.

11:40  
οὐκ εἶπόν σοι  
ὅτι ἐὰν πιστεύσης  
ὄψη τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ;

*Did I not tell you  
if you believe,  
you will see the glory of God?*

The clause preceding the protasis begins with the negative particle οὐκ *not*, and expects a positive answer. What he is about to tell her was something that Jesus told Martha earlier. The clause thus functions as an emphatic statement or metacomment such as *very truly I tell you*.<sup>321</sup> Characteristic of Jesus' conditionals in John, the negative Polarity represented by the particle οὐκ also makes its appearance here.

The conditional proper (second and third clauses) consists of a Subjunctive mood protasis + Future tense apodosis (cf. 11:25-26). The Subjunctive mood is used for hypothetical cases, but the rhetorical force is to prompt her to believe and so she will see God's glory (cf. v. 4). If Martha and the reader of the Gospel exercise the kind of faith

<sup>321</sup> See Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 101-124, where he discusses metacomments found in the epistles and the gospels, such as "as I said before, so I now I say" (Gal. 1:9) and "hear and understand" (Matt 15:10).

Jesus is referring to, they will see the glory of God. While the author did not record a response from Martha, the reader is motivated to answer the question *Do I believe?*

Textually, the conditional marks the conclusion of the conversations between Jesus and Martha. John 11:41-44 describes how Jesus raises Lazarus, but Martha fades from the narrative. It belongs to the group of concluding conditionals that Jesus often uses, for example, 3:12; 5:46, 47; 7:23; and 10:35-36. With the exception of 5:46, all of the above conditionals are also conditional questions.

In the same vein as Lamb's "inner languaging," there exists a silent communication between the author of John and the reader. As Culpepper comments,

The dialogues, particularly those which employ misunderstandings and obvious irony, teach the reader how to read the Gospel and detect its higher and subtler meanings. Everything is considered "from above."...Jesus' words often have an oracular quality which means that they stand out individually from their context and must be absorbed one at a time. The text is therefore made discontinuous. More time and space is left between sentences, time for the reader to ascend again and again to the higher plateau of meaning.<sup>322</sup>

The above comments are not only applicable to conditionals in general, but also to concluding conditional questions like 11:40.

Conditionals in John prompt the reader to think rationally and imaginatively. Jesus typically uses Indicative conditionals to assert and prove his Christological claim. In the context of discipleship, such as in the narrative of John 11, Jesus favors the use of Subjunctive conditionals for didactic and expository purposes. The author of John uses a rhetorical strategy with frequent use of conditionals to motivate the audience to probe deeper and go further in their understanding of Jesus. By analyzing the Ideational, Interpersonal, and

---

<sup>322</sup> Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 199.

Textual functions of these conditionals, one can further understand how John persuades the audience to put their faith in the Christ who is Jesus (20:31).

As our analysis of conditionals in individual discourses draws to a close, the remainder of this chapter will examine a very important aspect of the grammar of conditionals, that is, how conditionals construe reality, and in turn, how the construed reality shapes the meaning of the dialogues and persuades the reader of the Gospel. The section consists of two parts. Section 5.2.1 discusses conditionals and the construal of reality. Section 5.2.2 applies the grammar of conditionals to respond to the hypothesis of the language of John as antilanguage.

## 5.2 The Grammar of Conditionals

### 5.2.1 Conditionals and the Construal of Reality

Johnine conditionals construe and transform human experience and persuade the audience of John's Gospel.<sup>323</sup> From a rhetorical viewpoint, such a transforming power also explains why among the four Gospels, John has the highest number of conditionals. Conceptually, the reality construal or transformation function of language is very similar to setting up what Berger and Luckmann call the “plausibility structure.”<sup>324</sup>

Berger and Luckmann posit that knowledge is socially constructed, and that

---

<sup>323</sup> Halliday also remarks, “[A]n act of meaning is not the coding and transmitting of some pre-existing information or state of mind, but a critical component in a complex process of reality construction—critical in that on the one hand it is itself part of reality, and on the other hand it is a metaphor for some other part... This power of the act of meaning would not have been news to the sophists in ancient Athens, who constructed their grammatics in order to find out how language could persuade people of something even when it wasn't true. Or to the founders of modern science, who tried to design their language so that it would open up for them the gateway to new knowledge.” Halliday, “Act of Meaning,” *CW* 3:386.

<sup>324</sup> “Objective reality can readily be ‘translated’ into subjective reality, and vice versa. Language, of course, is the principal vehicle of this ongoing translating process in both directions.” Berger and Luckman, *Social Construction*, 123. Cf. Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 170.

reality can be transformed through conversation.<sup>325</sup> Accordingly, society is seen to exist as both an objective and a subjective reality.<sup>326</sup> The objective and subjective realities, acquired through primary and secondary socializations, respectively, play important roles in how a person “knows” and perceives reality. They write, “Primary socialization is the first socialization an individual undergoes in childhood, through which he becomes a member of a society. Secondary socialization is any subsequent process that inducts an already socialized individual into new sectors of the objective world of his society.”<sup>327</sup> Linguistic objectification, or conversation, is the most important vehicle of maintaining and transforming one’s reality or experience.<sup>328</sup>

Halliday also describes the relationship between reality and language as follows:

[L]anguage does not passively *reflect* reality; language actively *creates* reality. It is the grammar (lexicogrammar)...that shapes experience and transforms our perceptions into meaning...(Reality) is not something ready-made and waiting to be meant—it has to be actively construed; and that language evolved in the process of, and as the agency of, its construal.<sup>329</sup>

Our method of analysis is primarily based on a cline or continuum of “reality” that conditionals construe as part of their Ideational function under SFL. Along the

---

<sup>325</sup> Although Halliday posits that “the early Christian community (the church) was an anti-society, and its language was in this sense an antilanguage,” he also acknowledges that there are “significant differences” based on the phenomenon that alternation (of languages) does not of itself involve any kind of antilanguage. Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 171. But even when the early Christians were persecuted, it seems unlikely that they used antilanguage, with perhaps the exception of the book of Revelation. Other NT books, for example, Letters of Peter, use ordinary language even though persecution had already taken place.

<sup>326</sup> Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction*, 117.

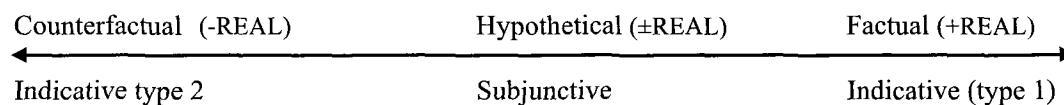
<sup>327</sup> Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction*, 120.

<sup>328</sup> “Conversation is the actualizing of this realizing efficacy of language in the face-to-face situations of individual existence. In conversation the objectifications of language become objects of individual consciousness. Thus the fundamental reality-maintaining fact is the continuing use of the language to objectify unfolding biographical experience.” Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction*, 141. The two terms “reality” and “(human) experience” are used interchangeably in this discussion.

<sup>329</sup> Halliday, “New Ways of Meaning,” *CW* 3:145. Language is “at the same time a part of a reality, a shaper of reality, and a metaphor for reality.” (146)

cline, three types of reality are identified: Counterfactual (-REAL), Hypothetical ( $\pm$ REAL), and Factual (+REAL). The reality of human experience is represented by the conditional adopted by the speaker in presenting their argument; it may or may not correspond to the “objective” reality comprehended by others. By characterizing the three types as part of a continuum, human experience, especially the Hypothetical ( $\pm$ REAL), can be construed and/or understood on various levels of being real or unreal. The total rhetorical impact of the projection of reality depends on other features of the conditional and the text in which the conditional appears. Throughout the Gospel of John, the author arranges the narratives and discourses to motivate the audience, immediate and outside, to examine their own worldview (reality) and to make the necessary adjustments so that they will have life in Jesus.

The three types of construed reality are shown below.



*The counterfactual reality.* The counterfactual (-REAL) is realized by the Indicative type 2 conditional. In John, Jesus often uses the Indicative type 2 conditional to deconstruct his audience’s argument, revealing their error in judgment, false claims, and pretense. These conditionals characteristically serve as spiritual reality checks, especially with the Jewish authorities. With only a few exceptions, the Jews (*you*) or the world (*they*) always appear at least once (protasis or apodosis) as the grammatical Subjects of these conditionals. Through the construal of the counterfactual reality, they point out the errors of the addressees. The following represents a selection of some of these Indicative type 2 conditionals by Jesus.



## I. The Samaritan woman

4:10 *If (εἰ) you knew (ἤδεις) the gift of God and...you would have (ἄν) asked him, and he would have (ἄν) given you living water.*

## II. The Jews

5:46 *For if (εἰ) you believed (ἐπιστεύετε) Moses, you would (ἄν) believe me*

8:19 *If (εἰ) you knew (ἤδειτε) me, you would (ἄν) know my Father also.*

8:42 *If (εἰ) God were (ἦν) your Father, you would (ἄν) love me*

9:41 *If (εἰ) you were (ἦτε) blind, you would (ἄν) have no sin*

## III. The world

15:22 *If (εἰ) I had not come and spoken (ἦλθον καὶ ἐλάλησα) to them, they would not have sin*

15:24 *If (εἰ) I had not done (ἐποίησα) among them the works which no one did, they would not have sin*

In all of the above examples, Jesus uses Indicative type 2 conditionals to show what is *absent*, what is *not* true, or what might have happened to posit his argument. For example, the Samaritan woman does not know that he is the gift of God. The Jews do not really understand or follow Moses' writings, fail to recognize who Jesus is, and do not treat God as their heavenly Father. The Jews also refuse to acknowledge that they are in spiritual darkness. Positing the protasis negatively (15:22, 24), Jesus further denies the world's excuse of being innocent. As the basis for the argument of the conditional, speakers use Indicative type 2 conditionals to construe reality or experience that failed to happen. In doing so, it is the hearer's responsibility to prove that the speaker is wrong. Such is the case with the Jews' conditionals (18:30) when they present Jesus to Pilate (even though the reader knows that Jesus did nothing wrong).

John 18:30

*If (εἰ) this man were (ἦν) not an evildoer, we would (ἄν) not have delivered him up to you.*

Use of Indicative type 2 conditionals with people who are unreceptive to Jesus'

teaching is also seen in the Synoptic Gospels. In the following conditionals, Jesus rebukes the unbelieving residents of the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida (Matt 11:21) and Capernaum (Matt 11:23) and the Pharisees (Matt 12:7):

Matt 11:21, 23

*Woe to you...For if (εἰ) the miracles had occurred (ἐγένοντο) in Tyre and Sidon...they would (ἄν) have repented long ago*

*...for if (εἰ) the miracles had occurred (ἐγενήθησαν) in Sodom...it would (ἄν) have remained to this day*

Matt 12:7

*But if (εἰ) you had known (ἐγνώκειτε) what this means...you would (ἄν) not have condemned the innocent*

As shown in the above conditionals, it is very common in polemic discourses for speakers to adopt construal of counterfactual reality for defense or for counter-attack.

*The hypothetical reality.* Hypothetical reality ( $\pm$ REAL) is grammaticalized through the Subjunctive mood in the protasis. What is being construed may or may not be taking place at the moment of speaking, or may never take place. It presents an *open* argument. The fulfillment of the protasis may or may not be under the control of the hearer or reader. In a number of Subjunctive conditionals by Jesus, such as the conditionals on the sovereign work of the Father in the Bread of life discourse (6:44, 65), the author expects the reader to make some inference about whether he or she belongs to those who are drawn by God. Jesus often construes hypothetical experience to transform his audience's view of the world to conform to God's. A selection of Subjunctive conditionals in John by Jesus to different hearers is shown as follows.

I. Nicodemus

3:3 *if (ἐάν μὴ) one is not born again, they cannot see the kingdom of God*

3:5 *if (ἐάν μὴ) one is not born of water and the Spirit*

II. The royal official and the bystanders

4:48 *if (ἐάν μὴ) you do not see signs and wonders*

### III. The Galilean Jews

6:44 *No one can come to me, if (ἐάν μὴ) the Father...does not draw them*

6:51 *if (ἐάν) anyone eats the bread*

6:53 *if (ἐάν μὴ) you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man*

### IV. The crowd at the Feast

7:37 *If (ἐάν) anyone is thirsty, come to me and drink.*

### V. The disciples

14:23 *If (ἐάν) anyone loves me, they will keep my word*

15:6 *If (ἐάν) anyone does not abide in me, he/she is thrown away as a branch*

15:7 *If (ἐάν) you abide in me...ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you*

As Subjunctive conditionals, the subject matter in these conditionals is put forward as neither true (+REAL) nor false (-REAL) necessarily. They are simply deemed to be possible or hypothetical ( $\pm$ REAL) and are often used by Jesus to motivate his audience to listen and follow. For example, the conditionals in 3:3, 5 express that the new birth happens only to some people. The intended inference for Nicodemus (and the reader) to make is that they must choose to receive it, or to change it from being a hypothesis ( $\pm$ REAL) to a personal experience (+REAL). Similarly, for the royal official and the Galileans who are also listening, Jesus' Subjunctive conditional (4:48) does not indicate whether or not they will see more signs and wonders. The royal official chooses to believe Jesus *without* seeing signs first. To the reader of the Gospel, the author of John is showing that, like the royal official, one can also put faith in Jesus' word without demanding to see his miraculous signs. The conditional thus makes the reader think about whether or not his or her faith (wrongly) relies on signs and wonders.

In 6:44, Jesus presents the action of the Father (ἐλκύση *he draws*) in a plausible or hypothetical world ( $\pm$ REAL) (see also 6:65). The Father's drawing of people to himself and their coming to Jesus are described as two perspectives on the same event. If the audience deems it as valid and plausible, the author has succeeded in persuading

the reader that God is at work in Jesus. Similarly, in vv. 51, 53 Jesus is not stating that people are actually eating the flesh of the Son of Man or drinking his blood. The case is suggested hypothetically. The author of John records these conditionals based on hypothetical construal of experience to motivate the reader and encourage him/her to choose the right course of action.

The grammar of the Subjunctive mood and its construal of the hypothetical experience ( $\pm$ REAL) prompt the hearer and reader to understand the value of Jesus' teaching. In the majority of cases, Jesus' aim is to achieve understanding and insight in his hearers.

[H]e does not try to make everything so explicit that the conclusion is forced down the throat of the hearer. Rather, he presents matters in such a way that those who wish to know can find their way to, can come to, the appropriate conclusion as something *they* have discovered—whether or not it is something they particularly care for.<sup>330</sup>

The Subjunctive mood makes it possible to "show" people what is plausible, especially with phenomena that are invisible and spiritual in nature. These phenomena are realities and experiences that cannot be readily or empirically tested at the time of speaking. Nevertheless, the audience is prompted to consider them as the basis of the argument, and by faith, to continue to look deeper and beyond the surface. He or she is "mentored" to seek change and transform what is hypothetical ( $\pm$ REAL) into something that they experience personally.

Subjunctive conditionals are often used in expository and didactic discourses, and can be illustrated by Jesus' Farewell Discourse with his disciples in John 13-16, the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7), and his teaching to his disciples in Matt 18. In the

---

<sup>330</sup> Willard, "Jesus the Logician," 607.

Farewell Discourse (John 13.31-16:33), there are 10 Indicative conditionals and 13 Subjunctive conditionals. However, six of the Indicative conditionals in John 15 (below) deal with the world and thus form a separate argumentative section within the discourse. If they are removed from the count, only four Indicatives remain (Indicative: Subjunctive ratio of 1.3.2). These four conditionals appear at the beginning of the Discourse and primarily deal with the immediate issues related to Jesus' departure. The Subjunctive conditionals, however, are evenly distributed throughout the Discourse.

	John 13	John 14	John 15	John 16
Indicative	v 32	v 2 v 7 v 28	v 18 v 19 v 20b v 20c v 22 v 24	--
Subjunctive	v 35	v 3 v 14 v 15 v 23	v 4a v 4b v 6 v 7 v 10	v 7a v 7b v 23

Likewise, in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7) Jesus uses only a total of five Indicative conditionals, but nine Subjunctive conditionals, a ratio of almost 1:2. In his teaching to his disciples in Matt 18 1-20, there are only two Indicative conditionals (identical to 5:29, 30, see below), but a total of 11 Subjunctive conditionals, a ratio of 1.5.5. Predominantly in expository discourses, Jesus uses Subjunctive conditionals to construe the hypothetical reality

	Matt 5	Matt 6	Matt 7	Matt 18
Indicative	v 29 v 30	v 23 v 30	v 11	v 8 (=5:30) v 9 (=5:29)
Subjunctive	v 13 v 20 v 46 v 47	v 14 v 15 v 22 v 23a	--	v 3 v 12 v 13 v 15a v 15b v 16 v 17a v 17b v 18a v 18b v 19

While the construal of the counteractive conditionals is used primarily to deconstruct the hearer's error, the construal of the hypothetical experience is to motivate the hearer and reader to explore and advance in their understanding of Jesus. The author of John mostly records Jesus' Indicative type 2 conditional for correcting false assumptions and correcting errors. He mainly uses the Subjunctive conditional to persuade the audience of what is plausible and worth believing.<sup>331</sup>

*The Factual Reality* Finally, as the basis for their argument or opinion, speakers may adopt the Indicative mood (type 1 conditional) to construe reality or experience as real and "true." Compared with the Subjunctive, the Indicative (type 1 and type 2) is

<sup>331</sup> The Future Indicative conditional which appears about 12 times in the NT, does not fit neatly into either the Indicative or the Subjunctive conditional. In terms of forms, it also poses some ambiguity as the first person singular Future tense and the same of Aorist Subjunctive are the same (Luke 19:40). Their appearances include Matt 26:33 par Mk 14:29; Luke 11:8, 19:40; Acts 8:31. The rest are found in Paul's letters: Rom 11 13-14; 1 Cor 3:15; 9:11, 2 Cor 5 1-3, and 2 Tim 2:11-13. Greek grammarians such as Robertson, Boyer, and Porter put it close to the Subjunctive. See Boyer, "Third Class Conditions," 171-72. Porter also adopts a separate semantic category of Expectation to describe its meaning. Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 312-16. For example, in 2 Tim 2:2b εἰ ἀρνησόμεθα (Fut. Mid. Ind.), κάκεινος ἀρνήσεται ἡμᾶς: *If we shall deny him, he also will deny us.* Porter explains that Paul uses the Future "to create expectation of the event of denial that if performed would lead to exclusion from God's kingdom." (313) As none of them appear in John's Gospel and a number of these conditionals are found in long sentences, their precise function will require a rather elaborate process which is outside the scope of this study. Therefore, the description of Expectation is adopted, and it is considered to be closely akin to the hypothetical (Subjunctive) type of reality construal.

rhetorically and argumentatively more compelling. With the Indicative type 1 conditional, the speaker asserts the protasis as a fact (+REAL), but this is simply his or her portrayal of reality, and does not necessarily correspond to what is genuinely true. For example, in 18:30, the Jews' construal of Jesus as an evildoer is obviously false.<sup>332</sup> If Pilate chooses to disagree with the Jews, he must first prove that they are wrong, but the Jews pressure him by identifying Jesus as a criminal.

With Indicative type 1 conditionals, both the protasis and the apodosis are presented as being true (+REAL). Due to the "factual" nature of the protasis, the speaker presents a compelling reason for the hearer to accept or follow the apodosis. For example, at the end of the dialogue with Jesus, Jesus asks Nicodemus to admit that Nicodemus simply does not understand Jesus' teaching. In 3:12, the protasis states, *if* (εἰ) *I told you earthly things and you do not believe*. Jesus did tell him earthly things, so the answer to Jesus' question in the protasis *how shall you believe (spiritual things)* is clear: Nicodemus has to agree (silently) that he does not understand.

Similarly, in the final conditional in the Sabbath healing debate, Jesus has already proved that the Jews do not really understand or follow Moses' writings, 5:47a *But if* (εἰ) *you do not believe his writings*. As a result, they cannot challenge Jesus' rhetorical question, 5:47b *how will you believe my words?* Such construal of reality (+REAL) is also used in conditionals with the Jews, such as in 7:23 *if* (εἰ) *a boy receives circumcision on the Sabbath*; 8:46 *If* (εἰ) *I speak the truth* (see also 10:35-38); and to the high priest, 18:23b *if* (εἰ) *(I have spoken) rightly*. In these situations, the audience

<sup>332</sup> The same holds true as Jesus adopts his opponents' charge for the sake of argument in Matt 12:27 καὶ εἰ ἐγὼ ἐν Βεελζεβοὺλ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια *And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons*. The truth, however, is found in the subsequent conditional, v. 28 εἰ δὲ ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ ἐγὼ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια *But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God*.

are in agreement with what Jesus states in the protases. The Jews have no reason to be angry with Jesus for his healing on the Sabbath (7:23); they have no excuse for not believing Jesus speaks the truth (8:46). Furthermore, the high priest also punishes Jesus by hitting him without cause (18:23a, 23b).

As a grammatical construction and a rhetorical device, Johannine conditionals thus serve the critical function of persuading the reader by presenting different worldviews (primarily through  $\pm$ REAL) through different ways of construing reality, and by putting forward arguments (primarily through +REAL and -REAL). As part of the Ideational function of language in construing different human experiences, conditionals also use other systems and features to express and create their total function or meaning.<sup>333</sup> As Halliday describes, language is composed of networks and grammatical systems which together construe a multidimensional semantic space.<sup>334</sup> It would be simplistic and inaccurate to rely solely on one particular function (for example, Ideational) or network to characterize the meaning of conditionals. The Ideational function of language in conditional statements prompts and persuades the reader of John's Gospel to be receptive to the new life that Jesus brings. This is accomplished through reality construal: by adopting certain worldviews and by re-evaluating phenomena, opinions, and arguments that may prevent them from experiencing eternal life (20:31).

Before moving on to the next section concerning the interpersonal function, a

---

<sup>333</sup> As clauses complexes, conditionals' rhetorical function operates in all three language metafunctions. The choice of Mood in the protasis effectively sets up the realm of reality (Assertion, Projection) in which the supposition is made, and is thus considered as part of the Ideational function. At the same time, the choice of Mood in the apodosis, including commands and questions, belongs to the Interpersonal function. Features such as clause order ( $P \wedge Q$  or  $Q \wedge P$ ) and lexical or semantic chain also form part of the Textual function as they play a significant role in the wider context and argument.

<sup>334</sup> Halliday, "Fuzzy Logic," *CW* 6:204.



remark on the Textual function is in order. The author of John also intends for the reader to make an inference based on the number of conditionals Jesus uses with each character and group of people. The “success” of conditionals does not depend on numbers of them being used on the audience. True understanding is a much deeper issue related to the state of their hearts (12:40), notwithstanding the divine drawing by God (conditionals 6:44, 65). As Jesus puts it, the Jews do not believe him because they are not his sheep (10:26). The following chart lists a selected number of discourses, the number of conditionals spoken by Jesus, and the result of the discourse.

Individuals	Conditionals	Result
The Samaritan woman	4:10	Belief
The royal official	4:48	Belief
Nicodemus (John 3)	Four	Unknown
The Jews (John 5, 7-8, 9, 10)	Multiple	Unbelief
Many disciples (John 6)	Multiple	Unbelief

*Summary.* This section shows that conditionals are used to construe reality to form the basis of argument in argumentative and expository discourses. Indicative type 2 and type 1 conditionals construe the counterfactual (-REAL) and factual (+REAL), respectively. Jesus uses Indicative conditionals primarily in polemic discourse with the Jews. In contrast, the Subjunctive conditional construes what is hypothetical ( $\pm$ REAL). Jesus often uses the Subjunctive conditional in expositions with his followers. In most cases, the Subjunctive motivates the audience to seek further understanding and prompts them to eventually appropriate what Jesus teaches them by believing him.

In the next subsection, the Interpersonal or social function of Johannine conditionals will be examined. It will also be used to respond to the claim that the

language of John is antilanguage, that the language is characterized by secrecy and is used to exclude outsiders.

### 5.2.2 Johannine Conditionals and Antilanguage

Recent Johannine studies have attempted to interpret John's Gospel from a social science perspective, in particular, the claim that Jesus and his disciples use antilanguage.<sup>335</sup> This section will examine the claim and respond to it by looking at selected examples of Jesus' conditionals with the Jewish and Roman authorities as well as selected linguistic features of conditionals to show that such a claim is unwarranted. These conditionals and linguistic features cited further illustrate how the interpersonal meanings of conditionals is used, not to exclude the outsiders, but to persuade the audience and reader to trust Jesus as the Christ.<sup>336</sup>

*The theory and the claim.* The underlying concept of antilanguage is language's role in social structure. As Halliday comments,

Language does not consist of sentences; it consists of text, or discourse—the exchange of meanings in interpersonal contexts of one kind or another. The contexts in which meanings are exchanged are not devoid of social value...By their everyday acts of meaning, people act out the social structure, affirming their own statuses and roles, and establishing

---

<sup>335</sup> See Malina, *Gospel of John*; Petersen, *Gospel of John*; Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Gospel of John*; Hobbs, "The Political Jesus," 274.

<sup>336</sup> The attempt to identify and draw a distinction between the language of the so-called Johannine community and the language of Jesus in John's Gospel is not without its complications. John may contain Jesus' speech word for word, or its language may represent an adaptation by the author of John (or the so-called Johannine community). Even within the Gospel itself, there are sections such as 3:16-21 where commentators are divided whether it belongs to Jesus' speech that begins in 3:3 or it begins a new section of the author's personal reflection. Moreover, whether major social changes (i.e. persecution) took place between the life of Jesus and when the Gospel was written that may affect the language is subject to further investigation. In light of such complexity, it is not unreasonable to assume that Johannine conditionals serve dual purposes: they are used by Jesus to persuade his immediate audience; and they are also recorded by the author to persuade the reader. It also appears that Malina and Rohrbaugh do not draw a clear distinction in their claim of the use of antilanguage in John's Gospel. They first apply the concept of antilanguage in the original setting of the story of Jesus. In their delineation of antisociety, however, they primarily focus on the effect on the "first-century Mediterranean Hellenism" audience. See Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Gospel of John*, 4-11.

and transmitting the shared systems of value and of knowledge.<sup>337</sup>

Antilanguage is the language of an anti-society, such as a street gang and the outlaws that are characterized by resistance, hostility, and even destruction toward the establishment.<sup>338</sup> The main purpose of antilanguage is to act out a distinct social structure that bears an alternative social reality, which then becomes the source of an alternative identity for its members.<sup>339</sup> In other words, an anti-language is the means of realizing a counter, subjective reality: not merely expressing it, but actively creating and maintaining it. Such a reality is created, expressed, and maintained through conversation.<sup>340</sup>

In his sociolinguistic study of John, Malina claims that John's Gospel takes on the features of romantic tragedy and John's mode of formal argument belongs to a "weak group/low grid" category.<sup>341</sup> Malina then argues that John adopts "antilanguage" as he writes his Gospel for the following reasons. (i) The "strong" groups that Jesus opposes are "the world" and "the Jews." These entities appear far more in John than in the

---

<sup>337</sup> Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 2. See also Halliday "Sociological Semantics," *CW* 3:323-54.

<sup>338</sup> Halliday's antilanguage may be summarized as follows: (i) antilanguages originate from anti- or counterculture societies, such as the criminals, the underworld, and the incarcerated; (ii) the information is usually preserved in the form of word lists (multiple words for the same object or person); (iii) the simplest form taken by an anti-language is its *relexicalization* and often *overlexicalization*, that is, new words for old (for example, according to one account, the underworld of Calcutta has 21 words for "bomb," and 41 words for "police"). Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 164-82.

<sup>339</sup> Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 167-68.

<sup>340</sup> Halliday schematizes the social structures of the normal and the antisociety as follows. In a normal society there are two groups of people: the free (+) and the incarcerated (-). Similarly, an antisociety of the incarcerated has: the people (+) and the suckers (-), and members of each sub-class in the antisociety may move up or down the social hierarchy. Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 167-68.

<sup>341</sup> "Group" is the degree to which a person is embedded in other persons. And "grid" is the degree to which persons find their commonly shared values to match their experiences. Weak group/low grid characterizes a society that is marginalized. Romantic Tragedy is defined as, "the hero (individualistic) struggles unsuccessfully against opposing psychological, physical or social constraints, yet the struggle reveals how success can be found beyond the constraints or by acquiescing to them." Malina, *Gospel of John*, 1-5.

For a methodology of social-scientific criticism, including evaluative parameters such as institutions and values, social interactions, and persuasion and communication models, see Malina, "Social-Scientific Criticism," 72-101 and Elliot, "Social-Scientific Criticism," 1-34.

Synoptic gospels. They consistently refuse to believe in Jesus as Messiah. (ii) Word groups such as "spirit, the above, life, light, not of the world, freedom, truth, love" and "flesh, the below, death, darkness, the/this world, slavery, lie, hate" show that the language of John is relexicalized and overlexicalized. The same holds true for John's use of "believing," "following," "abiding in," "loving," "receiving," "having" Jesus, and "keeping (Jesus) word." (iii) To facilitate re-socialization, John's Gospel also contains ample conversations with "implicit modes of reciprocity" (3:1-4:42; 5:10ff; 6:22ff.; 9:13-10:42; etc.). Malina claims that it is John's weak group/low grid antilanguage that accounts for this kind of communication in the Gospel.<sup>342</sup>

In their commentary on John's Gospel, Malina and Rohrbaugh further characterize Jesus and his disciples as the "in-group," and the rest of the society as the "out-group." Each group adopts distinctively different vocabulary, such as, "*light, born of water/spirit, above,*" and "*darkness, born of blood/flesh/humans, below.*" They further claim that the relationship between Jesus and his disciples is cemented by antilanguage.<sup>343</sup> In sum, the argument of Malina and others is built on the social location of Jesus and his disciples as well as on the vocabulary (wording) used in John's Gospel. An additional feature of the anti-structural contrast between Moses and Jesus in John also contributes to the claim of antilanguage used in John's Gospel.

---

<sup>342</sup> Malina, *Gospel of John*, 11-17.

<sup>343</sup> Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Gospel of John*, 4-15, 47-48. Similarly, Petersen also posits that Johannine followers of Jesus were rejected by mainstream society and John (the writer) and Jesus adopt antilanguage because it derives its terms from the language of their persecutors. What took place was a *structural* linguistic change from the ordinary language of the disciples of Moses to an anti-language of the disciples of Jesus, or the sons of light. Petersen, *Gospel of John*, 80-109. John's characterization is to be understood within the framework of the social contrast between these two distinct groups of people and associated languages. Jesus' language must be understood also in reference to the everyday language of the dominant society. And "virtually all the critical terms in John's characterization of Jesus, such as, *from heaven* (John 3), *give, gift* (John 4), and *bread, descend* and *ascend* (John 6), are anti-structurally derived from the image of Moses." (104)

*Response: Johannine conditionals and antilanguage.* The following response consists of three parts. First, Johannine conditionals related to the Jewish and Roman authorities will be used to show that the author of John does not characterize Jesus and his disciples as an inferior social group. Second, conditionals related to Jesus and his disciples do not exhibit the character of an antisociety. Third and finally, grammatical and semantic features such as “negative” (negative clauses and negative polarity) and questions show that conditionals are used to prompt and persuade the audience to probe deeper into the meaning of Jesus’ statements and not to exclude them from understanding him.

(i) Conditionals related to the Jewish and Roman authorities. In terms of the social location of Jesus and his disciples, it is rather speculative to characterize them as belonging to the "Weak Group/Low Grid" as Malina claims.<sup>344</sup> At times, the argument for the use of anti-language also appears circular.<sup>345</sup> The fact that Jesus transcends the alienated world that lies in darkness and the corollary that his disciples have been born from above show that they are neither weak nor lowly. A number of conditionals in John 18 clearly indicate that Jesus is far from victimized and the author of John does not

---

<sup>344</sup> As Herman Waetjen's comments, "a prior or preliminary understanding of this text has led [Malina] to identify the Fourth Gospel with the "Weak Group/Low Grid" and to contend that 'John would be presenting his audience with the story of Jesus...with a romantic tragedy mode of emplotment, developing an implicit formist argument and with an anarchic ideology.'" In Malina, *Gospel of John*, 31-32. Furthermore, reconstructing ancient history and culture is challenging and often problematic. See Whitelam, "History and Social Background," 255-67. Not only do significant gaps exist between what is assumed in modern sociological models and what we can glean from ancient NT documents, the problem becomes more acute when analysis relies principally on one single document, in this case, the Gospel of John. And the relationship between Jesus and the Jews (the world) in John's Gospel is admittedly rather complex. For example, according to Keener John's purpose for writing is "to *reclaim*, not to repudiate, the Jewishness of his community, while at the same time rejecting the leaders who have rejected their message...John *confirms* his audience's continuity with their Jewish heritage, while summoning them to retain their commitment to Christ as their first theological priority." Keener, *Gospel of John*, 1:232. See also Brown, *Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 115-50.

<sup>345</sup> For example, "Again, *since* Jn is anti-language, and Jn's group is weak group/low grid, this is all quite predictable." Malina, *Gospel of John*, 12. Italics added. Similarly, "It must be emphasized that it is Jn's weak group/low grid anti-language that accounts for this feature (conversations) of the gospel." 14.

characterize Jesus as weak and lowly. When Jesus faces the Roman soldiers and the officers from the chief priest and the Pharisees, he does not feel threatened as he speaks the conditional below.

18:8 (to the soldiers)

εἶπον ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι. εἰ οὖν ἐμὲ ζητεῖτε, ἄφετε τούτους ὑπάγειν

*I told you that I am he; if therefore you seek me, let these go their way.*

At least three features support the view that Jesus was not threatened by the soldiers: (i) the emphatic comment *I told you that I am he*, (ii) the protasis's marked Theme *me*, (iii) and the Imperative mood ἄφετε (Aor. Act. Imp.) *let (them) go* in the apodosis. This conditional statement shows signs of authority, not fear.

When Jesus was hit by the high priest's servant, he replied with two consecutive conditional statements.

18:23 (to the high priest)

εἰ κακῶς ἐλάλησα, μαρτύρησον περὶ τοῦ κακοῦ·  
εἰ δὲ καλῶς, τί με δέρεις;

*If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong;  
but if rightly, why do you strike me?*

In these consecutive conditionals, Jesus first uses an Imperative μαρτύρησον (Aor. Act. Imp.) *you bear witness* (v. 23a), followed by an interrogative (τί *why*) (v. 23b). The author of John records no answer from the high priest. All this evidence suggests that the high priest knows he is in the wrong, and Jesus is not afraid to defend himself.

In contrast, the one who shows fear is Pilate, the Roman governor, when the Jews threaten him with the following conditional.

\*19:12 (the Jews to Pilate)

ἐὰν τοῦτον ἀπολύσῃς, οὐκ εἶ φίλος τοῦ Καίσαρος· πᾶς ὁ βασιλέα ἐαυτὸν ποιῶν ἀντιλέγει τῷ Καίσαρι.

*If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar.*

The conditional clearly forces Pilate not to release Jesus. The rest of the narrative confirms that Pilate conceded to the Jews by condemning Jesus to the cross. These conditionals clearly do not portray Jesus as weak or lowly, and the authorities as strong as Malina and others claim.<sup>346</sup>

(ii) Conditionals related to Jesus and his disciples. It is also questionable to characterize Jesus and his disciples as an antisociety, comparing them to the underworld or the prison culture.<sup>347</sup> This view is problematic because of how Jesus describes the nature of the kingdom of God. The kingdom that Jesus proclaims is not an earthly, political kingdom. After the feeding of the 5000, Jesus refuses to be made king by the Jewish people (6:15). Jesus also opposes the use of violence when Peter attempts to save his master from being arrested by the soldiers (cf. 18:11). Before Pilate, Jesus also makes a clear statement, an Indicative conditional, concerning the non-violent and spiritual nature of his kingdom.

18:36  
 εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἦν ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ,  
 οἱ ὑπηρέται οἱ ἐμοὶ ἠγωνίζοντο [ἄν]  
 ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις

*If my kingdom were of this world,  
 then my servants would be fighting,  
 that I might not be delivered up to the Jews.*

The Indicative type 2 conditional clearly expresses that Jesus' kingdom does *not* belong to the world. The final ἵνα purpose clause clearly states that if Jesus and his followers

<sup>346</sup> Moreover, Malina and Rohrbaugh's lists of wordings contrasting the in-group and the out-group do not exhibit "heavy over-lexicalization" as they claim. What fits the description of the over-lexicalization is the initial word list based on the *Gang Slang Dictionary* that they excerpted. *Gospel of John*, 7-8. However, to claim that words such as *light, born of water/spirit, above* etc. (in-group) and *darkness, born of blood/flesh, below* etc. (out-group) have been re-lexicalized or over-lexicalized is not convincing. (47) The contrast simply shows Johannine dualism and not antilanguage.

<sup>347</sup> Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Gospel of John*, 7-9. Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 164-66.

were indeed an antisociety they would resort to violence. To characterize Jesus and his followers as an ideologically or politically motivated antisociety simply does not fit the content of John's Gospel.<sup>348</sup>

The teaching of Jesus in John is contradictory to the function of antilanguage to facilitate social stratification within an antisociety (see also Mk 10:42-45). In fact, Jesus rebukes his disciples when they attempt to elevate themselves among one another. To be Jesus' disciples, they are to serve and love one another, as shown by the following conditionals by Jesus.

13:14

**εἰ** οὖν ἐγὼ ἔνιψα ὑμῶν τοὺς πόδας ὁ κύριος καὶ ὁ διδάσκαλος, καὶ ὑμεῖς ὀφείλετε ἀλλήλων νίπτειν τοὺς πόδας·

*If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet; you also ought to wash one another's feet.*

13:17

**εἰ** ταῦτα οἴδατε, μακάριοί ἐστε **ἐὰν** ποιῆτε αὐτά.

*If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.*

13:35

ἐν τούτῳ γνώσονται πάντες ὅτι ἐμοὶ μαθηταὶ ἐστε, **ἐὰν** ἀγάπην ἔχητε ἐν ἀλλήλοις.

*By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*

While Jesus teaches his disciples to be humble, those who show characteristics of an antisociety by constantly vying for higher status are the Jewish authorities (cf. 5:44; 12:43).

(iii) Lexical and grammatical features of conditionals.<sup>349</sup> There are at least two

<sup>348</sup> Even Halliday's comment that the early Christian community was an anti-society and used anti-language needs justification. Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 171.

<sup>349</sup> From a lexical point of view, what Malina and others lack is a word list that compares the meaning in ordinary language with the alleged antilanguage of John. For example, Mallik's study of the underworld provides 24 words for "girl," 20 words for "bomb," 41 words for "police," and 21 words for "wine." Mallik also observes that the grammar of antilanguage is "irregular, cryptic, and weak," and almost non-existent. Mallik, *Language of the Underworld*, 17-27. The following illustration of a spray-painted



linguistic features that indicate conditionals in John intend to provide information, to direct the reader, and to include them in the community of Jesus. The first feature is the heavy presence of the “negative” semantic feature, primarily grammaticalized by the negative Polarity particles *oũ not* (and sometimes *ãv would*) and the rhetorical questions that expect negative answers.<sup>350</sup> For example, in the list of clauses of conditionals below (John 1-5), there are a total of 12 conditionals (protases and apodoses); all of them have the “negative” semantic feature at least once, and most of them contain two negative clauses.

John 1, 3	John 4	John 5
*1:25 --, <i>if you are <u>not</u> the Christ</i>	v 10 <i>if you knew .you would have asked</i> (two negative clauses)	v 19 <i>the Son is <u>not</u> able to do anything, if he does <u>not</u> see the Father</i>
*3:2 <i>no one can do these things if God is <u>not</u> with them</i>	v 48 <i>if you do <u>not</u> see signs...you will <u>never</u> believe</i>	v 30 <i>my testimony is <u>not</u> true</i>
3:3 <i>if one is <u>not</u> born again, he/she <u>cannot</u> see the kingdom</i>		v 43 <i>if another (<u>not</u> me) comes, --</i>
3.5 <i>if one is <u>not</u> born again, he/she <u>cannot</u> enter</i>		v 46 <i>if you believed Moses .you would believe</i> (two negative clauses)
3 12 <i>if you do <u>not</u> believe... how shall you believe (you will <u>not</u>)</i>		v 47 <i>if you do <u>not</u> believe...how will you believe (you will <u>not</u>)</i>

The strong presence of many “negative” features implies the provision of information, correction, instruction, rather than exclusion or secrecy as those who claim

message on a wall makes a strong case for antilanguage, "SQUASHED INSECTS DON'T BITE MAD MENTAL RULE." They explain: "Mad Mental" (a street gang), "Insects" (another street gang). And "quashed" and "bite" are used metaphorically Brown and Yule, *Discourse Analysis*, 42-45

<sup>350</sup> There are two ways to interpret polarity (positive, negative): interpersonally and ideationally. It is usually linked with the system of Mood (SFL, not the Greek verbal Mood), and thus located within the interpersonal function. However, it can also be treated under Ideational meaning according to different metafunctional strategies for identifying grammatical structure. In this section of discussion, since we are dealing with clauses, the feature “negative” is considered under the interpersonal meaning. Halliday puts it this way, “Polarity can be taken as the quintessential example of a grammatical system; it is involved in everything we say—everything that language can turn into meaning. It has a place in all metafunctions—in a sense it is pre-metafunctional, this is why it can be ambivalent, if realized on its own (as *yes* or *no*), and can be lexicalized in both ideational and interpersonal combinations (e.g. *allow/forbide; nice/nasty*).” Halliday, *Complementarities*, 64.

that John uses antilanguage. Jesus uses negative conditional clauses with all the characters he talks to (Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the royal official, and the Jews). The kingdom of God cannot be entered on any other basis than being born again spiritually (3:3,5); the Samaritan woman was not getting the water because she did not know who Jesus was (4:10); and the Jews do not believe Jesus because they are not the true followers of Moses (5:46, 47). The negative feature of these clauses is used to arouse curiosity, to teach, and to correct the audience. Their meanings are far from being obscure, contrary to the major function of antilanguage.

Likewise out of the seven conditionals in John 11:1-44, there are six negative clauses.

#### Conditionals in John 11:1-44

##### A. Jesus and the disciples

v. 9 *If anyone walks...he/she will not stumble*

v. 10 --, --

\*v. 12 --, --

##### B. Jesus, Martha, and Mary

\*v. 21 *if you had been here, my brother would not have died* (two negative clauses)

v. 25 --, --

\*v. 32 *if you had been here, my brother would not have died* (two negative clauses)

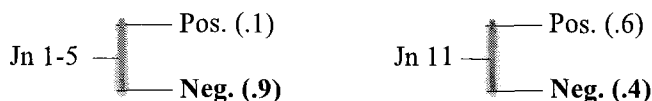
v. 40 *Did I not say..., if you believe*

Jesus uses the negative conditional clauses to remind his disciples that while he is with them, it is still not dark and they need not fear (v. 9). He also brings to Martha's attention the faith that leads to seeing God's glory (v. 40).<sup>351</sup> Together with the rest of the conditional clauses in the narrative of the raising of Lazarus, these negative clauses are recorded by the author to motivate and to prompt the audience, immediate and outside, to deepen their faith in Jesus.

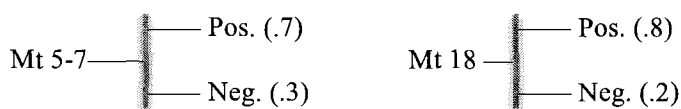
---

<sup>351</sup> The text (11:1-44) also includes the identical conditionals by Martha and Mary (vv. 21, 32) that also contain a total of four negative clauses. Although they are not expressed by Jesus, the negative features (Lazarus would not have died had Jesus not delayed his trip) are central to the entire text.

The patterns of occurrences of these negative clauses in Johannine conditionals is diagrammed below.



By comparison, in two other expository discourses in Matthew, Matt 5-7 (29 conditional clauses) has the ratio of Positive = .7 and Negative = .3; and Matt 18:1-20 (24 conditional clauses) has Positive = .8 and Negative = .2.<sup>352</sup> Diagrammatically,



It is evident that the occurrence of negative clauses is much higher in the mostly polemic discourses in John 1-5. Similarly, among the three expository passages listed above (John 11, Matt 5-7, and Matt 18), John 11 also has the highest proportion of negative clauses. Compared with Matthew's Gospel, the author of John draws heavily from linguistic resources to express the "negative" semantic feature of conditionals, to raise curiosity, to draw contrasts, and to instruct or correct the audience in polemic and expository discourses. With such function of conditionals, the thesis of Johannine antilanguage and the motif of secrecy cannot be maintained.

In addition, the interrogatives in John, conditionals and non-conditional questions alike, also play a similar rhetorical function in John's Gospel. These questions

<sup>352</sup> In Matt 5-7, eight negative clauses are found as follows

5:13 *if the salt becomes tasteless, how will it...?*

5:20 *if your righteousness does not surpass...you shall not enter*

5:46 *...what reward do you have?*

5:47 *...what do you do more than other?*

6:15 *if you do not forgive...the Father will not forgive*

In Matt 18:1-20, four negative clauses are found as follows

18:3 *if you are not converted...you shall not enter*

18:16 *if he/she does not listen*

18:17 *if he/she refuses to listen*

also challenge the notion that the language of John is antilanguage. For instance, the Jews raise a total of six questions and one conditional question in their dialogue with John the Baptist (1 19-28).

- 1 19-28 (the Jews and John the Baptist)
- v 19 Question 1 (*who*)
- v 21 Question 2 (*what*), Question 3 (y/n), Question 4 (y/n)
- v 22 Question 5 (*who*), Question 6 (*what*)
- v 25 Conditional question (*why*)

In the Bread of life discourse, the exchange between Jesus and the Galilean Jews contains three conditionals and three questions in a span of 12 verses.

- 6:41-59 (Jesus and the Galilean Jews)
- v 42 Question 1 (y/n), Question 2 (*how*)
- v 44 Conditional 1
- v 51 Conditional 2
- v 52 Question 3 (*how*)
- v 53 Conditional 3

The following chart also shows that the Gospel of John has the highest number of Greek interrogative particles, such as  $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ ,  $\pi\hat{\omega}\varsigma$ ,  $\pi\acute{o}\tau\epsilon$ , *where*, *how/why*, *when/how*, in a normalized text span of 1000 clauses.

	Matt	Mark	Luke	John
# particles <sup>353</sup>	21	12	15	28
# clauses <sup>354</sup>	4,372	2372	4747	3808
particles/1000 clauses	4.8	5.1	3.2	<b>7.4</b>

Since these interrogatives do not include yes/no questions in conditionals, such as 6:23 *Are you angry at me* ? 10:36 *Do you say of him* “*You are blaspheming*” .. ? and 11:40 *Did I not say to you* ? The total number of questions in John, and for the same reason, the total number in each Gospel, are actually higher. Regardless of the

<sup>353</sup> Figures based on Accordance Bible Software, version 10.2.1 July 2013.

<sup>354</sup> The calculation is based on OpenText.org. 1998-2005. The numbers represent the combined ranking and rankshifted clauses.

total number of questions in each Gospel, it is evident that the author of John records the highest frequency of questions expressed by interrogative pronouns: an average of 7.4 particles (questions) per 1000 clauses. The second highest is Mark's Gospel, with an average of 5.1, and the lowest is Luke's Gospel, with an average of 3.2.

In order to fully understand the meaning of these questions and/or conditional questions, they must be treated in their fuller contexts. The highs and lows should not be interpreted in a mechanical way. As Martin remarks in his discussion of register,

You have to use enough signals of register and genre to ensure that your listener can see where you are coming from. Otherwise, you will simply not be fully understood. But the notion of probabilistic realization over whole texts does mean that genre and register are not mechanical formulae, which stands in the way of an individual's creativity or self-expression.<sup>355</sup>

Nevertheless, the evidence seems strong enough that the author of John uses interrogatives, including a number of conditional questions, to stimulate the thinking of the reader to encourage them to probe deeper and understand more fully the meaning and significance of the person of Jesus and his teaching. These questions prompt the audience to engage in "inner languaging" by evaluating the situation in the text and by thinking through the questions that have been recorded. In the end, the reader has the understanding to make the right inferences and take the right steps toward faith in Jesus. The claim of a Johannine antilanguage not only runs counter to the stated purpose of John (20:31) but also how the author mobilizes linguistic resources to persuade the reader.

*Summary.* Since the purpose of John is persuasive and inclusive (20:31), to say that Jesus and his disciples belong to an antisociety and they use antilanguage to

---

<sup>355</sup> Martin, *Register Studies*, 66.

maintain secrecy is problematic. The fact that antilanguages also change rapidly to maintain secrecy for the insiders<sup>356</sup> is another factor that needs to be taken into consideration. People who are not familiar with the world that John recounts will simply not be able to understand. But the discussion of antilanguage in the context of social semiotic underpins a very fundamental use of language—that is, how people construe reality (or human experience) through the use of language. What Halliday says about antilanguage and counter realities can be applied to the language of conditional statements. Halliday writes, "[A]ntilanguage arises when the alternative reality is a *counter-reality*, set up *in opposition to* some established norm...An antilanguage is the means of realization of a subjective reality; not merely expressing it, but actively creating and maintaining it."<sup>357</sup> As a persuasive device, conditionals construe an *alternate* reality, and make available an "effective plausibility structure"<sup>358</sup> for the audience to suspend judgment, to reason through alternate situations, and to imagine possible correlations between them and what they imply.

### Summary and Conclusion

In the first section of this chapter, Subjunctive conditionals that are used to invite people to put their trust in Jesus and to grow in their commitment are studied. Such conditionals take the form of the third person indefinite pronoun *τις anyone* + Subjunctive protasis, and Future or Imperative apodosis. They are found in discipleship

---

<sup>356</sup> The function of the language of thieves and drug addicts "is to keep the content of their conversations secret—outsiders should not understand what is being said...It is easy to learn the slang words (anti-language), but it is hard to keep up to date and use and combine words correctly. In this way it is easy for the group members to tell who is a true member of the group." Anderson and Trudgill, *Bad Language*, 79.

<sup>357</sup> Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 171, 172.

<sup>358</sup> Halliday, *Social Semiotic*, 170. The term "effect plausible structure" is borrowed from Berger and Luckman, *Social Construction of Reality*, 142.

contexts such as Jesus as Light (11:9, 10), the Bread (6:51 *if anyone eats of this bread*), the living water (7:37 *If anyone is thirsty*), and as the door for the sheep (10:9 *if anyone enters through me*). At the same time, the disciples' conditional (v. 12) reveals their lack of understanding. However, Hans Förster's "untypical" misunderstanding based on the argument that death is irreversible is questionable. Even if his claim were valid, Martha and Mary's conditionals should be included in the same kind of misunderstanding.

Moreover, Richard Young's description of Martha's "Rebuke" and Mary's "Lament" is questionable. It relies a great deal on the speaker's intention (indirect speech act) and lacks a formal and systematic approach to describing conditionals. At the same time, Jesus' conditionals (vv. 25-26, 40) utilize grammatical features such as Subjunctive conditionals and conditional questions to prompt the audience to reflect and form a right opinion of him, who is the resurrection and the life (v. 25).

In the second section of the chapter, ideational and interpersonal functions of Johannine conditionals are also examined. First, the use of the Greek verbal mood (Subjunctive, Indicative) by the speaker to construe reality (unreal, hypothetical, and real) enables the speaker to frame their argument. An alternate worldview provides an opportunity for the audience, immediate and outside, to (re)consider their beliefs and behavior, and to accept Jesus' Christological claim.

Moreover, negative clauses and the use of questions and conditional questions by both Jesus and other Johannine characters encourage the reader to engage in "inner languaging." Negative clauses are used heavily in polemic discourses. Compared with similar discourses in Matthew, the author of John also records a higher occurrence of negative clauses in expository discourses. In addition to questions and conditionals,

these features are employed to arouse the curiosity of the audience and prompt them to avoid the errors made by the Jews and to follow the examples of those who believe Jesus' word (cf. the Samaritan woman and the royal official, 4:10, 48). Based on the above observations and the evidence of conditionals concerning the authorities and Jesus and his followers, the claim of Johannine antilanguage cannot be sustained.

The next chapter will provide the summary and conclusion of this study. The description and the meaning of conditionals will integrate all the features of the functional approach that have been proposed and adopted in this study. The conclusion will also include how Jesus uses conditional to persuade his audience and how the author of John also records these conditionals as rhetorical devices to achieve his purpose of writing.



## CHAPTER SIX

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

## Introduction

The purpose of this study is to propose a functional approach, based on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), to describe and classify New Testament conditional statements. Current classification schemes are too narrow in their scopes of description. A number of them do not have a strong linguistic theory behind their investigations. NT Greek textbooks also customarily investigate conditionals as stand-alone statements, without considering other relevant grammatical features or the function of conditionals in the wider context.

SFL has been chosen as the theoretical framework in this study for several reasons. First, it is a theory that emphasizes language as a meaning-making resource. To impart meaning is to choose grammatical features from system networks. While traditional understanding of language tends to be syntactic (“chain”), SFL values the paradigmatic aspect (“choice”) of language. Secondly, SFL offers a stratal and functional approach that is much broader and deeper in its understanding of how language works. The basic interpretative framework is based on the functions of language, namely, ideational (including experiential and logical functions), interpersonal, and textual, and how they are expressed in the ranks of the clause and clause complex in the content stratum.

Since John contains the highest number of conditionals among the four Gospels, it has been chosen for this study in part to understand how the conditionals contribute to its purpose of writing. Given that the purpose of John is to persuade his audience to

receive Jesus as the Christ (20:31), it is believed that a functional approach to the Johannine conditionals will enable not only a better understanding of conditionals, but also of how the author of John uses conditionals to persuade his reader

Analysis has been carried out chronologically, according to the unfolding gospel narrative. Selected dialogues have been chosen and the conditionals within them have been analyzed accordingly. The conversation participants include the Jews in Jerusalem (John 5, 10), the Samaritan woman and the royal official (John 4), the Galilean Jews (John 6), and followers of Jesus (John 11). Conditionals in these dialogues have been approached primarily on the basis of their function within the discourse or text, as grammatical constructions and rhetorical devices.

The chapter consists of three main sections. The first section summarizes the results the study according to the three major functions of conditionals. The second section contains the conclusion. The third and last section lists the implications of the study, including areas for future research.

## 6.1 Summary of Results

The following chart on the next page summarizes the major contents of the three analytical chapters of this study

Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
§3.1 Nicodemus (3:1-15)	§4.1 The Galilean Jews (6:41-59)	§5.1 The disciples, Martha, and Mary (11:1-44)
§3.2 The Samaritan woman and the royal official (4:7-12, 45-64)	§4.2 The disciples (6:60-65)	§5.2 Grammar of conditionals
§3.3 The Jerusalem Jews (5:19-47)	§4.3 The Jerusalem Jews (10:22-39)	

The major portion of the analysis is devoted to the selected discourses and their conditionals from John 3 to John 11 (sect. 3.1 to sect. 5.1). The type of dialogue participants and discourses may be broadly divided into two groups. The first group of participants are those who are either curious about Jesus, such as Nicodemus (sect. 3.1) and the disciples who eventually left Jesus (sect. 4.1). It also includes those who believe and follow Jesus, such as the Samaritan woman and the royal official (sect. 3.2), the disciples, Martha, and Mary (sect. 5.1). Jesus' discourses with these people are generally classified as expository or didactic in nature. Generally, their purpose is to encourage these people to grow deeper in faith. The second group of participants is the Jerusalem Jews: the opponents of Jesus. Jesus' discourses or debates with them are in sect. 3.3 and sect. 4.3. These discourses represent the first and the last of Jesus' public debates with them. Unlike those with the followers of Jesus, these discourses are highly argumentative and polemical.

Section 5.2 analyzes Johannine conditionals in general, including those that are not part of the discourses in sect. 3.1 to sect. 5.1. Special attention is given to their Ideational and Interpersonal functions, and how systemic networks and grammatical features shape the meaning of these conditionals as well as the text of the Gospel. These and other highly mobilized grammatical resources in conditional statements in John are used to refute the claim by some scholars that the author of John uses antilanguage.

In the following matrix, the rows represent the Clause, Clause Complex, and Text. The columns represent SFL's three metafunctions of language: Ideational (including Experiential and Logical),<sup>359</sup> Interpersonal, and Textual. Major discussions of

---

<sup>359</sup> The grouping of semantic components differs according to the perspective from which one looks at them. From the point of view of the organization within the semantic system itself (i.e. "from the same

these major linguistics features in the Johannine discourses analyzed are shown in the relevant cells of this text and rank-function matrix. For example, LOGICO-SEMANTIC RELATIONS (“above the clause” rank, Ideational function) is located in sect. 3.2, TENSE/ASPECT (“the clause” rank, Ideational function) is located in sect. 5 1,<sup>360</sup> and the grammatical feature “collocation with questions” (text, Interpersonal function) is found in sect. 4.1

	<b>Ideational (Experiential, Logical)</b>	<b>Interpersonal</b>	<b>Textual</b>
Text		Collocation with questions (§4.1)	Introductory & concluding cond. (§3.2); consecutive, identical and clustered cond. (§§3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1); lexical tie (§5.1)
Clause complex	LOGICO-SEMANTIC RELATION (§§3.2, 3.3)		clause configuration (§3.1); Grammatical intricacy (§4.3)
Clause	MOOD, ASPECT (§5.1); PERSON (§3 1)	MOOD, PERSON (§4.1); ASPECT (§4.3); POLARITY (§3.2)	THEME (§3.2)

In the remainder of this section, choices in systemic networks and grammatical features in conditionals will be summarized based on function. Description and significance of each relevant network and feature will be made from the ranks of the clause and clause complex, as well as under the semantic concept of text. The variety and complexity of these choices reflect the situations and arguments in which these

---

level”), the Experiential and the Logical go together under the Ideational function because there is greater systemic interdependence between these two than between other pairings. From the vantage point of the functions of the linguistic system in relation to some higher-level semiotic that is realized through the linguistic semiotic (i.e. “from above”), the Logical function may be seen as belonging to a different function, e.g. the Textual function. See Halliday, “Text as Semantic Choice,” 26-27

<sup>360</sup> The Greek verbal Mood system (represented in this study as MOOD) applies to all the ranking clauses, protasis and apodosis alike. Moreover, it is realized ideationally in the protasis in framing the conditional clause (protasis) as well as interpersonally in the apodosis in enacting social relations, for example, through commands and questions.

conditionals are spoken. They also reflect how the author of John mobilizes the meaning resources of language to express and create meaning for his persuasive purpose.

### 6.1.1 Ideational function

Speakers construe three kinds of realities in their speech acts, namely, the factual, the counterfactual, and the hypothetical, by choosing the Greek verbal Mood, combined with the choice of Tense. These construals of experiences are from the perspective of the speaker. They do not always correspond to the objective reality.<sup>361</sup> To reflect the Ideational function of language, this study chooses to replace the terminology of First class, Second class, Third class, and Fourth class with two basic classifications: Indicative and Subjunctive conditionals. In doing so, the description of conditionals is connected explicitly to their grammatical forms and functions.

The Indicative mood is used to construe factual and counterfactual reality by the speaker. While the speaker can choose any tense form with the protasis of the Indicative type 1 conditional, he or she is limited to the Imperfect, Aorist, and Pluperfect tenses for the Indicative type 2.<sup>362</sup> The choice between factual and counterfactual realities depends on factors such as the nature of the dialogue, the subject matter that is being discussed, and the relationship between the speaker and the audience. In the consecutive Indicative conditionals in 5:46, 47, Jesus first poses an Indicative type 2 conditional, 5:46 *For if*

---

<sup>361</sup> For example, the following Indicative type 2 conditionals are construed as counterfactual: John 18:30 *if he (Jesus) were not a criminal* and Luke 7:39 *if he (Jesus) were a prophet*. However, contrary to the way Jesus' opponents frame them, Jesus is *not* a criminal and he *is* a prophet. Similarly, in the Indicative type 1 conditional Jesus only poses the situation as "real" for the sake of argument in Matt 12:27 *if I by Beelzebub cast out* (ἐκβάλλω Pres. Act. Ind.) *demon*,. In the immediately subsequent Indicative type 1 conditional he states what is actually true, Matt 12:27 *But if I cast out* (ἐκβάλλω Pres. Act. Ind.) *demons by the Spirit of God*.

<sup>362</sup> In Greek, temporal values (past, present, future) are not established by use of the verbal aspects or tense forms alone. See Porter, *Idioms*, 25-26. McKay also writes, "It should be noted that some common time indicators sometimes occur in situations where they are markers of only part of the temporal setting, or where they are markers of some other factor, such as reality, rather than time." McKay, *New Syntax*, 39-40.

(εἰ) *you believed* (ἐπιστεύετε Impf. Act. Ind.) *Moses, you would* (ἂν) *believe* (ἐπιστεύετε Impf. Act. Ind.) *me*. Jesus argues that the Jews do not believe Moses (protasis), and as a result, they also do not believe Jesus (apodosis). Then, Jesus explicitly states in the subsequent Indicative type 1 conditional, 5:47 *For if you do not believe his writings* (a state of affairs that is true), *how will you believe my words?* The argument is presented in two ways. With the Indicative type 2 conditional, the case is stated positively (if the Jews believed Moses, but they did not). It is then stated negatively with the Indicative type 1 conditional that they in fact do not believe in Moses. It must be emphasized that the construal of the experience is purely based on how the speaker chooses to frame it. It is not uncommon for speakers in the NT to use such (Indicative) reality construal that does not correspond to the objective reality to either express their own opinion (John 18:30; Luke 7:39) or to put forward their arguments (Matt 12:27).

On the other hand, the Subjunctive mood construes a “virtual reality” or an alternate, plausible world. As a hypothetical statement, the supposition in the protasis may or may not take place, either at the moment of speaking or at all. It is an effective rhetorical device to prompt the audience to probe deeper into the meaning and validity of what is being asserted. Generally speaking, Jesus uses this type of supposition with those who are receptive to him. He teaches Nicodemus that new life is possible and necessary in order to enter God's Kingdom (3:3, 5). Similarly, twice he uses the Subjunctive conditional to state that he is the Bread of life (6:51) and urges people to eat of his flesh and drink his blood (6:53). The author of John often uses these Subjunctive

conditionals to motivate the reader to look beyond just the surface (cf. 7:24) and to think deeper to place their trust in Jesus.

Furthermore, the tense forms used in the purpose clauses of 10:38 between the perfective verbal aspect of γνῶτε (Aor. Act. Subj. *you may come to know*) and the imperfective verbal aspect of γινώσκητε (Pres. Act. Subj. *you may keep on knowing*) differentiates between the act of knowing and the continuing progress of understanding. Such a distinction supports the argument that the Gospel was written to address an audience including both non-believers and believers.

The negated Subjunctive (ἐὰν μὴ *if...not*) reduces all other choices and possibilities to a single option. For example, new birth takes place only when the birth is through water and Spirit, 3:3, 5 *if* (ἐὰν μὴ) *one is not born again...born of water and the Spirit*. Jesus uses the same type of conditional to strengthen his argument that he can only perform signs on the Sabbath when he sees the Father is at work (5:19; see also 8:24; 19:11). On the other hand, καὶ ἂν *and if* or *even if*, is used emphatically to include the option or situation that seems contradictory to the realization of the apodosis, as is illustrated in the following example to underscore the reality of Jesus being the resurrection and life.

11:2  
ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωὴ· ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ καὶ ἂν ἀποθάνῃ ζήσεται.

*I am the resurrection and the life, the one who believes in me shall live even if he/she dies.*

In summary, speakers use the verbal Mood in the protasis to construe a spectrum of reality, from counterfactual to hypothetical to factual:

<i>Counterfactual</i> (-REAL) (Indicative mood, type 2)	----- <i>Hypothetical</i> (±REAL) ----- (Subjunctive mood)	----- <i>Factual</i> (+REAL) (Indicative mood, type 1)
---	---	--

The renaming of the conditionals according to the verbal Mood (Indicative, Subjunctive) provides more accurate grammatical description. As a result of adopting SFL's ideational function of language of construing human experience, the description of conditionality as factual (+REAL), hypothetical ( $\pm$ REAL), and counterfactual (-REAL) makes the meaning of conditionals more explicit and understandable.

As clause complexes, conditionals also have two main types of logical meanings. In SFL, they are expressed as logico-semantic relations. Most NT grammarians simply adopt the classification scheme such as, Cause and Effect, Ground and Inference, and Equivalence, by Nutting and Kruger.<sup>363</sup> Such a classification scheme shows a mixture of logical (e.g., Cause and Effect) and grammatical (e.g., Equivalence) categories that are difficult to identify and at times confusing. Research in this area in New Testament Greek is also lacking.

The difficulty in classifying the logico-semantic relation in clause complexes such as the NT Greek conditionals lies in the fact that "logical" structures or relations in the semantic system are independent of any particular class or classes of phenomena. Moreover, linguists have yet to reach agreement whether languages differ as to what relations they are going to treat as logical.<sup>364</sup> Reality is construed in a more conceptual and complex manner with clause complexes. In this study, two types of L-S R are proposed: Causal and Correlative. These are core categories interpreted in their own terms as part of the semantics of the Greek language.<sup>365</sup> There is no intention to fit them

---

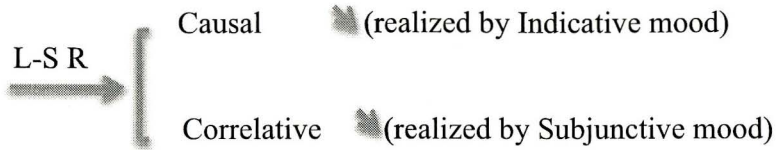
<sup>363</sup> For example, Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 319-20; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 682-84; see also Boyer, "First Class Conditions," 81-82.

<sup>364</sup> Halliday, "Modes of Meaning," *CW* 1:212. Halliday and Matthiessen classify logico-semantic relation (of the English language) into two main categories: Projection and Expansion. See *IFG*, 373-83.

<sup>365</sup> In the English language, SFL's logico-semantic relations are generalized glosses to suggest the core meaning of the category. Cf. Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 392.



exactly into formal logical categories, although there is some relationship between the two. The logico-semantic relations of Greek conditionals are shown in the following diagram.



The causal relation expresses a cause and effect, and an evidence and inference relationship between the protasis and the apodosis. It is realized by the εἰ + Indicative mood construction (with the exception of the Future tense form). The relation may be characterized as a rational argument as follows. if the protasis is true, the apodosis is true also. For example,

3:12 (causal relation)  
 εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε,  
 πῶς ἐὰν εἶπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια πιστεύσετε;

*If I told you earthly things and you do not believe,  
 how will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?*<sup>366</sup>

Jesus argues that because Nicodemus does not understand even earthly matters, Nicodemus will be unable to understand spiritual matters that he needs to know. The author of John often records this kind of Indicative mood and rational or causal argument in Jesus' debates with his opponents, the Jews (5:46, 46, 7:23, and 10:35-38). The same causal relation works effectively in Jesus' defense before the high priest in the following conditionals. It makes the action of the high priest indefensible.

18:23 (causal relation)  
 εἰ κακῶς ἐλάλησα, μαρτύρησον περὶ τοῦ κακοῦ·  
 εἰ δὲ καλῶς, τί με δέρεις;

*If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong;  
 but if rightly, why do you strike me?*

<sup>366</sup> The clause *if (ἐὰν) I speak of heavenly things* forms the second protasis within the apodosis.

On the other hand, the Correlative expresses a conjunctive or contingent relation.<sup>367</sup> It is expressed through the construction of ἐάν *if* (including ἐάν μή *if...not*, καὶν, *even if*) + Subjunctive protasis. There may be a logical relation between the protasis and the apodosis. However, such a relation, even if present, is not presented as the dominant relation. For example, in his Subjunctive conditional to the royal official and the Galilean Jews, Jesus makes a correlative connection between people's faith and his signs and wonders.

4:48  
 ἐάν μὴ σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἴδητε,  
 οὐ μὴ πιστεύσητε.

*If you people do **not** see signs and wonders,  
 you will never believe.*

Jesus could have chosen the εἰ + Indicative conditional to frame his argument. It would then mean that there is a necessary and direct link between faith and signs. But by framing the statement as a Subjunctive conditional with the correlative L-SR, Jesus makes the assertion in a milder form than it would be as an Indicative conditional. What Jesus expresses here is primarily a correlation between the two: only when they see signs and wonders will they believe. The same also holds true for Jesus' two Subjunctive conditionals.<sup>368</sup>

6:51 *if* (ἐάν) *anyone eats of this bread, they will live forever*

6:53 *if* (ἐάν μὴ) *you do **not** eat the flesh of the Son of Man...you have no life in yourselves*

The correlative relation primarily expresses a relationship of co-occurrence of the apodosis with the protasis. Jesus typically uses this kind of correlative relation, in

<sup>367</sup> The notion of correlation is illustrated in the following sentence: *If the majority say well we go **then** we're prepared to go with it.* Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 386.

<sup>368</sup> The conditionality of the Exceptive (*unless*) and Concessive (*even if*) Subjunctive is discussed in the next section, 6.1.2 "Mood and Tense" (Reality construal).

Subjunctive conditionals, with audiences who are more receptive to him, often in the context of helping them to deepen their faith. This is illustrated in the final conditional of his public ministry:

12:47

*If (ἐάν) anyone hears my sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge that person; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.*

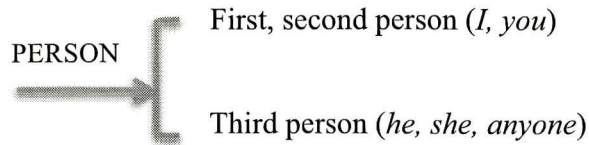
Although the logical consequence of being judged is possible, the correlative relation and the Subjunctive mood express a more moderate tone. By not accusing the people for disobeying his words, which would be expressed by the Indicative mood, Jesus gives them another opportunity to put their faith in him.

One benefit of the proposed classification scheme is that it is based on semantic relations and not a mixture of unconnected categories (logical and grammatical).

Another benefit is that it relates them to the conditional's rhetorical impact. Jesus often uses the causal relation (Indicative conditional) in formal debates and in argumentative discourses with his opponents. But in didactic and expository discourses with his followers, he typically uses the correlative relation (Subjunctive conditional). An audience is more likely to listen and to be open to change when the correlative relation and hypothetical supposition is used.

### 6.1.2 Interpersonal Function

Four important system networks and grammatical features form a significant portion of the interpersonal function of conditionals. They are: the networks of PERSON and PERSON, the features of ellipsis (protasis-only conditional), and collocation of conditionals with questions. On the clause level, the PERSON systemic network can be represented as follows.



It makes a distinction between the first and second person speech roles *I* (speaker) and *you* (hearer), and other roles such as the third person generalized τις *one/anyone*.<sup>369</sup> The first and second person speech roles are direct and explicit, while the indefinite third person role puts greater personal distance between the speaker and the hearer, and in many cases, is more polite and less confrontational.

Generally, Jesus uses Indicative conditionals with the speech role (*I, you*) the debates with the Jews, for example,

5:46, 47

*For if you believed Moses, you would believe me*

*But if you do not believe his writings, how would you believe my words*

8.19, 39, 46

*If you knew me, you would know my Father also*

*If you are Abraham children, (you) do the deeds of Abraham*

*If I speak truth. why do you not believe me?*

10:36, 37, 38

*If he called them gods...why do you say, "You are blaspheming"*

*If I do not do the works of my Father (you) do not believe me*

*but if I do them...(you) believe the works*

Jesus also uses the speech roles in Subjunctive conditionals with the Jews, but less in frequency than the Indicative conditionals and in a less confrontational manner<sup>370</sup>

On the other hand, Jesus uses the non-speech role, generalized third person τις *one/anyone* Subjunctive conditional with people, including his followers, who are more open to his words. They include the Galilean Jews, the crowd at the feast of

<sup>369</sup> Halliday & Matthiessen, *IFG*, 325. In Greek, the personal ending of the finite verb indicates the Person. It is also sometimes indicated emphatically by personal pronouns ἐγώ, σὺ, αὐτός, αὐτή *I, you, he, she*.

<sup>370</sup> For example, in the central debate section of John 7-8: 8:14 *Even if (καὶ ἐάν) I bear witness of myself;* 8:16 *Even if (καὶ ἐάν) I do judge;* 8:24 *for if (ἐάν μὴ) you do not believe that I am He.*

Tabernacles, and the disciples. Through these conditionals, he promises them salvation and new life in him.<sup>371</sup>

6:51 (the Galilean Jews)  
*if anyone (τις) eats of this bread, he/she shall live forever*

7:37 (the crowd)  
*If anyone (τις) is thirsty, come to me and drink.*

11·9, 10 (the disciples)  
*if anyone (τις) walks in the day But if anyone (τις) walks in the night*

In Jesus' dialogues and debates with the Jewish and Roman authorities, Jesus uses the first and second person *I, you* speech roles with the Indicative protasis 13 times, but only 7 times with the Subjunctive protasis, as the following chart shows.

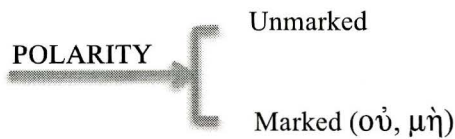
	John 5	John 8, 9	John 10, 18
<i>I, you</i> + Indicative	v 46	8.19	10:35-36
	v 47	8:39	10:37
		8:42	10:38
		8:46	18:23a
		9:41	18:23b
			18:36
<i>I, you</i> + Subjunctive	v 31	8.14	--
		8:16	
		8:24	
		8:31	
		8.54	
		8.55	

The above phenomenon lends support to the premise that the first and second person *you, I* Indicative conditionals are primarily used for legal defenses and formal arguments, whereas the third indefinite person *anyone* Subjunctive conditionals are more persuasive in teaching and expository discourses.<sup>372</sup>

<sup>371</sup> See also 7·17 *If anyone (τις)...he/she shall know*; 8:51 *if anyone (τις). he/she shall never see death*, and to his disciples in 12:26a, 26b; to the crowd in 12:47; and the disciples again in 14:23.

<sup>372</sup> The letter to the Galatians consists of 17 Indicative conditionals and only five Subjunctive conditionals. It is almost exactly the opposite in 1 John, which has only four Indicative but 18 Subjunctive

In conjunction with the network of PERSON, the author also uses the network of POLARITY for rhetorical purposes. Morphologically, the negative Polarity is marked with the particle οὐ or μὴ *not*, including the emphatic double negative οὐ μὴ *never* (e.g. 4:48, \*20:24 by Thomas).



But the grammatical feature of “negative” interacts with other systems and features in many complex ways. The negative feature may appear with negative clauses, sometimes expressed in Indicative type 2 conditionals (4.10; 8:42, 9:41) and in rhetorical questions, as the following question conditional by Nicodemus illustrates.

\*7.51 (Nicodemus)

**μὴ** ὁ νόμος ἡμῶν κρίνει τὸν ἄνθρωπον  
**ἔαν μὴ** ἀκούσῃ πρῶτον παρ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ γινῶ τί ποιεῖ;

*Does our Law judge a person*

*if it does **not** first hears from him and knows what he is doing?*

Nicodemus is stating that the Jews are in danger of judging Jesus without proper evidence. He raises a rhetorical question conditional with the Greek negative particle μὴ *not* that expects a negative answer. In this case, the negative polarity and the exceptive Subjunctive are used together to frame the question conditional that exposes the Jews’ evil intention.

The negative Polarity is also used with the Imperative mood for emphatic purposes, as shown in Jesus’ conditional with a negative protasis and negative Imperative apodosis.

---

conditionals. The difference can be explained by the fact that Galatians is more confrontational in style, whereas 1 John is more pastoral or expository

10:37

εἰ οὐ ποιῶ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρός μου, μὴ πιστεύετε (Pres. Act. Imp.) μου  
*If I do not **do** the works, do **not** believe me.*

The complex interaction between negative Polarity and the system network of Mood therefore includes both the Indicative mood (statement and question) as well as the non-Indicative (the Imperative) mood in order to achieve various rhetorical purposes.

Furthermore, Jesus' protasis-only conditional in 6:62 is used to heighten suspense and to challenge the hearer to "fill in the blank."

6:62

ἐὰν οὖν θεωρῆτε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀναβαίνοντα ὅπου ἦν τὸ πρότερον;  
*If then you see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?*

The omission of the apodosis leaves the audience wondering about Jesus' intention. A heightened sense of suspense is thus created and the audience is required to think deeper about what is at stake and their right response. Elsewhere Jesus uses protasis-only conditionals to indicate his disappointment.<sup>373</sup>

Luke 13:9

*And/even if (καὶ) it bears fruit next year [no apodosis], but if (εἰ) not, cut it down.*

Luke 19:42

*If (εἰ) you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace [no apodosis]*

Another grammatical feature as part of the interpersonal function of conditionals is the collocation of Jesus' conditionals with questions. It appears that the author of John does so in order to challenge the audience to the deeper meaning and implications of Jesus' words. The questions show that the audience struggles to understand Jesus' teaching, revealing how Jesus' conditionals offer them a new perspective of thinking,

<sup>373</sup> See also Acts 23:9 *We find nothing wrong with this man (Paul), what if (εἰ) a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?* This protasis-only question conditional appears in a highly emotional argument between the scribes and the Pharisees during Paul's trial in Jerusalem.

knowing, and behaving.<sup>374</sup> Such a grammatical pattern is sometimes interpreted under the category of “complex dialogues”<sup>375</sup> and as “Johannine misunderstanding.” These dialogues reflect Jesus’ divine origin. Unlike his audience, Jesus sees reality from a point of view that is transcendent or “from above.” Some of these dialogues include the following:

- John 3 (N: Nicodemus; J: Jesus)  
 v. 4 (N) *How can a person be born again...?*  
 v. 5 (J) *if (ἐὰν μὴ) a person is not born of water...*  
 v. 9 (N) *How can these things be?*  
 v. 12 (J) *If (ἐὰν) I told you earthly things and you do not believe*  
 John 6 (G: Galilean Jews)  
 v. 42 (G) *Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph...? How does he now say...?*  
 v. 44 (J) *...unless (ἐὰν μὴ) the Father...draws him or her*  
 v. 52 (G) *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*  
 v. 53 (J) *...unless (ἐὰν μὴ) you eat the flesh of the Son of Man*
- John 18 (P: Pilate)  
 v. 33 (P) *Are you the king of the Jews?*  
 v. 34 (J) *Are you saying this on your own initiative...?*  
 v. 35 (P) *I am not a Jew, am I? ...What have you done?*  
 v. 36 (J) *My kingdom is not of this world. If (εἰ) my kingdom were of this world...*  
 v. 37 (P) *So you are a king?*

In spite of the fact that Nicodemus is a highly respected teacher, his failure to understand, as reflected by his questions, is apparent. He simply does not grasp Jesus’ description of the fundamental truth of new birth. The process of his understanding is slow, but eventually, albeit secretly, he becomes a disciple of Jesus (19:38-39). The questions of the Galilean Jews also demonstrate that they see Jesus from a human point of view and that they lack the capacity to understand spiritual matters. The disciples,

---

<sup>374</sup> For interpersonal roles that are defined by the linguistic system and discourse roles such as questioner, informer, responder, doubter, contradictor, see Halliday, “Context of Culture,” *CW* 2:56. Hasan also writes, “Tenor of discourse refers to the nature of social relationship amongst those involved in the action—not which specific individual, but how the individuals are socially position vis a vis each other.” Hasan, “The Place of Context,” 172.

<sup>375</sup> “A complex dialogue results when the second speaker does not want to accept the dialogue on the terms suggested by the first speaker. On the contrary, the second speaker wants to evade or moderate the force of the previous speaker’s utterance; he wants in some way to blunt its point.” Longacre, *Grammar of Discourse*, 129-30. Martin calls such exchange dynamics as “challenging.” Martin, *English Text*, 71-76.



too, do not grasp the meaning of Jesus' σκληρός *difficult* teaching of the bread of life (6:60). The exchange between Pilate and Jesus also shows how insecure Pilate was during the trial of Jesus. These and other similar dialogues represent disputants locked in combat.<sup>376</sup> Jesus' conditional-statement answers often imply that the person who asks the question has a wrong assumption or perspective. As part of the Johannine rhetorical strategy, Jesus' transcendent "non-answers" characterize him as truly the unique Son of God who comes from above (1:14; 8:23).

In a number of cases, Jesus also uses conditional questions to challenge his opponents.

7:23

*If...that the Law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because I made an entire person well on Sabbath?*

As a rhetorical question, it calls attention to important information that is already present (i.e. "breaking" of the Sabbath) rather than attempting to elicit new information.<sup>377</sup> As Halliday remarks, in the field of education, the one who often takes the lead in asking questions is not the student, but the teacher.<sup>378</sup> By using conditional questions, many of which are rhetorical questions, Jesus forces his opponents to step back and examine carefully the underlying cause of their rejection and hostility towards him.

### 6.1.3 Textual Function

The author of John mobilizes a number of grammatical features to express and create the textual meaning of conditionals. These features are: (i) marked Theme, (ii) clause configuration, (iii) grammatical intricacy, (iv) emphatic statement, (v) lexical tie,

<sup>376</sup> Nuttall, *Overheard by God*, 131.

<sup>377</sup> Beekman and Callow, *Translating the Word of God*, 238.

<sup>378</sup> Halliday, "Text as Semantic Choice," *CW* 2:56-57; see also Sinclair et al., *The English Used by Teachers and Pupils*.

(vi) conditionals as introductory and concluding statements, and (vii) the frequency, and local and global distribution of conditionals in the text of the Gospel of John.

First, on the level of the clause, marked Themes underscore thematic elements in both the protasis and apodosis.<sup>379</sup> For example, in the Nicodemus dialogue, two elements of the clauses are placed in thematic position:

3:10, 12  
καὶ ταῦτα οὐ γινώσκεις;  
*and you do not understand these things?*

εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε  
*if I told you earthly things and you do not believe*

*These things* and *earthly things* not only are synonymous, but are also marked Themes in their respective clauses. They show that Nicodemus does not have the capacity to understand the basic teaching of Jesus. His capacity for understanding spiritual matters is seriously called into question.

With the conditional in 4:48, the marked Theme of the protasis is the word group *signs and wonders*.

4:48  
ἐὰν μὴ σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἴδητε  
*if you people do not see signs and wonders*

The Theme reflects the excessive attention people pay to Jesus' signs and wonders, at the expense of attempting to understand who he is and where he is from. They come to him because of his spectacular signs and not because they believe that he is the Christ (cf. 2:32; 3:2). But as the narrative unfolds, the faith of this royal official becomes a role model for the reader of John. He puts his faith in Jesus' words without first experiencing

---

<sup>379</sup> "In the Theme-Rheme structure, it is the Theme that is the prominent element...[B]y analyzing the thematic structure of a text clause by clause, we can gain an insight into its texture and understand how the writer made clear to us the nature of his underlying concerns." Halliday and Matthiessen, *IFG*, 105.

his miraculous sign. This kind of faith is commended in John's Gospel (20:29 *blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed*).

Multiple marked Themes in clustered conditionals also reflect a complex reasoning process that is crucial to the dialogue and the overall purpose of John's Gospel. They are used for emphasis in various ways. For example, in John 10:34-36, Jesus first establishes that the term "gods" is used by the Scripture to describe people (v. 34). He continues to highlight multiple marked Themes (underlined) that support his argument: that people have been called gods in the Scripture (v. 35a), the Scripture cannot be broken (v. 35b), and in the final clause of v. 36, his *Son of God* claim.

10:34  
... ἐγὼ εἶπα: θεοί ἐστε;  
...*I said, you are gods?*

10:35a  
εἰ ἐκείνους εἶπεν θεοὺς  
*If he called them gods*

10:35b  
καὶ οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή,  
*and the Scripture cannot be broken*

10:36  
ὅτι εἶπον υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ εἰμι;  
*because I said, "I am the Son of God"?*

The "chain" of marked Themes thus underscores the key elements that Jesus uses to establish the validity of his claim. As a result, his opponents have no reasonable grounds to reject his Christological claim.

Second, the apodosis-fronted clause configuration expresses a deliberate point of departure in the thematization or the information flow of the conditional. As clause complexes, conditionals are normally configured as protasis (P) ^ apodosis (Q). The protasis is the thematic clause or the point of departure of the statement, followed by the

apodosis as the rhematic clause. However, such a configuration is sometimes reversed for special emphasis. In John, the majority of the apodosis-fronted conditionals are found among Subjunctive conditionals. The change sharpens the role of the apodosis, its participant, and the subject matter in the overall argument. For example, John's act of baptizing is what draws the Jews' attention in the first place:

\*1:25 (the Jews)  
τί οὖν βαπτίζεις εἰ σὺ οὐκ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς

*why are you baptizing, if (εἰ) you are not the Christ*

Likewise, in his first conditional in the Sabbath healing debate with the Jews, Jesus' point of departure is his act of healing on the Sabbath.

5:19  
οὐ δύναται ὁ υἱὸς ποιεῖν ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ οὐδὲν **ἐὰν μὴ** τι βλέπη τὸν πατέρα ποιοῦντα:

*the Son can do nothing of himself, if he does **not** see what the Father is doing*

He responds to what he has done (the apodosis) by explaining that he is the Son and that he sees the Father at work (protasis).<sup>380</sup> Likewise, in Nicodemus's Subjunctive conditional to his fellow Pharisees, he first establishes the proper application of the law (apodosis), then uses it to warn his fellow Jews of their possible violation of it (protasis).<sup>381</sup>

\*7:51 (Nicodemus)  
μὴ ὁ νόμος ἡμῶν κρίνει τὸν ἄνθρωπον **ἐὰν μὴ** ἀκούσῃ πρῶτον παρ' αὐτοῦ καὶ γινῶ τί ποιεῖ;

<sup>380</sup> Other Q ^ P Subjunctive conditionals include: 3:2 *no one can do these things, if God is **not** with him/her*; 6:44 *No one can come to me, if the Father does **not** draw them*; 6:65 *no one can come to me, if it has **not** been granted by the Father*; 15:4a *the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, if it does **not** abide in the vine*; 15:4b *neither can you, if you do **not** abide in me*; 13:35 *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another*; and 15:14 *You are my friends, if you do what I command you*.

<sup>381</sup> See also 19:11. The authority over Jesus is first and foremost under God's sovereign control (apodosis), it is only given to Pilate by God (protasis). οὐκ εἶχες ἐξουσίαν κατ' ἐμοῦ οὐδεμίαν εἰ μὴ ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν. *You would have no authority over me, unless it had been give you from above.*

*Does our Law judge a person, if it does not first hears from him or her...?*

Third, grammatically intricate conditionals express complex arguments and highly contested issues critical to the argument of the discourse and to the overall argument of the Gospel.<sup>382</sup> Some of these grammatically intricate statements include inserted or enclosed protases used for emphasis. In their two occurrences (3:12; 11:25), Jesus primarily addresses his audience's lack of spiritual understanding and their need to deepen their faith.

In the first half of the Gospel, the most grammatically intricate conditionals by Jesus appear in his final debate with the Jews in 10:22-42. Jesus first poses a rhetorical question, v. 34 *Has it not been written in your Law, "I said, you are gods?"* then makes three consecutive conditionals in vv. 35-38. The first conditional (vv. 35-36), also a rhetorical question, consists of eight ranking clauses, four marked Themes (underlined), and an emphatic personal pronoun ὑμεῖς *you*.<sup>383</sup> Similarly, the third and final conditional (v. 38) consists of seven (7) ranking clauses.<sup>384</sup>

---

<sup>382</sup> In the discussion here, grammatical intricacy is view in terms of clause structure. As it is also related to rhetorical impact, it can also be viewed from the viewpoint of the interpersonal function.

<sup>383</sup> 10:35-36

- [1] *If (εἰ) he called them gods,*
- [2] *to whom the word of God came—*
- [3] *and the Scripture cannot be broken—*
- [4] *do you (ὕμεῖς) say of him,*
- [5] *whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world,*
- [6] *'You are blaspheming'*
- [7] *because I said,*
- [8] *'I am the Son of God'?*

<sup>384</sup> 10:38

- [1] *but **if** I do them,*
- [2] ***even if** you do not believe me,*
- [3] *believe the works,*
- [4] *that you may know*
- [5] *and understand*
- [6] *that the Father is in me*
- [7] *and I am in the Father.*

In v. 38, cls. 1 and 2 consist of double protases; cl. 3 is an imperative apodosis; cls. 4 and 5 are made up of two purpose (ἵνα) clauses, and finally, cls. 6 and 7 are two content (ὅτι) clauses that explain the preceding purpose clauses. In all, there are three clauses with marked Themes (cls. 2, 3 and 6). According to the purpose clause, these grammatically intricate conditionals seek to persuade the audience to *come to know* (γινῶτε Aor. Act. Subj.) and *keep on knowing* (γινώσκητε Pres. Act. Subj.) that Jesus and the Father are indeed one, which is also the central purpose of John's Gospel.<sup>385</sup> From a linguistic point of view, the more complex or intricate the clause grammar becomes, the more it reflects how deeply a speaker is engaged in the dialogue.

As another feature of high grammatical intricacy, inserted or enclosed clauses<sup>386</sup> are used to draw the hearer's attention to the insertion by splitting up clauses. For example, Nicodemus's apparent lack of understanding (3:9 *How can these things be?*) eventually leads to Jesus' statement in v. 12:

3:12  
 [1] εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν  
 [2] καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε,  
 [3, 4] πῶς «ἐάν εἴπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια» πιστεύσετε;

[1] *If I told you earthly things*  
 [2] *and you do not believe,*  
 [3, 4] *how «if I speak of heavenly things» will you believe?*

Splitting up cl. 3: πῶς...πιστεύσετε; *how...will you believe* highlights the fact that Nicodemus does not understand matters of a heavenly or spiritual nature. As a result of

---

<sup>385</sup> Other grammatically intricate conditionals by Jesus are found in the Farewell Discourse in 14:15-17 *If* (ἐάν) *you love me* with 11 ranking clauses, and 14:23 *If* (ἐάν) *anyone loves me*, with six ranking clauses, including five apodoses. Likewise, although they do not contain any conditionals, the opening scene of the last supper in 13:1-5 is equally grammatically intricate with nine ranking clause, including 13 embedded clauses. And 1 Cor 13:1-3 consists of three conditionals with a total of 14 ranking clauses, including three embedded clauses. It shows that these writers (John and Paul) crafted these statements with great care, as they form the key components of the immediate contexts and arguments.

<sup>386</sup> Halliday and Mattiessen, *IFG*, 10.

Nicodemus's lack of understanding, Jesus can no longer go further into the subject matter of new birth. The rhetorical question also brings Jesus' argument in this discourse to a close. Similarly, in the following conditional (11:25), the inserted Subjunctive protasis «κἄν ἀποθάνῃ» *even if he/she dies* underscores the reality of physical death in the context of resurrection. But Jesus' promise remains true, *in spite of* the reality of death.

11:25

ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ «κἄν ἀποθάνῃ» ζήσεται,

*the one who believes in me «even if he/she dies» will live*

Fourth, emphatic statements such as *very truly I say to you* (3:3) and comments like *did I not say to you* (11:40) are also used to highlight the significance of the conditional that follows. The *very truly* statements preceding the conditionals in 3:3, 5 help to underscore the necessity of new life. Similarly, in the conditional in 6:53, the same statement stresses the importance of eating of the flesh of Jesus and the drinking of his blood in receiving eternal life.<sup>387</sup> These emphatic statements draw extra attention to the conditional that follows by temporarily suspending the flow of the discourse. They indicate the speaker's intent and the writer's stance toward the subsequent conditional. Their presence is to mark some features of the conditionals that might otherwise have been overlooked.

Fifth, lexical ties connect conditionals to other texts (co-texts). These ties point to the development of argument in texts and highlight the significance of important

---

<sup>387</sup> For other *very truly I say to you* conditionals, see also 8:51 *if* (ἐάν) *anyone keeps my word*; 12:24 *unless* (ἐάν μὴ) *a grain of wheat...dies*; 16:23 *if* (ἄν) *you shall ask the Father*. Similarly, conditionals prefaced by the Christological ἐγώ εἰμι *I am* statement stress the Christological nature of the claim and invites the audience to come to Jesus by faith: 6:51 *I am the living bread...if* (ἐάν) *anyone eats*, 10:9 *I am the door... if* (ἐάν) *anyone enters*, and 11:25 *I am the resurrection and the life...even if* (κἄν) *he/she dies*.

theological concepts. For example, a series of lexical ties (“walk,” “day, night,” and “light (of the world)”) are found in Jesus’ conditionals to the disciples in John 11.

11:9, 10

*Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, they do not stumble, because they see the light of this world.*

*But if anyone walks in the night, they stumble, because the light is not in them.*

The term “walk” appears in the context of discipleship in John 6. After Jesus’ difficult teaching, many of the disciples no longer “walk” with him (6:66). In John 9, Jesus also talks to the disciples about “day, night” (9:4). It is still “day,” because he is the light of the world (v. 5). With this set of lexical ties, the author develops these discipleship motifs in John’s Gospel. While some no longer “walk” with Jesus, those who continue to walk with him must also understand that having Jesus’ presence with them means having “the Light of the world” in them. His followers are to follow him without fear (cf. Thomas’s remark 11:16). Another lexical chain in the same passages (John 9 and John 11) is the motif of Jesus is the “light (of the world).”

As the sixth grammatical feature, introductory conditionals in functionally-significant text spans provide points of departure that frame semantic units. Similarly, concluding conditionals at the end of texts also draw these semantic units to a close. Selected introductory and summative conditionals are shown below. Even though some of the conditionals do not appear at the beginning of the paragraph divisions, they nevertheless represent the first or second statement of Jesus in the discourse/dialogue.



Text	Introductory	Concluding
John 5		
vv 19-30	v 19 <i>the Son can do nothing, if .not</i>	
vv 31-40	v 31 <i>if I testify about myself</i>	
vv 41-47		v 46 <i>For if you believed Moses</i> v 47 <i>But if you do not believe</i>
John 6		
vv 41-51	v 44 <i>No one can come...if .not</i>	v 51 <i>if anyone eats this bread</i>
vv 52-59	v 53 <i>if you do not eat the flesh</i>	
vv 60-65	v 62 <i>What then if you see</i>	v 65 <i>no one can come to me, if .not</i>
John 10		
vv 31-39		v 35 <i>If he called them gods</i> v 37 <i>If I do not do the works</i> v 38 <i>but if I do them</i>

In the Sabbath healing debate (5 19-47), for example, v 19 and v 31 introduce the major themes of their respective paragraphs, namely, Jesus as the Son (vv 19-30) and those who testify to Jesus (vv 31-40). Beginning with his Christological sonship (vv 19-30), Jesus supports his claim using other who support his claim. In the third and final paragraph (vv 41-47), Jesus denies his audience's claim to be followers of Moses, and instead asserts that they do not possess the faith necessary to trust Jesus' words. The point is succinctly put forward by the consecutive conditionals in vv 46, 47

Similarly, in the bread of life discourse, the Subjunctive conditionals (6:44, 53) introduce the twin themes of the work of the Father in salvation and the need for people to partake of the bread of life (Jesus). And 6:65 also sums up the larger discourse unit of 6:41-65 In the final debate with the Jews, Jesus' concluding consecutive conditionals (10:35-36, 37, 38) also logically argue against the Jews' refusal to acknowledge the

works and words of Jesus as the basis of his Christological claim.<sup>388</sup> These introductory and concluding conditionals represent another textual function of Johannine conditionals that are used to support John's overall argument of Jesus' Christological claim. While some of these statements reflect and form the judgment against those who do not believe (10:35-38), others emphasize the need for the audience and the reader to act upon Jesus' teaching and to trust him for eternal life (6:51, 53).

The seventh and final textual function of conditionals is expressed through the clustering and the distribution of conditionals in texts. One form of clustering is placing conditionals consecutively. These paired conditionals build up argument and heighten the urgency of the message. They are often used as comparisons and contrasts to emphasize their key points. Among the 101 conditionals in John's Gospel, 31 of them belong to consecutive conditionals.<sup>389</sup> All 31 of them are double conditionals, with the exception of Jesus' final conditionals with the Jews in 10:35-36, 37, 38, where he uses three consecutive conditionals. Such an unusually high concentration of conditionals further indicates the climactic nature of these statements in expressing the inexcusable nature of the Jews' unbelief.

10:35 *If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came*  
 10:37 *If I do not do the works of my Father*  
 10:38 *but if I do them*

Jesus' last consecutive conditionals in John's Gospel appear in 20:23a, 23b, where he emphasizes the authority that he is imparting to the disciples to forgive and hold people accountable for their sins.

---

<sup>388</sup> Other Johannine conditionals that serve as thematic or summative statements in the first half of John's Gospel are found in 7:23 (7:14-24); 7:39 (7:37-39); 8:31 (8:31-38); 8:39, 46 (8:39-47); 9:41 (9:40-41); and 12:26a, 26b (12:20-26).

<sup>389</sup> They are: 3:12, 13; 5:46, 47; 8:54, 55; 10:35-36, 37, 38; 11:9-10; 12:24a, 24b; 12:26a, 26b; 14:2, 3; 14:14, 15; 15:4b, 4c; 15:6, 7; 15:18, 19; 15:20b, 20c; 18:23a, 23b; and 20:23a, 23b.

20:23a *If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven;*  
 20:23b *if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.*

Identical conditionals are also used for framing the textual boundaries of discourses, highlighting the speaker's viewpoint, and underscore a motif in a discourse. For example, \*1:25 and \*10:24 records the motif of the Jews searching and seeking to identify the Christ. As a grammatical construction, these conditionals represent their initial search and marking their final rejection of Jesus.

\*1:25 *if you are not the Christ*  
 \*10:24 *If you are the Christ*

The next set of nearly identical conditionals (6:44, 65) brackets Jesus' Bread of life discourse with the Jews and the disciples in 4:41-65. They highlight the audience's failure to accept Jesus as the special agent of the Father and his invitation to place their trust in him. Both conditionals underscore the work of the Father in those who are drawn to Jesus.

6:44 *if the Father who sent me does **not** draws them*  
 6:65 *if it has **not** been granted him/her from the Father*

The writer of John also uses the identical conditionals by Martha and Mary in 11:21 and 11:32, respectively, to show their lack of faith and to demonstrate how Jesus teaches them through his words, including the conditionals in vv. 25, 40, and through the raising of Lazarus.

\*11:21 *Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.*  
 \*11:32 *Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.*

As part of the logogenetic patterns of John, these conditionals show the progressing unbelief of the Jews, as well as the need for the followers of Jesus to grow in their faith.

Moreover, there is insufficient evidence to classify Martha's conditional (v. 21) as "Rebuke," and Mary's identical conditional (v. 32) as "Lament." Speech Act Theory

places unnecessarily strong emphasis on the intention of the speaker (indirect speech act) at the expense of key grammatical and semantic features of the conditionals.<sup>390</sup>

Highly clustered conditionals are also used for various rhetorical functions in the discourses in which they cluster. For example, in the three sets of clustered conditionals with the Jews (John 5, 8, and 10, below), the conditionals appear to show that the Jews' unbelief is inexcusable. In Jesus' discourse with his followers (John 11), the highly clustered conditionals serve to deepen the faith of these followers. And in the upper room discourse, the two texts with the most highly clustered conditionals found in John 15 clearly encourage the disciples to remain in Jesus (the Vine) and to persevere in the midst of persecution of the world.<sup>391</sup>

5:41-47	The Jews 8:48-59	10:22-39	(Followers) 11:1-44	The disciples 15:1-10 (the Vine)	15:18-25 (the world)
v 43	v 51	*v 22	v 9	v 4a	v 18
v 46	v 52	v 35-36	v 10	v 4b	v 19
v 47	v 54	v 37	*v 12	v 6	v 20
	v 55	v 38	v 21	v 7	v 22
			*v 32	v 10	v 24
			v 40		

The above six groups of clustered conditionals represent six discourse segments that are especially recorded by the author of John to support his argument for the purpose of his writing. The first three discourses show the unbelief of the Jews is inexcusable. The highly clustered conditionals are all found at the end of each discourse. The last three discourses are spoken to those who follow Jesus. The unusually high number of clustered conditionals also indicates the significance of the teachings of

<sup>390</sup> Young, "Classification of Conditional Sentences," 29-49.

<sup>391</sup> The same kind of consecutive or highly clustered conditionals reflecting the urgency of the writer is also found in Paul's teaching on love in 1 Cor 13 1-3 where he uses four consecutive *ἐάν* *if* and one *καὶ* *even if* Subjunctive clauses, see also his defense on resurrection in 1 Cor 15:12-19 where six *εἰ* *if* clauses appear in eight verses. In 1 John 1:6-10, five consecutive *ἐάν* *if* clauses are used.

Jesus, namely, he is life and resurrection (11 1-44), the disciples are to remain in him (5 1-10), and persecution by the world is coming upon them (15 18-25), respectively

As the following chart shows, the distribution of conditionals in John in terms of the number of conditionals per 1000 normalized clauses is 27, the highest among the four Gospels. Such a strong presence of rhetorical devices such as the conditionals further indicates the highly persuasive purpose of John among the four Gospels.

	Matt	Mark	Luke	John
# clauses	4374	2734	4758	3812
# conditions	71	29	49	102
cond./1000 clauses	16	11	10	<b>27</b>

Finally, the rhetorical impact of conditionals is seen in their power of construing human experience. Through various modes of construal (Subjunctive and Indicative mood), speakers create a “virtual reality” to present points of view, to engage in debates and arguments, and to motivate hearers to engage in “inner languaging.” In addition to the feature of reality construal, Johannine conditionals also mobilize a variety of grammatical resources to express and create meaning, making them particularly effective for persuasion. The function of Johannine language is not to exclude those who are outside the so-called antisociety of Jesus and his disciples, but to inform the reader to understand the Gospel, and to include them as part of the community of the followers of Jesus Christ.

## 6.2 Conclusion

This study has been conducted by adopting key premises of SFL. One such premise is that language is a resource for making meaning, not a system of rules from

which meaning derives. The meaning potential of texts is also expanded as they develop (“logogenesis”). Consequently, the description and meaning of conditionals in John’s Gospel in this study reflects the complex interactions of system networks and grammatical features mobilized by various speakers. The full meaning of conditionals is thus negotiated through entire texts and contexts rather than through relying on a few linguistic descriptions of a particular stratum or level of language, such as the Moods and Tenses of the main verb of the protasis in conditionals.

The study also analyzed conditionals on the linguistic stratum both above and beyond the rank of the clause. Conditionals are investigated as clause complexes in the context of conversations or speeches that are semantically divided into paragraphs and sections. To fully understand the meaning of conditionals, the three metafunctions (Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual) of SFL are used. Based on this approach, the following conclusions are made.

#### 6.2.1 Methods of description

This study has found that the Moods and Tenses approach only covers a small range of the meaning of conditional statements. The categories of the Greek verbal Mood and Tense form fall short of providing a complete picture how language works, especially in complex clauses such as conditionals. The primary focus of Greek grammarians has also been solely the Ideational meaning. Descriptions based on time (past, present, future) and probability (possible, uncertain, impossible) have been rightly corrected. More recently, the Mood-based approach, utilizing the semantic concepts of Assertion and Projection similarly restrict analysis to the experiential meaning of the

protasis. Such an approach also overlooks the fact that conditionals are clause complexes and the important role of the apodosis.

The classification of the semantic relation between the protasis and the apodosis also lacks consistent theoretical underpinning. Most grammarians adopt categories such as cause and effect, inference and evidence, primarily based on the study of logic. However, the categories do not accurately reflect the *semantic* connection between the protasis and the apodosis of Greek conditionals. Moreover, Greek grammar textbook discussions of conditionals are customarily isolated and removed from any context of situation and culture.

Not only has the scope of investigation of these grammarians been narrow, the methods of describing conditionals are also inadequate because NT grammarians have adopted different theories and concepts of language uncritically. For example, the classification of conditionals based on Speech Act Theory focuses only on the Interpersonal meaning and has been found to be overly dependent on the indirect speech act and the speaker's intention. Other linguistic elements, such as the system networks of MOOD, PERSON, POLARITY, and grammatical features such as thematization and clause configuration that also shape the meaning of conditionals are ignored.

The discourse grammar approach is also one-sided as it addresses only the textual meaning (information structure) of conditionals. Runge acknowledges that various language theories, such as the Prague school of linguistics, Simon Dik's functional grammar, and Lambrecht's cognitive-functional grammar, have influenced his eclectic method of description.<sup>392</sup>

---

<sup>392</sup> Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 204.

With different grammarians focusing on only selected linguistic features and adopting a mixture of theories or no theory at all, the research on NT Greek conditionals is made more difficult. As complex grammatical constructions that are used to express complex situations and arguments, the task to fully describe and understand conditionals remains challenging.

#### 6.2.2. Toward a functional description of conditionals

As has been adopted throughout this study, the terms “first class,” “second class,” and “third class” conditionals should be discarded. They convey a hierarchy of conditionals that is not supported by the Johannine text. The terms Indicative (type 1, type 2) and Subjunctive conditionals should be adopted instead. The new descriptors make conditionals more explicitly based on the Mood of the protasis. Similarly, semantic relations such as “cause and effect,” “inference and evidence,” and “equivalence” should also be replaced by terms that better reflect the actual semantic relationships.

The proposed functional description is primarily based on the rank-functional matrix with the addition of the semantic concept of text, as shown below. The vertical axis consists of SFL’s content stratum of language, and primarily the lexicogrammar sub-stratum of the clause and clause complex. Above the clause and clause complex is the text. The function (horizontal axis) includes all three functions of language. The analysis usually begins from the Ideational function to the Interpersonal function. These two functions represent how language is used in its most basic manner. This is then followed by the analysis of the Textual function. System networks and grammatical



features are chosen selectively according to the overall purpose of the investigation. The categories shown in the chart below represent some of the major systems and features.

	<b>Ideational (Experiential, Logical)</b>	<b>Interpersonal</b>	<b>Textual</b>
Text		Collocations with questions	Distribution of conditionals, lexical tie, etc.
Clause and clause complex	L-S RELATION MOOD, ASPECT/TENSE, PERSON, POLARITY	MOOD, ASPECT/TENSE, PERSON	clause configuration, grammatical intricacy, emphatic statement  Thematization (clause)

The Ideational function is expressed through the choice of Mood and its associated logico-semantic relation. The speaker chooses to frame his or her argument by first construing reality in a certain way. Three kinds of reality that are expressed are factual and counterfactual, and hypothetical, realized by the Indicative mood and the Subjunctive mood respectively. The Indicative conditional clause (protasis) is further sub-categorized into Indicative type 1 (factual) and Indicative type 2 (counterfactual). All these realities are based on the speaker's construal, they may or may not correspond to the objective reality.

As clause complexes, the Ideational meaning of conditionals also includes logico-semantic relations. The two types of logico-semantic relations based on the study of Johannine conditionals are causal and correlative. The causal relation, realized by the Indicative mood in the protasis, primarily expresses a causal relation between the protasis and the apodosis: if the protasis is true, then the apodosis is also true. The correlative relation, realized by the Subjunctive mood, expresses a relationship that is associative or correlative. For example, in the following example (8:54), Jesus' self-

glorifying (protasis) is equated with such glory as nothing (apodosis). There are other reasons that one's glory is nothing. But in the above conditional, the protasis's function is simply to provide one example.

8:54

ἐὰν ἐγὼ δοξάσω ἑμαυτόν, ἡ δόξα μου οὐδέν ἐστιν

*If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing*

Furthermore, the description of the Interpersonal meaning of conditionals includes the relevant choices made in system networks and grammatical features, not only just the protasis, but the apodosis also. These networks and features include POLARITY, MOOD (including questions), and TENSE, such as emphatic negation οὐ μὴ *never*, and rhetorical questions. They also include networks such as ASPECT and PERSON, including the choice between the speech roles and other roles, as well as the use of the emphatic personal pronouns. For example, in the following conditional by Jesus, the apodosis includes the morphologically marked negative polarity οὐκ *not*, and the emphatic personal pronoun ἐγὼ *I*.

12:47

ἐάν τις μου ἀκούσῃ τῶν ῥημάτων καὶ μὴ φυλάξῃ, ἐγὼ οὐ κρίνω αὐτόν

*If anyone hears my sayings, and does not keep them, I do not judge him*

Finally, the Textual function of conditionals is to be described by the features such as thematization (clause level), clause configuration, and grammatical intricacy. These and other textual features also contribute to the shape and meaning of the text. Furthermore, textual meaning is also to be described in terms of lexical ties, the location of the conditional(s) in the text or the text span under investigation (for example, the beginning or the end of a paragraph), as well as their distribution in the entire text and their clustering pattern. As the Indicative conditionals (10:35-38) in Jesus' final debate

with the Jews show, the more marked features mobilized by the conditionals, the more significant the conditionals are in the rhetorically argument of the text. In all the debates between Jesus and the Jews, the conditionals Jesus uses here are the most grammatically intricate. They include many other grammatical features such as marked Themes (clausal), emphatic personal pronouns, and the use of the Imperative mood. They are also the only three Indicative consecutive conditionals by Jesus in John, appearing at the end of Jesus' final public discourse with the Jews.

In sum, conditionals as grammatical constructions are to be approached as clause complexes. Their descriptions and meaning are to be analyzed in terms of the related choices in system networks and grammatical features that perform the functions of language, namely, the Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual functions. According to SFL, language is a meaning making resource. The more system networks and grammatical features in the lexicogrammar and semantics (or "content") stratum conditionals mobilize, the more enriched and complex their meanings become.

### 6.2.3 Johannine conditionals and John's persuasive purpose

The Indicative conditional is used heavily in Jesus' debates with the Jews. With the exception of 4:10, all the Indicative conditionals are addressed solely to the Jews in Jesus' public ministry: 5:46, 47 (Sabbath healing); 7:23 (Jewish Feast); 8:9, 39, 42, 46 (Light of the world discourse); 9:41 (healing the blind man), and 10:35-38 (final debate). During the trial of Jesus, all four conditionals Jesus speaks are also Indicative: 18:23a, 23b (high priest); 18:36 (Pilate); 19:11 (Pilate again). These conditionals strongly indicate that Jesus was not guilty of the crime with which he was charged, and that the world's hatred toward him and his followers are without warrant (15:25). Such

polemic use of the Indicative conditional in John's Gospel is also supported by Paul's defense of resurrection in 1 Cor 15:12-19, and in the defense of his apostleship in the letters to the Galatians. In the latter example, 15 of the 20 conditionals are Indicative conditionals.<sup>393</sup>

On the other hand, Subjunctive conditionals are used mostly in didactic or expository discourses. In the following discourses, the author of John records exclusively Subjunctive conditionals: the royal official (John 4), the Galilean Jews and the disciples (John 6), the crowd (John 7), and the disciples and Martha (John 11), and the disciples (John 12). Through these conditionals the audience is prompted to carefully consider the words and works of Jesus so that they will either trust Jesus or grow in their faith and follow him faithfully. The same holds true for the Subjunctive conditionals in the Farewell Discourse. Subjunctive conditionals used for expository purposes are also found elsewhere in the NT, such as Matt 18:1-20; 1 Cor 13:1-3, and 1 John 1:6-10. This pattern of polemic and expository uses of conditionals with the Jews and with the followers of Jesus strongly suggests that John's Gospel is written both to defend Jesus' Christological claim and to deepen the faith of his followers (20:31).

Secondly, it is also evident that the higher the "density" of conditionals within a functionally-significant text span (i.e. a paragraph), the greater is its rhetorical significance. In other words, the author (speaker) uses closely clustered conditionals to prove, defend, and emphasize important points. There are a number of texts that challenge the audience to pause and engage in critical thinking, for example, the final debate with the Jews (conditionals 10:35-36, 37, 38), where Jesus points to the Jews'

---

<sup>393</sup> Indicative conditionals: Gal. 1:9, 10; 2:14, 17, 18, 21; 3:18, 21, 29; 4:7; 5:11, 15, 18, 25; 6:3. Subjunctive conditionals: Gal. 1:8; 2:16; 5:2; 6:1, 7.

responsibility for their unbelief; the teaching of the Vine (conditionals 15:4b, 4c, 6, 7, 10), where Jesus emphasizes to his followers the importance of remaining in him; and being disciples in the midst of persecution (conditionals 15:18, 19, 20b, 20c, 22, 24). These texts and their conditionals delineate crucial issues the author wants to present and explain: the charge of blasphemy against Jesus, the commitment to follow, and persecution by the world. The level of persuasive force is shown through the heavily clustered conditionals and the numerous system networks and grammatical features that those conditionals mobilize.

Finally, it has also been shown that the author of John records the highest frequency of conditionals among the four Gospels. The author uses conditionals to direct the audience to reason about alternate situations, to make inferences from presented evidence, and to visualize possible correlations between situations. Considering the rhetorical function of conditionals and the exceptionally high number of conditionals recorded in John, the evidence strongly supports the thesis that the author of John's Gospel employs them to the fullest extent for his persuasive purpose.

### 6.3 Implications and Future Research

A major implication of this study is that the study of the NT Greek language, or any language, should be set within a broader linguistic framework and be based on the function of language in use. New Testament Greek textbooks that have organized their contents according to parts of speech will need to revise their method of organization. Some grammars correctly recognize conditionals as hypotactic sentences (clause complexes). However the meaning of "*if*" in conditionals is far more complex than

most, if not all, of the paratactic and hypotactic clause complexes. Although Halliday and Matthiessen's *An Introduction to Functional Grammar (IFG)* is neither a textbook for Greek grammar nor a monograph on Greek conditionals, their general treatment of the clause and its functions (Part 1 of the book) provides a good framework for understanding the meaning of the Greek language.<sup>394</sup> It will greatly enhance the knowledge of conditionals if future research can locate conditionals' "semiotic address" within the overall architecture of the Greek language and in relation to other grammatical constructions.

Comparative studies of conditionals found in other NT texts, for example, in Paul's letter to the Galatians and the epistle of 1 John, both containing a high density of conditionals, will also be a research area that will deepen understanding of NT conditionals. As Halliday prescribes, the description of texts must be by methods "derived from general linguistic theory, using the categories of the description of the language as a whole; and the comparison of each text with others, by the same and by different authors, in the same and in different genres."<sup>395</sup> Comparative studies of conditionals in other NT writings will effectively widen our knowledge of conditionals.

Moreover, the "context" stratum, the third and the highest level of stratification of language according SFL, should also be explored. Our study has mainly focused on

---

<sup>394</sup> *IFG*, however, does not include any significant discussion on the topic of rhetoric. It only provides one example of rhetorical-relational structure of a "persuasive text" ("California Common Cause," 584-85). But unlike most of the texts investigated in this study, it is relatively short, consisting of only nine sentences, and the analysis is simply based on how conjunctions (*rather, but, therefore*) and clause complexing (hypotaxis and parataxis) complement each other in achieving the text's persuasive purpose. In order to further advance the discussion of the relationship between NT conditionals and rhetoric, it will be beneficial to distinguish the three levels of language: (i) clause complex, (ii) text segment (e.g. dialogue, debate, and monologue), and (iii) the text in its entirety (e.g. the Gospel of John). The next step is to provide a comprehensive semantic network of classification, ideally for each level. The semantic categories such as "enhancing," "evidence," and "justify" that *IFG* has adopted are not specifically for conditionals, nor do they appear to be part of a comprehensive systemic network.

<sup>395</sup> Halliday, "Linguistic Study," *CW* 2:6.

the lexicogrammar in the stratum of “content” and to some degree, semantics. As Hasan observes, as context occupies the highest stratum in language, it has the property of being “language external.”<sup>396</sup> However, this does not imply that it is less important than lexicogrammar or semantics. In particular, examining the register, perhaps different types of registers, adopted by the author of John may further reveal how the language and the conditionals of John’s Gospel have enabled the author to achieve his persuasive goal. This necessitates further research into field, tenor, and mode, to develop an appropriate framework that will enable narratives and discourses to be analyzed and compared. This study has simply identified the types of Johannine audience into two main groups: opponents and followers of Jesus. We have also identified two main types of discourses: argumentative or polemic and expository discourses. Further research is required to develop a fuller interpretative model that will be used to show, for example, which and how particular networks and grammatical features are mobilized in various registers.<sup>397</sup>

Due to their absence in John’s Gospel, Future Indicative conditionals and the Optative conditionals did not receive adequate treatment in this study. However, being able to compare and contrast them with the Indicative and Subjunctive conditionals will enable even better understanding of how different types of NT conditionals are connected within the study’s functional framework.

---

<sup>396</sup> Hasan, “The place of context,” 170.

<sup>397</sup> See Cirafesi, “Register Theory...and the Audience of the Gospel of John.” As part of Cirafesi’s analysis of the register of John 2, the predominant selection of the third Person in the narrative sections as well as Jesus’ speech role of directing (i.e. the Imperative Mood) in the Interpersonal function, together with other relevant grammatical features, lead him to conclude that proposals about the social and historical context of John’s Gospel, such as the so-called “Johannine community,” and their influence on Johannine language need to be revised. Further studies of NT conditionals can likewise benefit from being incorporated into the study of register including associated grammatical features as well as semantic structure of a larger, continuous text span.

Finally, as a result of analyses of conditionals typically performed only on one or a few linguistic features, and without the benefit of a general linguistic framework, understanding conditionals grammatically and rhetorically has been a constant challenge for NT grammarians. By adopting SFL's framework of language function and process, this study has furthered the description and understanding of NT conditionals by describing conditionals according to their language function. Lexiogrammatically and semantically, meaning is expressed and created as the sum of the choices from system networks and grammatical features. By applying the SFL model, this study has also shown that Johannine conditionals serve their persuasive purpose effectively by defending Jesus' Christological claim and by prompting his followers to go deeper in their journey of faith. Through the mobilizing of various language resources, the author of John makes his goal possible through construing realities, enacting social relations, and creating a strongly coherent text.



## Appendix 1 Distribution of conditionals in the four Gospels

## (i) Matthew

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
--	--	--	v 3	v 13	v 14	v 11
			6	20	15	
			9	23	22	
				29	23a	
				30	23b	
				46	30	
				47		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
v 2	v 21	v 13a	v 21	v 7	--	v 28
31		13b	23	11		
		25		26		
				27		
				28		
				29		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
v 14	v 26	v 4	v 3	v 10	--	v 3, 21
		20	8	17		25
			9	21		26
			12			
			13			
			15a			
			15b			
			16			
			18			
			19			
			35			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
v 24	v 30	v 23	--	v 22	v 40	v 14
45		26		24	43	
		43		33		
		48-51		35		
				39		
				42		

---

Total. 71

## (ii) Mark

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
--	--	v 24 25 26 27	v 22 23	--	v 10	v 11
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
v 3 12 34 35a 35b 38	v 35 42 43 45 47 50	v 11 12 29-30	v 3 23	--	v 20 21-22	v 9 14
15	16					
--	--					

Total. 29

## (iii) Luke

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
--	--	--	v 3 7 9	--	v 32 33 34	v 39
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
--	v 13 23 24a 24b	v 6 13	v 8 13 18 19 20 36	v 26 28 39 45-46	v 3 5 9a 9b	v 26 34
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
v 8	v 11 12 31	v 2 3b 3c 4 6	--	v 8 31 40 42	--	--
22	23	24				
v 42 67a 67b 68	v 31 35 37	--				

---

Total. 49

## (iv) John

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v 25	--	v 2	v 10	v 19	v 44	v 4
		3	48	31	51	17
		5		43	53	23
		12		46	62	37
		13		47	65	51
		27				

8	9	10	11	12	13	14
v 14	v 31	v 9	v 9	v 24a	v 8	v 2
16	33	24	10	24b	14	3
19	41	35-36	12	26a	17	7
24		37	21	26b	20	11
31		38	25	32	32	14
36			32	47	35	15
39			40			23
42			48			28
46						
51						
52						
54						
55						

15	16	17	18	19	20	21
v 4b	v 7b	--	v 8	v 11	v 15	v 22
4c	7c		23a	12	23a	23
6	23		23b		23b	25
7			30		25	
10			36			
14						
18						
19						
20b						
20c						
22						
24						

---

Total. 102

## Appendix 2. Distribution of conditionals in Galatians and 1 John

## (i) Galatians

1	2	3	4	5	6
v 8	v 14	v 18	v 7	v 2	v 1
9	<b>16</b>	21		11	<b>3</b>
10	17	29		15	<b>7</b>
	18			18	
	21			25	

---

Total. **20**

## (ii) 1 John

1	2	3	4	5
v 6	v.1	v 2	v 11	v 9
7	<b>3</b>	13	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>
8	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
9	19	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>
10	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>		
	28			
	29			

---

Total. **25**

Boldfaced. Subjunctive conditionals

## Appendix 3 A comparison of Jesus' conditionals in John's Gospel

With the Jews		With the Disciples	
Indicative	Subjunctive	Indicative	Subjunctive
5:46	5:19	13:14	6:62
5:47	5:31	13:17	6:65
7:17	5:43	13:31	11:9
7:23	8:14	14:2	11:10
8:19	8:16	14:7	11:25
8:39	8:24	14:11	11:40
8:42	8:31-32	14:28	12:24a
8:46	8:36		12:24b
9:41	8:51		12:26a
10:35-36	8:54		12:26b
10:37	8:55		13:8
10:38			13:20
15:18			13:35
15:19			14:3
15:20			14:14
15:21			14:15
15:22			14:23
15:24			15:4b
18:23a			15:4c
18:23b			15:6
			15:7a
			15:7b
			15:10
			15:14
			16:23
			20:23
			21:22
Total. 20	Total. 11	Total. 7	Total. 27

## Appendix 4: A comparison of Jesus' conditionals in Matthew's Gospel

With the Jews		With the Disciples	
Indicative	Subjunctive	Indicative	Subjunctive
12:7	12:11	5:29	5:13
12:26	12:29	5:30	5:20
12:27		6:30	5:23
12:28		7:11	5:46
22:45		10:25	5:47
		18:8	6:14
		18:9	6:15
		24:43	6:22
		26:24	6:23
			10:13a
			10:13b
			15:14
			16:26
			17:20
			18:3
			18:5
			18:12
			18:13
			18:15
			18:16
			18:17
			18:18
			18:19
			18:35
			21:3
			21:21
			24:23
			24:26
			24:48-51
Total. 5	Total. 2	Total. 9	Total. 29

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abbott, Edwin. *Johannine Grammar*. London: A. & C. Black, 1906.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Johannine Vocabulary*. London: A. & C. Black, 1905.
- Anderson, Lars, and Peter Trudgill. *Bad Language*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990.
- Anderson, Paul N. *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: The Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6*. WUNT 2.78. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1996.
- Armitage, David. "An Exploration of Conditional Clause Exegesis with Reference to Galatians 1:8-9." *Biblica* 88 (2007) 365-92.
- Ashton, John. *Studying John*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Austin, J. L. *How to Do Things with Words*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- Barrett, C. K. "Christocentric or Theocentric? Observations on the Theological Method of the Fourth Gospel." In *Essays on John*, 98-115. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Dialectical Theology of St. John." In *New Testament Essays*, 49-69. London: SPCK, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "'The Flesh of the Son of Man' John 6:53." In *Essays on John*, 37-49. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Gospel according to St. John*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Gospel of John and Judaism*. London: SPCA, 1975.
- Bauer, Walter, et. al. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., rev. by Frederick W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Berger, Peter L., and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality: a Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City: Anchor Books, 1967.
- Bernard, J. H. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John*, 2 vols. ICC. London: T. & T. Clark, 1928.
- Berry, H. Margaret. *An Introduction to Systemic Linguistics*, 2 vols. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975-77.



- Berry, Margaret, et al., eds. *Meaning and Form: Systemic Functional Interpretations*. Norwood: Ablex, 1996.
- Beekman, John, and John Callow. *Translating the Word of God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974.
- Black, David A. *Linguistics for Students of NT Greek*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988.
- Blass, F., and A. Debrunner. *A Greek Grammar of the NT and Other Early Christian Literature*. Trans. R. W. Funk. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
- Bloor, Thomas, and Meriel Bloor. *The Functional Analysis of English: A Hallidayan Approach*. London: Edward Arnold, 1995; Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2001.
- Borgen, Peder. *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo*. SuppNT 10. Leiden: Brill, 1965.
- Boyer, James L. "First Class Conditions: What Do They Mean?" *GTJ* 2 (1981) 75-114.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Other Conditional Elements in NT Greek." *GTJ* 4 (1983) 173-88.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Second Class Conditions in NT Greek." *GTJ* 3 (1982) 81-88.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Third (and Fourth) Class Conditions." *GTJ* 3 (1982) 163-75.
- Brown, Gillian, and George Yule. *Discourse Analysis*. CTL. Cambridge: CUP, 1983; Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2000.
- Brown, Raymond E. *The Gospel According to John*. 2 vols. AB 29 and 29A. New York: Doubleday, 1966, 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*. New York: Doubleday, 2003.
- Büchner, J. –A. "The Exegesis of the Johannine 'I Am' Sayings." In *The Interpretation of John*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. by John Ashton, 207-18. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1997.
- Bühler, Karl. *Theory of Language: The Representational Function of Language*. FS, trans. by Donald Fraser Goodwin. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1990.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *The Gospel of John*. Trans. by G. R. Beasley-Murray. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Theology of the New Testament*. 2 vols. Translated by Kendrick Grobel. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951, 1955.

- Burge, G. M. "Revelation and Discipleship in St. John's Gospel." In *Challenging Perspective on the Gospel of John*, WUNT 2, Reihe 219, ed. by John Lierman, 235-54. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006.
- Burton, E. D. W. *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in NT Greek*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1976.
- Buth, Randall. "Ὅν, Δέ, Καί, and Asyndeton in John's Gospel." In *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation*, ed. by David A. Black, 144-61. Nashville: Broadman, 1992.
- Butler, Christopher S. "Functionalist Theories of Language." In *ELL*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by Keith Brown, 4:696-704. New York: Elsevier, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Systemic Linguistics: Theory and Applications*. London: Batsford Academic and Educational, 1985.
- Caffarel, Alice. "Systemic Functional Grammar and the Study of Meaning." In *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Analysis*, edited by Bernd Heine and Heiko Narrog, 797-825. Oxford: OUP, 2010.
- Callow, Kathleen. *Discourse Considerations in Translating the Word of God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974.
- Carson, D. A. "The Challenge of the Balkanization of Johannine Studies." In *John, Jesus, and History*, edited by Paul N. Anderson et al, 1:133-59. Atlanta: SBL, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Gospel according to John*. PNTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Understanding Misunderstanding in the Fourth Gospel." *TB* 33 (1982) 59-89.
- Cirafesi, Wally V. "Register Theory in Michael Halliday's Social Semiotic and the Audience of the Gospel of John: A Methodological Assessment and Proposal." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Baltimore, Maryland, 23-26 November, 2013.
- Colewell, Ernest Cadman. *The Greek of the Fourth Gospel: a Study of its Aramaisms in the Light of Hellenistic Greek*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931.
- Comrie, Bernard. "Conditionals: A Typology." In *On Conditionals*, ed. by Elizabeth C. Traugott et. al, 77-99. Cambridge: CUP, 1986.
- Cooper, Guy L. *Attic Greek Prose Syntax*. 2 vols. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998-2002.

Cotterell, F. P. "The Nicodemus Conversation: A Fresh Appraisal." *ET* 96 (1985) 237-42.

Cotterell, Peter, and Max Turner. *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*. London: SPCK, 1989.

Crossan, John D. "It is Written: A Structuralist Analysis of John 6." *Semeia* 26 (1983) 3-21.

Cullman, O. "Der johanneische Gebrauch doppeldeutiger Ausdrücke als Schlüssel zum Verständnis des vierten Evangeliums." *TZ* 4 (1948) 360-72.

Culpepper, R. Alan. *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.

\_\_\_\_\_. ed. *Critical Reading of John 6*. BIS. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Dana, H. E., and J. R. Mantey. *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*. Macmillan, 1955.

Davison, M. E. "New Testament Greek Word Order." *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 4 (1989) 19-28.

de Beaugrande, Robert. *Linguistic Theory: The Discourse of Fundamental works*. London: Longman, 1991; Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2001.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Text Production: Toward a Science of Composition*, ADP vol. XI. Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1984.

de Jonge, Marinus. "Nicodemus and Jesus: Some Observations on Misunderstanding and Understanding in the Fourth Gospel." *BJRL* 53 (1970/71) 337-59.

Demke, Christoph. "Das Evangelium der Dialoge: Hermeneutische und methodologische Beobachtungen zur Interpretation des Johannesevangeliums." *ZThK* 97 (2000) 164-82.

Dik, Simon C. *Functional Grammar*. N-HLS. New York: North-Holland, 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. "On the Semantics of Conditionals." In *Layers and Levels of Representation in Language Theory: A Functional View*, ed. by Jan Nuyts, et al., 233-61. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Studies in Functional Grammar*. London: Academic Press, 1980.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Theory of Functional Grammar: Part 1: The Structure of the Clause*. Functional Grammar Series 9. Dordrecht: Foris, 1989.
- Dodd, C. H. *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968.
- Dover, Kenneth J. *Greek Word Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960.
- Dvorak, James D. "Thematization, Topic, and Information Flow," *JLIABG* 1 (2008) 17-37.
- Edwards, Michael. "The World Could Not Contain the Books." In *The Bible as Rhetoric*, ed. by Martin Warner, 178-94. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Eggs, Suzanne. *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. London: Pinter, 1994.
- Elliott, John H. "Social-Scientific Criticism of the New Testament and its Social World: More on Method and Models." *Semeia* 35 (1986) 1-34.
- Esler, Philip F., and Ronald Piper. *Lazarus, Mary and Martha*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 2006.
- Farrar, Frederic W. *A Brief Greek Syntax*. London: Longmans, 1876.
- Fawcett, R. *A Theory of Syntax for Systemic Functional Linguistics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000.
- Ferguson, Charles A., et al. "Overview." In *On Conditionals*, edited by E. C. Traugott, A. t. Melen, J. S. Reilly, and C. A. Ferguson, 3-20. Cambridge: CUP, 1986.
- Firth, J. R. *Selected Papers of J. R. Firth 1952-59*. LLL. Edited by F. R. Palmer. London: Longmans, 1968.
- Foley, W. A., and R. D. van Valin. *Functional Syntax and Universal Grammar*. Cambridge: CUP, 1984.
- Förster, Hans. "Johannes 11:11-14—ein typisches johannisches Missverständnis?" *NT* 53 (2011) 338-57.
- Freed, Edwin D. "Variations in the Language and Thought of John." *ZNW* 55 (1964) 167-97.

- Funk, Robert. *A Beginning-Intermediate Grammar of Hellenistic Greek*. 3 vols. Missoula, Mont.: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973.
- Funk, Wolf-Peter. "On a Semantic Typology of Conditional Sentences." *FL* 19 (1985) 365-413.
- Gärtner, Bertil E. *Critical Readings of John 6*. BIS. Lund: Gleerup, 1959.
- Gildersleeve, B. L. "On εἶ with the Future Indicative and ἐὼν with the Subjunctive in the Tragic Poets." *TAPA* 7 (1876) 5-23.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Syntax of Classical Greek from Homer to Demosthenes*. 2 vols. New York: American Book, 1900, 1911.
- Godet, Frederick L. *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 2 vols. CCL. Reprint. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.
- Gonda, J. *The Character of the Indo-European Moods, with Special Regard to Greek and Sanskrit*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1956.
- Goodwin, W. W. "On the Classification of Conditional Sentences in Greek Syntax." *TAPA* 4 (1873) 60-79.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. London: Macmillan, 1892.
- Greenberg, Joseph H. "The Realis-Irrealis Continuum in the Classical Greek Conditional." In *On Conditionals*, ed. by Elizabeth C. Traugott et al., 247-64. Cambridge: CUP, 1986.
- Grice, H. P. "Logic and Conversation." In *Syntax and Semantics, vol. 3: Speech Acts*, ed. by P. Cole and J. Morgan, 41-58. New York: Academic Press, 1975.
- Griffith, Terry. "'The Jews Who Had Believed in Him' (John 8:31) and the Motif of Apostasy in the Gospel of John." In *The Gospel of John and Christian Theology*, ed. by Richard Bauckham and Carl Mosser, 183-92. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Gunderson, Steven. "The Use of Discourse Analysis in Character Studies: Nicodemus and the Samaritan Woman (John 3-4)." In *The Linguist as Pedagogue*, NTM, 11, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Matthew B. O'Donnell, 113-26. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.
- Haenchen, Ernest. *John 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of John 1-6*. Hermenia. Trans. by Robert W. Funk. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984

- Haiman, John. "Conditionals are Topics." *Language* 54 (September 1978) 564-89.
- Halliday, M. A. K. "The Act of Meaning (1992)." In *On Language and Linguistics*, ed. by J. Webster, 3:375-89. New York: Continuum, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Categories of the Theory of Grammar (1961)." In *On Grammar, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 1:37-94. New York: Continuum, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Complementarities in Language*. Beijing: Commercial Press, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Construction of Knowledge and Value in the Grammar of Scientific Discourse: with Reference to Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* (1990)." In *Text and Discourse, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 2:168-92. New York: Continuum, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Corpus Studies and Probabilistic Grammar (1991)." In *Computational and Quantitative Studies, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 6:63-75. New York: Continuum, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The De-Automation of Grammar: from Priestley's *An Inspector Calls* (1982)." In *Text and Discourse, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 2:126-48. New York: Continuum, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Dimension of Discourse Analysis." In *On Grammar, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 1:261-86. New York: Continuum, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *An Exploration in the Function of Language*. London: Edward Arnold, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Introduction: On the 'Architecture of Human Language.'" In *On Language and Linguistics, Collected Works*, edited by J. Webster, 3:1-39. New York: Continuum, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Introduction: A Personal Perspective." In *On Grammar, Collected Works*, edited by J. Webster, 1:1-14. New York: Continuum, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Introduction: Towards an Applicable Description of the Grammar of a Language." In *Studies in English Language, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 7:xxiii-xxxxi. New York: Continuum, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Is the Grammar Neutral? Is the Grammarian Neutral?" In *On Language and Linguistics, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 3:271-92. New York: Continuum, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Language and the Order of Nature (1987)." In *On Language and*

*Linguistics, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 3:116-38. New York: Continuum, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. London: Edward Arnold, 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Language Structure and Language Function (1970)." In *On Grammar, Collected Works*, edited by J. Webster, 1:173-95. New York: Continuum, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Linguistic Function and Literary Style: An Inquiry into the Language of William Golding's *The Inheritors* (1971)." In *Text and Discourse, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 2:88-125. New York: Continuum, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Linguistic Study of Literary Texts (1964)." In *Text and Discourse, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 2:5-22. New York: Continuum, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Method–Techniques–Problems." In *Continuum Companion to Systemic Functional Linguistics*, edited by M. A. K. Halliday and J. Webster, 59-86. New York: Continuum, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Modes of Meaning and Modes of Expression: Types of Grammatical Structure and Their Determination by Different Semantic Functions." In *On Grammar, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 1:196-218. New York: Continuum, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. "New Ways of Meaning: the Challenge to Applied Linguistics (1990)." In *On Language and Linguistics*, ed. by J. Webster, 3:139-74. New York: Continuum, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_. "On Language in Relation to Fuzzy Logic and Intelligent Computing." In *Computational and Quantitative Studies, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 6:196-212. New York: Continuum, 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_. "On Grammar and Grammaticals." In *On Grammar, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 1:384-417. New York: Continuum, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Poetry as Scientific Discourse." In *Text and Discourse, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 2:149-67. New York: Continuum, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Quantitative Study of Polarity and Primary Tense in the English Finite Clause." In *Computational and Quantitative Studies, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 6:93-129.

\_\_\_\_\_. "So you say 'Pass'...thank you three muchly." In *Text and Discourse, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 2:228-54. New York: Continuum, 2002.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Spoken and written modes of meaning." In *On Grammar, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 1:323-51. New York: Continuum, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Studies in Chinese Language, Collected Works, vol. 8*. ed. by J. Webster. New York: Continuum, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Systemic Theory (1994)." In *On Language and Linguistics, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 3:433-41. New York: Continuum, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Text as Semantic Choice in Social Contexts (1977)." In *Text and Discourse, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 2:23-81. New York: Continuum, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Three Aspects of Children's Language Development: Learning Language, Learning through Language, Learning about Language (1980)." In *The Language of Early Childhood, Collected Works*, ed. J. Webster, 4:308-326. New York: Continuum, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Towards a Sociological Semantics (1972)." In *On Language and Linguistics, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 3:323-54. New York: Continuum, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Users and Uses of Language (1964)." In *Language and Society, Collected Works*, ed. by J. Webster, 10:5-40. New York: Continuum, 2007.
- Halliday, M. A. K., and Ruqaiya Hasan. *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman, 1976.
- Halliday, M. A. K., and Christian M. I. M. Matthiessen. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Hodder Education, 2004.
- Halliday, M. A. K., and Jonathan Webster, eds. *Continuum Companion to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. New York: Continuum, 2009.
- Hamid-Khani, Saeed. *Revelation and Concealment of Christ: A Theological Inquiry into the Elusive Language of the Fourth Gospel*. WUNT 2.120. Tübingen: Mohr, 2000.
- Harvey, A. E. *Jesus on Trial: A Study in the Fourth Gospel*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1977.
- Hasan, Raqaiya. "Text in the Systemic-Functional Model." In *Current Trends in Textlinguistics*, RTT, vol. 2, ed. by Wolfgang U. Dressler, 228-46.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Place of Context in a Systemic Functional Model." In *Continuum Companion to Systemic Functional Linguistics*, ed. M. A. K. Halliday and Jonathan Webster, 166-89. New York: Continuum, 2009.



- Hobbs, T. Raymond. "The Political Jesus: Discipleship and Disengagement." In *The Social Setting of Jesus and The Gospels*, ed. by Wolfgang Stegemann et. al, 251-82. Philadelphia: Fortress, 2002.
- Hofius, Otfried. "Das Wunder der Wiedergeburt: Jesu Gespräch mit Nikodemus Joh 3,1-21." In *Joannesstudien: Untersuchungen zur Theologie des vierten Evangeliums*, WUNT 88, edited by Otfried and Hans-Christian Kammler, 33-80. Tübingen: Mohr, 1996.
- Keener, Craig S. *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*. 2 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003.
- Kennedy, George A. *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.
- Köstenberger, Andreas J. "Jesus as Rabbi in the Fourth Gospel." In *Studies on John and Gender*, 65-98. New York: Peter Lang, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*. BTNT. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
- Kress, G. R. (ed.) *Halliday: System and Function in Language: Selected Papers*. London: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Kruger, G. van W. *Conditionals in the New Testament: A Study of their Rationale*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 1966.
- Kwong, Ivan S. C. *The Word Order of the Gospel of Luke: Its Foregrounded Messages*. LNTS 298; SNTG 12. London: T&T Clark, 2005.
- Kysar, Robert. "The Dismantling of Decisional Faith: A Reading of John 6:25-71." In *Critical Readings of John 6*, BIS, ed. by Alan Culpepper, 167-81. New York: E. J. Brill, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *John*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986.
- Lamb, Sydney. *Language and Reality*, ed. by J. Webster. New York: Continuum, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Outline of Stratification Grammar*. Berkley: Associated Students of the University of California, 1962.
- Lambrech, Knud. *Information Structure and Sentence Form: Topic, Focus, and the Mental Representations of Discourse Referents*. CSL 71. Cambridge: CUP, 1996.
- Ledgerwood III, L. W. "What Does the Greek First Class Condition Imply? Gricean

Methodology and the Testimony of the Ancient Greek Grammarians.” *GTJ* 12 (1992) 99-118.

Leroy, Herbert. *Rätsel und Missverständnis: Ein Beitrag zur Formgeschichte des Johannesevangeliums*. BBB. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1968

Levinsohn, Stephen H. *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Dallas: SIL International, 2000.

Lightfoot, David. *Natural Logic and the Greek Moods: The Nature of the Subjunctive and Optative in Classical Greek*. The Hague: Mouton, 1975.

Lincoln, Andrew T. “The Lazarus Story: A Literary Perspective.” In *The Gospel of John and Christian Theology*, ed. Richard Bauckham and Carl Mosser, 211-32. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

Longacre, Robert. *The Grammar of Discourse*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. TLL. New York: Plenum Press, 1996.

Louw, J. P. “New Testament Greek—the Present State of Art.” *Neotestamentica* 24 (2) (1990) 159-72.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Reading a Text as Discourses.” In *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation*, ed. by David Allan Black, 17-30. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1992.

Louw, J. P., and E. A. Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*. 2 vols. New York: UBS, 1989.

Lunn, Patricia V. “The Evaluative Function of the Spanish Subjunctive.” In *Modality and Grammar in Discourse*, ed. by Joan Bybee and Suzanne Fleischman, 419-49. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995.

Lust, J., et al. *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003.

Malina, Bruce J. *The Gospel of John in Sociolinguistic Perspective: Protocol of the Forty- Eighth Colloquy, 11 March 1984*. Berkeley, CA: Center for Hermeneutical Studies in Hellenistic and Modern Culture, 1984.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Rhetorical Criticism and Social-Scientific Criticism: Why Won’t Romanticism Leave Us Alone?” In *Rhetoric, Scripture and Theology*, JSNTSup 131, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Thomas Olbricht, 72-101. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.

- Malina, Bruce J., and Richard L. Rohrbaugh. *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1998.
- Mallik, Bhaktiprasad. *Language of the Underworld of West Bengal*. CSCRS 77. Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1972.
- Mann, William, and Sandra A. Thompson. "Rhetorical Structure Theory: Toward a Function Theory of Text Organization." *Text* 8 (3) (1988) 243-81.
- Martin, J. R. *English Text: System and Structure*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1992.
- Martín-Asensio, Gustavo. "Hallidayan Functional Grammar as Heir to New Testament Rhetorical Criticism." In *The Rhetorical Interpretation of Scripture*, JSNTSup 180, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Dennis L. Stamps, 84-107. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Transitivity-Based Foregrounding in the Acts of the Apostles: A Functional-Grammatical Approach to the Lukan Perspective*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.
- Matthews, P. H. *Syntax*. CTL. Cambridge: CUP, 1981.
- Maurer, Christian. "Der Exklusivanspruch des Christus nach dem Johannesevangelium." In *Studies in John*, 143-54. SuppNT 24. Leiden: Brill, 1970.
- McGrath, James F. *John's Apologetic Christology: Legitimation and Development in Johannine Christology*. SNTSMS 111. Cambridge: CUP, 2001.
- McHugh, John F. *John 1-4*. ICC. London: T & T Clark, 2009.
- McKay, K. L. *A New Syntax of the Verb in NT Greek: An Aspectual Approach*. SBG 5. New York: Peter Lang, 1994.
- Mead, A. H. "The βασιλικὸς in John 4:46-53." In *New Testament Backgrounds*, ed. by Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, 203-206. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
- Meeks, Wayne A. *The Prophet King*. Leiden: Brill, 1967.
- Menken, M. J. J. "John 6:51c-58: Eucharist or Christology?" In *Critical Reading of John 6*, BIS, ed. by Alan Culpepper, 183-204. Leiden: Brill, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Observations on the Significance of the Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel." In *Theology and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*, edited by G. van Bell et al., 155-75. BETL 184. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005.

- Metzger, Bruce. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: American Bible Society, 1994.
- Michaels, J. Ramsay. *The Gospel of John*. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Morley, G. David. *An Introduction to Systemic Grammar*. London: Macmillan, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Explorations in Functional Syntax—A New Framework for Lexicogrammatical Analysis*. Oakville, CT: Equinox, 2004.
- Morris, Leon. *The Gospel According to John*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Moule, C. F. D. *An Idiom Book of NT Greek*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cambridge: CUP, 1959.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Meaning of ‘Life’ in the Gospels and Epistles of St. John.” *Theology* 78 (1975) 114-25.
- Mußner, Franz. “Der ‘Charakter’ Jesu nach dem Johannesevangelium.” *TThZ* 62 (1953) 321-32.
- A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, ed. by Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Neyrey, Jerome H. *The Gospel of John*. NCBC. Cambridge: CUP, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Gospel of John in Cultural and Rhetorical Perspective*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *An Ideology of Revolt. John’s Christology in Social-Science Perspective*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.
- Nicole, Willem. *The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel*. NovTSup 32. Leiden: Brill, 1972.
- Nutall, A. D. *Overheard by God*. London: Methuen, 1980.
- Nutting, H. C. “The Modes of Conditional Thought.” *AJP* 24 (1903) 278-303.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Order of Conditional Thought.” *AJP* 24 (1903) 25-39; 149-62.
- O’Donnell, Matthew B. *The Application of Corpus Linguistics to the Study of Hellenistic Greek, with Specific Reference to the Greek of the NT*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Use of Annotated Corpora for New Testament Discourse Analysis: A Survey of Current Practice and Future Prospects.” In *Discourse Analysis and the*

- New Testament, Approaches and Results*, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Jeffrey Reed, 71-119. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
- O'Donnell, Matthew B., and Catherine Smith. "A Discourse Analysis of 3 John." In *The Linguist as Pedagogue*, NTM 11, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Matthew B. O'Donnell, 127-45. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.
- Olsson, Birger. *Structure and Meaning in the Fourth Gospel: A Text-Linguistic Analysis of John 2:1-11 and 4:1-42*. Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1974.
- Omanson, Roger L. *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006.
- Oswald, John N. *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1-39*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- Palmer, F. R. *Mood and Modality*. CTL. Cambridge: CUP, 2001; Beijing: World Publishing, 2007.
- Pensalfini, R. "Configurationality." In ELL, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. edited by Keith Brown, 3:23-27. New York: Elsevier, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Toward a Typology of Configurationality." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 22 (2004) 359-408.
- Perkins, Larry. "Mark's Use of the Verb Σανδαλίζειν and the Interpretation of Jesus' Visit to Nazareth (Mark 6:1-6a)" *CTR* 1 (2012) 23-36.
- Petersen, Norman. *The Gospel of John and the Sociology of Light: Language and Characterization in the Fourth Gospel*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1993.
- Phillips, Gary A. "'This is a Hard Saying, Who Can be Listener to It?' Creating a Reader in John 6." *Semeia* 26 (1983) 23-56.
- Porter, Stanley E. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. BLG 2. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Prominence: A Theoretical Overview." In *The Linguist as Pedagogue*, NTM 11, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Matthew B. O'Donnell, 45-74. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood*. SBG 1. New York: Peter Lang, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Word Order and Clause Structure in NT Greek." *FN* 6 (1993) 177-206.

- Porter, Stanley E., and D. A. Carson. *Discourse Analysis and Other Topics in Biblical Greek*. JSNTSup 113. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.
- Porter, Stanley E., and Matthew Brook O'Donnell. "The Greek Verbal Network Viewed from a Probabilistic Standpoint: An Exercise in Hallidayan Linguistics." *FN* 14 (2001) 3-41.
- Porter, Stanley E., and Jeffrey Reed. "Discourse Analysis and the New Testament: An Introduction." In *Discourse Analysis and the New Testament, Approaches and Results*, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Jeffrey Reed, 15-19. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
- Powell, Charles E. *The Semantic Relationship between the Protasis and the Apodosis of NT Conditional Constructions*. Ph.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2000.
- Pritchett, W. Kendrick. "The Conditional Sentence in Attic Greek." *AJP* LXXVI (1955) 1-17.
- Reed, Jeffrey T. *A Discourse Analysis of Philippians : Method and Rhetoric in the Debate over Literary Integrity*. JSNTSup 136. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Cohesiveness of Discourse: Toward a Model of Linguistic Criteria for Analyzing New Testament Discourse." In *Discourse Analysis and the New Testament, Approaches and Results*, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Jeffrey Reed, 28-46. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
- Reim, Günter. *Studien zum Alttestamentlichen Hintergrund des Johannesevangeliums*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974.
- Renz, Gabi. "Nicodemus: An Ambiguous Disciple? A Narrative Sensitive Investigation." In *Challenging Perspectives in the Gospel of John*, WUNT 2.219, ed. by John Lieberman, 255-83. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *The Rule of Metaphor*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977.
- Riesner, Rainer. *Jesus als Lehrer*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. WUNT 2.7. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1988.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Jesus as Preacher and Teacher." In *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition*, JSNTSup 64, edited by Henry Wansbrough, 185-210. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1991.
- Ridderbos, Herman. *The Gospel of John*. Trans. by John Vriend. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

- Roberts, J. W. "Some Aspects of Conditional Sentences in the Greek NT." *RQ* (1960) 72-79.
- Robertson, A. T. *A Grammar of the Greek NT in the Light of Historical Research*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Nashville: Broadman, 1934.
- Robinson, John A. T. "The Destination and Purpose of St. John's Gospel." In *Twelve New Testament Studies*, 107-25. London: SCM, 1962.
- Rubel, Georg. *Erkenntnis und Bekenntnis: Der Dialog als Weg Der Wissensvermittlung im Johannesevangelium*. NA 54. Münster: Ascendorff, 2009.
- Runge, Steven E. *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010.
- Schenke, Ludger. *Das Johannesevangelium: Einführung-Text-dramatische Gestalt*. UB 446. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1992.
- Schmidt, Daryl. "The Study of Hellenistic Greek Grammar in Light of Contemporary Linguistics." In *Perspectives on the New Testament*, edited by Charles H. Talbert, 27-38. Macon: Mercer University Press, 1985.
- Schnackenburg, Rudolf. *The Gospel according to St. John*, 3 vols. New York: Herder and Herder, 1968.
- Sinclair, J. McH., and R. M. Coulthard. *Towards an Analysis of Discourse: The English Used by Teachers and Pupils*. London: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- Smyth, H. W. *Greek Grammar*. Rev. G. M. Messing. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956.
- Stählin, Wilhelm. *Das johanneische Denken*. Ruhe: Luther-Verlag + Witten, 1954.
- Staley, Jeffrey L. *The Print's First Kiss: A Rhetorical Investigation of the Implied Reader in the Fourth Gospel*. SBLDS 82. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988.
- Stibbe, M. W. G. *John as Storyteller: Narrative Criticism and the Fourth Gospel*. SNTSMS 73. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Elusive Christ: A New Reading of the Fourth Gospel." In *The Gospel of John as Literature: An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Perspectives*, ed. Mark Stibbe, 231-47. Leiden: Brill, 1993.
- Tan, Randall. "Prominence in the Pauline Letters." In *The Linguist as Pedagogue*, NTM 11, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Matthew B. O'Donnell, 95-110. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

- Thate, Michael. "Conditionality in John's Gospel: A Critique and Examination of Time and Reality as Classically Conceived in Conditional Constructions." *JETS* 50 (2007) 561-72.
- Thiselton, A. C. "Semantics and NT Interpretations." In *NT Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by I. H. Marshall, 75-104. Exeter: Paternoster, 1979.
- Thyen, Hartwig. *Das Johannesevangelium*. HNT 6. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Über die Mißverständnisse im Johannesevangelium." In *Studien zum Corpus Iohanneum*, 689-91. WUNT 214. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007.
- Tjen, Anwar. *On Conditionals in the Greek Pentateuch*. LHBOTS 515. New York: T. & T. Clark, 2010.
- Traugott, Elizabeth C., Alice T. Meulen, Judy S. Reilly, and Charles A. Ferguson, eds. *On Conditionals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Turner, Nigel. *Syntax*. Vol. 3 of *A Grammar of NT Greek*, by J. H. Moulton. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Style*. Vol. 4 of *A Grammar of NT Greek*, by J. H. Moulton. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1976.
- Untergassmair, Franz Georg. "Du bist der Lehrer Israels and verstehst das nicht? (Joh 2,10b)—Lernen bei Johannes." In *Religiöses Lernen in der biblischen, frühjüdischen und frühchristlichen Überlieferung*, ed. by Beate Ego and Helmut Merkel, 211-33. WUNT 180. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.
- Vachek, Josef. *A Prague School Reader in Linguistics*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1964.
- van Dijk, Teun A. *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. 4 vols. London: Academic Press, 1985.
- Van Valin, R. D. *Advances in Role and Reference Grammar*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1993.
- Voigt, Gottfried. *Licht-Liebe-Lebe: Das Evangelium nach Johannes*. BtS 6. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991.
- Wakker, Gerry. *Conditions and Conditionals: An Investigation of Ancient Greek*. ASCP 3. Amerstadam: J. C. Gieben, 1994.



- Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.
- Warner, Martin. "The Fourth Gospel's Art of Rational Persuasion." In *The Bible as Rhetoric*, ed. by Martin Warner, 153-77. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Wead, David W. *The Literary Devices in John's Gospel*. TD 4. Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt Kommissionsverlag, 1970.
- Webster, Jane S. *Ingesting Jesus: Eating and Drinking in the Gospel of John*. AB (SBL) 6. Atlanta: SBL, 2003.
- Wellhausen, J. *Das Evangelium Johannis*. Berlin: Druck und Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1908.
- Westcott, B. F. *The Gospel According to St. John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1881.
- Westfall, Cynthia. *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews: Relationship between Form and Meaning*. London: T. & T. Clark, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Discourse Analysis of Romans 7.7-25." In *The Linguist as Pedagogue*, NTM 11, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Matthew B. O'Donnell, 146-58. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Method for the Analysis of Prominence in Hellenistic Greek." In *The Linguist as Pedagogue*, NTM 11, ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Matthew B. O'Donnell, 75-94. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.
- Whitelam, Keith W. "Introduction: General Problems of Studying the Text of the Bible in order to Reconstruct History and Social Background." In *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies*, ed. by J. W. Rogerson and Judith M. Lieu, 255-67. Oxford: OUP, 2006.
- Willard, Dallas. "Jesus the Logician." *CSR* 28 (1999) 605-14.
- Willmott, Jo. *The Moods of Homeric Greek*. CCS. Cambridge: CUP, 2007.
- Windisch, Hans. "John's Narrative Style." In *The Gospel of John as Literature: An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Perspectives*, NTTS 17, edited by Mark Stibbe, 25-64. Leiden: Brill, 1993.
- Wrede, W. *Charakter und Tendenz des Johannesevangeliums*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. SGVSGTR 37. Tübingen: Mohr, 1933.
- Young, Richard A. "A Classification of Conditional Sentences Based on Speech Act Theory." *GTJ* 10 (1989) 29-49.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Intermediate NT Greek: A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994.

Zerwick, M. *Biblical Greek*. SPIB 114. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963.

Zhu, Rongsheng, et al. *An Introduction to Functional Linguistics*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2004.