

# Strategies for Anderson conditionals: their implications to the typology of O- and X-markings

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Today's slides are available on my webpage  
(<https://teruyukimizuno.wordpress.com>)

# Introduction

'O'- and 'X'-markings in natural language (von Stechow & Iatridou 2022):

- (1) a. If Jo **comes** tomorrow, the party **will** be fun. (O-marked)  
b. If Jo **came** tomorrow, the party **would** be fun. (X-marked)

**O-marking** (previously 'indicative'):

- *open, ordinary, ...*
- signaling actual contexts
- $\approx$  absence of X-marking

**X-marking** (previously 'subjunctive', 'counterfactual'):

- *eXtra, ...*
- signaling non-actual contexts
- incl. Fake Past (Iatridou 2000), Hungarian '-nA', etc.

**The typological problem** (Karawani 2014; von Fintel & Iatridou 2022; a.o.):

What differs and what is shared across languages w.r.t O- and X- markings?

*'We prefer methodologically to work with a starting hypothesis of total uniformity: all languages have X-marking, in all languages X-marking has the same overall meaning in all its uses ... .'*

(von Fintel & Iatridou 2022, p.6)

**Takeaway:** Languages differ as to how they express 'Anderson conditionals'

**Specifically:**

- Japanese must use O-marking for Anderson conditionals ( $\Leftrightarrow$  English)
- Japanese seems to use a strategy similar to 'Historical Present'
- urges us to reconsider the typology/definition of O- and X-markings

# Outline of talk

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Anderson conditionals and X-marking: the view from English
- 3 A discrepancy emerges: the view from Japanese
- 4 Japanese uses the Historical Present
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### Anderson conditionals:

- (2) If Jones had taken arsenic, he would have shown just exactly those symptoms which he does in fact show. Anderson (1951)
- (3) If Jones had taken arsenic, he would show exactly those symptoms that he is now showing.
- The antecedent is an explanans for facts described by the consequent
  - The sentence involves X-marking (i.e., Fake Past in English)

Context:

- 1 Jones has been sent to an emergency room at the hospital, with symptoms suggesting that he was poisoned.
  - 2 The investigation team are figuring out what chemical was used.
  - 3 One shrewd member suggests that, given the symptoms Jones shows, he must have taken arsenic.
  - 4 The boss of the team then says the following.
- (4) You're right. If Jones had taken arsenic last night, he would show just exactly those symptoms which he is now showing.

Anderson conditionals can be used to argue *for* the truth of the antecedent.

- (5) ... so, it looks like he did take arsenic.



What does X-marking do in Anderson conditionals?

A: It **avoids triviality** (Stalnaker 1975; von Fintel 1999; a.o.)

- 1 The actual context entails the truth of the consequent (e.g., Jones shows such-and-such symptoms now)
- 2 In the actual context, the conditional is trivially true regardless of whether the antecedent (i.e., Jones took arsenic) is true or false in it
- 3 X-marking takes one to a **non-actual** context where the value of the consequent is still open (i.e., 'suspends' the truth of the consequent)
- 4 In such a non-actual context, the conditional is **not trivial**

O-marking ( $\approx$  the absence of X-marking) is infelicitous:

- (6) #If Jones took arsenic, he shows just exactly those symptoms which he  
does in fact show. von Fintel (1999, 2')

O-marking requires one to stick to the actual context, hence triviality

## Summary:

- The consequent of Anderson conditionals is entailed by the actual context
- X-marking can avoid triviality by shifting the context to a non-actual one
- English must use X-marking to express Anderson conditionals

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## A discrepancy emerges: the view from Japanese

**Past** can be X-marking in Japanese (Ogihara 2014; Mizuno & Kaufmann 2019)

Context:

- 1 John, an ace player, has recently left the team for better pay.
- 2 The team weakens considerably after losing their mainstay, and their defeat in today's game is already certain during the first half.
- 3 A fan who is currently watching the game says the following.

- (7) *John-ga ima kono siai-no naka-ni ir-eba, syoohai-wa mada*  
John-NOM now this game-GEN inside-LOC be-COND outcome-TOP yet  
*wakar-ana-{??i / katta} daroo.*  
be.clear-NEG-NPST PAST MOD  
'If John were playing now, the outcome would still be uncertain.'

**Prediction:** Past tense must be involved in Japanese Anderson conditionals

- given that Past is X-marking in Japanese
- given the supposed role of X-marking in Anderson conditionals

The prediction is **not** borne out. **Non-Past** ( $\approx$  O-marking) must be used!

(8) [Arsenic is likely to be the poison that was used against Jones:]

- a. *Tasikani*, [*Jones-si-ga sakuya hiso-o nom*]-*eba*, [*kare-ga*  
you're.right Jones-Mr.-NOM last.night arsenic-ACC drink-COND he-NOM  
*ima mise-tei-ru syoozyoo-to mattaku onazi syoozyoo*]-*o ima*  
now show-ASP-NPST symptom-as exactly same symptom-ACC now  
*mise*-{**ru** / **#ta**} *hazuda*.

show-NPST PAST MOD

'You're right. If he had taken arsenic last night, he would have shown just exactly those symptoms that he shows now.'

- b. *Soosuruto*, *kare-wa hontooni hiso-o non-da no daroo*.  
then he-TOP really arsenic-ACC take-PAST FIN MOD

'Then, it looks like he did take arsenic.'

**English:** Anderson conditionals must involve **X-marking**

**Japanese:** Anderson conditionals must involve **O-marking**

**Two questions:**

- 1 Why can't X-marking appear in Japanese?
- 2 Why can O-marking appear in Japanese? (next section)



Why can't X-marking (i.e., Past) appear in Japanese Anderson conditionals?

A: It implies the **falsity** of the antecedent.

Context: Jones took a poison that is not arsenic but causes symptoms that are identical to those of arsenic poisoning.

- (9) [*Jones-si-ga sakuya hiso-o nom*]-eba, [*kare-ga ima  
Jones-Mr.-NOM last.night arsenic-ACC drink-COND he-NOM now  
mise-tei-ru syoozyoo-to onazi syoozyoo*]-o ima mise-**ta** hazuda.  
show-ASP-NPST symptom-as same symptom-ACC now show-PAST MOD  
'If he had taken arsenic last night, he would have shown just exactly  
those symptoms that he shows now.'

(9) is felicitous, but it is a counterfactual.

Why does Past require the antecedent to be false?

A: I'm not fully sure.

- Japanese Fake Past cannot enforce Future Less Vivid (FLV) readings (Ogihara 2014; Mizuno & Kaufmann 2019;  $\approx$  English Fake Past Perfect)
- Unavailability of 'X' for FLV  $\approx$  Unavailability of 'X' for Anderson? (Mandarin in fact patterns with Japanese)

I leave further research for another occasion.

**Next:** Why can O-marking appear in Japanese Anderson conditionals?

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## Japanese uses the Historical Present

Why can O-marking appear in Japanese Anderson conditionals?

- The conditional is trivial if it is evaluated in the actual context
- The context has to be shifted to a non-actual one way or another

How does Japanese force shifts from the actual context in Anderson cases?

A: Through a 'perspectival shift' similar to what we find in **Historical Present**.

**Historical Present:** 'the speaker is directly witnessing past events'

- (10) Seventy eight years ago to this day, on January 22, 1944, just as the Americans **are** about to invade Europe, the Germans **attack** Vercors.

Schlenker (2004):

- Indexicals (*'seventy eight years ago'*):  
evaluated w.r.t. the actual speech time (i.e., the year 2022)
- Tense (*'are', 'attack'*):  
evaluated w.r.t. a **certain past moment** (e.g., the year 1944)

- (11) [*Jones-si-ga sakuya hiso-o nom*]-eba, [*kare-ga ima Jones-Mr.-NOM last.night arsenic-ACC drink-COND he-NOM now mise-tei-ru syoozyoo-to onazi syoozyoo*]-o *ima mise-ru hazuda*.  
show-ASP-NPST symptom-as same symptom-ACC now show-NPST MOD  
'If he had taken arsenic last night, he would have shown just exactly those symptoms that he shows now.'

- '*sakuya*' ('last night'): evaluated w.r.t. the actual speech time
- '*-ru*' (Non-Past): evaluated w.r.t. a **certain past moment**

**Intuitively:** one pretends to be at a past moment and make 'future predictions'

Such 'pretension' signals that one is temporarily away from the actual context

**Evidence:** The sentence can clearly refer to past moments despite Non-Past

Context:

1. Jones is a criminal who has been on the run overseas for many years.
2. One day, the investigation team have obtained information from reliable sources that Jones, who reportedly disguised himself as a different person, entered Korea from the Incheon Airport yesterday.
3. They have also obtained the information about the gate that he passed at immigration.



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EPassport\\_gates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EPassport_gates)

4. The investigation team now want to identify the country from which Jones entered Korea.
5. One shrewd member suggests that, given the arrival time and the location of the gate, Jones must have left the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila, Philippines two nights ago.



<https://www.freeworldmaps.net/asia/philippines/location.html>

6. Carefully investigating all the recent flights into Incheon, this turns out to be the most likely possibility.
7. The boss of the team then says the following.



- (12) *Tasikani*, [*Jones-ga ototoi Manila-o syuppatusu*]-reba,  
 it's.true Jones-NOM two.days.ago Manila-ACC leave-COND  
 [*kare-no zissai-no nyuukoku geeto-to mattaku onazi geeto*]-o,  
 he-GEN actual-GEN immigration gate-as exactly same gate-ACC  
 [*kinoo-no tuuka zikoku-to mattaku onazi zikoku*]-ni tuukas-**{uru**  
 yesterday-GEN passage time-as exactly same time-at pass-NPST  
 / **#ita**} (*hazuda*).  
 PAST MOD

'You're right. If Jones had left Manila two days ago, he would have passed exactly the same immigration gate that he actually passed yesterday, exactly at the same time as he actually did it.'

- 1 '*kinoo-no tuuka zikooku-to mattaku onazi zikoku-ni*' (lit. 'exactly at the same time as the time of his passage yesterday') forces **past reference**.
- 2 **Non-Past** must be used; Past makes the sentence counterfactual
- 3 '*ototoi*' ('two days ago') and '*kinoo*' ('yesterday') are evaluated w.r.t. the actual speech time ( $\approx$  Historical Present).

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## **Implication 1:** Is the uniformity hypothesis tenable?

*'We prefer methodologically to work with a starting hypothesis of total uniformity: all languages have X-marking, in all languages X-marking has the same overall meaning in all its uses ... .'*

(von Stechow & Iatridou 2022, p.6)

- English and Japanese differ w.r.t. Anderson conditionals
- Is the hypothesis wrong, or any third factor that explains the difference?

## Implication 2: 'Fake Non-Past'?

Non-Past in Japanese Anderson cases is **X-marking** in some sense:

- Non-Past is extraordinary given the past reference (e.g., the 'Manila' case)
- Non-Past signals that one is in a non-actual context, as Fake Past does

But Non-Past is also **O-marking** given 'O' = the absence of 'X'.

Then, Non-Past in Japanese Anderson cases is **both O- and X-marking**.

Is this even possible, or is the current definition of O- and X-markings wrong?

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