

The intertwining of discourse, syntax, and lexicon in language use: The case of Huasteca Nahuatl pleonastic conditionals

Jesus Olguin Martinez

University of Illinois, USA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4555-4213>

ABSTRACT: The paper analyzes pleonastic conditionals (e.g., *sweetheart, I understand. If you have to go, you have to go*) in Huasteca Nahuatl, an Uto-Aztecan language spoken in Mexico. Based on conversational data, it is demonstrated that pleonastic conditionals in Huasteca Nahuatl have different discourse-pragmatic functions, such as surprise, disagreement, and indifference, etc. Moreover, it is argued that the different discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals are systematically associated with specific syntactic forms of the apodosis (i.e., whether the apodosis is a precise echo of the protasis or not) and with specific lexical preferences (i.e., verb lemmas appearing in the protasis and apodosis). It is proposed that these preferential co-occurrences are shaped by three usage-based factors: iconicity, discourse economy, and semantic coherence.

KEYWORDS: Conditional clause; Repetition; Discourse; Conversation

RESUMEN: El artículo presenta un análisis de las condicionales pleonásticas (e.g., *sweetheart, I understand. If you have to go, you have to go*) en el Náhuatl de la Huasteca, una lengua yuto-azteca hablada en México. Se demuestra, a partir de datos de conversación, que las condicionales pleonásticas en esta lengua tienen diferentes funciones pragmático-discursivas, tales como la expresión de situaciones sorprendidas, situaciones de desacuerdo, y situaciones que implican indiferencia, entre otras. Además, se plantea que las diferentes funciones pragmático-discursivas de esta construcción compleja se correlacionan con diferentes formas sintácticas de la apódosis y con diferentes preferencias léxicas tanto de la prótasis como de la apódosis. Se propone que estas correlaciones entre discurso, sintaxis, y léxico se deben a tres factores: iconicidad, economía discursiva, y coherencia semántica.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Cláusula condicional; Repetición; Discurso, Conversación

1. Introduction

Repetition is pervasive in languages spoken in different parts of the world (Bazzanella 2011: 252). While the functional domain of repetition has been traditionally neglected by generative linguists (Van Lancker Sidtis & Wolf 2015: 265), many usage-based linguists have shown that repetition has many important discourse functions in language use. For instance, in Warekena, one of the discourse functions of repetition is that of clarification for the sake of accuracy, as in (1).

Warekena (Arawak)

- (1) *Wa ni-yutfia ema, ni-yutfia peya ema peya malayu.*
then 3PL.SBJ-kill tapir 3PL.SBJ-kill one tapir one deer
'Then they killed a tapir, they killed a tapir and a deer.' (Aikhenvald 1998: 252)

Another discourse function can be found in Mamaindê. In this language, one of the functions of repetition is to control the information flow per clause, as in (2). In discourse medial position, there is typically a maximum of only one or two new bits of information per clause (Eberhard 2009: 575).

Mamaindê (Nambikwaran)

- (2) *ʔnĩu-k^hatoʔ*, *loh-jeʔ-let-Ø-nãn-wa*.
 return-then.SS vomit-EMPH-INTERM.PST-3SG-PST-DECL
 ‘After returning, she vomited.’
Ta-teʔ-tu *loh-jeʔ-let-Ø-nãn-wa*.
 1SG.POSS-wife-FNS vomit-EMPH-INTERM.PST-3SG-PST-DECL
 ‘My wife vomited.’
Loh-k^hatoʔ, *paah-ãni* *loh-jeʔ-let-Ø-nãn-wa*.
 vomit-then.SS two-FNS vomit-EMPH-INTERM.PST-3SG-PST-DECL
 ‘Vomiting, two times she vomited.’ (Eberhard 2009: 575)

In Jarawara, repetition is used for indicating that the activity being described was extended over a period of time, as in (3) (Dixon 2017: 105).

Jarawara (Arawá)

- (3) *Arakawa haa ne-ri ama-ka; arakawa haa=ne*.
 chicken call AUX-REC.PST.M extent-DECL.M chicken call=AUX
 ‘The rooster crowed; the rooster was crowing (lit., ‘rooster crow’).’ (Dixon 2017: 110)

Another function of repetition is that processing ease. Many languages around the world contain a construction which contributes to discourse cohesion and structuring in that it links sentences or paragraphs together, usually by repetition of at least part of the previous clause (Thurman 1975: 342). This construction is known in the literature as *tail-head linkage constructions*. For instance, in the Lango example in (4), the tail clause is *nìnò* ‘he slept’ and the head clause is *ì káré àmê ònìnò* ‘after sleeping.’ De Vries (2005: 363-364) notes that in many languages around the world the head clause has a specific intonation contour involving slowed pronunciation and a final rise towards the end of the tail clause. He points out that this provides the speaker with a break to formulate his next chain, and the listener with time to process the information just heard.

Lango (Eastern Sudanic)

- (4) *Tê càmmò dyèl tê nìnò*.
 3SG.SBJ.and.then.HAB eat.INF goat 3SG.SBJ.and.then.HAB sleep.INF
 ‘He ate the goat and he slept.’
Ì káré àmê ònìnò...
 in time REL 3SG.SBJ.sleep.PFV
 ‘After sleeping... (Noonan 1992: 253)

Besides its functions in monologues, repetition also plays an important role in conversations. Examination of conversation has revealed that everyday speech is comprised of utterances that have been produced in prior instances or contexts. Repeating (part of) an utterance by another person to perform a responding action is a conversational strategy used for different functions, such as agreement, confirmation, news receipt, and the expression of attitudes (Norrick 1987; Schegloff 1996; Stivers 2005; Bolden 2009; Du Bois 2014; Gipper 2020). An example from English is given in (5). The repeat in line 3 of example (5) can be read as a news-receiving response, indicating that the information provided by Laura in line 2 is new to Michael.

- (5) 1. Michael: *Where did you go yesterday?*
 2. Laura: *To the supermarket.*
 3. Michael: *To the supermarket.*

What the studies discussed above seem to indicate is that repetition in monologues and conversations is not simply a tautology used for emphasis. Instead, speakers exploit this pattern for a number of functions deeply rooted in discourse.

The present study contributes to the theoretical discussion sketched above by exploring the discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals, as in (6). These constructions have been characterized as complex sentences involving redundancy. The interpretation of the apodosis is clearly not dependent on the evaluation of the protasis because they are the same (Sommerer 2023).¹ Because of this, pleonastic conditionals contrast with default conditionals (e.g., *if it rains, the lawn will get wet*) which tend to involve a causal link, condition or inference between two propositions, i.e., the content of the protasis must be interpretable as a cause of the content of the apodosis (Comrie 1986: 80). The causal relation is from the protasis as cause to the apodosis as effect. Accordingly, if one compares default conditionals with pleonastic conditionals there is similarity in form but not so much in function. This is why pleonastic conditionals have been categorized as non-conditional constructions (Declerck & Reed 2001: 359).

- (6) *Sweetheart, I understand. If you have to go, you have to go.*

It has been shown that the basic discourse-pragmatic function of pleonastic conditionals is that of “conveying the message that the speaker accepts what she considers as an inescapable fact” (Declerck & Reed 2001: 360). Put another way, pleonastic conditionals are used for expressing some kind of acceptance of the inevitable. Here it is shown by using natural discourse data from Huasteca Nahuatl that this construction has a number of discourse-pragmatic functions that have been neglected.² For instance, in the Huasteca Nahuatl example in (7), the pleonastic conditional construction is used for expressing surprise.

- (7) 1. Mr. Luna: *Tla te-mi-ti-ki yah-ti-ohui-yaya,*
 CONJ INDEF.OBJ-die-CAUS-PFV go-LIG-walk-IPFV
 ‘If he was murdered while he was walking,
 2. *te-mi-ti-ki yah-ti-ohui-yaya.*
 INDEF.OBJ-die-CAUS-PFV go-LIG-walk-IPFV
 he was murdered while he was walking.’
 3. *Pero ach-tla-huel pensaro-ki.*
 but NEG-INDEF.OBJ-can think-PFV
 ‘I cannot believe it (that he was murdered).’

It is shown that the different discourse-pragmatic functions of Huasteca Nahuatl pleonastic conditionals are systematically associated with specific syntactic forms of the apodosis and with specific lexical preferences. For instance, there are cases in which the apodosis is a precise echo of the protasis, as in (7), and instances in which the apodosis shows different omissions with respect to the morphosyntactic make-up of the protasis, as in (8). While the former construction involving verbatim repetition is known as the *standard form*, the latter is

¹ I use *protasis* and *apodosis* to refer to the dependent clause and the main clause respectively.

² Studies dedicated to the analysis of discourse phenomena in Huasteca Nahuatl are not new territory in the literature (e.g., Peregrina Llanes 2016; Peregrina Llanes & Estrada Fernández 2016). However, the discourse functions of pleonastic conditionals in this Uto-Aztecan are, to the best of my knowledge, unexplored territory.

known as the *non-standard form* (Declerck & Reed 2001: 360). Moreover, while in a number of cases, pleonastic conditionals will tend to appear with a group of verbs that one might classify as having to do with damage, disadvantage, or injury (e.g., *be murdered*), as in (7), in other cases they will tend to occur with verbs that one may characterize as involving states experienced by humans which do not involve physical actions (e.g., *be hungry*), as in (8).

- (8) 1. Mrs. Cruz: *Tla ki-machi-lia mayana pampa ach-ki-kua-ki,*
 CONJ 3SG.OBJ-feel-APPL be.hungry because NEG-3SG.OBJ-eat-PFV
 ‘If she is hungry because she didn’t have lunch,
 2. *mayana*
 be.hungry
 she is hungry.’

The questions are: how can we explore the discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals in Huasteca Nahuatl? What are the factors that motivate the interaction of discourse, syntax, and lexicon in Huasteca Nahuatl pleonastic conditionals?

The analysis reported here attempts to answer these questions and does not test any specific hypotheses. Even though this study is based on a large number of naturally occurring examples that indicate certain trends, it is intended to be qualitative, i.e., it is aimed towards deepening our understanding of the discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals and their interactions with other domains by using natural discourse data.

The organization of this paper is as follows. Section 2 sketches a simplified picture of the typological profile of Huasteca Nahuatl. Section 3 first discusses the discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditional that have been identified in the literature and then shows how Huasteca Nahuatl pleonastic conditionals can expand the list of functions proposed by Declerck & Reed (2001: 360) and Sommerer (2023). Next, this section also presents the data used for this paper. In Section 4, I analyze how the different discourse-pragmatic functions of Huasteca Nahuatl pleonastic conditionals are systematically associated with specific forms of the apodosis (i.e., whether the apodosis is a precise echo of the protasis or not) and with specific lexical preferences (i.e., verb lemmas appearing in the protasis and apodosis). Section 5 provides some concluding remarks and several aspects relevant to the analysis of pleonastic conditionals that remain to be investigated by future studies.

2. Huasteca Nahuatl: Typological profile

Huasteca Nahuatl is a Southern Uto-Aztecan language that belongs to the Uto-Aztecan language family.³ Varieties of Nahuatl are spoken by an estimated 1.5 million Nahuatl peoples, most of whom live in Central Mexico, in the states of Puebla, Veracruz, Hidalgo, Guerrero, and San Luis Potosí. The data used in this work are drawn from one field work period in the village of Teposteco. This is situated in the Municipality of Chicontepec, in the state of Veracruz. This village has 363 inhabitants, and Spanish is used as the main means of instruction in all the different educational levels (Eladio Cruz, pers. comm.).

Huasteca Nahuatl is a polysynthetic language with agglutinating tendencies. A simple clause in this language may consist only of a verbal word bearing not only the participants, but also voice information (e.g., causatives, applicatives), tense-aspect-mood markers, and illocutionary markers (Peregrina 2015: 15), among others, as in (9).

³ Because of the geographical distances among Nahuatl speakers, many spoken Nahuatl varieties have arisen. Flores Farfán (2010: 38) mentions that modern Nahuatl is a set of about 12 varieties with different degrees of mutual intelligibility.

- (9) *Ki-mak-ti-lis-k-e.*
 3SG.OBJ-give-CAUS-APPL-PFV-PL
 ‘They gave it to them.’ (Elicited)

The grammatical relations of the arguments in any clause in Huasteca Nahuatl are marked with a set of pronominal indexes, which are either bound to a nominal element if they refer to a possessor or bound to a verb if they refer to the subject or object argument (Table 1). The language also has a set of independent pronouns (Table 2) (Peregrina 2015: 15).

Table 1. Bound pronouns in Huasteca Nahuatl (Peregrina 2015: 15)

Number	Person	Subject	Object	Reflexive Reciprocal Medial	Human Unspecified Object	Non-human unspecified object	Possessive
Singular	1 st	ni-	nech-	mo-	te-	tla-	no-
	2 nd	ti-	mits-				mo-
	3 rd		ki-				i-
Plural	1 st	ti-	tech-				to-
	2 nd	in-	amech-				amo-
	3 rd		kin-				in-

Table 2. Free pronouns in Huasteca Nahuatl (Peregrina 2015: 16)

Number	Person	Single form
Singular	1 st	na
	2 nd	ta
	3 rd	ya
Plural	1 st	tohuanti
	2 nd	anohuanti
	3 rd	inohuanti

Huasteca Nahuatl is a language with no case marking. However, bound pronouns affixed to a verbal root play a key role in determining the function of the participants. Huasteca Nahuatl is a nominative-accusative language since the single argument of an intransitive construction, the subject (S), and the agent argument (A) of a transitive construction are marked in the same way (S=A), while the patient argument (P) of the transitive construction is marked differently (S≠P) (Peregrina 2015: 15). In (10), the argument S in the intransitive clause, the noun phrase *nosihua* ‘my wife’, agrees with a zero marking of a third person singular subject at the verbal root, *kuatsah* ‘to scream’. Similarly, in the example in (11), the agent participant A, *nopa toahui* ‘the woman’, of the transitive construction agrees with the zero marking of a

third person singular subject of the verbal root *kuah* ‘to eat’. Meanwhile, the P participant, *tamali* ‘tamales’, agrees with the third person plural object pronominal index *kin*.⁴

- (10) *No-sihua* *kuatsah-skia*.
 1SG.POSS-wife scream-COND
 ‘My wife would scream.’ (Elicited)
- (11) *Nopa toahui* *kin-kuah-ki* *tama-li*.
 DET woman 3PL.OBJ-eat-PFV tamales-ABS
 ‘The woman ate tamales.’ (Elicited)

Huasteca Nahuatl contains two negative markers: the negative prefix *ach-* and the negative marker *amo*. The negative prefix *ach-* is attested for the most part in simple clauses, as in (12) (Beller & Beller 1979: 212). On the other hand, the negative marker *amo* tends to be found in imperatives, as in (13) (Beller & Beller 1979: 212). This marker has developed into an expletive negative marker that is mostly attested in a number of adverbial clauses, as in (14). Expletive negation is characterized by the fact that “a negative item, which lexically contributes to negation, does not modify the truth value of the proposition in which it occurs” (Espinal 1992: 49).

- (12) *Ya ach-ki-hueli*.
 3SG NEG-3SG.OBJ-can
 ‘He cannot do it.’ (Elicited)
- (13) *Amo chi-temo-ti mo-sihua*.
 NEG IMP-look-DIR 2SG.POSS-wife
 ‘Do not look for your wife!’ (Elicited)
- (14) *Ach-kin-kuah-ki tama-li*,
 NEG-3PL.OBJ-eat-PFV tamal-ABS
 ‘He did not eat tamales,
ni menos amo ki-kuah-ki sopelik.
 NEG less NEG 3SG.OBJ-eat-PFV candy
 let alone candy.’ (Olguín Martínez 2024: 23)

Adverbial clauses in this language, including conditional constructions, are encoded with conjunctions (Olguín Martínez 2020: 6), as in (15). These are morphemes which mark adverbial clauses for their semantic relationship to the main clause (Kortmann 2001: 842). Conjunctions in this Uto-Aztecan language introduce clauses whose internal structure shows no evidence of dependent status. Put another way, conjunctions operate in clauses that appear with the same morphosyntactic properties as main clauses.

⁴ Speakers of Huasteca Nahuatl distinguish possessed from non-possessed nouns by the absolutive suffix *-li*. While possessed nouns do not occur with the absolutive suffix, nouns that are not possessed do appear with it. The use of this label must not be confused with the absolutive case marker that is observed in ergative-absolutive languages.

Moreover, they can also be found in other discourse contexts that have not been identified by previous studies, such as surprise as in (21) and disagreement as in (22).

- (21) 1. Mrs. Rodriguez: *Tla mo-mi-ti-ki telpoka-tl panopa,*
 CONJ REFL-die-CAUS-PFV boy-ABS DEM
 ‘If the boy committed suicide while being there,
 2. *mo-mi-ti-ki telpoka-tl panopa.*
 REFL-die-CAUS-PFV boy-ABS DEM
 the boy committed suicide while being there.’
 3. *Amo nelia pampa achkema koalan-tok*
 NEG true because never angry-NMLZ
 ‘This was unexpected because he was never angry.’
 4. Mrs. Cruz: *Mo-tlepanita mo-tlepanita mo-tlepanita.*
 REFL-excite REFL-excite REFL-excite
 ‘He was always very happy.’
 5. *Chaka tla-huel pensaro-ki.*
 nobody INDEF.OBJ-can think-PFV
 ‘Nobody could believe it (that he committed suicide).’
 6. Mrs. Rodriguez: *nochipa hueska-yaya achkema mo-koeso-ki.*
 always laugh-IPFV never REFL-get.sad-PFV
 ‘He was always laughing, and we never saw him sad.’
- (22) 1. Mrs. Rodriguez: *Tla ti-ki-ih kenhatsa ni-ki-tla-ya,*
 CONJ 2SG-3SG.OBJ-say manner 1SG.OBJ-3SG.OBJ-burn-IPFV
 ‘If you say that’s the way I should burn it (the corn),
 2. *kenhatsa ni-ki-tla-ya.*
 manner 1SG.OBJ-3SG.OBJ-burn-IPFV
 that’s the way I should burn it (the corn).’
Pero ach-mo-kateh-ya de acuerdo.
 but NEG-REFL-stay-IPFV of agreement
 ‘But I don’t agree with you.’

The corpus used to analyze the discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals in Huasteca Nahuatl consist of 4 conversations involving 4 native speakers: Mr. Luna, Mr. Cruz, Mrs. Cruz, and Mrs. Rodriguez. These conversations were compiled in one fieldwork period (two-week period) in the village of Teposteco. In the first two conversations, Mr. Luna and Mr. Cruz talk about a number of situations that could be characterized as surprising and situations that could be characterized as generic/habitual. In total, these two conversations contain roughly 312 sentences. Of these, it was possible to identify 42 pleonastic conditionals. In the other two conversations, Mrs. Cruz and Mrs. Rodriguez not only talk about surprising and generic/habitual situations, but also about situations expressing indifference and disagreement. In total, these conversations contain 356 sentences. Of these, it was possible to identify 29 pleonastic conditionals.

Table 3. Number of pleonastic conditionals according to their discourse-pragmatic function

Discourse-pragmatic function	Number
Surprise	25
Generic/habitual	25
Indifference	10
Disagreement	11

After analyzing the discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals in Huasteca Nahuatl by using natural discourse data, an attempt was made to use direct elicitation to get more information about the functions of this complex sentence construction. However, speakers never used pleonastic conditionals in elicited isolated sentences. This indicates that these communicative functions are of a conversational, interactional nature (see Mithun 2020 for similar thoughts with respect to evidential markers). Successful collaboration with speakers depends on the recognition that they do not necessarily have direct access to the factors governing their choices (Mithun 2020: 340). As Joseph (2003: 318) notes, “native speakers’ knowledge of their language generally involves knowledge that is not readily accessible to them for reflection and discussion.”

It could be argued that the discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals discussed above are not really coded by the constructional template. Rather, their discourse-functions only emerge in some contexts and in combination with other constructions. However, in this paper, ultimately, it is proposed that the discourse-pragmatic functions of Huasteca Nahuatl pleonastic conditionals do not only emerge depending on specific co- and contexts, but also depending on important grammatical and lexical factors. This is in line with Ono & Thompson (1995), who point out that no construction has a completely fixed meaning, but rather a potential to mean depending on a number of factors that emerge in different interactional settings.

4. Interaction of discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals with other domains

If the discourse-pragmatic functions were all there was to Huasteca Nahuatl pleonastic conditionals, the theoretical picture would be too simple. A usage-based approach to pleonastic conditionals requires us to relate the discourse-pragmatic functions discussed before to other domains. Accordingly, in this section, special attention is paid to how these functions are systematically associated with specific forms of the apodosis (i.e., whether the apodosis is a precise echo of the protasis or not) and with specific lexical preferences (i.e., verb lemmas appearing in the protasis and apodosis). In fact, this is a task that has not been pursued by previous corpus-based studies on pleonastic conditionals, but has been identified as an area to be investigated by future investigations. Sommerer (2023: 372) mentions that future research can take into account not only standard pleonastic conditionals, but also non-standard conditionals. Moreover, future studies can analyze potential lexical preferences of the respective pleonastic conditional types, i.e., certain verbs might prefer a particular function more frequently than expected.

4.1 Form of the apodosis: Standard and non-standard forms

It is worth noting that there are cases in which the apodosis is a precise echo of the protasis (standard form), that is, this construction shows verbatim repetition. Moreover, there are instances in which the apodosis shows a number of omissions with respect to the protasis (non-standard form). Interestingly, a closer look reveals that standard and non-standard forms correlate with specific discourse-pragmatic functions of pleonastic conditionals, as can be seen in Table 4. While standard forms are only attested in cases in which pleonastic conditionals express surprise, indifference, and disagreement, non-standard forms are only found in cases in which pleonastic conditional indicate generic-habitual situations. The question is: why do pleonastic conditionals show standard and non-standard forms depending on their discourse-pragmatic function? The fact that the apodosis in pleonastic conditionals may be an echo of the protasis or not depending on their discourse-pragmatic function can be explained by two usage-based factors: iconicity and discourse economy.

Table 4. Interaction of discourse-pragmatic function and form of the apodosis in pleonastic conditionals

Discourse-pragmatic function	Form of apodosis	Number
Surprise	Standard	25
Generic/habitual	Non-standard	25
Indifference	Standard	10
Disagreement	Standard	11

It has been proposed that verbatim repetition in discourse is pervasive and seems to have a key functional role in rhetoric, language socialization, and language development (Tannen 1987, 1989). Makino (1985) explores the significance of verbatim repetition and identifies six cognitive principles that can be subsumed under three basic categories: (1) the importance of the information in the utterance to be repeated, (2) the empathy/apathy by the speaker toward what was uttered in discourse by someone else, and (3) the challenge to the illocutionary force of the utterance. This means that verbal repetition is socially motivated in that it achieves community, i.e., the emotional ties among participants (Maynard 1983). Constructions involving verbal repetition are iconic. Given that the meaning conveyed by verbatim repetition tends to create emotional identification between the speaker and the audience (Havelock 1963: 160 cited by Tannen 1989: 194-195), this meaning is “diagrammatically iconic because the repetition, that is, the increased quantity of the form, resembles the increased quality of the meaning of the form” (Ishikawa 1991: 555). Put another way, phrases, clauses, or sentences may show verbal repetition to convey added intensity to the stance of a speaker with respect to something that was uttered in an interactional setting.

As was mentioned above, verbal repetition (standard form) is only attested in pleonastic conditionals with following discourse-pragmatic functions: surprise, disagreement, and indifference. Pleonastic conditionals involving surprise, as in (23), contain information that should be considered important to the interactional setting. In this scenario, the function of this pleonastic conditional is to construe the propositional information conveyed by the clauses as unexpected to the speaker given their knowledge (Aikhenvald 2012; DeLancey 1997).

- (23) 1. Mr. Luna: *Tla te-mi-ti-ki pa oh-tli,*
 CONJ INDEF.OBJ-die-CAUS-PFV LOC way-ABS
 ‘If he (the chief) was murdered on his way back home,
 2. *te-mi-ti-ki. pa oh-tli.*
 INDEF.OBJ-die-CAUS-PFV LOC way-ABS
 he was murdered on his way back home.’
 3. *Ach-ni-tla-huel pensaro-ki.*
 NEG-1SG.SBJ-INDEF.OBJ-can think-PFV
 ‘I still can’t believe it (that he was murdered).’
 4. Mr. Cruz: *Tlaka-tl ueno ki-ihtoa-h.*
 man-ABS kind 3SG.OBJ-say-PL
 ‘They say he was a very kind man.’

As for pleonastic conditionals involving indifference, as in (24), they express apathy toward what was uttered in discourse by someone else. Put another way, they indicate the absence of attention, interest, affection, or care in relation to what was said before in a conversation. They are attested for the most part in scenarios in which they convey information that could not have been anticipated by the other participant(s) in the conversation given their knowledge.

- (24) 1. Mrs. Cruz: *Ni-ki-kak hueli motlatoa-yaya.*
 1SG.SBJ-3SG.OBJ-hear big run-IPFV
 ‘I heard that he runs (every day).
 2. Mrs. Rodriguez: *Tla hueli motlatoa-yaya,*
 CONJ big run-IPFV
 ‘If he runs (every day),
 3. *hueli motlatoa-yaya.*
 big run-IPFV
 he runs (every day).’
 4. *Ni-k-kualan-yaya tla ki-chih-yaya kitl.*
 1SG-3SG.OBJ-get.angry-IPFV CONJ 3SG.OBJ-do-IPFV DEM
 ‘I do not care if he does that.’
 5. *ni-k-tlan-s.*
 1SG.SBJ-3SG.OBJ-win-IRR
 ‘I will win (the race).’

As for pleonastic conditional expressing disagreement, as in (25), they indicate lack of consensus or approval with respect to what was uttered by someone else, i.e., they challenge the illocutionary force of an utterance in a particular interactional setting. In general, verbal repetition in this discourse context is utilized as speakers work to have their ideas and opinions heard and attended to. It has been shown that the more explicit the repetition is, the better it is equipped to ensure that speakers stress the potential conflict with what was uttered by someone else (Scott 2002: 320).

- (25) 1. Mrs. Rodriguez: *In-ki-toka-s nopa sin-tli.*
 2SG.PL-3SG.OBJ-harvest-IRR DEM corn-ABS
 ‘You should harvest the corn like this.’
 2. Mrs. Cruz *Tla kenopa ta ti-ki-ihtoa,*
 CONJ that.way 2SG.SBJ 2SG.SBJ-3SG.OBJ-say
 ‘If you say so,

3. *kenopa ta ti-ki-ihtoa.*
 that.way 2SG.SBJ 2SG.SBJ-3SG.OBJ-say
 you say so.’
4. *Pero ach-mo-kateh-ya de akuerdo*
 but NEG-REFL-stay-IPFV of agreement
 ‘But I don’t agree with you.’

What the three discourse-pragmatic functions of Huasteca Nahuatl standard pleonastic conditionals have in common is that they involve a stance on emotion. It is well-known that the way in which situations unfold in the sequence of interaction can give rise to emotion and this in turn can “influence the choice of actions, words, and bodily comportment even in moments that appear devoid of remarkable expressive display” (Du Bois & Kärkkäinen 2012: 434). Linguistically, emotive involvement can be marked in various ways, such as the use of nouns, adjectives, and prepositions, as well as other linguistic forms, including intensifiers and verbatim repetition (Ochs & Schieffelin 1989). Accordingly, providing an exact replica of the protasis in the apodosis is a discourse technique that ensures that speakers direct the audience’s attention to their emotive stance in order to achieve a social goal (Ochs & Schieffelin 1989).

As for non-standard pleonastic conditionals, I follow Guérin & Aiton (2019: 14) to discuss the different types of omissions that this construction shows in Huasteca Nahuatl. They propose that tail-head linkage constructions may show different types of omissions, such as cases in which arguments and adjuncts mentioned in the tail clause are omitted in the head clause (see Section 1 for a definition of tail-head linkage). For instance, in the Lavukaleve example in (26), the argument *oina* ‘the other (boy)’ is not recapitulated in the head clause. Another instance is found in Abma. The example in (27) shows that both arguments and adverbials may be omitted at the same time. In this regard, the phrase *bwenges nan m watang lin* ‘the pandanus leaf for your basket on it (fire)’ that appears in the tail clause is omitted in the head clause. In a similar fashion, in the Mamaindê example in (28) the tail clause appears with an adjunct (i.e., *taʔwennatu* ‘in the jungle’) and an argument (i.e. *ʔaintu* ‘fish’), but these are omitted from the head clause.

Lavukaleve (Solomons East Papuan)

- (26) *Aka-ri fi ma-tairi-a veva aka*
 then-PSNV 3SG.NEUT.FOC 3PL.SBJ-divide-INTRANS in.that.way then
oina o-feu.
 other.NEUT.DIST.SG.M 3SG.SBJ-go.inland
 ‘They divided themselves in that way, and the other (boy) went inland.’
Feu...
 go.inland
 ‘(The boy) went inland...’ (Terrill 2003: 470)

Abma (Austronesian)

- (27) *Ko mwa=sla bwenges na-n m*
 2SG 3SG.IPFV=dry pandanus.leaf ASSOC-3SG.POSS 2SG.POSS
watang li-n.
 basket location-3SG.POSS
 ‘You dry the pandanus leaf for your basket on it (fire).’
Bi ko mwa=sla sera...
 and 2SG IPFV=dry finish
 ‘And you finish drying it...’ (Schneider 2010: 250)

Mamaindê (Nambikuaran)

- (28) *ʔai-kʰatoʔ taʔwen-na-tu ʔain-tu at-jeʔ-le-a-nān-wa.*
 go-then.DS jungle-CL-FNS fish-FNS to.fish-EMPH-INTERM.PST-SBJ-PST-DECL
 ‘We went, then we fished for fish in the jungle.’

At-a-kʰatoʔ...

to.fish-SBJ-then.SS

‘After fishing...’ (Eberhard 2009: 577)

In Huasteca Nahuatl non-standard pleonastic conditionals, there are only cases in which adjuncts are omitted from the apodosis, as in (29). In this example, the adverbial clause that occurs in the protasis in line 1, i.e., *pampa kimiktis itata* ‘because of the dead of their father’, does not appear in the apodosis in line 2.

- (29) 1. Mr. Luna: *Tla koeso-yaya pampa ki-mik-ti-s i-tata,*
 CONJ get.sad-IPFV CONJ 3SG.OBJ-die-CAUS-IRR 3SG.POSS-father
 ‘If someone gets sad because of the dead of their father,
 2. *koeso-yaya.*
 get.sad-IPFV
 someone gets sad.’
 3. Mr. Cruz: *Tla tsahtsi-yaya.*
 CONJ cry-IPFV
 ‘(It’s normal) if someone cries.’

Interestingly, as was mentioned above, this non-standard form is only attested in pleonastic conditionals that express generic/habitual situations. This construction has the following sense: ‘X is a fact. period. nothing can be done about it.’ While a generic pleonastic conditional is one that ascribes a general property to all members of a class, a habitual pleonastic conditional describes activities that are customary. These constructions are called *general validity predications* in that they involve encyclopedic knowledge of situation types. While some aspects of the world’s structure are constantly in effect, with continuous or ubiquitous manifestation (e.g., gravity), “much of it resides in dependencies, causal relationships, or the manifestation of a certain kind of event when certain conditions arise (e.g., hard exercise induces sweat)” (Langacker 1997: 205-206). The fact that non-standard pleonastic conditionals express a general validity situation may provide an explanation as to why the apodosis is not a precise echo of the protasis. Given that this sort of conditional construction conveys propositional information that could be characterized as general knowledge of the kinds of activity involved, speakers have the luxury of omitting morphosyntactic make-up from the apodosis. In this scenario, speakers assume that the other language users share a *common ground*, i.e., general world knowledge (Diessel 2019: 26). Accordingly, this provides the basis for the *auditory design*, which refers to the process whereby speakers seek to construct a sentence according to their communicative intention in a particular situation (i.e., speakers must make choices of linguistic means depending on the background information). From a usage-based perspective, non-standard pleonastic conditionals are a classic case of economical behavior rooted in the predictability of information in discourse. Discourse economy does not drive the form of language to be the most transparent mirror of meaning possible, but posits that predictable information is reduced whenever possible in order to avoid redundancy (Croft 2003: 102). Put another way, discourse economy refers to the “the tendency to economize on the length or complexity of an utterance or message” whenever the context provides the information necessary for the message to be transmitted (Haiman 1985: 158-159). In the context of adverbial clauses, this phenomenon has

been called the *principle of information recoverability*. Cristofaro (2003: 249) mentions that the speaker “leaves out whatever s/he may afford to leave out without affecting the communicative value of the sentence.”

4.2 Verbs lemmas in the protasis and apodosis

The distinction between lexicon and syntax has played an important role in linguistic theory. For instance, in the generative approach, lexical expressions are freely inserted under the terminal nodes of syntactic phrase structure trees (Diessel & Hilpert 2016). However, the dichotomy of lexicon vs. syntax and their presumed independence has long been challenged in particular by work in the framework of usage-based construction grammar (e.g., Goldberg 1995). As has been noted by many researchers who employ usage-based methods (Goldberg 1995; Stefanowitsch & Gries 2003), lexical items and syntactic constructions are strongly associated in cognitive representation. That is, “what language users know about lexical items includes not just their meaning, but also the constructions in which they have been experienced. Conversely, knowledge of constructions includes the set of lexical items used in the construction” (Bybee & Thompson 2021: 12). Put another way, such work has proposed that the co-occurrence patterns of lexemes and constructions is functionally motivated; for instance, verbs occur in some construction’s slot especially if the verb’s function/meaning is compatible with that of the construction (Goldberg 1995: 50), which gives rise to a joint distribution of lexemes in constructions that are known in the literature as *filler-slot relations* (see Diessel 2019: 20).

A closer look reveals that there seems to be an interesting interplay between the form of pleonastic conditionals, its lexical content, and its discourse-pragmatic function, as can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Interaction of syntactic constructions, discourse-pragmatic functions, and verb lemmas in pleonastic conditionals

Syntactic construction	Verb lemmas in the protasis and apodosis	Discourse function	Number
Standard	<i>die, suicide, pass away, cease to exist, drown, hurt, kill</i>	Surprise	25
Standard	<i>go, come, move, run, walk</i>	Indifference	10
Standard	<i>say, tell</i>	Disagreement	11
Non-standard	<i>be happy, be sad, be angry, be hungry, be sorry, be annoyed, be afraid, be anxious</i>	Generic/habitual	25

We assume that pleonastic conditionals involving surprise mean: ‘X situation is unexpected to the speaker and is not yet integrated into his overall picture of the world.’ Accordingly, this situation involves a drastic deviation from a speaker’s expectation

(DeLancey 1997: 35-36). This means that situations that do not fall with the speaker's expectations are grounded both in terms of the speaker's past experiences of similar situations and his general knowledge and in terms of the speaker's immediate experience of a situation. Given the semantics of this type of pleonastic conditional, the verb lemmas appearing in the protasis and apodosis, as in (30), harmonize with the semantics of this construction. The verb lemmas in Table 5 (e.g., *die*, *suicide*) should be characterized as detriment verbs (i.e., a cause of injury or damage). This indicates that speakers of Huasteca Nahuatl use this type of pleonastic conditional to talk about detriment situations that involve a counter-expectation of the speaker. For instance, in (30), the situation should be understood as follows: if someone eats healthy food every day and is very young, one does not normally die. Therefore, the fact that the young boy died should be characterized a surprising situation.

- (30) 1. Mr. Luna: *Ni-ki-kak* *mi-ki.*
 1SG.SBJ-3SG.OBJ-hear die-PFV
 'I heard he (the young boy) died.'
2. *Nochipah kua-yaya kual.*
 always eat-IPFV good
 'He always ate healthy food.'
3. Mr. Cruz: *Ach-ni-tla-huel* *pensaro-ki.*
 NEG-1SG.SBJ-INDEF.OBJ-could think-PFV
 'I still can't believe it.'
4. ***Tla okichpi-tl telpoka mi-ki,***
 CONJ boy-ABS young die-PFV
 'If the young boy die,
5. ***okichpi-tl telpoka mi-ki.***
 boy-ABS young die-PFV
 the young boy die,
6. *Pero yah-ki chikahuak hua telpoka*
 CONJ go-PFV strong and young
 'But he was very strong and young.'

As for pleonastic conditionals involving indifference, we assume that they mean: 'X situation is not relevant to the ongoing discourse.' Put another way, there is a lack of interest toward what was uttered in discourse by someone else. As can be seen in Table 5, this type of pleonastic conditional only appears with motion verbs, as in (31). Accordingly, these constructions should be understood as: 'that X went/move/ran/came to Y place is trivial.' Under this interpretation, motion verbs harmonize with the semantics of pleonastic conditionals involving indifference.

- (31) 1. Mrs. Cruz: *Sampa Ricardo nemi-yaya nemi-yaya.*
 again Ricardo wander-IPFV wander-IPFV
 'Ricardo was wandering again (aimlessly though the streets).'
2. Mrs. Cruz: *Tlahuel pobre hua ach-ki-chi-ya*
 very poor and NEG-3SG.OBJ-be.enough-IPFV
 'He's very poor and does not have enough money.'
3. *ueno*
 well
 'Well.'

4. Mrs. Rodriguez: **Tla Ricardo nemi-yaya kenhatsa flojo,**
 CONJ Ricardo wander-IPFV like lazy
 ‘If Ricardo wanders like a lazy guy,
5. **Ricardo nemi-yaya kenhatsa flojo**
 Ricardo wander-IPFV like lazy
 Ricardo wanders like a lazy guy.’
6. **Ni-k-kualan-yaya**
 1SG-3SG.OBJ-get.angry-IPFV
 ‘I do not care.’

As is shown in Table 5, utterance verbs, such as *say* and *tell*, are only attested in pleonastic conditionals involving disagreement. Utterance verbs profile “a simple transfer of information initiated by an agentive subject” (Noonan 2007: 121). We assume that pleonastic conditionals involving disagreement mean: ‘What was uttered by someone else contradicts what a speaker believes’ (Kakava 2002: 1540). This indicates that a speaker produces an utterance that either directly or indirectly means the opposite to what was uttered by the addressee, as in (32). Accordingly, under this interpretation, the semantics of utterance verbs harmonizes with the semantics of pleonastic conditionals involving disagreement.

- (32) 1. Mrs. Cruz: **Mo-kuili-s nopa no-ichpoka.**
 REFL-take.something-IRR DEM 1SG.POSS-daughter
 ‘He wants to marry our daughter.’
2. **Pero tla ki-chihua-s i-esposa**
 but CONJ 3SG.OBJ-do-IRR 3SG.POSS-wife
 ‘But if he wants her to be his wife,
3. **ki-kohua-s.**
 3SG.OBJ-buy-IRR
 he should give us something in return.’
4. Mrs. Rodriguez: **Tla ti-ki-ih Pedro ki-kohua-s,**
 CONJ 2SG.SBJ-3SG.OBJ-say Pedro 3SG.OBJ-buy-IRR
 ‘If you say Pedro should give you something in return,
5. **ti-ki-ih Pedro ki-kohua-s.**
 2SG.SBJ-3SG.OBJ-say Pedro 3SG.OBJ-buy-IRR
 Pedro should give you something in return.’
6. **Pero ach-mo-kateh-ya de akuerdo.**
 but NEG-REFL-stay-IPFV of agreement
 ‘But I don’t agree with you.’
7. **Onka fiesta yonke ti-ach-ki-neki.**
 there.is wedding CONJ 2SG.SBJ-NEG-3SG.OBJ-want
 ‘There will be a wedding even if you don’t want to.’

Pleonastic conditionals expressing generic/habitual meanings only occur with verbs that one may characterize as denoting states experienced by human (e.g., *be happy*, *be sad*), as in (33) (see Table 5). These verbs do not involve physical actions but only denote emotional meanings expressing various desires (Ransom 1986: 142). These verbs are always followed by causal/reason adverbial clauses (e.g., *I got sick because I didn’t wear a coat*). Accordingly, these emotional predicates are only attested in discourse contexts involving general validity (e.g., hunger is induced by not eating anything or being thirsty is induced by not drinking any water). As pointed by Langacker (1997: 205-206), many general validity statements “reside in dependencies, causal relationships, or the manifestation of a certain kind of event when certain

First, at the current stage of our work, it is not clear to us the role of prosody in Huasteca Nahuatl pleonastic conditionals. It is well-known that prosody plays an essential role in conveying different discourse functions in spoken communication. For instance, prosody can be used for expressing illocutionary force (e.g., speaker's intention to inquire, declare, etc.) and for expressing the speaker's attitude towards their interlocutor, and about the speaker's immediate affective and emotional state (e.g., Bolden 2006; Culpeper et al. 2003; Wichmann 2000, 2004). It remains to be explored how prosody interacts with different discourse-pragmatic functions in Huasteca Nahuatl.

Second, besides conditional constructions, there are other reduplicating constructions that also seem to be attested in conversational data in Huasteca Nahuatl: *kemah* 'when' constructions (e.g., *it ends when it ends*). However, unlike pleonastic conditional constructions, they seem to show a low frequency. It remains to be analyzed whether pleonastic *kemah* 'when' constructions show similar discourse-pragmatic functions as pleonastic conditional constructions and how their communicative, interactional functions are directly mapped onto specific syntactic and lexical forms.

Third, in a number of examples, the apodosis of pleonastic conditionals is introduced with the coordinating device *huankino* 'and then'. The fact that it only appears in a few examples in the corpus of the present study indicates that this element is optional in pleonastic conditionals. This contrasts with its obligatory use in default conditional constructions. It remains to be investigated whether this is a case of *constructional contamination* (Pijpops & van de Velde 2016), which is a process where a construction is structurally influenced by another functionally non-related construction due to superficial formal similarities or similar linguistic environments.

It is hoped that the present study will contribute to inform our theories and hypothesis regarding the discourse-pragmatic functions of repetition in monologues and conversations.

Abbreviations

1=first person, 2=second person, 3=third person, ABS=absolutive, APPL=applicative, ASSOC=associative, AUX=auxiliar, CAUS=causative, COND=conditional, CONJ=conjunction, DECL=declarative, DEM=demonstrative, DIR=directional, DIST=distal, DS=different subject, EMPH=emphatic, FNS=final nominal suffix, FOC=focus, HAB=habitual, IMP=imperative, INDEF=indefinite, INF=infinitive, INSTRANS=intransitive, INTERM=intermediate, IPFV=imperfective, IRR=irrealis, LIG=ligature, LOC=locative, M=masculine, NEG=negative, NEUT=neutral, NMLZ=nominalizer, PFV=perfective, PL=plural, POSS=possessive, PSNV=presentative, PST=past, REC=recent, REF=referent, REFL=reflexive, REL=relativizer, REP=reportative, SBJ=subject, SG=singular, SS=same subject.

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CRediT – Taxonomy of Academic Collaboration Roles

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Authors' contribution

Conceptualization: Jesús Olguín Martínez

Formal Analysis: Jesús Olguín Martínez

Investigation: Jesús Olguín Martínez

Writing – original draft: Jesús Olguín Martínez

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