### Cognition and conditionals

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# Outline

Conditionals in psychology

- Indicative conditionals
- Uncertain conditionals
- Mental probability logic
  - Wasons selection task
  - Truth table task
  - Paradoxes of the material conditional

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Conclusions

# Conditionals in psychology: Indicative conditionals

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Three prominent psychological predictions of how people interpret "If A, then B":

- Material conditional,  $A \supset B$
- Conjunction,  $A \wedge B$
- ► Conditional event, *B*|*A*

# Conditionals in psychology: Indicative conditionals

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- Conjunction,  $A \wedge B$
- Conditional event, B A

			Material	Conjunction	Conditional
			conditional		event
	A	В	$A \supset B$	$A \wedge B$	B A
$s_1$	true	true	true	true	true
<i>s</i> <sub>2</sub>	true	false	false	false	false
<b>s</b> 3	false	true	true	false	undetermined
<i>s</i> 4	false	false	true	false	undetermined

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 $P(A \supset B)$  $P(A \wedge B)$ Probabilistic extension of the *mental model* theory



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of the *mental model* theory



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- ► the indicative "**if** *A*, **then** *B*" is interpreted as a nonmonotonic conditional:

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$$\overrightarrow{P(B|A) = x, P(A) = y} \models \overrightarrow{P(B) \in [xy, xy + 1 - y]}$$

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 premises are evaluated by point values, intervals or second order probability distributions

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coherence

## Coherence

- ▶ de Finetti, and {Lad, Walley, Scozzafava, Coletti, Gilio,...}
- degrees of belief
- complete algebra is not required
- conditional probability, P(B|A), is primitive
- zero probabilities are exploited to reduce the complexity

- imprecision
- provides semantics for System P

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If there is a vowel on the one side , then there is an even number on the other side .

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If there is a vowel on the one side (A), then there is an even number on the other side (B).



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Wasons selection task





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## Truth table task

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## Task AA, SP condition





Does the shape on the screen speak for the assertion in the box?

# Task AA, PS condition





Does the shape on the screen speak for the assertion in the box?

## Task AN, SP condition





Does the shape on the screen speak for the assertion in the box?

## Task NA, SP condition





Does the shape on the screen speak for the assertion in the box?

## Task NN, SP condition





Does the shape on the screen speak for the assertion in the box?

# Design

- Two conditions: SP ( $n_1 = 18$ ) and PS ( $n_2 = 18$ )
- $\blacktriangleright$  16 target tasks: 4 conditionals  $\times$  4 truth table cases
- Order of tasks:

Conditional in box	Shape on screen	Task type
If circle, then black	•	target AA
If circle, then black	0	target AN
If circle, then black	<b>A</b>	target NA
If circle, then black	$\bigtriangleup$	target NN

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# Design

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If circle, then black	<b>A</b>	target NA
If circle, then black	$\bigtriangleup$	target NN
counterfactual	broken screen	filler item

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Conditional in box	Shape on screen	Task type
If circle, then black	•	target AA
If circle, then black	0	target AN
If circle, then black	▲	target NA
If circle, then black	$\bigtriangleup$	target NN
counterfactual	broken screen	filler item
If circle, then white	٠	target AN
If circle, then white	0	target AA
If circle, then white	<b>A</b>	target NN
If circle, then white	$\bigtriangleup$	target NA
counterfactual	broken screen	filler item
:	:	:
If triangle, then white	$\bigtriangleup$	target AA

Group	Response	Task Type			
		AA	AN	NA	NN
SP	speaks against	2.78	86.11	30.56	22.22
	neither/nor	4.17	11.11	<b>61.11</b>	<b>76.39</b>
	speaks for	93.06	2.78	8.33	1.39

Representation as a conditional event  $(\cdot|\cdot)$ 

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	neither/nor	5.56	6.94	26.39	50.00
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Representation as a conjunction  $(\cdot \land \cdot)$ 

Group	Response	Task Type			
		AA	AN	NA	NN
SP	speaks against	2.78	86.11	30.56	22.22
	neither/nor	4.17	11.11	61.11	76.39
	speaks for	93.06	2.78	8.33	1.39
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Representation as a material conditional  $(\cdot \supset \cdot)$ 

Group	Response	Task Type			
		AA	AN	NA	NN
SP	speaks against	2.78	86.11	30.56	22.22
	neither/nor	4.17	11.11	61.11	76.39
	speaks for	93.06	2.78	8.33	1.39
PS	speaks against	speaks against 0.00 91.67 <b>58.33</b> 47		47.22	
	neither/nor	5.56	6.94	26.39	<b>50.00</b>
	speaks for	94.44	1.39	15.28	2.78

Not yet clear what's going on here.

## Paradoxes of the material conditional

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Two paradoxes of the material conditional (conditional introduction): "If A, then B" interpreted as " $A \supset B$ "

 $\mathfrak{P}$  2+2=4

log. valid

 $\mathfrak{C}$  If the moon is made of green cheese, then 2 + 2 = 4

$$B \vdash A \supset B$$

Two paradoxes of the material conditional (conditional introduction): "If A, then B" interpreted as " $A \supset B$ "

**P** Not: The moon is made of green cheese

 $\mathfrak{C}$  If the moon is made of green cheese, then 2 + 2 = 4

log. valid

$$\neg A \vdash A \supset B$$

Two paradoxes of the material conditional (conditional introduction): "If A, then B" interpreted as " $A \supset B$ "

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Mental model theory postulates that subjects represent "basic conditionals" "If A, then B" as

implicit mental models:



log. valid

... truth conditions of the conjunction,  $A \wedge B$ 

Two paradoxes of the material conditional (conditional introduction):

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Mental model theory postulates that subjects represent "basic conditionals" "If A, then B" as

- implicit mental models
- explicit mental models:

... truth conditions of the material conditional,  $A \supset B$ 

Example (Paradox 1)  $B \therefore$  If A, then B

Premise		Conclusion	
В		$A \supset B$	(logically valid)
P(B) = x	<i>.</i> `.	$P(A \supset B) \in [x,1]$	(prob. informative)
P(B) = x		$P(A \wedge B) \in [0, x]$	(prob. informative)
P(B) = x		$P(B A) \in [0,1]$	(prob. non-informative)

#### Example (Paradox 1)

B : If A, then B

 $B \therefore$  If A, then <u>not</u>-B

Premise		Conclusion	
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P(B) = x	<i>.</i>	$P(B A) \in [0,1]$	(prob. non-informative)
В	<i>.</i>	$A \supset \neg B$	(not logically valid)
P(B) = x	<i>.</i>	$P(A \supset \neg B) \in [1-x,1]$	(prob. informative)
P(B) = x	<i>.</i>	$P(A \wedge \neg B) \in [0, 1-x]$	(prob. informative)
P(B) = x		$P(\neg B A) \in [0,1]$	(prob. non-informative)

#### Example (Paradox 1)

B : If A, then B

 $B \therefore$  If A, then <u>not</u>-B

Premise		Conclusion	
В		$A \supset B$	(logically valid)
P(B) = 1		$P(A \supset B) = 1$	(prob. informative)
P(B) = 1		$P(A \wedge B) \in [0,1]$	(pract. non-informative)
P(B)=1	<i>.</i>	$P(B A) \in [0,1]$	(prob. non-informative)
В	<i>.</i>	$A \supset \neg B$	(not logically valid)
P(B) = 1		$P(A \supset \neg B) \in [0, 1]$	(pract. non-informative)
P(B)=1		$P(A \wedge \neg B) = 0$	(prob. informative)
P(B)=1	<i>.</i>	$P(\neg B A) \in [0, 1]$	(prob. non-informative)

Example (Paradox 2) <u>Not</u>-A : If A, then B

	Conclusion	Premise	
(logically valid)	$A \supset B$	$\neg A$	
(prob. informative)	$P(A \supset B) \in [x,1]$	$P(\neg A) = x$ .	Ρ
(prob. informative)	$P(A \wedge B) \in [0, 1 - x]$	$P(\neg A) = x$ .	Ρ
(prob. non-informative)	$P(B A) \in [0,1]$	$P(\neg A) = x$ .	Ρ

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#### Example (Paradox 2)

<u>Not</u>-A : If A, then B<u>Not</u>-A : If A, then <u>not</u>-B

Premise		Conclusion	
$\neg A$		$A \supset B$	(logically valid)
$P(\neg A) = x$		$P(A \supset B) \in [x,1]$	(prob. informative)
$P(\neg A) = x$		$P(A \wedge B) \in [0, 1-x]$	(prob. informative)
$P(\neg A) = x$	÷	$P(B A) \in [0,1]$	(prob. non-informative)
$\neg A$		$A \supset \neg B$	(logically valid)
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**Experimental results** 

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Simon works in a factory that produces playing cards. He is responsible for what is printed on the cards. On each card, there is a shape (triangle, square, ...) of a certain color (green, blue, ...), like:

- ▶ green triangle, green square, green circle, ...
- blue triangle, blue square, ...
- ▶ red triangle, ...

Simon works in a factory that produces playing cards. He is responsible for what is printed on the cards.

On each card, there is a shape (triangle, square, ...) of a certain color (green, blue, ...), like:

- ▶ green triangle, green square, green circle, ...
- blue triangle, blue square, ...
- ▶ red triangle, ...

Imagine that a card got stuck in the printing machine. Simon cannot see what is printed on this card. Since Simon did observe the card production during the whole day, he is

A Pretty sure: There is a square on this card.

Considering A, how certain can Simon be that the following sentence is true?

If there is a red shape on this card, then there is a square on this card.

A Pretty sure: There is a **square** on this card.

Considering A, how certain can Simon be that the following sentence is true?

If there is a **red** shape on this card, <u>then</u> there is a **square** on this card.

Considering A, can Simon infer—at all—<u>how certain he can be</u>, that the sentence in the box is true?

□ NO, Simon cannot infer his certainty.

□ YES, Simon can infer his certainty.

A Pretty sure: There is a **square** on this card.

Considering A, how certain can Simon be that the following sentence is true?

 $\underline{If}$  there is a **red** shape on this card,  $\underline{then}$  there is a **square** on this card.

Considering A, can Simon infer—at all—<u>how certain he can be</u>, that the sentence in the box is true?

□ NO, Simon cannot infer his certainty.

□ YES, Simon can infer his certainty.

In case you ticked YES, please fill in

 $\hfill\square$  Simon can be pretty sure that the sentence in the box is false.

 $\Box$  Simon can be pretty sure that the sentence in the box is true.

Paradox 1 ( $n_1 = 16$ )



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Paradox 1 ( $n_3 = 19$ )



negated Paradox 1 ( $n_3 = 19$ )



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Paradox 2 ( $n_2 = 15$ )



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Paradox 2 ( $n_4 = 20$ )



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negated Paradox 2 ( $n_2 = 15$ )



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negated Paradox 2 ( $n_4 = 20$ )



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### Complement

If A, then B : If A, then  $\neg B$ 

Premise	Conclusion	
$A \supset B$	 $A \supset \neg B$	(not logically valid)
$P(A \supset B) = x$	 $P(A \supset \neg B) \in [1-x,1]$	(prob. informative)
$P(A \wedge B) = x$	 $P(A \wedge  eg B) \in [0,1-x]$	(prob. informative)
P(B A) = x	 $P(\neg B A) = 1 - x$	(prob. informative)

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If A, then B : If A, then  $\neg B$ 

Premise		Conclusion	
$A \supset B$		$A \supset \neg B$	(not logically valid)
$P(A \supset B) = x$		$P(A \supset \neg B) \in [1-x,1]$	(prob. informative)
$P(A \wedge B) = x$		$P(A \wedge \neg B) \in [0, 1 - x]$	(prob. informative)
P(B A) = x		$P(\neg B A) = 1 - x$	(prob. informative)
$\Lambda \supset B$		$\Lambda \supset -B$	(not logically valid)
	• •		
$P(A \supset B) = .99$	· · ·	$P(A \supset \neg B) \in [.01, 1]$	(pract. non-inform.)
$P(A \wedge B) = .99$		$P(A \wedge  eg B) \in [0,.01]$	(prob. informative)
P(B A) = .99		$P(\neg B A) = .01$	(prob. informative)

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Complement  $(n_3 + n_4 = 39)$ 



 $A \rightarrow B$   $\therefore$   $A \rightarrow \neg B$ 

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negated Complement  $(n_3 + n_4 = 39)$ 



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Paradox 3: Monotonicity (Premise strengthening)

"If A, then B" interpreted as " $A \supset B$ "

 $\mathfrak{P}_1$  If the animal is a bird, then it can fly

C If the animal is a bird and a penguin, then it can fly

log. valid

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$$A \supset B \vdash A \land C \supset B$$

#### Cautious Monotonicity

"If A, then B" interpreted as " $A \supset B$ "

- $\mathfrak{P}_1$  If the animal is a bird, then it can fly
- $\mathfrak{P}_2$  If the animal is a bird, then it is a penguin

C If the animal is a bird and a penguin, then it can fly

log. valid

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# The second premise "blocks" the conclusion

Monotonicity ( $n_3 = 19$ )



 $\blacksquare : A \to B \quad \therefore \quad C \land A \to B \\ \Box : A \to B \quad \therefore \quad A \land C \to B$ 

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# negated Monotonicity ( $n_3 = 19$ )



Cautious Monotonicity  $(n_3 = 19)$ 



negated Cautious Monotonicity  $(n_3 = 19)$ 



► Framing human inference in coherence based probability logic

- new predictions (probabilistic (non-)informativeness)
- new experimental paradigms
- incomplete probabilistic knowledge leads to probability-intervals

investigating argument forms that differentiate

► Framing human inference in coherence based probability logic

- new predictions (probabilistic (non-)informativeness)
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- investigating argument forms that differentiate
- Most participants interpret conditionals as conditional events, but...

Framing human inference in coherence based probability logic

- new predictions (probabilistic (non-)informativeness)
- new experimental paradigms
- incomplete probabilistic knowledge leads to probability-intervals

- investigating argument forms that differentiate
- Most participants interpret conditionals as conditional events, but...
- ... differences in interpretations may indicate intra- and interindividual differences

Framing human inference in coherence based probability logic

- new predictions (probabilistic (non-)informativeness)
- new experimental paradigms
- incomplete probabilistic knowledge leads to probability-intervals

- investigating argument forms that differentiate
- Most participants interpret conditionals as conditional events, but...
- ... differences in interpretations may indicate intra- and interindividual differences
- Alternative interpretations, beyond  $\cdot | \cdot, \cdot \supset \cdot$ , and  $\cdot \land \cdot$ ?

### Acknowledgments

- EUROCORES programme LogICCC "The Logic of Causal and Probabilistic Reasoning in Uncertain Environments" (European Science Foundation)
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Papers to download:

www.users.sbg.ac.at/~pfeifern/

# Appendix

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## Design Experiment 1

- **•** Two conditions: Group 1 ( $n_1 = 16$ ) and Group 2 ( $n_2 = 15$ )
- Tasks: Each group 20 tasks (10 arguments affirmative & negated)
- Group 1: Five Modus Ponens tasks and five Paradox 1 tasks with varying uncertainties of the categorical premises ("pretty sure" / "absolutely certain", e.g.);

Modus Ponens: from 
$$If A$$
, then  $B$  and  $A$  infer  $B$   
Paradox 1: from  $B$  infer  $If A$ , then  $B$ 

Group 2: Five Modus Ponens tasks and five Paradox 2 tasks with varying uncertainties of the categorical premises ("pretty sure" / "absolutely certain", e.g.);

Modus Ponens: from 
$$If A$$
, then  $B$  and  $A$  infer  $B$ 

Paradox 2: from 
$$\neg A$$
 infer If A, then B

## Design Experiment 2

- **Two conditions**: Group 1 ( $n_3 = 19$ ) and Group 2 ( $n_4 = 20$ )
- Tasks: Each group 20 tasks (affirmative & negated)



System P: Rationality postulates for nonmonotonic reasoning (Kraus, Lehmann & Magidor, 1990)

Reflexivity (axiom):  $\alpha \sim \alpha$ Left logical equivalence: from  $\models \alpha \equiv \beta$  and  $\alpha \triangleright \gamma$  infer  $\beta \triangleright \gamma$ Right weakening: from  $\models \alpha \supset \beta$  and  $\gamma \triangleright \alpha$  infer  $\gamma \triangleright \beta$ Or: from  $\alpha \vdash \gamma$  and  $\beta \vdash \gamma$  infer  $\alpha \lor \beta \vdash \gamma$ Cut: from  $\alpha \wedge \beta \succ \gamma$  and  $\alpha \succ \beta$  infer  $\alpha \succ \gamma$ Cautious monotonicity: from  $\alpha \succ \beta$  and  $\alpha \succ \gamma$  infer  $\alpha \land \beta \succ \gamma$ And (derived rule): from  $\alpha \succ \beta$  and  $\alpha \succ \gamma$  infer  $\alpha \succ \beta \land \gamma$ 

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System P: Rationality postulates for nonmonotonic reasoning (Kraus, Lehmann & Magidor, 1990)

Reflexivity (axiom):  $\alpha \sim \alpha$ Left logical equivalence: from  $\models \alpha \equiv \beta$  and  $\alpha \mid \sim \gamma$  infer  $\beta \mid \sim \gamma$ Right weakening: from  $\models \alpha \supset \beta$  and  $\gamma \models \alpha$  infer  $\gamma \models \beta$ Or: from  $\alpha \vdash \gamma$  and  $\beta \vdash \gamma$  infer  $\alpha \lor \beta \vdash \gamma$ Cut: from  $\alpha \wedge \beta \succ \gamma$  and  $\alpha \succ \beta$  infer  $\alpha \succ \gamma$ Cautious monotonicity: from  $\alpha \succ \beta$  and  $\alpha \succ \gamma$  infer  $\alpha \land \beta \succ \gamma$ And (derived rule): from  $\alpha \succ \beta$  and  $\alpha \succ \gamma$  infer  $\alpha \succ \beta \land \gamma$ 

#### Semantics for System P

- Normal world semantics (Kraus, Lehmann & Magidor '90)
- Possibility semantics: α ⊢ β iff Π(A ∧ B) > Π(A ∧ ¬B) (e.g., Benferhat, Dubois & Prade '97)
  - Empirical support: Da Silva Neves, Bonnefon, & Raufaste ('02), Benferhat, Bonnefon, Da Silva Neves ('05)
- Inhibition nets (Leitgeb '01, '04)
- Probability semantics
  - ▶ Infinitesimal:  $\alpha \succ \beta$  iff  $P(\beta|\alpha) = 1 \epsilon$  (e.g., Adams '75)
  - Noninfinitesimal: α ⊢ β iff P(β|α) > .5 (e.g., Gilio '02; Biazzo, Gilio, Lukasiewicz, Sanfilippo, '05)

- ▶ ...
  - Empirical support: Pfeifer & Kleiter ('03, '05, '06)

Modus Ponens  $(n_1 + n_2 = 31)$ 



Modus Ponens ( $n_3 = 19$ )



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negated Modus Ponens  $(n_1 + n_2 = 31)$ 



negated Modus Ponens ( $n_3 = 19$ )



 $\Box: A, A \to B \quad \therefore \quad \neg B$ 

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Modus Tollens ( $n_4 = 20$ )



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negated Modus Tollens ( $n_4 = 20$ )



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Irrelevance  $(n_3 + n_4 = 39)$ 







No

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 $A \rightarrow B$   $\therefore$   $A \rightarrow C$ 

negated Irrelevance  $(n_3 + n_4 = 39)$ 



Yes negated Irrelevance



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No

 $A \rightarrow B$   $\therefore$   $A \rightarrow \neg C$