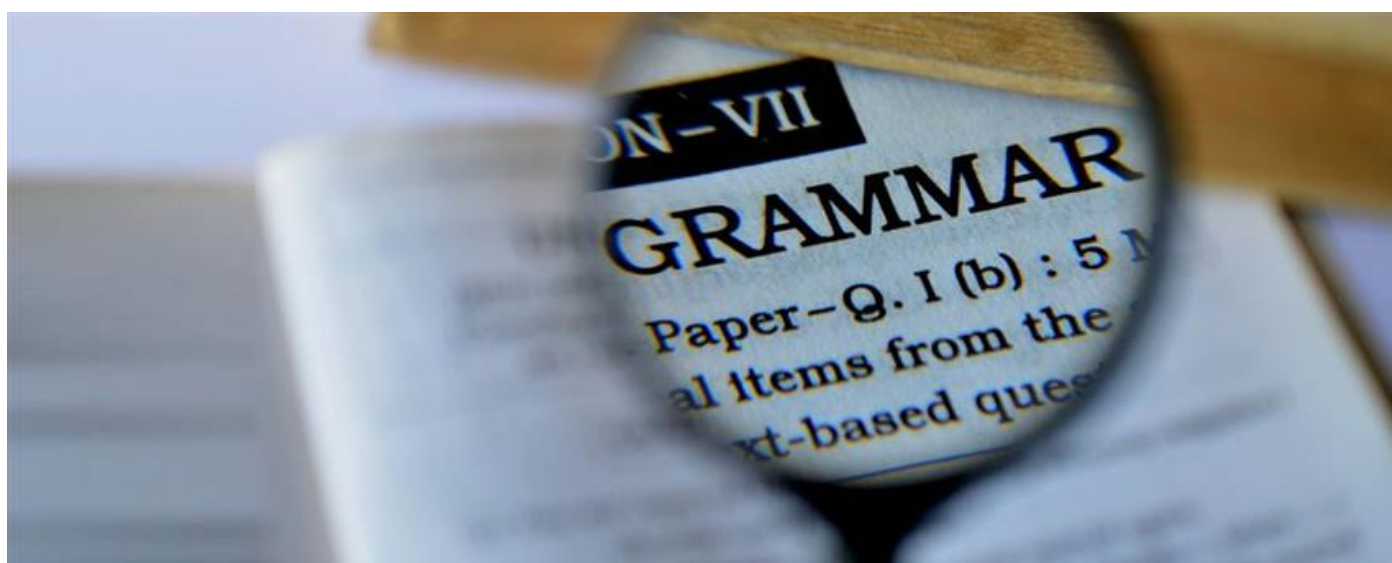# "If-then": Using Conditional Sentences in Academic Writing

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https://www.enago.com/academy/ifthen-using-conditional-sentences-in-academic-writing/

Conditional sentences are statements of an "if-then" or "unless-then" situation (although "then" is not used), or a probability. These sentences present situations and their possible outcomes. Conditional sentences are often used to discuss the results of the research studies or are part of a research hypothesis statement.

Conditional sentences are perfectly acceptable and, in many cases, necessary to state and test a condition and its outcome. Most authors of the scientific papers will use these sentences in their abstracts to discuss the reasons to conduct their study. So, it is important to frame them correctly.

One way of writing conditional sentences correctly is using Trinka – world's first AI-powered grammar checker and language enhancement tool custom designed for academic writing. Its smart features help you in incorporating all the requirements of academic writing such as formal tone, consistency, style guide preferences and much more! Moreover, Trinka corrects advance grammar errors unique to technical writing which includes conditional sentences, too.

Types of Conditional Sentences

Conditional sentences are constructed using two clauses—the *if* (or *unless*) clause and the *main* clause. There are five types of conditional sentences. It is important to understand each because each conveys a different meaning. Some conditional sentences refer to the general truths and others to hypothetical situations.

- *Zero conditional sentences* refer to the general truth about a situation. These sentences state that one condition always results in the same outcome. For example:

    If I <u>don't</u> turn on my air conditioner, my house <u>is</u> hot.

Note that the both clauses are in the <u>present tense.</u>

- *First conditional sentences* present a situation in which a future outcome is not ensured. For example:

    <u>If</u> you eat your broccoli, you <u>will</u> feel great.

Note that the <u>present tense</u> is used in the <u>if</u> clause and the <u>future</u> tense in the main clause.

- *Second conditional sentences* express <u>if</u> clauses and results that are extremely unlikely, such as those we "wish for." For example:

    <u>If</u> I <u>had</u> control over the food sources, I <u>would</u> end world hunger.

Note the use of the <u>simple past tense</u> in the <u>if</u> clause and the verb (i.e., would, could, should) in the main clause.

- *Third conditional sentences* are a bit different. They suggest that the result would be different had the past been different. For example:

    <u>If</u> you <u>had</u> told me you <u>were</u> hungry, I <u>would have</u> bought food for you.

Note that the conditions did not happen. The <u>past perfect tense</u> (had + past participle form of the verb) is used in the <u>if</u> clause and the verb (would) plus "have" plus the past participle of the verb was used in the main clause.

- *Mixed type conditional sentences* refer to something in the past but continuing into the present; however, the past condition and the results are not real. For example,

    <u>If</u> I <u>had learned</u> to ride sooner, I <u>would be</u> a top rodeo star by now.

Note that <u>the past perfect verb</u> is used in the <u>if</u> clause and the present conditional verb is used in the main clause.

<u>Punctuating these conditional sentences</u> is simple. Use a comma to separate the <u>if</u> clause from the main clause when the <u>if</u> clause comes first. Again, <u>Trinka</u> can help you in the punctuating the sentences correctly, within minutes!

Some Exceptions to the Rules

For example, in the following sentence, we use the simple future verb in the <u>if</u> clause:

>   If turmeric <u>will ease</u> my arthritis pain, I <u>will take</u> some every day.

Note that the action in the <u>if</u> clause hasn't happened yet, but will happen after the action in the main clause is taken.

The use of <u>were to</u> in the <u>if</u> clause is another exception. This phrase is used to emphasize the importance of the result of something that *might* happen. For example:

>   If she <u>were to</u> fall on that arm again, she <u>would have to</u> have surgery.

The action in the main clause is emphasized by <u>were to</u> in the <u>if</u> clause.

Importance to Researchers

In your research, you are most likely going to either perform your own experiments or use the results of others' experiments to conduct a meta-analysis. Whichever the case, you will need to <u>report your findings and assessments</u>. In doing so, there will be situations in which the results of your study or even future studies are based on certain conditions. Your conclusions are based on evidence, data, or theory. You might present your conclusions as likelihoods that something has already happened, is currently happening, or will happen at some point. This is where conditional sentence is a great help.

Writing conditional sentences might appear to be a difficult thing to do, but with practice and good understanding of the above mentioned rules, you can perfect it. Alternatively, you can check out <u>Trinka</u>! Its robust AI facilitates you in integrating all the conventions and language requirements of academic writing. Along with, conditional sentences Trinka can also assist you in logic, syntax, technical spellings and much more!

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