ON THE HISTORY OF CONCESSIVE CONNECTIVES IN ENGLISH. DIACHRONIC AND SYNCHRONIC EVIDENCE

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The paper examines the historical development of concessive connectives and concessive sentences in English. Concessivity is shown to be a derived notion and the late development of this category, both ontogenetically and phylogenetically, is shown to be reflected in the morphology of the connectives: concessive connectives derive either from conditional connectives, from expressions asserting remarkable co-occurrence or co-existence, or from notions earlier only applicable to human agents or experiencers. Synchronic data taken from a variety of languages are shown to support the claims made on the basis of data taken from the history of English alone. The historical discussion throws some interesting light on the meaning ·and function of concessive constructions in present-day English.

1. Introduction

Concessive sentences and the connectives that signal concessive relations are remarkably different from other adverbial sentences and other connectives in a number of ways. In contrast to other markers of adverbial relations, concessive connectives (i.e., prepositions like *despite*, conjunctions like *although* and conjuncts like *nevertheless*, to use distinctions made in Quirk et al. (1972)) have a fairly transparent formal make-up and etymology. Concessive connectives are usually complex in nature, but their components are easy to identify and can easily be related to another original, or at least, earlier meaning. Moreover, in European languages at least, a wide variety of concessive markers is available and new items are constantly added to this class. Most of these connectives seemed to have developed fairly late in the history of a language. There were few, if any, clearly

concessive markers in Old English (cf. Burnham (1911), Quirk (1954: 14)); Old High German (cf. Mensing (1891)), or Old French (cf. Lerch (1925)). In language acquisition, too, concessive constructions come in fairly late, by far later than conditionals, for instance, which are acquired fairly late themselves (cf. Bowerman (1983)).

In contrast to other adverbial clause types, concessive clauses cannot be the focus of a particle or adjunct like *only, also, even*:

(1a) Q, only because p
(1b) Q, only if p.
(1c) Q, only when p.
(1d) Q, only in order to p.
(1e) *Q, only although p.

Finally, concessive sentences are a dead-end street for interpretative augmentation. Several types of complex sentences (cf. (2a–d)) have a concessive reading under certain contextual conditions, whereas sentences explicitly marked as concessives can never be interpreted as expressing another adverbial relation:

(2a) I have to do all this work and you are watching TV.
(2b) There was a funny smile on Dickie's face, as if Dickie were pulling his leg by pretending to fall in with his plan when he hadn't the least intention to fall in with it.[1]
(2c) This house is no less comfortable because it dispenses with air conditioning.
(2d) Poor as he is, he spends a lot of money on horses.

The present paper investigates the historical development of concessive connectives in English. In order to get a more general, cross-linguistic, perspective on this question, however, I will also take a brief look at a variety of other languages. Historical semantic studies are usually based on data taken from several stages of one language or perhaps a family of genetically-related languages. It has been clearly demonstrated in some recent work, however, that synchronic data taken from a wide variety of unrelated languages can be as valuable a tool in historical semantics (cf. Bybee and Pagliuca (1985)). Our comparative approach will enable us to

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[1]   From P. Highsmith, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978, p. 75.

provide a more solid basis for our hypotheses concerning semantic changes in English by showing them to be instances of general developments observable in many languages. Finally, I hope that my historical semantic study will also shed some light on the meaning and use of concessive constructions in present-day English.

2. Basic distinctions

Synchronically, a strict distinction has to be drawn between conditionals and concessives, on the one hand, as well as between concessive conditionals ('irrelevance' conditionals) and concessives proper, on the other (cf. Quirk et al. (1972: 749 ff.)). Like many distinctions drawn in the area of adverbial clauses, these distinctions can best be made on the basis of semantic criteria, i.e., by looking at the semantic relations existing between the proposition expressed by the complex sentence and those expressed by the component clauses. Conditionals and concessives are easy to distinguish semantically: the former entail neither their antecedent nor their consequent, whereas the latter entail both of their component clauses. A sentence like *Even though Fred is English, he speaks fluent French* can only be true if both the subordinate and the main clause are true. Irrelevance (concessive) conditionals like (3a–c) have properties in common with both conditionals and concessives and thus are sometimes grouped together with the former and sometimes with the latter:[2]

(3a) Whether he is right or not, we must support him.
(3b) However much advice you give him, he does exactly what he wants to do.
(3c) Even if nobody helps me, I'll manage.

In contrast to simple conditionals, irrelevance (concessive) conditionals relate a series of antecedent conditions to a consequent. This series can be specified by a disjunction as in (3a), by a universal or 'free choice' quantifier as in (3b) or by a scalar expression as in (3c). A characteristic

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[2] Martin (1982), for instance, does not distinguish between concessive conditionals like (3a–b) and concessives. In Thompson and Longacre (forthcoming), sentences of type (3a–b) ('indefinite concessives') are grouped together with definite concessive clauses introduced by *although* and are thus distinguished from concessive conditionals like (3c).

property of such 'free choice' quantifiers is that they signal free choice in the substitution of values for a variable in the antecedent. In other words, the universe of discourse must be assumed to be very large or even unrestricted. Concessive conditionals of type (3b) are related to *Wh*-questions in the same way in which those of type (3a) are related to Yes–No questions. In (3c) a series of antecedents is specified by asserting a conditional relationship for an extreme (unlikely) value on a scale. By implication, this relationship can also be assumed to obtain for other values on the same scale. The consequent is asserted to hold under any of the conditions specified by the antecedent. In most cases, concessive conditionals will therefore entail their consequent and, to simplify matters slightly, we will assume that this is always the case. The three constructions discussed so far can thus be distinguished on the basis of semantic criteria along the following lines (cf. König and Eisenberg (1984)):

(A) Conditionals
    typical form: if p, then q
    entailments: –
(B) Concessive conditionals ('irrelevance conditionals')
    typical form: (a) Whether p or not-p, q
                  (b) $(\forall x)$ (if p_x, q)
                  (c) Even if p, q
    entailments: q
(C) Concessives
    typical form: although p, q
    entailments: p, q

The semantic properties just mentioned do not exhaust the contribution that concessive connectives make to the meaning of a sentence. The use of such connectives implies that, by normal standards, there is an incompatibility or conflict between the facts described by p and q: 'p' and 'q' do not normally go together. This implication can roughly be described as follows:

(4) Normally (if p, then not-q)

Because of the abnormal projection behaviour of this implication – it survives embedding into negative, interrogative and conditional contexts

(cf. (5a–c)) – and because of its cancellability in reductio arguments (cf. (6)), we will regard it as a presupposition:

(5a) It is not the case that Fred wants to go out for a walk even though it is raining.

(5b) Does Fred want to go out for a walk even though it is raining?

(5c) If Fred wants to go out for a walk even though it is raining, he must be crazy.

(6) Even though I put this chemical into the water, the water does not change its colour. This shows that this chemical does not affect the colour of water in any way.

One reason why concessive conditionals have so often been grouped together with concessives is the fact that they, too, may carry an implication or suggestion of incompatibility between two situations. Given the fact that such conditionals relate a set or series of antecedents to a consequent, one of those conditions (either p or not-p or one substitution instance for the variable in p_x) will often be regarded as being in conflict with the consequent. But, although concessive (irrelevance) conditionals and concessive sentences are grouped together in the description of many languages, a clear distinction between these two types of sentences can be made in most European languages today. As illustrated in (B) and (C) above, sentences introduced by *even though* or *although* always entail their component clauses, sentences introduced by *even if* never entail their antecedents, although they may assume a factual character in certain contexts. We will return to this problem below.

Another distinction that needs to be drawn at this point is the one between concessive relations and adversative relations, i.e., the relations typically expressed in English by *although* or *even though*, on the one hand, and those expressed by *but*, on the other. The analysis given above for concessive connectives is not applicable to sentences like (7a). The substitution of a concessive connective for the coordinating conjunction *but* produces a very odd result in this case:

(7a) He certainly knows his job, but he has got blue eyes.

(7b) ?Even though/in spite of the fact that he knows his job, he has got blue eyes.

Unlike concessive connectives like *even though* or *although*, *but* and its

counterparts in other languages do not express any kind of incompatibility between the facts denoted by the clauses they connect. What adversative conjunctions like *but* do is to relate two propositions that support contradictory conclusions. A sentence like (7a) makes perfect sense in a context where somebody is looking for a good actor with brown eyes (cf. Moeschler and de Spengler (1981)). Since there is no incompatibility between the facts expressed by the relevant clauses, whatever norms one may have in mind, a concessive connective like *even though* is out of place. The best semantic analysis that can be given for *but* or its counterpart *mais* in French, is still the one given by Anscombre and Ducot (1977). According to that analysis, a sentence of the form 'p but q' expresses that the first clause 'p' is an argument for a conclusion 'r', whereas the second clause 'q' supports the very opposite conclusion 'not-r' and this second conclusion carries more weight in the whole argument (cf. Anscombre and Ducrot (1977: 28), Moeschler and de Spengler (1981)).

(8) *p* but *q*
     (a) $p \rightarrow r$
     (b) $q \rightarrow$ not-*r*
     (c) *q* carries more weight

Applied to our example (7a) this means that the overall impact of the relevant utterance is that the speaker does not consider the actor as suitable after all. 'Adversative' relations can thus be defined as relations between propositions that support contradictory conclusions with the main point of the speaker expressed by the second proposition. Concessive relations, by contrast, are based on conditional, frequently causal, relations between events. What is asserted in a concessive sentence does not normally go together.

The preceding remarks concerning the differences between adversative relations and concessive relations should not obscure one essential point of similarity: in both cases something is suspended: the significance of *p* as an argument in favour of some conclusion the speaker wants the hearer to draw, in the former case, and the applicability of certain norms concerning causal or conditional relations to a current situation, in the second case. Finally, I would like to point out that the distinction drawn above between adversative relations and concessive relations is primarily based on semantic and/or pragmatic criteria. On the formal side, the distinction does not seem to be strictly drawn in either Modern English or Modern

German. Some connectives, as for instance *in spite of, despite* or *even though*, only express concessive relations, but *although* seems to be usable for both kinds of relations:

(9a) Although we did not lose, we did not win either.
(9b) We did not lose, but we did not win either.

But, too, seems to cover the whole ground. This, taken together with the fact that not all languages have concessive connectives whereas all seem to have adversative conjunctions like *but*, suggests that adversative relations are more general and basic and the concessive relations are a specific variety of the former.

3. From Old English *Đeah* to Modern English *although*

The only connective in Old English that could possibly be described as having a concessive meaning is *þeah* (as well as its phonetic and orthographic variants). OE. *þeah* is related to Gothic *þau + h* 'if + also/and', to German *doch* and Dutch *toch*. The earlier Gothic cognate shows that this form has a clear conditional origin and was originally used to express a concessive-conditional relationship. OE. *þeah* was frequently used correlatively, i.e., both clauses, the 'dependent' and the 'independent' one, were introduced by this connective.

(10) Đeah (þe) *p*, þeah *q*.

This correlative use underlies, of course, the use of Mod. E. *though* as both conjunction (cf. (11a)) and conjunct (cf. (11b)):

(11a) Though R.'s victory was almost certain, I must admit to being taken aback by the size of the landslide.
(11b) I would certainly like to help you. I cannot do it right away, though.

A closer look at the way *þeah* and its variants are used reveals that these forms are not always used in a concessive sense. Rather, they are often used in a concessive-conditional sense, i.e., in the sense of Mod. E. *even if*. The following examples show that this use can be found throughout the history of English:[3]

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[3] None of the examples given in (12a–d) commits the speaker (or writer) to the truth of

(12a) Hwaet fremaeð þam men, *þeah* he al middaneard on his aʒene aeht
      istreone. (OE. Homilies 132, 25)
      'What use would it be to man, if he called the whole world his
      own.'

(12b) Com ʒe þere, ʒe be kylled, may þe knyʒt rede
      Trawe ʒe me þat trewely *þaz* ʒe had twenty lyues to spende. (Ga-
      wain, 2111–2)
      'If you go there, you will be killed … even if you had twenty lives
      to spend.'

(12c) I'll speak to it *though* hell itself should gape and bid me hold my
      peace. (Shakespeare, Hamlet I. II)

(12d) It is never pleasant to be a traitor to the man who is paying you,
      even *though* he be a knave. (1900, Visser p. 905)

That *þeah* and related forms could even be used in a purely conditional
sense is suggested by such entries in the *OED* which are glossed as 'nearly
coinciding with *if* but usually retaining some notion of opposition' (*OED*,
s.v. *though* II. 4.):

(13) No mervell *þouʒe* his herte wer in grete mournyng. (c 1200, Beryn
     953)
     'No wonder that/if his heart was in great sorrow.'

Data given in the *OED* in which *þeah* and its cognates are simply glossed
as 'if, supposing that' and the equivalence between *as if* and *as though*
in Modern English point into the same direction.
    OE. *þeah* could also occur in combination with *swa, and swa, hwaeðre*[4]

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the clause introduced by *þeah* or any of its cognates. In fact, all of these clauses contain a
scalar expression, i.e., they specify a highly unlikely or extreme value for the conditional
relationship expressed by the sentence in question and thus, by implication, a whole series
of values.

[4] Quirk (1954: 14) describes *hwaeðere*, together with *þeah* as the only explicit sign of con-
cession. OE. *hwaeðere* (cf. Goth. *hvaþar*; Lat. *uter* and OHG *hwedar*) was used as a noun
phrase (quantifier) in the sense of 'either of the two' and 'which of the two', as a conjunction
in the sense of Mod. E. 'whether' and as a conjunct in the sense of 'however, yet'. All
cognates of this form in other languages clearly show that the quantifier meaning is the basic
one: the interrogative quantifier ('which of the two') underlies the use as interrogative
conjunction and the 'assertive' quantifier 'either of the two' underlies the use as concessive
adverb (conjunct). In order to relate the quantifier meaning to the concessive meaning, we
have to assume that this adverb was originally used as a marker of a concessive-conditional
relationship: '*P* or not-*p*. In either case *q*'.

and *efne swa*. Whether such combinations invariably resulted in a clear concessive meaning is difficult to determine on the basis of the available evidence. What is clear, however, is that from the OE. period on a phenomenon called 'strengthening' in the relevant literature is becoming more and more frequent: *Ðeah* co-occurs and ultimately combines with emphatic elements like *all* and this results in a construction that is clearly concessive in the sense described above.

> (14a) Forþan ic hine sweorode swebban nelle, ... *þeah* ic eal maege. (Beowulf, 679)
> 'Therefore I do not want to kill him with the sword, although I could it.'
> (14b) And *þuf* all he war not wellewillid þerto, yit he was compellid to drynk. (1450, Alphab. Tales 295, 15)
> 'And although he was not inclined to do it, yet he was compelled to drink.'

Here again we find evidence for the assumption that a close connexion originally existed between conditionals and clauses introduced by *þeah*, because strengthening can also be observed in conditionals introduced by *if* and those marked by inversion:

> (15a) *Al were* he ifulled of de (holi) goste ... ʒet ne durste he wunian among men. (Ancr. R. 70, 10, c. 1225)
> 'Although he was filled with the holy ghost, he dared not live among men.'
> (15b) This oyntment es precyouse *all if* the spycery in it-selfe be noghte full clene... (c. 1340, Hampole, Prose Treatises, IX, 36, 32)
> (15c) *Albeit* that a great number of them were slain, yet fell they out again. (*OED*, s.v. *albeit*, 1603)

Finally, we may note that conditional clauses and those introduced by *þeah/though* both selected the subjunctive mood and lost that marking at exactly the same time (cf. Stein (fortcoming)).

4. Semantic domains and concessive connectives

On the basis of the historical development undergone by the one connective

considered so far it seems justified to assume that at least some concessive connectives ultimately derive from conditionals, that they later develop an interpretation equivalent to Mod. E. *even if* and are finally differentiated from conditionals. Of course, *although* is not the only concessive connective in English, though it is a very frequent one. So, the hypotheses formulated so far are certainly in need of further support from the study of other connectives in English. But before we consider some of those other concessive connectives, we should broaden out the perspective of this investigation by looking at a variety of other languages. Such a cross-linguistic study shows that concessive connectives are typically composite in their formal make-up. Furthermore, as has already been mentioned, it is possible in most cases to identify other meanings and functions of these components and thus relate concessivity to other semantic domains. By investigating this affinity to other semantic domains we can divide concessive connectives into four groups and thus identify various general sources for the development of concessives (cf. König (1985)).

(i) First, there is a close relationship between concessivity and universal quantification. Concessive connectives in many languages contain a component which is also used as a universal quantifier (determiner) like E. *all* or a free-choice quantifier like E. *any* or *-ever*. This use as a quantifier (determiner), however, is not the only use of the elements in question. Frequently, they are also used as emphatic or 'factual' particles like Dutch *al* 'already'. We therefore include into our first group all connectives containing components that also have a use as universal quantifiers, as free-choice quantifiers, or as factual, emphatic particles as well as those that directly express the notion of choice or volition like Russian *chotja* (cf. Haiman (1974)):

(16) E. *although, albeit, for all, all the same, however, anyway*; G. *bei all, allerdings, wiewohl, zwar*; Lat. *quamquam* (cf. *quisquis* 'whoever'); F. *toutefois, tout...que, (com)bien que*; Finn. *vaikka* 'although' (cf. *vaikka kuka* 'whoever', *kuka* 'who'); Dutch *ook al, hoewel*; Hung. *habar* 'although' (cf. *ha* 'if', *ki* 'who', *barki* 'whoever'); Russ. *vsë-taki, chotja*; Chin. *swei ran...dou/ye* 'although...all/also', etc.

(ii) Secondly, concessive connectives are frequently composed of an earlier conditional (like E. *if*) or temporal connective (like E. *when*) and/or an additive focus particle like E. *even/also/too*. Instead of focus particles

we may also find emphatic, factual particles, so that our second group overlaps to a certain extent with our first:

(17) E. *even though, even so*; G. *ob-gleich, ob-wohl, ob-schon, wenn-gleich, wenn ... auch, obzwar*; Lat. *et-si*; Gk. *ei-kai*; Dutch *ofschoon*; F. *quand même*; Finn. *jos-kin* 'if-also', *sitten-kin* 'then-also'; Serb. Croat. *i-ako* 'also-if'; Jap. *keredo(mo)* 'though', *mo* 'also'; Malayalam *-enkil-um* 'if-also'; Ewe *né-ha* 'if-and'; Sesotho *le ha* 'and/even if', etc.

(iii) Members of our third group all imply remarkable co-occurrence or co-existence of two facts as part of their literal or earlier meaning. This implication may be expressed in different ways: By asserting that one fact 'p' does not prevent or affect another fact 'q', by asserting simultaneity between two facts or unhindered continuation of one fact given another, to mention only the most frequent ways of expressing this coexistence:

(18) E. *nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, just the same, regardless, still, yet*; G. *gleichwohl, dennoch, ungeachtet, unbeschadet*; Lat. *nihilo minus*; F. *tout de même, cependant, n'empêche que*; Sp. *aunque, con todo, todavia*; Turk. *bununla beraber* 'together with this'; Hung. *mégis* 'still-too'; Jap. *nagara* 'while, although'; Dutch *niettemin, niettegenstaande*; Turk. *iken* 'while, though', etc.

(iv) Members of our fourth group derive from notions such as 'obstinacy, spite, contempt', i.e., from notions originally only applicable to human agents or experiencers.

(19) E. *in spite of, despite*; F. *en dépit de, au mépris de, mal-gré* (cf. *bon gré mal gré* 'willy-nilly'); G. *trotz, trotzdem*, Sp. *a pesar de* (*pesar* 'sorrow, regret'); Dutch. *ondanks* (*ondank* 'ingratitude'; Mid. Dutch *te enes ondanke* 'against somebody's will'[5]), *in weerwil van* (cf. G. *Widerwille*); Arabic *raḡman* (*raḡama* 'compel'); Turk. *raḡmen*, etc.

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[5] Dutch *ondanks* 'despite' is of course not only related to Mod. Dutch *ondank* 'ingratitude' but also to *denken* 'think' or G. *Gedanke* 'thought'. MHG. *undankes*, OE. *unôonces* meant 'against one's will' just like MNL. *te enes ondanke* (cf. de Vries (1971) s.v. *ondanks*). So I am not claiming that *ondanks* derives from the notion 'ingratitude', but only that it derives from a concept originally only attributable to human subjects. We may also note at this point that the non-negative counterpart of *ondanks* and equivalent elements in other languages develop a use as a causal connective (cf. G. *dank*; Dutch *dankzij*; E. *owing to, thanks to*; F. *grâce à*, etc.

5. Paths of semantic change leading to concessivity

The affinities discussed in the preceding section suggest that some very general processes of semantic change underlie the development of concessive connectives in a wide variety of languages. In the following section we will examine how these processes have operated in English and to what results they have led.

Let us, first of all, return to our analysis of the development leading from OE. *þeah* to Mod. E. *though*. Our assumption that some concessives connectives in English derive from conditional connectives now receives some additional support from cross-linguistic considerations. Indeed, it seems plausible to assume that two processes led to the development of concessive connectives from conditional markers, which we will call (a) *strengthening*, and (b) *reinterpretation*. We have already used the term *strengthening* in order to describe the difference between a clause introduced by *þeah/though* or *if* (or a clause exhibiting inversion) and the corresponding clauses additionally marked by *all*. The following two examples taken from Chaucer provide further illustration of the relevant distinction:

(20a) Be blythe, though thou ryde upon a jade.   (Nun Priest's tale, 4002)
(20b) We moven nat, al thoughe we hadde it sworn.   (Canon's Yeoman Tale, 681)

The subordinate clause in (20a) is clearly not factual and thus can only be a concessive conditional rather than a concessive proper, whereas (20b) is clearly an example of a concessive sentence. The significance of this process of strengthening was pointed out by Mensing as early as 1891:

'Will man andeuten, dass es sich trotz der conditionalen Konjunktion *ob* um ein concessives Verhältnis handelt, so hat man dazu zwei Mittel: entweder kann der Nachsatz durch eine Adversativpartikel hervorgehoben, oder der Nebensatz durch eine beschränkende Partikel (*ouch, halt, joch*) verstärkt werden.'   (Mensing 1891: 69 ff.)

Burnham (1911: 114) pointed to the same phenomenon in connection with her discussion of the difference between *for* and *for eall*:

'... when *for* is accompanied by *eall* the contrast between the "cause" referred to and its "ineffectiveness" becomes more explicit, and the meaning of the preposition shifts to "in spite of".'

What exactly does this process of 'strengthening' involve? Recall that

conditionals do not entail their antecedents. But, even though they are typically used in situations where the antecedent is not assumed to be true, they are compatible with a factual interpretation. What emphatic elements like *all* do is to give a factual character to a clause which expresses no commitment of the speaker with respect to its truth or falsity without such a particle. The relevant effect can nicely be demonstrated in connection with G. *schon*, the German counterpart of E. *already* or Dutch *al*. The combination of *schon* and the originally conditional conjunction *ob* results in a concessive connective (*obschon*, cf. Dutch *ofschoon*). *Schon* does not have exactly the same effect on a clause introduced by *wenn*, the most frequent conditional connective in German. What this particle does bring about, however, is to give a conditional clause that factual character which we have identified as the result of 'strengthening'. In the second, but not the first, of the two following examples, the speaker is clearly committed to the truth of the first clause:

(21a) Wenn ich nicht mitkommen darf, will ich fernsehen.
      'If I am not allowed to come along, I want to watch television.'
(21b) Wenn ich schon nicht mitkommen darf, will ich wenigstens fernsehen.
      'Given that I am not allowed to come along ....'

For connectives like E. *even though*, *even so* and most of the examples listed in (14a–b) a somewhat different development must be assumed to have taken place. Most of the connectives listed in (14a–b) have the following general form and were thus originally markers of a concessive-conditional relationship:

(22) also/even + if/when

It was pointed out above that concessive conditionals introduced by a focus particle like *even* frequently entail their consequent. One condition which is essential for this to be the case is that the whole antecedent and not only a part of it should be the focus of *even*. This is the case in the first, but not in the second of the following two examples.[6]

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[6] There seems to be another distinction overtly drawn in German but not in English which has to do with the question of whether a concessive conditional of type (3c) entails its consequent or not. A clause introduced by *selbst wenn* 'even if' in German may but need not count as first constituent of the relevant complex sentence. Such a clause may thus be

(23a) Even if he is a little slow, he is actually quite intelligent.
(23b) Even if you drink just a little, your boss will fire you.

For reasons which cannot be developed in detail in this paper the underlying general form of a sentence like (23a), which also serves best as a starting point for a semantic interpretation of *even*, can roughly be described as follows:[7]

(24) even (*p*, if *x q*)

What *even* contributes to the meaning of a sentence like (23a) is the implication that there are other conditions (i.e., other antecedents) for which the consequent is true as well as the implication that the given antecedent is the most unlikely and therefore most surprising candidate (of all the alternatives under consideration) for this relationship. This brief analysis should make it clear that *even if*-conditionals have two features in common with concessives; (i) the consequent is entailed, and (ii) there is an incompatibility between antecedent and consequent. The only difference concerns the antecedent, which is not factual in concessive conditionals. But this factuality can be provided by the context. Consider the following dialogue:

(25) A: I was in France for a year.
      B: If you were in France for a year, your French must be excellent.

In such a situation the antecedent of a conditional is given in the immediately preceding co-text and is therefore given or entailed by the dialogue as a whole (cf. Akatsuka (1985)). The same phenomenon can be observed in the following example with *even if*:

(26) It was the loneliness of the neighbourhood, they supposed, that

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followed by the finite verb of the main clause (cf. (i)), but the finite verb can also appear in third position (cf. (ii)):

(i) Selbst wenn Paul nicht kommen kann, gehe ich zur Versammlung.
(ii) Selbst wenn Paul nicht kommen kann, ich gehe zur Versammlung.
    'Even if Paul cannot come, I am going to the meeting.'

The construction type (ii) always entails its consequent, whereas type (i) only sometimes does.
[7] Cf. Karttunen and Peters (1979), Bennett (1982), König (1981) and Jacobs (1983) for a detailed discussion of the meaning of *even* and that of its counterparts in German.

> kept the house next to theirs empty (...) The house stood two hundred yards from the Bartleby's and A. liked looking out of the window now and then and seeing it, even if it was empty. (P. Highsmith, *Suspension of Mercy*, p. 6)

Given these facts it seems therefore plausible that the following steps led to the development of the concessive connectives listed in (17): originally markers of a concessive-conditional relationship, these connectives were frequently used in factual contexts like (25) or (26). This factuality came gradually to be associated with the connective themselves, which thus developed into genuine concessive connectives. The development in question was undergone by *even though* and *even so* (< *even if so*) but not by *even if.*

The connectives listed in (19) are all based on attitudes or actions which originally could only be predicated of human agents or human experiencers. In a general process of bleaching these relational concepts were also applied to propositions, thus giving rise to concessive connectives. This process of 'bleaching' is of course only a special manifestation of the general type of semantic change leading from 'concrete' to 'abstract' (cf. Kronasser's Law, Kronasser (1952)).

The common feature of the connectives listed in (18) is that they all express co-occurrence or co-existence of two facts as part of their literal or original meaning. More often than not this co-occurrence is emphatically asserted, especially by denying that one fact affected or prevented the other one. It is plausible to assume that the concessive implications that these connectives now have as part of their conventional meaning originally were the result of some interpretative augmentation of their literal meaning. This principle of interpretative augmentation can still be seen at work in sentences with expression denoting simultaneity. It was pointed out above that *when* has a concessive interpretation in the context given in (2b) and the same is true of *at the same time* or *while* in examples like the following:

(27a) It is not easy to find examples of services that are of general social benefit and, at the same time, not costly.

(27b) While our competitors are doing extremely well, our sales are declining.

Expressions denoting simultaneity show the same affinity to concessivity that expressions denoting temporal sequence exhibit with respect to causality (*post hoc ergo propter*) (cf. Abraham (1976)). If we consider examples like

(2b) or (27), then it is clear that the concessive implications of such sentences are cancellable. Thus they can probably be considered as Gricean implicatures. They are clearly not based on any violation of conversational maxims. So, if anything, they must be standard implicatures (cf. Levinson (1983: 126)). On the other hand, they do seem to require specific contextual conditions (e.g., knowledge concerning a potential conflict between two facts). So, they are not generalized conversational implicatures. Further-more, these implicatures do not seem to be derivable from some argument that is based on any of the Gricean maxims of conversation. In order to account for the tendency to interpret temporal sequence as causation and similar interpretative augmentations, Atlas and Levinson (1981) have there-fore formulated the principle of informativeness, which roughly states that the best interpretation of an utterance is the most informative proposition among competing interpretations that is consistent with the common ground. There are so many things going on simultaneously that an utterance des-cribing the relationship of simultaneity or temporal overlap between two events, processes or states will frequently not be very informative or relevant. As a consequence, the hearer will look for a further interpretation. 'Causality' is excluded as an interpretative augmentation, but the assumption of a general incompatibility between the events, processes or states in question clearly makes the utterance more remarkable and informative.

The preceding considerations principally apply to connectives which origin-ally denoted – or may still denote – simultaneity or continuation (like E. *yet*, *still*).[8] As far as most of the connectives listed in (18) are concerned the pragmatics of negation can also be assumed to have played an important role. It is a well-known fact that negatives are only uttered in a context where corresponding affirmatives have already been discussed, or else where the speaker assumes the hearer's belief in, or at least familiarity with, the corresponding affirmative (cf. Givón (1978: 179)). Applied to English con-nectives like *nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, regardless*, or *un-impressed by*, this principle suggests that the concessive presupposition which is now part of the conventional meaning of these connectives originally started out as a pragmatic implication (implicature). Due to this restriction on the use of negation two sentences of the form '*p. Nonetheless q*' suggest that one would not expect *q* given *p*. The same principle seems to be operative in the incipient grammaticalisation of the past participle *unimpressed*

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[8]   For a discussion of the semantic development of E. *still* and *yet*, cf. König and Traugott (1982).

by as concessive preposition. Note that this connective has not been grammaticalised yet, since it still requires a human subject in the main clause so that the participle is also predicated of that human subject:

> (28) Unimpressed by all this criticism, Minister Goodefellow continues in his virtuous course of action.

As in other cases mentioned above the affixal negation suggests that one might expect the very opposite of what is asserted. From this implicature that one would not expect *q* given *p* it is only a small step to the concessive presupposition described above.

6. Conclusion

The preceding discussion suggests that there were no connectives with a concessive meaning in OE., in the sense in which the term 'concessive' is used throughout this paper. Failure to distinguish between concessives proper and concessive conditionals (cf. Burnham (1911), Quirk (1954)) obscures this point. The lack of a proper concessive construction was no functional deficit, of course, since the adversative conjunctive *ac* in Old English could be used for all the functions later expressible by either adversative or concessive connectives. In order to express a genuine factual concessive relationship in OE. and even in later periods of English, one had to rely either on the context or on an emphatic particle that turned an open conditional into a factual statement. The development of concessive connectives in English is based: (a) on a process of strengthening through which a conditional or concessive conditional connective combined with an emphatic, factual, particle, (b) on the use of conditionals, specifically irrelevance conditionals in factual contexts and a reinterpretation through which this contextual feature of factuality came to be associated with the connectives themselves, (c) on a process of bleaching involving such notions as 'spite', 'unthoughtfulness', etc. originally only applicable to human agents or experiencers, and (d) the pragmatics of negation or, more generally, the conventionalisation of conversational implicatures carried by assertations of co-occurrence or co-existence of two facts.

It has been suggested that the relevant semantic changes have not only occurred in English but also in a variety of other languages. The fact that many different sources led to the same result is one reason for the wide

variety of concessive connectives available in many languages today. By revealing the essentially derived nature of concessivity the present paper offers an explanation for the relatively transparent etymology and the late acquisition of concessive connectives. The fact that concessive clauses cannot be the focus of a scalar particle like *only*, *also*, or *even* (cf. (1e)) is due to the fact that additive particles like *even* are essentially involved in the historical development and thus already part of the formal make-up of concessive connectives. Finally, I have also tried to show that both diachronic as well as synchronic data can profitably be used in historical semantics.

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