

# Zavisne surećenice s veznikom osim ako: hrvatski i slovenski u usporedbi s engleskim

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Source / Izvornik: **Rasprave: Časopis Instituta za hrvatski jezik i jezikoslovlje, 2019, 45, 473 - 504**

**Journal article, Published version**

**Rad u časopisu, Objavljena verzija rada (izdavačev PDF)**

<https://doi.org/10.31724/rihjj.45.2.12>

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:131:111221>

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Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-06-28**



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## SUBORDINATE *UNLESS*-CLAUSES: CROATIAN AND SLOVENIAN IN COMPARISON TO ENGLISH

The complex subordinator *unless* (Cr. *osim ako*; Sl. *razen če*) introduces subordinate conditional clauses carrying exceptive meaning. It is usually assumed that *unless*-clauses are akin to (and replaceable by) negative *if*-conditional clauses, with the choice of one over the other being governed by semantic and pragmatic factors. This paper investigates subordinate *unless*-clauses in Croatian and Slovenian in comparison to English, primarily with regard to their interpretation, the possibility of expressing hypothetical and factual meanings, and the (non-)occurrence of pleonastic negation. Based on the data collected from referential corpora of Croatian, Slovenian and English we aim to establish not only the similarities that exist regarding *unless*-clauses across the three languages, but also some significant differences: as opposed to Croatian and Slovenian, English *unless*-clauses rarely/ /untypically express hypothetical meanings. As for the occurrence of pleonastic negation in *unless*-clauses, it never appears in English while in Croatian and Slovenian it is common but completely optional, with Slovenian displaying both properties of pleonastic negation – the assignment of the genitive of negation and no licensing of strong NPIs – and Croatian only one (no strong NPI licensing). Even though *unless*-clauses in both Slavic languages display very similar properties, their distribution with regard to negation is to some extent different: affirmative *unless*-clauses are more frequent in Slovenian than in Croatian, while the number of those with overt pleonastic negation is significantly smaller. We conclude that *unless*-clauses are an example *par excellence* of the fine-grained interplay of syntax, semantics and pragmatics, which primarily mediates the speaker's communicative needs and intentions.

## 1. Introduction

In logic, the (material) conditional is a connective that links two propositions  $p$  (the antecedent) and  $q$  (the consequent) into the ‘if  $p$  then  $q$ ’ relationship. In linguistics, a host of studies (Traugott et al. 1986, Athanasiadou and Dirven 1997, Declerck and Reed 2001, von Stechow 2011, Kratzer 2012, *inter alii*) have been undertaken to determine the nature of conditionals in natural languages, and these can be categorised into three major streams of research: the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic approach. While the first analyses different syntactic means available to form conditional structures (e.g., different subordinators, the use of indicative/non-indicative verbal forms), the second investigates the derivation of different meanings triggered by various conditional structures. Within the semantic approach, a special focus is laid on the truth values, and the contrast between the real and possible worlds – i.e., between the real (also: *realis*, indicative) and imaginary/counterfactual (also: *irrealis*, subjunctive) conditionals. Examining different conditional subordinators in English, we can easily observe that sentence grammar and the derivation of sentence meaning are closely interwoven. For instance, while the subordinator *if* introduces both *realis* and *irrealis* conditionals, the subordinators *providing* and *unless* typically introduce *realis* conditionals, and the connective *only if* introduces *irrealis* conditionals. This is also grammatically encoded in the selection of the verbal forms: *realis* conditionals are marked with the indicative forms, whereas *irrealis* conditionals are marked with the subjunctive/modal (i.e., non-indicative mood) forms. The true nature of conditionals, however, cannot be described solely from the perspectives of syntax and semantics. It is a long-established fact that the full interpretation of conditionals depends on different pragmatic factors. Perhaps the clearest example that illustrates such factors is the so-called tentative conditional (1a), in which the speaker selects *irrealis* verbal forms to refer to *realis* situations in order to bring about the effect of tentativeness or politeness. While the conditionals in (1a) and (1b) are to some extent alike, as they both refer to real situations, (1a) is understood as a more polite (and certainly less insistent) request than (1b), and this interpretation is facilitated by the use of the non-indicative verbal form *taped*.

- (1) a) Would you mind if I **taped** this conversation, Mrs Darcy?<sup>1</sup>  
 b) Would you mind if I **take** your name?

The pragmatic factors can also be observed in the so-called conditional perfection,<sup>2</sup> a term coined by Geis and Zwicky (1971), whereby the meaning of conditional as in (2a) is strengthened and understood as its corresponding biconditional (2c): even though conditional (2a) does not include (2b), as there may be other reasons for the speaker giving the addressee five dollars, (2a) is oftentimes interpreted as the conjunction of (2a) and (2b), resulting in the *if and only if* interpretation (2c), i.e., the only possible way of obtaining five dollars from the speaker is by mowing the lawn. Thus, under the conditional perfection analysis, the explicit structure  $p \rightarrow q$  gives rise to the  $\neg p \rightarrow \neg q$  implicature.

- (2) a) If you mow the lawn, I'll give you five dollars.

(Geis and Zwicky 1971: 562, (4))

$\rightarrow p \rightarrow q$

- b) If you don't mow the lawn, I won't give you five dollars.

$\rightarrow \neg p \rightarrow \neg q$

- c) If and only if you mow the lawn, I'll give you five dollars.

Conditional perfection may therefore be described as an inference pattern which involves what Geis and Zwicky (1971) termed *invited inference*, i.e. a tendency to “perfect” the interpretation of a conditional sentence in order to strengthen its understanding. In other words, many speakers tend to interpret “plain” conditionals of the kind  $p \rightarrow q$  (*if p, then q*) as  $\neg p \rightarrow \neg q$  (*if not p, then not q*) or even as *if and only if p, then q* (cf. von Fintel 2011).

It has to be pointed out that conditionals perform different roles in discourse (cf. Iatridou 1991, von Fintel 2011 *inter alii*). The most studied cases are the so-called circumstantial conditionals, which describe *realis* and *irrealis* condition, for example, (3a) and (3b) respectively. In addition to these two prototypical

<sup>1</sup> Unless stated otherwise, all examples are taken from referential corpora. For English the BNC and ukWaC corpora, for Slovenian the FidaPLUS v2 corpus, and for Croatian the Croatian National Corpus (HNK) and hrWaC.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed insight and pragmatic account(s) see van der Auwera (1997), Horn (2000), von Fintel (2001), and Van Canegem-Ardijns and Van Belle (2008) *inter alii*.

classes, two other classes are discussed in the relevant literature: the speech act conditionals (3c) and factual conditionals (3d), both of which are heavily discourse-dependent. The former specify “some circumstances under which the consequent is relevant or appropriate as a speech act” (Iatridou 1991: 58), while the latter are used by the speaker as a special discourse device which *prima facie* expresses speakers’ acceptance of the previously mentioned assertion, but, in reality, implies their doubt/disagreement with the assertion in question (cf. Iatridou *ibid*).

- (3) a) **If she comes between us**, I’ll finish it.  
 b) He wasn’t sure what he would have done with the girl **if she had come**.  
 c) You heal quickly, **if I may say so**.  
 d) A: Bill is very unhappy here.  
 B: **If he is so unhappy**, he should leave. (Iatridou 1991: 58, (20))

Conditionals can also express different illocutionary forces. Fillenbaum (1986), for instance, discusses the usage of conditionals when referring to notions other than condition, such as inducements (conditional promise) and deterrents (conditional threats). Using the English subordinators *if* and *unless*, and drawing on experimental data, Fillenbaum (1986) shows that even though the two subordinators are standardly assumed to have a close semantic link, i.e., *unless* is frequently equalled to negative *if* (i.e., *if...not*) in *realis* conditionals,<sup>3</sup> the two subordinators are not completely interchangeable when used in inducements and deterrents. While *unless* and negative *if* in deterrents are, by and large, interchangeable (4a-b), the opposite is not true of inducements, in which the substitution of one with the other results in questionable acceptability (4c-d).<sup>4</sup>

- (4) a) **If you don’t** give me your money, I will kill you.  
 (Fillenbaum 1986: 184)  
 b) **Unless** you give me your money, I will kill you.

<sup>3</sup> This is a gross oversimplification, and a more detailed account of *unless* is provided in section 2.

<sup>4</sup> Fillenbaum (1986: 184) points out that “[i]n contrast, the source promise makes it clear that the bribe is being offered just to avoid a ticket and has very much the force of *Only if you don’t give me a ticket will I give you \$20.*” According to this interpretation the scope of negation is still within the subordinate clause.

- c) **If** you don't give me your ticket, I'll give you \$20.  
 d) ??? **Unless** you give me your ticket, I'll give you \$20.

Although conditionals are well documented and studied in modern theoretical linguistics, less attention is paid to the contrastive aspect of conditionality. However, investigations from the contrastive approach such as that by Dancygier (1985) show that the contrastive analysis can contribute greatly to our better understanding of the subject matter. Therefore, the present paper focusses on the contrastive analysis of the subordinate conditional clauses introduced by *unless* (English), and its equivalent in Croatian (*osim ako*), and Slovenian (*razen če*). For the sake of clarity, we hereafter refer to these subordinate clauses as *unless*-clauses, and to *if*-conditional clauses as *if*-clauses. The reason for selecting *unless*-clauses as our topic is twofold. First, we want to examine whether and to what extent *unless*-clauses in all three languages can be analysed in terms of von Stechow's (1992: 136) proposal, which views *unless* as an "exceptive operator on quantifier domains". Secondly, Croatian and Slovenian, as Slavic and negative concord languages, display the phenomenon of pleonastic negation, which differs from sentential negation in that it does not deny the truth of the proposition. Pleonastic negation is typically found in subordinate clauses introduced by emotive doxastics, dubitatives, and negative predicates, in which it displays five distinct characteristics: (i) it expresses speaker's negative evaluation of or stance towards the proposition, (ii) it typically, but not obligatorily, co-occurs with the non-indicative mood, (iii) its use is optional, (iv) it cannot licence strong negative polarity items (henceforth: strong NPI's), and (v) it can license the genitive of negation (henceforth: GoN) in languages where the GoN is still preserved (for details on pleonastic negation in Croatian and Slovenian, cf. Zovko Dinković and Ilc 2017). Pleonastic negation with some of the afore described properties can also be found in Croatian and Slovenian *unless*-clauses, so it is our aim to provide an account of pleonastic negation in Croatian and Slovenian subordinate *unless*-clauses.

In particular, the paper deals with four major research question:

- RQ1: What are the syntactic similarities and differences between the *unless*-clauses in the three languages?  
 RQ2: Is it possible to provide a unified semantic account of the *unless*-clauses in the three languages?

RQ3: Which pragmatic factors influence the interpretation of the *unless*-clauses in the three languages?

RQ4: What motivates the use of pleonastic negation in Croatian and Slovenian *unless*-clauses?

The paper is organised as follows: section 2 discusses the properties of *unless*-clauses in English, to be followed by the analysis of *unless*-clauses in Croatian (section 3) and Slovenian (section 4). Section 5 discusses the main findings, and section 6 concludes the paper.

## 2. Literature overview and *unless*-clauses in English

The conditional subordinator *unless* has been traditionally treated as a negative subordinator (Quirk 1999: 1089ff), which is typically and freely used in *realis* conditionals, whereas their occurrence in *irrealis* conditionals is limited (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 775) but possible (cf. Declerck and Reed 2000). In addition, its semantics has been explained in terms of an (approximate) equivalent to negative *if*, i.e., '*unless p, q*' is replaceable with '*if not p, q*'. However, detailed analyses of *unless* have shown that such overgeneralisations have to be taken with caution. In what follows, we briefly present some of the findings that put *unless* into a different perspective.

First, let us address the negative status of *unless*. Etymological and diachronic analyses reveal that negation was never part of *unless*. *Unless* is derived from the 15<sup>th</sup> century comparative structure *lesse than* or *in/on/of lesse than*, in which the prepositions *in/on/of* were used interchangeably, with *on* eventually becoming the dominant preposition (Traugott 1997: 154). The preposition *on* was phonologically reduced to *un-*, which is nowadays wrongly reanalysed as a negative prefix attached to *less*. This morphological reanalysis may be one of the sources contributing to the claim that *unless* is negative. The second reason for associating *unless* with negation may lie in the fact that originally the *lesse than* or *in/on/of lesse than* was combined with the negative matrix clause, and this tendency can still be observed in present-day English (von Fintel 1992: 136).

Supporting for the claim that *unless* is (at least) syntactically non-negative comes from the fact that *unless* (5c-d), unlike negative *if* (5a-b), cannot license

non-assertive and negative polarity items when introducing affirmative sentences (cf. Dancygier 1985: 68). Furthermore, no syntactic correspondence between *unless* and negative *if* can be observed in the cases of *unless* introducing negative clauses (5e-f), as such clauses cannot be interpreted as equivalent to negative *if*-clauses.

- (5) a) **If** you can't do anything better, keep mopping up.  
 b) **If** these liberal-humanists don't give a damn, then they don't.  
 c) \***Unless** you can do anything better, keep mopping up.  
 d) \***Unless** these liberal-humanists give a damn, then they don't.  
 e) **Unless** we care nothing for human freedom and are impervious to human suffering, denunciation seems an implausible general justification for a system, which deliberately inflicts punishment on people.  
 → \***If** we don't care nothing ...  
 f) Ideally, steps should not be taken to remove children from parental care **unless** there is clearly no other way to prevent harm to them.  
 → \*... **if** there isn't clearly no other way ...

In their analysis of *unless*, Declerck and Reed (2000) provide a detailed account of the semantics of *unless*. The authors (*op. cit.*: 206) propose that “the basic meaning of ‘Q unless P’ is “Q in a case other than P”, however, the final interpretation of this core meaning depends on the type of conditional introduced by *unless*. In the *realis* conditional, *unless* is interpreted as an exceptive ‘Q except if P’, which logically entails the negative *if* interpretation. In more detail, they claim (*op. cit.*: 208) that the exceptive meaning (6a) logically entails (6b), which in turn entails (6c). Let us exemplify these theoretical concepts using example (6d). The semantics of (6d) is paraphrased in (6e) with the exceptive subordinator *except if*. This meaning is then interpreted via entailment as (6f) and (6g).

- (6) a) q except if p  
 b) [(not q) if p]<sup>5</sup>  
 c) if not p, q (negative *if* interpretation)

<sup>5</sup> This follows Dancygier's (1985: 68) proposal, whereby “*unless* [...] strings can be interpreted not as subordinate simple clauses, but as complex structures containing conditional sentences with negated *q*'s as consequents and *p*'s as antecedents: q unless p = q; [(not q) if p].”.



- d) Researchers predict that the forests will last only 10 years **unless** Soviet sulphur levels are cut.
- e) The forests will last only 10 years **except if** Soviet sulphur levels are cut.
- f) The forest will last only 10 years.  
[The forests will not last only 10 years if Soviet sulphur levels are cut.]
- g) If Soviet sulphur levels are not cut, the forests will last only 10 years.

Futhermore, Declerck and Reed (2000: 227ff) investigate the properties of *irrealis unless*-clauses, and come to the conclusion that in imaginary *irrealis* conditionals (7a) *unless* typically gives rise to the exceptive reading, whereas in counterfactual *irrealis* conditionals (7b) *unless* is mostly interpreted in the sense of the negative *if*. It is noteworthy that the predominant use of *unless*-clauses is in the *realis* conditional. A possible explanation for this asymmetry can be found in Traugott (1997: 158), who claims that exceptive conditionals are pragmatically linked with the future time sphere, which is associated with open conditions rather than counterfactuals.

- (7) a) [I didn't go to the party, so I don't know if I would've become as drunk as you all appear to have been. In fact, I'm afraid] I would've been drunk too, **unless** I'd brought my wife with me to keep an eye on me.  
(Declerck and Reed 2000: 229, 61)
- b) But **unless** I'd gone along with you, you'd have told my husband, I bet.  
(Declerck and Reed 2000: 228, 60 (a))

Von Stechow (1992) provides the first formal semantic account of *unless*. Building on Kratzer's original claim that in natural languages there is "no two-place *if... then* connective in the logical forms" and that "[*i*]f-clauses are devices for restricting the domains of operators" (Kratzer 2012: 106),<sup>6</sup> von Stechow (1992: 136) argues that *unless* is "a subtractive or exceptive operator on quantified domains". In particular, the semantics of *unless* is described as a combination of the conditional and the exceptive meaning. The exceptive meaning of *unless* is akin

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<sup>6</sup> This claim first appeared as Kratzer (1986), and was later republished in its original form as Chapter 2 in Kratzer (2012).

to the meaning of the exceptive *but*-phrases<sup>7</sup> (von Fintel 1992, 1993), and is formalised in terms of the uniqueness condition. In his analysis of *unless*-clauses, the meaning of *unless* is hence presented as consisting of two conjuncts (8a): the first conjunct gives rise to the meaning ‘*if... not*’, and the second represents the uniqueness condition, which is responsible for the exceptive interpretation (von Fintel 1992: 143–4).<sup>8</sup> In line with von Fintel’s proposal (8a), sentence (6d) can be paraphrased as ‘(i) all of the minimal situations in the set of currently relevant situations except the ones in which Soviet sulphur levels are cut are part of a larger situation in which the forest will last only 10 years, and (ii) any other set of exceptional circumstances is bigger than the set of situations where Soviet sulphur levels are cut.’ (adapted from von Fintel 1992: 144, (27)).

$$(8) \text{ a) } \mathbf{unless} \ R, Q \mid C \mid M = Q \mid C - R \mid M \ \& \ \forall S (Q [C - S] [M] \rightarrow R \subseteq S)$$

(von Fintel 1992: 144, (26))

Q: the interpretation of the adverb of quantification

C: the set of currently relevant circumstances

R: the antecedent proposition used to restrict C

M: the interpretation of the main clause minus the adverb

S: set of situations

(von Fintel 1992: 141-144)

In sum, in this section we have shown that *unless* is an exceptive operator, which combines both the exceptive and conditional meanings, and as such introduces exceptive conditional subordinate clauses. Furthermore, the negative *if* interpretation of *unless*-clauses is achieved through logical entailment. In English, the *unless*-clauses display the following characteristics:

<sup>7</sup> Consider sentences (i) and (ii) taken from or based on von Fintel (1992). The *but*-phrase in (i) identifies the minimal set and subtracts it from the domain of a quantifier, whereas *unless* in (ii) identifies the minimal set of situations and subtracts it from the domain of a quantifier.

(i) All students but John came to the lecture.            $\models$   $\llbracket$ all students $\rrbracket - \llbracket$ John $\rrbracket$

(ii) I will leave unless Bill calls soon.                  $\models$   $\llbracket$ all situations $\rrbracket - \llbracket$ situation in which Bill calls soon $\rrbracket$

<sup>8</sup> For a detailed critical evaluation of this proposal see Leslie (2009: 19–26) and Nadathur (2014: 4-5) *inter alii*. Leslie (2009: 24) argues that von Fintel’s uniqueness condition is too strict as it excludes sentences such as (i) and (ii) which do not contain the (c)overt universal quantifier, and proposes a weaker version of the uniqueness condition:  $Q [C - R] [M] \ \& \ Q [M \cap C] [C - R]$ .

(i) John usually succeeds unless they goof off.

(ii) John rarely succeeds unless he works hard.           (Leslie 2009: 22, (13) and (14))

- (i) *unless* is typically yet not exclusively found in *realis* conditionals;
- (ii) semantically, *unless* combines the conditional and exceptive meaning in *realis* and imaginary *irrealis* conditionals;
- (iii) in *realis* conditionals the *unless*-conditional is interpreted as (a) the negative *if* (via entailment), and (b) an exceptive;
- (iv) in counterfactual *irrealis* conditionals, *unless*-clauses are semantically equivalent to negative *if*-clauses.

### 3. *Unless*-clauses in Croatian

Croatian *unless*-clauses involve a complex subordinator *osim ako*, which consists of the exceptive *osim* ‘except (for)’ and the plain conditional *ako* ‘if’, and results in exceptive meaning, i.e. *q* except if *p*.<sup>9</sup> *Unless*-clauses in Croatian may select the indicative (9a) or the subjunctive mood (9b), resulting in *realis* and *irrealis* hypothetical conditionals respectively. *Irrealis* counterfactuals are quite rare with *unless*-clauses (9c), which is in line with Traugott (1997) and Declerck and Reed (2000) (see section 2).

- (9) a) U jesen i zimu u ulicu je nemoguće ući **osim ako** nemate neki  
in autumn and winter in street is impossible enter unless not have-3pl.IND some  
terenski automobil.  
SUV  
‘In autumn and winter it is impossible to enter the street unless you have a SUV.’
- b) Bio bi stranac u stranoj zemlji **osim ako** ne bi uzeo slovensko  
be-2sg.SUBJ foreigner in foreign land unless not take-2sg.SUBJ Slovenian

<sup>9</sup> It is quite interesting that the majority of Croatian grammar and reference books (e.g. Brabec, Hraste and Živković 1954, Raguž 1997, Katičić 2002, Barić et al. 2005, Silić and Pranjković 2005 to name but a few) do not mention this subordinator at all, possibly because they consider the exceptive meaning to be subsumed under the negated conditional, even though the two differ (see section 2). An exception is Florschütz (1940: 165), who explicitly enumerates this subordinator among those used in *realis* conditionals. Vukojević and Hudeček (2007: 296) also mention *osim ako* as being one of three true complex subordinating conjunctions in conditional clauses (with all the other conditional subordinators being classified as conjunctive phrases, i.e. a combination of a modifier and a simple subordinator). The subordinator *osim ako* is equally absent from Croatian dictionaries, with the exception of Anić (2003), where it is defined as a complex subordinator that narrows down the content of the main clause.

državljanstvo.

citizenship

‘You would be a foreigner in a foreign land unless you took Slovenian citizenship.’

c) Bila bi me tužila šefu **osim ako** ne bih to (bila) učinila.

AUX-3sg.SUBJ me tell.on boss unless not that do-1sg.SUBJ

‘She would have told on me to the boss unless I had done that.’

Croatian clauses with *osim ako* allow a combination of the two moods in the matrix and the subordinate clause (10a-b). In these cases, the stress is not so much on the opposition of *realis* vs. *irrealis* condition as it is on the speaker’s judgement on the likelihood of the condition, and very often the habitual nature of the event in the main clause (10c). English allows the subjunctive mood in *unless*-clauses if the main clause contains a modal (10d). The reason for this is a dual interpretation of the subjunctive mood: in terms of form (i.e. an inflection of the verb) and in terms of the overall, hypothetical meaning of the verb phrase or a clause, which is usually expressed through modals.<sup>10</sup> If we look at it that way, then (10d) would not be considered a combination of two moods:

(10) a) Nema žene koja ovo ne bi htjela **osim ako** je alergična na te  
not.be woman who this not want-3sg.SUBJ unless be-3sg.IND allergic to these  
proizvode.  
products

‘There is no woman who wouldn’t want this unless she is allergic to these products.’

b) Nastavite raditi ono što ste radili **osim ako** vam to ne bi oduzelo  
continue-IMP do what do-2pl.IND unless to you it not take.away-3sg.SUBJ  
više od pet ili deset minuta.  
more than five or ten minutes

<sup>10</sup> This is clearly seen from the following definition of the subjunctive, taken from the *Collins English Dictionary* (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/subjunctive>, accessed June 1, 2019):

1. adjective (grammar): denoting a mood of verbs used when the content of the clause is being doubted, supposed, feared true, etc. rather than being asserted (...)

2. noun (grammar): a. the subjunctive mood; b. a verb in this mood.

and from *Random House Kernerman Webster’s College Dictionary* (2010):

1. of or designating a grammatical mood typically used for subjective, doubtful, hypothetical, or grammatically subordinate statements or questions (...).

‘Continue doing what you were doing unless it would take away more than five or ten minutes.’

- c) Tada bi Prenda zaprijetila tim ljudima tužbom **osim ako** ne plate  
then Prenda threaten-3sg.SUBJ these people lawsuit unless not pay-3pl.IND  
nagodbu.  
settlement

‘Prenda would then threaten these people with lawsuit unless they paid the settlement.’

- d) He would never apply for that kind of job **unless** he were in urgent need of some money.

It is evident from the examples that Croatian *unless*-clauses can be either affirmative (10a) or negative (9a-c) and (10b-c) regardless of the verbal mood (although the conditional indicates a smaller likelihood than the present tense).<sup>11</sup> The data collected from two referential corpora of Croatian – the Croatian National Corpus (HNK) and the Croatian Web Corpus (hrWaC) – which are presented in Table 1 reveal a somewhat contradictory situation. The v3.0 version of the Croatian National Corpus from 2013 contains 217,071,651 tokens and the relative frequency of *osim ako* is 32.1. Out of the overall number of 6,968 occurrences of *osim ako* 53.1% are found in affirmative clauses, while 46.9% are in negative clauses, which would suggest no bias in use with regard to pleonastic negation. However, it should be noted that the Croatian National Corpus is a corpus of written texts collected from on-line editions of daily newspapers and various journals that have for the most part been proofread prior to publishing. Also, the majority of occurrences of *osim ako* (87.5%) is found in the official journal of record of the Croatian government, which indicates that this subordinator is mainly used in administrative and especially legal texts, where one would naturally expect exceptive conditionals to be abundant. On the other hand, the data from the Croatian Web Corpus, which was, much like the Slovenian web corpus, built by completely crawling the .hr top-level domain (cf. Ljubešić and Erjavec 2011),

<sup>11</sup> There is again no guidance offered by grammars and dictionaries of Croatian as to the use of the subordinator *osim ako* with or without negation although the single example that is provided by both Florschütz (1940) and Anić (2003) – *Doću ću osim ako me nešto ne omete*. (‘I’ll come unless something hampers me.’) – clearly involves pleonastic negation.

shows a different picture: the v2.2 version of the corpus from 2014 contains 1.397,757,548 tokens and the relative frequency of *osim ako* is 23.4. However, out of 32,708 occurrences of this subordinator, 69.3% is in negative clauses. If we keep in mind that this corpus contains not only on-line editions of newspapers and journals but also texts collected from various blogs, forums, chats and such, it seems that there is a strong tendency in less formal registers to use *osim ako* with overt negation.

Table 1. The distribution of affirmative and negative *unless*-clauses in Croatian

HNK (v3.0)	N	%	hrWaC (v2.2)	N	%
<i>osim ako</i>	6,968	100.0	<i>osim ako</i>	32,708	100.0
affirmative	3,703	53.1	affirmative	10,059	30.7
negative	3,265	46.9	negative	22,649	69.3

Negative *unless*-clauses in Croatian can involve either sentential or pleonastic (expletive) negation. The former negates the proposition, while the latter does not affect the truth value of the proposition, i.e. it does not negate the antecedent. Thus, sentence (10a) would still convey the same meaning if negation were overtly present in the subordinate clause (i.e., *osim ako nije alergična na te proizvode*). As opposed to English, where *unless*-clauses do not contain pleonastic negation, but also e.g. Polish, where negation is obligatory in *unless*-clauses, negation in Croatian is optional and its pleonastic nature is evident from the fact that it cannot license strong NPIs in its scope (11a) (cf. Zovko Dinković and Ilc 2017). However, when negation is sentential (11b), it not only negates the proposition, but also licenses strong NPIs in its local scope (cf. Progovac 1994, Brown 1999, Abels 2005 *inter alii*).

- (11) a) Doći ću        **osim ako** me nešto/\*ništa        (ne) omete.  
           come-1sg.IND unless    me something/\*nothing (not) hamper-3sg.IND  
           ‘I’ll come unless something/\*nothing hampers me.’
- b) Uredska zabava će se održati        **osim ako** se nitko ne pojavi.  
           office party    take.place-3sg.IND unless        nobody not show.up-3sg.IND  
           ‘The office party will take place unless nobody shows up.’

In their treatment of pleonastic expressions in the Croatian standard language Hudeček, Lewis and Mihaljević (2011: 60) mention the complex subordinator *osim ako* and its frequent use in administrative discourse. They distinguish two uses of this subordinator: one that they consider to be pleonastic and the other which is not. For the former they provide the example which contains clausal negation in the main clause and pleonastic negation in the *unless*-clause: *Ljudi ne postoje osim ako nisu kraljevi*. ‘People don’t exist unless they are kings.’, claiming that the meaning does not change if we leave out the exceptive *osim* ‘except’ – *Ljudi ne postoje ako nisu kraljevi*. ‘People don’t exist if they are not kings.’. The non-pleonastic use is illustrated with the following example: *Navi-jam za Brazil, osim ako zaigra loše*. ‘I support Brazil unless they play badly.’, where, according to the authors, the *unless*-clause cannot readily be replaced by an *if*-clause to get the same meaning. Based on these examples Hudeček, Lewis and Mihaljević (2011) conclude that the pleonastic interpretation of *osim ako* ‘unless’ depends on the syntactic environment in which it appears, being pleonastic in sentences containing double negation and non-pleonastic in sentences without double negation. This view is problematic in two respects: in the first example, it fails to acknowledge that it is not the subordinator but negation in the subordinate clause that is pleonastic, and in the second, it overlooks the fact that *unless*-clauses in *realis* conditionals by and large correspond to negative *if*-clauses (though only covertly through logical entailment – see section 2), not to affirmative ones. In other words, the *unless*-clause in the first example would function equally well with or without negation: *Ljudi ne postoje osim ako su kraljevi*. and *Ljudi ne postoje osim ako nisu kraljevi*. ‘People don’t exist unless they are kings.’ both convey the same meaning – in order to exist one needs to be a king. As already mentioned in our discussion of example (6) in section 1, in *realis* conditionals *unless* is interpreted as an exceptive ‘q except if p’, and logically entails the negative *if* interpretation (cf. Declerck and Reed 2000). When *osim ako* ‘unless’ is replaced by a negative *if*-clause, the negation is no longer pleonastic but sentential, and following the Law of Double Negation the two negations cancel out each other and result in the intended meaning: *Ljudi postoje ako su kraljevi*. ‘People exist if they are kings.’ (cf. Zovko Dinković 2013: 136). It should also be noted that negative *if*-clauses (much like their affirmative counterparts) do not necessarily narrow down the number of other possible preconditions *p* for *q* to be true: to say that people do not exist if they are not kings does

not exclude other conditions for the non-existence of people. In other words, as already established in section 2, *if*-clauses give rise to biconditional reading only covertly through conditional perfection; therefore, we may not interpret (negative) *if*-clauses as exceptive ‘q except if p’. In order to do this we would have to use the subordinator *samo ako* ‘only if’, which overtly encodes the exceptive meaning: people exist if and only if they are kings.

It is also worth mentioning that some of the sentences with negation both in the matrix and in the *unless*-clause are the only examples where the interpretation of the *unless*-clause (in the absence of an appropriate context) may be ambiguous.

(12) Pero ne igra **osim ako** nije dobro plaćen.

‘Peter doesn’t play unless he’s well-paid.’

Here the negation in the *unless*-clause may be interpreted either as pleonastic and carrying the exceptive conditional meaning (*Pero ne igra ako nije dobro plaćen*. ‘Peter doesn’t play if he is not well-paid.’) or as sentential and expressing a causative relation between the subordinate and the matrix clause, where the fulfilment of the condition in the *unless*-clause reverses the claim in the matrix clause (*Pero igra ako nije dobro plaćen*. ‘Peter plays if he’s not well-paid.’) In the former case negation is optional and in the latter it is obligatory. Moreover, the interpretation of negation in the *unless*-clause as pleonastic may only be valid if *p* (to the best of our knowledge) entails *q*. In other words, negation in the *unless*-clause in a sentence such as *Pero ne igra osim ako nije bolestan*. ‘Peter doesn’t play unless he’s not ill.’ may only be interpreted as sentential negation (*Pero igra ako nije bolestan*. ‘Peter plays if he’s not ill.’), not as pleonastic (*\*Pero igra ako je bolestan*. ‘Peter plays if he’s ill.’)

The second example presented by Hudeček, Lewis and Mihaljević (2011: 60), where the subordinator is deemed non-pleonastic, again speaks in favour of the claim that *osim ako* ‘unless’ does not convey the simple conditional meaning and may only be substituted by a negative *if*: *Navijam za Brazil, osim ako (ne) zaigra loše*. ‘I support Brazil unless they play badly.’ conveys the same meaning regardless of the presence or absence of pleonastic negation, while an *if*-clause must be accompanied by sentential negation to convey the same meaning as the *unless*-clause – *Navijam za Brazil ako ne zaigra loše*. ‘I support Brazil if they don’t play badly.’. We should keep in mind though, as already mentioned in the intro-



ductory part of this paper, that conditionals may express different illocutionary forces and even though *unless* and *if not* may be interchangeable in some contexts, in others they are not (cf. Fillenbaum 1986).

The above examples provide clear evidence that *unless*-clauses are a case of pragmatic (conditional) strengthening and that their interpretation is achieved either through entailment or through the overt presence of pleonastic negation. The same is valid for Slovenian, which is discussed in the following chapter.

#### 4. *Unless*-clauses in Slovenian

In Slovenian, the *unless*-clauses are introduced by the complex subordinator *razen če*, consisting of the exceptive *razen* ‘except/apart from’ and the conditional *če* ‘if’, which means that Slovenian *unless*-clauses unlike their English equivalents (see section 2) explicitly convey the exceptive meaning. With regard to the mood selection, *razen če* selects both the indicative (13a) and non-indicative (i.e., subjunctive) moods (13b), resulting in the *realis* and *irrealis* conditionals respectively. Examining the paraphrase of sentence (13a) in (13a’), we can observe that Slovenian *unless*-clauses neatly fall into von Fintel’s formal analysis of English exceptive *unless*-clauses. In contrast to English, however, where the conditional sentences appear either with the indicative or non-indicative mood, but never with the combination of the two, in Slovenian *unless*-clauses such combinations can be found (13c-e). In these cases, it seems that the selection of the non-indicative mood does not pertain so much to the *realis/irrealis* asymmetry, but rather to the speaker’s evaluation of the condition as unlikely (13c-d), or to their tentative stance towards the consequent (13e). In contrast to Croatian (cf. section 3, example (10c)), the non-indicative mood cannot give rise to the habitual reading.

(13) a) Pomagati skoraj ni več mogoče, **razen** če bo padal dež.

help almost is.not more possible unless fall-3sg.IND rain

‘It will be almost impossible to help unless it rains.’

a’) i. all of the minimal situations in the set of currently relevant situations except the ones in which it rains are part of a larger situation in which it will be almost impossible to help; and

ii. any other set of exceptional circumstances is bigger than the set of situations where it will rain.

b) Nikoli se ne bi poročil, **razen** če bi bil na poti otrok.  
 never not marry-3sg.SUBJ unless be-3sg.SUBJ on way baby  
 ‘He would never get married unless there were a baby on the way.’

c) Te točke ne bo na dnevnem redu, **razen** če bi kateri od članov  
 this point not be-3sg.IND on agenda unless AUX-3sg.SUBJ one of members  
 to zahteval.  
 this require  
 ‘This item will not be on the agenda unless a member should require it.’

d) Tega ne bodo izvedeli, **razen** če ne bi nekdo izključil  
 this not find.out-3pl.IND unless not somebody turn.off-3sg.SUBJ  
 računalnika.  
 computer-GEN  
 ‘They will not find this out, unless somebody should turn off the computer.’

e) Načrt bi se moral posrečiti, **razen** če ne bo uspela prepričati  
 plan must work-3sg.SUBJ unless not succeed-3sg.IND convince  
 soproga.  
 husband-GEN  
 ‘The plan should work, unless she fails to convince her husband.’

Slovenian *unless*-clauses can be either affirmative (13a) or negative (13d-e), (14a-b), and, according to the dictionary entry for *razen če* in the Dictionary of Slovenian language *SSKJ*<sup>2</sup> (available online: <https://fran.si/>), *razen če* negative antecedents should be more typical than affirmative ones. However, the data from the reference corpus FidaPLUS v2, summarized in Table 2, reveal a different situation – there is an approximate 2:1 ratio between the affirmative and negative antecedents introduced by *razen če*. The data from the diachronic perspective (time spans 1979-1990 vs. 2000-2006) show that there is little difference between the samples. Comparable results can be found in other, larger,

Slovenian corpora, for example, Slovenian Web 2015, in which there is an even stronger preference for affirmative *unless*-clauses.<sup>12</sup>

Table 2. The distribution of affirmative and negative *unless*-clauses in Slovenian

FidaPLUS v2	N	%	Fida PLUS v2 (1979-1990)	N	%	FidaPLUS v2 (2000-2006)	N	%	Slovenian Web 2015	N	%
<i>razen če</i> of which	7,934	100.0	<i>razen če</i> of which	2,482	100.0	<i>razen če</i> of which	5,263	100.0	<i>razen če</i> of which	17,370	100.0
affirmative	5,104	64.3	affirmative	1,565	63.1	affirmative	3,418	64.9	affirmative	13,318	76.7
negative	2,830	35.7	negative	917	36.9	negative	1,845	35.1	negative	4,052	23.3

Comparing Slovenian data (Table 2) with the Croatian data (Table 1), we can observe that there is a difference with regard to the frequency of negative and affirmative *unless*-clauses. It seems that in Slovenian, there is a stronger preference for the affirmative *unless*-clauses, while in Croatian, the negative *unless*-clauses are more frequent, this is particularly so in the hrWaC corpus.

When discussing Slovenian negative *unless*-clauses, special attention has to be paid to the type of negation used. More specifically, Slovenian *unless*-clauses can involve either sentential or the pleonastic negation. While the former negates the proposition, the latter does not affect the truth value of the proposition. Consider examples (14a-b). (14a) contains sentential negation, because the meeting is unsuccessful only if nobody attends it – in all other cases, it is successful. Negation in (14b), on the other hand, does not make the antecedent negative, and the meaning of the conditional would be identical to that without negation (i.e., *razen če bo ugodeno njegovu prošnji*). The (non)-negative status of sentences (14), can be easily observed in their English equivalents. Another test that can be applied to distinguish the two types of negation is the requirement of (Slavic) strong NPIs to be licensed by sentential negation in its local scope (cf. Progovac 1994, Brown 1999, Abels 2005 *inter alii*). Pleonastic negation, on the other hand,

<sup>12</sup> FidaPLUS v2 contains 738,503,145 tokens (600,309,670 words) with the frequency of the subordinator *razen če* 10.74 per million words. Slovenian Web 2015 contains 988,513,467 tokens (829,544,337 words) with the frequency of the subordinator *razen če* 17.57 per million words.

cannot license strong NPIs in its local scope (for details on Croatian and Slovenian data see Zovko Dinković and Ilc, 2017 *inter alii*). We can observe that in (14a) the strong NPI *nihče* ‘nobody’ is properly licensed by sentential negation. Adding the strong NPI *nobeni* ‘none (of)’ (14b’) in the local scope of pleonastic negation (14b) renders the sentence ungrammatical.<sup>13</sup>

(14) a) Ne bi si upal reči, **razen** če nihče ne pride, da je sestanek  
 not dare-1sg.SUBJ say unless nobody not come-3sg.ind that is meeting  
 neuspešen.  
 unsuccessful  
 ‘I wouldn’t dare to say, unless nobody attends, that the meeting is unsuccessful.’

b) Cooper bo šel v zapor, **razen** če ne bo ugodeno n jegovi pritožbi.  
 Cooper go-3sg.IND into prison unless not grant-3sg.IND his appeal  
 ‘Cooper will go to prison unless his appeal is granted.’

b’) \*Cooper bo šel v zapor, **razen** če ne bo ugodeno nobeni njegovi  
 Cooper go-3sg.IND into prison unless not grant-3sg.IND no his  
 pritožbi.  
 appeal  
 ‘Cooper will go to prison unless no appeal of his is granted.’

The question arises at this point as to what motivates the occurrence of pleonastic negation in such cases. Recall that in section 2 (ex. (6a-c)) we have shown that the meaning of exceptive conditionals has the semantics of *q* except if *p*, and entails [(not *q*) if *p*] in the terms of Dancygier (1985). This is exactly what can be claimed for Slovenian example (14b): the occurrence of pleonastic negation should be seen as a special overt device that indicates that the consequent *q* is no longer valid as soon as the antecedent *p* becomes true (15b). In the non-negative counterpart (15c), the same interpretation is achieved (compare (15b) and (15d)),

<sup>13</sup> There is, however, one feature shared by both types of negation, namely, in Slovenian the genitive of negation is still fully grammaticalized, and both negations license the genitive of negation. Thus, any account of sentential and pleonastic negation in Slovenian has to take into consideration the above described asymmetry (i.e., sentential negation licensing both the strong NPIs and the genitive of negation, while pleonastic negation licensing only the latter). For details see Ilc (2012), and Zovko Dinković and Ilc (2017).

but this time through entailment only, i.e., without the presence of the overt marker. Thus, it seems that the semantics of (15a) and (15c) are identical, and the difference between the two is that in (15a) the speaker overtly expresses the intended entailment, whereas in (15c) it remains covert.

(15) a) Cooper bo šel v zapor, **razen** če **ne bo** ugodeno njegovi

Cooper go-3sg.IND into prison unless not grant-3sg.IND his

pritožbi. = (14b)

appeal

‘Cooper will go to prison unless his appeal is granted.’

b) Cooper bo šel v zapor; [Cooper ne bo šel v zapor, če bo ugodeno njegovi pritožbi]

‘Cooper will go to prison; [Cooper won’t go to prison, if his appeal is upheld.]’

c) Cooper bo šel v zapor, **razen** če **bo** ugodeno njegovi pritožbi.

Cooper go-3sg.IND into prison unless grant-3sg.IND his appeal

‘Cooper will go to prison unless his appeal is granted.’

d) Cooper bo šel v zapor; [Cooper ne bo šel v zapor, če bo ugodeno njegovi pritožbi]

‘Cooper will go to prison; [Cooper won’t go to prison, if his appeal is upheld.]’

A more formalised account of our claim can be found in von Fintel and Iatridou (2007) and Margulis (2016).

## 5. Discussion

Starting with the syntactic similarities and differences between the English, Croatian and Slovenian *unless*-clauses (RQ1), we can observe that in all three languages, the verbal forms in the subordinate and main clause can be marked for indicative as well as non-indicative mood. However, it is the case that English *unless*-clauses typically contain the indicative mood, resulting in the *realis* interpretation of the conditional, whereas in Croatian and Slovenian, both moods

are possible, leading to the *realis* and *irrealis* conditionals. In addition, in both Slavic languages, the combination of the indicative and the non-indicative mood within the same conditional sentence (i.e., in the antecedent and the consequent) is possible. In these cases, the mood selection is not motivated by the opposition between *realis* and *irrealis* condition, but it involves either the speaker's judgement of the unlikelihood of the condition (Croatian and Slovenian), or the habitual nature of the event in the main clause (Croatian only).

From the semantic perspective (RQ2), the *realis unless*-clauses in the three analysed languages are closely associated with exceptive meaning, which is semantically, but not syntactically, (almost) identical to negated *if*-clauses. More specifically, in line with the analyses by Dancygier (1985), von Stechow (1992) and Declerck and Reed (2000), we have been able to argue that in all three languages, *unless* is interpreted as an exceptive operator, which logically entails the negative *if* interpretation, the exceptive interpretation of which results from pragmatic strengthening through conditional perfection (cf. Geis and Zwicky 1971) (RQ3).

The most noticeable difference between English, Croatian and Slovenian, however, involves the use of negation in *unless*-clauses: these clauses can contain only sentential negation in English, whereas in Croatian and Slovenian both sentential and pleonastic negation can be found. To explain the observed differences (RQ4), we follow the analysis put forth by von Stechow and Iatridou (2007), who, albeit analysing a syntactic construction different from conditionals,<sup>14</sup> observe that cross-linguistically constructions containing the exceptive *only* appear in two distinct patterns: (i) negation + exceptive element, and (ii) exceptive elements only.<sup>15</sup> In their analysis, they argue that these two distinct patterns are, in fact, just two different realisations of the same underlying structure. In particular, they propose that the *only*-exceptive be decomposed into two elements: semantic negation and the exceptive operator, or in their denotation: NEG + EXCEPTIVE. The observed dichotomy between languages can then be explained in terms of (c)overtness of semantic negation – in the first group of languages, negation is overtly expressed (these languages are referred to as “NEG + EXCEPTIVE” languages), whereas in the

<sup>14</sup> The so-called sufficiency modal construction.

<sup>15</sup> Compare English example (i) with the exceptive element only, and its French equivalent (ii) with the combination of the exceptive element and negation:

(i) To get good cheese, you **only** have to go to the North End! (von Stechow and Iatridou 2007: 445 (1))  
 (ii) Si tu veux du bon fromage, tu **n'as qu'**à aller au North End. (von Stechow and Iatridou 2007: 446 (3))

other, negation remains covert (the so-called “only” languages). Furthermore, von Fintel and Iatridou (2007) observe that in both cases semantic negation has to take scope over the exceptive operator and not vice versa.

Returning to *unless*-conditionals in Croatian and Slovenian, we can draw clear parallels between von Fintel and Iatridou’s (2007) proposal, and Croatian and Slovenian exceptive *unless*-clause. We argue that these clauses contain an exceptive operator in the terms of von Fintel and Iatridou (2007), which is spelt out as negation *ne* and the exceptive *osim ako/razen če*. If we want to adopt this approach, however, two fundamental questions have to be addressed, specifically, (i) why negation in subordinate *unless*-clauses can behave as pleonastic negation, if, under von Fintel and Iatridou’s (2007) decomposition analysis, it should be treated as semantic negation (i.e., “true”, sentential negation), and (ii) which scopal properties negation has in *unless*-clauses.

In what follows, we try to show that these two questions are closely related, and appear problematic only if we focus on the surface structure. As shown above (see example (14b), and the explanation provided), negation linearly appears after the operator, and does not affect the truth value of *p*; therefore, this occurrence of negation has been standardly referred to as pleonastic negation to be distinguished from sentential negation. However, focussing on the paraphrase of (14b) in (15b), which is in line with Dancygier’s (1985) original proposal, we can observe that negation at LF scopes over the exceptive as it semantically appears in the main clause (i.e., negating the consequent rather than the antecedent). Such an analysis now neatly explains why negation in these constructions displays different properties than real sentential negation. Recall that pleonastic negation cannot license strong NPIs (see examples (11a) and (14b’)). If we adopt the claim that pleonastic negation in *unless*-clauses raises to the matrix clause, then the observed characteristic of pleonastic negation can be explained straightforwardly: since strong NPIs in both languages not only have to be licensed locally, but also have to remain in the local configuration with negation, the movement of negation out of the local domain renders strong NPIs improperly licensed, resulting in ungrammaticality of examples such as (14b’).<sup>16</sup> To exem-

<sup>16</sup> Due to the lack of space, we do not provide details on the derivation. The reader is kindly referred to Zovko Dinković and Ilc (2017), where derivational processes involving movement of negation out of sentential scope are explained in detail.

plify, let us return to sentences (11a-b) and (14a-b). In line with our proposal, negation in (11b) and (14a) remains in the antecedent, which means that the strong NPI *nitko/nihče* ‘nobody’ is properly licensed in the subordinate clause. In (11a) and (14b), on the other hand, negation moves from the subordinate clause to the matrix at LF, and consequently, no longer constitutes the proper environment for potential strong NPIs to be licensed (cf. (14b’)). Hence, our claim provides further support for those analyses of pleonastic negation, which treat sentential and pleonastic negations as two instances of semantic negation with each having a different scope at LF (cf. Tovena 1996, 1998, Abels 2005 *inter alii*). Within this framework, it is assumed that the observed syntactic differences between sentential and pleonastic negation (e.g., the (non)licensing of the strong NPIs) directly result from different negative scopes.

A similar extension of von Stechow and Iatridou’s (2007) proposal to subordinate clauses containing pleonastic negation can be found in Margulis (2016). The author analyses Hebrew *until*-clauses with pleonastic negation, and argues that these also contain an *only*-like operator, and that pleonastic negation is a reflex of the negative component of the *only*-like operator. His analysis shows that negation in these cases takes scope over the operator as well, resulting in the pleonastic rather than sentential interpretation of negation.

What remains to be addressed is the question of the optional occurrence of pleonastic negation (compare (10b) and (15a) to (10a) and (15c) respectively). Proponents of the theory that pleonastic negation is not vacuous (e.g., Margulis 2016) argue that in such cases optionality is only seeming, and that there is a semantic difference between structures with pleonastic negation and those without it. Margulis (2016), for example, claims that Hebrew *until*-clauses without pleonastic negation are ambiguous as they can be interpreted with or without interruption implication (i.e., it is a scalar implicature, and, as such, defeasible), whereas their counterparts with pleonastic negation can be interpreted with interruption implication only. The same proposal could be extended to exceptive conditionals, meaning that the exceptive implication of *unless*-clauses without pleonastic negation is defeasible, whereas that of *unless*-clauses with pleonastic negation is not. This claim, however, faces a problem, and is not reflected in attested examples. For instance, examining different *unless*-clauses from legislation, where the exceptive interpretation is of central importance, we can find



sentences without or with pleonastic negation ((16a-b) for Slovenian and (16c-d) for Croatian respectively):

(16) a) Sredstva ... se zagotavljajo v skladu s predpisi ..., **razen** če je  
resources REFL provide in accordance with regulations unless is  
s tem zakonom drugače določeno.

with this law otherwise specified

‘Resources ... are provided in accordance with the regulations, unless the law provides otherwise.’

b) Poslovanje med rezidenti in nerezidenti je prosto, **razen** če ni s  
transactions between residents and non-residents is free unless not-is with  
tem zakonom drugače določeno.

this law otherwise specified

‘Transactions between residents and non-residents are free, unless the law provides otherwise.’

c) Sudac može produljiti taj rok za daljnja tri dana, **osim ako je**  
judge may prolong this deadline for next three days, unless is  
okrivljenik lišen slobode.

defendant in custody.

‘The judge may prolong this deadline for another three days, unless the defendant is in custody.’

d) Vozila kategorije L7 moraju zadovoljavati tehničke zahtjeve za vozila  
vehicles category L7 must comply technical requirements for vehicles  
kategorije L5, **osim ako nije** drukčije propisano.

category L5 unless not.is otherwise specified

‘Vehicles in category L7 must comply to the technical requirements for vehicles in category L5, unless specified otherwise.’

Hence, it seems that the selection of pleonastic negation in Croatian and Slovenian *unless*-clauses is motivated pragmatically, not only semantically (RQ3). The speak-

er resorts to the use of pleonastic negation (i) when wanting to explicitly encode the exceptive meaning, which is otherwise available only through entailment (e.g., (10b) and (15a)), or (ii) when evaluating the fulfilment of the antecedent as unlikely (e.g., (10b) and (13d)).<sup>17</sup> In the latter case, this intended meaning can be strengthened with the use of the non-indicative verbal form, and this usage of pleonastic negation is similar to its use in subordinate clauses introduced by emotive doxastics, dubitatives, and negative predicates (for details see Zovko Dinković and Ilc 2017). In this sense, the use of pleonastic negation may be linked to different expression of epistemic stance on the part of the speaker. As Yoon (2011: 105) notes:

If a sentence with E[valuative] N[egation] in an embedded clause implicates that a subject is uncertain as to whether the embedded propositional content is going to be realized or else the subject assumes that it is unlikely to happen, the distribution of EN is expected to be confined to low likelihood contexts.<sup>18</sup>

Pleonastic negation is thus considered to convey the information on the (un)likelihood of realization (of the content expressed by the *unless*-clause), while its absence rather denotes an equal possibility between  $p$  and  $\neg p$ .

<sup>17</sup> In order to test the second reason, we conducted a small-scale survey with 45 native speakers of Croatian aged 19-25 ( $M = 20.4$ ). The participants were presented with two sets of sentences based on example (9b). Each set involved an overt expression of likelihood/unlikelihood used with and without pleonastic negation in the *unless*-clause:

a. Bio bi stranac u stranoj zemlji *osim ako bi*, što je lako moguće, uzeo slovensko državljanstvo. (*unless* + affirmative)

a'. Bio bi stranac u stranoj zemlji *osim ako ne bi*, što je lako moguće, uzeo slovensko državljanstvo. (*unless* + pleonastic negation)

'You would be a foreigner in a foreign country *unless*, which is very likely, you took Slovenian citizenship.'

b. Bio bi stranac u stranoj zemlji *osim ako ne bi*, što je gotovo nemoguće, uzeo slovensko državljanstvo. (*unless* + pleonastic negation)

b'. Bio bi stranac u stranoj zemlji *osim ako bi*, što je gotovo nemoguće, uzeo slovensko državljanstvo. (*unless* + pleonastic negation)

'You would be a foreigner in a foreign country *unless*, which is almost impossible, you took Slovenian citizenship.'

The obtained results show that 86.7% of participants prefer sentence a. to sentence a'. while only 13.3% prefer a'. As for the second set, 71.1% of participants prefer sentence b'. to sentence b. which was chosen by 28.9%. We believe these results speak in favour of our claim, i.e. when high likelihood is explicitly stated, negation is omitted because it is associated with unlikelihood. On the other hand, if unlikelihood is overtly encoded by a separate expression, negation is deemed unnecessary (and thus truly pleonastic) because there is no need to encode the same information twice.

<sup>18</sup> Yoon (2010) uses the term Evaluative Negation because "[Expletive Negation] also has pragmatic contribution. It triggers what we can think of as evaluative mode of negating." (Yoon 2010: viii)

We also agree with Lauer (2013) in claiming that people have a general communicative preference for less complex utterances (i.e., to simply assert the consequent instead of using a conditional) and they will override these preferences only if there is a strong communicative need for them to do so. In other words, they will apply conditional strengthening (von Fintel 2001):

**Conditional strengthening:** Given a conditional operator *cond* and two propositions *p* and *q*, the statement *q cond p* carries with it the suggestion that the speaker is unwilling or unable to commit to the unconditional proposition *q*. (Nadathur 2014: 29)

This claim is further elaborated and supported by Nadathur (2014), who sees this conditional strengthening as a presupposition on *unless*:

Where conditional strengthening on *if*-conditionals seems to be about *post hoc* rationalization, the conclusion it mandates appears to take on the role of an admittance condition or presupposition for *unless*. That is, the speaker must have a contextually-recoverable reason for using a conditional form in order for *unless* to be felicitous; it is not enough to simply infer the existence of an unverifiable reason as a consequence of the utterance. (Nadathur 2014: 30)

Thus, while positive and negative *if*-clauses make us infer that the speaker has some reason for avoiding the simple unconditional assertion of the consequent, *unless*-clauses directly communicate the speaker's belief that this reason may be supplied from the observable context (cf. Dancygier 1985). In other words, while we may treat conditional strengthening as an implicature for negative *if*, we treat it as a presupposition for *unless*. As Nadathur (2014: 31) concludes:

(...) *unless*-statements, unlike their *if not* counterparts, draw attention to the relationship between their main generalization (the simpler alternative) and the excepted set.

We may thus assume that Croatian and Slovenian (and English for that matter) have the same pragmatic reasons that underlie the use of *unless*-clauses, which leaves us with the issue of the (non-)occurrence of pleonastic negation in *unless*-

-clauses. The corpus data in Tables 1 and 2 indicate that negative *unless*-clauses are more frequent in Croatian than in Slovenian, which indicates the existence of other possible factors that contribute to the (non-)occurrence of pleonastic negation. It seems rather plausible, as Nadathur (2014: 34) convincingly asserts, that the attachment of conditional strengthening to *unless* is driven by the speakers' communicative needs, and may be linked "to a condition requiring some sort of epistemic relationship between the *p* and *q* propositions in the statement *q unless p*." Indeed, the overt use of pleonastic negation might indicate a greater stance on the part of the speaker towards the presupposition (e.g., considering *p* as less likely to occur), or a smaller amount of control the speaker has over *p*.

## 6. Conclusion

Comparing the *unless*-clauses in English, Croatian and Slovenian, we have shown that despite their semantic similarities, they display several important differences. For example, while English *unless*-clauses are typically associated with non-hypothetical meanings and indicative verbal forms, in Croatian and Slovenian such sentences can appear with both indicative and non-indicative moods. Furthermore, in both languages, the antecedent and the consequent can contain different moods (i.e., one contains the indicative and the other the non-indicative verbal form and vice versa). The selection of the non-indicative mood in these cases does not pertain to the opposition between *realis* and *irrealis* condition, but is associated with the speaker's judgement of the unlikelihood of the condition (Croatian and Slovenian), or the habitual nature of the event in the main clause (Croatian only). The most noticeable difference between the three languages, however, involves the use of negation in *unless*-clauses: while in Croatian and Slovenian *unless*-clauses can contain both pleonastic and sentential negation, in English the use of pleonastic negation is not possible.

Despite these differences, the *unless*-clauses in all three languages are associated with the exceptive reading, which can semantically but not syntactically be linked to the negated *if*-clause. In particular, following Dancygier (1985), von Stechow (1992), Declerck and Reed (2000), and Nadathur (2014), we have shown that in all three languages, *unless* is interpreted as an exceptive operator, which logically entails the negative *if* interpretation.

We have argued that the use of pleonastic negation in Croatian and Slovenian *unless*-clauses is mostly motivated pragmatically: the speaker resorts to the use of pleonastic negation either when wanting to encode the exceptive meaning explicitly, which is otherwise available only through entailment, and/or when evaluating the fulfilment of the antecedent as unlikely.

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## Zavisne surečenice s veznikom *osim ako*: hrvatski i slovenski u usporedbi s engleskim

### Sažetak

Složeni veznik *osim ako* (slov. *razen će*, engl. *unless*) uvodi zavisne pogodbene surečenice s isključnim značenjem. Takve se surečenice obično smatraju srodnima (i zamjenjivima) niječnim pogodbenim surečenicama s veznikom *ako*, a izbor između tih dvaju tipova surečenica ovisi o semantičkim i pragmatičkim čimbenicima. U ovome se radu istražuju zavisne surečenice uvedene veznikom *osim ako* u hrvatskome i slovenskome u usporedbi s engleskim jezikom, prije svega s obzirom na njihovo tumačenje, mogućnost izražavanja hipotetskoga i činjeničnoga značenja te pojavu pleonastične negacije. Pritom se navode neki od ranijih pristupa, koji su uglavnom bili usmjereni na prirodu izrečenoga uvjeta (pogodbe) ili su željeli utvrditi značenjski doprinos surečenica s *osim ako* u kvantifikacijskome okružju, u kojemu su ih smatrali ili isključnim operatorom nad skupom kvantifikatora, ili presupozicijski (i pragmatički) motiviranim pojačivačem pogodbenoga uvjeta putem veznika *osim ako*. Na temelju podataka prikupljenih u referentnim korpusima hrvatskoga, slovenskoga i engleskoga želi se utvrditi ne samo sličnosti koje postoje u tim trima jezicima s obzirom na surečenice s veznikom *osim ako* nego i neke bitne razlike. Za razliku od hrvatskoga i slovenskoga, engleske surečenice s *osim ako* (engl. *unless*) rijetko izražavaju hipotetsko značenje: hrv. *Došao bih na predstavljanje knjige, osim ako ne bi bila / ne bude velika gužva.*, slov. *Na predstavitev knjige bi prišel, razen če ne bo / ne bi bilo gneče.*, engl. *\*I'd come to the book presentation, unless there's a huge crowd.* Kada je riječ o pojavi pleonastične negacije u takvim surečenicama, ona se u engleskome nikad ne pojavljuje, dok je u hrvatskome i slovenskome uobičajena, ali neobavezna. Pritom slovenski pokazuje oba svojstva tipična za pleonastičnu negaciju – dopušta pojavu niječnoga (slavenskoga) genitiva i ne dopušta pojavljivanje niječnih neodređenih izraza (tzv. jedinica niječne polarnosti) – dok hrvatski pokazuje samo jedno svojstvo (ne dopušta pojavu jedinica niječne polarnosti). Iako surečenice s *osim ako / razen će* u oba slavenska jezika pokazuju vrlo slična obilježja, njihova se distribucija s obzirom na pojavu pleonastične negacije donekle razlikuje: potvrdne surečenice s *osim ako / razen će* češće su u slovenskome nego u hrvatskome, dok je rečenica s izraženom pleonastičnom negacijom bitno manje.



Zaključujemo da su surečenice uvedene veznikom *osim ako / razen će* jedan od najboljih primjera složenoga međudjelovanja sintakse, semantike i pragmatike, kojim se prije svega posreduju govornikove komunikativne potrebe i namjere.

**Ključne riječi:** *unless, osim ako, razen će*, pogodbene rečenice, isključno značenje, pleonastična negacija

**Keywords:** *unless, osim ako, razen će*, conditional clauses, exceptive meaning, pleonastic negation