The real, the fake, and the fake fake: In counterfactual conditionals, crosslinguistically
Karawani, H.

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This dissertation explores the expression of counterfactuality crosslinguistically both from a morpho-syntactic/semantic perspective - focusing on the interaction between tense, aspect, mood and modality - and from a semantic/pragmatic perspective - focusing on the presuppositions and implicatures of counterfactual conditionals in a dynamic framework.

Counterfactual conditionals have fascinated many scholars in philosophy and linguistics, and I am one of them. For this reason, it is very difficult for this dissertation to be offering an account that is radically original or groundbreaking. But, as it builds on already established accounts, this dissertation adds an illuminating perspective on the typological dimension of counterfactuals by offering a description and analysis of data from Palestinian Arabic that was not discussed in this domain before. And by doing so it sheds light on and helps discriminate among existing accounts of counterfactuality. It also adds clarity to the semantic dimension of counterfactuals by suggesting a compositional account that might be crosslinguistically unifying for counterfactual structures and their use in context.

In chapter 1, I discuss a handful of proposals regarding the contribution of morphological combinations found in counterfactuals to counterfactual meaning. I present these proposals while trying to find a common denominator between the different morpho-syntactic means of the crosslinguistic examples that are discussed. In this chapter, the view that there is uniform semantics underlying counterfactuals which are derived through different morpho-syntactic means is merely an assumption. What is important is that certain combinations give rise to counterfactual readings and we want to understand the contribution of such morphemes to counterfactuality. The subtle differences between different forms of counterfactuals within and across languages is orthogonal in this chapter, but is picked up in the following chapters until dealt with in depth in chapter 4. There, a semantic account of conditionals is given which divides conditionals into three types. The division alludes to presuppositions of information states that pertain to knowledge and expectation and is shown to be
crosslinguistically attested.

Chapter 2 zooms in on counterfactual constructions in Palestinian Arabic providing a description and analysis of the morpho-syntax and semantics of those ingredients that play an essential part in yielding counterfactuality. The discussion of Palestinian Arabic data is important for the typological debate that is the center of attention in chapter 3, because Palestinian Arabic provides a relatively transparent case of the interaction between morphological ingredients and syntactic structure in yielding counterfactual interpretation. Chapter 3, tries to fine-tune our understanding of the typology of counterfactuals by looking more closely at languages like English, Hebrew, Hindi and Zulu through the lens of chapter 2. The dissertation concludes by addressing some of the important issues raised that leave questions for further investigation.