

## Final *though*

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*Abstract:* Starting out from observations in English linguistics, the paper makes a case that final *though* is an English particle. An experimental study is conducted indicating that *though* is permissive outside of concessive contexts as well. The focus of this study is placed on corpus examples which have remained unaccounted for in previous approaches. A descriptive generalization is proposed in terms of noteworthiness and an initial modelling in terms of a split notion of common ground following Bar-Asher Siegal & Boneh (2016) is pursued.

### 1 Introduction

The goal of this paper is to have a closer look at final *though* in English. To this end, we refine corpus inquiries started by Haselow (2012) and add initial experimental steps drawing on methods from the literature on not-at-issue content (Bade 2016). Against the prevalent view (cf. e.g. Zimmermann 2011), we will suggest that English still has discourse particles in modern usage (similar to so-called modal particles in German) if its syntactic skeleton is factored in, namely the absence of a fully functional middle field. Focusing on aspects of meaning, we analyze instances of final *though* that do not find a natural explanation in previous studies. We propose a descriptive generalization capturing such uses in terms of a notion of noteworthiness. Moving on towards a modelling of the phenomenon, we will propose that final *though* can be analyzed as a particular type of

discourse management device similarly (though not identically) to other phenomena recently considered (cf. especially Bar-Asher & Boneh 2016). After the introductory first section, the paper contains a brief discussion of previous research in Section 2, followed by a consideration of targeted issues pertaining to concessiveness under the inclusion of pilot experimental results in Section 3. Such results will already indicate a watered-down concessive character at best, and further motivate our analysis as a developing common-ground managing device in sections 4 and 5.

### *1.1 Discourse particles in English*

English does not have discourse particles, at least according to many researchers, such as Abraham (1991), Lenker (2010) or Zimmermann (2011). This claim is founded on one specific property of discourse particles: their restriction to the middle field. Since this position is not available in English, it follows that English cannot have discourse particles. However, while the middle field is the most common position for discourse particles in German, they can also appear outside the middle field in some cases (Bayer & Obenauer 2011). Fischer & Heide (2018) discuss the similarity of German discourse particles and pragmatic markers in English, but do not factor in their syntactic position. Our view here is, following, among others, Haselow (2012) and Hancil et al. (2015), that discourse particles exist in English as *final* particles. These final particles share the

majority of features with discourse particles, with the exception of the middle field restriction (Haselow 2012). Final particles exist in many languages, including English, German and Dutch (Hancil et al. 2015). One example of an English final particle is final *though*, as in (1).<sup>1</sup>

(1) B: My grammar is really dodgy, **though**.

(ICE-GB S1A-069 95)

A typical property of particles (from a semantic point of view) is that they are hard to paraphrase (Zimmermann 2011). Attempts to paraphrase the meaning contribution of final *though* show that finding a suitable paraphrase is, indeed, hard if at all possible. Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen (2002), among others, claim that final *though* functions as an abbreviated subordinate clause of concession, as in the radio show excerpt in (2) and the schematic summary in (3), which yields a paraphrase of *though*.

(2) S: but uh back to these uh protesters.

L: yeah.

S: they do no good,

<sup>1</sup> The corpus examples used in this paper are from the International Corpus of English Great Britain, specifically sections S1A (private dialogues), S1B (public dialogues) and S2A (unscripted monologues). Other examples are from the Old Bailey Corpus (Huber, Magnus, Nissel, Magnus & Karin Puga. 2016. Old Bailey Corpus 2.0.) Notice also that we only deal with mainstream English here, and not e.g. with Singapore English final particles, as an anonymous reviewer remarks.

they won't change a damn thing;

excuse the language

L: it's their right to be heard **though**; isn't it,

S: it's their right to be heard but not quite that way

(modified from Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen 2002: 348)

(3) S: The protesters do no good, they won't change a damn thing

L: It's their right to be heard, **though** (=though they do no good and won't change a damn thing).

(modified from Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen 2002: 348)

As is indicated in (4) and (5), there are many counterexamples to this type of paraphrase. (5) is not a suitable paraphrase for what is meant by final *though*.

(4) A: They're building up a corpus of uhm conversations in

English so that they can

uhm

I don't know

I have no idea

Uhm a study of the grammar and structures of English so

B: My grammar is really dodgy **though**

I get the words in the wrong places.

(ICE-GB S1A-069 91-96)

(5) A: They're building a corpus to study the grammar and

structures of English

B: My grammar is really dodgy **though** (# =though they're building a corpus).

Another property of particles is that they do not contribute to the at-issue content of the clause (Zimmermann 2011). According to Potts (2012), the 'Hey, wait a minute'-test can be used to identify all kinds of not at-issue content, not just presuppositions. A similar test has the template 'W, what do you mean W?' which challenges the non-at-issue part of the meaning contribution of the word or structure W it highlights (Potts 2012: 2521). This test is more suitable for final *though* than the 'Hey, wait a minute'-test, as is shown in (6) and (7).

(6) A: But she started talking to Phil

Yeah and it sort of happened from then

But she's really nice **though**

(ICE-GB S1A-081 165-167)

(7) Though, what do you mean though? Of course, she's nice.

The test in (7) highlights the word *though* which makes an, at least partly, non-at-issue meaning contribution, which is then challenged, as the continuation "of course, she's nice" shows.

## 2 Final *though*

The final particle *though* occurs at the end of a turn construction unit, i.e. at the end of what could have been a turn on its own (Haselow 2012). From a syntactic point of view, we may expect it to attach not only to sentential but also to fragmentary material (cf. e.g. Merchant 2004, Dvořák & Gergel 2004, Winkler 2005, Gergel 2007, 2008, Reich 2011 for discussions of different elliptical processes).

(8) A: Good tackle **though** by Adams.

(ICE-GB S2A-015 229)

As (8) shows, compared to (1), *though* does not have to occur sentence-finally. It also becomes evident from such an example that further phrases can be added, even if the reversed relative linearization of *though* and *by Adams* would be have been possible as well.

There are many different uses of *though* besides the subordinating conjunction and the final particle, as illustrated in (9) through (12) below. These other uses play a minor role as their meanings are closely related. Only (1) and (8) are of interest here.

(9) A: The best parts of this building are seven hundred years old  
**though** there has been worship there for a great deal longer.

(ICE-GB S2A-020 105)

(10)B: It sounds **as though** you've been attacked or something.

(ICE-GB S1A-050 246)

(11)A: But on the other hand if we're advancing, **even though** that

be quite slow, quite different attitudes prevail

(ICE-GB S2A-021 055)

(12)Interventionist **though** she was she know her limits of power

(Drabble 27, in Rudolph 1996: 400)

(9) shows *though* as a subordinating conjunction, (10) and (11) are examples of *even though* and *as though* and (12) is another kind of concessive construction with *though*.

### 2.1 Previous research on final *though*

The two predominant topics in previous research on final *though* are the functions of final *though*, and the question whether or not final *though* can be concessive proper. The latter is controversial: while some authors (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985, Altenberg 1986) appear to view final *though* as concessive proper, others (e.g. Rudolph 1996) claim that final *though* is too weak for proper concessive meaning (Lenker 2010). Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen (2002) also appear to view final *though* as concessive proper because they claim that the function of final *though* is that of an abbreviated subordinate clause of concession. (13) and (14), repeated from (2) and (3), illustrate their view on final *though*: (13) is the original dialogue and (14) includes the abbreviated subordinate clause of concession in a schematic form.

(13)S: but uh back to these uh protesters

L: yeah

S: they do no good, they won't change a damn thing. excuse the  
language

L: it's their right to be heard **though**, isn't it

(14)S: the protesters do no good, they won't change a damn thing

L: it's their right to be heard **though** (=though they do no good  
and won't change a damn thing)

(Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen 2002: 348)

For Haselow (2012), the concessive pattern seems to be a starting point. He states that final *though* does not follow the concessive pattern *Although p, q*. However, the rest of Haselow's paper is not dedicated to whether this means that no proper concessive meaning can be achieved with final *though* or not. Regarding the functions and uses of final *though*, there are different approaches. As illustrated above, final *though* functions as an abbreviated subordinate clause of concession for Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen (2002). They also show that final *though* can function as a discourse marker for topic change. This use is illustrated in (15), which is an excerpt of a geology lecture.

(15)A: You get all these things like Wenlock limestone and all these  
uh uh shallow water local <unclear word> which have  
become so important in correlation.

Uhm the Devonian **though**



What is the Devonian in Britain.

(ICE-GB S1B-006 123-125)

In (15), the speaker uses *though* to highlight the topic change from Wenlock limestone to the Devonian in Britain.

Lenker (2010) views final *though* not as a particle but as an adverbial connector. Following a three-level approach, Lenker (2010) distinguishes the propositional, interpersonal and textual level and specifies uses of *though* at each level. On the propositional level, i.e. the level of semantic content, uses of *though* include expressing counter-expectancy or contrast. On the interpersonal level, on which social functions are expressed, uses include self-correction and other-correction. The textual level, i.e. the discourse organization level, the functions include topic management or discourse management, as in (15) above. The predominant use she identifies is the marking of contrast at the interpersonal level, such as self-correction or other-correction (Lenker 2010). An example of other-correction is given in (16).

(16)C: BBC

It was through the BBC wasn't it

A: no it was through Lubbock

C: I thought it was through the BBC that you did that uhm music  
for the BBC <unclear>

A: Yes, but not through the BBC, **though**

because Lubbock couldn't do it so they passed it onto me

(ICE-GB S1A-058 168-173 in Haselow 2012: 193)

Haselow (2012) compares the schematics of final *though* with other concessives. The standard concessive pattern has the form *Although p, q.* and for final *though*, the form is *p. q, though.* Haselow (2012) claims that final *though* retrospectively modifies *p* into backgrounded information that is somehow incompatible with *q*. To illustrate this, consider (17).

(17)B: I was at a job for three and a half days. (*p*)

I didn't put it down on my CV **though**. (*q, though*)

(ICE-GB S1A-017 204-205 in Haselow 2012:187, modified)

Haselow's claim is that *p* (being at a job for three days) is retrospectively modified into backgrounded information that is somehow incompatible with *q* (not putting it down on the CV). Haselow (2012) identifies two functions of final *though* under a specific condition of use, see (18) below.

(18) [though] = Modify *p* in CG

Eliminate *p* from CG, add *q*

Condition of use: *p* does not include or implicate *q*

(adapted from Haselow 2012: 194)

An example of the first function (Modify *p* in CG) is in (17), the second function (Eliminate *p* from CG, add *q*) applies to those examples where *q* is a correction of *p*, such as (16). Haselow's analysis is the basis of the descriptive generalizations in section 4 below.

## 2.2 Unsolved questions

There are two unsolved questions with respect to final *though*: the first concerns its contribution as concessive proper. This is an important point because most analyses of final *though* are based on concessive relations or, at least, view them as a starting point.<sup>2</sup> The second question involves examples that cannot be explained by the approaches described above, such as (19)<sup>3</sup>.

(19)B: But she's actually my half sister.

She's got the same father.

C: Mmm

B: And so she really looks like my dad **though** and so

does his other daughter who is eight.

(ICE-GB S1A-042 354-357)

In (19), it is not possible to interpret *though* as concessive proper. Sharing one parent and looking like the parent two half-siblings share is not uncommon. Similarly, *though* as an abbreviated subordinate clause of concession does not work here, as in (20).

<sup>2</sup> Lenker (2010) is an exception. She bases her analysis of *though* on the discourse uses of *but*, which, just like *though*, can be used to indicate counter-expectancy, (self-)correction, topic management, etc. (Lenker 2010).

<sup>3</sup> An anonymous reviewer pointed out to us that these odd examples might be performance errors. We asked several native speakers of English who confirmed that the sentence sounds natural to them.

(20) And so she really looks like my dad though (# =though we share the same father).

Regarding retrospective modification of *p*, in this case “she’s got the same father”, is also odd. Uttering that the sister looks like the father does not in any way background the fact that the two sisters have the same father. Topic management in the sense of topic change is also not on point here. The preceding discourse is about the half-sisters’ features. The fact that she and her father look alike is just one more feature of the sister.

The example in (21) makes the difficulty even clearer.

(21) A: But this time Dixon’s taken a short throw to  
Rocastle but he has it once again the England fullback  
Swings it in right-footed  
Smith goes up  
Good header there by Sedgely **though**

(ICE-GB S2A-015 192-195)

In (21), it is hard to even identify a *p*, meaning a proposition that is either potentially incompatible with *q* (concessive proper and abbreviated subordinate clause of concession), or retrospectively modified (Haselow’s (2012) and Lenker’s (2010) approaches).

The following sections are dedicated to addressing these two unsolved questions, starting with whether or not final *though* is, or can be, concessive proper.

### **3 Concessive final *though***

#### *3.1 Experiment*

Final *though* is treated as a variation of ‘regular’ concessives (e.g. Haselow 2012; Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen 2002). Others claim that final *though* is too weak for proper concessive meaning (Rudolph 1996). This experiment aims to determine to what extent final *though* can have proper concessive meaning by comparing final *though* to other concessives. The methods of this experiment are similar to methods from the literature on not-at-issue content (Bade 2016).

##### *3.1.1 Methods*

The experiment used a 4x3 design with a Latin square and 12 context sentences. Four concessive constructions were tested: final *though*, *nevertheless*, *despite*, and *however* (concessive condition). For each of the 12 context sentences, there was a [+], [0], and [-]-version (context version condition). The [+]-version provided an adversative context, the [-]-version a non-adversative context and the [0]-version an unrelated context. For each context sentence, there were 12 conditions (3 context conditions x 4 concessive conditions). To illustrate the design, (22) through (27) show the

same context sentence with [+], [0], and [-]-versions for final *though* and *despite*. The full list of target items is provided in the appendix.

(22) John is good at sports. He's bad at running, **though**. ([+],  
*though*)

(23) John is good at sports. He loves to travel, **though**. ([0],  
*though*)

(24) John is good at sports. He's good at running, **though**. ([-],  
*though*)

(25) John is good at sports despite being bad at running. ([+],  
*despite*)

(26) John is good at sports despite his love of travel. ([0],  
*despite*)

(27) John is good at sports despite being good at running. ([-],  
*despite*)

A Latin square was used to distribute the target items onto 6 lists with 24 target items. Every condition was shown twice with different context sentences. An expectation from such a set-up (raising from studies on other not-at-issue meanings; cf. Bade 2016 for ample discussion) is that an item providing a supportive context should be rated comparatively high.

Similarly, without further enriched context, an item with a [-] context should be significantly worse. In the current case, however, notice that we are testing multiple items with (roughly) similar meanings. It will hence also be relevant to pay attention to the way items compare to one another, and in

particular in the [-] contexts (i.e. the seemingly ‘anti-concessive’ ones), as this could be informative concerning how different items are allowing alternative (i.e. not strictly concessive) interpretations.

The 36 fillers were constructed from the target items using the (potential) duality of concessives and causals. The context sentences were mostly the same as for the target items, but with causal expressions instead of concessives. Three fillers functioned as attention tests because they were ungrammatical and were the same for every list.

Fillers and target items were randomized in order, but every experiment started with the same two fillers. Items were rated on a scale from -3 (unnatural and hard to understand) to +3 (natural and easy to understand). Participants were asked to rate the items based on their intuition of what sounds good and makes sense quickly. They were asked not to overthink their choices because for some of the [-]-versions, it is possible to think of an uncommon, but possible, scenario where the construction would make sense.

The questionnaire was distributed as a link, which, when activated, assigned participants randomly to one of 6 lists. The randomizer used ensured an even distribution of participants to the six lists. 48 participants took part in the experiment. 37 participants remained after the elimination of those who did not give consent, whose native language was not English, or who admitted to meaningless response(s). Three participants were also excluded from the analysis because their response to 2 or more of the 3 attention tests

was more than one standard deviation above average, leaving 34

participants for the analysis. The elimination of participants means that not all items are rated an equal number of times.

### 3.1.2 Results

Figure 1 shows histograms of each concessive and context version. The ratings for the [+]-versions are similar for *though*, *however*, and *despite*. For *nevertheless*, they are lower in general, and have a different distribution than the other concessives tested. For [0] and [-]-versions, *though* and *however* interestingly receive higher ratings compared to *despite* and *nevertheless*.

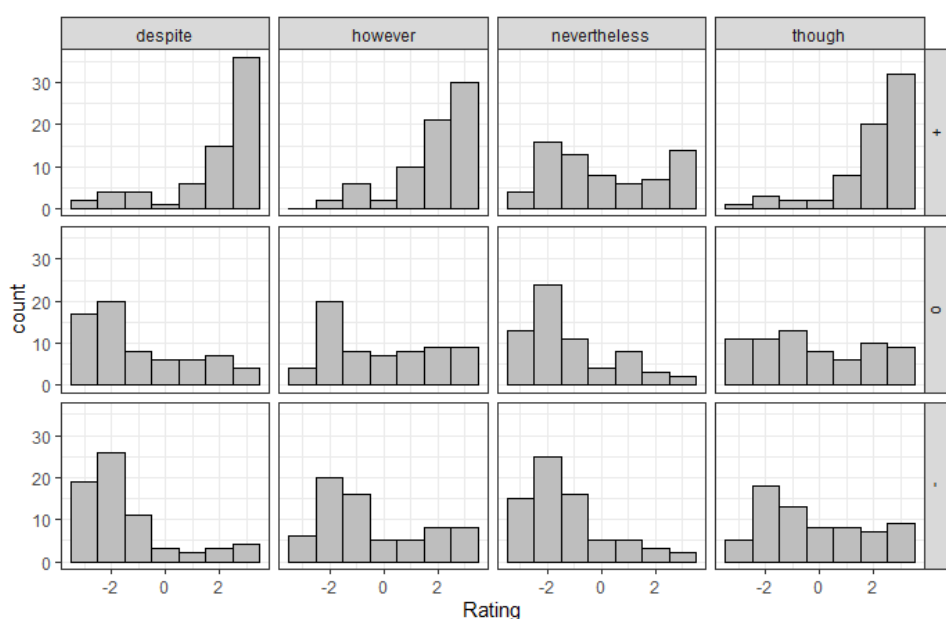


Figure 1: Histograms of concessive and context conditions

Figure 2 shows the median ratings of each concessive in the different conditions. [+]-versions have a triangle shape. The median ratings also show



that *nevertheless* behaves differently from the other three concessive items. *Despite*, *however*, and *though* have median ratings of 3, 2 and 2, while the [+] -condition for *nevertheless* received a median rating of 0. [0]- and [-]-versions have the same median ratings for *though*, *despite*, and *nevertheless* but the median ratings for *though* (-1) are higher than for *despite* and *nevertheless* (-2). Median ratings for the [0]-context for *however* are higher (0) than for the [-]-version (-1).

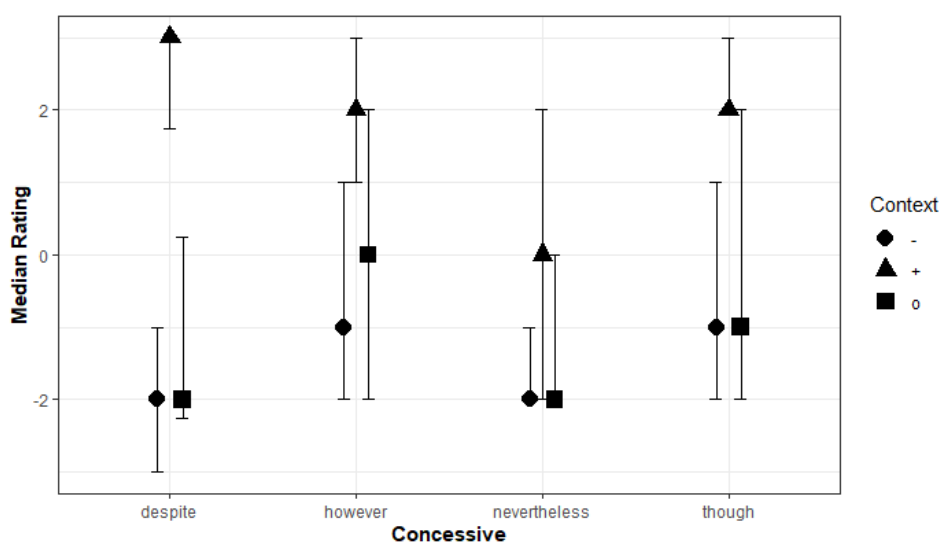


Figure 2 Boxplot of Concessive ~ Context

A two-way repeated ordinal regression with CLMM was conducted taking into account the context version, the concessive, the interaction between the two and context sentences (item) as random effects (Rating ~ Context + Concessive + Context:Concessive + (1|Item)) (R: ordinal package, version 2019.4-25). Context and Concessive are both highly significant ( $p > 0.001$ ), the interaction was also significant ( $p = 0.002$ ). Post-hoc tests for pair-wise comparisons were conducted using the Tukey method and revealed highly

significant differences for all concessives between their [+] and [-]-contexts ( $p < 0.001$  for *though*, *despite* and *however*;  $p = 0.004$  for *nevertheless*). The differences between the respective [+] and [0]-contexts are also significant for all concessives with  $p < 0.001$  for *though*, *however* and *despite*, and  $p = 0.0059$  for *nevertheless*. No effect was found for the differences of each concessive between [0] and [-]-contexts for all concessives ( $p = 1$  for all of them). Within the [+] -condition, *nevertheless* received significantly lower ratings than the other concessives ( $p < 0.001$  in all three cases). *Nevertheless* was also significantly different from *though* in the [-] and [0]-context ( $p = 0.035$  and  $p = 0.046$ , respectively). The pairwise comparison yielded no other significant differences.

### 3.1.3 Discussion

An important point is that final *though* can have proper concessive meaning. This is evident from the high ratings of *though* in the [+] -condition (median rating 2). It follows that the concessive meaning contribution is an appropriate starting point for other meaning contributions. At the same time, we repeat the point that final *though* also has higher ratings in the negative condition compared with a stricter concessive such as *despite*.

The results of *nevertheless* are interesting because even though *nevertheless* is clearly a concessive element, it behaves very differently from the other concessives in the experiment, as the significant differences in the [+] -context shows. This suggests that *nevertheless* is used in different contexts

than *though*, *however*, and *despite*. The precise differences in conditions of use of *nevertheless* and other concessive elements will have to be the topic of further research.

The other concessive elements behave as expected. *Despite*, as expected of a concessive proper, receives the highest ratings for the [+]-condition, but very low ratings for [0]- and [-]-conditions. *However*, like *though*, appears to be more flexible. This is also expected due to its use as a discourse marker.

To sum up the important points for final *though*, it can take proper concessive meaning, but it is far more flexible than other concessives like *despite*. Final *though* can be used in adversative contexts and in unrelated contexts (and in some non-adversative contexts).

#### 3.1.4 Corpus findings

While the results of the experiment show that final *though* is acceptable not only in adversative/concessive contexts, but also more acceptable than concessives proper such as *despite* in some non-adversative and unrelated contexts, they cannot make any claims regarding the frequency of either context. For this reason, a brief corpus study was conducted using sections S1A, S1B, and S2A of the British component of the International Corpus of English, i.e. unscripted private and public dialogues as well as monologues, and a simple word search for “though”. Of the 271 cases of *though* in these sections, 97 cases were excluded because *though* was not the final particle,

leaving 174 cases for the analysis. These 174 instances of final *though* were categorized according to the same three contexts as in the experiment: [+], [0], and [-]-contexts, by first identifying a preceding proposition *p* in the context and then determining the relation of *p* to *q*, *though*. If *p* & *q* normally co-occur, the example was categorized as [-], if *p* & *q* do not normally co-occur, the example was categorized as [+] and if *p* & *q* are unrelated, the example was categorized as [0]. As is shown in Figure 3, 44% of all instances have an adversative [+]-context, another 44% have an unrelated [0]-context, and 21% show a non-adversative [-]-context.

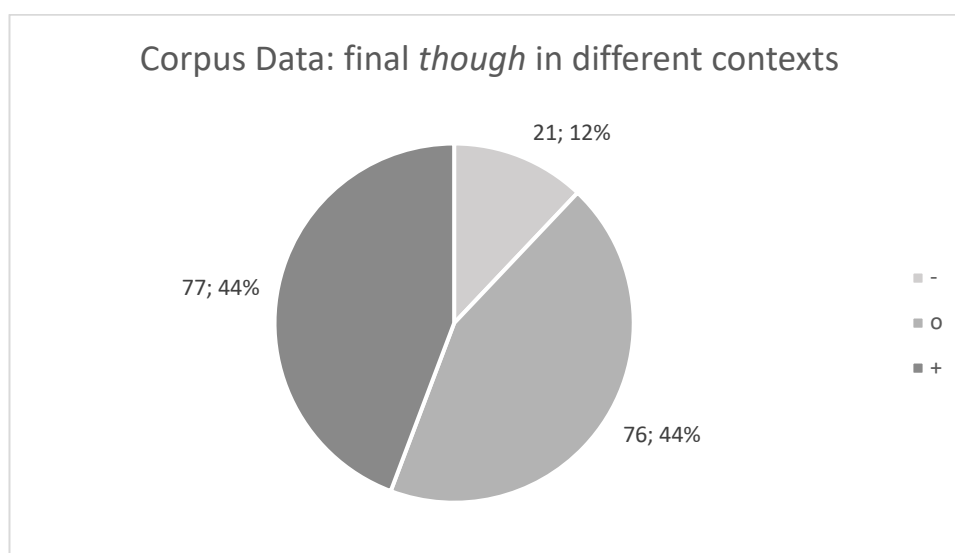


Figure 3 Final *though* in corpus ICE-GB S1A, S2A, S1B

This data further supports the results of the experiment above by showing that final *though* can occur in adversative, non-adversative and unrelated contexts. Final *though* occurs in unrelated contexts as frequently as it does

in adversative contexts. Final *though* is less frequent, but also possible, in non-adversative contexts.

### 3.2 *Final though as projective content*

Concessives of the form *Although p, q*. trigger the presupposition (PSP) normally  $\neg (p \ \& \ q)$ <sup>4</sup>. On this, we believe to be close to König's (1988) prose intuition, who classifies such effects as presuppositions (even though we explicitly do not follow his suggested implementation as a conditional). Final *though* typically follows a different pattern: *p, q, though*. Given that *p* is not necessarily found in the linguistic context, it seems appropriate to suggest that a concessive expression of the form *q, though* triggers (28).

(28) There is a salient *p* such that normally  $\neg (p \ \& \ q)$ .

To determine whether final *though* triggers the effect described in (28), a first intuition would be to use the “family of sentences” diagnostics known from the classical literature on presuppositions. The dialogue in (29) is a starting point to this end.

(29) A: I'm going for a walk.

B: It's raining, **though**.

<sup>4</sup> The discussion of *though* as projective content is based on this PSP, but it does not depend on it. Gast's (2019) probabilistic definition of concessivity and concessive PSP, which expresses that the probability of  $(p \ \& \ \neg q)$  is higher than the probability of  $(p \ \& \ q)$ , is a feasible, albeit less intuitive, alternative.

“It’s raining, though” arguably triggers the PSP that there is a salient  $p$  (A’s going for a walk) such that normally  $\neg (p \ \& \ q)$  (normally  $\neg$  (going for a walk & rain)). (30) shows the family of sentences diagnostic applied to the example.

(30)A: I’m going for a walk.

a. B: It’s raining, though.

normally  $\neg$  (going for a walk & rain)

b. B: It’s not raining, **though**.

normally  $\neg$  (going for a walk & no rain)

c. B: It might be raining, **though**.

normally  $\neg$  (going for a walk & might rain)

As can be seen in (30b), the classic diagnostic using negation seems to fail the diagnostic. We suspect this is due to the fact that, as a discourse managing device, *though* outscopes negation (cf. Bar-Asher & Boneh 2016, among others, for similar effects). However, the epistemic modal *might* confirms the diagnostic. It can be concluded that final *though* triggers at least some form of projective content.

### 3.3 Final *though* as a trigger in corpus examples

While constructed examples seem to show final *though* as a PSP trigger, the situation is less clear for corpus examples. Some of our retrieved corpus

examples such as (19) and (21), repeated in (31) and (32) below, were not accounted for in the approaches to the function of final *though*.

(31)B: But she's actually my half sister.

She's got the same father.

C: Mmm

B: And so she really looks like my dad **though** and so  
does his other daughter who is eight.

(ICE-GB S1A-042 354-357)

(32)A: But this time Dixon's taken a short throw to

Rocastle but he has it once again the England fullback

Swings it in right-footed

Smith goes up

Good header there by Sedgely **though**

(ICE-GB S2A-015 192-195)

If they trigger the same PSP as described above, the PSP is the following.

(33)“And so she really looks like my dad though” triggers the PSP:

There is a salient *p* (having the same father?) such that normally

¬ (having the same father & (at least) one sibling looking like the  
father).

The PSP in (33) is odd. It is possible that the selected *p* is not the correct one. It could have been non-linguistic, e.g. that the speaker looks very much like her mother and not like her father at all. In this case, there would seem

to be a contrast of sorts between the looks of one sister and the looks of the other, but the “normally” condition of the PSP is still not appropriate.

Example (31) is similar to (32) in the respect that *p* is hard to identify. (34) is an attempt to show a putative presupposition triggered in (32).

(34) “Good header there by Sedgely, **though**.” Triggers the PSP:

there is a salient *p* (hard to identify, game situation?) such that  
normally  $\neg$  (this type of game situation & good defense headers).

This example works better as a PSP trigger than (31), but they have one thing in common, which makes such an example easier to account for. The use of *though* highlights that what is described by *q* is somehow noteworthy in light of *p*. We will discuss noteworthiness of *q* in more detail below. A more specific PSP could, therefore, be:

(35) *q, though*. triggers the PSP: there is a salient *p* such that

normally  $\neg$  (*p* & *q*) where *q* describes an event/state such that the occurrence of *q* is noteworthy in light of *p*.

While what is described in (35) would fit both examples (31) and (32), it is essentially König’s presupposition, which takes *p* as a starting point and judges *q*’s occurrence as unexpected or noteworthy in light of *p*. This is problematic for examples such as in (36) below. (36) is not a corpus example, but an item in the experiment and received a median rating of +2 (scale -3 to +3).

(36)A: Joe won the karate tournament.

B: He’s been training for years, **though**.



Notice that the rating is particularly high for a putative negative context (from the perspective of pure concessiveness). Following the PSP above, “He’s been training for years, though.” would trigger the following PSP:

(37) There is a salient  $p$  (Joe’s win) such that normally  $\neg (p$   
(winning) &  $q$  (training)).

From the perspective of an athlete, this is simply not the case. It is also not what intuitions tell us about the meaning. A native speaker commented on the dialogue that *though* takes away some of the worth of the win, and indicated further that it would only have been noteworthy had Joe not won the tournament. This is quite the opposite from what (37) predicts.

A potential solution comes from a very different direction. Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen (2002), which based their research on Couper-Kuhlen & Thompson (1998), describe a cardinal concessive pattern, and several variations of this pattern, including one for final *though*. The pattern is provided in (38).

(38) A: X (claim)

B: Y (counterclaim)

X’ (acknowledgement of claim)

where X and Y are understood by participants to be potentially incompatible

(Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen 2002: 347)

The use of ‘potentially’ is important, but ‘winning’ and ‘training hard’ are very compatible, and not “potentially” incompatible. König & Siemund

(2000) adapt Couper-Kuhlen & Thompson's pattern by including conversational implicatures. Their adaptation is given in (39).

- (39) X (therefore Z)  
X'  
Y (where Y is contradictory to Z)  
(König & Siemund 2002: 356)

Note that this is the 'cardinal concessive pattern', i.e. not the pattern for the variation with final *though*. For this variation, Y and X' (signifying the conceding move, which is realized with final *though*) are exchanged. There are two differences (besides the order of X' and Y) between (38) and (39): the loss of the word 'potentially' and the inclusion of Z as a conversational implicature of X. Adapting this pattern to the triggered presupposition would mean judging *q* against implicatures of *p* instead of whether or not it normally co-occurs with *p*. Applying this pattern to the example, and using the implicature within the triggered presupposition, this would mean the following:

(40) A: Joe won the karate tournament (which is great, special,  
surprising, ...)

B: He's been training for years, **though**.

(41) "He's been training for years, though." triggers the PSP: there is a salient *p* (the great, special, surprising, ... win) such that normally  $\neg (p \text{ (surprising wins)} \ \& \ q \text{ (hard training)})$ .

Again, an athlete might disagree with (40) and (41), but this is much closer to what intuitions tell us about the meaning of *though*. In this case, the win is less special/surprising because of the hard training. What this example shows is simply that *p* is much more versatile and not necessarily obvious or easy to identify.

To sum up, *though* as some sort of PSP trigger appears to account for the majority of examples. However, it is not a satisfying straight-forward approach for all examples. In the next section, we will seek to sharpen a descriptive generalization to shed more light on the meaning contribution of final *though*.

#### **4 Descriptive generalization of the uses of final *though*: balancing noteworthiness**

One notion, that has come up frequently in the discussion of the examples above, was that of *noteworthiness*. The fact that the sister looks like the father (19)/(31) was somehow noteworthy in the context, the header by Sedgely in (21)/(32) was special, or noteworthy, in the game situation, and the fact that Joe won the tournament (36) was less noteworthy, but rather expected because of his hard training. This notion of noteworthiness is at the core of the descriptive generalization of the functions of final *though*.

The descriptive generalization below is a modification of Haselow's (2012) approach. Haselow (2012) summarizes the functions of final *though* (in *p. q. though*) as retrospectively (1) modifying *p* in CG, (2) eliminating *p* and adding *q*. As conditions of use, he states that *p* can neither implicate nor include *q*. In the following, we will show, first, that the second function is redundant because it is included in the first, and second, that the conditions of use can be broadened to say *p* cannot include *q*, but that the relevant implicature is fine, and third, specify how *p* is modified in CG or what is added with *q*.

Haselow's (2012) second function of final *though* supposedly describes examples such as (16), repeated in (42).

(42)C: BBC

It was through the BBC wasn't it

A: no it was through Lubbock

C: I thought it was through the BBC that you did that uhm music  
for the BBC <unclear>

A: Yes, but not through the BBC, **though**

because Lubbock couldn't do it so they passed it onto me

(ICE-GB S1A-058 168-173 in Haselow 2012: 193)

Haselow (2012) claims, that 'it was through the BBC' is eliminated from the common ground and that 'it was not through the BBC' is added. However, the negation of *p* is not the same as an elimination. It is also a modification, in this case a negation. This means that examples such as (42) are included

in the first of the two functions of *though* and, thus, the second function is obsolete.

Haselow (2012) further claims that the conditions of use for final *though* are that *p* does not include or implicate *q*. Consider (43) and (44) (a corpus and an experimental item, as mentioned):

(43)A: Well she'd been down there. Had a very good day.

B: Uhm.

A: She'd been down there on Saturday

B: Oh had she

A: Yeah

B: What. Down to see him

A: Yeah

B: Oh. Gosh. That's good of her

A: Yes, Yeah. Well she's a very good-hearted girl **though**<sup>5</sup>

(ICE-GB S1A-023 129-143)

(44)A: Joe won the karate tournament.

B: He's been training for years, **though**.

If the speaker states that the action was 'good of her', this might implicate that she is, indeed, good-hearted. In (44), if Joe won the tournament, it

<sup>5</sup> A German translation of (43) and (44) would most likely include the particle combination "aber auch", which does not seem possible in concessive contexts.

stands to reason that he has been training for it. This could, therefore, be implicated by *p*.

Returning to the notion of noteworthiness: there are two general observations with respect to noteworthiness and final *though*. For the structure, *p, q, though.*, there are two potential cases: either *q* itself is noteworthy, or *p* is not so noteworthy. We have seen examples of both already. Consider (45), repeated from (21), and (46), repeated from (15).

(45)A: But this time Dixon's taken a short throw to

Rocastle but he has it once again the England fullback

Swings it in right-footed

Smith goes up

Good header there by Sedgely **though**

(ICE-GB S2A-015 192-195)

(46)A: You get these things like Wenlock limestone and all these uh

uh shallow water local <unclear> which have become so

important in correlation

Uhm the Devonian **though**

What is the Devonian in Britain

(ICE-GB S1B-006 123-125)

As discussed above, there seems to be something noteworthy about Sedgely's header in the present game situation. (46) is a little bit different. Barth-Weingarten & Couper-Kuhlen (2002) discuss how final *though* has developed into a discourse marker for topic change. (46) is an example of

this use. New topics, in this case the introduction of the Devonian, are inherently noteworthy.

Examples such as (47) and (43), repeated in (48), have a noteworthiness downgrading of *p* through *q*, *though*.

(47)A: I followed her into the shop, and said, “Now I will see what you have” – she shifted her legs — I said, “Let me see what you have dropped” — I moved her on one side, and there was the dress — she immediately said, “You did not see me take it, **though**,” and said I did it through spite, because she would not buy the shawl.

(OBC2 1841-0823)

(48)A: Well she’d been down there. Had a very good day.

B: Uhm.

A: She’d been down there on Saturday

B: Oh had she

A: Yeah

B: What. Down to see him

A: Yeah

B: Oh. Gosh. That’s good of her

A: Yes, Yeah. Well she’s a very good-hearted girl **though**

(ICE-GB S1A-023 129-143)

In (47), the discovery of the dress between the woman’s legs, and proof of theft, is weakened by her statement that the theft was not witnessed by the

interlocutor. Similarly, in (48), the good deed of the girl (going down to see him) is weakened by the fact that she is a good-hearted girl and consequently, good deeds are expected and not noteworthy.

While noteworthiness as a concept seems to attach nicely to the uses of *though*, the question arises how it can be connected to its concessive component. In concessive relations, two propositions  $p$  and  $q$  both hold although they are usually incompatible. This means that  $p$  and  $q$  do not usually intersect (in other, slightly more formal words: there are usually no possible worlds in which both  $p$  and  $q$  are true). If  $p$  and  $q$  do occur together (and intersect), this fact is functionally then already noteworthy. For final *though*,  $p$  and  $q$  do not necessarily have to be usually incompatible, as was seen in (43), where  $q$  was even implicated by  $p$ . It is sufficient if  $q$  is noteworthy, or, at least, more noteworthy than  $p$ , because the intersection of  $p$  and  $q$  is noteworthy if  $q$  is noteworthy on its own. In other words, final *though* has retained a presumed property of ‘noteworthiness’ that can be derived – as we have just argued – from the use of its concessive origin and is used in a greater variety of contexts than concessives proper.<sup>6</sup>

Taking one step back to the discussion of Haselow’s (2012) functions of final *though*. It was argued that only one function is applicable: to

<sup>6</sup> While our current inquiry is primarily synchronic, we believe that the logical relationship informally described between the different uses (if noteworthiness is indeed a relevant factor as we are claiming), could also lead to diachronic results. Example (47) above is thus from 1841 and was retrieved from the *Old Bailey Corpus*. Caution is, however, in order, given the oral character of the construction. We leave it to further research to establish whether particle uses are systematically also available at earlier stages of English.



retrospectively modify  $p$  in the common ground. What Haselow (2012) did not specify was what is modified. As was discussed above, final *though* modifies  $p$  by making it less noteworthy than  $q$ . There are two possible ways of achieving this: either by adding a  $q$  that is so noteworthy (as marked by *though*) that previous utterances are automatically less noteworthy (e.g. topic change (the Devonian), Sedgley's header, ...) or by weakening the noteworthiness of  $p$  (e.g. Joe's win of the karate tournament, the good-hearted girl, ...). A schema of the function of final *though* is summarized in (49), as modified from Haselow (2012: 194).

- (49) Final *though*: modify  $p$  in CG by
- a) adding noteworthy  $q$
  - b) downgrading noteworthiness of  $p$
- condition of use:  $p$  does not include  $q$ .

Final *though* indicates that the present utterance is noteworthy compared to the previous utterances by highlighting the noteworthiness of  $q$  and potentially downgrading the noteworthiness of  $p$ .

## **5 Common ground management (with side-effect mirativity)**

In this section, we propose to treat final *though* as a discourse managing device (Krifka 2008), specifically in the spirit of Bar-Asher Siegal & Boneh (2016). Bar-Asher Siegal & Boneh (2016) begin with an analysis of

discourse datives in Hebrew, and suggest a splitting of the common ground into the more classical part containing asserted propositions  $CG_A$  and one that rather confirms to generalizations, which they dub  $CG_G$ . We cannot go into a full motivation of this step in this contribution for space reasons, and we refer the interested reader to the data and literature reviewed in Bar-Asher Siegal & Boneh (2016), in order to present our current take next. Two main adaptations are necessary. First, instead of  $CG_G$ , we propose to use  $CG_E$ , which we define as that part of the common ground, which roughly confirms to hearer expectations in the particular situation and at the particular time of the conversation, as well as notably their anticipation of the speaker. The motivation of the first adaptation lies in the fact that speakers do not only present conclusions as based on genuine rule-based generalizations, but often take recourse e.g. to zero or default expectations. Moreover, sometimes expectations may not be the result of any (inferential) generalizations at all, but rather appear as less rational (or even irrational for that matter), which, nonetheless, are still in need of being addressed and potentially marked as such in conversations. Such expectations are then propositions in  $CG_E$  (and in turn, propositions are sets of possible worlds, in the usual way). While we do not dispute the usefulness of  $CG_G$  for other phenomena, our current point is simply to use an adaptation of it that we submit to be more to the point for the case study at hand. To be precise: we take a superset of the common ground of generalizations  $CG_G$ , as defined

above. A fortiori, we assume generalizations that are usually made by speakers largely fall within the domain of what can be expected.

Speakers may signal that certain states of affairs observed in the actual world (which are themselves added to the classical  $CG_A$ , updating it in the usual way) have a higher divergence from the propositions in  $CG_E$ , which makes them, using the descriptive terminology of section 4, noteworthy.

Second, the specific phenomenon of the discourse dative (available in Hebrew, and distinct e.g. from the more widely known ethical datives available in several languages), as analyzed by Bar-Asher Siegal & Boneh (2016), explicitly signals that the proposition in question is not in the  $CG_G$ . This is not something that is signaled by final *though*, as will be shown below. We will also show that mirativity appears as a side-effect of the analysis.

The utterance in (50) raises the expectation that the next utterance is going to be a fact about the sun.

(50)A: I'm going to tell a fact about the sun.

$CG_E$  comprises propositions with facts about the sun, possibly on a very unspecific level. Speaker A is aware, or can at least reasonably assume, that the hearer expects a fact about the sun. Note that expectations in this case are not necessarily what the speaker assumes this specific hearer expects, but rather, what is commonly expected. Regardless of the individual speakers involved, the default expectation after (50) is a fact about the sun.

(51) falls perfectly into this set of possible propositions with facts about the sun.

(51)A: I'm going to tell a fact about the sun.

The sun is the center of our solar system.

If final *though* signals that a proposition  $p_0$  are noteworthy because it has a higher divergence from the propositions  $p_E$ , a proposition such as in (51), which has no, or only a low divergence from, propositions  $p_E$  should be infelicitous with final *though*. (52) shows that this is, indeed, the case.

(52)A: I'm going to tell a fact about the sun.

#The sun is the center of our solar system, **though**.

It follows that a proposition that has a high divergence from propositions  $p_E$  should be felicitous with final *though* because they are noteworthy. A topic change to the moon as in (53) falls into this category and is felicitous with final *though*.

(53)A: I'm going to tell a fact about the sun.

First, the moon, **though**.

However, not all propositions with a high divergence from  $p_E$  are felicitous with final *though*. Consider (54) and (55).<sup>7</sup>

(54)A: I'm going to tell a fact about the sun.

#The moon orbits around the earth, **though**.

<sup>7</sup> *Though* and *however* are interchangeable in these examples. While this is not in our current focus, the result is convergent with the results of the experiment presented in this paper.

(55)A: I'm going to tell a fact about the sun.

#A volcano erupted and covered an entire village in ashes,  
**though.**

Both are completely out of the blue topic changes and are not felicitous with final *though*. It follows that for a proposition to be felicitous with final *though*, two criteria need to be met: First, the proposition  $p_0$  needs to have a higher divergence from  $p_E$ , in other words,  $p_0$  needs to be noteworthy.

Second, the proposition  $p_0$  needs to be accessible in  $CG_E$ . A topic change that is announced as such (“First, ...”) is conceivable but an ‘out-of-the-blue’ change of topic without any overt indication, (54) and (55), is not.

This fact motivates our second adaptation of Bar-Asher Siegal & Boneh’s (2016) model. The discourse dative as analyzed by Bar-Asher Siegal & Boneh (2016) explicitly signals that the proposition in question is not in the  $CG_G$ . This is not signaled by final *though*. Propositions need to be at least marginally in  $CG_E$  to be felicitous with final *though*.

It follows that there are three possible logical relations between  $CG_A$  and  $CG_E$ :  $CG_E$  can be a subset of  $CG_A$ ,  $CG_E$  and  $CG_A$  can be disjoint, or they can partially overlap. The latter is not an option for Bar-Asher Siegal & Boneh’s (2016) analysis of the discourse dative. A proposition either conforms to norms, in which case  $CG_G$  is included in  $CG_A$ , or it does not conform to norms, in which case  $CG_G$  and  $CG_A$  are disjoint. With expectations, there are three options: A proposition can meet expectations (cf. (51)), it can fail to meet expectations but be a conceivable alternative at

the same time (cf. (53)), or it can fail to meet expectations and also not be a conceivable alternative (cf. (54) and (55)). Final *though* is felicitous when  $CG_A$  and  $CG_E$  partially overlap.

We formulate the semantic representation for the discourse management device final *though* in (56).

$$(56)[[\text{final though}]]^{sp} = \lambda p_{\langle s,p \rangle} \lambda w \forall w' \in Epi_{sp}(w) (p \not\subseteq \approx CG_E w'). p(w)$$

In all the speaker's epistemically accessible worlds  $w'$  that conform to the speaker's knowledge in  $w$  (and assumed by her to be part of the common knowledge), it holds that the proposition in question is only marginally in  $CG_E$ . In other words: it is almost not in  $CG_E$ .

Final *though* is a discourse management device that signals a proposition  $p_0$  is not a prototypically expected proposition  $p_E$ , but rather a conceivable, only marginally expected alternative. We use  $\approx$  here, the approximation sign, as one way to semi-formally represent marginality in reminiscence of the wider research on approximators such as *almost*<sup>8</sup>. The expected proposition  $p_E$  is in the inner part of  $CG_E$  (crosshatched in Figure 4), i.e. the more accessible possible worlds and the default expectation. The outer part of the  $CG_E$  contains less accessible possible worlds that are conceivable but at odds with

<sup>8</sup> An alternative could be to find a metric (e.g. via an ordering source) to identify those possible worlds that are only marginally within the  $CG_E$ .

the default expectation. This is the equivalent of saying that such worlds are ranked as more distant. The divergence of  $p_0$  from  $p_E$  is indicated by the arrow. Crucially,  $p_0$  is true in  $CG_A$  and in  $CG_E$ .

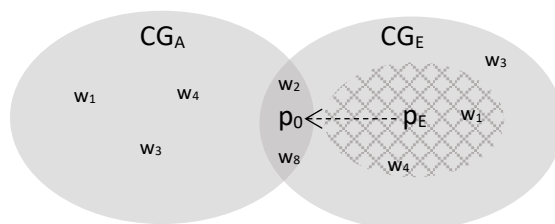


Figure 4: final *though* in the system of split CG

The example in (57), repeated from (21), illustrates the model. The default expectation of every football commentary on radio is that an offense should ideally lead to a goal.

(57)A: But this time Dixon's taken a short throw to

Rocastle but he has it once again the England fullback

Swings it in right-footed

Smith goes up

Good header there by Sedgely **though**

(ICE-GB S2A-015 192-195)

In this specific instance, after “Smith goes up”, the audience ‘expects’ Smith to head the ball into the goal. The expected proposition  $p_E$  in this example is a goal or, at least, a continuation of the offense. All possible worlds in which the offense continues or leads to a goal are in the inner part of  $CG_E$ . Instead of a goal or continued offense, Sedgely's defense header stops the

offense. All possible worlds in which the offense is stopped are less expected and in less accessible possible worlds in the outer part of  $CG_E$ .<sup>9</sup> There is a partial overlap between  $CG_E$  and  $CG_A$  because the expected  $p_E$ , the continuation of the offense, is not part of  $CG_A$  but the actual  $p_0$  is true both in  $CG_A$  and in the outer (less accessible) parts of  $CG_E$ .

This is where a mirative side-effect comes in. Mirativity refers to “the grammatical marking of unexpected information” (DeLancey 1997: 33) and Sedgely’s defense header is arguably unexpected. Whether, for mirative markers in general, the information is new/unexpected to the speaker, or the hearer depends on the point of view of the author. For DeLancey (1997, 2001), the speaker signals that the information was new or unexpected to themselves. For Beaver & Clark (2010), the ‘expecting’ (by default) is done by the hearer, and information is marked as mirative if the information is expected (by the speaker) to be unexpected for the hearer. According to Aikenvald (2012), the range of mirative meanings includes all of the above and more: sudden discovery, surprise, unprepared mind, counter-expectation or, simply, information new to either speaker, hearer, or main character (Aikenvald 2012: 437). There is a line of research (e.g. Lau & Rooryck 2017, Mexas 2016, Adelaar 1977, 2013), according to which “the core meaning of mirativity is that of sudden realization or discovery: a punctual change of epistemic state” (Lau & Rooryck 2017: 113).

<sup>9</sup> Needless to say, a notion of perspective is also involved.



For the example in (57), all of the above apply: it is a sports commentary, so the speaker comments on the game as it happens, and any unexpected events (such as a good defense header) will be unexpected to the speaker. This is even more so to the hearer listening to the radio broadcast of the game who ‘sees’ the game through the eyes of the commentator—any developments will be unexpected to the hearer. In this scenario, there is even a sudden change of knowledge, but this is true for the whole game as it is a live commentary. For the broad range of instances with final *though*, the punctual change of epistemic, which is at the core of mirative meaning for Lau & Rooryck (2017) and others, is not part of mirative component. However, despite unexpectedness often coinciding with a sudden change of epistemic state, this sudden change is not a necessary prerequisite to unexpectedness in itself. Therefore here, ‘mirativity’ is viewed as the grammatical marking of information as new, unexpected, or surprising to either speaker or hearer.

The above model can be applied in a similar way to (58) but in this case, it is not possible to make a claim as to what expectations might be.

(58)A: But she’s actually my half sister.

She’s got the same father.

B: Mmm

A: And so she really looks like my dad **though** and so  
does his other daughter who is eight.

(ICE-GB S1A-042 354-357)

There is no default expectation in this case, and any special fact about the sister or their relationship is in the outer part of CG<sub>E</sub>, as is demonstrated in (59).

(59)A: But she's actually my half sister.

She's got the same father.

B: Mmm

A: And so she has really long hair, **though**. / And so she doesn't live with us, **though**. / ...

Again, mirativity occurs as a side-effect. It was argued above that the similarities of the sister to the father are noteworthy because they are unexpected (in light of p, e.g. that the speaker does not look like her father at all). Final *though* here signals this information is unexpected, and therefore meets the criteria for a mirative marker.

(60) shows final *though* as a marker for topic change. This property of final *though* can be straight-forwardly integrated into the model because one can reasonably assume the speaker to stay on topic. A topic change is, consequently, not the default expectation. New topics, in this case, the Devonian, are not necessarily unexpected but they are new. In consequence, *though* as a marker for topic change can also be viewed as a mirative marker if the wide definition is used, which includes new information in general.

(60)A: You get these things like Wenlock limestone and all these uh uh shallow water local <unclear> which have become so important in correlation

Uhm the Devonian **though**

What is the Devonian in Britain

(ICE-GB S1B-006 123-125)

Example (61) was analyzed above as a downgrading of noteworthiness of the first proposition.

(61)A: Joe won the karate tournament.

B: He's been training for years, **though**.

The line of reasoning here is slightly different. By telling B of Joe's win, the expected reaction is for B to be happy for Joe or have a positive reaction to the win. Instead, B downgrades the win. This downgrading is not what was expected, hence the highlighting of this with final *though*.

Regarding a potential mirative side-effect, it was argued that the use of *though* weakened the noteworthiness of the win. The utterance *though* accompanies is inferable from the preceding utterance, albeit not being the expected reaction. These uses of *though*, which downgrade the noteworthiness of *p*, are clearly not mirative. They are anti-mirative because they signal that the utterance they accompany, which contains inferable information, weakens the unexpectedness of the preceding utterance. In (61), *though* in combination with the hard training, which is inferable from the win, signals that the win is less unexpected (or more expected) than it would have been, had *q*, *though* not been uttered.

This means that final *though* is both a mirative and an anti-mirative marker, depending on whether it is used with new or inferable information. If the

utterance *though* accompanies contains new information, *though* is used as a mirative marker, which further highlights the unexpectedness, surprise or noteworthiness of the utterance. If the utterance *though* accompanies contains inferable information<sup>10</sup>, *though* is used as an anti-mirative marker, which signals that the preceding utterance is less unexpected, surprising or noteworthy because of the information in *q*, *though*.

Final *though* as both a mirative and anti-mirative marker, depending on the information status of the utterance it accompanies, does not contradict the model because the model is based only on the divergence of  $p_0$  from  $p_E$ . The model makes no assumptions regarding the information status of the expected or unexpected propositions, but only on whether or not they are expected. Whether these propositions contain new or given information is immaterial to the model itself, but it is precisely where the mirative side-effect comes into play. If the unexpected propositions contain new information, there is a mirative side-effect. If the unexpected propositions contain given or inferable information, the effect is anti-mirative.

## 6 Conclusion and outlook

<sup>10</sup> In this context, an anonymous reviewer asked why in the half-sister example in (58), final *though* is analyzed as a mirative marker, even though the use of “so” (“and so she really looks like my dad though”) indicates that the information is inferable. However, as is demonstrated in (59), the content can be exchanged without any problems. It is not inferable that the sister has long hair, that she lives with the family, etc. In other words, “so” does not seem to mark the information as inferable in this situation.

This paper has started out from more general insights based on Haselow (2012) and presented an analysis for previously unaccounted uses of the final particle *though*. A new descriptive generalization of the uses of final *though* surrounding the concept of noteworthiness showed that final *though* marks the proposition it accompanies as noteworthy, at times via downgrading of the preceding (and often implicit) utterance. Initial evidence for the discourse-managing status of the particle has been drawn from an experimental study. By theoretically adapting an analysis of a discourse dative by Bar-Asher Siegal & Boneh (2016), we have argued that final *though* is a discourse management device that signals only marginal conformity to the currently entertained expectations in a conversation. We have pointed out potential mirativity effects of final *though*, but we have argued that they are best treated as a side-effect of the analysis in terms of noteworthiness or counterexpectation.

Finally, from a cross-linguistic perspective, the question remains whether English has discourse (so-called ‘modal’) particles of the type German and Dutch have. If such particles are defined syntactically, then the answer has to be ‘no’. Even though the syntax has not been in the focus of our current inquiry, final *though*, by definition, is disjoint from the classical middle-field position claimed for such particles. However, if the pragmatic import of a discourse-managing device is taken into account, then final *though* – so we have claimed – merits the benefits of membership to the club. While we

have not discussed the relationship of *though* to its German cognate *doch* within present scope (as their meanings and conditions of use are quite distinct), Gergel (2020) and Gergel, Kopf-Giammanco & Puhl (2021) provide certain theoretical and methodological considerations how such comparisons could be conducted. A key step towards further inquiries, we believe, is to ascertain how exactly particles of the final type current English possesses have developed as a class from their ancestors in Old and Middle English (cf. van Kemenade, this volume).

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## 8 Appendix: Experimental Items

John is good at sports.	+	though	He's bad at running, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, he's bad at running.
		however	However, he's bad at running.
		despite	despite being bad at running.
	o	though	He loves to travel, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, he loves to travel.
		however	However, he loves to travel
		despite	despite his love of travel.
	-	though	He's good at running, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, he's good at running.
		however	However, he's good at running.
		despite	despite being good at running.
Mary loves to dance.	+	though	She doesn't own any dancing shoes, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, she doesn't own any dancing shoes.
		however	However, she doesn't own any dancing shoes.
		despite	despite not owning any dancing shoes.
	o	though	She can't cook, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, she can't cook.
		however	However, she can't cook.
		despite	despite her inability to cook.
	-	though	She bought a new pair of dancing shoes, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, she bought a new pair of dancing shoes.
		however	However, she bought a new pair of dancing shoes.
		despite	despite having a new pair of dancing shoes.
Jill and Jane are sisters.	+	though	They don't look alike, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, they don't look alike.
		however	However, they don't look alike.
		despite	despite them not looking alike.
	o	though	Jane looks like Serena Williams, though.

		nevertheless	Nevertheless, Jane looks like Serena Williams.
		however	However, Jane looks like Serena Williams.
		despite	despite Jane looking like Serena Williams.
	-	though	They look very much alike, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, they look very much alike.
		however	However, they look very much alike.
		despite	despite them looking very much alike.
Mary is making dinner for a friend.	+	though	She doesn't have a lot of time, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, she doesn't have a lot of time.
		however	However, she doesn't have a lot of time.
		despite	despite not having a lot of time.
	o	though	She decided to wear jeans, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, she decided to wear jeans.
		however	However, she decided to wear jeans.
		despite	despite deciding to wear jeans.
	-	though	She has a lot of free time, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, she has a lot of free time.
		however	However, she has a lot of free time.
		despite	despite having a lot of free time.
Jim bought a brand-new BMW convertible.	+	though	It was rather cheap, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, it was rather cheap.
		however	However, it was rather cheap.
		despite	despite it being rather cheap.
	o	though	It is red, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, it is red.
		however	However, it is red.
		despite	despite it being red.
	-	though	It was expensive, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, it was expensive.
		however	However, it was expensive.
		despite	despite it being expensive.
Sandra went to church on Sunday.	+	though	She doesn't believe in God, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, she doesn't believe in God.

		however	However, she doesn't believe in God.	
		despite	despite not believing in God.	
	o	though	She has blond hair, though.	
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, she has blond hair.	
		however	However, she has blond hair.	
		despite	despite having blond hair.	
	-	though	She's very religious, though.	
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, she's very religious.	
		however	However, she's very religious.	
		despite	despite being very religious.	
	Joe won the karate tournament.	+	though	He had a bad hangover, though.
			nevertheless	Nevertheless, he had a bad hangover.
however			However, he had a bad hangover.	
despite			despite having a bad hangover.	
o		though	He drank coffee after his last fight, though.	
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, he drank coffee after his last fight.	
		however	However, he drank coffee after his last fight.	
		despite	despite drinking coffee after his last fight.	
-		though	He has been training for years, though.	
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, he has been training for years.	
		however	However, he has been training for years.	
		despite	despite having trained for years.	
The bathroom floor is very clean.	+	though	I haven't cleaned it this week, though.	
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, I haven't cleaned it this week.	
		however	However, I haven't cleaned it this week.	
		despite	despite not having cleaned it this week.	
	o	though	The towels are fresh, though.	
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, the towels are fresh.	
		however	However, the towels are fresh.	
		despite	despite the towels being fresh.	
	-	though	I cleaned it this morning, though.	
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, I cleaned it this morning.	

		however	However, I cleaned it this morning.
		despite	despite having been cleaned this morning.
This blueberry muffin looks delicious.	+	though	It doesn't taste good, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, it doesn't taste good.
		however	However, it doesn't taste good.
		despite	despite it not tasting good.
	o	though	It's gluten free, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, it's gluten free.
		however	However, it's gluten free.
		despite	despite it being gluten free.
	-	though	It tastes good, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, it tastes good.
		however	However, it tastes good.
		despite	despite it tasting good.
There is no hot water in the shower.	+	though	The plumber was here this morning, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, the plumber was here this morning.
		however	However, the plumber was here this morning.
		despite	despite the plumber being here this morning.
	o	though	Jane took a bath instead, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, Jane took a bath instead.
		however	However, Jane took a bath instead.
		despite	despite Jane taking a bath instead.
	-	though	The shower has been broken for a week, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, the shower has been broken for a week.
		however	However, the shower has been broken for a week.
		despite	despite the shower being broken for a week.
A company has advertised a new drug to treat asthma.	+	though	It is not on the market yet, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, it is not on the market yet.
		however	However, it is not on the market yet.
		despite	despite it not being on the market yet.
	o	though	The drug is for children over the age of 3, though.



		nevertheless	Nevertheless, the drug is for children over the age of 3.
		however	However, the drug is for children over the age of 3.
		despite	despite it being for children over the age of 3.
	-	though	Studies showed promising results, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, studies showed promising results.
		however	However, studies showed promising results.
		despite	despite studies showing promising results.
Palm trees grow in southern Ireland.	+	though	They are not native to the island, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, they are not native to the island.
		however	However, they are not native to the island.
		despite	despite not being native to the island.
	o	though	Jane finds them beautiful, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, Jane finds them beautiful.
		however	However, Jane finds them beautiful.
		despite	despite Jane finding them beautiful.
	-	though	The winters are mild enough, though.
		nevertheless	Nevertheless, the winters are mild enough.
		however	However, the winters are mild enough.
		despite	despite the winters being mild enough.