

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS AND PHILOLOGY

CONDITIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN AMHARIC

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By

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Abstract

This study aims at describing conditional constructions in Amharic. Two secondary sources, Hartmann (1980) and Leslau (1995), have been used, along with the primary intuition of the researcher.

Amharic conditionals are constructed from two clauses one of which is an adverbial, the antecedent, and the other of which is a main clause, which is the consequent. Canonical and non-canonical forms of conditionals have been identified. The canonical forms consist of conditional markers in their antecedent clauses. The non-canonical forms are composed of two independent clauses conjoined by such conjunctives like *alyam*, *injji* and *inna*. *kə-*, *ində-* and *bi-* are identified as conditional markers. *kə-* occurs with main verbs or with their auxiliaries in the perfective aspect, whereas *ində-* occurs only with the auxiliary *hon-* and its reduced forms in the same perfective aspect. *bi-* occurs with main verbs or their auxiliaries in the imperfective aspect.

The semantic-based classification of Amharic conditionals is dealt with in light of Thompson et al.'s (2007) typology. It is shown that Amharic real conditionals are marked by *kə-* (and sometimes by *ində-*). Except predictives which may take any of the three conditional markers, other types of unreal conditionals are marked by *bi-*. Counterfactuals differ from hypothetical conditionals in that they mostly contain *nor-o* as a marker of counterfactuality in their antecedent clauses. Concessive conditionals are characterized by the focus suffix *-mm* and the adverb *ink^wa(n)* 'even' which mostly co-occur in antecedent clauses. Exceptive conditionals are characterized by *bək'ər* (*bəstək'ər*) or *injji* in their antecedent clauses and the choice between these is determined by polarity type of the antecedent clause.

Abbreviations

Acc	:	Accusative case marker
AGR	:	Agreement
Aux	:	Auxiliary
Ben	:	Benefactive marker
Caus	:	Causative marker
CF	:	Counterfactual
Cmpl	:	Completive
Comp	:	Complementizer
Contj	:	Contingent Marker
Def	:	Definite marker
Equ	:	Equative
f	:	Feminine
Gen	:	Genitive marker
Hon	:	Honorific
Impf	:	Imperfective
Impv	:	Imperative
Infv	:	Infinitive
Jus	:	Jussive
Lit	:	Literal meaning
m	:	Masculine
Mal	:	Malffective
md	:	Middle Voice

O	:	Object
Oblig	:	Obligation marker
Pf	:	Perfective
pl	:	Plural marker
Poss	:	Possession Marker
Prog	:	Progressive
Pros	:	Prospective
Ps	:	Passive
Rel	:	Relative marker
S	:	Subject
sg	:	Singular
1	:	First person
2	:	Second person
3	:	Third person

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

Prototypically, conditional constructions consist of an adverbial clause, often referred to as the conditional clause, antecedent or protasis, and a main clause called consequent or apodosis (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 639; Debala & Meyer 2006: 70; Kaufmann 2006:6; Payne 1997: 316).

The precedence of the antecedent over the consequent and the fact that it represents the morpho-syntactically marked part of a conditional construction is taken as a cross-linguistic feature in the literature (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 642; Debala & Meyer 2006: 70).

With regard to syntactic forms of conditional constructions, Jackendoff (2002: 404) notes about the possibility of uttering conditionals in a variety of syntactic forms as far as the referential dependency between the antecedent and the consequent remains constant.

In conditional constructions, markers of conditionality can either be affixes attached to the subordinate verb or free morphemes within the subordinate clause (Debala & Meyer 2006: 70).

Regarding the interpretation of conditional structures, Bhatt & Pancheva (2005:639) states that they are interpreted "with the proposition expressed by the antecedent clause specifying the (modal) circumstances in which the proposition expressed by the main clause is true". Moreover, Kaufmann (2006:6) notes on the effect of expressions of temporal relations, modality, quantification, and a variety of pragmatic factors in constraining and determining the interpretation of conditionals in all languages.

Although it is not a trenchant distinction, most languages basically manifest a semantic-based distinction between real and unreal conditionals (Thompson et al. 2007: 255). They summarized their semantic-based typology as follows:

Real

1. *Present*
2. *Habitual/generic*
3. *Past*

Unreal

1. *Imaginative*
 - a. *Hypothetical*
 - b. *Counterfactual*
2. *Predictive*

(Thompson et al. 2007: 256)

Furthermore, Bhatt & Pancheva (2005: 639) makes a semantic-based distinction among hypothetical, relevance, and factual (premise-conditionals) conditionals.

Contrary to the fact that a huge number of linguistic works have been done on various aspects of the Amharic grammar, studies dealing with its conditionals are surprisingly very few. To the best of my knowledge, Hartmann (1980) and Leslau (1995) are the only linguistic works that have, at least roughly, addressed Amharic conditionals.

In the tenth chapter of his grammar book, *Amharische Grammatik*, Hartmann (1980) presents a description of Amharic conditionals. He basically classified them into three; *real*, *hypothetical*, and *counterfactual* conditionals. He attests fourteen forms for expressing the apodosis and one form for expressing the protasis in the case of real conditionals; two forms for expressing the apodosis and two forms for expressing the protasis in the case of hypothetical conditionals; and, four forms for expressing the

apodosis and one basic form for expressing the protasis in the case of unreal conditionals.

In his grammar book *Reference Grammar of Amharic*, Leslau (1995) addresses conditionals in a chapter called *Clauses*. He makes mention about two basic types of conditionals, namely *real* and *hypothetical*. Regarding real conditionals, he states nine morphological means of expressing the protasis. The prominent appearance of the apodosis is obscurely described as “in the appropriate tense” (803). With regard to the hypothetical conditionals, he states four morphological ways of expressing the protasis, and several ways of expressing the apodosis.

However, it is necessary to note the descriptively inadequacy of these two studies:

1. They do not clearly define such important notions as *conditionals*, *real conditionals*, *unreal conditionals*, *hypothetical conditionals*, etc.
2. They gloss and analyze the data in such a crudely manner that the structural components of conditional sentences cannot be easily identified.

The present study generally differs from that of Hartmann (1980) and Leslau (1995) in its:

- a. independent treatment of the topic,
- b. depth and comprehensiveness, and
- c. manner of analysis

1.2. Objective of the study

The general objective of this study is to produce a comprehensive description of Amharic conditional constructions. This general objective encompasses the following specific objectives.

1. Identification of syntactic forms of Amharic conditional constructions;
2. Morpho-syntactic examination of Amharic protases and apodoses;
3. Typological classification and analysis of Amharic conditional constructions.

1.3. Significance of the study

It is believed that the result of this study will fill in the gap in the description of Amharic. It is also assumed that it will serve as a good resource material for further theoretical studies concerning conditional constructions in general.

1.4. Research methodology

This study will mainly take two sources of data. First, since I am a native speaker of Amharic, introspection will serve as a major source of data. Second, previously done studies will be used as additional sources of data.

Then, the data will be described and analyzed in light of general definitions and typological classifications of conditional constructions, which exist in the linguistic literature. Since this study is more of descriptive, theoretical discussions will be kept to a minimum, limited to explaining the facts.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature on Conditionals

This chapter sets forth theoretical preliminaries. There is huge literature on conditionals. However, it is impossible to review every detail of such a vast and complex topic in a chapter like this. Consequently, I will limit the review to only pointing out the issues which have higher relevance to the general objective of the study, which is *describing conditional constructions of Amharic*.

The organization of the chapter is as follows: 2.1 deals with the essence and form of conditionals. 2.2 deals with their interpretation; where a brief discussion on the compositional effect of tense and aspect as well as mood and modality is presented. Finally, 2.3 presents conditional types.

2.1. Basics of Conditionals

The concept of conditionality is in many ways central to human thought and action (von Stechow 2009: 3). Rescher (2007: 5) notes on the difficulties we, users of language, would face if we were not able to construct conditionals; “without conditionals our thought would be restricted to reality – constrained to the decidedly limited, factual range of what is actually so. Speculation, planning, and conjecture would be aborted”. It is worth noting that conditionals are a primary exhibit of displacement, one of the *design features* of human language (von Stechow 2009: 3). In fact, the importance of conditionals, whether in day-to-day communication or thinking in general, is unquestionable. Hence, the need for studying conditionals is unquestionable.

Conditionals are objects of inquiry for linguists, philosophers of language, logicians, psychologists, etc. The scholars’ interest in conditionals is determined by the general concern and scope of their fields of study, and, most importantly, the approaches they employ to study them. This, on the other hand, results in differences over definitions. The way linguists define conditionals is different from that of philosophers of language

or that of psychologists. Even in the same field of study such as Linguistics, there are differences over definitions across such fields like Syntax, Semantics, or Pragmatics.

This section recaps the basics of conditionals.

2.1.1. The *What* of Conditionals

Different scholars specify conditionals variously based on different perspectives. Some specify them on the basis of their function, others on the basis of their clausal compositions, many others on the basis of their semantics, etc. Citing Declerck and Reed (2001: 8), Bottyán (2004: 19) takes note of the difficulty of defining conditional interpretation. In what follows, I take a brief look at what is said about conditionals in some of the linguistic and philosophical literatures.

Palmer (1986: 189) notes the uniqueness of conditionals emphasizing on the non-factuality of both the antecedent and the consequent; “[n]either indicates that an event has occurred (is occurring or will occur); the sentence merely indicates the dependence of the truth of one proposition upon the truth of another”.

“A conditional sentence expresses a proposition which is a function of two other propositions, yet not one which is a truth function of those propositions” (Stalnaker 1968: 98). Similarly, but less precisely, von Stechow (2009: 2) defines conditionals as “sentences that talk about a possible scenario that may or may not be actual”.

Zaehner (1991: 210) puts what he understands by a conditional as follows:

A conditional or more explicitly a *conditional form* is a grammatical structure or construction that encodes a conditional function as its primary purpose. [...] A *conditional function* is something that conditionalizes any proposition q , i.e., that converts q into the proposition that something, normally the holding of some given proposition p , is (in a way) sufficient for the holding of q .

Then, he calls the proposition that is to be conditionalized the *consequent*, the conditionalizing proposition the *antecedent*, and the result of the conditionalization the *c-proposition*.

A conditional is used to express the cause-and-effect or temporal sequences of two events (Yu-Shan 2004: 2). It is regarded as a particular relation between two events such that the fulfillment of the event in the consequent clause is relevant to the degree of reality of the event in the antecedent clause (Bakró-Nagy 2009: 4).

Prototypically, conditionals are complex sentences composed of an adverbial clause, often referred to as the conditional clause, antecedent or protasis, and a main clause called consequent or apodosis (Payne 1997: 316; Dancygier 1998: 1; Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 639; Debala & Meyer 2006: 70; Kaufmann 2006:6; von Fintel 2009: 2).

In general terms, a conditional is a bi-clausal structure involving an adverbial clause, the antecedent, which states the conditions under which the proposition expressed by the main clause, the consequent, is true/valid or relevant.¹

2.1.2. The Marking of Conditionals

Languages use a variety of means to indicate that a particular syntactic structure is a conditional rather than some other bi-clausal construction (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 642). Overt marking of the antecedent clause appears to be the commonest cross-linguistic strategy (Ibid).

Zaefferer (1991: 216-218) outlines a universal inventory of conditional markers by arranging them into four groups: morphological, lexical, phrasal, and structural.

¹ However, there are types of conditionals, variously called *speech act*, *relevance*, or *biscuit* conditionals, in which the truth or believability of the consequent is not made contingent on the antecedent. In such conditionals it is the conversational relevance of the consequent that seems to be contingent on the antecedent (DeRose & Grandy 1999: 405). (a), (b) and (c) are conditional types of this sort.

- a. There are biscuits on the sideboard if you want some.
- b. If you are interested, there's a good documentary on ETV tonight.
- c. I paid you back yesterday if you remember. (von Fintel 2009: 4)

The term "conditional" in its strict sense, yet, is being used in the literature only to refer to constructions involving an adverbial clause merged to a main clause in a particular position (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 642).

Mood markers and *other suffixes*² are categorized as *morphological* conditional markers. He mentions Turkish, West Greenlandic, Aranda (a Pama-Nyungan language), Basque and Nkore-Kiga (a Bantu language) as languages having special sets of inflectional forms in their verbal paradigms that encode a conditional mood. Hua (a Papuan language) and Imbabura Quechua, on the other hand, are mentioned as languages that use other morphological devices, which are not verbal mood markers, for conditional marking. With regard to *lexical* conditional markers, such languages as Danish, German and English are mentioned for having words or lexicalized expressions, mostly particles, that convert a simple clause into an antecedent clause.

Phrasal conditional markers are mostly modifications of some default complementizer (Zaefferer 1991: 217). Spanish is a good example with a host of different constructions of this type where the default complementizer is *que* 'that' and where among others the following phrasal protasis markers exist: *suponiendo que*, 'supposing that', *ya sea que*, literally 'be it already that', *siempre que*, literally 'always that', *con tal que*, literally 'with such that' (Ibid).

In *structural* conditional marking, a marked word order indicates that a given clause functions as a protasis (Zaefferer 1991: 218). German is a good example where verb-first clauses are commonly used as protases (Ibid).

In line with Zaefferer's inventory, Bhatt & Pancheva (2005: 642) also remark that conditionality can be marked by certain free lexical items, particular inflectional morphemes, or by purely syntactic means such as verb-movement.

Markers could be affixes attached to a subordinate verb or free morphemes within the same clause (Debela & Meyer 2006: 70). Citing Podlesskaya (2001: 1001), Debala and Meyer (2006: 71) also state that "suffixes as markers for the conditional clauses are said to be preferred in languages with non-finite subordinate verbs, while prefixes are often used with subordinate verbs indicating agreement with the subject".

² As I will show in chapter three, markers of conditionality in Amharic are such *particles* as *kə-*, *bi-*, and *ində-* which also have other grammatical functions.

2.1.3. The Form of Conditionals

Regarding the form of conditionals, Dancygier (1998: 2) remarks that it “seems to escape elegant, uniform descriptions [...], because conditionals have an imposing variety of forms and a still more overwhelming variety of interpretations”.

According to von Stechow (2009: 2), the canonical form of a conditional is a two-part sentence consisting of an antecedent marked with *if* and a consequent sometimes marked with *then*. It is a common practice of philosophers and logicians to take the form *if A, then B* as a conditional (Bottyan 2006: 20). Though *if A, B*³ appears to be the cross-linguistically attested canonical form of conditionals, Jackendoff (2002: 404) notes that there are possibilities of uttering conditionals in a variety of syntactic forms as far as the referential dependency between the antecedent and the consequent remains constant.

Kaufmann (2006: 6) states, “The form *if A, B* is neither necessary nor sufficient for the expression of conditionality”. Conditionality can be conveyed by other forms of construction like the following from von Stechow (2009: 3):

1. Had he admitted his guilt, he would have gotten off easier.⁴
2. Take another step and I'll knock you down.⁵

³ Despite their similarity in form with the ordinary *if A, B* conditionals, Bottyan (2006: 20) and Lasnik (1996: 164) note on the unconditionality of such if-sentences as (a) and (b) wherein *if* and *whether* can be used interchangeably.

- a. I don't know *if* John is awake.
- b. He wondered *if* everybody heard him.

⁴ In such structures there is no conditional complementizer. The use of subjunctive morphology is a common formal device in building conditional antecedents (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 643).

⁵ In a number of languages a structure involving an imperative clause conjoined with a non-past indicative clause receives a conditional interpretation (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 641). The imperative clause is interpreted as the antecedent and the indicative in the coordination is interpreted as the consequent (Ibid). Thus, (2), where *and* is the coordinator, is interpreted as *if p, q* (where *p* and *q* are the propositions denoted by the imperative and the indicative clauses, respectively). In line with this Russel (2006: 2) identifies *declarative simple present sentences (i)*, *bare verb phrases (ii)*, and *non-finite clauses (iii)* as first conjuncts that coordinate with a future tense declarative main clause in *conditional conjunctions*.

- i. *Chalmers finds out about Ross* and we'll get fired.
- ii. *Move a muscle* and Frank will shoot you.

3. He was pushed or he wouldn't have fallen down the cliff.⁶

4. I would have beaten Kasparov.⁷

5. For you to do that would be nice. (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 641)⁸

von Fintel (2009: 3) further notes that "some languages are reported to have no conditional construction[s] of the *if...then*-type and use paratactic means only".⁹

Regarding the position of the if-clause (antecedent) with respect to the consequent, Lasersohn (1996: 154) remarks that "ordinary if-clauses occur most naturally either immediately before, or immediately after, their corresponding consequent clause". He further notes that positioning the antecedent clause inbetween the subject noun phrase of a sentence and the verb phrase or after an auxiliary verb is possible. In such cases, however, the antecedent is normally set off by parenthetical intonation represented by commas as in the following examples (Ibid, 155).¹⁰

iii. *Everyone shut up and I'll tell you who Renick is.*

⁶ The coordinating conjunction *or* has the semantic import of the coordinating conjunction *and* plus negation of the proposition expressed by the imperative clause (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 641). Thus, (3), with *or* as the coordinator, is interpreted as *if ¬p, q*. The facts of (2) and (3) are furthermore cross-linguistically attested (Ibid).

⁷ Schueler (2008: 1) refers to such constructions as "implicit conditionals" or ICs. They are characterized by a resemblance in morphology to the consequent clause of a subjunctive conditional sentence, in particular the occurrence of the modal *would* or another conditional modal (Ibid). Semantically, they are conditional in meaning, despite the fact that they lack the clausal complexity of full conditionals (Ibid).

⁸ This sentence receives a conditional interpretation such as *it would be nice if you do that*. Here the relevant facts in deriving the conditional interpretation are the non-finiteness of the sentential subject, and the mood morphology in the main clause (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 641).

⁹ Citing Levinson (2000: 125), he gives the following example from Guugu Yimithirr on this issue.

Nyundu budhu dhadaa, nyundu minha maanaa bira
You maybe go you meat get for sure
'May be you will go, (then) you will certainly get meat'.
= 'if you go, you'll get meat'.

¹⁰ Take the following Amharic counterfactual. The antecedent is positioned in between the NP and VP of the consequent clause. It seems "zərafiwočču" is fronted to TOPIC position.

zərafiwočču polis baydərsibbaččəw noro yaməlt'u nəbbər
[[zərafi-očč-u polis bi-al-yi-dərs-bb-aččəw nor-o] [yi-aməlt'-u nəbbər]]
burglar-pl-Def police if-Neg-3sg.m.S-arrive_{Impf}-Mal-3pl.O Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen 3.S-run away_{Impf-pl} Aux_{Pst}
'The burglars, if the police hadn't arrived (at them), would have ran away'

- a. John, if you bother him long enough, will give you five dollars.
- b. John will, if you bother him long enough, give you five dollars.

2.2. Interpreting Conditionals

The meaning of conditionals is determined by a number of form-meaning correlations which are construction-specific (Dancygier 1998: 5). For example, their verb forms signal important aspects of interpretations (such as the type of reasoning involved, or the speaker's and the hearer's knowledge which constitutes the background for the reasoning), but they do so in ways that affect the whole construction, rather than one clause, and which are specific to conditionals (Ibid). Bhatt & Pancheva (2005:639) also state that a conditional is interpreted "with the proposition expressed by the antecedent clause specifying the (modal) circumstances in which the proposition expressed by the main clause is true". Moreover, Kaufmann (2006:6) notes on the effect of expressions of temporal relations, modality, quantification, and a variety of pragmatic factors in constraining and determining the interpretation of conditionals in all languages.

In this sub-section the semantics of tense, aspect, mood and modality is briefly discussed with the aim of highlighting their compositional effect on conditional interpretations. The topics will be revisited in more detail in line with the Amharic data in the next two chapters.

2.2.1. Tense and Aspect

Tense and aspect systems allow speakers to relate situations to time, but offering different slants on it (Saeed 2003: 124). Tense is a deictic grammatical category that locates an event in time relative to the utterance time (Mezhevich 2008: 328; Boland 2006: 56; Yu-Shan 2004: 8; Saeed 2003: 125; Palmer 1986: 1). "Most grammatical tense systems allow the speaker to describe situations as prior to, concurrent with, or following the act of speaking" (Saeed 2003: 125). Furthermore, Saeed notes on the possibility of locating time in a more complicated manner; "the speaker can locate an

event in the past or future and use that event as the reference point for its own past, present and future" (2003: 125).

"Tense expressions leave the description of the state of affairs intact and do not change the internal dynamics of the state of affairs nor any of the other elements that build up the description of the state of affairs (the arguments, the property or relation, other participants)" (Boland 2006: 60). Aspect, on the other hand, is a grammatical means that marks the view point or perspective from which a speaker looks at an event (Boland 2006: 43). Aspect systems allow speakers to view an event as complete or incomplete, as so short as to involve almost no time, as something stretched over a perceptible period, or as something repeated over a period (Saeed 2003: 126). The function of aspectual expressions is to locate the part of the temporal structure of the property or relation (which is expressed by verbs) that is ascribed to the arguments (Boland 2006: 44).

Confining himself to the Functional Grammar approach, Boland (2006: 41) distinguishes different areas of aspectuality. The first area concerns the distinction between perfective and imperfective. The second area is phasal aspectuality, which specifies the phase of development of the event in terms of beginning, continuation or end. The third area concerns perspectival aspectuality that relates the occurrence of the event to an outside temporal reference point, in which the categories prospective and perfect are included. All categories of aspect have the same communicative function: they select part of the temporal structure of the property or relation that is designated by the predicate (Boland 2006: 51).

Mezhevich (2008: 326) notes that "many languages with no inflectional mood morphology use past tense morphology to convey irrealis". With respect to this point Arregui (2005: 2) and Portner (2009: 248) remark on the existence of much cross-linguistic evidence that past morphology has a role to play in indicating unreality.

2.2.2. Mood and Modality

Trask & Stockwell (2007: 176) remark on the impossibility of drawing a sharp line between mood and modality. McShane et al. (2003: 1) ¹¹ notes on the difficulty of describing mood and modality, and mentions the following reasons among others:

- The inventory of modal meanings is not stable across languages,
- Moods do not map neatly from one language to another,
- Modality may be realized morphologically or by free-standing words, and
- Modality interacts in complex ways with other grammatical categories, like tense and aspect.

Modality is a cover term for devices which allow speakers to express varying degrees of commitment to, or belief in a proposition (Saeed 2003: 135). It is the linguistic phenomenon whereby grammar allows one to say things about, or on the basis of situations which need not be real (Portner 2009: 1). Palmer (1986: 16) attempts to define modality as “the grammaticalization of speakers’ (subjective) attitudes and opinions”.

Boland (2006: 68) notes on the absence of general agreement regarding the boundaries of the domain of modality. However, there are some modal distinctions that are generally acknowledged. One acclaimed distinction is that modality expresses notions of either necessity or probability. Another common distinction is that between epistemic and deontic modalities.¹² Epistemic modality, in general, concerns the knowledge of the speaker about the truth of the propositional content, whereas deontic modality is about notions of permission and obligation (Boland 2006: 68; Saeed 2003: 137). Boland (2006:

¹¹ Defining mood and modality simply as notions that relate to the linguistic expression of the speaker’s attitude toward utterances, these scholars tend to treat them in one category MOD due to the overlap between them. They also remark that mood and modality can be construed as a verbal and sentential feature, respectively, if a distinction is made between them (McShane et al. 2003: 19).

¹² There is a third type of modality called *dynamic modality* which is closely related to the deontic one, and expresses ability (or inability) to put the assertion into practice independently of the judgment or will of the speaker (Gianto 2009: 138).

82) sets three parameters with which the meaning of modal expressions differ: *sense*, *source* and *scope*.¹³

Saeed (2003: 135-136) suggests three possible linguistic strategies to express modality: embedding a sentence under a higher clause with an adjective or adverb of modality, putting into the higher clause a verb which describes the extent of the speaker's belief (or propositional attitude), and using modal verbs. Gabrielatos (2007) notes also on varieties of formal means with which modality can be expressed. She includes modal auxiliaries, catenative verbs (e.g. need, want), adverbs, the imperative, the past tense (e.g. in conditionals), and other constructions.

Trask & Stockwell (2007: 175) defines mood as a "grammatical category which expresses the degree or kind of reality attached to an utterance". Mood is formally a morphosyntactic category of the verb like tense and aspect, even though its semantic function relates to the contents of the whole sentence (Palmer 1986: 21).

Portner (2009: 258) distinguishes three types of phenomena to which the term *mood* has been applied: verbal mood, notional mood, and sentential mood. As he provisionally defines it, verbal mood is "dependent sub-sentential modality represented in the form of the verb". The indicative and subjunctive verb forms and the similar oppositions which go under different names in particular languages, for instance *realis* and *irrealis* verbs are central members of this category (Ibid).

Portner (2009: 259-262) distinguishes two main uses of the term *notional mood*:

- Forms with the function of verbal mood, but not expressed on the verb in the right way. This category includes, in particular, infinitives and dependent modals.
- An opposition between sentences in factual (sometimes *realis*) and those in non-factual (sometimes *irrealis*) mood. A sentence in factual mood is one that is

¹³ *Sense* conveys the basic meaning of a modal expression, on a scale from potentiality to necessity; *source* concerns the factors to which the modality is ascribed, participant-internal, participant-external, or epistemic source; the *scope* of modality is the part of the utterance that is modified.

meant to be interpreted as true or false in the actual world, and in the non-factual mood otherwise.

The term *sentence mood* is used for two related concepts: *clause type* and *sentential force* (Portner 2009: 262). The difference between clause type and sentential force is that the former relates to form, while the latter relates to meaning. The categories of declarative, interrogative, and imperative are among the major clause types. The conversational uses *assertion*, *asking* and *requiring* are sentential forces of *declarative*, *interrogative* and *imperative* clause types, respectively (Ibid).¹⁴

Trask & Stockwell (2007: 174, 175) notes on the fact that mood shades off imperceptibly into modality, on one hand, and modality into several other categories such as *evidentiality*, *modalization*, *modularity*, *hedging*, and *vague language*, on the other. This suggests that modality is a broader concept than mood.

As we shall see in the next section, modality generally has implication in differentiating *real* versus *unreal* as well as *indicative* versus *subjunctive* conditional types.

2.3. Classifying Conditionals

Conditional constructions show a variety of complex form-meaning correlations. Their overall complexity poses a serious challenge in classifying them. This section briefly summarizes the major semantic-based classifications of conditional types, common mainly in the linguistic literature.

¹⁴ Portner (2009: 262-263) notes on the importance of distinguishing sentence mood/sentence force from that of illocutionary force. Sentence mood is the conversational use conventionally associated with a particular clause type. In contrast, the illocutionary force of a sentence is the type of communicative act which the speaker intends on a particular occasion. Thus, in the obvious context *I wonder if you can tell me the time* has the sentential force of assertion but the illocutionary force of asking. Moreover, sentential force must be analyzed at the interfaces among syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, while illocutionary force is a pragmatic phenomenon having to do with the speaker's communicative intentions, analyzed in terms of speech act theory.

2.3.1. Real versus Unreal Conditionals

Real versus unreal (also called *realis* versus *irrealis*) is a semantic-based distinction made in the linguistic literature. A parallel distinction common in the philosophical literature is the one between indicative and subjunctive/counterfactual conditionals.¹⁵ Yet, it is the *real/unreal* classification that apparently deals with the compositional effect of grammatical categories as tense, aspect, mood, etc. in conveying the distinct conditional meanings which are more relevant to the main objective of the present study. Consequently, the *indicative/subjunctive* classification will not be taken up in this section.

The semantic-based distinction between real and unreal conditionals is said to exist in most languages (Thompson et al. 2007: 255). Real conditionals, also known as *open* or *simple* conditionals, are those which refer to *real* situations. They state that a proposition (expressed by the consequent clause) results if another proposition (expressed by the antecedent clause) holds (Parker 1991: 168) and are “unmarked for modality in many languages” (Palmer 1986: 189).

Thompson et al. (2007: 255) further classifies real conditionals into three: *present*, *habitual/generic*, and *past*. The present conditionals indicate situations that are real at the present moment, whereas the habitual/generic and the past conditionals indicate habitual/generic and past real situations, respectively. Parker (1991: 169) adds a fourth

¹⁵ The terminology *indicative/subjunctive* is a borrowing from mood morphology. In those languages (for instance, Latin & Greek) in which their verb morphology inflects for mood, the morphological marking of the indicative and subjunctive conditionals is one of mood; i.e. indicative mood and subjunctive mood, respectively. However, in most other languages the morphological marking of these conditionals is one of tense and aspect (von Stechow 2009: 4).

Conditionals, being distinguished as indicative and subjunctive/counterfactual, are dealt in most of the philosophical literature for the differences in truth-values of their component clauses. For instance, as von Stechow (2009: 5) notes, the difference between the two kinds of conditionals is that indicative conditionals somehow convey that the truth of the antecedent is an open issue, while subjunctive conditionals seem to convey that the truth of the antecedent is false. Consequently, many of the classic philosophy-based formal semantic approaches and analyses, for instance *material implication*, *strict implication*, *possible worlds* and *modal logic*, are oriented towards treating the semantics of conditionals as a whole than dealing with the compositionality of the various grammatical categories (e.g. tense, aspect, mood, etc.) that yield the distinct interpretations.

class: *future*, in which such conditionals as *if you go to Bamumbu tomorrow morning, I'll remain behind* are categorized under. However, Thompson et al. (2007: 258) considers such future conditionals as unreal, and classifies them likewise by the name *predictive*. These scholars tend to take anything about the future as unreal:

The semantic explanation for the fact that languages differ as to whether predictive conditionals are marked in the same way as imaginative conditionals, i.e., as 'unreal', or in the same way as 'real' conditionals, is clearly that predictive conditionals can be seen semantically either as 'unreal' or as 'real'. That is, a future prediction is about something that has not yet happened, so it is 'unreal', as are sentences about what did not happen or what might happen. But it is also 'real' in that it is making a prediction about a state of affairs in the 'real world', as opposed to the 'imaginary' world. (Thompson et al. 2007: 259)

Unreal conditionals, on the other hand, refer to unreal situations (Thompson et al. 2007: 255). According to these scholars there are two types of unreal situations: *imaginative* and *predictive*, those in which we imagine what might or might have been and those in which we predict what will be, respectively. They further classify the imaginative conditionals into *hypothetical* and *counterfactual*, wherein the first refers to situations which might happen while the latter refers to situations which didn't or couldn't happen.¹⁶

Parker (1991: 174) describes hypothetical conditionals as follows:

[T]he situation expressed by the verb in the antecedent clause is unrealized at the moment of utterance, and its eventual realization may even seem unlikely. It is, nevertheless, assumed that, if this antecedent proposition were to hold, then the consequence proposition would also hold.

¹⁶ In the philosophical literature, there are two types of *subjunctive conditionals (or SCs)*, the (a) and the (b) sentences below (Ippolito (2008) names them *simple past SCs* and *past perfect SCs*, respectively), which convey different meanings. The (a) sentences are taken as true, but the (b) sentences as false. Note that this distinction has correspondence with the *hypothetical* and the *counterfactual* classes in the semantic-based classification, respectively.

1. a. If Shakespeare did not write Hamlet, someone else did.
b. If Shakespeare had not written Hamlet, someone else would have. (Morton 2004: 289)
2. a. If Oswald did not kill Kennedy, someone else did.
b. If Oswald had not killed Kennedy, someone else would have. (von Stechow 2009: 5)

In hypothetical conditionals such as *if she had time, Mary would write a letter*, the speaker is neutral about whether the conditions for the realization of the event are or will be fulfilled (Boland 2006: 87).

Citing Bybee et al. (1994: 322) Boland (2006: 88) defines counterfactuals as statements that describe unreal or imagined situations that could have been true but were not.

Boland (2006: 88) notes that many languages that do not have a systematically marked realis/irrealis distinction do have special expressions for hypothetical and counterfactual statements. In such languages the combination of past tense morphology and a modal verb, subjunctive mood (if there is one), a hypothetical marker, or imperfective aspect account for hypothetical or counterfactual readings (Ibid).

In general terms, Thompson et al. (2007: 257) summarizes the semantic-based classification of conditionals as follows. In chapter four, I will employ this typological frame, and see how Amharic conditionals fit in.

Real

- a) Present
- b) Habitual/Generic
- c) Past

Unreal

- a) Imaginative
 - i. Hypothetical
 - ii. Counterfactual
- b) Predictive

2.3.2. Concessive versus Exceptive Conditionals

"*Concessive* is a general term for a clause which makes a concession, against which the proposition in the main clause is contrasted" (Thompson et al. 2007: 262). Whereas, an *exceptive* is "a clause which indicates the unique presupposition (= the exception) that can alter the situation described in the main clause" (Hartmann 1980: 444).

The term *concessive conditional* is commonly used to refer to clauses similar to “even if” clauses, for instance *even if it rains we’ll have our picnic*, in English (Thompson et al. 2007: 261). Sawada (2004: 425) remarks on two important characteristics of the *even if* construction: the scalarity of the antecedent clause and an already established causal assumption.

As Sawada continues his discussion regarding the first characteristic, he notes on the existence of two kinds of scale in the antecedent clause: a *continuous scale* and a *polar scale*. A number of alternative conditions can be assumed when a contrastive accent (or focus) is put on a predicate.¹⁷ However, only a polar scale is assumed if there is no contrastive accent (or focus). In the antecedent clause of *I hope John will agree; but even if he doesn’t, we’ll carry out this decision*, for instance, “he agrees” and “he doesn’t agree” are the only polar propositions that can be assumed.

With regard to the second important characteristic, Sawada (2004: 426) remarks that there is always an already established causal assumption (i.e. expectation understanding) behind the interpretation of *even if* sentences but contrary to that assumption, they deny it.¹⁸

Thompson et al. (2007: 261) expounds on the characteristics of concessive conditionals in contrast to negative and ordinary conditionals:

Like negative conditionals, concessive conditionals in a given language are typically similar to ordinary conditionals in that language, in terms of verb forms and the expressions of reality/unreality and hypotheticality/counterfactuality. However, concessive conditional clauses do carry additional presuppositions not signalled by ordinary conditionals, which match quite closely those carried by such contrary-to-expectation morphemes as the English *even*.

¹⁷ Daeho (2004: 311) notes that a contrastive focus is naturally assumed in concessive constructions.

¹⁸ In line with this point, Thompson et al. (2007: 262) “roughly” interprets the concessive conditional *Even if it rains, we’ll have our picnic* as follows:

Asserted: we’ll have our picnic

Presupposed: there is an expectation that the proposition [If it rains, we’ll have our picnic] would *not* be true

Presupposed: there is a belief that the proposition [If it doesn’t rain, we’ll have our picnic] is likely

Moreover, a declarative concessive conditional sentence is like an ordinary conditional sentence in the sense that it may talk about some unreal event. But, the assertability of its main clause, *inspite of* assumptions to the contrary, makes it similar to a concessive sentence (Thompson et al. 2007: 262).

Regarding the characteristics of exceptive conditionals (or *unless* clauses), Hartmann (1980: 444) remarks that they are closely related to negative conditionals. However, due to the fact that a clause of exception (or exceptive conditional) negates all possible conditions except for one single condition (expressed in the antecedent), it differs from a negative conditional which its antecedent expresses only the negation of one single condition out of many possible conditions (Ibid).

The issue of concessive and exceptive conditionals will be discussed in more detail in light of Amharic facts in chapter four.

Chapter Three

Definition of Amharic Conditionals

This chapter deals with the definitions and characteristics of Amharic conditionals. In (3.1) conditional constructions in Amharic are identified. In (3.2) their forms are considered and in (3.3) their morpho-syntactic make-up is discussed.

3.1. The Survey of Amharic Conditionals

Conditionals are bi-clausal structures where one of the clauses, the antecedent, states the condition under which the proposition expressed by the main clause, the consequent, becomes true, valid, relevant, etc (cf. 2.1.1). Yet, conditionals need to be distinguished from other bi-clausal structures in which one of the clauses is adverbial. In this section, Amharic conditionals which are structurally similar on the one hand and those which are structurally different on the other will be considered.

The Amharic conditional is constructed from two clauses one of which is an adverbial, the antecedent, which mostly contains a marker, and the other of which is a main clause which is the consequent. There are three conditional markers. These are *kə-*, *ində-* and *bi-*, which are attached to the main verb or to the auxiliary of the antecedent clause. These *particles*¹⁹ have different distributional characteristics (cf. 3.3.1).

In the following structures, the particles *kə-* in (1) and (3), *ində-* in (4), and *bi-* in (2) and (5), are attached to the main verbs or auxiliaries of the respective antecedent clauses and mark the conditional clause. As a result, all the five structures are identified as conditionals.

¹⁹ Demissie (1977) refers to these and other similar adpositions, such as *silə-* and *lə-*, as *clause markers*; Baye (2008) as *complementizers*; and Mulusew (2005) as *prepositional complementizers (precomps)*.

1. miġb kalbəllah yirbiħall

[[miġb kə-al-bəlla-h] [yi-riħ-h-all]]

food if-Neg-eat_{pf}-2sg.m.S 3sg.m.S-be hungry_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Aux

Lit. 'If you did not eat food, you will be hungry'

'If you do not eat food, you will be hungry'

2. miġb batbəla yirbiħall

[[miġb bi-al-ti-bəla] [yi-riħ-h-all]]

food if-Neg-2sg.m.S-eat_{Impf} 3sg.m.S-be hungry_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Aux

Lit. 'If you do not eat food, you will be hungry'

'If you do not eat food, you will be hungry'

3. miġb yəmmatbəla kəhonə yirbiħall

[[miġb yəmm-al-ti-bəla kə-hon-ə] [yi-riħ-h-all]]

food Rel-Contj-Neg-2sg.m.S-eat_{Impf} if-be_{pf}-3sg.m.S 3sg.m.S-be hungry_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Aux

Lit. 'If it happened that you are not going to eat food, you will be hungry'

'If you are not going to eat food, you will be hungry'

4. miġb yəmmatbəla indəhonə yirbiħall

[[miġb yə-imm-al-ti-bəla ində-hon-ə] [yi-riħ-h-all]]

food Rel-Contj-Neg-2sg.m.S-eat_{Impf} if-be_{pf}-3sg.m.S 3sg.m.S-be hungry_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Aux

Lit. 'If it happened that you are not going to eat food, you will be hungry'

'If you are not going to eat food, you will be hungry'

5. miġb batbəla noro yirbiħ nəbbər

[[miġb bi-al-ti-bəla nor-o] [yi-riħ-h nəbbər]]

food if-Neg-2sg.m.S-eat_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen 3sg.m.S-be hungry_{Impf}-2sg.m.O Aux_{Pst}

'If you had not eaten food, you would have been hungry'

However, *kə-*, *bi-* and *ində-* can occur in other adverbial clauses marking grammatical functions other than conditionality:

6. bərrun kəməkfəte issu^wan ayyəhu^wat (Leslau 1995: 736)

bərr-u-n kə-mə-kfət-e issu^wa-n ayyə-hu-at
door-Def-Acc as soon as-Infv-open-1sg.Gen she-Acc see_{pf}-1sg.S-3sg.f.O
'I saw her as soon as my opening of the door'

7. lijočču kətəññu k'oyyitəwall

liǰ-očč-u kə-təññ-u k'oyyit-əw-all
child-pl-Def since-sleep_{pf}-3pl.S be long_{cmpl}-3pl.Gen-Aux
'It has been long since the children slept'

8. məttaməmun indəsəmmahu dəwwəlkullət

məttaməm-u-n ində-səmma-hu dəwwəl-ku-llət
sickness-3sg.m.Gen-Acc when-hear_{pf}-1sgS call_{pf}-1sg.S-3sg.m.O.Ben
'I called him when I heard his sickness'

11. bədənb alat'ənnahımm inji fətənwun talf nəbbər

bədənb al-at'ənnah-mm inji fətəna-u-n ti-alf nəbbər

harder Neg-study_{PF}-2sg.m.S-Comp otherwise exam-Def-Acc 2sg.m.S-pass_{Impf} Aux_{Pst}

'You have not studied harder; otherwise, you would have passed the exam'

= 'If you had studied harder, you would have passed the exam'

12. mist'iren lələla səw tənagərinna ?igədlıhalləhu

mist'ir-e-n lə-ləla səw tənagər-inna ?i-gədl-h-allə-hu

secret-1sg.Gen-Acc to-another person Ps-tell_{Impv}-and 1sg.S-kill_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Aux-1sg.S

'Tell my secret to another person and I will kill you'

= 'If you tell my secret to another person, I will kill you'

(10), (11) and (12) are bi-clausal constructions with conditional readings. However, the aforementioned conditional markers are not realized in these sentences. This suggests that there are other forms of constructions, different from those in (1) – (5), which convey conditional meaning.

There are also other non-conditional constructions such as (13) and (14) below which contain dependent clauses that seem identical to conditional antecedents. Despite their structural similarity, such clauses are different from conditional antecedents which are adverbial, while the clauses in (13) and (14) are complements. Note further that *kə-* and *ində-* in (13) and (14), respectively, do not have a sense of conditionality.

13. Sara kəbetəkristiyan təməllisa kəhonə alawk'ımm

Sara kə-betəkristiyan tə-məllis-a kə-hon-ə

S. from-church Ps-return_{compl}-3sg.f.Gen if/whether-happen_{PF}-3sg.m.S

al-Ø-awk'-mm

Neg-1sg.S-Know_{Impf}-Comp

'I do not know if/whether Sara has returned from church'

14. amariñña awk' indəhon t'əyyək'əññ (Leslau 1995: 331)

amariñña awk' ində-hon t'əyyək'-ə-ññ

Amharic know_{Impf} if/whether-happen_{Pf} ask_{Pf}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O

'He asked me if/whether I know Amharic'

In general, the realization of the particles *kə-*, *bi-* and *ində-* or structural patterns such as those in (1) – (5) are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for conveying conditional meanings in Amharic. Note that this claim goes in line with Kaufmann's (2006: 6) remark for English (cf. 2.1.3). In what follows, I take a closer look at the forms of Amharic conditionals.

3.2. The Formation of Amharic Conditionals

There are various forms of conditional constructions in Amharic. For ease of presentation, I categorize them into two classes, *canonical* and *non-canonical*, based mainly on their formal structure.

One basic feature of canonical conditional constructions is the presence of the particles *kə-*, *bi-* and *ində-* in their antecedent clauses. The sentences (1) – (5) are examples of such structures. The antecedents show the particles (shown in bold) in [*migb **kə**-albəllah*], [*migb **bi**-attibəla*], [*migb yəmmattibəla **kə**-honə*], [*migb yəmmattibəla **ində**-honə*], and [*migb **bi**-attibəla noro*] as conditional markers. These particles are attached to the main verbs (or the auxiliaries) of the antecedent clauses so that the clauses become dependent to the main (consequent) clauses. In fact, the antecedents in conditional constructions as (1) – (5), are adverbial clauses of condition, in contrast to adverbial clauses of manner, time, reason, etc.

This is not the case in structures (10) – (12), which are among the non-canonical forms. These clauses do not show the conditional particles *kə-*, *bi-* and *ində-* although they are also composed of two independent clauses which are conjoined by the conjunctives *alyam*, *injji* and *inna*.

In the case of the structures in (10) and (12), their constituent clauses [*t'iyyak'ewun mällis*] and [*mist'iren lələla səw tənagər*] are imperatives that substitute the antecedent clauses in the conditional readings of the respective structures. The other constituents [*tik'k'ət't'alləh*] and [*ɔigəllihalləhu*], which represent the consequent clauses in the conditional readings, are non-past in form and indicate possible future actions. This fact goes in line with Bhatt & Pancheva's (2005: 641) cross-linguistic remark that "a structure involving an imperative clause conjoined with a non-past indicative clause receives a conditional interpretation" (cf. 2.1.3). Hence, (10) and (12) can be paraphrased as (15a – d) and (16a – d), respectively, which are canonical conditional constructions.

15. a. t'iyyak'ewun kalməlləsk tik'k'ət't'alləh

t'iyyak'e-u-n kə-al-məlləs-k ti-k'-k'ət't'-allə-h
question-Def-Acc if-Neg-answer_{PF}-2sg.m.S 2sg.m.S-Ps-punish_{Impf}-Aux-2sg.m.S
Lit. 'If you did not answer the question, you will be punished'
'If you do not answer the question, you will be punished'

b. t'iyyak'ewun batmällis tik'k'ət't'alləh

t'iyyak'e-u-n bi-al-ti-mällis ti-k'-k'ət't'-allə-h
question-Def-Acc if-Neg-2sg.m.S-answer_{Impf} 2sg.m.S-Ps-punish_{Impf}-Aux-2sg.m.S
'If you do not answer the question, you will be punished'

c. t'iyyak'ewun yəmmatmällis kəhonə tik'k'ət't'alləh

[[t'iyyak'e-u-n yə-imm-al-ti-mällis kə-hon-ə]
question-Def-Acc Rel-Contj-Neg-2sg.m.S-answer_{Impf} if-happen_{PF}-3sg.m.S
[ti-k'-k'ət't'-allə-h]]
2sg.m.S-Ps-punish_{Impf}-Aux-2sg.m.S
Lit. 'If it happened that you are not answering the question, you will be punished'
'If you are not answering the question, you will be punished'

d. t'iyak'ewun yəmmatmällis indəhonə tik'kət't'alləh

[[t'iyak'e-u-n yə-imm-al-ti-mällis ində-hon-ə]

question-Def-Acc Rel-Contj-Neg-2sg.m.S-answer_{Impf} if-happen_{Pf}-3sg.m.S

[ti-k'-kət't'-allə-h]]

2sg.m.S-Ps-punish_{Impf}-Aux-2sg.m.S

Lit. 'If it happened that you are not answering the question, you will be punished'

'If you are not answering the question, you will be punished'

16. a. mist'iren lələla səw kətənnaggər ʔigədlihalləhu

[[mist'ir-e-n lə-ləla səw kə-tənnaggər-k] [ʔi-gədl-h-allə-hu]]

secret-my-Acc to-another person if-tell_{Pf}-2sg.m.S 1sg.S-kill_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If you told my secret to another person, I will kill you'

'If you tell my secret to another person, I will kill you'

b. mist'iren lələla səw bitinnaggər ʔigədlihalləhu

[[mist'ir-e-n lə-ləla səw bi-ti-nnaggər] [ʔi-gədl-h-allə-hu]]

secret-my-Acc to-another person if-2sg.m.S-tell_{Impf} 1sg.S-kill_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If you tell my secret to another person, I will kill you'

'If you told my secret to another person, I will kill you'

c. mist'iren lələla səw yəmmittinnaggər kəhonə ʔigədlihalləhu

[[mist'ir-e-n lə-ləla səw yə-imm-ti-nnaggər kə-hon-ə]

secret-my-Acc to-another person Rel-Contj-2sg.m.S-tell_{Impf} if-happen_{Pf}-3sg.m.S

[ʔi-gədl-h-allə-hu]]

1sg.S-Kill_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If it happened that you are telling my secret to another person, I will kill you'

'If you are telling my secret to another person, I will kill you'

d. *mist'iren lælela sæw yəmmitinnaggər indəhonə ʔigədlɪhalləhu*

[[*mist'ir-e-n læ-lela sæw yə-imm-ti-nnaggər ində-hon-ə*]

secret-my-Acc to-another person Rel-Contj-2sg.m.S-tell_{Impf} if-happen_{Pf}-3sg.m.S

[*ʔi-gədl-h-allə-hu*]]

1sg.S-Kill_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If it happened that you are telling my secret to another person, I will kill you'

'If you are telling my secret to another person, I will kill you'

The propositions of the antecedent clauses in (15) are the negations of the proposition of the imperative clause in (10), i.e. [*t'iyak'ewun məllis*]; but, the proposition of the imperative clause in (12), i.e. [*mist'iren lælela sæw tənagər*], is somewhat similar to the propositions of the antecedent clauses in (16). The case of (11) is a bit different from the above two. Its conditional reading is as follows:

17. *bədənb bitat'əna noro fətənwun talf nəbbər*

[[*bədənb bi-ti-at'əna nor-o*] [*fətəna-u-n ti-alf nəbbər*]]

Harder if-2sg.m.S-study_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen exam-Def-Acc 2sg.m.S-pass_{Impf} Aux_{Pst}

'If you had studied harder, you would have passed the exam'

The antecedent proposition of sentence (17), [*bədənb bitat'əna noro*], is a possible entailment of [*bədənb alat'ənnahimm inji*] in sentence (11). The following structure demonstrates the case in point:

18. *bədənb alat'ənnahimm inji [bədənb bitat'əna noro] fətənwun talf nəbbər*

bədənb al-at'əna-h-mm inji bədənb bi-ti-at'əna nor-o

harder Neg-study_{Pf}-2sg.m.S-Comp otherwise harder if-2sg.m.S-study_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

fətəna-u-n ti-alf nəbbər

exam-Def-Acc 2sg.m.S-pass_{Impf} Aux_{Pst}

'You have not studied harder; if you had studied harder, you would have passed the exam'

= 'If you had studied harder, you would have passed the exam'

The conditional interpretation of constructions like (10), (11) and (12) seems to be a composition of the conjunctives [*alyam*]²¹, [*inna*] and [*injji*], and the context. Without these elements and the necessary context coordinate constructions do not receive conditional interpretations.²²

In general, the way the non-canonical forms receive conditional interpretations is systematic. Attempt to explain this system leads to observing the relationship between non-canonical forms and the canonical ones as (15), (16), and footnotes (20) and (21) illustrate.²³ In the following section I show the morpho-syntax of the Amharic conditionals.

²¹ [*alyam*] can be used interchangeably with [*kalhonə*]. Note that [*kalhonə*] contains the conditionality marker *kə-*. As a result, when it conjoins two clauses, it automatically turns the opening clause into a conditional antecedent:

- c. t'iyak'ewun məllis kalhonə tik'k'ət't'alləh
 t'iyak'e-u-n məllis kə-al-hon-ə ti-k'-k'ət't'-allə-h
 question-Def-Acc answer_{Impv} if-Neg-happen_{Pf}-3sg.m.S 2sg.m.S-Ps-punish_{Pf}-Aux-2sg.m.S
 Lit. 'Answer the question! If not, you will be punished'

If one compares sentences (10) and (c) above, he finds them to be identical.

One further point regarding [*alyam*] and [*kalhonə*] is their similarity in their internal makeup:

- i. al-ya-m ii. kə-al-hon-ə
 Neg-that-Comp if-Neg-be-3sg.m.S
 Lit. 'not that' Lit. 'if not it be'

In (i) and (ii), both [*ya*] 'that' and [*honə*] 'it be' refer to a preceding proposition, and [*al-*] 'not' negates it. This seems to be the reason why coordinate clauses conjoined by [*alyam*] mostly receive conditional interpretations.

²² For instance, the following two sentences cannot receive conditional interpretation though they have structural similarity with (11) and (12), respectively:

- a. aymut injji kifunña təgodtəwall
 al-yi-mut injji kifunña tə-godt-o-all
 Neg-3sg.m.S-die_{JUS} though badly Ps-injur_{compl}-3sg.m.Gen-Aux
 'Though he did not die he has been injured badly'

- b. kasa yimət'all inna yəmmibbəlla nəgər azzəgaǰillət
 kasa yi-mət'-all inna yə-imm-yi-b-bəlla nəgər azzəgaǰ-i-llət
 K. 3sg.m.S-come_{Impf}-Aux and Rel-Contj-3sg.m.S-Ps-eat_{Pf} thing prepare_{Pf}-3sg.f.S-3sg.m.Ben
 'Since Kasa will come, prepare him something to be eaten'

²³ There are also constructions like (a) below which convey conditional meaning. Compare this with (b) and (c), which are possible paraphrases, though not precisely:

3.3. The Morpho-syntax of Amharic Conditionals

This section discusses the overall morpho-syntax of conditionals in Amharic. It consists of three subsections. The first is about conditional markers in the language, with focus on canonical forms in which conditionality is formally marked. The second and third subsections deal with the internal composition of the antecedent and consequent clauses.

3.3.1. Conditional Markers in Amharic

As it is indicated in the preceding sections, there are three *particles*²⁴ that mark conditionality in the language: *kə-*, *ində-* and *bi-*. These particles are attached to verbal stems or auxiliaries of antecedents of conditional clauses. Marking conditionality is not the only grammatical function that these particles do; they have also systematic correlations with various grammatical categories such as agreement, tense and aspect.

-
- a. fək'adwo hono lela k'ət'əro biyadərgulliññ
fək'ad-wo hon-o lela k'ət'əro bi-yi-adərg-u-lliññ
permission-your.Hon be-3sg.m.Gen another appointment if-3sg.S-make_{Impf}-3sg.S.Hon-1sg.O.Ben
'with all your permission, (I'd be glad) if you give me another appointment'
- b. fək'adwo kəhonə lela k'ət'əro biyadərgulliññ
fək'ad-wo kə-hon-ə lela k'ət'əro bi-yi-adərg-u-lliññ
permission-your.Hon if-be_{pp}-3sg.m.S another appointment if-3sg.S-make_{Impf}-3sg.S.Hon-1sg.O.Ben
'If it is your permission, (I'd be glad) if you give me another appointment'
- c. fək'adwo indəhon lela k'ət'əro biyadərgulliññ
fək'ad-wo ində-hon lela k'ət'əro bi-yi-adərg-u-lliññ
permission-your.Hon if-be_{Impf} another appointment if-3sg.S-make_{Impf}-3sg.S.Hon-1sg.O.Ben
'If it is your permission, (I'd be glad) if you give me another appointment'

I do not deal with cases like (a) here; since their function seems to fall into the domain of pragmatics, which is beyond the scope of this study.

²⁴ These particles are variously named in the literature as *clause markers*, *complementizers*, and *prepositional complementizers* (cf. footnote 19). I prefer to use the most neutral term *particles*. The terms *complementizers*, and *prepositional complementizers* may be appropriate considering the grammatical function of these particles only within the clauses they are found, i.e. the antecedent clauses. However, these terms do not address their functions with respect to the whole conditional structures. Regarding the term *clause marker*, this appears to be biased towards clausal structures; so that it will be inappropriate to use it while talking about non-clausal functions where, for instance, *kə-* and *ində-* serve as prepositions.

In addition to the three particles which are bound, there is also [nor-o], which occurs following main verbs or auxiliaries, and to which *bi-* is attached. The presence or absence of [nor-o] determines whether a given conditional construction is counterfactual or not. In what follows, I present each particle starting with *kə-*.

a. *kə-*

*kə*²⁵ is a particle that occurs with a verbal stem or an auxiliary in antecedent clauses. As the data below illustrate, *kə-* is prefixed to the main verb of the clause in (19) and to its auxiliary in (20):

19. *lotəri kədərrəsəññ*

lotəri kə-dərrəs-ə-ññ

lottery if-reach_{PF}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O

Lit. 'If a lottery reached me'

'If I win a lottery'

20. *lotəri yəmmidərsəññ kəhonə*

lotəri yə-imm-yi-dərs-əññ kə-hon-ə

lottery Rel-Contj-3sg.m.S-reach_{Impf}-1sg.O if-happen_{PF}-3sg.m.S

Lit. 'If it happened that a lottery is to reach me'

'If I am winning a lottery'

One noticeable distinction between (19) and (20), wherein *kə-* is prefixed to the verbal stem [dərrəs-] and the auxiliary [hon-]²⁶, is that the main verb in the former is in the

²⁵ *kə-* is classed under the category of *prepositions*. It merges with noun phrases to construct prepositional phrases. For example (a) and (b) are simple and complex prepositional phrases, respectively, which are headed by the preposition *kə-*:

a. <i>kəbete</i>	b. <i>antən</i>	<i>kəmmiməsləw liǰ</i>
<i>kə-bet-e</i>	<i>antə-n</i>	<i>kə-yə-imm-yi-məsl-əw liǰ</i>
from-house-1sg.Gen	you.m-Acc	from-Rel-Contj-3sg.m.S-resemble _{Impf} -Def boy
'from my house'	'from the boy who looks like you'	

Note also that *kə-* serves as a temporal marker in such structures like (6) and (7) (cf. 3.1.1).

²⁶ Baye (2006: 193) categorizes [hon-] 'become/happen' as a *modal auxiliary*.

perfective while it is in the *imperfective* in the latter.²⁷ *Kə-* cannot be prefixed to a main verb (or an auxiliary) which is not in the perfective aspect.

21. a. *liḵu birč'ik'owun kəsəbbərə*

liḵ-u *birč'ik'o-u-n* ***kə-səbbər-ə***
 boy-Def glass-Def-Acc if-break_{pf}-3sg.m.S

Lit. 'If the boy broke the glass'

'If the boy breaks the glass'

b. *liḵu birč'ik'owun yisəbr kəhonə*

liḵ-u *birč'ik'o-u-n* ***yī-səbr*** ***kə-hon-ə***
 boy-Def glass-Def-Acc 3sg.m.S-break_{Impf} if-happen_{pf}-3sg.m.S

Lit. 'If it happened, the boy breaks the glass'

'If the boy breaks the glass'

c. **liḵu birč'ik'owun kəysəbr hon-ə*

liḵ-u *birč'ik'o-u-n* ***kə-yī-səbr*** ***hon-ə***
 boy-Def glass-Def-Acc if-3sg.m.S-break_{Impf} happen_{pf}-3sg.m.S

²⁷ Baye (2006) recognizes two canonical and four non-canonical aspectual forms in Amharic. The canonical forms are the *perfective* and the *imperfective* which are identified as [1ə22ə3-] and [1ə23-], respectively. He further recognizes four sub-aspectual forms. These are the *progressive*, the *prospective*, the *inceptive* and the *completive*; of which the first three are derived from the imperfective whereas the fourth one is derived from the perfective. The progressive is indicated by [*iyyə-*] based on the perfective stem unlike the others. The prospective is indicated by [*l/-*]; the inceptive is distinguished by the auxiliary it selects, i.e. *ḵammər-*; the completive is distinct from the others in its agreement behavior as it selects an agreement feature that refers to a genitive subject. Though the completive is said to be derived from the perfective, its stem is alike the imperfective ones. All these aspectual forms interact variously with agreement features.

Haile Eyesus (1993: 36) remarks that the perfective aspect subsumes the equivalent of the past, present-perfect and the past-perfect, and the imperfective aspect refers to the present, present-continuous, future and the past-continuous in English.

d. liju birč'ik'owun iyyəsəbbərə kəhonə

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n **iyyə-səbbər-ə** **kə-hon-ə**

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc Prog-break-3sg.m.S if-happen_{PF}-3sg.m.S

Lit. 'If it happened, the boy is breaking the glass'

'If the boy is breaking the glass'

e. *liju birč'ik'owun kəyyəsəbbərə honə

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n **kə-iyyə-səbbər-ə** **hon-ə**

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc if-Prog-break-3sg.m.S happen_{PF}-3sg.m.S

f. liju birč'ik'owun lisəbr kəhonə

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n **li-yi-səbr** **kə-hon-ə**

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc Pros-3S-break if-happen_{PF}-3sg.m.S

Lit. 'If it happened, the boy is going to break the glass'

'If the boy is going to break the glass'

g. *liju birč'ik'owun kəlisəbr honə

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n **kə-li-yi-səbr** **hon-ə**

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc if-Pros-3S-break happen_{PF}-3sg.m.S

h. liju birč'ik'owun səbro kəhonə

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n **səbr-o** **kə-hon-ə**

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc break_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen if-happen_{PF}-3sg.m.S

Lit. 'If it happened, the boy has broken the glass'

'If the boy has broken the glass'

i. *liju birč'ik'owun kəsəbro honə

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n **kə-səbr-o** **hon-ə**

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc if-break_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen happen_{PF}-3sg.m.S

The data in (21) generally illustrates the fact that the particle *kə-* can be prefixed to a main verb of a clause only if the aspect of the verb is perfective. If there is an auxiliary, *kə-* is prefixed to it (cf. (b), (d), (f) and (h)). If *kə-* is prefixed to the main verb where there is an auxiliary, the resultant structure will be automatically ruled out (cf. (c), (e), (g) and (i)).

In general, *kə-* is a conditional marker prefixed to main verbs or to their auxiliaries in the perfective aspect. When it occurs with [hon-] it can be replaced by *ində-* which is another conditional marker to be treated next.

b. *ində-*

*ində*²⁸, as a conditional marker, appears only in antecedent clauses that contain an auxiliary. Similar to *kə-*, *ində-* always takes an auxiliary in the perfective aspect. It can be used interchangeably with *kə-* as in structures like (21b, d, f and h). These two conditional markers show some structural distinctions.

One major difference is that only *ində-* can occur with such reduced forms of [hon-] like *hon* and *hu*, as (23a-c) illustrate.

23. a. *lijitu birč'ik'owun səbra ində/kəhona*

lijit-u birč'ik'o-u-n səbr-a ində-/kə-hon-ə

girl-Def glass-Def-Acc break_{cmpl}-3sg.f.Gen if-happen_{pf}-3sg.m.S

Lit. 'If it happened, the girl has broken the glass'

'If the girl has broken the glass'

²⁸ Categorially *ində-* is a *preposition* that can merge with a noun phrase to form a prepositional phrase. It has other grammatical functions in addition to marking conditionality. In structures like (i) below, for instance, it functions as an *equative* morpheme (Baye 2008: 455).

i. *indabbatu tatari*
ində-abbat-u tatari
 Equ-father-3sg.m.Poss hard-working
 'hard-working like his father'

In other cases (cf. footnote 11) it merges with finite clauses making them dependent clauses. These subordinate clauses merge with various main clauses where they function as complements or adjuncts.

b. liǰitu birč'ik'owun səbra ində/*kəhon

liǰit-u birč'ik'o-u-n səbr-a **ində-/*kə-hon**

girl-Def glass-Def-Acc break_{cmpl}-3sg.f.Gen if-happen_{pf}

Lit. 'If it happened, the girl has broken the glass'

'If the girl has broken the glass'

c. liǰitu birč'ik'owun səbra ində/*kəhu

liǰit-u birč'ik'o-u-n səbr-a **ində-/*kə-hu**

girl-Def glass-Def-Acc break_{cmpl}-3sg.f.Gen if-happen_{pf}

Lit. 'If it happened, the girl has broken the glass'

'If the girl has broken the glass'

In (23b) and (23c) the auxiliaries to whom *ində-* is attached are reduced forms of [hon-]. *Kə-* cannot substitute *ində-* in cases like these ones. In the case of *kə-*, the agreement marker on the auxiliary is mandatory. It is only in those cases like (23a) that these two particles substitute for one another.

The other major difference between these two particles is that *ində-* cannot be prefixed to a main verb in the perfective aspect and show conditionality. In cases like (24), *ində-* occurs as a subordinate clause marker.²⁹

²⁹ Structurally, the same construction, (24), functions as a complement clause in (i) and an adjunct in (ii).

i. liǰu birč'ik'owun indəsəbbərəw nəggərəčč'iññ

[liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n **ində-səbbər-ə-w** nəggər-əčč-iññ

Boy-Def glass-Def-Acc Comp-break_{pf}-3sg.m.S-3sg.m.O tell_{pf}-3sg.f.S-1sg.O

'She told me that the boy has broken the glass'

ii. liǰu birč'ik'owun indəsəbbərəw abbatu gərfotall

[liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n **ində-səbbər-ə-w** abbat-u gərf-o-t-all

Boy-Def glass-Def-Acc Comp-break_{pf}-3sg.m.S-3sg.m.O father-his punish_{cmpl}-3sg.m.S-3sg.m.O-Aux

'By the time the boy broke the glass his father has punished him'

24. liju birč'ik'owun indəsəbbərəw

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n ində-səbbər-ə-w

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc when/as soon as-break_{pf}-3sg.m.S-3sg.m.O

'When/as soon as/that the boy broke the glass'

A third major difference is that *ində-* seems to lose its sense of conditionality when it merges with [nəbbər-] which is the past tense form of [hon-]. The following data elaborates the case in point.

25. a. liju iyyətəč'awwətə ində/kəhonə

liǰ-u iyyə-təč'awwət-ə **ində-/kə**-hon-ə

boy-Def Prog-play-3sg.m.S if-happen_{pf}-3sg.m.S

Lit. 'If it happened, the boy is playing'

'If the boy is playing'

b. liju iyyətəč'awwətə *ində/kənəbbərə³⁰

liǰ-u iyyə-təč'awwət-ə ***ində-/kə**-nəbbər-ə

boy-Def Prog-play-3sg.m.S if-be_{pst}-3g.m.S

Lit. 'If it was, the boy was playing'

'If the boy was playing'

The auxiliary in (25a) is in the non-past tense form and both particles potentially indicate conditionality. However in (25b), it is only *kə-* that shows conditionality. Note that the past tense form [nəbbər-] is an existential auxiliary.

³⁰ Note that the asterisk is to mean (25b) with *ində-* is not a conditional (antecedent) clause. In such a case *ində-*, not *kə-*, is a complementizer that yields a complement clause:

liju iyyətəč'awwətə ində/*kənəbbər(ə) tawk'owall

[liǰ-u iyyə-təč'awwət-ə **ində-/*kə**-nəbbər-(ə) tə-awk'-o-all]

boy-Def Prog-md-play-3sg.m.S Comp-be_{pst}-(3sg.m.S) Ps-know_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen-Aux

'It is known that the boy was playing'

From these formal differences, in general, it can be concluded that *kə-* is a more productive marker of conditionality than *ində-*, which has other grammatical functions than marking conditionality. In fact, *ində-* serves as a conditional marker only in very limited environments. It only occurs with the auxiliary *hon-* and its reduced forms *hon* and *hu* in the perfective aspect.

There is also a third particle, *bi-*, which functions as a conditional marker. Its distribution is limited mainly to unreal conditionals. In what follows I show its features as a conditional marker in general and its correlation with [noro] where it marks *counterfactuality* in particular.

c. *bi-*

*bi-*³¹ is another conditional marker in Amharic. One basic feature of it is that it cannot merge with a clause that contains a perfective verb. As (26a) and (26b) show, *bi-* contrasts with *kə-* which occurs only with perfective verbs.

26. a. sira *kə*/**bi*sərrah hiywoth yilləwwət'all

[[sira **kə**-/***bi**-sərra-h] [hiywot-h yi-l-ləwwət'-all]]

work if-do_{PF}-2sg.m.S life-your 3sg.m.S-Ps-change_{Impf}-Aux

Lit. 'If you worked, your life will be changed'

'If you work, your life will be changed'

³¹ Unlike *kə-* and *ində-*, *bi-* cannot merge with noun phrases to form prepositional phrases. This particle serves as head of (as a complementizer) an adverbial clause of reason in structures like the following one.

silk k'ut'irwan bit'əyyik'at fit nəssaččiw
 [silk k'ut'ir-wa-n **bi**-yi-t'əyyik'-at] fit nəssa-čč-w
 phone number-her-Acc as-3sg.mS-ask for_{Impf}-3sg.f.O piss off_{PF}-3sg.f.S-3sg.m.O
 'She pissed him off as he asks for her phone number'

b. sira bi/*kəti-səra hiywoth yilləwwət'all

[[sira **bi-**/***kə**-ti-səra] [hiywot-h yi-l-ləwwət'-all]]

work if-2sg.m.S-do_{Impf} life-your 3sg.m.S-Ps-change_{Impf}-Aux

Lit. 'If you work, your life will be changed'

'If you worked, your life will be changed'

However, the meanings of (26a) and (26b) are not exactly the same. There seems to exist a modality difference between them such that [kəsərrah] is a *realis* condition whereas [bitisəra] is an *irrealis* one. (27a) and (27b) systematically illustrate the case in point. Here, the only thing different from (26) is the tense of the auxiliary in the consequent clause. However, this minor difference leads to a major difference in interpretation. If (26a) and (26b) were exactly the same, (27a) wouldn't sound bizarre. The weirdness of (27a) seems to emanate from the merging of a *real* antecedent, i.e. [sira kəsərrah], with an *unreal* consequent, i.e. [hiywoth yilləwwət' nəbbər]. Note that the imaginative proposition [hiywoth yilləwwət' nəbbər] 'your life would be/ have been changed' entails a real proposition [hiywoth altəlləwwət'əmm] 'your life has not changed'.

27. a. *sira kəsərrah hiywoth yilləwwət' nəbbər

sira kə-sərra-h hiywot-h yi-l-ləwwət' nəbbər

work if-do_{pf}-2sg.m.S life-your 3sg.m.S-Ps-change_{Impf} Aux_{Pst}

b. sira bitisəra hiywoth yilləwwət' nəbbər

sira bi-ti-səra hiywot-h yi-l-ləwwət' nəbbər

work if-2sg.m.S-do_{Impf} life-your 3sg.m.S-Ps-change_{Impf} Aux_{Pst}

'If you worked, your life would be changed'/

'If you had worked, your life would have been changed'

bi- occurs with the auxiliary [hon-] in its imperfective form, as the following facts illustrate:

28. a. liǰu birč'ik'owun iyyəsəbbərə bihon

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n iyyə-səbbər-ə **bi-yi-hon**

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc Prog-break-3sg.m.S if-3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}

'If the boy was breaking the glass'

b. liǰu birč'ik'owun lisəbr bihon

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n li-yi-səbr **bi-yi-hon**

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc Pros-3sg.m.S-break if-3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}

'If the boy was going to break the glass'

c. liǰu birč'ik'owun səbro bihon

liǰ-u birč'ik'o-u-n səbr-o **bi-yi-hon**

boy-Def glass-Def-Acc break_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen if-3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}

'If the boy has broken the glass'

All the propositions expressed in (28a-c) are generally *unreal hypothetical* conditions. The unreal hypothetical condition is expressed through the interaction between *bi-* and the imperfective aspect of the auxiliary.

The use of [nor-o]³² in structures like (28) automatically turns the clauses into *counterfactual* (contrary-to-fact) conditions, as in (29a-c).

³² [nor-] 'exist' functions as a modal auxiliary in cases like (i) and (ii) below:

i. wəndimme læsost amətət ǰərmən wist' norowall
wəndimm-e læ-sost amət-at ǰərmən wist' **nor-o**-all
brother-my for-three year-Pl Germany in exist_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen-Aux
'My brother has lived in Germany for three years'

ii. yəset gu^waddəñña noroññ ayawk'imm
yə-set gu^waddəñña **nor-o**-ññ al-yi-awk'-mm
Gen-girl friend exist_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen-1sg.O Neg-3S-experience_{Impf}-Comp
'There never existed a girl friend (for me)' ~ 'I never had a girl friend'

However, in constructions like (29a-c) it functions as an indicator of counterfactuality. As a result, I refer to it as *counterfactuality auxiliary* (Aux_{CF}).

29. a. *liḵu birč'ik'owun iyyəsəbbərə bihon noro*

liḵ-u birč'ik'o-u-n iyyə-səbbər-ə bi-yi-hon nor-o
boy-Def glass-Def-Acc Prog-break-3sg.m.S if-3sg.m.S-be_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen
'If the boy had been breaking the glass'

b. *liḵu birč'ik'owun lisəbr bihon noro*

liḵ-u birč'ik'o-u-n li-yi-səbr bi-yi-hon nor-o
boy-Def glass-Def-Acc Pros-3S-break if-3sg.m.S-be_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen
'If the boy had been to break the glass'

c. *liḵu birč'ik'owun səbro bihon noro*

liḵ-u birč'ik'o-u-n səbr-o bi-yi-hon nor-o
boy-Def glass-Def-Acc break_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen if-3sg.m.S-be_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen
'If the boy had broken the glass'

A counterfactual reading of a conditional (antecedent) clause is possible with the use of *nor-o*. A clause with *nor-o* is interpreted as contrary to fact. The presupposition of (29a), for example, is [*liḵu birč'ik'owun iyyəsəbbərə alnəbbərəmm*] 'the boy was not breaking the glass'; which is contrary to the proposition of (29a). In general terms, [*noro*] is a clear indicator of counterfactuality in Amharic.

However, the compositional effect of *bi-* and [*hon_{Impf}*] should not be undermined in the construction of counterfactuals. In fact, [*noro*] cannot occur with *kə-* or *ində-* and the auxiliary [*hon_{Pf}*], as the examples (30a-b) demonstrate:

30. a. **liḵu birč'ik'owun səbro kəhonə noro*

liḵ-u birč'ik'o-u-n səbr-o kə-hon-ə nor-o
boy-Def glass-Def-Acc break_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen if-be_{Pf}-3sg.m.S Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

b. **liḵu birč'ik'owun səbro indəhon noro*

liḵ-u birč'ik'o-u-n səbr-o ində-hon nor-o
boy-Def glass-Def-Acc break_{cmpl}-3sg.m.S if-be_{Pf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

From this, one can conclude that *bi-* is a marker of unreal conditionals. It occurs with a main verb (or the auxiliary *hon-*) in the imperfective aspect and with *noro* to mark hypothetical conditionals as well as counterfactuals. This will be revisited when I show the typological classifications of conditionals in Amharic in the next chapter.

In this sub-section, I have shown three conditional markers *kə-*, *ində-* and *bi-*. Their interaction with aspectual forms and tense, and their relation with the auxiliaries *hon-* and *nor-* are also shown. In the next sub-section, I deal with the morpho-syntax of antecedent clauses highlighting on agreement features.

3.3.2. The Antecedent Clause

An antecedent clause is a subordinate clause composed of a conditionality particle and a proposition. It is an adverbial clause that modifies a main clause, the consequent clause. Syntactically, it is an adjunct and not a complement.

31. a. Kasa kəgondər kəmət't'a biro ʔinagəññəwallən

[[Kasa kə-gondər kə-mət't'a]

kasa from-Gonder if-come_{pf}-3sg.m.S

[biro ʔin-agəññ-əw-allə-n]]

office 1pl.S-find_{Impf}-3sg.m.O-Aux-1pl.O

Lit. 'If Kasa came from Gonder, we will find him at (the) office'

'If Kasa comes from Gonder, we will find him at (the) office'

b. Kasa kəgondər mət'to indəhonə biro ʔinagəññəwallən

[[Kasa kə-gondər mət't-o ində-hon-ə]

kasa if-Gonder come_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen if-happen_{pf}-3sg.m.S

[biro ʔin-ageññ-əw-allə-n]]

office 1pl.S-find_{Impf}-3sg.m.O-Aux-1pl.O

Lit. 'If it happened (that) Kasa has come from Gonder, we will find him at (the) office'

'If Kasa has come from Gonder, we will find him at (the) office'

*pro*³³ to the subject position of the auxiliary. (32a-b) below further elaborates the case in point.

32. a. *almaz wədə gəbəya heda kəhonə*

[almaz wədə gəbəya hed-a kə-hon-ə]

Almaz to market go_{compl}-3sg.f.Gen if-happen_{pf}-3sg.m.S

'If Almaz has gone to (the) market'

b. *almaz wədə gəbəya heda kəhonəčč*

[almaz wədə gəbəya hed-a kə-hon-əčč]

Almaz to market go_{compl}-3sg.f.Gen if-happen_{pf}-3sg.f.S

'If Almaz has gone to (the) market'

In the structure of (32a) Almaz takes the subject position of the main predicate as it agrees with *-a* '3sg.f.Gen' and a non-thematic *pro* takes the subject position of the auxiliary. However in (32b), since the agreement features on both the main predicate and the auxiliary refer to a third person singular feminine entity, Almaz takes the non-theta-marked subject position of the auxiliary moving out of its theta-marked subject position in the clause [*gəbəya heda*] (though leaving its copy there).

In antecedent clauses that contain the auxiliary *hon-*, movement (of the subject of main predicates) seems likely to occur when the auxiliary carries agreement features similar to the ones in the main predicates. For instance, in examples (31b) and (32b) the agreement features on *hon-*, *-ə* '3sg.m' and *-əčč* '3sg.f', are synonymous with those on the respective main predicates, *-o* '3sg.m' and *-a* '3sg.f'. As a result, the subjects of the main predicates, *Kasa* and *Almaz*, move to the null subject positions of the auxiliary in the two clauses. The case of the following unreal antecedent clauses is also similar to those mentioned above.

³³ Haile Eyesus (1998: 93) claims that Amharic has two kinds of non-thematic (expletive) *pros*. These are: one which has an NP associate (as the expletive *there* in English) and the other is that which has a clause associate (as the expletive *it* in English). He further remarks that the non-thematic *pro* which corresponds to *there* occurs with existential predicates, whereas the one that corresponds to *it* occurs with raising and passive predicates.

33. a. kasa wədə gəbəya hedo bihon

[kasa wədə gəbəya hed-o bi-yi-hon]

Kasa to market go_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen if-3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf}

'If Kasa has gone to (the) market'

b. almaz wədə gəbəya heda bihon

[almaz wədə gəbəya hed-a bi-yi-hon]

Almaz to market go_{cmpl}-3sg.f.Gen if-3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf}

'If Almaz has gone to (the) market'

c. almaz wədə gəbəya heda bithon

[almaz wədə gəbəya hed-a bi-ti-hon]

Almaz to market go_{cmpl}-3sg.f.Gen if-3sg.f.S-happen_{Impf}

'If Almaz has gone to (the) market'

In the structure of (33a) Kasa may move up to the null subject position of the auxiliary as it agrees with the prefix *yi-* '3sg.m'. Similarly, in the S-structure of (33c) Almaz may move up to the null subject position of the auxiliary as it agrees with the prefix *ti-* '3sg.f'. But in (33b) Almaz remains at its original position (the spec of the main predicate) as it does not agree with the subject marker on the auxiliary and the subject position of the auxiliary is taken by a non-thematic (expletive) pro.

In counterfactual antecedents the counterfactuality auxiliary *nor-* always takes the agreement marker *-o* '3sg.m.Gen' irrespective of subjects in main predicates. If this agreement marker is replaced by other equivalent markers such as *-a* '3sg.f.Gen' or *-əw* '3pl.Gen', then the resultant will be ill-formed counterfactual constructions. This property of *nor-* uniquely characterizes the derivations of counterfactual antecedent clauses like those in (34a-g).

34. a. kasa wədə gəbəya hedo bihon noro

[kasa wədə gəbəya hed-o bi-yi-hon nor-o]

Kasa to market go_{cmpl}-3sg.m.Gen if-3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

'If Kasa had gone to (the) market'

b. almaz wədə gəbəya heda bihon noro

[almaz wədə gəbəya hed-a bi-yi-hon nor-o]

Almaz to market go_{cmpl}-3sg.f.Gen if-3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

'If Almaz had gone to (the) market'

c. almaz wədə gəbəya heda bithon noro

[almaz wədə gəbəya hed-a bi-ti-hon nor-o]

Almaz to market go_{cmpl}-3sg.f.Gen if-3sg.f.S-happen_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

'If Almaz had gone to (the) market'

d. lijočču wədə gəbəya hedəw bihon noro

[lijočču wədə gəbəya hed-əw bi-yi-hon nor-o]

child-pl-Def to market go_{cmpl}-3pl.Gen if-3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

'If the children had gone to (the) market'

e. lijočču wədə gəbəya hedəw bihonu noro

[lijočču wədə gəbəya hed-əw bi-yi-hon-u nor-o]

child-pl-Def to market go_{cmpl}-3pl.Gen if-3.S-happen_{Impf-pl} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

'If the children had gone to (the) market'

f. *almaz wədə gəbəya heda bithon nora

[almaz wədə gəbəya hed-a bi-ti-hon **nor-a**]

Almaz to market go_{cmpl}-3sg.f.Gen if-3sg.f.S-happen_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.f.Gen

'If Almaz had gone to (the) market'

g. *lijočču wədə gəbəya hedəw bihonu norəw

[liǰ-očč-u wədə gəbəya hed-əw bi-yi-hon-u **nor-əw**]

child-pl-Def to market go_{cmpl}-3pl.Gen if-3.S-happen_{Impf}-pl Aux_{CF}-3pl.Gen

'If the children had gone to the market'

In the structure of (34a) Kasa may move up to the non-theta subject positions of the auxiliaries *hon-* and *nor-* as it agrees with the subject markers, *yi-* and *-o*, of both. In the structures of (34c) and (34e), however, Almaz and *lijočču* 'the children' move up to take the subject positions of *hon-* as they agree with *ti-* '3sg.f' and *yi---u* '3pl', respectively, while the subject positions of the counterfactuality auxiliary in both structures is taken up by a non-thematic pro. And in those of (34b) and (34d) Almaz and *lijočču* 'the children' remain at their original positions and two non-thematic pros fill the subject positions of *hon-* and *nor-* respectively.

The ungrammaticality of (34f) and (34g) is due to the alteration of the agreement marker *-o* '3sg.m.Gen' to other categories. This strongly suggests that the subject position of the counterfactuality auxiliary is always taken up by a non-thematic pro which has a clausal associate.

Similarly, the derivations of antecedent clauses consisting of non-finite predicates do not seem to allow movement of their subjects to the subject positions of auxiliaries except in cases like (35a) where the agreement feature on both the infinitive and the auxiliary is third person singular masculine.

35. a. kasa wədə gəbəya məhedu kəhonə

[kasa wədə gəbəya mə-hed-u kə-hon-ə]

Kasa to market Infv-go-3sg.m.Gen if-happenPf-3sg.m.S

Lit. 'If it happened (that) Kasa to go to market'

'If Kasa is to go to market'

b. almaz wədə gəbəya məhedwa kəhonə/*-əčč

[almaz wədə gəbəya mə-hed-wa kə-hon-ə/*-əčč]

Almaz to market Infv-sing-3sg.f.Gen if-happenPf-3sg.m.S/*3sg.f.S

Lit. 'If it happened (that) Almaz to go to market'

'If Almaz is to go to market'

c. anči wədə gəbəya məhedš kəhonə/*-š

[anči wədə gəbəya mə-hed-š kə-hon-ə/*-š]

you(f) to market Infv-go-2sg.f.Gen if-happenPf-3sg.m.S/*2sg.f.S

Lit. 'If it happened (that) you to go to market'

'If you are to go to market'

In the derivations of antecedent clauses where movement of main predicate subjects up to subject positions of auxiliaries takes place, factors that trigger the movements do not seem clear. Derivations of such structures, in general, require deeper investigation. And it cannot be pursued in this study as it is beyond its scope.

So far it is shown that antecedent clauses are composed of conditional markers which serve as complementizers. It is also shown how the interaction between main predicate subjects and agreement features on auxiliaries greatly influence derivations of antecedent clauses. But antecedent clauses constitute only half of the whole picture of conditional constructions. The other constituent, in fact the main one, is the consequent clause. In the sub-section that follows, I deal with the morpho-syntax of consequent clauses.

3.3.3. The Consequent Clause

The consequent constituent of a conditional construction is an independent clause. Its structure in Amharic is not any different from any ordinary independent clause. In what follows, I analyze the temporal, aspectual, modal and agreement aspects of such clauses.

36. a. bizu gənzəb kagəññəhu məkina ʔigəzalləhu

bizu gənzəb kə-agəññə-hu [məkina ʔi-gəz-allə-hu]

lots of money if-get_{pf}-1sg.S car 1sg.S-buy_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If I got a lot of money, I will buy a car'

'If I get a lot of money, I will buy a car'

b. bizu gənzəb bagəññ məkina ʔigəza nəbbər

bizu gənzəb bi-Ø-agəññ [məkina ʔi-gəza nəbbər]

lots of money if-1sg.S-get_{Impf} car 1sg.S-buy_{Impf} Aux_{Pst}

Lit. 'If I get a lot of money, I will buy a car'

'If I got a lot of money, I would buy a car'

The consequent clauses marked in square brackets in (36a-b) are different in their temporal structure in that the auxiliary [allə] is in its *non-past* and *past* forms in (a) and (b), respectively. However, the past tense in (36b) is a *fake (or pseudo)* one as it does not encode past temporal reference (cf. 3.3.2); it rather serves a modal function, expressing the hypothetical nature of the state of affair.

Regarding the aspectual composition of consequent clauses let us take a look at the following examples:

37. a. kalfəlləgaččihuññ hejʃalləhu

kə-al-fəlləg-aččihu-ññ [hejʃ³⁴-e-allə-hu]

if-Neg-need_{pf}-2pl.S-1sg.O go_{cmpl}-1sg.Gen-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If you did not need me (any more), I have gone'

'If you do not need me (any more), I am gone'

³⁴ Note that /d/ in *hed-e* is palatalized to [j] (+geminate) due to the effect of the front-mid vowel /e/ that follows it.

b. *kalfəlləgaččihuññ ʔihedalləhu*

kə-al-fəlləg-aččihu-ññ [ʔi-hed-allə-hu]

if-Neg-need_{pf}-2pl.S-1sg.O 1sg.S-go_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If you did not need me (any more), I will go'

'If you do not need me (any more), I will go'

c. *kalfəlləgaččihuññ məhede nəw*

kə-al-fəlləg-aččihu-ññ [mə-hed-e³⁵ nə-u³⁶]

if-Neg-need_{pf}-2pl.S-1sg.O Infv-go-1sg.Gen Aux-3sg.m.O

Lit. 'If you did not need me (any more), I am (about) to go'

'If you do not need me (any more), I am (about) to go'

As the above examples illustrate, the consequent clause of (37a) is in the completive aspect³⁷, whereas those in (37b) and (37c) are not. However, the purpose of the completive aspect in (37a) does not seem to indicate the completion of the activity (of going); rather it is to encode a modal meaning of certainty of the speaker in to having done the going. In contrast, the aspectual structures of (37b) and (37c) clearly encode the fact that the speaker performs the activity of going after the utterance. In addition, the degree of immediacy in (37c) seems stronger than that of (37b) as the latter carries a future tense which does not locate any specific point of future time. In general terms, the perfective aspect, in its proper sense, does not seem to occur with consequent clauses of prototypical conditional constructions.^{38,39,40}

³⁵ [-e] is normally a "1sg.Gen" marker. However, the relationship between such affixes and verbal nouns like *məhed* 'to go/going' is one of subject marking (Hailu 1968: 76).

³⁶ [-u] '3sg.m.Obj.' is the default subject agreement marker of the copulative verb [nə-] 'be' (Baye 2006: 198).

³⁷ Note that the completive aspect is a derivation of the perfective (Baye 2006: 197)

³⁸ Given that the perfective aspect presents a completed state of affair in its entirety, then it is not possible to set a condition that determines the truth value (validity) of a state of affair which is already completed. If the perfective aspect occurs in a consequent clause, it should be for some modality function.

³⁹ There is an exceptional kind of conditional construction such as the one stated below in which the consequent clause takes the perfective aspect. However, its function rather seems to encode modality than to indicate completion of some activity.

But, there are other types of conditional constructions in which their corresponding consequent clauses can be in the perfective aspect. For example, the main verbs of the consequent clauses in (39a), (39b) and (39c) are in the *perfective*, *completive* and *past perfective* forms⁴¹, respectively.

38. a. kət'əmmah jogu wist' t'əlla alləllih

kə-t'əmma-Ø-h [jog-u wist' t'əlla all-ə-llih]

if-thirst_{PF}-3sg.m.S-2sg.m.O jar-Def in local beer exist_{PF}-3sg.m.S-2sg.m.Ben

Lit. 'If it (water) thirsted you, there exists local-beer in the jar (for you)'

'If you are thirsty, there is local-beer in the jar'

b. kalsəmmah yəkasa innat arfəwall

kə-al-səmma-h [yə-kasa innat arf-əw-all]

if-Neg-hear_{PF}-2sg.m.S Poss-Kasa mother pass away_{cmpl}-3sg.Gen.Hon-Aux

Lit. 'If you did not hear, Kasa's mother has passed away'

'If you have not heard (yet), Kasa's mother has passed away'

c. kastawwəsk amna aksumn gobñitən nəbbər

kə-astawwəs-k [amna aksum-n gobñit-ən nəbbər]

if-remember_{PF}-2sg.m.S last year Aksum-Acc visit_{cmpl}-1pl.Gen Aux_{Pst}

Lit. 'If you remembered, we had visited Aksum last year'

'If you remember, we had visited Aksum last year'

gənzəb bənorəññ məkina bəgəzzahu
 gənzəb bə-nor-ə-ññ [məkina bə-gəzza-hu]
 money Comp-exist_{PF}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O car Comp-buy_{PF}-1sg.S
 Lit. 'If money existed for me, I would buy a car'
 'If I had money, I would buy a car'

⁴⁰ By *prototypical conditional constructions* I mean those conditional clauses in which the antecedent clauses set a condition(s) for the states of affairs expressed in the consequent clauses to hold true or valid. The examples given in (38a-c), for instance, are not prototypical conditionals. This distinction should not be confused with the canonical versus non-canonical one presented in section 3.2.

⁴¹ Baye (2006: 197) recognizes the completive aspect as a non-canonical aspectual form derived from the perfective. It takes the shape 1ə23- and a genitive agreement marker, and becomes past perfective when the past auxiliary *nəbbər* is added to it.

Such conditional constructions are variously called *relevance*, *speech act* and *biscuit conditionals* in the relevant literature (DeRose & Grandy 1999, Bhatt & Pancheva 2005, von Stechow 2009 and many others). These conditional types are distinguished from the prototypical ones in that their antecedent clauses state the circumstances in which the consequent clauses are *discourse-relevant*, not the circumstances in which they are *true* or *valid* (Bhatt & Pancheva 2005: 671).

The consequent clause can also be composed of modal auxiliaries with various shades of meaning. Except (40a), which consists of an existential auxiliary [all-] ‘exist’, all the other consequent clauses below contain one of the modal auxiliaries, i.e. [hon-] ‘become/happen’, [čal-] ‘can/may’ and [k’ərr-] ‘remain/fail to come’.

39. a. bəsriʔat kat’ənnəš fətənwun talfiyalləš

bəsriʔat kə-at’ənnə-š [fətəna-u-n ti-alf-i⁴²-allə-š]

properly if-study_{PF}-2sg.f.S exam-Def-Acc 2S-pass_{Impf}-sg.f-Aux-2sg.f.S

Lit. ‘If you studied properly, you will pass the exam’

‘If you study properly, you will pass the exam’

b. bəsriʔat kat’ənnəš fətənwun talfi yihonall

bəsriʔat kə-at’ənnə-š

properly if-study_{PF}-2sg.f.S

[fətəna-u-n ti-alf-i yi-hon-all]

exam-Def-Acc 2S-pass_{Impf}-sg.f 3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf}-Aux

Lit. ‘If you studied properly, you may pass the exam’

‘If you study properly, you may pass the exam’

⁴² Since Amharic vowels are not allowed to occur in concatenation, the epenthetic semi-vowel /y/ needs to be inserted in between /i/ and /a/ in (39a). As a result, /ti-alf-i-allə-š/ becomes [talfiyalləš].

c. bəsriʔat kat'ənnas̄ fətənwun litalfi tičyalləs̄
 bəsriʔat kə-at'ənnas̄
 properly if-study_{PF}-2sg.f.S
 [fətəna-u-n li-ti-alf-i ti-čil⁴³-i-allə-š]
 exam-Def-Acc Pros-2S-pass_{Impf}-sg.f 2S-can_{Impf}-sg.f-Aux-2sg.f.S
 Lit. 'If you studied properly, you can pass the exam'
 'If you study properly, you can pass the exam'

d. bəsriʔat kat'ənnas̄ fətənwun sattalfi atk'ərimm
 bəsriʔat kə-at'ənnas̄
 properly if-study_{PF}-2sg.f.S
 [fətəna-u-n si-al-ti-alf-i al-ti-k'ər-i-mm]
 exam-Def-Acc Comp-Neg-2S-pass_{Impf}-sg.f Neg-2S-remain_{Impf}-sg.f-Comp
 Lit. 'If you studied properly, you will not remain without passing the exam'
 'If you study properly, you will not remain without passing the exam'

The above conditional constructions are different in their interpretation. The main source of difference is the composition of the modals in their respective consequent clauses. For instance, the degree of certainty encoded by (39b, c and d) is not as strong as that of (39a).

The consequent clauses in (39b) and (39c) are about the *probability* and *possibility* of passing the exam, respectively. Similar to that of (39b), (39d) expresses the *probability* of passing the exam but with a higher degree. In these constructions, the speaker is signaling *degrees of knowledge* about the state of affair of passing an exam, in one way or the other. This sort of modality is called *epistemic* modality (Saeed 2003: 135-6) and contrasts with another type of modality, called *deontic*, which encodes *obligation* and *permission* (Ibid, 136-7). Amharic consequent clauses can also be composed of such modals.

⁴³ Note that /l/ changes to [y] because of the high front vowel /i/ following it.

40. a. at'niččalləhu kalk fətənwun maləf alləbbih

at'ničč⁴⁴-e-allə-hu kə-al-k

study_{cmpl}-1sg.Gen-Aux-1sg.S if-say_{PF}-2sg.m.S

[fətəna-u-n mə-aləf allə-bb⁴⁵-h]

exam-Def-Acc Infv-pass have_{PF}-Oblig-2sg.m.S

Lit. 'If you said 'I have studied', you have to (must) pass the exam'

'If you say you have studied, you have to (must) pass the exam'

b. at'niččalləhu kalk fətənwun maləf yinoribbihall

at'ničč-e-allə-hu kə-al-k

study_{cmpl}-1sg.Gen-Aux-1sg.S if-say_{PF}-2sg.m.S

[fətəna-u-n mə-aləf yi-nor-bb-h-all]

exam-Def-Acc Infv-pass 3sg.m.S-have_{Impf}-Oblig-Aux

Lit. 'If you said 'I have studied', you have to (should) pass the exam'

'If you say you have studied, you have to (should) pass the exam'

⁴⁴ Note that [čč] resulted from the palatalizing (+geminating) effect of the front high vowel /e/ on /t/ in /at'nit-e/.

⁴⁵ The affix /-bb-/, in cases like this one, seems to serve as an indicator of obligation. It takes the position before the subject marker so that it seems to encode "even if it (the activity to be accomplished) is against your will". It has to be distinguished from the *instrumental (dative)* marker, as is the case in (i) below, and the *malefactive* marker, as is in the case of (ii). Note that in these cases, /-bb-/ takes the position after the subject markers.

i. yohannis bərsasu dəbdabbe s'afəbbət (Girma 2006: 255)

yohannis bə-rsas-u dəbdabbe s'af-ə-**bb**-ət

john with-pencil-Def letter write_{PF}-3sg.m.S-3sg.m.O[bb-AgrPP]

'John wrote a letter with the pencil'

ii. wəndimmiwan gəddəlubbət

wəndimm-wa-n gəddəl-u-**bb**-at

brother-her-Acc kill_{PF}-3pl.S-Mal-3sg.f.O

'They killed her brother (to her disadvantage)'

- c. at'niččalləhu kalk məč'awət tičlalləh
 at'ničč-e-allə-hu kə-al-k
 study_{cmpl}-1sg.Gen-Aux-1sg.S if-say_{pf}-2sg.m.S
 [mə-č'awət ti-čil-allə-h]
 Infv-play 2sg.m.S-can-Aux-2sg.m.S
 Lit. 'If you said 'I have studied', you are allowed to play'
 'If you say you have studied, you can play'

The consequent clauses of (40a) and (40b) express a *deontic* modality of obligation while that of (40c) expresses permission. The intensity of the obligation in (40a) appears greater than that of (40b). This variation in intensity is due to the difference in the aspectual form of the respective modal auxiliaries. The modal auxiliary in (40a) [allə] is in the perfective form, while the one in (40b) [nor-] is in the imperfective.

Moreover, the consequent clause can be in any sentential mood. As the following examples show, the shape of the consequent clause is in the *declarative*, *interrogative*, *negative* and *imperative* moods in (41a), (41b), (41c) and (41d), respectively.

41. a. almazn kagəbbahuwat dəstəñña ?ihonalləhu
 almaz-n kə-agəbba-hu-at [dəstəñña ?i-hon-allə-hu]
 Almaz-Acc if-marry_{pf}-1sg.S-3sg.f.O happy 1sg.S-become_{impf}-Aux-1sg.S
 Lit. 'If I married Almaz, I will be happy'
 'If I marry Almaz, I will be happy'

- b. fətənwun kalləfku mīn tiğəzalliññalləh?
 fətəna-u-n kə-alləf-ku [mīn ti-gəza-ll-iññ-allə-h]
 exam-Def-Acc if-pass_{pf}-1sg.S what 2sg.m.S-buy_{impf}-Ben-1sg.O-Aux-2sg.m.S
 Lit. 'What will you buy me if I passed the exam?'
 'What will you buy me if I pass the exam?'

c. nəgə kəzənnəbə kəbet alwət'amm

nəgə kə-zənnəb-ə [kə-bet al-Ø-wət'a-mm]

tomorrow if-rain_{pf}-3sg.m.S of-home Neg-1sg.S-get out_{Impf}-Comp

Lit. 'If it rained tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

'If it rained tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

d. wədə gəbəya təhed indəhon abrən ?inhid

wədə gəbəya ti-hed ində-hon [abrən ?in-hid]

to market 2sg.m.S-go_{Impf} if-happen_{pf} together 1pl.S-go_{Jus}

Lit. 'If it happened that you go to market, let us go together'

'If you are going to market, let us go together'

So far I have shown temporal, aspectual and modal aspects of consequent clauses. In what follows I briefly show its agreement features in relation to antecedent clauses focusing on subject markers.

Agreement (of subjects) in consequent clauses is of two types. The first type is where there is agreement between its subject and that of the antecedent clause, as in the examples below.

42. a.almaz wədə gəbəya kəhedəčč ləjjoččwa libs tiğəzallaččəwalləčč

[[almaz wədə gəbəya kə-hed-əčč]

Almaz to market if-go_{pf}-3sg.f.S

[lə-lj-əčč-wa libs ti-ğəza-llaččəw-all-əčč]]

to-child-pl-her cloth 3sg.f.S-buy_{Impf}-3pl.O.Ben-Aux-3sg.f.S

Lit. 'If Almaz went to market, she will buy cloth to her children'

'If Almaz goes to market, she will buy cloth to her children'

b. bizu gənzəb bagəññ məkina ʔigəza nəbbər

[[bizu gənzəb bi-Ø-agəññ] [məkina ʔi-gəza nəbbər]]

lots of money if-1sg.S-get_{Impf} car 1sg.S-buy_{Impf} Aux_{Pst}

Lit. 'If I get a lot of money, I will buy a car'

'If I got a lot of money, I would buy a car'

In (42a-b), the subject agreement markers in the consequent clauses match with those in their respective antecedent clauses. *-əčč* '3sg.f.S' and *tʃ-/əčč* '3sg.f.S' in the antecedent and consequent clauses of (42a) and *Ø* '1sg.S' and *ʔi* '1sg.S' in the antecedent and consequent clauses of (42b) refer to Almaz and to a thematic pro, respectively.

The second type is where there is no match between the subject of the consequent clause and that of the antecedent, as the examples in (43a-b) show.

43. a. bəmaʔrəg kətəmərrəkk mulu libs ʔigəzallihalləhu

[[bə-maʔrəg kə-tə-mərrək'-h]

with-distinction if-Ps-graduate_{PF}-2sg.m.S

[mulu libs ʔi-gəza-llih-allə-hu]]

full cloth 1sg.S-buy_{Impf}-2sg.m.O.Ben-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If you are graduated with distinction, I will buy a suit to you'

'If you graduate with distinction, I will buy you a suit'

b. haymanothin bitk'əyyir wəlaǰoččih yirəgmuhall

[[haymanot-h-n bi-ti-k'əyyir]

religion-your-Acc if-2sg.m.S-change_{Impf}

[wəlaǰ-očč-h yi-rəgm-u-h-all]]

parent-pl-your 3.S-curse_{Impf}-pl-Aux

Lit. 'If you change your religion, your parents will curse you'

'If you changed your religion, your parents will curse you'

In (43a-b), the subjects of the consequent clauses do not match with that of their respective antecedent clauses. The subject of the consequent clause in (43a) is a first person singular *pro* but the antecedent's subject is a second person singular *pro*. Similarly, the subject of the consequent clause in (43b) is *wəlaʝoččih* 'your parents' but the antecedent's subject is a second person singular *pro*.

These agreement-based distinctions may have implications to the syntactic derivations of conditional constructions. I will not go into this topic here as it is beyond the scope of the study.

In this sub-section, I have dealt with consequent clauses of Amharic conditionals. It shows the interactions of tense, aspect and modality. In the next chapter, these interactions will be revisited.

Chapter Four

Classification of Amharic Conditionals

This chapter presents the typology of Amharic conditionals on the basis of the semantic-based classification of Thompson et al. (2007) (cf. 2.3.1). In addition to the real versus unreal distinction, an attempt is made to describe concessive and exceptive conditional types. The organization of the chapter is as follows. (4.1) deals with real conditionals. (4.2) analyzes unreal conditionals. (4.3) and (4.4) investigate on concessive and exceptive conditionals, respectively.

4.1. Real Conditionals

These conditional constructions refer to real situations. They state that the proposition of the consequent clause results if the proposition of the antecedent clause holds. In the philosophical literature, they (being named as *indicative conditionals*) are assumed to be truth-functional operators. That is, the truth value of the conditional construction is determined by the truth values of its antecedent and consequent clauses (Huitink 2008: 58).⁴⁶

Based on their semantics, Thompson et al. (2007) classify reality conditionals into three sub-types: *present*, *habitual (generic)* and *past*. In what follows I consider of these types.

⁴⁶ On the assumption that indicative conditionals are truth-functional, their semantics corresponds to the truth function that is known as *material implication* (Huitink 2008: 58). However, some *paradoxes of material implication* led to the doubt that indicative conditionals are truth-functional operators. Later, the paradoxes of material implication were avoided by *strict implication*: an approach introducing a *modal* interpretation of indicative conditionals. That is, indicative conditionals state that every accessible world which makes the antecedent true also makes the consequent true (Huitink 2008: 61). But, strict implication was not clear from related paradoxes. Finally, Huitink (2008: 63) unified the two approaches to deal with the semantics of indicative conditionals. He remarks that the indicative conditionals which we use are usually relative to sets of established facts.

Present real conditionals are distinguished from the other two by the coincidence of the “assertion time” and the “utterance time” (to use Mezhevich’s (2008) terms).⁴⁷ In fact, it is in the present tense that the two times, i.e. T-Ut and T-Ast, coincide.

1. a. *iyyəzənnəbə kəhonə məngədu yič’ək’əyyall*

[[*iyyə-zənnəb-ə kə-hon-ə*] [məngəd-u yi-č’ək’əyy-all]]

Prog-rain-3sg.m.S if-happen_{pf}-3sg.m.S road-Def 3sg.m.S-get wet_{Impf}-Aux

‘If it is raining, the road will get wet’

b. *gənzəben ahun kalsət’təhəññ kəzzih alnik’əsak’k’əsimm*

[[*gənzəb-e-n ahun kə-al-sət’tə-h-əññ*]

money-my-Acc now if-Neg-give_{pf}-2sg.m.S-1sg.O

[*kə-izzih al-Ø-nik’əsak’k’əs-mm*]]

from-here Neg-1sg.S-move_{Impf}-Comp

‘If you do not give me my money now, I will not move from here’

c. *wədə gəbəya iyyəhedk indəhu abrən ?inhid*

[[*wədə gəbəya iyyə-hed-k ində-hu*] [*abrən ?in-hid*]]

to market Prog-go-2sg.m.S if-happen_{pf} together 1pl.S-go_{Jus}

‘If you are going to (the) market, let’s go together’

(1a), (1b) and (1c) are present real conditional constructions. The truth of the consequent propositions holds in the immediate realization of the antecedent propositions. The temporal structure of the constituent clauses is non-past tense. That is, the antecedent clauses of (1a) and (1c) contain the progressive marker *iyyə-* and that of (1b) consists of an adverb of present time [*ahun*] ‘now’. In addition, their

⁴⁷ Klein (1995) in Mezhevich (2008: 327) proposes that Tense orders the utterance time T-Ut (the time when the utterance is made) and the assertion time T-Ast (the time about which the assertion is made). The relation between T-Ut and T-Ast is characterized as coincidence or non-coincidence (Ibid).

consequent clauses are structured in such a way that they can potentially receive a present tense reading.⁴⁸

Habitual (generic) real conditionals are morphologically similar to present reallis except that they describe actions or situations which occur more than once. That is, the action or situation they describe is essentially a characteristic of an extended period of time (de Haan 2006: 11). For instance in the following data, (2a) is the habitual counterpart of (1a).

2. a. kəzənnəbə məngədu yič'ək'əyyall

[[kə-zənnəb-ə] [məngəd-u yi-č'ək'əyy-all]]

if-rain_{PF}-3sg.m.S road-Def 3sg.m.S-get wet_{Impf}-Aux

'If it rains, the road gets wet'

b. k'iben bəsat kamok'kəw yik'əlt'all

[[k'ibe-n bə-ʔisat kə-a-mok'-k-əw] [yi-k'əlt'-all]]

butter-Acc with-fire if-Caus-boil_{PF}-2sg.m.S-3sg.m.O 3sg.m.S-melt_{Impf}-Aux

'If you boil butter with fire, it melts'

c. firenun kərəggət'kəw məkinaw zigg yilall

[[firen-u-n kə-rəggət'-k-əw]

brake-Def-Acc if-step on_{PF}-2sg.m.S-3sg.m.O

[məkina-u zigg yi-l-all]]

car-Def slow 3sg.m.S-become_{Impf}-Aux

'If you step on the brake, the car slows down'

The conditional constructions in (2a, b and c) are structurally similar to those in (1a, b and c). However, they are different in the sense that the actions they describe take place for an extended period of time and their habituality (genericity) is encoded by

⁴⁸ The morphological marking of Amharic tense system is distinguished as past versus non-past. Taking the same morphological shape, the non-past may render *simple present*, *habitual present* and *future tense* readings (Taddese 1972: 236; Baye 2008: 144).

the non-past tense morphology in the corresponding consequent clauses (cf. footnote 48). Unlike the cases of the present real conditionals, the antecedent clauses of habitual real conditionals do not contain any present tense marker. This fact goes in agreement with de Haan's (2006: 4) remark that the habitual is not strictly temporal in nature.

kə- and *ində-* are the conditional markers that occur in present and habitual real conditionals. But the latter is restricted to only those cases where the modal auxiliary [hon-] 'happen/become' occurs.

Past real conditionals, as their name suggests, express actions or events in the past. They are characterized by the past tense morphology in their constituent clauses so that the utterance time and the assertion time do not coincide.

3. a. zənbo kənəbbər(ə) mængədu č'ək'yito^wall

[[zənb-o kə-nəbbər-(ə)] [mængəd-u č'ək'yit-o-all]]

rain_{cmpl}-3sg.m.S if-Aux_{Pst}-3sg.m.S road-Def get wet_{cmpl}-3sg.m.S-Aux

'If it did rain, the road has (already) gotten wet'

b. addaraš u wist' kənəbbərə hukətun ayto^wall

[[addaraš-u wist' kə-nəbbər-ə] [hukət-u-n ayt-o-all]]

auditorium-Def in if-Aux_{Pst}-3sg.m.S chaos-Def-Acc see_{cmpl}-3sg.m.S-Aux

'If he was in the auditorium, he has seen the chaos'

c. anbəssawun kasa kalgəddələw lela səw gədlotall

[[anbəssa-u-n kasa kə-al-gəddəl-ə-w]

lion-Def-Acc kasa if-Neg-kill_{pf}-3sg.m.S-3sg.m.O

[lela səw gədl-o-t-all]]

another person kill_{cmpl}-3sg.m.S-3sg.m.O-Aux

'If Kasa did not kill the lion, someone else did'

(3a), (3b) and (3c) are past real conditionals in that they make assertions about past events. That is, the consequences are true for conditions that hold in the past. Note that in such conditionals, there is an already established presupposition. For instance, in (3c) the fact that “a lion is killed by Kasa (or someone else)” is already established. The conditional marker in past real conditionals is always *kə-*.

In general, real conditionals are about established facts in the real world. As we saw in (1), (2) and (3), Amharic real conditionals are predominantly marked by *kə-* (and sometimes by *ində-*). In the section that follows, I present the facts of unreal conditionals which show more complicated grammatical and semantic properties.

4.2. Unreal Conditionals

One basic property of unreal conditionals, which are also called *subjunctive conditionals*⁴⁹ in the philosophical literature, is their dissociation from real world. They are divided into two, *imaginative* and *predictive*. The characteristic feature of imaginative conditionals is their use of past morphology in both the antecedent and consequent clauses (Ippolito 2003: 145). The predicative conditionals, on the other hand, are characterized by their use of future tense in their consequent clauses.

4.2.1. Imaginative Conditionals

Imaginative conditionals are further classified into *hypotheticals* and *counterfactuals*. The Amharic hypotheticals and counterfactuals can be taken as contrastive structures as they are mostly similar except that counterfactuals contain a marker for counterfactuality in their antecedent clauses. Examples (4a) and (4b) below differ only in that the antecedent clause of the latter contains the counterfactuality auxiliary [nor-o]. This verb leads to semantic differences between the two types of conditional constructions. Though both are about imaginative conditions, the one in (4a) is

⁴⁹ Subjunctive conditionals are further classified into past and future subjunctives on the basis of their choice of tense morphology. Past subjunctives describe hypothetical situations that are unlikely to arise in the actual world; whereas the future subjunctives describe situations that can still be realized (Mezhevich 2008: 327). These two classes correspond to *counterfactual* and *predictive* conditionals of the semantic-based distinction in the linguistic literature.

uttered before the actual situation (before the announcement of the election result) while the one in (4b) is uttered after it.

4. a. mirč'awun tək'awamiwočč biyaššənnifū dəss yiləññ nəbbər

[[mirč'a-u-n tək'awami-očč bi-yi-aššənnif-u]

election-Def-Acc opponent-pl if-3.S-win_{Impf}-pl

[dəss yi-l-əññ nəbbər]]

happy 3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-1sg.O Aux_{Pst}

'I would be happy if the opponent (parties) won the election'

b. mirč'awun tək'awamiwočč biyaššənnifū noro dəss yiləññ nəbbər

[[mirč'a-u-n tək'awami-očč bi-yi-aššənnif-u nor-o]

election-Def-Acc opposition-pl if-3.S-win_{Impf}-pl Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

[dəss yi-l-əññ nəbbər]]

happy 3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-1sg.O Aux_{Pst}

'I would have been happy if the opposition (parties) had won the election'

The unreality of the two conditional constructions is not identical. They differ in the way they dissociate from the real world; hypotheticality is dissociation from the present as its reference is the future; whereas counterfactuality is dissociation from what had actually happened in the past, which is why it is called *contrary-to-fact*. The following two sub-sections present an independent treatment of each type.

4.2.1.1. Hypothetical Conditionals

Amharic hypothetical conditionals are characterized by imperfective morphology in the antecedent clause and past tense morphology in the consequent clause, on one hand, and by the absence of the counterfactuality auxiliary [nor-o] on the other. Hypothetical conditionals are uttered before the occurrence of the actual state of affair. But they do not make any prediction or evaluation of what is going to happen. Rather they state some sort of wish.

5. a. budnaččin biyaššənnif dəss yiləññ nəbbər

[[budn-aččin bi-yi-aššənnif] [dəss yi-l-əññ nəbbər]]

team-our if-3sg.m.S-win_{Impf} happy 3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-1sg.O Aux_{Pst}

'If our team won, I would be happy'

b. nəgə bizənb wədə timhirt bet alhedimm nəbbər

[[nəgə bi-yi-zənb] [wədə timhirt bet al-Ø-hed-mm nəbbər]]

tomorrow if-3sgmS-rain_{Impf} to school Neg-1sgS-go_{Impf}-Comp Aux_{Pst}

'If it rained tomorrow, I would not go to school'

The structures in (5) are hypothetical conditionals. Both (a) and (b) are about unreal situations. The states of affairs they express are expected (wished) to occur in the future. But the temporal structuring of their corresponding consequent clauses show past states of affairs. So there is a mismatch between the actual and the structural situations. The actual situation is future while the structural situation is past.

The role of the past tense in the consequent clauses of hypothetical conditionals is not to show tense; it serves the modal function of indicating *irrealis*.⁵⁰ It is for this reason that it is called "fake" past in the literature (cf. 3.3.3).

It is said earlier that [nor-o] does not appear in hypothetical conditionals. But its absence does not guarantee a hypothetical reading. It is only in structures like (5), which refer to future states of affairs in which it yields hypothetical readings. Similar structures without [nor-o] but with past reference have counterfactual readings. The following are illustrations for this.

⁵⁰ Boland (2006: 155) remarks for cases of English like (i) and (ii) below (156), that *irrealis* is indicated by past-tense morphology and secondary (or past) modal in the antecedent and consequent clauses, respectively.

- i. If I acted like that in front of him, that would be inexcusable.
- ii. If he came to live with us, then she would have to give up work.

6. a. tinant mata budnaččin biyaššännif dæss yiləññ nəbbər

[[tinant mata budn-aččin bi-yi-aššännif]

yesterday night team-1pl.Gen if-3sg.m.S-win_{Impf}

[dæss yi-l-əññ nəbbər]]

happy 3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-1sg.O Aux_{Pst}

'If our team had won last night, I would have been happy'

b. tinant bizənb wədə timhirt bet alhedimm nəbbər

[[tinant bi-yi-zənb] [wədə timhirt bet al-Ø-hed-mm nəbbər]]

yesterday if-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf} to school Neg-1sg.S-go-Comp Aux_{Pst}

'If it had rained yesterday, I would not have gone to school'

(5a and b) and (6a and b) appear to be structurally similar except that the antecedents of the latter refer to past situations. As a result, (6a) and (6b) yield counterfactual readings even if they do not show the counterfactuality auxiliary [nor-o] in their antecedent clauses.

Hypothetical conditionals can also be contrasted with predictive conditionals. Predictives are about the future and they show future morphology in their consequent clauses. (7a) and (7b) can be taken as the predictive counterparts of the hypotheticals in (5a) and (5b), respectively.

7. a. budnaččin biyaššännif dæss yiləññall

[[budn-aččin bi-yi-aššännif] [dæss yi-l-əññ-all]]

team-1pl.Gen if-3sg.m.S-win_{Impf} happy 3.S-be_{Impf}-1sg.O-Aux

'If our team wins, I will be happy'

b. nəgə bizənb wədə timhirt bet alhedimm

[[nəgə bi-yi-zənb] [wədə timhirt bet al-Ø-hed-mm]]

tomorrow if-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf} to school Neg-1sg.S-go_{Impf}-Comp

'If it rains tomorrow, I will not go to school'

The conditionality marker in the hypothetical conditionals is *bi-*, *kə-* or *ində-* cannot occur in such conditionals. For instance, (8a) and (8b) are ruled out because *bi-* is replaced by *kə-* or *ində-*.

8. a. *budnaččīn kə/īndīyāššānnīf dāss yīlāññ nābbār

[[budn-aččīn kə-/īndə-yī-aššānnīf] [dāss yī-l-āññ nābbār]]

team-our if-3sg.m.S-win_{Impf} happy 3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-1sg.O Aux_{Pst}

b. *nəgə kə/īndīzənb wədə tīmhirt bet alhedīmm nābbār

[[nəgə kə-/īndə-yī-zənb] [wədə tīmhirt bet al-Ø-hed-mm nābbār]]

tomorrow if-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf} to school Neg-1sg.S-go_{Impf}-Comp Aux_{Pst}

Moreover, the antecedent clauses of hypothetical conditionals cannot be in the perfective aspect. (9a) and (9b) are ungrammatical because of the perfective morphology in the corresponding antecedent clauses.

9. a. *budnaččīn kaššānnəfə dāss yīlāññ nābbār

[[budn-aččīn kə-aššānnəf-ə] [dāss yī-l-āññ nābbār]]

team-our if-win_{Pf}-3sg.m.S happy 3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-1sg.O Aux_{Pst}

b. *nəgə kəzənnəbə wədə tīmhirt bet alhedīmm nābbār]]

[[nəgə kə-zənnəb-ə] [wədə tīmhirt bet al-Ø-hed-mm nābbār]]

tomorrow if-rain_{Pf}-3sg.m.S to school Neg-1sg.S-go-Comp Aux_{Pst}

There are uniquely reduced forms of hypothetical conditional constructions. They are constructed from two equivalent clauses wherein the verbs are in the perfective aspect. In addition, both clauses contain the particle [bə-] attached to the subordinate and main clause verbs.

10. a. askərenun bamət't'ut bək'əbbərnəw

[[askəren-u-n bə-amət't'-u-t] [bə-k'əbbər-n-əw]]

body-Def-Acc Comp-bring_{pf}-3pl.S-3sg.m.O Comp-bury_{pf}-1sg.S-3sg.m.O

'If they brought the body, we would bury it'

b. budnaččin baššənnəfə dəss baləññ

[[budn-aččin bə-aššənnəf-ə] [dəss bə-al-ə-ññ]]

team-1pl.Gen Comp-win_{pf}-3sg.m.S happy Comp-become_{pf}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O

'If our team won, I would become happy'

Such hypothetical constructions differ from similar but counterfactual constructions in that the consequent clauses of the latter contain the past auxiliary *nəbbər* (cf. 4.2.1.2).

In general, Amharic hypothetical conditionals are constructed from antecedent clauses that, mostly, contain imperfective morphology and consequent clauses that consist of past tense morphology. The marker of conditionality in such constructions is always *bi-*.

4.2.1.2. Counterfactual Conditionals

The typical characteristic of Amharic counterfactuals is the presence of the counterfactuality auxiliary, [nor-o], in the antecedent clause. In addition, their consequent clauses also show past-tense morphology/auxiliary.

11. a. budnaččin biyaššənnif noro dəss yiləññ nəbbər

[[budn-aččin bi-yi-aššənnif nor-o]

team-1pl.Gen if-3sg.m.S-win_{Impf} Aux_{Cf}-3sg.m.Gen

[dəss yi-l-əññ nəbbər]]

happy 3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-1sg.O Aux_{Pst}

'If our team had won, I would have been happy'

b. tinant bizənb noro wədə timhirt bet alhedimm nəbbər

[[tinant bi-yi-zənb nor-o]

yesterday if-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

[wədə timhirt bet al-Ø-hed-mm nəbbər]]

to school Neg-1sg.S-go_{Impf}-Comp Aux_{Pst}

'If it had rained yesterday, I would not have gone to school'

(11a) and (11b) are counterfactual conditionals as they express contrary-to-fact states of affairs. Both constituent clauses of counterfactuals encode meanings that are contrary to what has actually happened. For instance, the antecedent and consequent clauses of (11a) convey the meanings "our team has lost" and "I was disappointed", respectively.

However, there are counterfactual constructions which optionally take [nor-o] (cf. the cases of (6a and b)). The antecedent clauses of such constructions contain temporal adverbials, like [tinant] 'yesterday' in (6a) and [tinant mata] 'last night' in (6b), which refer to the past. There are also other counterfactual constructions such as (12a) and (12b), which may not take [nor-o]. In such constructions the verbs in the antecedent clauses are in the *completive*⁵¹ aspectual form unlike in (6) and (11).

12. a. kiflun as'ıdtaw bihon (noro) k'ošaša ayıggəññimm nəbbər

[[kifl-u-n a-s'ıdt-a-w bi-yi-hon (nor-o)]

house-Def-Acc Caus-clean_{compl}-3sg.f.S-3sg.m.O if-3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

[k'ošaša al-yi-g-gəññ-mm nəbbər]]

dirt Neg-3sg.m.S-Ps-find-Comp Aux_{Pst}

'If she had cleaned the room, dirt would not have been found'

⁵¹ Baye (2006: 197) recognizes the *completive aspect* as the only non-canonical aspectual form derived from the *perfective*.

b. budnaččin aššənnifo bihon (nor-o) dəss yiləññ nəbbər

[[budn-aččin aššənnif-o bi-yi-hon (nor-o)]

team-1pl.Gen win_{cmpl}-3sg.m.S if-3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf} Aux_{CF}-3sg.m.Gen

[dəss yi-l-əññ nəbbər]]

happy 3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-1sg.O Aux_{Pst}

'If our team had won, I would have been happy'

The cases of (6), (11) and (12) suggest that the optionality of [nor-o] is determined by the presence or absence of past-tense morphology in the corresponding antecedent clause. In cases like (5a) wherein the antecedent clause is not marked for past-tense, [nor-o] is needed for counterfactual interpretation.⁵²

There are also other, more unique, counterfactual constructions which do not often show the conditional marker *bi-* and the counterfactuality auxiliary *noro* in their antecedent clauses. Such structures are reduced ones. The main verbs in both of the constituent clauses are in the perfective aspect. The particle [bə-] is affixed to the main verbs of both clauses.

13. a. sira bənorəññ indih baltəčəggərku nəbbər

[[sira bə-nor-ə-ññ]

job Comp-exist_{PF}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O

[ində-yih bə-al-tə-čəggər-ku nəbbər]]

like-this Comp-Neg-Ps-bother_{PF}-1sg.S Aux_{Pst}

'If I had had a job, I would not have been bothered like this'

⁵² Both Hartmann (1980: 442-443) and Leslau (1995: 812-813) are not clear enough in their treatment of [noro]. They took it simply as an element that occurs optionally in the antecedent clauses of *unreal* (in Hartmann's classification) and *hypothetical* (in the classifications of both scholars) conditionals. However, its semantic function as well as optionality is systematic.

b. balyazhut bəhedə nəbbər (Hartmann 1980: 443)

[[bə-al-yaz-hu-t] [bə-hed-ə nəbbər]]

Comp-Neg-hold_{pf}-1sg.S-3sg.m.O Comp-go_{pf}-3sg.m.S Aux_{pst}

'If I had not held him, he would have gone'

As is noted in the relevant literature, the presence of past-tense morphology in both the antecedent and consequent clauses is an important feature of counterfactual conditionals. In fact, this seems to be the case for Amharic counterfactuals since they use the past tense auxiliary *nəbbər* in the consequent clause. Past-tense morphology of the antecedent clauses is indicated by either [nor-o] (as in (11)) or by the perfective aspect (as in (12) and (13)).

In general, the antecedent clauses of both hypothetical and counterfactual conditionals are imaginary. Both of them contain the conditional marker *bi-*. However, they differ in degree of counterfactuality. Since the antecedent clauses of counterfactuals are assumed to be false, their degree of likelihood is low. The antecedent clauses of hypothetical conditionals, on the other hand, are not assumed to be false. Even if their eventual realization may not seem to hold, they have some degree of likelihood.

4.2.2. Predictive Conditionals

Predictive conditionals are characterized by the tense of their consequent clauses. The tense is future. The antecedent clauses, on the other hand, may be in the perfective or the imperfective aspect.

14. a. lotəriw kədərrəsəññ məkina ʔigəzalləhu

[[lotəri-u **kə-dərrəs-ə-ññ**] [məkina ʔi-gəza-llə-hu]]

lottery-Def if-win_{pf}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O car 1sg.S-buy_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If I won the lottery, I will buy a car'

'If I win the lottery, I will buy a car'

b. nəgə kəzənnəbə kəbet alwət'amm

[[nəgə **kə-zənnəb-ə**] [kə-bet al-Ø-wət'a-mm]]

tomorrow if-rain_{Pf}-3sg.m.S of-home Neg-1sg.S-get out_{Impf}-Comp

Lit. 'If it rained tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

'If it rains tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

15. a. lotəriw bidərsəññ məkina ʔigəzalləhu

[[lotəri-u **bi-yi-dərs-əññ**] [məkina ʔi-gəza-llə-hu]]

lottery-Def if-3sg.m.S-win_{Impf}-1sg.O car 1sg.S-buy_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If I win the lottery, I will buy a car'

'If I win the lottery, I will buy a car'

b. nəgə bizənb kəbet alwət'amm

[[nəgə **bi-yi-zənb**] [kə-bet al-Ø-wət'a-mm]]

tomorrow if-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf} of-home Neg-1sg.S-get out_{Impf}-Comp

Lit. 'If it rains tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

'If it rains tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

16.⁵³ a. lotəriw yəmmidərsəññ kə/indəhonə məkina ʔigəzalləhu

[[lotəri-u yə-ımm-yi-dərs-əññ **kə-/ində-hon-ə**]

lottery-Def Rel-Contj-3sg.m.S-win_{Impf}-1sg.O if-happen_{Pf}-3sg.m.S

[məkina ʔi-gəza-llə-hu]]

car 1sg.S-buy_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If it happened that I am winning the lottery, I will be a car'

'If I am winning the lottery, I will buy a car'

⁵³ Note that, in cases like (16a and b), *ində-* can be affixed to the reduced forms of *-hon-* and *-hu-*. *kə-* cannot occur with these reduced forms (cf. 3.3.1).

b. nəgə yəmmizənb kə/indəhonə kəbet alwət'amm

[[nəgə yə-imm-yi-zənb **kə-/ində-hon-ə**]

tomorrow Rel-Contj-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf} if-happen_{Pf}-3sg.m.S

[kə-bet al-Ø-wət'a-mm]]

of-home Neg-1sg.S-get out_{Impf}-Comp

Lit. 'If it happened that it is raining tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

'If it is raining tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

17. a. lotəriw yəmmidərsəññ bihon məkina ʔigəzalləhu

[[lotəri-u yə-imm-yi-dərs-əññ **bi-yi-hon**]

lottery-Def Rel-Contj-3sg.m.S-win_{Impf}-1sg.O if-3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf}

[məkina ʔi-gəz-allə-hu]]

car 1sg.S-buy_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

Lit. 'If it happens that I am winning the lottery, I will buy a car'

'If I am winning the lottery, I will buy a car'

b. nəgə yəmmizənb bihon kəbet alwət'amm

[[nəgə yə-imm-yi-zənb **bi-yi-hon**]

tomorrow Rel-Contj-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf} if-3sg.m.S-happen_{Impf}

[kə-bet al-Ø-wət'a-mm]]

of-home Neg-1sg.S-get out_{Impf}-Comp

Lit. 'If it happens that it is raining tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

'If it is raining tomorrow, I will not get out of home'

All these structures are predictive conditionals. The main verbs of the antecedent clauses in (14a and b) and (15a and b) on the one hand, and the modal auxiliary in (16a and b) and (17a and b) on the other, are in the perfective and imperfective aspectual forms, respectively. In cases where the main verb and the modal auxiliary are in the perfective aspect, the markers of conditionality are *kə-* and *kə-/ində-*,

respectively. And, *bi-* is the marker of conditionality in cases where the main verb and the auxiliary are in the imperfective aspect.

The irrealis reading of predictive conditionals is a result of the future-tense morphology in the consequent clause. De Haan (2006: 17) remarks that “future is a prototypical irrealis category because it refers to events that have not yet happened and are therefore unreal”.

The future tense marking in Amharic is also shared by the present tense and the present habitual. Because of this, the predictive conditionals and the present and habitual real conditionals are not easily distinguished from each other. This is because Amharic uses the same verb form for the present, the present habitual, the present progressive and the future (cf. footnote 48).

Unlike imaginatives that include hypotheticals and counterfactuals, predictive conditionals describe states of affairs that are likely to occur. The states of affairs described in (14a) and (14b) have the likelihood of occurring if the propositions in their antecedent clauses hold.

The fact that consequent clauses of predictive conditionals are in the future tense means that they require modal auxiliaries and that this leads to various levels of certainty as shown in (40) and (41), in chapter three. For example, the consequent clause in (14a) above takes various modal auxiliaries and encodes different modal readings, as shown in (18a-d).

18. a. lotəriw kədərrəsəññ məkina ?igəza yihonall

[[lotəri-u kə-dərrəs-ə-ññ] [məkina ?i-gəza **yi-hon-all**]]

lottery-Def if-win_{pf}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O car 1sg.S-buy_{Impf} 3S-Aux_{Mod}-Aux

‘If I win the lottery, I may buy a car’

b. lotəriw kədərrəsəññ məkina liğəza ʔičlalləhu

[[lotəri-u kə-dərrəs-ə-ññ]

lottery-Def if-win_{PF}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O

[məkina li-Ø-gəza **ʔi-čil-all-hu**]

car Pros-1sg.S-buy_{Impf} 1sg.S-Aux_{Mod}-Aux-1sg.S

'If I win the lottery, I will be able to buy a car'

c. lotəriw kədərrəsəññ məkina liğəza ʔičl yihonall

[[lotəri-u kə-dərrəs-ə-ññ]

lottery-Def if-win_{PF}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O

[məkina li-Ø-gəza **ʔi-čil yi-hon-all**]

car Pros-1sg.S-buy_{Impf} 1sg.S-Aux_{Mod} 3S-Aux_{Mod}-Aux

'If I win the lottery, I may be able to buy a car'

d. lotəriw kədərrəsəññ məkina salgəza alk'ərimm

[[lotəri-u kə-dərrəs-ə-ññ]

lottery-Def if-win_{PF}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O

[məkina si-al-Ø-gəza **al-Ø-k'ər-mm**]

car Comp-Neg-1sg.S-buy_{Impf} Neg-1sg.S-Aux_{Mod}-Comp

'If I win the lottery, I will not remain without buying a car'

The above examples of predicative conditionals have consequent clauses with modal auxiliaries that denote various degrees of possibility or probability (of buying a car). The consequent clause in (18a) encodes a modal meaning of (weaker) probability; (18b) is one of possibility/capability; (18c) probable capability; and, (18d) (stronger) probability. These are instances of epistemic modality (cf. 3.3.3).

The future-oriented nature of consequent clauses also allows that they are stated with deontic modality.⁵⁴ For instance, the clauses in (19a) and (19b) use deontic modalities of obligation and volition, respectively.

19. a. lotəriw kədərrəsəññ məkina mægzat alləbbiññ

[[lotəri-u kə-dərrəs-ə-ññ] [məkina mægzat allə-bb-ññ⁵⁵]]

lottery-Def if-win_{PF}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O car to buy Aux_{Mod}-Oblg-1sg.O

'If I win the lottery, I have to/ must buy a car'

b. lotəriw kədərrəsəññ məkina mægzat ?ifəlligalləhu

[[lotəri-u kə-dərrəs-ə-ññ]

lottery-Def if-win_{PF}-3sg.m.S-1sg.O

[məkina mægzat ?i-fəllig-allə-hu]]

car to buy 1sg.S-need_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

'If I win the lottery, I need to buy a car'

In general, predictive conditionals are characterized mainly by future tense morphology in their consequent clauses. The events or activities they describe can be in epistemic or deontic modalities. Any of the three conditional markers, *kə-*, *bi-* or *ində-*, can occur in predictive conditionals depending on the aspectual type of the main verbs or auxiliaries of the antecedent clauses to which they are attached.

So far, the semantic-based classification of the Amharic conditionals has been considered in light of Thompson et al.'s (2007) typology. In what follows, I take a look at two other distinctions of conditional types.

⁵⁴ De Haan (2006: 26) notes on the connection between obligation/volition (deontic modalities) and the future tense in that "one can [oblige] someone to do something only in the future".

⁵⁵ [ññ] is an accusative case marker in main verbs but is a nominative one in auxiliaries (Baye 2006: 195) citing Fullas (1972) and Haile (1970)).

4.3. Concessive Conditionals

Amharic concessive conditionals are characterized by the presence, in them, of a focus suffix [-mm] and the adverb [ink^wa(n)] 'even' in their antecedent clauses.⁵⁶ The suffix [-mm] may be attached to a main verb or an auxiliary while [ink^wa(n)] takes the terminal position of the antecedent clause.

20. a. bizənbimm ink^wa ʔihedalləhu (Hartmann 1980: 445)

[[bi-yi-zənb-mm ink^wa] [ʔi-hed-allə-hu]]

if-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf}-Foc even 1sg.S-go_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

'Even if it rains, I will go'

b. fīrenun biṛəgt'əwimm ink^wa məkinaw zigg aylimm

[[fīren-u-n bi-ti-rəgt'-əw-mm ink^wa]

brake-Def-Acc if-2sg.m.S-step on_{Impf}-3sg.m.O-Foc even

[məkina-u zigg al-yi-l-mm]]

car-Def slow Neg-3sg.m.S-become_{Impf}-Comp

'Even if you step on the brake, the car will not slow down'

(20a) and (20b) are concessive conditionals. Their corresponding antecedent clauses consist of the focus suffix [-mm] and the adverb [ink^wa(n)] 'even'. Concessive conditionals are interpreted against an already established causal assumption or expectation (cf. 2.3.2). For instance, (20a) and (20b) are interpreted against the assumptions that "one is not expected to go in the rain" and "stepping on the brake of a car makes it to slow down", respectively.

The deletion of either [-mm] or [ink^wa(n)] 'even' from constructions like (20a and b) does not cause any semantic problem. But the simultaneous deletion of both turns the clauses into ordinary conditionals. This is illustrated by (21), (22) and (23).

⁵⁶ Daeho (2004: 311) states that *contrastive focus* in concessive constructions "describes a relation between two events highly incompatible in nature".

21. a. bizenb ink^{wa} ʔihedalləhu

[[bi-yi-zenb ink^{wa}] [ʔi-hed-allə-hu]]

if-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf} even 1sg.S-go_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

'Even if it rains, I will go'

b. firenun bitrəgt'əw ink^{wa} məkinaw zigg aylimm

[[firen-u-n bi-ti-rəgt'-əw ink^{wa}]

brake-Def-Acc if-2sg.m.S-step on_{Impf}-3sg.m.O even

[məkina-u zigg al-yi-l-mm]]

car-Def slow Neg-3sg.m.S-become_{Impf}-Comp

'Even if you step on the brake, the car does not slow down'

22. a. bizenbimm ʔihedalləhu

[[bi-yi-zenb-mm] [ʔi-hed-allə-hu]]

if-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf}-Foc 1sg.S-go_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

'Even if it rains, I will go'

b. firenun bitrəgt'əwimm məkinaw zigg aylimm

[[firen-u-n bi-ti-rəgt'-əw-mm]

brake-Def-Acc if-2sg.m.S-step on_{Impf}-3sg.m.O-Foc

[məkina-u zigg al-yi-l-mm]]

car-Def slow Neg-3sg.m.S-become_{Impf}-Comp

'Even if you step on the brake, the car will not slow down'

23.⁵⁷ a. bizənb ʔihedalləhu

[[bi-yi-zənb] [ʔi-hed-allə-hu]]

if-3sg.m.S-rain_{Impf} 1sg.S-go_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

'If it rains, I will go'

b. firenun bitrəgt'əw məkinaw zigg aylimm

[[firen-u-n bi-ti-rəgt'-əw]

brake-Def-Acc if-2sg.m.S-step on_{Impf}-3sg.m.O

[məkina-u zigg al-yi-l-mm]]

car-Def slow Neg-3sg.m.S-become_{Impf}-Comp

'If you step on the brake, the car will not slow down'

The focus marker [-mm] may also be suffixed to constituents of the antecedent clause other than the main verb or auxiliary. In (24a) and (24b), it is attached to the subject noun phrase and the indirect object (prepositional phrase), respectively.

24. a. innathimm bitmət'a ink^{wa}a attadnihimm

[[innat-h-mm bi-ti-mət'a ink^{wa}a]

mother-your-Foc if-2sg.m.S-come_{Impf} even

[al-ti-a-din-h-mm]]

Neg-3sg.f.S-Caus-save_{Impf}-2sg.m.O-Comp

'Even if your MOTHER comes, she will not save you'

⁵⁷ One may question the acceptability of (23a) and (23b). They resulted from the deletion of the concession elements [-mm] and [ink^{wa}a] in (20a, b). They seem fallacious when they are compared to (i) and (ii) below, from which the concessive conditionals in (20a, b) are derived.

i. kalzənnəbə ʔihedalləhu

[[kə-al-zənnəb-ə] [ʔi-hed-allə-hu]]

if-Neg-rain_{pf}-3sg.m.S 1sg.S-go_{Impf}-Aux-1sg.S

'If it does not rain, I will go'

ii. firenun kərəggət'kəw məkinaw zigg yilall

[[firen-u-n kə-rəggət'-k-əw] [məkina-u zigg yi-l-all]]

brake-Def-Acc if-step on_{pf}-2sg.m.S-3sg.m.O car-Def slow 3sg.m.S-become_{Impf}-Aux

'If you step on the brake, the car will slow down'

b. ləpolisimm bitnəgri ink^wa aytəwšimm

[[lə-polis-mm bi-ti-nəgr-i ink^wa]

to-police-Foc if-2sg.S-tell_{Impf}-f even

[al-yi-təww-š-mm]]

Neg-3sg.m.S-leave_{Impf}-2sg.f.O-Comp

'Even if you tell to the POLICE, he will not leave you alone'

Amharic allows making distinction between real and unreal concessive conditionals. For instance, (20a) and (20b) can be taken as predictive and real (habitual) concessive conditionals, respectively.

Concessive construction seems possible in the case of imaginative conditionals too. (25a), for example, is a hypothetical concessive conditional. But this utterance makes sense in a presumed undesirable condition which causes disappointment despite the fulfillment of a desired end. For instance, "if supporters are going to clash one another, I would not be happy even if our team won". (25b), on the other hand, can be assumed to be a concessive derivation of the ordinary counterfactual "if he had received medical aid, he wouldn't have died". In counterfactual concessive conditionals, [ink^wa(n)] 'even' seems to take the position preceding or following [nor-o].

25. a. budnaččin biyaššənnifimm ink^wa dəss ayləññimm nəbbər

[[budn-aččin bi-yi-aššənnif-mm ink^wa]

team-our if-3sg.m.S-win_{Impf}-Foc even

[dəss al-yi-l-əññ-mm nəbbər]]

happy Neg-3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-Comp Aux_{Pst}

'Even if our team won, I would not be happy'

b. yəhikkiminna irdata biyagəññimm ink^Wa noro yimot nəbbər

[[yə-hikkiminna irdata bi-yi-agəññ-mm ink^Wa noro]

of-medical aid if-3sg.m.S-find_{Impf}-Foc even Aux_{CF}

[yi-mot nəbbər]]

3sg.m.S-die_{Impf} Aux_{Pst}

“Even if he had received medical aid, he would (still) have died”

In general, Amharic concessive conditionals are marked by the focus suffix [-mm] and the adverb [ink^Wa(n)] ‘even’ which mostly co-occur in antecedent clauses. As discussed in the last two paragraphs, Amharic makes distinction between real and unreal concessive conditionals.

4.4. Exceptive Conditionals

Exceptive conditionals⁵⁸ in Amharic are characterized by the presence of the free morphemes [bək’ər (bəstək’ər)] or [inji] in their antecedent clauses. The choice of one or the other of these two morphemes is determined by the affirmative or negative polarity of the main verb or the auxiliary in their antecedent clauses. That is [bək’ər (bəstək’ər)] occurs with negative while [inji] occurs with affirmative clauses. Their position is always final. The following are examples.

⁵⁸ Thompson et al. (2007: 260) call this category as “negative conditionals”. But this seems to cause confusion in distinguishing between ordinary conditionals with negated antecedents, like (i) below, and exceptive conditionals, like (26a and b), which also contain negation markers.

i. bammist dək’ik’a wist’ izzih kaldərrəsk t’ilənh ?inhedallən

[[bə-ammist dək’ik’a wust’ izzih kə-al-dərrəs-k] [t’il-ən-h ?in-hed-allə-n]]

with-five minute in here if-Neg-reach_{Pf}-2sg.m.S leave_{Impf}-1pl.S-2sg.m.O 1pl.S-go_{Impf}-Aux-1pl.S

‘If you do not reach here within five minutes, we will go leaving you’

26. a. bammist dək'ik'a wist' izzih kaldərrəsk bək'ər t'ilənh ʔinhedallən
 [[bə-ammist dək'ik'a wust' izzih kə-al-dərrəs-k bək'ər]
 with-five minute in here if-Neg-reach_{PF}-2sg.m.S unless
 [t'il-ən-h ʔin-hed-allə-n]]
 leave_{Impf}-1pl.S-2sg.m.O 1pl.S-go_{Impf}-Aux-1pl.S
 'Unless you reach here within five minutes, we'll go leaving you'

b. fətənowoččun bəmulu kalalləfk bəstək'ər sirawun attagəññimm
 [[fətəna-očč-u-n bə-mulu kə-al-alləf-k bəstək'ər]
 test-pl-Def-Acc of-all if-Neg-pass_{PF}-2sg.m.S unless
 [sira-u-n al-ti-agəññ-mm]]
 job-Def-Acc Neg-2sg.m.S-get_{Impf}-Comp
 'Unless you pass all the tests, you will not get the job'

27. a. bammist dək'ik'a wist' izzih kədərrəsk inji t'ilənh ʔinhedallən
 [[bə-ammist dək'ik'a wist' izzih kə-dərrəs-k inji]
 with-five minute in here if-reach_{PF}-2sg.m.S unless
 [t'il-ən-h ʔin-hed-allə-n]]
 leave_{Impf}-1pl.S-2sg.m.O 1pl.S-go_{Impf}-Aux-1pl.S
 'Unless you reach here within five minutes, we'll go leaving you'

b. fətənowoččun bəmulu kalləfk inji sirawun attagəññimm
 [[fətəna-očč-u-n bə-mulu kə-alləf-k inji]
 test-pl-Def-Acc of-all if-pass_{PF}-2sg.m.S unless
 [sira-u-n al-ti-agəññ-mm]]
 job-Def-Acc Neg-2sg.m.S-get_{Impf}-Comp
 'Unless you pass all the tests, you will not get the job'

(26a and b) and (27a and b) are exceptive conditionals. Their antecedent clauses provide the exceptional conditions that the hearer (receiver) has to fulfill in order to avoid the undesirable consequences (expressed by the consequent clauses). That means, the hearer has to pass *all* of the tests to get the job. He will not get it if he manages to pass only *some* or *most* of the tests.

In exceptive conditionals which select [bək'ər (bəstək'ər)] the conditional marker seems to be always *kə-*. On the contrary, in the environment where [inji] occurs, any of the three conditional markers may appear.

28. a. amələšəggawan kalhonə bək'ər alagəbamm

[[amələšəgga-wa-n **kə**-al-hon-ə **bək'ər**] [al-Ø-agəba-mm]]

descent-Sing-Acc if-Neg-be_{PF}-3sg.m.S unless Neg-1sg.S-marry_{Impf}-Comp

'Unless it is the descent one, I will not marry'

b. amələšəggawan kəhonə inji alagəbamm

[[amələšəgga-wa-n **kə**-hon-ə **inji**] [al-Ø-agəba-mm]]

descent-Sing-Acc if-be_{PF}-3sg.m.S unless Neg-1sg.S-marry_{Impf}-Comp

'Unless it is the descent one, I will not marry'

c. amələšəggawan indəhon/hu inji alagəbamm

[[amələšəgga-wa-n **ində**-hon/hu **inji**] [al-Ø-agəba-mm]]

descent-Sing-Acc if-be_{PF} unless Neg-1sg.S-marry_{Impf}-Comp

'Unless it is the descent one, I will not marry'

d. amələšəggawan bihon inji alagəbamm

[[amələšəgga-wa-n **bi**-yi-hon **inji**] [al-Ø-agəba-mm]]

descent-Sing-Acc if-3sg.m.S-be_{Impf} unless Neg-1sg.S-marry_{Impf}-Comp

'Unless it is the descent one, I will not marry'

As the above data illustrates, [bək'ər (bəstək'ər)] occurs with *kə-* in (28a) while [inʃi] occurs with *kə-*, *ində-* and *bɪ-* in (28b), (28c) and (28d), respectively.

Exceptive conditionals can be considered as real and unreal, except in the case of imaginative conditionals. For instance, (26) and (27) are predictive exceptive conditionals and (29a), (29b) and (29c) are present, habitual, past real exceptive conditionals, respectively.

29. a. gənzəben ahun kalsət't'əhəññ bək'ər kəzzih alnik'əsak'k'əsimm

[[gənzəb-e-n ahun kə-al-sət't'ə-h-əññ bək'ər]

money-my-Acc now if-Neg-give_{pf}-2sg.m.S-1sg.O unless

[kə-izzih al-Ø-nik'əsak'k'əs-mm]]

from-here Neg-1sg.S-move_{Impf}-Comp

'Unless you give me my money now, I will not move from here'

b. fɪrenun karrəggət'kəw bək'ər məkinaw zigg aylimm

[[fɪren-u-n kə-al-rəggət'-k-əw bək'ər]

brake-Def-Acc if-Neg-step on_{pf}-2sg.m.S-3sg.m.O unless

[məkina-w zigg al-yi-l-mm]]

car-Def slow Neg-3sg.m.S-be_{Impf}-Comp

'Unless you step on the brake, the car does not slow down'

c. addarašu wist' kalnəbbərə bək'ər hukətun alayyəmm

[[addaraš-u wist' kə-al-nəbbər-ə bək'ər]

auditorium-Def in if-Neg-exist_{pst}-3sg.m.S unless

[hukət-u-n al-ayy-ə-mm]]

chaos-Def-Acc Neg-see_{pf}-3sg.m.S-Comp

'Unless he was in the auditorium, he has not seen the chaos'

In general, exceptive conditionals are characterized by the presence of [bək'ər (bəstək'ər)] or [iŋʃi] in their antecedent clauses. The choice between these morphemes is determined by the type of polarity of the antecedent clause; i.e. if the antecedent clause has a positive polarity, [iŋʃi] is used, and if the antecedent clause has a negative polarity, [bək'ər (bəstək'ər)] is used. These exception morphemes are not optional.

Chapter Five

Summary and Conclusion

In this study, an attempt has been made to describe conditional constructions of Amharic with the specific aims of identifying their syntactic forms, examining the morpho-syntax of antecedent and consequent clauses and analyzing their typological classifications.

Amharic conditionals are constructed from two clauses one of which is an adverbial, the antecedent, and the other of which is a main clause, which is the consequent. Two forms of Amharic conditionals have been identified. These are, canonical and non-canonical. Canonical forms are characterized by conditional markers in their antecedent clauses. Non-canonical forms, on the other hand, are composed of two independent clauses conjoined by such conjunctives like *alyam*, *injji* and *inna*. *kə-*, *ində-* and *bi-* have been identified as conditional markers of Amharic. Of these, *kə-* occurs with main verbs or with their auxiliaries in the perfective aspect. However, *ində-* occurs only with the auxiliary *hon-* and its reduced forms *hon* and *hu* in the perfective aspect. *bi-* occurs with main verbs or with their auxiliaries in the imperfective aspect.

Antecedent clauses are composed of conditional markers and clauses. The conditional markers serve as complementizers that take the clauses as their complements. In counterfactual antecedents the counterfactuality auxiliary *nor-* always takes the agreement marker *-o* '3sg.m.Gen' irrespective of subjects in main predicates. In general, it has been shown that the interaction between main predicate subjects and agreement features on auxiliaries greatly influence derivations of antecedent clauses. The structure of the consequent clause, on the other hand, is not different from any ordinary independent clause of Amharic. It has been noted that agreement of subjects in consequent clauses is of two types – one is that which shows agreement between its subject and that of the antecedent clause and another is that which does not show

agreement between the subject of the consequent clause and that of the antecedent clause.

Thompson et al.'s (2007) semantic-based typology has been used as a frame to classify the Amharic conditionals. Real conditionals refer to real situations and are further divided into present, habitual (generic) and past real conditionals. Habitual (generic) real conditionals are morphologically similar to present real conditionals except that they describe states of affairs which occur more than once. Unlike cases in present real conditionals, antecedent clauses of Amharic habitual real conditionals do not contain any present tense marker. Past real conditionals express states of affairs in the past and are characterized by the past tense morphology in their consequent clauses. It has been shown that Amharic real conditionals are marked by *kə-* (and sometimes by *ində-*). Unreal conditionals are divided into *imaginative*, which in turn is sub-divided into hypothetical and counterfactual, and *predictive*. The last one is characterized by its dissociation from real world situations. The characteristic feature of imaginative conditionals is their use of past morphology in both the antecedent and consequent clauses whereas predicative conditionals use future tense in their consequent clauses. Except predictive conditionals which may take any of the three conditional markers, both hypotheticals and counterfactuals take *bi-*. Counterfactuals differ from the hypotheticals in that they mostly contain *nor-o* as a marker of counterfactuality in their antecedent clauses.

Two additional distinctions of conditional types have also been considered. These are concessive and exceptive. Concessive conditionals contain the focus suffix [-mm] and the adverb [ɪnk^wa(n)] 'even' which mostly co-occur in antecedent clauses. Exceptive conditionals, on the other hand, contain [bək'ər (bəstək'ər)] or [ɪnjɪ] in their antecedent clauses. The choice between these morphemes is determined by the type of polarity of antecedent clauses.

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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