Amharic

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1 Overview

2 Phonology

Amharic has several interesting features, including a three-way contrast for stops between voiced, voiceless, and ejective stops. This distinction also exists for affricates, and the syllable structure of the language allows for quite heavy syllables (at least CVCC). There are seven vowel phonemes, and at least nineteen consonant phonemes.

2.1 Consonant Phonemes

Table 1 shows the consonant phonemes in Amharic.

Table 1: Consonant Phonemes

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t t' d			k k' g	ʔ
Nasal	m		n				
Trill			r				
Fricative	f		s z	ʃ			h
Approximant					j		
Lat. approx.			l				

Other sounds: w (labio-velar approximant)
Affricates: ʧ, ʧ', ts', ʤ

There is a two-way contrast for labial stops (voiced and voiceless). Both sounds occur word-initially, as can be seen in (1).

(1) [pɑsti] 'pastry'
[bɑdo] 'empty'

Alveolar and velar stops have a three-way contrast between voiced, voiceless, and ejective variants. These can be seen in (2) and (3).

(2) [tɑko] 'high heel'
[t'ɑbjɑ] 'station'
[dɑr] 'edge'

(3) [kɨbrit] 'lighter'
[k'odɑ] 'skin'
[gɑbjɑ] 'blanket'

The glottal stop, was not observed word-initially, but it does occur word-medially. It is not clear whether it is a phoneme in the language; there are no close minimal pairs, and it is often deleted.

(4) [gɑʔɑt] ‘large bite’
[gɑːt] ‘large bite (said quickly’

Amharic has at least two nasal consonant phonemes. [m] and [n] occur word-initially, as in (5). The palatal nasal only occurs word-medially, and so it may be an allophone of [n].

(5) [mɨlɑs] ‘tongue’
[nɨfɑs] ‘wind’

(6) [ɑmɑrɨɲɑ] ‘Amharic’

The trill [r] has a good minimal pair with [g], but there are no word-initial examples in the data.

(7) [bɛr] ‘door’
[bɛg] ‘lamb’

There are five fricative phonemes in Amharic. All of these occur word-initially, as seen in (8).

(8) [fɛrɛs] ‘horse’
[sɑmbɑ] ‘lung’
[zɨmb] ‘fly’
[ʃukɑ] ‘fork’
[hod] ‘belly’

There are four affricates in the language, including a voiced, voiceless, and ejective variant of [ʧ]. There were no word-initial examples of the non-ejective [ʧ], so it may not be a phoneme in the language.

(9) [ʧ’ɛrɛk’ɑ] ‘moon’

(10) [ts’ɛhɑj] ‘sun’

(11) [ʤoro] ‘ear’

(12) [ɑinoʧu] ‘eyes’

Approzimants in Amharic include [l], [j], and [w].

(13) [lɛlit] ‘night’
[jimɑrɨ] ‘bless you’
[wɛf] ‘bird’

2.2 Vowel Phonemes

Table 2 shows the vowel phonemes in Amharic.

The front and mid high vowels [i] and [ɨ] occur word-initially and word-finally in (15) and (16), but the back vowel [u] does not occur word-initially (and is shown word-finally in (15). However, the morpheme /-u/ functions like a determiner, so [u] we have reason to suspect that it is a phoneme.

(14) [iju] ‘look at it’
[pɑsti] ‘pastry’

Table 2: Vowel Phonemes

i	ɨ	u
e ɛ		o
		ɑ

Diphthongs: ej, aj, ɛw

(15) [ɨbet] ‘house’
[jimɑrɨ] ‘bless you’

Mid vowels in Amharic include [e], [ɛ], and [o]. All occur word-initially and word-finally, as seen in (17), (18), and (19).

(16) [eli] ‘turtle’
[ɑjne] ‘my eye’

(17) [ɛrɛ] ‘really?’

(18) [oromiŋa] ‘language of Oromo people’
[doro] ‘chicken’

The only low vowel is [ɑ], which occurs word-initially and word-finally.

(19) [ɑsɑ] ‘fish’

Amharic has three diphthongs. [ej] only occurs once in the data set, so it may not be a separate phoneme. [ɛw] does not occur word-initially, so it may not be In some cases, these may be better analyzed as a verb and a consonant.

(20) [ajt] ‘mouse’
[k’ej] ‘red’
[jɛsɑʧɛw] ‘their (formal) hand’

2.3 Syllables

There are several different syllable types in Amharic.

(21) (V) [eli] ‘turtle’

(22) (CV) [mɨlɑs] ‘tongue’

(23) (CVC) [wɛf] ‘bird’

(24) (CVCC) [wɛrk’] ‘gold’

(25) (CCV) [ɑrɨŋgwɑde] ‘green’

In general, we see CCV syllables only with glides as the second syllable. As in (25), (CVCC) syllables are also possible. So, we may propose a general template for syllable structure that looks like (C)(G)V(C)(C), where G is a glide. However, we see no CGVCC syllables, so there may be a limit to how many consonants are in a syllable.

2.4 Orthography

The following orthography was created for easier transcription of Amharic and is used in the rest of the paper.

Table 3: Vowels

í [i]	*ɨ* [ɨ]	*u* [u]
é [e]		*o* [o]
e [ɛ]		*a* [ɑ]

Consonants remain largely the same as their IPA equivalents, with the exception of the affricates.

Table 4: Consonant Phonemes

Bilabial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
p b		t t' d			k k' g	'[ʔ]
m		n				
		r				
f		s z	sh[ʃ]			h
				y[j]		
		l				

Other sounds: w (labio-velar approximant)

Affricates: ch[ʧ], ch'[ʧ'], ts', j[ʤ]

3 Pronouns

Subject pronouns have the following forms in Amharic:

Table 5: Subject pronouns

iné	I
ante	you (m)
anchí	you (f)
isu	he
iswa	she
inya	we
inante	you (pl)
inesu	they

These pronouns only occur as the subjects of sentences, and they occur before objects and verbs. This provides some evidence that suggests that Amharic is an SOV language.

(26) *iné rejim neny*
I tall be\1S
'I am tall.'

(27) *ante rejim neh*
you-M tall be\2MS
'You (m) are tall'

(28) *anchí rejim nesh*
you-F tall be\2FS
'You (f) are tall'

(29) *isu rejim new*
he tall be\3MS
'He is tall'

(30) *iswa rejim nat*
she tall be\3FS
'She is tall'

(31) *inya rejim nen*
we tall be\1P
'We are tall'

(32) *inant rejim nachu*
you\P tall be\2P
'You (pl) are tall'

(33) *inesu rejim nachew*
they tall be\3P
'They are tall'

Additionally, the language has demonstrative pronouns (like 'this' and 'that'). These pronouns appear to be grammatically masculine; in (34), we see that the verb *new* 'to be' is in the masculine form, even though *wef* 'bird' is grammatically feminine.

(34) *ihé k'ey wef new*
this red bird be\3MS
'This is a red bird'[1]

(35) *inezí k'ey wef-och nachew*
these red bird-P be\3P
'These birds are red'

(36) *yachí wef tinishíyé nat*
that bird small be\3FS
'That bird is small'

There is evidence of possessive pronouns, but we only see a single example in the data.

(37) *yené* 'mine'

[1]In these glosses, 3FS means third person feminine singular, 3PL means third person plural, etc.

4 Possession

There are two different strategies for possession in Amharic, both of which are used for alienable and inalienable possession.

4.1 Suffixes

Possession is marked with noun suffixes. Second and third person singular suffixes distinguish between male and femaile, but the plural forms are not gendered.

(38) *doro-é* 'my chicken'
doro-i 'your (m) chicken'
doro-ish 'your (f) chicken'
doro-u 'his chicken'
doro-wa 'her chicken'

The second person masculine suffix also occurs as *-ih*.

(39) *ij-ih* 'your (m) hand'

All plural suffixes begin with *ach-*. These suffixes may be further analyzable as *-ach-in, -ach-un, and -ach-ew*.

(40) *doro-achin* 'our chicken'
doro-achun 'your (pl) chicken'
doro-achew 'their chicken'

4.2 Contrast forms

Additionally, Amharic has several contrast forms for possession. These forms place the stress on the possessor and convey a meaning like 'MY hand.' Each of these can also be expressed with a suffix form as in the previous section.

Table 6: Contrast forms

yené ij	'my hand'	*ij-é*	'my hand'
yante ij	'your (m) hand'	*ij-ih*	'your (m) hand'
yanchí ij	'your (f) hand'	*ij-ish*	'your (f) hand'
yesu ij	'his hand'	*ij-u*	'his hand'
yeswa ij	'her hand'	*ij-wa*	'her hand'
yenya ij-och	'our hands'	*ij-och-achin*	'our hands'
-[2]	-	*ij-och-achun*	'your (pl) hands'
yenesu ij-och	'their hands'	*ij-och-achew*	'their hands'

Possessive forms like 'Rachel's hand' are constructed similarly. As shown in (42), these constructions do not work with the suffix forms in the previous section.

[2]There was no example of a contrast form for the second person plural (you all).

(41) *je Rachel ij* ‘Rachel’s hand’

(42) **Rachel ijwa* ‘Rachel’s hand’

(43) *je Abe ij* ‘Abe’s hand’

We can see in (41) and (43) that these forms are the same for male and female.

5 Reflexives

Reflexives are formed with the noun *iras*, which may be derived from *ras* 'head.' *iras* is the object of the sentence and takes a possessive and a *-n/-ny* object suffix. In (44), we see the paradigm for the verb *metat'eb* 'to wash.'

(44) *metat'eb* 'to wash'

iras-é-ny	*tat'eb-kuwin*	'I washed myself'
iras-i-n	*tat'eb-k*	'You (m) washed yourself'
iras-ish-in	*tat'eb-sh*	'You (f) washed yourself'
iras-u-n	*tat'eb-e*	'He washed himself'
iras-wa-n	*tat'eb-ech*	'She washed herself'
iras-achin	*tat'eb-en*	'We washed ourselves'
iras-achun	*tat'eb-achu*	'You all washed yourselves'
iras-achew-n	*tat'eb-u*	'They washed themselves'

Each of these forms of *iras* has an added *-n/-ny/-in* object suffix unless the possessive suffix already ends in *n*[3]. The *-ny* form occurs after the tense *-é* suffix in the 1S form, and the *-in* form occurs after *-ish*. This may be a result of the cluster **ishn* not being allowed in the language. (45) and (46) show the glosses of two of the forms.

(45) *iras-é-ny* *tat'eb-kuwin*
REFL-1S.POSS-OBJ wash-1S
'I washed myself'

(46) *iras-i-n* *tat'eb-k*
REFL-2SM.POSS-OBJ wash-2SM
'You (m) washed yourself'

The verb form is conjugated as we expect from section ??[4] on subject person marking. It agrees with the subject of the sentence, which either occurs before the object or only as a verbal suffix (as seen here).

[3]This is probably an object suffix that occurs throughout the language. This requires some more data to prove.

[4]This will point to the actual section in the final write-up...

6 Commands

There are eight different command forms in Amharic. In the second person, there positive and negative forms for male, female, and plural recipients. Additionally, there are both positive and negative hortative forms. Some examples are shown in table 7.[5]

Table 7: Command forms

	group 1			group 2			
	meblat	*metéñat*	*met'et'at*	*mambib*	*merot'*	*mets'af*	*mehéd*
F	*bí*	*téñí*	*t'ech'í*	*ambibí*	*ruch'í*	*ts'afí*	*híjí*
M	*bila*	*téña*	*t'et'a*	*ambib*	*rut'*	*ts'af*	*híd*
P	*bilu*	*téñu*	*t'et'u*	*ambibu*	*rut'u*	*ts'afu*	*hídu*
H	*inibla*	*initéña*	*init'eta*	*inambib*	*inirut'*	*inits'af*	*inihíd*
NF	*atibí*	*atitéñí*	*atit'ech'í*	*atambibí*	*atiruch'í*	*atits'afí*	*atihíjí*
NM	*atibla*	*atitéña*	*atit'et'a*	*atambib*	*atirut'*	*atits'af*	*atihíd*
NP	*atiblu*	*atitéñu*	*atit'et'u*	*atambibu*	*atirut'u*	*atits'afu*	*atihídu*
NH	*anibla*	*anitéña*	*anit'et'a*	*anambib*	*anirut'*	*anits'af*	*anihíd*

6.1 Roots

To analyze these command forms, it is important to recognize the verb root. Each infinitive form starts with the prefix /me-/. In some of these forms, the /e/ is dropped when the root begins with a vowel.[6]

(47) me-ambib > [mambib]
INF-read
'to read'

Verbs are broken up into two different groups based on their root structure. Group 1 nouns (as seen in table 7) have roots consisting of two syllables where the second syllable is CV. These nouns also have a word-final /-t/ indicating the infinitive.

(48) *me-téña-t*
INF-sleep-INF
'to sleep'

The language may require verbs to end in a consonant in their infinitive forms. Therefore, verbs in group 1 take an extra /-t/, while the verbs in group 2 already have a final consonant as part of the verb root. Alternatively, the /-t/ suffix may exist underlyingly for every infinitive, and the word-final custers that would be produced in group 2 verbs are not allowed. The verbs from table 7 have the following roots:

[5]In this table, F represents a command directed toward a female, M represents male, P represents plural, H represents hortative 'let's', and N represents the negative form of each.

[6]In these glosses, INF represents the infinitive, 2M.IMP represents the second person masculine imperative, etc.

Table 8: Verb roots

	group 1			group 2			
root	*bila*	*téña*	*t'et'a*	*ambib*	*rot'*	*ts'af*	*héd*
translation	eat	sleep	drink	read	run	write	go

6.2 Command affixes

The different command forms are encoded through affixes which are attached to the verb root.

Table 9: Command affixes

form	affix
F	*-í*
M	*-∅*
P	*-u*
H	*in- -a*
NF	*at- -í*
NM	*at- -∅*
NP	*at- -u*
NH	*an- -a*

In the case of group 1 verbs, the final vowel is dropped when there is a suffix (as in (50)). However, the final vowel of group 2 verbs is preserved in the masculine forms, where there is no additional suffix. This can be seen in (49).

(49) *téña-∅*
sleep-2M.IMP
'sleep! (to a man)'

(50) *téñ-í*
sleep-2F.IMP
'sleep! (to a woman)'

(51) *ambib-∅*
read-2M.IMP
'read! (to a man)'

(52) *ambib-í*
read-2F.IMP
'read! (to a woman)'

In addition to the affixes, the root vowel changes for some verbs in the imperative form. Examples of this in table 7 include *merot'* and *mehéd*, which are shown in (53) and (54).

(53) *merot'* 'to run' → *rut'* 'run! (to a male)'

(54) *mehéd* 'to go' → *híd* 'go! (to a male)'

This process occurs in one-syllable verb roots. More data would is required to determine whether this process is phonological, but we can put together the following correspondences:

(55)
1. *é* → *í*
2. *o* → *u*
3. *a* → *a* (no change)

In the case of *é* and *o*, these vowels are being raised, but we do not see a similar process with *a*.

In the feminine forms of many commands, the consonant before the /-*í*/ suffix becomes palatalized. This can be seen in 56 and 57, and appears to only occur with /t/ and /d/.

(56) *t'ech'-í*
drink-2F.IMP
'drink! (to a female)'

(57) *jíj-í*
go-2F.IMP
'go! (to a female)'

This can be captured with the following phonological rule. This does not appear to be a general rule in the language and may be specific to commands.

(58) voiceless stop → palatalized / _ *í*

7 Copular sentences

7.1 Structure

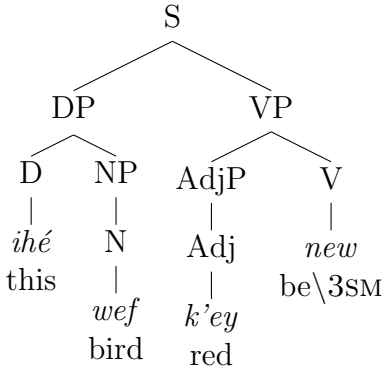
The 'be' element is the verb *new* (here in the masculine form; all forms can be seen in table 10). Copular sentences have the form SOV. The complements in each of these sentences can be phrases headed either by nouns, the class of words that includes things, or by adjectives, the class of words that are used to modify nouns. These two possibilities are shown in (59) and (60).

(59) *wef-och tinishíyé nachew*
bird-P small be\3P
'The birds are small'[7]

(60) *Arsema temarí nech*
Arsema student be\3SF
Arsema is a student

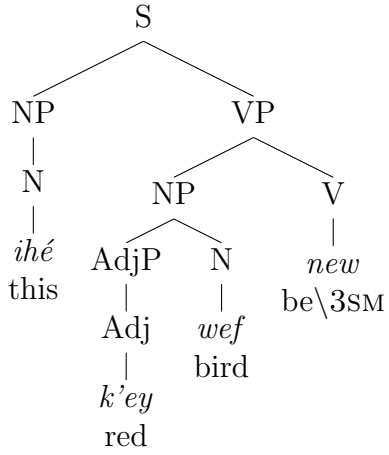
The difference between these phrases is sometimes dependent on word order. In (61), *k'ey* 'red' is a complement of the verb. In (62), it modifies the noun phrase, which is a complement of the *new*.

(61)



'This bird is red'

(62)



'This is a red bird'

The forms of the subjects and complements are the same. Amharic appears to track arguments using word order, and there are no indications of case in copular sentences.

7.2 Copula forms

Table 10 lists the forms of the copula in the postive and negative.

The word order is SOV in both the positive and negative. The only difference between affirmative and negative is the form of the copula.

(63) *iné temarí neny* 'I am a student'

[7]In these glosses, 3SF means third person singular feminine, P means plural, etc.

Table 10: Copula forms

form	affirmative		negative	
1S	neny	'I am'	aydelehum	'I am not'
2SM	neh	'You (m) are'	aydelehim	'You (m) are not'
2SF	nesh	'You (f) are'	aydeleshim	'You (f) are not'
3SM	new	'He is'	aydelem	'He is not'
3SF	nech/nat	'She is'	aydelechim	'She is not'
1P	nen	'We are'	aydelenim	'We are not'
2P	nachu	'You (pl) are'	aydelachum	'You (pl) are not'
3P	nachew	'They are'	aydelum	'They are not'

(64) *ante temarí neh* 'You (m) are a student'

(65) *anchí temarí nesh* 'You (f) are a student'

(66) *isu temarí new* 'He is a student'

(67) *iswa temarí nech* 'She is a student'

(68) *inya temaríyoch nen* 'We are students'

(69) *inante temaríyoch nachu* 'You (pl) are students'

(70) *inesu temaríyoch nachew* 'They are students'

(71) *iné temarí aydelehum* 'I am not a student'

(72) *ante temarí aydelehim* 'You (m) are not a student'

(73) *anchí temarí aydeleshim* 'You (f) are not a student'

(74) *isu temarí aydelem* 'He is not a student'

(75) *iswa temarí aydelechim* 'She is not a student'

(76) *inya temaríyoch aydelenim* 'We are not students'

(77) *inante temaríyoch aydelachum* 'You (p) are not students'

(78) *inesu temaríyoch aydelum* 'They are not students'

8 Verbs

Maybe an overview here?

8.1 Subject person marking

In Amharic, subject person marking differs in each tense.

8.1.1 Past positive, negative

In the past tense, there are different affixes depending on whether the verb root ends in a consonant or a vowel. Example (79) lists the different forms for a verb ending in a consonant.

(79) *mezemir* 'to sing'

zemer-ku[8] 'I sang'	*al-zemer-ku-m* 'I didn't sing'
zemer-k 'You (m) sang'	*al-zemer-k-im* 'You (m) didn't sing
zemer-sh 'You (f) sang'	*al-zemer-sh-im* 'You (f) didn't sing
zemer-e 'He sang'	*al-zemer-e-m* 'He didn't sing'
zemer-ech 'She sang'	*al-zemer-ech-im* 'She didn't sing'
zemer-en 'We sang'	*al-zemer-en-im* 'We didn't sing'
zemer-achu 'You (pl) sang'	*al-zemer-achu-m* 'You (pl) didn't sing'
zemer-u 'They sang'	*al-zemer-u-m* 'They didn't sing'

By contrast, (80) shows the forms for a verb root ending in a consonant.

(80) *mesrat* 'to work'

sera-w 'I worked'	*al-sera-w-m* 'I didn't work'
sera-h 'You (m) worked'	*al-sera-h-im* 'You (m) didn't work
sera-sh 'You (f) worked'	*al-sera-sh-im* 'You (f) didn't work
sera 'He worked'	*al-sera-m* 'He didn't work'
sera-ch 'She worked'	*al-sera-ch-im* 'She didn't work'
sera-n 'We worked'	*al-sera-n-im* 'We didn't work'
sera-chu 'You (pl) worked'	*al-sera-chu-m* 'You (pl) didn't work'
ser-u 'They worked'	*al-ser-u-m* 'They didn't work'

For both types of verbs, the past negative is formed with the *al-* prefix and the *-im* suffix. All V-final forms preserve the final root vowel with the exception of the third-person plural form *seru*. In this form, the final vowel is dropped and replaced with the *-u* suffix; otherwise, it would be indistinguishable from the 3SM form. These two paradigms are summarized in table 11.

8.1.2 Present/future positive, negative

In the present tense, there are several different forms for the positive and negative. Each form requires a prefix and a suffix, which is summarized in table 12. The different forms of *merot'* are shown in (81).

[8] Arsema was unsure if this form was correct, and also provided *zemerkuwin*

Table 11: Past subject affixes

form	C-final	V-final
1S	*-ku*	*-w*
2SM	*-k*	*-h*
2SF	*-sh*	*-sh*
3SM	*-e*	*-∅*
3SF	*-ech*	*-ch*
1P	*-en*	*-n*
2P	*-achu*	*-chu*
3P	*-u*	*-u*

(81) *merot'* 'to run'

iné i-rot'-al-ew 'I run'	*iné al-rot'-im* 'I don't run'
ante ti-rot'-al-eh 'You (m) run'	*ante at-rot'-im* 'You (m) don't run
anchí ti-roch'-al-esh 'You (f) run'	*anchí at-roch'-im* 'You (f) don't run
isu yí-rot'-al-e 'He run'	*isu ay-rot'-im* 'He doesn't run'
iswa ti-rot'-al-ech 'She run'	*iswa at-rot'-im* 'She doesn't run'
inya in-rot'-al-en 'We run'	*inya an-rot'-im* 'We don't run'
inante ti-rot'-al-achu 'You (pl) run'	*inante at-rot'-um* 'You (pl) don't run'
inesu yí-rot'-al-u 'They run'	*inesu ay-rot'-um* 'They don't run'

In the positive forms, *-al* occurs after the verb root and may represent the present tense. The four different prefixes separate the forms into four different groups, as shown in table 12. This grouping seems arbitrary; it puts all 2nd person forms in one group along with the 3rd person feminine (group 2), while other third person forms are grouped (group 3) and first person forms are not grouped (groups 1 and 4).

Table 12: Present/future affixes

form	positive	negative	group
1S	*i- -al-ew*	*al- -im*	1 (*i-*/*al-*)
2SM	*ti- -al-eh*	*at- -im*	2 (*ti-*/*at-*)
2SF	*ti- -al-esh*	*at- -im* + palatalization	2 (*ti-*/*at-*)
3SM	*yí- -al-e*	*ay- -im*	3 (*yí-*/*ay-*)
3SF	*ti- -al-ech*	*at- -im*	2 (*ti-*/*at-*)
1P	*in- -al-en*	*an- -im*	4 (*in-*/*an-*)
2P	*ti- -al-achu*	*at- -um*	2 (*ti-*/*at-*)
3P	*yí- -al-u*	*ay- -um*	3 (*yí-*/*ay-*)

These sentences may then be glossed like in (82) and (83), where G1 represents the group 1 prefix.

(82) *iné i-rot'-al-ew*
I G1.PRES-run-PRES-1S
'I run'

(83) *ante ti-rot'-al-eh*
2SM G2.PRES-run-PRES-2SM
'You run'

The negative forms of each have a prefix that changes depending on which group the form is in, and the person marker is dropped. Each of these prefixes may be a variation of the *al-* prefix, which is found in the past tense, and just like the past tense, each form has the *-im* suffix for negation. The prefixes represent the group of the person marking, the present tense, and negation, as shown in (84) and (85).

(84) *iné al-rot'-im*
I G1.PRES.NEG-run-NEG
'I don't run'

(85) *ante at-rot'-im*
2SM G2.PRES.NEG-run-NEG
'You don't run'

8.2 Object person marking in transitive verbs

In transitive verbs, the direct object is marked by a verbal suffix which occurs after the subject suffix (listed in table 12). In this way, the verb agrees with both the subject and the direct object. (86) shows the paradigm for the verb *mak'if* 'to hug.'

(86) *mak'if* 'to hug'

ak'if-e-ny	'He hugged me'
ak'if-e-h	'He hugged you (m)'
ak'if-e-sh	'He hugged you (f)'
ak'if-e-w	'He hugged him'
ak'if-at	'He hugged her'
ak'if-e-n	'He hugged us'
ak'if-achu	'He hugged you (pl)'
ak'if-achew	'He hugged them'

There are several phonological processes that change the surface forms of the affixes. For example, in (87), the third-person masculine singular subject is dropped when the object affix begins with a vowel. Additionally, in (88), the affix occurs with an initial *w* which does not occur in other forms. This *w* may be inserted after consonants in the 3SF, 2P, and 3P forms, but this is blocked by the underlying *-e* in (87).

(87) *ak'if-∅-at*
hug-3SM.SUBJ-3SF.OBJ
'He hugged her'

(88) *ak'if-ach-wat*
hug-2P.SUBJ-3SF.OBJ
'You (pl) hugged her'

These forms are summarized in table 13.

Additionally, we have evidence that suggests that indirect objects work similarly. In these examples, the direct object comes before the verb, and the indirect object occurs as a verbal suffix. The verb agrees with the subject and the indirect object in (89).

(89) *mest'et* 'to give'

Table 13: Subject and object suffixes

form	object
1S	*-ny*
2SM	*-h*
2SF	*-sh*
3SM	*-t, -w*
3SF	*-(w)at*
1P	*-en*
2P	*-(w)achu*
3P	*-(w)achew*

mets'af set'-ech-iny	'She gave me a book'
mets'af set'-ech-ih	'She gave you (m) a book'
mets'af set'-ech-ish	'She gave you (f) a book'
mets'af set'-ech-u	'She gave him a book'
mets'af set'-ech-at	'She gave her a book'
mets'af set'-ech-in	'She gave us a book'
mets'af set'-ech-achu	'She gave you (pl) a book'
mets'af set'-ech-achew	'She gave them a book'

In several of these forms, *i* is inserted before the object prefix. This is common throughout the language, and we would expect *i* to be inserted as the default vowel.

9 Causatives

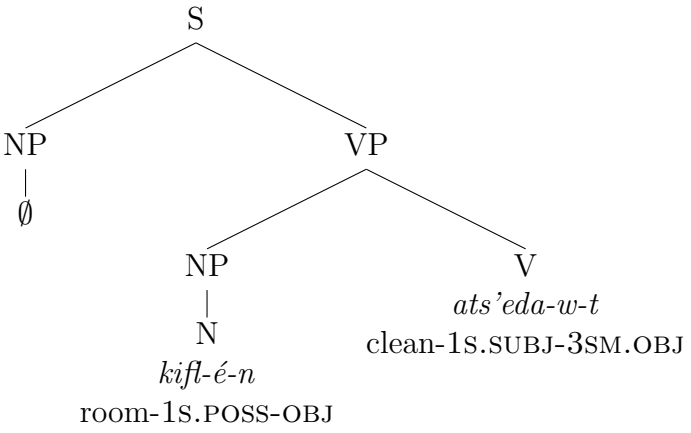
Causatives are marked with the verbal prefix *as-*. In the causative form, the verb agrees with the causer (in the subject position) and the causee (in the object position). This is different from the non-causative form, in which the verb agrees with the subject and the object of the sentence, as seen in (90) with the verb *mats'dat* 'to clean.' However, the object is marked with the object suffix *-n* in both forms. We can see the causative form in (91).

(90) *kifl-é-n* *ats'eda-w-t*
room-1S.POSS-OBJ clean-1S.SUBJ-3SM.OBJ
'I cleaned my room'

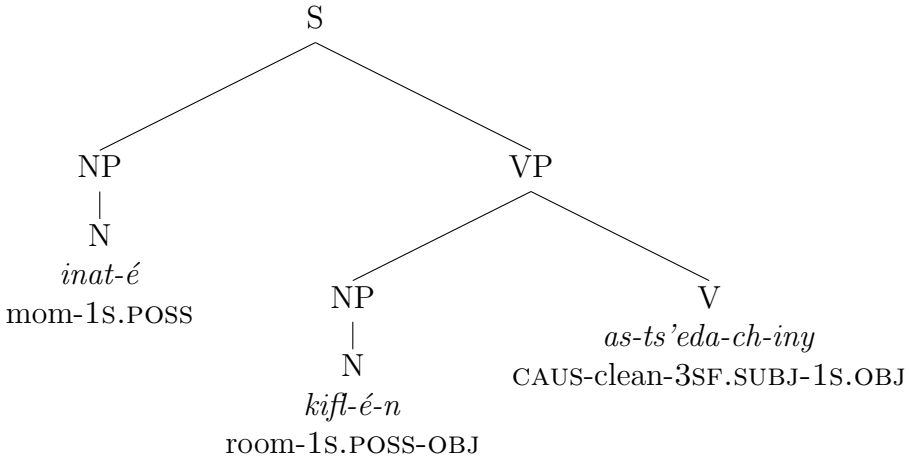
(91) *inat-é* *kifl-é-n* *as-ts'eda-ch-iny*
mom-1S.POSS room-1S.POSS-OBJ CAUS-clean-3SF.SUBJ-1S.OBJ
'My mom made me clean my room'

(92) and (93) show the structures of both sentences.

(92)



(93)



10 Dependent clauses

TODO: Add an intro here.

10.1 Complement clauses

There are several types of complement clauses in Amharic.

10.1.1 Null complementizer

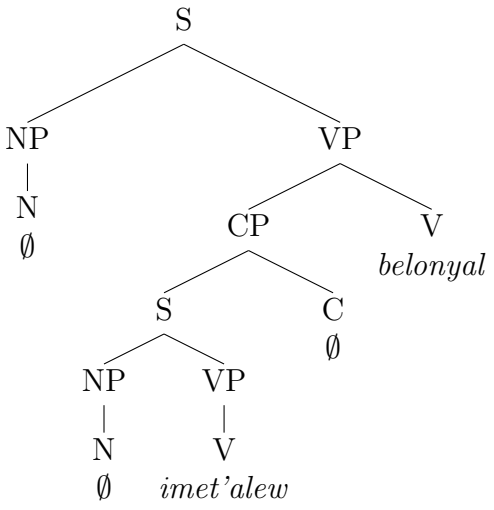
In some cases, complement clauses are formed without an explicit complementizer. This can be seen in (94) and (95).

(94) *i-met'-ale-w* *belo-∅-ny-al*
G1.PRES-come-PRES-1S said-3SM.SUBJ-1S.OBJ-al
'He said, "I am coming"'[9]

(95) *k'onjo nat* *t'eye-kuwin*
pretty be\3SF asked-1S
"'Is she pretty?" I asked'

In these sentences, the CP is the object of the main verb. These sentences have the following structure:

(96)



10.1.2 Complementizer prefixes

There are several examples of verbal prefixes that function as complementizers. In many of these examples, *inde-* is used; this is shown in (97) and (98).

(97) *inde-mí-met'a* *belo-∅-ny-al*
COMP-3SM.COMP-come\3SM.PAST said-3SM.SUBJ-1S.OBJ-al
'He said that he's coming'

[9]The meaning of this -al suffix is unknown.

(98) *temarí inde-hon-ku tenager-ku*
student COMP-be-1S.SUBJ said-1S.SUBJ
'I said that I am a student'

Another such prefix is *ke-*, which functions similarly in (99).

(99) *k'onjo ke-hon-ech t'eye-kuwin*
pretty COMP-be-3SF asked-1S
'I asked if she was pretty'

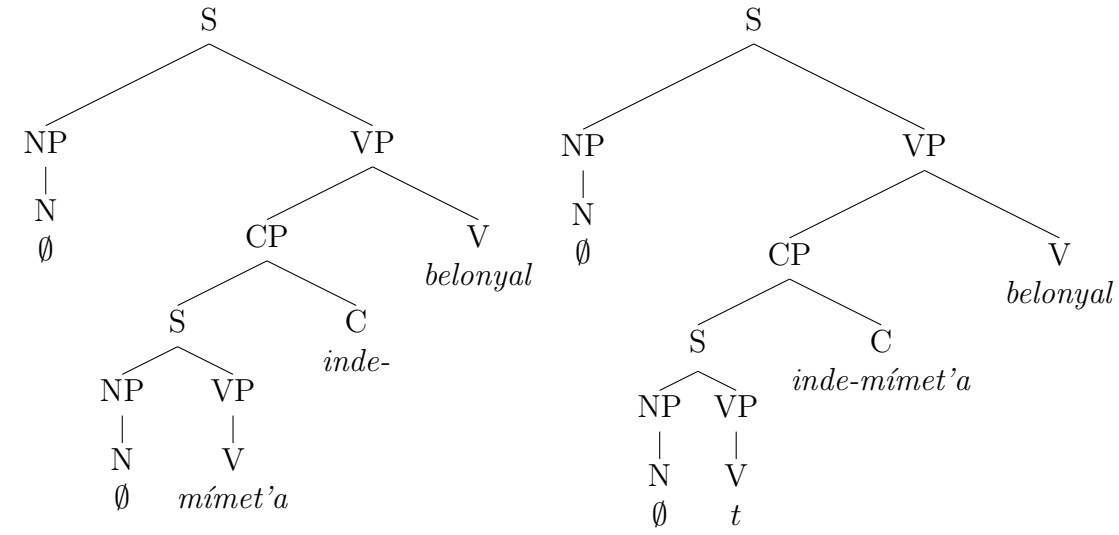
In some examples, these prefixes are accompanied by a variation of *-mi-* and even a verbal suffix in the 1SF, 2P, and 3P forms. It is unclear when these are used, as they occur in forms like (97) but not in forms like (98). This paradigm is shown in Table 14.

Table 14: Complementizer forms

1S	*meblat inde-mi-felig*	'that I want to eat'
2SM	*meblat inde-mit-felig*	'that you (m) want to eat'
2SF	*meblat inde-mit-felig-í*	'that you (f) want to eat'
3SM	*meblat inde-mí-felig*	'that he wants to eat'
3SF	*meblat inde-mit-felig*	'that she wants to eat'
1P	*meblat inde-mini-felig*	'that we want to eat'
2P	*meblat inde-miti-felig-u*	'that you (pl) want to eat'
3P	*meblat inde-felig-u*	'that they want to eat'

(100) shows the structure of these sentences; the second tree shows how the verb moves up to the complementizer *inde-*. As in the previous examples, the CP is the object of the verb *belonyal*.

(100)



10.1.3 Infinitives

Infinitives are formed with the verbal prefix *me-* and function like other prefix complementizers. This is shown in (101), (102), and (103).

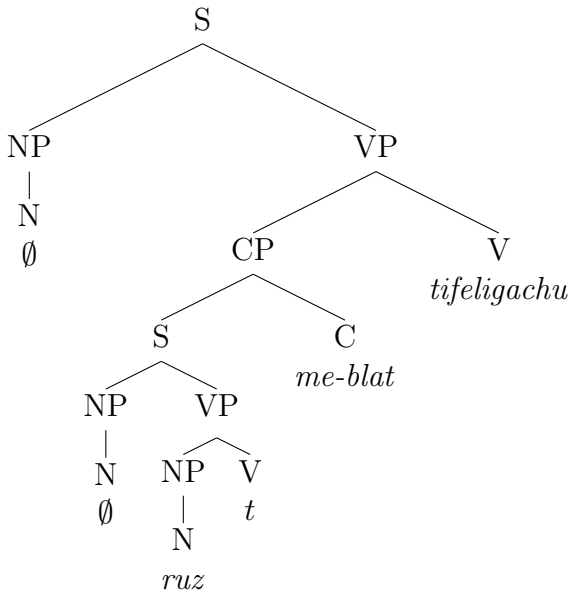
(101) *me-blat i-felig-ale-w*
INF-eat G1.PRES-want-PRES-1S
'I want to eat'

(102) *me-blat inde-mífelig negro-∅-nya*
INF-eat COMP-want told-3SM.SUBJ-1S.OBJ
'He told me that he wants to eat'

(103) *ruz me-blat ti-felig-achu wey?*
rice INF-eat G2.PRES-want-2P right?
'You all want to eat rice, right?'

The structure of these sentences is shown in (104). The verb *blat* 'eat' moves up from the V to the C (*me-*).

(104)



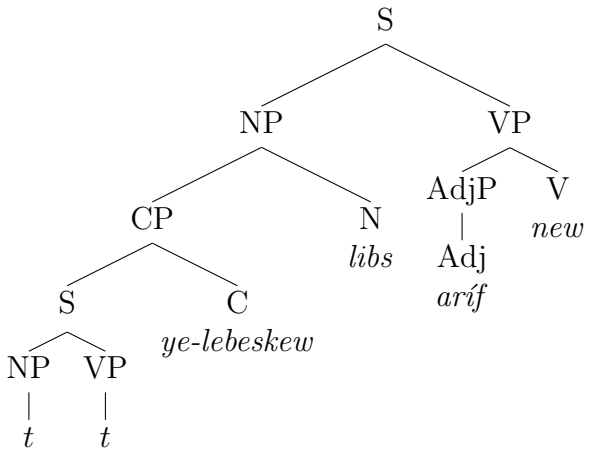
10.2 Relative clauses

Relative clauses in Amharic use the relativizer *ye-* and function like other CPs in the language. Since Amharic is a head-final language, relative clauses occur before the nouns they modify. In subject relative clauses, the verb in the relative clause agrees with the noun that the clause modifies as the subject and the object within the clause as the object. This can be seen in (105).

(105) *ye-lebes-ke-w libs aríf new*
REL-wear-2SM.S-3S.O clothes nice be\3S
'What you are wearing is nice'

The structure of this sentence can be seen in (106). There is a gap at the subject of the embedded CP, and the verb moves up to the complementizer.

(106)



In object relative clauses, the relativized noun is the direct object. The verb in the relative clause agrees with the noun it modifies as the object and the subject of the relative clause as the subject. This can be seen in (107).

(107) *ye-sera-w-t* *buna* *yet* *new*
REL-make-1S.S-3S.O coffee where be\3S
'Where is the coffee I made'

The structure of this sentence can be seen in (108). There is a gap at the object of the relative clause, and the verb moves up to the complementizer.

(108)