Homework 6
Will Theuer

1 Subject person marking

In Amharic, subject person marking differs in each tense.

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 (1) shows the different forms for a verb ending in a consonant.

(1) *mezemir* 'to sing'

zemer-ku[1] '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, (2) shows the forms for a verb root ending in a consonant.

(2) *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'

We see that if the affix begins with a vowel, this vowel is dropped when the verb ends in a vowel (with the exception of the third-person plural form *seru*).

1.2 Present/future positive, nevative

In the present tense, there are many different forms for the positive and negative. Each form requires a prefix and a suffix, which is summarized in table 1.

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[1] Arsima was unsure if this form was correct, and also provided *zemerkuwin*

(3) *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'

Table 1: Present/future affixes

form	positive	negative
1s	*i- -al-ew*	*al- -im*
2SM	*ti- -al-ew*	*at- -im*
2SF	*ti- -al-esh*	*at- -im*[2]
3SM	*yí- -al-e*	*ay- -im*
3SF	*ti- -al-ech*	*at- -im*
1P	*in- -al-en*	*an- -im*
2P	*ti- -al-achu*	*at- -um*
3P	*yí- -al-u*	*ay- -um*

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.

(4) *ak'if-ke-ny*
hug-2SM.SUBJ-1S.OBJ

'You (m) hugged me'

(5) *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'

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[2]This form also has palatalization in the verb root.
[3]This possibly becomes *-n* after a palatalized consonant.

Table 2: Subject and object suffixes

form	subject	object
1s	*-ku*	*-eny*
2sm	*-k*	*-eh*
2sf	*-sh*	*-ish*
3sm	*-e*	*-t, -ew*
3sf	*-echi*	*-(w)at*
1p	*-en*	*-en*[3]
2p	*-achu-*	*-(w)achu*
3p	*-u*	*-(w)achew*