

Conditionals in Khalaj

Hasan Güzel

1. Introduction

The Khalaj language has many linguistic characteristics which make it special among Turkic languages, and it has great importance in Turcology and the Altaic theory. Until the 1960s, Khalaj was thought to be a variant of Azerbaijani, in that Khalaj and the Oghuz languages had characteristics in common. Because the Oghuz and Khalaj people lived and migrated in the past in Iran and especially the Khorasan region, the Khalaj and Oghuz languages have closely influenced each other for centuries. Khalaj is spoken by about 40 000 people in a few dozen villages in an area bordered by the towns of Saveh to the north, Arak to the south, Hamadan to the west and Qom to the east, and was so to speak rediscovered by a team under the leadership of Doerfer. In the second half of the 20th century, Doerfer proved that Khalaj was an archaic Turkic language. The preservation of the ancient Proto-Altaic */p-/ as /h-/ is an archaic characteristic not seen even in Chuvash. The preservation of the Old Turkic word medial and word final /-d-/ and /-d/ sound as in Tuvan and Tofa is another archaic characteristic. The primary vowel lengths which are thought to have existed in Proto-Turkic are regularly preserved outside Khalaj only in Yakut and Turkmen. Along with this, according to Doerfer there are also diphthongs in Khalaj (Doerfer 1978: 19–21). Many morphological characteristics of Khalaj are archaic. For example, Khalaj still preserves causative affixes such as *-GUr* and *-GAR*, and the adjective verb ending *-(X)GLX ~ -(X)KIX*, seen in the Old Uighur and Karakhanid periods (Doerfer 1988: 118–123). Also, the locative case ending is *-çA* in Khalaj and the ablative case is *-DA* as in Old Turkic: *ūça* ‘asleep’, *yan-i-ça* ‘beside’, *häv-i-dä* ‘from his house’ (Doerfer 1971:165). Khalaj also has an archaic character in terms of vocabulary. Old Turkic *baliq* ‘city’ = Khalaj *baluq*, Old Turkic *küdan* ‘wedding, celebration’ = Khalaj *küdan*, Old Turkic *idiş* ‘dish’ = Khalaj *hidiş*. However, this vocabulary has largely changed due to the copying of large numbers of words from Farsi, Arabic, Azerbaijan and other languages of Iran: Khal. *guldän* ‘vase’ < Farsi *guldän*.

The sociolinguistic state of Khalaj does not seem very bright, and no positive predictions are being made about its future. This has been stated clearly in many articles on Khalaj. For social and linguistic reasons, the Khalaj people see their native language as a means of communication within the community, and their adoption of Farsi for communication outside the community greatly narrows the functional area

of Khalaj. This unbalanced bilingualism in the Khalaj community means that Farsi is influential at every level (Doerfer 1999: 303–310, Bosnalı 2010: 67–88, Kırıl 2000: 89, Güzel 2020: 429–440).

1.1. Data and Method

The data used in this study was collected from Khalaj people living in the villages of Talkhab (Talk.), Mansurabad (Mans.) and Vashqan (Vaš.) in the Markazi province of Iran. The random sampling method was used in the interviews, and participants were chosen randomly from those closest. Data collected from sixteen male and four female participants was used for the study. Five participants were in the 35–60 year age group, and six were aged between 60 and 80. The other participants were selected from among individuals of less than 35 years of age. The participants stated that they knew both Khalaj and Farsi well. In this article, examples were not taken from Khalaj-language texts in previously published studies, and 107 sentences in which conditionals were used were examined and classified.

2. Conditional forms in Khalaj

Conditional statements are defined logically as “the relationship between two propositions, a protasis (p) and an apodosis (q)” (Comrie 1986: 78). Conditional constructions are described as a complex construction including a main clause and an adverbial subordinate clause attached to this main clause. Conditional clauses state the condition of whether the action of the main clause has been performed, may be performed, or may have been performed (Bulut 2009: 35).

Explanations of conditional constructions generally refer to the presumption of truth to differing degrees, typically using open or closed conditions or contrasts such as real vs. unreal or factual vs. counterfactual. The character of most of these explanations is a regular limited two or three-way division, according to the language. Comrie thinks that conditionality (maybe) is a continuum without any definite separation, that different languages make simple distinctions at different hypothetical levels along this continuum, and that the choice of how this is done is subjective (Comrie 1986: 88).

Conditional constructions have different structural characteristics. According to the context of a conditional construction, the apodosis and the protasis may change places. In connection with this, the discourse-pragmatic evaluations of a conditional construction may vary (Can Bakırlı 2010: 27). In conditional constructions, both the protasis and the apodosis may vary in form. Khalaj, as well as using the *-sA* marker preserved from old Turkic to today in many Turkic languages (Bulut 2009, Menz 2009, Kerslake 2003), also uses methods which have developed as a result of language contact and which do not accord with the general typology of Turkic languages. Although conditional constructions have attracted the attention of large number of linguists, the conditional sentences of Khalaj have not often been the topic of study.

The aim of this article is to explain the various conditional constructions in Khalaj. The form and meaning characteristics of conditional constructions are examined in the study.

2.1. Constructions marked with *-sA*

In Khalaj, conditional clauses are generally formed with the addition of morphological markers based on *-sA* to the protasis. *-sA* based conditional sentences show different meaning content according to other morphemes used in the protasis and apodosis.

One of the commonest meaning contents of *-sA* based sentences is the expression of a real conditional. In these constructions, generally accepted truths or habits are mostly referred to. In this kind of conditional, the aorist is often used with *-sA* in the protasis, and the apodosis takes a non-past-tense marker. In sentence (1) below, a generally accepted scientific truth is conveyed. In sentence (2), a habit constantly repeated from the past until today is conveyed.

(1) Talk.

<i>yayuş</i>	<i>kälsä</i>	<i>häkinlär</i>	<i>käkärir</i>
rain	come:COND	crop:PL	sprout:AOR

“If it rains, the crops sprout.”

(2) Vaş.

<i>boyda</i>	<i>olmassa</i>	<i>arpa</i>	<i>häkärimiz</i>
wheat	be:NEG[AOR]-COND	barley	plant:AOR-1PL

“If there is no wheat, we plant barley.”

Along with this, *-sA*-based constructions can give a speaker’s opinions and plans which are closely related to notionally true conditions. In these conditional sentences, the speaker’s opinions, plans and judgments are given (see *potentialis* in Bulut 2009). These kinds of statement are expressed in different ways in Khalaj. The commonest is for the verb in the protasis to be marked with aorist + *-sA*, and the apodosis with the aorist.

(3) Mans.

<i>bāzārça</i>	<i>işlāsä</i>	<i>häyli</i>	<i>havul</i>	<i>olur</i>
market	work-COND3SG	very	good	be:AOR.3SG

“If he works in the market, that’ll be very good.”

(4) Talk.

<i>dädämiy</i>	<i>kärsäm</i>	<i>kömäk</i>	<i>‘etärim</i>
father:POSS1SG-ACC	see:COND-1SG	help:	AOR-1SG

“If I see my father, I help.”

Also, in *-sA*-based conditional sentences, modal markers are frequently used in the apodosis.

(5) Talk.

bōz *ossa* *kārāk* *holunʔam*
 cold be:COND necessity come back:OPT-1SG
 “If it’s cold, I must come back.”

The conjunction *āgār* copied from Farsi can also come in sentences constructed with *-sA*. In these sentences, *āgār* is not a compulsory marker, but is used to reinforce the meaning of the sentence.

(6) Vaš.

āgār *xäläč* *tili* *ürgätsä,* *häyli* *xošhāl*
 If Khalaj language:POSS3SG teach:COND very happy
olʔam
 be:OPT-1SG

“If he teaches Khalaj, I’ll be very happy.”

In conditional sentences, the apodosis is usually a declarative sentence, but a question or an imperative can also be used.

(7) Mans.

sibä *zäng vursa* *yovaraq*
 tomorrow phone:COND go:IMP.1PL
 “If he phones tomorrow, let’s go.”

In Khalaj, the unit *-sA* can be used in the protasis with the *är-* past tense forms of the verb. In this type of construction, the verb in the apodosis generally takes past tense or aorist forms. In examples below (8, 9), a counterfactual condition, *-sA* has been used in the protasis along with the past tense form of the *är-*. In the apodosis, the verb uses the past tense form of the *är-* in the same way.

(8) Mans.

kāčä *sändilä* *varsattuq* *tīʔmi* *baluqča* *olattuq*
 night you:INS go:COND-PC-1PL now village:LOC be:PC-1PL
 “If we’d gone with you at night, we’d have been in the village now.”

(9) Talk.

uniy *pūliy* *ossamuš* *täräktuliy*
 he:GEN money-POSS.3SG be:COND-PC tractor-POSS.3SG
aluramuš
 buy:AOR.3SG-PC
 “If he’d had money, he’d have bought a tractor.”

In example 9 above, the *-mXš* morpheme added to the protasis verb is not an evidential marker. Here, it is a pluperfect marker. This morpheme developed this function under the influence of Farsi (Kıral 2000: 89-101). The sentence indicates a counterfactual situation.

In Khalaj, the apodosis and protasis sometimes change places. In the counterfactual conditional sentence below (10), the apodosis comes before the protasis.

- (10) Talk.
älän, häftād olmušattu, hełmäsätti.
 now seventy be:PST.3SG-PC die:PST.3SG-PC
 “He’d have been 70 now if he hadn’t died.”

2.2. Conditional constructions with the optative

In one frequently seen type of conditional sentence, the optative mood is used in the protasis. Here, what is noticeable is the use of a non-past tense marker in the apodosis. In the questionnaires, it was seen that the aorist was generally used. This is similar to the Turkic languages of Iraq (Bulut 2009: 46).

- (11) Talk.
sītiy hičmäyalär hełirlär
 milk:ACC drink:NEG.AOR-OPT.3PL die:AOR-3PL
 “If they don’t drink milk, they die.”

- (12) Mans.
äkki kätāb alum, bīsi sänä
 two book buy:AOR.1SG one:POSS.3SG you:DAT
yuollayām
 send:OPT-1SG
 “If I buy two books, I’ll send you one.”

The protasis can take the past tense form along with the optative. This was seen in only two examples. In these examples, the apodosis also takes past tense markers in conformity with the protasis. Examples 13 and 14 describe counterfactual conditions. The verb in the protasis takes the optative ending *-GA* and the pluperfect marker *-mXš*.

- (13) Vaš.
bōdā tırrilük itgämüş, xālī toqirämiš
 here live:OPT.3SG-PC carpet wove:AOR.3SG-PC
 “If she’d lived here, she’d have woven carpets.”

- (14) Talk.
Mohsänla bilä işlägättüm, dārskā varmazzuttüm
 Mohsän:INS with work:OPT-PC-1SG class-DAT go:NEG.AOR-PC-1SG
 “If I’d worked with Mohsen, I couldn’t have gone to class.”

Examples are also frequently seen in which the apodosis takes modal markers in constructions with the optative in the subordinate clause.

(15) Talk.

bī toy oluḡa, toysahāb kārāk
 a wedding be:AOR.OPT.3SG host necessity
cār vurya
 announce:OPT.3SG

“If there’s a wedding, the host must announce it.”

(16) Mans.

sibā vaqtiy olḡa Ezmāndkā
 tomorrow time-POSS.2SG be:AOR.OPT Ezmend-DAT
yovaraq
 go:IMP.1PL

“If you’ve got time tomorrow, let’s go to Ezmend.”

2.3. *agar*

The most commonly encountered construction in our texts was of conditional sentences constructed with the conjunction *ägär* (< Fars. *agar*), copied from Farsi. Gencan (2001: 461) states that the conjunction *eđer* in Turkish is used in apodosis clauses to reinforce its meaning. Also, it has been said that the use of *eđer* in Turkish is mostly optional (Csató and Johanson 1998: 203–235). Conditional sentences with *ägär* in Khalaj, as in other Turkic languages in Iran, have been influenced by Farsi. A real conditional sentence with *agar* in Farsi is in this form:

Fars.

Agar mixwastand nan bepazand, tanurra
 If want:PST.CONT3PL bread bake:SUBJPL oven:ACC
roušan mikardand
 light:PST.CONT3PL

‘If they wanted to bake bread, they would (usually) light the oven.’ (Bulut 2009: 65)

Looking at the examples below, it is seen that the examples of conditional marked with *ägär* structurally resemble the Farsi model. In Johanson’s terminology, this is a mixed copy. In our recordings, we found 43 examples.

(17) Talk.

ägär ullar kätāb hoqumaqiy hišöllar ullarqa
 if they book reading:ACC want:AOR.3PL them
kätāb yietgärüm
 book bring:AOR.1SG

“If they want to read a book, I’ll bring them a book.”

(18) Mans.

ägär hišōriy hävdä hünäm
 if want:PRE-2SG house:ABL go out:OPT.1SG
 “If you want, I’ll go out.”

This kind of conditional was used in the sentences below with the conjunction *ägär* and present (19), aorist (20) and past (21) tenses.

(19) Mans.

ägär säsimiziy zabt 'etōriy matal hayōriz
 if voice:POSS.1PL record:PRE-2SG story tell:PRE-1PL
 “If he’s recording our voice, we’ll tell a story.”

(20) Vaš.

uniy ägär pūliy ɔlir hoyruluq 'etmāz
 he:GEN if money-POSS.3SG be:AOR.3SG steal:NEG.AOR.3SG
 “If he has money, he won’t steal.”

(21) Talk.

ägär pāncārā bākitti, bōz olmaɣay
 if window close:PST.3SG cold be:NEG-FUT.3SG
 “If he’s closed the window, it won’t be cold.”

In example 22 below, the real conditional sentence is based on *-sA*. In this sentence, the conjunction *ägär* is optional, as in the Turkish.

(22) Talk.

ägär 'etābilsā yilqi ɔtlatullar
 if do:ABIL-COND flock graze:AOR.3PL
 “If they can do it, they take the flock to graze.”

After a protasis with the conjunction *ägär*, the apodosis may contain an imperative.

(23) Vaš.

ägär širīnī aldilār, kallarke
 if sweet buy:PST-3PL child:PL-DAT
v'ärtälār
 give:IMP.3PL
 “If they’ve bought sweets, let them give them to the children.”

(24) Man.

ägär hasta ol'rsiyz, kīčā olduqi yatuvay
 if tired be:2PL night be:CONV sleep:IMP.2PL
 “If you get tired, sleep at night.”

In a conditional sentence constructed with *ägär* (25), it was found that the protasis was used after the apodosis. This example, taken from a story told by an old person, expresses a command.

(25)

yāk *iċgār āgār hišōriy* *kāsikiy*
 come:IMP.2SG inside if want:PRE-2SG clothes:ACC
kōrāy
 see:OPT.2SG
 “Come inside if you want to see the clothes!”

2.4. Conditional constructions without conditional forms

Languages use different strategies to form conditionals. In terms of form, alongside constructions formed with conditional conjunctions, there are also constructions which are not in the form of a conditional, but which have a coded conditional meaning. These kinds of construction are coded in different ways. For example, there is no conditional marker in the following English sentence. An adverb clause of time provides expression of the conditional (Declerck and Reed 2001: 28):

You will be paid AFTER the job is finished, not before.

In some languages, there are conditional constructions in which adverbs are not used. Mandarin Chinese is a good example of this. In that language, a conditional statement can be made without the use of a conditional adverb. As can be seen in the example below, *rúguō* (if) in the protasis and *jīu* (then) in the apodosis are optional (Comrie 1986: 82).

(rúguō) Zhangsan hē jīu, wǒ (jīu) mà tā
 If Zhangsan drinks wine, (then) I will scold him.

In Khalaj also, there are constructions which have a conditional meaning but which do not use any conditional markers. These conditional constructions are achieved with tense endings and mood markers in the protasis and apodosis. This kind of conditional, unmarked by any morpheme, were found 16 times in our recordings.

In the examples of conditionals below (26, 27), the present tense is used in the protasis and apodosis. In this sentence, the action expressed in the protasis must be realized for the apodosis to be realized.

(26) Talk.

xäläcī hayōm, *xäläcī fähm 'etmōllar* *farsī*
 Khalaj speak:PRE.1SG Khalaj understand:NEG.PRE-3PL Farsi
hayōm.
 speak:PRE.1SG
 “I speak Khalaj. If they don’t understand Khalaj, I speak Farsi.”

(27) (Man.)

y^uolqa *tüšōriy* *nānāsikā*
 way:DAT set out:PRE-3SG mother:POSS.3SG-DAT
zāng vurōr
 phone:PRE.3SG
 “If he sets out, he calls his mother.”

In example 28, the real conditional statement is made using the present tense in the protasis and the aorist in the apodosis.

(28) Talk.

Fäyzabadqa yovaraq. Ullar xäläci hayöllar,
 Feyzabad:DAT go:IMP.1PL they Khalaj speak:PRE.2PL
säsläriy zabt 'etämiz.
 voice:PL-ACC record:AOR.1PL

“Let’s go to Feyzabad. If they speak Khalaj, we’ll record them.”

Past Tense forms are frequently used to indicate conditionals. In the following sentences, the pluperfect is used in the protasis, but it is followed by an apodosis in which the past tense is used. The meaning content of this kind of structure often indicates unreal conditionals.

(29) Talk.

qor häyli kälmišätti beyin işlämäzättik
 snow a lot come:PST.3SG-PC today work:NEG.AOR-PC.1PL

“If it had snowed a lot, we wouldn’t have worked today.”

(30) Talk.

pülumuz olmušattu qara kinimiz däq
 money:POSS.1PL be:PT-PC bad day:POSS.1PL also
höz olattu.
 few be:[AOR].3SG-PC

“If we’d had money, we’d have had fewer bad days.”

In one sentence, the protasis refers to a hypothetical world. This is expressed by the use of the past tense form in the protasis. In the apodosis, present tense markers have been added to the verb.

(31) Talk.

kälgili yıl torkiyäkä kældim šäyöm
 next year Turkey:DAT come:PST-1SG want:PRE-1SG
säniy ziyärat 'etgäm
 you:ACC visit:OPT-1SG

“If I come to Turkey next year, I want to visit you.”

Declerck and Reed (2001: 31) state that time-coding constructions can contain conditional associations. In Khalaj, it is seen that adverbs indicating time contain an expression of conditionality. In example (32), there is an adverbial clause of time constructed with the time adverb *bäd*, and here the meaning is ‘watching the film will happen only when/after the condition of studying has been met’.

(32) Talk.

Mohammäd dârs hoqir, bād film vāqibilōr
 Mohammed study:AOR.3SG after film watch: ABIL-PRE.3SG
 “Mohammed studies, later he can watch the film.”

Similarly, time-coded constructions were recorded with conditional-associated content with *o moqay* (<Farsi *moqei*) and *o vaqt*, meaning ‘then’.

(33) Mans.

o moqay yovuşqan yiet'rōllar pūllariy
 when rhubarb bring:PRE.3PL money:POSS.3PL.ACC
v'ārōm
 give:PRE.1SG
 “When they bring the rhubarb, I’ll give the money.”

(34) Vaš.

vaqte ke hündü taşqar sözimiş
 when go out:PST.3SG outside word:POSS.1SG-ACC
hayōm
 speak:PRE.1SG
 “If you go outside, I’ll speak.”

In Khalaj, conditional clauses can be expressed by lexical markers. Two examples were seen in our recordings in which the construction *her kim* was used in a conditional sentence, and one with *her ne*. These conditional constructions based on lexical markers come from the influence of Farsi.

(35) Vaš.

här kim uniy ziyārätkä kälir şuqulat yā
 whoever him visit:DAT come:AOR.3SG chocolate or
şirīnī v'ārir
 sweets give:AOR.3SG
 “Whoever comes to visit him, he gives them either chocolate or sweets.”

(36) Vaš

här nä kärüngili օlur hirāq
 however apparent be:AOR.3SG far away
օlmaz
 be:NEG.AOR.3SG
 “However much it seems, it’s not far away.”

Conclusion

In daily communication, conditional expressions are commonly used, because they play a very important role in expressing hypothetical ideas, habits and obligations, suggesting results and as a result affecting human behaviour. The structural distribution of these conditional sentences is as follows:

1. Conditional sentences constructed with *agar* (43 examples)
2. Conditional sentences based on *-sA* (29 examples)
3. Sentences constructed with the optative (19 examples)
4. Morphologically marked conditional sentences (16 examples)

In conditional constructions formed from a protasis and an apodosis in Khalaj, the protasis is usually coded before the apodosis. In only two sentences in our recordings was it found that the protasis was coded after the apodosis. The two examples in which the protasis followed the apodosis were spoken by female participants.

In Khalaj, conditional sentences based on the Turkic type *-sA* morpheme was used very frequently. Conditional sentences based on *-sA* were used with the past tense just as with the aorist and present tenses. These constructions had hypothetical or unreal conditional content, according to the use of tense endings in the protasis and apodosis.

Farsi generally has a strong effect on Khalaj. This strong effect, seen in all areas of the language, can also be seen in conditional sentences. Conditional statements in Khalaj constructed with *ägär* are modelled on Farsi. This type of conditional sentence was more used by participants of less than 55 years of age.

The basic strategy in Khalaj of forming conditionals without morphological markers comes from the effect of Iran. As with other Turkic languages in Iran (Bulut 2009: 64–68), morphologically unmarked conditional sentences take time markers which are similar to Farsi.

Especially in the past century, the functional area of Khalaj has been greatly narrowed under the intense effect of Farsi, and is now spoken by a very small population. The effect of Farsi on conditional sentences is the result of a process over a very long time. It was found that although Turkic type conditional sentences are used, use of the Farsi-type construction is increasing.

Abbreviations

ABIL	ability/possibility	AOR	aorist
DAT	dative	LOC	locative
PL	plural	PRE	present
ABL	ablative	COND	conditional
GEN	genitive	NEG	negative
PC	past kopula	PST	past
ACC	accusative	CON	converb
INS	instrumental	OPT	optative
POSS	possessive	SG	singular

References

- Bosnalı, Sonel 2010. Halaçanın yitim ve değişim sürecine tasarlama kipleri açısından bir bakış. *bilig* 53, 67–88.
- Bulut, Christiane 2009. Conditional clauses in Iran-Turkic. In: Csató, É. Á. et al. (eds.) *Turcological Letters to Bernt Brendemoen*. Oslo: Novus Press: 35–76.
- Comrie, Bernard 1986. A typology of conditionals. In: E. C. Traugott, A. Meulen, J. S. Reilly & C. A. Ferguson (eds.), *On Conditionals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 77–100
- Can Bakırlı, Özge 2010. *Türkçede Koşullu Yapılar*. [PhD Thesis dissertation, Dokuz Eylül University]
- Csató, É. Ágnes, Johanson, L. 1998. Turkish. In: L. Johanson and É. Á. Csató (eds.) *Turkic languages*, London and New York: Routledge: 203–235
- Doerfer, Gerhard 1971. *Khalaj Materails* (with the collaboration of Wolfram Heschel Hrtwig Scheinhardt, Semih Tezcan). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Doerfer, Gerhard 1978. Khalaj and Its relation to the other Turkic languages. *TDAY-Belleten* 1977, 17–33.
- Doerfer, Gerhard 1988. *Grammatik des Chaladsch*. Turcologica 4, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Doerfer, Gerhard 1999. İran’da Türk dil ve lehçeleri ve bunların hayatta kalma şansı. *3.Uluslar Arası Türk Dil Kurultayı 1996*, Ankara: TDK Yayınları: 303–310.
- Declerck, Renaat, Reed, S. 2001. *Conditionals: A Comprehensive Empirical Analysis*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Gencan, T. Nejat 2001. *Dilbilgisi*. Ankara: Ayraç Yayınları
- Güzel, Hasan 2020. Telhab Halaçları üzerine toplumdilbilimsel bir değerlendirme. *Semih Tezcan ve Türkoloji*. Ankara: Nobel Yayınları: 429–440.
- Kıral, Filiz 2000. Reflections on -miş in Khalaj. In: Lars Johanson & Bo Utas (eds.). *Evidentials, Turkic, Iranian and Neighbouring Languages*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter: 89–101.
- Kornfilt, Jaklin 1997. *Turkish*. London: Routledge.
- Menz, Astrid 2009. Conditionals in th dialects of the province Erzurum. In: É. Á. Csató, et al. (eds.) *Turcological Letters to Bernt Brendemoen*. Oslo: Novus Press: 173–190.
- Ruhi, Ş. Zeyrek, D., Turan, Ü. D. (eds.) 2000. Koşul tümcelerinde varsayımsallık ve gerçek karşılığı. *XIII. Dilbilim Kurultayı Bildirileri*. İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları: 19–29.