

Conditional Sentences in Ekid

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Abstract

This paper examines *conditional sentences* with the conditional conjunction *if* in Ekid, with a view to determining their syntactic formation and internal structure, including their semantic roles. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study, and data were collected through elicitation from four competent native speakers of Ekid between the ages of 50 and 65, who have resided in Ekid for over 40 years. GB (Government and binding) Syntax was deployed in the analysis of data. Investigation reveals that in Ekid, conditional sentences with the conditional conjunction – *if* are therefore classified into various classes: zero conditionals (real), first conditional (predictive), second conditional (unreal) and third conditional (hypothetical). The conditional conjunction – *if* in Ekid conditional sentences has played a vital linguistic role in terms of its position in the conditional sentence; it occurred morphologically as one-word *àdíékè/ákpédè* ‘if’ and as a conditional modal affix *kpé-* ‘if’. Also, this work reveals the relationship between the conditional conjunctions *àdíékè/ákpédè* ‘if’ and the conditional modal affix *kpé-* ‘if’ in Ekid conditional sentences, which is determined by the tense of the conditional sentence.

1. Introduction

Language, as a system of rules and principles in which structure and meaning are integrated for communication, is an essential tool for communication. The use of language for communication determines how information is transferred from one person to another. Information as facts or details about somebody or something can be received through diverse ways of expression in literature such as idioms, proverbs, figurative expressions, questions, conditional sentences, and declarative/imperative sentences in a language.

The term “conditional sentence”, according to Dancygier (1998:1), refers to ‘a complex sentence composed of the main clause (called *apodosis*, or symbolized as *q*) and a subordinate clause (called *protasis* or symbolized as *p*). The protasis is introduced by a conjunction which is *if* in English language’.

This study attempts to examine conditional sentences in Ekɪd language, with a view in determining syntactically their internal structure, formation, principles and parameters, also meanings which they encode. The aim of this study is to examine Conditional Sentences with the conditional conjunction – *ifin* Ekɪd, with a view to determine their syntactic formation and internal structures, including their semantic roles.

2 Some Definitions of Conditional Sentence

The term “conditional sentence” otherwise called “conditional”, is defined in many ways in literature. Some of the definitions focus on the presence of conditional conjunction, while some focus on the relation between the two clauses.

Bennett (2003) defines conditional sentence as a sentence that contains two clauses: the main clause and the subordinate clause; and the subordinate clause is introduced by a conditional conjunction. The two definitions (that of Dancygier, 1998; and Bennett, 2003) use the term ‘conditional’ to refer to sentences that are introduced by conditional conjunctions. For example, we have the following below:

1. a) If it rains, the match will be cancelled.
b) If it rained, the match would be cancelled.
c) If it had rained, the match would have been cancelled.

A similar definition is given by Crystal (2008:99) who defines conditionals as ‘clauses whose semantic role is the expression of hypothesis or conditionals. In English, these are introduced by *if*, *unless* and few other conjunctions’.

Also, Bhatt and Pancheva (2007:641) state that ‘conditional structures are interpreted in general terms, with the proposition expressed by the antecedent clauses specifying the (modal) circumstances in which the proposition expressed by the main clause is true’. This entails a causal relation between two clauses in a conditional sentence and they do not entail the presence of a conditional conjunction. In other words, it’s about other types of conditional sentences in which the conditional meaning is expressed without the occurrence of the conditional conjunction. The following examples which are quoted from Bhatt and Pancheva (2007:641) express conditional meaning and are not introduced by a conditional conjunction.

2. a) ‘kiss my dog and you will get fleas’.
b) ‘For you to do that, it would be nice’.

The meaning of sentence (2a) is similar to “if you kiss my dog, you will get fleas”; while (2b) is the same as “it would be nice if you do that”. Bhatt and Pancheva (2007) believe that this observation is not only in English, and it can be extended to many languages.

3 Classification of Conditional Sentence

English conditional sentences have been analyzed by the semantic distinction and syntactic structures into categories. We will discuss and summarize the categories as proposed by several researchers, beginning with the classification by the semantic distinction, and then the classification by the syntactic structures.

3.1 Semantic Classification

Several researchers have attempted to classify conditional sentences in terms of their semantic distinction. In the linguistic literature, the classification of conditional sentences is technologically more diverse than in philosophy.

Dancygier (1998) also states that two types of conditional sentences are distinguished in the literature: open conditional sentences (also called *real, factual* or neutral conditional sentence), and hypothetical conditional sentences (also called *closed, unreal, rejected, non-factual* or *counterfactual* conditional sentence). Dancygier (1998:30) states that open conditional sentences ‘do not make any prediction about the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of the condition’; and describes that, hypothetical conditional sentences ‘express the speaker’s negative belief to the fulfillment of the condition’. Also, Dancygier (1998:34) adds that ‘open conditional sentences are seen as neutral with the respect to the fulfillment of the condition; and hypothetical ones are said to present it as contrary to expectation, assumption or fact, depending on time reference’ (cf. Quirk, Bandolph, Greenbaum, Sidney, Leech, Geoffrey and Svartvik, 1985).

Dancygier (1998) also points out that conditional sentence can be predictive or non-predictive. Dancygier (1998:61) defines predictive conditional sentences as conditional sentences which ‘represent predictive reasoning and they are therefore marked with *if*-backshift in the protases and have a predictive modal in their apodoses’. Dancygier (1998) uses the term **backshift** to refer to the cases of language when it uses a verb that refers to time that is later than the time that marked in the form of the verb. It means that the time marked in the form of verb is earlier than the time that is referred to by this verb. For example, the verbs “rain”, “rained”, and “had rained” in the following examples are examples of backshift because, the verb “rain” in example (3a) is marked for the present, but it refers to the future. In the same way, the verb “rained” in (3b) is marked for the past, but it refers to the future. Also, the form “had rained” in (3c) is marked for the past perfect, but it refers to the past. In this case, all the conditional sentences below are predictive:

3. a) If it rains, the match will be cancelled.
b) If it rained, the match would be cancelled.
c) If it had rained, the match would have been cancelled.

Contrarily, in non-predictive conditional sentences, verb forms are marked for the time that they refer to. Therefore, it means that the verbs are not back-shifted and their uses

in conditional sentences are the same as their uses in regular sentences. Also, the two clauses (protasis and apodosis) in non-predictive conditional sentences are not constrained to their usual sequence tenses. In other words, the event in apodosis may occur before the event in the protasis. The following sentences which are quoted from Dancygier (1998:62) show non-predictive conditional sentences in English.

4. a) 'If he will not arrive before time, there is no point in ordering for him'.
- b) 'If she is in the lobby, the plane arrived early'.

From the semantic explanation of conditional sentences by some linguists, according to Kaufmann (2001:85), conditional sentences in English language and other languages are grouped into two semantic types: **real** and **unreal conditionals**. In a real conditional sentence, the speaker has no knowledge about the fulfillment of the condition and does not involve *backshift*; also, the time reference of a real conditional sentence can be past, present and future. On the other hand, in an unreal conditional sentence, the speaker has a negative belief towards the fulfillment of the condition, and there is an involvement of *backshift*; and also, the time reference can be the past, present or future.

3.2 Syntactic Classification:

In English conditionals, the condition clause (protasis) is most commonly introduced by the conjunction *if*, or sometimes other conjunctions or expressions such as *unless*, *when*, *provided that* etc. These conditionals are often classified under the following headings: zero conditional, first conditional (or conditional I), second conditional (or conditional II) and third conditional (or conditional III), according to grammatical pattern followed.

3.2.1 Zero Conditionals

It refers to a conditional sentence that expresses a simple implication. In other words, it is a conditional sentence that is used for talking about general truths – things which always happen under certain condition, particularly when both clauses are in present tense.. The following examples in Table 1 (cf. Abbas (2012:43 - 44), indicate the grammatical pattern of zero conditionals.

Table 1: Examples of English Zero Conditionals

	Subordinate clause (protasis)	Main clause (apodosis)
	<i>If + present simple</i>	<i>Present simple</i>
5. a)	If you cool water to zero degree	it turns into ice
b)	If you heat iron	It expands

These forms of the conditionals shown above, express the idea that universally known facts are being described. In other words, they express facts, rules and situations

which are always true (one thing always follow the other). Thus, zero conditional is a real conditional (cf. Abbas (2012:43 - 44)).

3.2.2 First Conditionals (or Conditional I)

It refers to a predictive conditional sentence. The prediction expresses possible future events which depend on other events happening in the future. It is used to talk about future events that might happen; and the condition is expressed using the present tense, and the consequence using the future tense, as shown in the table 2 (cf. Abbas (2012:44)).

Table 2: Examples of First Conditionals in English

	Subordinate clause (protasis)	Main clause (apodosis)
	<i>If + present simple</i>	<i>Future (will) + infinitive without 'it'</i>
6. a)	If it rains	we will have to cancel the picnic
b)	If I go abroad	I will get something back for you

3.2.3 Second Conditionals (or Conditional II)

It is used to talk about unreal possibilities or impossible events, thus, establishing the course of action that would follow. It refers to the pattern where the condition clause (protasis) is in the past tense, and the consequence (the apodosis) in conditional mood (using 'would' or in the first person and rarely 'should'). It is used for expressing unreal situations in the present or in the future. Thus, it is used for hypothetical, counterfactual situations in a present or future time frame where the condition is known to be false or is presented as unlikely as shown in the table 3 (cf. Abbas (2012:46)).

Table 3: Examples of Second Conditionals in English

	Subordinate clause (protasis)	Main clause (apodosis)
	<i>If + past simple</i>	<i>would/could (+ infinitive without 'to')</i>
7. a)	If I had a million dollars	I would buy a penthouse on Park Avenue
b)	If I win the lottery	I could stop working

3.2.4 Third Conditionals (or Conditional III)

It's the pattern where the condition clause is in the past perfect, and the consequence is expressed using the conditional perfect. It expresses unreal situations (things that do not happen) in the past. In other words, it is used to refer to hypothetical or counterfactual situation in the past as shown in table 4 (cf. Abbas (2012:48)).

Table 4: Examples of Third Conditionals in English

	Subordinate clause (protasis)	Main clause (apodosis)
	<i>If + past perfect</i>	<i>would/could/might have + past participle</i>
8. a)	If I had studied a little more in college	life would have been easier
b)	If I had known that you were coming	I would have met you in the airport

4 The Role of Conditional Conjunction

Dancygier (1998:23) suggests that a conjunction in a conditional sentence can have two roles. First, it is a marker of non-assertiveness, whereby its position in front of an assumption shows that there are reasons for presenting the assumption as inassertive. Second, it introduces the conditional clause, showing that there is a connection between the conditional and result clause in the conditional sentence. Also, Tynan and Lavin (1997) believe that the main role of the connective (conditional) conjunction in a conditional sentence is to express the assumptions of the speaker regarding the relation between the two clauses in the conditional. They interpreted conditional sentence to mean that ‘if the conditional clause is true, the result clause will be true’ and the speaker does not assert that the conditional clause is true.

5 Conditional Sentences in Ekɪd

Conditional sentences in Ekɪd can be formed by the use of the conditional conjunction *àdíékè* ‘if’ or *áKpédè* ‘if’; and can also be expressed by the use of the conditional modal prefix *Kpé-* ‘if’. We first present below, the sample of the *If* conditional sentences in Ekɪd with the *if*-form (conditional) conjunction *àdíékè* ‘if’; and later determine the relationship between the two conditional conjunctions *àdíékè* and *áKpédè* ‘if’, and the conditional modal prefix *Kpé-* ‘if’.

5.1 Conditional Sentences with the conditional conjunction *àdíékè* ‘if’

In Ekɪd language, certain conditions are expressed with the conditional conjunction *if*-form: *àdíékè*, which could be either real or unreal condition. Let us consider some examples in which such conditions are expressed:

5. *àdíékè àfè à tɪghéké mé ñkwà ádà, ànyé á bùmó*
If you 2sg.cl - sit on egg the, it 3sg.cl-crack
“If you sit on the egg, it egg cracks”.
6. *àdíékè àfè à míáhá ékpád ádà mé ìbibènè, ànyé á bùmó*
If you 2sg.cl smash bottle the on wall, it 3sg.cl-break
“If you smash the bottle on the wall, it breaks”.
7. *àdíékè èmèm á míáhá ènò mé íkpábòñ, ènò á yáá-túá*
If Emem 3sg.cl beat Eno with cane, Eno 3sg.cl fut cry
“If Emen beats Eno with cane, Eno will cry”.

8. àdíékè émò é díáhá ndídíá àbùúsù ànim, í mì-kòu-kè àkǎñ mé àkónòjì
If they 3pl.cl-eat food morning this, 3pl.cl.Fut feel Neg. hunger in night
“If they eat this morning, they will not feel hungry in the night”.
9. àdíékè àmì m máá-nyí ùmíáñ ákpòhò, àmì m kpáá-dí ébú
If I 1sg.cl Pst have more money, I 1sg.cl M buy goat
“If I had more money, I would buy a goat”.
10. àdíékè àmì m máá-kán-nyè ndídíá, àmì m kpáá-nyí ùmíáñ ákpòhò
If I 1sg.cl Pst Hab sell food, I 1sg.cl M have more money
“If I used to sell food, I would have more money”.
11. àdíékè àmì m mé-nyè ndídíá, àmì m- mé-nyí ùmíáñ ákpòhò
If I 1sg.cl Perf sell food, I 1sg.cl Perf have more money
“If I have sold food, I have more money”.
12. àdíékè àmì m máá-kán-sùk-nyè ndídíá, àmì m kpáá-ké-nyí ùmíáñ ákpòhò
If I 1sg.cl Pst Hab Prog sell food, I 1sg.cl M Pst have more money
“If I used to be selling food, I would have had more money”.

The examples presented above comprise the conditional conjunction *àdíékè* which expresses certain conditions that are real and unreal. Examples (5 and 6) express conditions that are factual (real); examples (7 and 8) express conditions that are predictive (real); while example (9, 10, 11 and 12) express unreal conditions. The conditional conjunction *àdíékè* is seen to occur at the initial position of the protasis (*if*-clause), which precedes the subject of the protasis, serving as the subject form of conditional conjunction.

6 The Relationship between the Conditional Conjunctions *àdíékè/ákpédè* and the Conditional Modal Prefix *kpé-* of Conditional Sentences in Ekɪd

The relationship between the conditional conjunction *àdíékè* and the conditional modal prefix *kpé-* in the conditional clauses in Ekɪd is determined by verb form (tense) in the *if*-clause (protasis). That is, they can stand in for another in the *if*-clause based on the tense that is involved, without violating the grammaticality of the construction or changing the result in the main clause. Let us consider the following expressions:

13. a) àdíékè àfè à tìghéké mé ñkwà ádà, ànyé â bùmó
if you 2sg.cl - sit on egg the, it 3sg.cl-crack
“If you sit on the egg, it egg cracks”.
- b) àfè à kpé tìghè mé ñkwà ádà, ànyé â bùmó
you 2sg.cl if sit on egg the, it 3sg.cl-crack
“If I sit on the egg, it cracks”.

From the examples above, it is observed that example (13a) and (b) counterpart expresses the same factual condition that is real with the use of zero present tense in both the *if*-clause and the main clause. From the example, it is observed that there is no violation of the grammaticality of the condition expressed in the *if*-clauses, and there is no change

in the result or main clauses. The difference is, when the conditional conjunction *àdíékè* is used in the *if*-clause, there is an occurrence of verbal extension (when the tense is simple present) in the verb roots: *tìghé* ‘sit’ and *nyí* ‘have’ marked by the extension marker *-ké*, and *-ní* (cf. Essien, 1990: 116, 117), in order to complete the grammaticality of the *if*-clause, because without such occurrence, the *if*-clause will otherwise be ungrammatical as seen in example below:

14. a) **àdíékè àfè à tìghé mé ñkwà ádà, ànyé â bùmó*
 if you 2sg.cl - sit on egg the, it 3sg.cl-crack
 “If you sit on the egg, it egg cracks”.
- b) **àdíékè àmì ñ nyí- inì m̀fìn, àmì ñ yáá-k̀dè útúm ínwań ádà*
 if I 1sg.cl have time today, I 1sg.cl Fut finish work farm that
 “If I have time today, I will finish that farm work”.

From the observation above, it is therefore considered that the conditional conjunction - *àdíékè* and the conditional modal prefix *kpé-* are fit for the formation of factual conditionals and predictive conditionals in Ekɪd. Further more, let us consider if the conditional conjunction *ákpédè* is also fit for the formation of factual conditionals in Ekɪd, by using the verb form – present tense. Let us consider this by using the same conditional expression (cf. 14a/b) as used in example below:

15. a) **ákpédè àfè à tìghé mé ñkwà ádà, ànyé â bùmó*
 if you 2sg.cl -sit on egg the, it 3sg.cl crack
 “If you sit on the egg, it cracks”.
- b) **ákpédè àmì ñ nyí- inì m̀fìn, àmì ñ yáá-k̀dè útúm ínwań ádà*
 if I 1sg.cl have time today, I 1sg.cl Fut finish work farm that
 “If I have time today, I will finish that farm work”.

From the example above, it is quite obvious that the conditional conjunction *ákpédè* is not suitable for factual conditionals which use present tense in the expression, therefore making the construction ungrammatical. For the grammaticality of such expression in order to suit the conditional conjunction *ákpédè*, the verb form in both the *if*-clause and main clause must take on a perfect viewpoint (aspect) which is expressed with the marker *mé*, as seen in the example below:

16. a) *ákpédè àfè à mé tìghé mé ñkwà ádà, ànyé á m̀ê bùmó*
 if you 2sg.cl Perf sit on egg the, it 3sg.cl Perf crack
 “If I have sat on the egg, it has cracked”.
- b) *ákpédè àmì m̀ mé nyí- inì m̀fìn, àmì ñ yáá-k̀dè útúm ínwań ádà*
 if I 1sg.cl Perf have time today, I 1sg.cl Fut finish work farm that
 “If I have time today, I will finish that farm work”.

The two conditional conjunctions of conditional sentences in Ekɪd *àdíékè* and *ákpédè* can also replace each other in certain conditional constructions in Ekɪd, without violating the grammaticality of Ekɪd language in such constructions. As observed earlier that the relationship of substitution or interchangeability between the conditional conjunctions *àdíékè* and *kpé*-is determined by the verb form of conditional sentences, likewise the relationship between *àdíékè* and *ákpédè*. Let us consider some examples below:

17. a) *ákpédè àmì m mé-nyí ùmíáñ ákpòhò, àmì m kpáá-dì ébú*
 if I 1sg.cl Perf have more money, I 1sg.cl M buy goat
 “If I have more money, I would buy a goat”.
- b) *àdíékè àmì m mé-nyí ùmíáñ ákpòhò, àmì m kpáá-dì ébú*
 if I 1sg.cl Perf have more money, I 1sg.cl M buy goat
 “If I have more money, I would buy a goat”.

From the examples above, it is observed that the (a) part is conditionally expressed with the conditional conjunction *ákpédè* ‘if’, while the (b) counterpart (of the same expression) is conditionally expressed with the conditional conjunction *àdíékè* ‘if’, as a substitute for the conditional conjunction *ákpédè*, which results in no ungrammaticality of the conditional construction.

7 The Syntactic and Semantic Classification of Conditional Sentences in Ekɪd

Conditional sentences in Ekɪd can be classified structurally into different classes (zero conditionals, first conditional, second conditional and third conditional) based on the tenses involved, with some variations in the protasis and apodosis (exception of the zero conditionals). Also, conditional sentences in Ekɪd can be semantically classified into different classes (the real conditionals: factual/predictive conditionals, and the unreal conditional: hypothetical/counterfactual conditionals) based on the degree of reality or probability (cf. Zhang, 2005: 9-14; Dancygier, 1998).

7.1 Zero Conditional Sentences: The Real (Factual) Conditional Sentences

Zero conditionals (factual conditionals) in Ekɪd can have the same structural pathern according to the verb form as determined by their degree of reality. Below, we have the pathern of both clauses with some examples:

- | | <i>If</i> | + | <i>Simple Present</i> | ...+ | <i>Simple Present</i> |
|-----|--------------------|--------------|---|-----------------|-----------------------|
| | <i>(If-clause)</i> | | | | <i>(Main clause)</i> |
| 18. | <i>àdíékè àfè</i> | <i>à</i> | <i>tìghéké mé ñkwà ádà,</i> | <i>ànyé á</i> | <i>bùmó</i> |
| | if | you 2sg.cl - | sit on egg the, | it 3sg.cl-crack | |
| | | | “If you sit on the egg, it egg cracks”. | | |
| 19. | <i>àdíékè àfè</i> | <i>à</i> | <i>míahá ékpád ádà mé mbibènè,</i> | <i>ànyé á</i> | <i>bùmó</i> |
| | if | you 2sg.cl | smash bottle the on wall, | it 3sg.cl-break | |
| | | | “If you smash the bottle on the wall, it breaks”. | | |

In the examples above, it is observed that in all the examples shown, the tense in both the *if*-clause and the main clause is expressed in simple present form, and they all express the idea of truth (things that always occur under certain condition) which are universally factual, just as in English language, i.e. factual conditionals, thus, real conditionals (cf. Zhang, 2005).

7.2 First Conditional (conditional I: The Real (Predictive) Conditional Sentences

In this type of conditional, the tense in the *if*-clause is simple present tense, while the tense in the main clause is future tense. Below are some examples of first conditional sentences in Ekɪd, with their structural pattern based on the verb form – tenses expressed by both the conditional clause and the result clause. The pattern is shown as:

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|------|----------------------|
| | <i>If</i> + <i>Simple Present</i> | ...+ | <i>Future</i> |
| | <i>(If-clause)</i> | | <i>(Main clause)</i> |
20. àdíékè Èmèm á míáhá Ènò mé íkpábòñ, Ènò á yáá-túá
 if Emem 3sg.cl beat Eno with cane, Eno 3sg.cl fut cry
 “If Emen beats Eno with cane, Eno will cry”.

From the example above, it is observed that, the tense in the *if*-clause is different from that of main clause, i.e. the *if*-clause is expressed in simple present verb form which states a condition as predicted by the main clause which is expressed in future verb form, marked by the modal marker: *yáá-* ‘*will*’ (cf. Essien 1990). Such conditional sentence in Ekɪd is therefore known as predictive conditional sentence; thus, real conditional sentence (cf. Zhang, 2005).

Also, in the main clause, instead of having the future tense to predict the result of the *if*-clause, we may have the following pattern in the main clause:

- If* + *Simple Present*, ...+ *may/can*. For example we have:
21. àdíékè édím á ùdéké ídì, àyìd ì mí kémé í wò ásòñ
 If rain 3sg.cl stop fall we 1pl.cl Perf can 1pl.cl go outside
 “If rain stops to fall, we can go outside”
- If* + *Simple Present*, ...+ *should/must*. For example we have:
22. ákpédè àfè à nyímí-díá ndídíá, àfè á nà kâ ùdùà
 If you 2sg.cl want eat food, you 2sg.cl M go market
 “if you want to eat food, you should/must go to the market”

Apart from having variations in the main clause, variation can also be in the *if* clause., For instance, instead of the *if*-clause to be in just a simple present tense, there is possibility for it to also contain some aspects such as perfective and progressive aspects as seen in the examples below:

- If* + *Simple Present (Perf/Hab/Prog)*, ...+ *Future*.
23. ákpédè àmí m mé kán sùk ndíá ùmíáñ ndídíá, àmí n yáá kpú ídí
 if I 1sg.cl Perf Hab Prog eat much food, I 1sg.cl Fut fat body
 “If i have been eating much food, I will be fat”.

If + Simple Present (Perf), ...+ Future.

24. àdíékè àmì m mé k̀ídé útúm ádá, àmì n yáá-dé
 if I 1sg.cl Perf finish farm work, I 1sg.cl Fut sleep
 “If I have finished the farm work, I will sleep”.

7.3 Second Conditional (conditional II): The Unreal (Hypothetical) Conditional Sentences

Some examples of second conditional sentences are shown below, in terms of the verb form of both the *if*-clauses and main clauses. The pattern is illustrated as:

If + Simple Past ...+ Would (Modal Auxiliary)
(If-clause) (Main clause)

25. ákpédè àmì m máá-nyí ùmíáñ ákpòhò, àmì m kpáá-dí ébú
 if I 1sg.cl Pst have more money, I 1sg.cl M buy goat
 “If I had more money, I would buy a goat”.

From the example above, it is observed that the *if*-clause is expressed in (simple) past tense marked by *ké-*, while the main clause is expressed with the modal prefix *kpáá-* ‘would’, which indicates the personal wish (willingness) of the speaker (cf. Essien, 1990:78, 88). It is also observed that the condition of the *if*-clause has not been fulfilled; such conditional expressions are hypothetical conditionals, thus, unreal conditionals (cf. Zhang, 2005).

7.4 Third Conditional (conditional III): The Unreal (Counterfactual) Conditional Sentences

Below are some examples of third conditional sentences in Ekid, based on the verb form which they expressed. The pattern is shown as:

If+ Past (Perfect Viewpoint) ...+ Would (Modal Auxiliary)
(If-clause) (Main Clause)

26. ákpédè àmì m máá- ké-nyí ùmíáñ ákpòhò, àmì m kpáá-ké-dí ébú
 if I 1sg.cl Pst Pst have more money, I 1sg.cl M Pst buy goat
 “If I had had more money, I would have bought a goat”.
27. ákpédè àmì m máá-nò ànyé ùmíáñ áfòñ, ànyé á kpáá-ké nyè ùsúk
 if I 1sg.cl-Pst give him more cloths, he 3sg.cl M Pst sell some
 “If I had given him more cloths, he would have sold some”.

From the examples, it is observed that the protases and apodoses use different verb form. That is, the *if*-clauses are expressed in past verb form/perfect viewpoint marked with *máá-/ké-*, while the main clauses use past participle verb form still marked with *ké* which is attached to the main verb, preceded by the modal prefix *kpáá-/kpí-* (negative form of

kpáá-) (Essien, 1990: 78, 88, 89). Also, the conditionals express impossible conditions which have not yet taken place and can never occur. In other words, they are counterfactual and thus, unreal conditionals (cf. Essien 1990: 89).

9 Summary and Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed and analyzed conditional sentences with the conditional conjunction ‘*if*’ in Ekɪd. This research reveals that, apart from the two types of conditional conjunctions *àdíékè/ákpedè* ‘*if*’ in Ekɪd, there is a modal affix *kpé-* ‘*if*’, which also expresses certain conditions as being attached to the verb root in the protasis or conditional or *if*-clause of conditional sentences, as well as its relationship with the two conditional conjunctions. Thus, the modal affix *kpé-*, is therefore seen as a ‘conditional modal affix (prefix)’. Also, investigation reveals that conditional sentences in Ekɪd, typically with the *if*-clause are therefore classified syntactically and semantically into various classes: zero conditionals, first conditional, second conditional and third conditional (syntactic classes); the real conditionals: factual/predictive conditionals, and the unreal conditional: hypothetical/counterfactual conditionals (semantic classes).

Having undergone this research, despite the dearth of reference material in Ekɪd to this aspect of research, this research is therefore just one of the pioneering works in Ekɪd language, which serves as a reference point for further research.

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