

AMHARIC CONVERSATION
for English Speakers - *a primary book*

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For English Speakers - a primary book

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Acknowledgement

About the Book

Amharic is [only] the most widely spoken and the Ethiopian Federal Government official language among 80 plus languages of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia is the only African country that has its own alphabets called *fidel* that Amharic is using as inherited from *Ge'ez* - an ancient Ethiopian language.

Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia is also referred as the capital of Africa because it's the seat of the then OAU (Organization of African Union), the current AU, UNECA (the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa) and lots of delegates. Moreover, Ethiopia is a host to the most number of UNESCO world heritages in Africa, and it is believed to be the possible home for modern human ancestors as well as many natural wonders.

For these and more reasons many a foreigners land Ethiopia in an increasing rate. But not everyone in Ethiopia speaks English, a language regarded as international; therefore, visitors get it easy to communicate with everyone if they can learn the basics of Amharic - - - and that's where the idea of preparing this book originated.

“How to do it?” is the question followed. Pocket sized, audio CD supported, quick reference for tourists, and simple dictionary-like conversation book is found to be the best answer at least in primary basis. This has proved the birth of “AmharicConversation for English Speakers” and so is the primary book on your hand.

Enjoy AmharicConversation!

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Introduction

Amharic is a Semitic language and is the official language of Ethiopia having more than 25 millions of speakers.

Amharic is written with a version of the *Ge'ez* script which contains more than 300 letters. There are 26 sounds to each of which has seven and sometimes more family-sounds in the Amharic alphabet. (Please look at the complete alphabets on page——)

Example 1: *la, lü, li, lä, lé, le', lo* (symbolized as ለ, ሉ, ሊ, ላ, ሌ, ል, ሎ)

To make the self-teaching activity of yours easier, in this book, we use our own way of reading Amharic words in Latin letters as mapped below.

| Vowel | Sounds as bolded in- | Amharic equivalent (examples) |
|-------|------------------------|---|
| a | accent, early | ኧ (e.g. <i>saw/ሰው</i> ~ man) |
| ü | cook, book | ኡ (e.g. <i>esü/አሁ</i> ~ he) |
| i | tip, peak | ኢ (e.g. <i>hidg/ሂጅ</i> ~ go (for feminine)) |
| ä | abacus, Canada | ኣ (e.g. <i>nä/ና</i> ~ come (for masculine)) |
| é | café, cafeteria | ኤ (e.g. <i>ené/አኔ</i> ~ I) |
| e' | learned, take | እ (e.g. <i>me'n?/ግግ?</i> ~ what?) |
| o | cold, toad | ኦ (e.g. <i>botä/ቦታ</i> ~ place) |
| ua | quality, dual | ኡዋ (e.g. <i>esua/አሷ</i> ~ she) |

Table 1: Amharic vowels mapped to Latin letters (only for AmharicConversation')

There are also Amharic consonants that are too slangy and difficult to make for English speakers. We have mapped these sounds to approximate common sounds so that any Amharic speaker could easily understand.

| Mapped to- | Sounds as bolded in- | Amharic equivalent (examples) |
|------------|----------------------|--|
| q | Al- Q aeda | ቀ (e.g. <i>qay/ቀይ</i> ~ red) |
| ñ | Avril Lav ñ | ኘ (e.g. <i>qañ/ቀኝ</i> ~ right [hand]) |
| dg (j) | B ridge | ጅ (e.g. <i>ledg/ልጅ</i> ~ child <i>je'l/ጅል</i> ~ fool) |
| jz | S eizure | ዠ (e.g. <i>gejzi/ጠር</i> ~ buyer (governor)) |
| tt | | ጠ (e.g. <i>qe'ttal/ቅጠል</i> ~ leaf) |
| ch | | ጨ (e.g. <i>chakāñ/ጨካኝ</i> ~ cruel) |
| ts | T sunami | ፀ/ጸ (e.g. <i>tsehay/ፀሃይ</i> ~ sun) |
| pp | E thiopia | ጸ (e.g. <i>lappis/ላጸስ</i> ~ eraser) |

Table 2: Uncommon Amharic sounds mapped to Latin letters (only for 'AmharicConversation')

The 'q' (ቀ) sound is correctly pronounced by the Arabs; whereas the Spanish people, on the other hand, could make 'ñ' (ኘ) and the Japanese

'ts' (θ/ʒ) sounds. However, the rest listed above are really difficult for [only] English speaking people, the sounds can easily be understood as pronounced in the above table.

As we go along, we will also need to see the Amharic language sentences difference with those of English ones. To begin with, let's see the difference between the order of *subject*, *object* and *verb* of a sentence as it is basic.

Example 2:

English = Subject + Verb + Object

E.g. I had coffee.

Amharic = Subject + Object + Verb

E.g. *e'né bünnä ttattahü (bünnä ttattahü)*

እኔ ቡና ጠጣሁ (ቡና ጠጣሁ)

Verbs' Tens

The second Amharic sentence (put in braces of Example 2) avoids the subject since it is embedded in the verb. In Amharic, verbs change their forms so that they can describe the subject. Thus, the avoidance of the subject doesn't change the meaning of the sentence (also adding the subject doesn't add anymore meaning to the sentence).

Example 3:

'Eat' ~ *mablät* (መጠጥ) or 'balä' (በላ) – root words in Amharic usually put in 2nd person masculine form.

I ate ~ *balähü* (በላህ)

We ate ~ *balän* (በላን)

You ate (masculine) ~ *baläh* (በላህ)

You ate (feminine) ~ *baläsh* (በላሽ)

You ate (plural) ~ *baläche'hü* (በላችሁ)

He ate ~ *balä* (በላ)

She ate ~ *balach* (በላች)

They ate ~ *balü* (በሉ)

Direct Propositional Suffixes

There is no verbs' tens change in Amharic language without inscription of sex and number of subject spoken of. The suffix over the verb determines all these. One should only know the verb appropriate to the third person singular (he), and then for the others, it is only a matter of adding the suffixes in Table 3.

| Subject | Suffix | Example |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| I | - <i>hu</i> (-ሁ) or - <i>chälahü</i> (-ቻለሁ) | I came ~ <i>mattähü</i> (መጣሁ) |
| We | - <i>n</i> (-ን) or - <i>tanäl</i> (-ተናል) | We came ~ <i>mattän</i> (መጣን) |
| You (masculine) | - <i>h</i> (-ህ) or - <i>tahäl</i> (-ተካል) | You came ~ <i>mattäh</i> (መጣህ) |
| You (feminine) | - <i>sh</i> (-ሽ) or - <i>tashäl</i> (-ተሻል) | You came ~ <i>mattäsh</i> (መጣሽ) |
| You (plural) | - <i>che'hü</i> (-ቸሁ) or - <i>täche'hual</i> (-ተቸኝል) | You came ~ <i>mattäche'hü</i> (መጣችሁ) |

| Subject | Suffix | Example |
|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| He | | He came ~ <i>mattä</i> (መጣ) |
| She | -ch (-ች) or -tälach (-ተለች) | She came ~ <i>mattäch</i> (መጣች) |
| They | -ü (ሁ) or -tawäl (-ተዋለ) | They came ~ <i>mattü</i> (መጡ) |

Table 3: Direct propositional suffixes in Amharic

Note:- The third person singular ‘it’ is denoted as either masculine or feminine usually depending on the size of the object; bigger objects are commonly sentenced in masculine sense.

When you declare something you saw, you simply say it in simple past form as ‘I saw’ which is equivalent to ‘*äyahü*’ (አየሁ) in Amharic; but if someone asks if you have seen something, you usually say it in a present participle form as ‘I have seen...’, which can be translated into Amharic as ‘...*äychälahu*’ (...አይቻለሁ). That is the difference between the two forms of tenses.

Personal Pronouns

All the examples we have seen earlier demonstrate *Subject* and *Verb* united as one word; in Amharic, it is also possible and common to make a single word after the combination of *Subject*, *Object* and *Verb*. ‘He told me’ can be translated as ‘*nagarañ*’ (ነረኝ) and ‘she told me’ is translated as ‘*nagarache’ñ*’ (ነረኝኝ). Most Amharic sentences are short that you can learn easily if you once understood how to make them. Table 4 and 5 guide you towards the ‘how’.

| Subject | Amharic (Independent) | Possessive Suffixes | Object Pronoun Suffixes | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | Prepositional | |
| | | | Benefactive | Locative or Adversative |
| I | <i>e’né</i> (አኔ) | -(y)é (-ይ/ኤ) | - <i>lañ</i> (-ለኝ) | - <i>labbñ</i> (-ለብኝ) |
| You (masculine) | <i>änta</i> (አንተ) | -(e’)h (-ህ) | - <i>lah</i> (-ለህ) | - <i>labbe’h</i> (-ለብህ) |
| You (feminine) | <i>änchi</i> (አንቺ) | -(e’)sh (-ሽ) | - <i>lash</i> (-ለሽ) | - <i>labbe’sh</i> (-ለብሽ) |

| Subject | Amharic (Independent) | Possessive Suffixes | Object Pronoun Suffixes | |
|--------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | Prepositional | |
| | | | Benefactive | Locative or Adversative |
| You (plural) | <i>e'nänta</i> (አናንተ) | <i>-che'hü</i> (-ኸህ) | <i>-läche'hü</i> (-ለኸህ) | <i>-labbäche'hü</i> (-ለባኸህ) |
| He | <i>e'sü</i> (እሱ) | <i>-(w)ü</i> (-አ) | <i>-law</i> (-ለው) | <i>-labbat</i> (-ለበት) |
| She | <i>e'sua</i> (እሷ) | <i>-ua</i> (-አዋ) | <i>-lät</i> (-ለት) | <i>-labbät</i> (-ለባት) |
| We | <i>e'ñä</i> (እኛ) | <i>-che'n</i> (-ኸን) | <i>-lan</i> (-ለን) | <i>-labbe'n</i> (-ለበን) |
| They | <i>e'nasü</i> (እነሱ) | <i>-chaw</i> (-ኸው) | <i>-lachaw</i> (-ለኸው) | <i>-labbächaw</i> (-ለባኸው) |

Table 4: Amharic Personal Pronouns

| Subject | Possessive Pronoun | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| I | My ~ <i>yané</i> (የኔ) | Me ~ <i>e'nén</i> (እኔን) |
| You (masculine) | Your ~ <i>yänta</i> (የንተ) | You ~ <i>antan</i> (አንተን) |
| You (feminine) | Your ~ <i>yänchi</i> (የንቺ) | You ~ <i>anche'n</i> (አንቺን) |

| Subject | Possessive Pronoun | |
|--------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| You (plural) | Your ~ <i>yanänta</i> (የኅንተ) | You ~ <i>e'näntan</i> (እኅንተን) |
| He | His ~ <i>yasü</i> (የሱ) | Him ~ <i>e'sün</i> (እሱን) |
| She | Her ~ <i>yasua</i> (የሷ) | Her ~ <i>e'suan</i> (እሷን) |
| We | Our ~ <i>yañä</i> (የኛ) | Us ~ <i>e'nän</i> (እኛን) |
| They | Their ~ <i>yanasü</i> (የነሱ) | Them ~ <i>e'nasün</i> (እነሱን) |

Table 5: Amharic Possessive Pronouns**Example 4:****Possessive Suffixes**

My book ~ *matse'hafé* (*yené matse'haf*)

መጽሐፍ (የኔ መጽሐፍ)

Your book ~ *matse'hafe'h* (*yänta matse'haf*) - masculine

መጽሐፍህ (የኅንተ መጽሐፍ)

matse'hafe'sh (*yänchi matse'haf*) - feminine

መጽሐፍሽ (የኅንቺ መጽሐፍ)

matse'hafache'n (*yanänta matse'haf*) – plural

መጽሐፋችን (የኛን መጽሐፍ)

His book ~ *matse'hafü* (*yasü matse'haf*)

መጽሐፉ (የሱ መጽሐፍ)

Her book ~ *matse'hafua* (*yesua matse'haf*)

መጽሐፉ (የሱ መጽሐፍ)

Our book ~ *matse'hafache'n* (*yañä matse'haf*)

መጽሐፋችን (የኔ መጽሐፍ)

Their book ~ *matse'hafachaw* (*yanasü maste'haf*)

መጽሐፋቸው (የሱ መጽሐፍ)

Beneficative Prepositional Suffixes

I have ...~ ...*älaiñ* (*e'né..... älaiñ*)

...አለኝ (አኔ አለኝ)

You have ...~ ...*älah* (*änta älah*) - masculine

... አለህ (አንተ..... አለህ)

...*älash* (*änchi.....älash*) – feminine

...አለሽ (አንቺ.....አለሽ)

...äläche'hü (e'nänta.....äläche'hu) – plural

...አላችሁ (እናንተ.....አላችሁ)

He has ... ~ ... älaw (e'sü..... älaw)

...አለው (እሱ..... አለው)

She has ... ~ ...älät (e'sua.....älät)

...አላት (እሷ..... አላት)

We have ... ~ ...älan (e'ñäälan)

... አለን (እኛ..... አለን)

They have ... ~ ... älächaw (e'nasüälächaw)

...አላቸው (እነሱ..... አላቸው)

Adversative Prepositional suffixes

I have to go ~ mahéd älab'e'ñ (e'né mahéd älab'e'ñ)

መሄድ አለብኝ (እኔ መሄድ አለብኝ)

You have to go ~ mahéd älab'e'h (änta mahéd älab'e'h) – masculine

መሄድ አለብህ (እንተ መሄድ አለብህ)

mahéd älab'e'sh (änchi mahéd älab'e'sh) – feminine

መሄድ አለብሽ (አንቺ መሄድ አለብሽ)

mahéd älabäche'hü (e'nänta mahéd älabäche'hu) – plural

መሄድ አለባችሁ (እናንተ መሄድ አለባችሁ)

He has to go ~ *mahéd älabat (e'sü mahéd älabat)*

መሄድ አለበት (እሱ መሄድ አለበት)

She has to go ~ *mahéd älabät (e'sua mahéd älabät)*

መሄድ አለባት (እሱዋ መሄድ አለባት)

We have to go ~ *mahéd älabē'n (e'ñä mahéd älabē'n)*

መሄድ አለብን (እኛ መሄድ አለብን)

They have to go ~ *mahéd älabächaw (e'nasü mahéd älabächaw)*

መሄድ አለባቸው (እነሱ መሄድ አለባቸው)

Interrogatives

Don't expect formal changes in interrogative sentences of Amharic language. Interrogatives in Amharic are only identified for their tones of question. 'he came (*mattä/መጣ*)' is a question when it is 'he came? (*mattä?/መጣ?*)' in the sense of Amharic language.

Negatives

Verbs of Amharic language change their forms into negative by adding negative suffixes (usually *al-* ~ አለ- or *ay-* ~ አይ-)

Example 5:

I won't come ~ *almattäm* (አልመጣም)

I didn't have lunch ~ *me'sä äle'balahüm* (ምሳ አልበላሁም)

This is not my fault ~ *ye'h yané se'he'tat aydalam*

ይህ የኔ ስህተት አይደለም

...is not... ~ *aydalam* (አይደለም) - - - masculine

aydalache'm (አይደለችም) - - - feminine

...are not... ~ *aydalüm* (አይደሉም) - - - plural

Basic Amharic

Saying 'Hello'

- Hello

- ▶ *tennä yestteleñ* (ጠናይስጥልኝ)
- ▶ *salām* (ሰላም)

- Hi

- ▶ *tädyäs* (ታዲያስ)

What Language to Speak

- Do you speak English?

- ▶ *e'nglizeña manägar te'che'läläh?* (እንግሊዝኛ መናገር ትችላለህ?)

(If the second person is masculine)

- ▶ *e'nglizeña manägar te'che'yälash?* (እንግሊዝኛ መናገር ትችላለሽ?)

(If the second person is feminine)

Language (*quanqua* ~ ቋንቋ)

Languages' names in Amharic are given a suffix *-ñä* (ኛ) next to the name of the country or people that speak the language. For example, if you say '*amerikañä*' (አሜሪካኛ), any Amharic speaker can easily understand that you mean a language that the Americans speak. But, the English language is called *e'nglizeña* (እንግሊዝኛ) because it is perceived that the English people who are called *e'ngliz* (እንግሊዝ) in Amharic are the speakers of the language.

Citizenship (*zége'nat* ~ ዜግነት)

Citizenship in Amharic is expressed by adding a suffix *-awi* (-አዊ) in the name of the country to which the person is citizen to.

Example 6:

American ~ *amérikawi* (አሜሪካዊ)

English ~ *enge'lizawi* (እንግሊዘዊ)

Canadian ~ *cänädäwi* (ካናዳዊ)

Norwegian ~ *norwéyäwi* (ኖርዌይዊ)

Related Words List

Bad ~ *mattfo* (መጥፎ)

Good ~ *malkäm* (መልአካም)

Excuse me ~ *ye'qe'rtä* (ይቅርታ)

I'm sorry ~ *äznälahu* /አገናሎ/ (when something regrettable happens)

No ~ *äy* (አይ)

Ok ~ *eshi* (እኛ)

Please ~ *ebäk'h* /አባከህ/ (masculine), *ebäke'sh* /አባከሻ/ (feminine)

See you ~ *ene'ganännälan* (እንገናኛለን)

Thank you ~ *ämasagnälahu* (አመሰግናለሁ)

Yes ~ *äwo* (አዎ)

Others

This (masculine) ~ *ye'hé* (ይኔ)

This (feminine) ~ *ye'chi* (ይቺ)

That (masculine) ~ *yä* (ያ)

That (feminine) ~ *yächi* (ያቺ)

These ~ *e'nazih* (እነዚህ)

Those ~ *e'naziä* (እነዚያ)

Here ~ *ezih* (እዚህ)

There ~ *eziä* (እዚያ)

Introducing One Another

Introducing yourself

- Hello. My name is [Hana]

▶ *Salām - [hännä] ebälälahu* (ሰላም፤ <ሐኛ> አባላለሁ)

Asking someone's name

- What's your name?

▶ *män le'bal?* (ማን ልበል?)

(to both sexes)

▶ *se'me'he'n män le'bal?* (ሰምህን ማን ልበል?)

(if the person is masculine)

▶ *se'me'she'n män le'bal?* (ሰምሽን ማን ልበል?)

(if the person is feminine)

Telling one's name

- I'm [Bef]?

▶ *[bef] ebälälahu / [bef] nañ* (<በፍ> አባላለሁ / <በፍ> ነኝ)

Asking for someone's country

- Where are you from?
 - ▶ *hägare'h yat naw?* (ሃገርህ የት ነው?)
(if the person is masculine)
 - ▶ *hägare'sh yat naw?* (ሃገርሽ የት ነው?)
(if the person is feminine)

Telling one's country

- I'm from [USA] /I'm an American/
▶ *ka[Amerikka] naw yamattähut /Amerikkawi nañ*
ከአሜሪካ ነው የመጣሁት/ አሜሪካዊ ነኝ
- And you?
 - ▶ *äntas?* (አንተስ?) - - - (if the person is masculine)
 - ▶ *änchis?* (አንቺስ?) - - - (if the person is feminine)

Asking for someone's profession

- What do you do?

► *se'räh me'nde'n naw?* (ሰራህ ምንድን ነው?)

(if the person is masculine)

► *seräsh me'nde'n naw?* (ሰራሽ ምንድን ነው?)

(if the person is feminine)

Introducing others

■ Hello [Hana] this is [Bef]?

► *saläm [hännä] esü [bef] naw* (ሰላም <ሐና> እሱ <በፍ> ነው)

(if [Bef] is masculine)

► *saläm [bef] esua [hännä] nä*t (ሰላም <በፍ> እሷ <ሐና> ናት)

(if [Hana] is feminine)

Telling one's profession

■ I'm a [teacher]

► *[mame'he'r] nañ* (መምህር ነኝ)

List of Related Words

Mr. ~ *äto* (አቶ)

Mrs. ~ *wayzaro* (ወይዘሮ)

Miss ~ *wayzarit* (ወይዘሪት)

Sir ~ *ge'täyé* (ጌታዬ)

Madam ~ *emabété* (አመቤቲ)

In Ethiopia there is no such thing as family name. Everyone is called by her/his name. For e.g. Hana Wobbersu is formally called *wayzarit Hana Wobbersu* before getting married and *wayzaro Hana Wobbersu* after getting married.

Names in Ethiopia are written or told in order of one's given name followed by father's given name of one and grandfather's given name of one consecutively. So, in the above example *Hana Wobbersu* denotes a woman's full name; *Hana* is her given name whereas *Wobbersu* is her father's given name.

Telephone Conversation

Introducing yourself

- This is [Hana] / [Hana] is speaking.
 - ▶ [*hännä*] *nañ* (ሐና ነኝ)

Asking who is on the phone

- Excuse me, who is this?
 - ▶ *yeqe'rtä män le'bal?* (ይቅርታ ማን ልበል?)

Asking for someone

- Can I have extension [123]?
 - ▶ *exténshe'n [änd hūlat sost] tægganäññāñ?*
ኤከሰቴንሽን <አንድ፣ ሁለት፣ ሦስት> ታገናኘኝ?
(if the person on the phone is masculine)
 - ▶ *exténshe'n [änd hūlat sost] tægganäññiñ?*
ኤከሰቴንሽን <አንድ፣ ሁለት፣ ሦስት> ታገናኘኝ?
(if the person on the phone is feminine)

- Can /May/ I speak to [Miss Hana]?
 - ▶ *[weizerit hännä]n mäggñat echelälahu?*
<ወይዘራት ሐና>ን ማግኘት እችላለሁ?

- Is [Bef] in?
 - ▶ *[bef] gabtual?* (*<በፍ> ገቢቷል*)
 (if the person needed is masculine)
 - ▶ *[hännä] gabtälach?* (*<ሐና> ገቢታለች?*)
 (if the person needed is feminine)

Connecting someone

- I will put you through
 - ▶ *ägganäñotälahu* (*አገናኝዎታለሁ*)
 (both sexes, but supposedly for elderly)
 - ▶ *ägganäñe'hälahu* (*አገናኝሃለሁ*)
 (if the person on the phone is masculine)
 - ▶ *ägganäñe'shālahu* (*አገናኝሻለሁ*)
 (if the person on the phone is feminine)

■ Can you hold the line? / Can you hold on a moment?

▶ *te'ne'sh ye'ttabqu* (ትንሽ ይጠብቁ)

(both sexes, but supposedly for elderly)

▶ *te'ne'sh tabe'q* (ትንሽ ጠብቅ)

(if the person on the phone is masculine)

▶ *te'ne'sh tabe'qi* (ትንሽ ጠብቅ)

(if the person on the phone is feminine)

When someone is not there

■ I am afraid [Bef] is not available at the moment

▶ *[bef] yalam* (<ቤፍ> የለም)

(if the person needed is masculine)

▶ *[hännä] yalachim* (<ሐኖ> የለችም)

(if the person needed is feminine)

■ The line is busy (if an extension line is used)

▶ *masmaru tayzual* (መስመሩ ተይዟል)

Taking a message

- Can/May/ I take a message?

- ▶ *male'ekt älot?* (መልዕክት አለኛት?)

(both sexes, but supposedly for elderly)

- ▶ *male'ekt älah?* (መልዕክት አለህ?)

(if the person on the phone is masculine)

- ▶ *male'ekt älash?* (መልዕክት አለሽ?)

(if the person on the phone is feminine)

- Can/May/ I tell him who is calling?

- ▶ *män dawala lebel?* (ማን ደወለ ልበል?)

Related Words List

Answer ~ *mänsät* (ማንሳት) - - - only for phone calls

E.g. Answer the phone ~ *se'lkun änsäw/ ስልኩን አንሳው* (for masculine)

Busy ~ *tayzual* (ተይዟል)

E.g. The line is busy ~ *masmaru tayzual* (መስመሩ ተይዟል)

Call ~ *madawal* (መደወል)

E.g. I wanna call ~ *madawal e'faligälahu* (መደወል አፈልጋለሁ)

Message ~ *male'ekt* (መልዕክት)

E.g. Leave me a message ~ *male'ekt äsqamtte'lñ* (መልዕክት አስቀምጥልኝ)

Phone ~ *se'lk* (ስልክ)

E.g. Where's the phone ~ *se'liku yatäl?* (ስልኩ የታል?)

Ring ~ *mattarat* (መጥራት)

E.g. The phone is ringing ~ *selku eyatarä naw* (ስልኩ አየጠራ ነው)

Switched off ~ *taftual* (ጠፍቷል)

E.g. The phone is switched off ~ *se'liku taftual* (ስልኩ ጠፍቷል)

Shopping Conversation

Bargaining

- How much is this?
 - ▶ *ye'hé se'nt naw?* (ይሄ ስንት ነው?)

- It's [100] Birr*
 - ▶ *[änd mato] birr naw* (<አንድ መቶ ብር ነው)

- How much is its real price?
 - ▶ *macharashäw se'nt naw?* (መጨረሻው ስንት ነው?)

- Take it for [90] Birr
 - ▶ *[zattnä] birr wüsadaw* (<ዘጠና ብር ውሰደው)
 - (if the person shopping is masculine)
 - ▶ *[zattanä] birr wüsadge'w* (<ዘጠና ብር ውሰኚው)
 - (if the person shopping is feminine)

* Birr is the name for Ethiopian currency.

- Let me take it for [80] birr

▶ *[samänya] birr le'wsadaw* (<ሰማንያ ብር ልውሰድው)

- Ok. Take it.

▶ *eshi – wusadaw* (እኛ - ውሰድው)

(if the person shopping is masculine)

▶ *eshi - wüsadge'w* (እኛ - ውሰጁው)

(if the person shopping is feminine)

Asking for preferences

- Do you have [shoes]?

▶ *[chämä] äla?* (<ሜማ አለ)

- I want to buy [traditional clothes]

▶ *[bählawi le'bs] mage'zät efale'gälahu*

<ባሕላዊ ልብስ> መግዛት እፈልጋለሁ

- Does this cloth have [larger size]?
 - ▶ *yehé le'bs [safī size] älaw?* (ይሄ ልብስ <ሰፊ ሳይዝ> አለው?)

- Does this cloth have [another color]?
 - ▶ *ye'hé le'bs [lélä color] älaw?* (ይሄ ልብስ <ሌላ ከለር> አለው?)

- Do you have mass discount?
 - ▶ *be'je'mllä te'qansäläche'hu?* (በጅምላ ትቀንሳላችሁ?)

- Do you sell per piece?
 - ▶ *banattallä te'shattäläche'hu?* (በነጠላ ትሽግላችሁ?)

Paying for

- Here's [80] Birr
 - ▶ *ye'hew [samänya] berr* (ይሄው <ሰማንያ> ብር)

- Give me the change

▶ *malsün se'ttañ* (መልሱን ስጠኝ)

(if the person is masculine)

▶ *malsün se'chiñ* (መልሱን ስጪኝ)

(if the person is feminine)

■ Keep the change

▶ *malsün yāzaw* (መልሱን ያዘው)

(if the person is masculine)

▶ *malsün yājziw* (መልሱን ያዢው)

(if the person is feminine)

Related Words List

Buy ~ *magezät* (መግዛት)

E.g. I want to buy a traditional cloth ~ *bähe'läwi le'be'soch magzät efale'gälahu* (ባሕላዊ ልብሶች መግዛት እፈልጋለሁ)

E.g. I bought a necklace ~ *häbe'l gazahü* (ሃበል ገዛሁ)

Cheap ~ *rekhash* (ርካሽ)

E.g. It is cheap ~ *re'käsh naw* (ርካሽ ነው)

Discount ~ *qenäsh* (ቅናሽ)

E.g. I want discount ~ *qe'näsh efale'gälahü* (ቅናሽ እፈልጋለሁ)

Expensive ~ *wüd* (ውድ)

E.g. Why is it expensive? ~ *lame'n wüd hona?* (ውድ ነው?)

Market ~ *gabayä* (ገበያ)

E.g. Where is the market? ~ *gabayäw yat naw?* (ገበያው የት ነው?)

Pay ~ *makfal* (መክፈል)

E.g. Pay first ~ *qe'dmiyä ye'kfalü* (ቅድሚያ ክፈሉ)

Sell ~ *mashatt* (መሸጥ)

E.g. I want to sell my bag ~ *borsäyén mashatt efale'gälahü*
(ቦርሳዬን መሸጥ እፈልጋለሁ)

Shop ~ *süq* (ሱቅ)

E.g. Take me to a cosmetic shop ~ *wada kosmotik süq we'sadañ* (mascu.)
ወደ ኮስሞቲክ ሱቅ ወሰድኝ
wada kosmotik süq we'sajiñ (femin.)
ወደ ኮስሞቲክ ሱቅ ወሰጃኝ

Bill ~ *hisäb* (ሒሳብ)

E.g. Bills, please? ~ *hisäb ebäke'h* (ሒሳብ እባክህ) - - masculine
hisab ebäke'sh (ሒሳብ እባክሽ) - - - feminine

Hotel Conversation

While Checking In

- I need to make reservation

▶ *qe'de'miyä botä mayäz efale'gälahü* (ቅድሚያ ቦታ መያዝ እፈልጋለሁ)

- I have made reservation on call

▶ *base'le'k qe'de'miyä botä ye'jzé nabar*

በስልክ ቅድሚያ ቦታ ይገድ ነበር

- What name is the reservation under?

▶ *bamän se'm naw yatayäzaw?* (በማን ስም ነው የተያዘው?)

- I have a reservation under [Hana]

▶ *ba[hännä] se'm naw yatayäzaw* (በአና ስም ነው የተያዘው)

- Is the hotel booked?

▶ *yahotélü ke'fe'loch tayizawäl?* (የሆቴሉ ከፍለግኝ ተይዘዋል?)

- Can I get a room for tonight?

▶ *ke'fe'l ye'noräl?* (ለሃራ ምሽት ክፍል ይኖራል?)

- How much is the room?

▶ *ke'fe'lü wägäw se'nt naw?* (ክፍሉ ዋጋው ስንት ነው?)

- How long will you be staying?

▶ *me'n yähe'l ye'qoyälhü?* (ምን ያህል ይቆያሉ?)

- I will be staying for [5] days and [5] nights

▶ *la[5] qan enä la[5] lélit* (ለ<5> ቀን እና <5> ሌሊት)

- Your room number is [051]

▶ *ye'ke'fe'le'wo qüte'r [051] naw* (የክፍልዎ ቁጥር <051> ነው)

- All rooms checked in until tomorrow noon.

▶ *hülüm ke'fe'loch eskanaga tayzawäl*

ሁሉም ክፍሎች እስከነገ ተይዘዋል

- Here you have two room keys.

▶ *ye'haw hūlat yake'flū qūlfoch (ፎቭው ሁለት የክፍሉ ቁልፎች)*

- What time is breakfast served at?

▶ *qüre's se'nt saät naw yamiqarbaw?*

ቁርስ ሰዓት ሰዓት ነው የሚቀርበው?

- Can I get a wake-up call at [5:00AM]?

▶ *[11:00] saät läy te'dawe'lüle'näläche'hü?*

<11:00> ሰዓት ትደውሉልኛላችሁ?

- How do I get to my room?

▶ *wada ke'fe'lé bayat bakül le'hid? (ወደ ክፍሌ በየት በኩል ልሂድ?)*

- Where is the elevator?

▶ *life'tü yatäla?* (ለፍቱ የታለ?)

While Checking Out

- When is check out time?

▶ *mawe'chä saät se'nt naw?* (መውጫ ሰዓት ስንት ነው?)

- Are you planning on checking out tomorrow?

▶ *naga lamawe'ttät ye'fe'le'gälü?* (ነገ ለመውጣት ይፈልጋሉ?)

- I am checking out now

▶ *ähün mawttät efale'gälahü* (አሁን መውጣት እፈልጋለሁ)

- Are you ready to check out?

▶ *lamawe'ttät tazagäje'tawäl?* (ለመውጣት ተዘጋጅተዋል?)

■ What room were you in?

▶ *yat ke'fe'l nabarü?* (የት ክፍል ነበሩ?)

■ I'm checking out of room [401]

▶ *ka[401] qütte'r ke'fe'l naw yawattähüt*

ከ401 ቁጥር ክፍል ነው የወጣሁት

■ How was your stay?

▶ *qoye'täwo endét nabar?* (ቆይታዎ እንዴት ነበር?)

■ I really enjoyed my stay

▶ *battäm das ye'l nabar* (በጣም ደስ ይል ነበር)

■ Was everything satisfactory?

▶ *hülüm nagar äre'ki nabar?* (ሁሉም ነገር አርካ ነበር?)

■ I have a few complaints

▶ *te'qit qe'rétä älañ?* (ጥቂት ቅሬታ አለኝ?)

■ Can I speak to the hotel manager on duty?

▶ *yahotélün ästadädar mänagägar eche'lälahü?*

የሆቴሉን አስተዳደር ማኪንገር እጅላለሁ?

■ Do you have a shuttle to the airport?

▶ *wada äyar mangad yamiwase'dañ makinä yenoral?*

ወደ አየር መንገድ የሚወስደኝ መኪና ይኖራል?

Other Hotel Conversations

■ Where can I get some drink and food?

▶ *yamittatä enä yamibalä nagar yat ägañälahü?*

የሚጠጣ እና የሚበላ ነገር የት አገኛለሁ?

■ Is the restaurant open now?

▶ *me'ge'b bétü ähün ke'fe't naw?* (ምግብ ቤቱ አሁን ክፍት ነው?)

■ Where is the Bar?

▶ *bünnä bétü yat naw?* (ቡና ቤቱ የት ነው?)

■ I need to pay my bills

▶ *hisäb makfal efale'gälahü* (ሒሳብ መክፈል አፈልጋለሁ)

■ Do you accept [credit card/Master card/Visa card/American Express]?

▶ *[krédit kârd/mâstar kârd/vizä kârd/ämérikän eke'spras] tiqabaläläche'hü?* (<ክሬዲት ካርድ/ማስተር ካርድ/ቪዛ ካርድ> ትቀበላለችሁ?)

■ Can you change some money for me?

▶ *ganzab te'zaraze'rüle'ñäläche'hü?* (ገንዘብ ትዘረዝሩልኛለችሁ?)

- How much is the change rate of a [dollar] for a birr?
▶ *änd [dolär] se'nt birr naw?* (አንድ <ዶላር> ስንት ብር ነው?)

- Do you have a laundry service?
▶ *le'be's ättabä ägale'ge'lot äläche'hü?*
ልብስ አጠባ አገልግሎት አላችሁ

- Where is the rest room?
▶ *matsadäjä ke'fe'lü yat naw?* (መፀዳኛ ክፍሉ የት ነው?)

- Is there a travel agency in this hotel?
▶ *bahotélü we'se't äse'gobe'ñi de're'je't ala?*
በሆቴሉ ውስጥ አስጎብኚ ድርጅት አለ?

- Is it safe to walk around the hotel?
▶ *hotélü ge'bi wuse't mansharäshar che'ge'r alaw?*
ሆቴሉ ግቢ ውስጥ መንሸራሸር ችግር አለው?

- Do you have an Internet access?

▶ *ya'entarnét ägalge'lot äläche'hü?* (የኢንተርኔት አገልግሎት አላችሁ?)

- Can you recommend a restaurant out of this hotel?

▶ *kahotélü wüchi te'rü restaurant te'ttaqümüñäläche'hü?*

ከሆቴሉ ውጪ ጥሩ ሬስቶራንት ትጠቁሙኛላችሁ?

- I need the direction to swimming pool

▶ *mawāñä gane'däw bayat bakül naw?*

መዋኛ ገንዳው በየት በኩል ነው?

Related Words List

- Bar ~ *bünnä bét* (ቡና ቤት)
- Breakfast ~ *qürs* (ቁርስ)
- Cold ~ *qazqäzä* (ቀዝቃዛ)
- Day ~ *qan* (ቀን)
- Dinner ~ *rät* (ራት)
- Drink ~ *mattät* (መጠጥ)
- Elevator ~ *life't* (ሊፍት)
- Food ~ *me'ge'b* (ምግብ)
- Hot ~ *te'küś* (ትኩስ)
- Laundry Service ~ *yale'bs ättabä* (የልብስ አጠጣ)
- Lunch ~ *me'sä* (ምሳ)
- Night ~ *me'she't* (ምሽት)
- Restaurant ~ *me'ge'b bét* (ምግብ ቤት)
- Salt ~ *chaw* (ጨው)
- Sauce ~ *se'go* (ስጎ)
- Sugar ~ *se'kuar* (ስኳር)
- Swimming pool ~ *mawäñä* (መዋኛ)
- Tea ~ *shäy* (ሻይ)

Cab Conversation

Contract Taxi

- Where do I get a taxi?
 - ▶ *täksi yat ägañālahü?* (ታክሲ የት እገኛለሁ?)

- Please take me to [Sheraton Hotel]
 - ▶ *ebäke'h wada [sharātan hotél] wüsadañ* (masculine)
እባክህ ወደ <ሸራተን ሆቴል> ውሰደኝ
 - ▶ *ebäke'h wada [sharātan hotél] wüsajiñ* (feminine)
እባክህ ወደ <ሸራተን ሆቴል> ውሰጁኝ

- How much will it cost to get to [Markato]?
 - ▶ *[markäto] se'nt yäse'kafe'läl?* (<መርካቶ> ስንት ያስከፍላል?)

- I need to go to [the Lion Zoo]
 - ▶ *[änbasä gibi] mahéd efale'gālahü* (<አንበሳ ጊቢ> መሄድ እፈልጋለሁ)

- Please wait for me here
 - ▶ *ezihü tabe'qañ* (እባክህ እዚሁ ጠብቀኝ)

- I will be right back.
 - ▶ *ähün emalasälahü* (አሁን እመለሳለሁ)

- Is there a good Ethiopian restaurant you can take me to?
 - ▶ *te'rü yaEtiyopyä me'ge'b bét täsäyañālah?*
ጥሩ የኢትዮጵያ ምግብ ቤት ታሳየኛለህ?

- How long does it take to get to [Yod Abyssinia]?
 - ▶ *[yod äbisiniä] lamadras se'nt saät yifajal?*
<የድ አቢሲንያ> ለመድረስ ስንት ሰዓት ይፈጃል?

In Public Transport

Most taxis and buses provide their services to mass public in the capital of Ethiopia. The common conversations in public transportation tracks

are to ask the cashier of taxi or bus its direction and cost of service.

- Where are you going?
 - ▶ *wadét naw?* (ወዴት ነው?)

- How much does it cost to go to [Bole]?
 - ▶ *[bolé] se'nt naw?* (ቀበሌ ስንት ነው?)

Related Words List

Bus ~ *bäs* (ባስ)

Cab/Taxi ~ *täksi* (ታክሲ)

[Bus/Taxi] Cashier ~ *radät* (ረዳት) / Colloquial → *wayälä* (ወያላ)

[Cab] Driver ~ *shufér* (ሻፊር)

Load ~ *che'nat* (ቅነት)

Unload ~ *mäwe'rad* (ማውረድ)

Relationship Conversation

Introduction

- I love you ~ *äfaqe're'hälahü* (to a masculine)

አፈቅርሃለሁ

äfaqe're'shālahü (to a feminine)

አፈቅርሻለሁ

- I like you ~ *ewede'hālahü* (to a masculine)

እወድሃለሁ

ewede'shālahü (to a feminine)

እወድሻለሁ

- You are beautiful ~ *qonjo nah* (to a masculine)

ቆንጆ ነህ

qonjo nash (to a feminine)

ቆንጆ ነሽ

■ I hate you ~ *talähüh* (to a masculine)

ጠላሁህ

talähüsh (to a feminine)

ጠላሁሽ

■ I want to have a date with you

▶ *ka-äntagä taganäñe'ché machäwat efale'gälahü* (to a man)

ካንተጋ ተገናኝቼ መጫወት እፈልጋለሁ

▶ *ka-änchigä taganäñe'ché machäwat efale'gälah* (to a woman)

ካንቺጋ ተገናኝቼ መጫወት እፈልጋለሁ

■ Will you marry me?

▶ *tägabäñälah?* (to a man)

ታገባኛለህ?

▶ *tägabiñälash?* (to a woman)

ታገቢኛለሽ?

Related Words List

Boyfriend/Girlfriend ~ *fe'qe'rañä* (ፍቅረኛ)

Break up ~ *malayäyat* (መለያየት)

Cheating ~ *mawaslat* (መወስለት)

Dating ~ *maqättar* (መቃጠር)

Divorce ~ *fe'chi* (ፍቺ)

Engagement ~ *matachächat* (መተግበሪያ)

Fiancé ~ *echoñä* (እጩኛ)

Husband ~ *bäl* (ባል)

Lover ~ *äfe'qäri* (አፍቃሪ)

Loving ~ *mäfqar* (ማፍቀር)

Marriage ~ *gäbe'chä* (ጋብቻ)

Relationship ~ *ge'ne'ñünat* (ግንኙነት)

Wife ~ *mist* (ሚስት)

In-laws

Anyone who is a relative to one's husband or wife is called *amät* (አማት) to the one; and the relatives call one who is married to their relative as *amäch* (አማች).

Numerical Conversation

1 ~ *änd* (አንድ)

2 ~ *hūlat* (ሁለት)

3 ~ *sost* (ሦስት)

4 ~ *ärät* (አራት)

5 ~ *äme'st* (አምስት)

6 ~ *se'de'st* (ስድስት)

7 ~ *sabät* (ሰባት)

8 ~ *se'me'nt* (ስምንት)

9 ~ *zattañ* (ዘጠኝ)

10 ~ *äse'r* (አስር)

äse'rä- is the prefix for numbers eleven to nineteen.

11 ~ *äse'rä-änd* (አስራ አንድ)

12 ~ *äse'rä-hūlat* (አስራ ሁለት)

13 ~ *äse'rä-sost* (አስራ ሦስት)

14 ~ *äse'rä-ärät* (አስራ አራት)

15 ~ *äse'rä-äme'se't* (አስራ አምስት)

16 ~ *äse'rä-se'de'st* (አስራ ስድስት)

17 ~ *äse'rä-sabät* (አስራ ሰባት)

18 ~ *äse'rä-se'me'nt* (አስራ ስምንት)

19 ~ *äse'rä-zattañ* (አስራ ዘጠኝ)

20 ~ *häyä* (ሃያ)

30 ~ *saläsä* (ሠላሳ)

40 ~ *ärbä* (አርባ)

50 ~ *hämsä* (ሃምሳ)

60 ~ *se'le'sä* (ስልሳ)

70 ~ *sabä* (ሰባ)

80 ~ *samäne'ya* (ሰማንያ)

90 ~ *zattanä* (ዘጠና)

100 ~ *mato* (መቶ)

1000 ~ *shi* (*änd shi*)

ጺ (አንድ ጺ)

21 ~ *häyä-änd* (ሃያ አንድ)

32 ~ *saläsä-hülat* (ሠላሳ ሁለት)

43 ~ *ärbä-sost* (አራት ሦስት)

54 ~ *hämsä-ärät* (ሃምሳ አራት)

65 ~ *se'le'sä-äme'st* (ስልሳ አምስት)

76 ~ *sabä-se'de'st* (ሰባ ስድስት)

87 ~ *samäne'ya-sabät* (ሰማንያ ሰባት)

98 ~ *zattanä-se'me'nt* (ዘጠና ስምንት)

101 ~ *änd mato änd* (አንድ መቶ አንድ)

10,000 ~ *äse'r shi* (አስር ጺ)

1,234 ~ *änd shi hülat mato saläsä ärät* (አንድ ጺ ሁለት መቶ ሠላሳ አራት)

The rest like Million, Billion and Trillion are named after the English numerals

Time Telling

It is from 6:00 o'clock in the morning that Ethiopians start their day (instead of mid-night as most countries do). For example, 8:00 AM in Ethiopia is told as 2:00 o'clock in the morning.

The following conversation assumes the English speakers watch start to count at mid night, while the Amharic one's start to count at dawn.

- What time is it?
 - ▶ *saät se'nt naw?* (ሰዓት ስንት ነው?)

- It is 7:00 o'clock.
 - ▶ *änd saät naw* (አንድ ሰዓት ነው)

- [25] past [9]
 - ▶ *[3] saät ka[25]* (3 ሰዓት ከ25)

- [25] to [9]
 - ▶ *[25] güdäy la [3] (25 ጉዳይ ለ3)*

- Quarter past [5]
 - ▶ *[11] karüb (11 ከሩብ)*

- Quarter past [5]
 - ▶ *rüb güdäy la [11] (ሩብ ጉዳይ ለ11)*

- Half past [10]
 - ▶ *[4] takül (4 ተኩል)*

There exists also about 8 years of difference between the unique Ethiopian calendar and the Gregorian one. According to the Ethiopian calendar, it is the fifth month of 2003 when it is January 2011.

Related Words List

Afternoon ~ *kasaät* (ከሰዓት)

Day ~ *qan* (ቀን)

Earlier ~ *qe'de'm* (ቅድሞ)

Evening ~ *mätä* (ማታ)

Later ~ *bahualä* (በኋላ)

Mid-night ~ *eküalälit* (እኩላሊት)

Morning ~ *tawät* (ጠዋት)

Night ~ *lélit* (ሌሊት)

Noon ~ *qate'r* (ቀትር)

Now ~ *ähün* (አሁን)

O'clock ~ *saät* (ሰዓት)

Watch ~ *saät* (ሰዓት)

Days of the week

Monday ~ *saño* (ሰኞ)

Tuesday ~ *mäksaño* (ማክሰኞ)

Wednesday ~ *rabü* (ረቡዕ)

Thursday ~ *hämüs* (ሐሙስ)

Friday ~ *äre'b* (ዓርብ)

Saturday ~ *qe'dämé* (ቅዳሜ)

Sunday ~ *ehüd* (እሁድ)

Months of the year

September ~ *mase'karam* (መስከረም)

October ~ *te'qe'mt* (ጥቅምት)

November ~ *he'där* (ኡዳር)

December ~ *tähsäs* (ታሕሳስ)

January ~ *te'r* (ጥር)

February ~ *yakätit* (የካቲት)

March ~ *megabit* (መጋቢት)

April ~ *miyäziä* (ሚያዝያ)

May ~ *ge'nbot* (ግንቦት)

June ~ *sané* (ሰኔ)

July ~ *häme'lé* (ሐምሌ)

August ~ *nahässé* (ኦገስት)

The first month in Ethiopian official calendar is September. The new year in Ethiopia celebrates on September 11/12, of Gregorian calendar.

Common Commands and Requests

- Come (Come here)
 - ▶ *nä/ኅ* (to a masculine)
 - ▶ *nay/ነይ* (to a feminine)
 - ▶ *nü/ኑ* (plural)

- go
 - ▶ *hid/ሂድ* (to a masculine)
 - ▶ *hij/ሂጅ* (to a feminine)
 - ▶ *hidü/ሂዱ* (plural)

- Give me
 - ▶ *se'ttañ/ስጡኝ* (to a masculine)
 - ▶ *se'chiñ/ስጡኛ* (to a feminine)
 - ▶ *se'ttüñ/ስጡኝ* (plural)

■ Can you please give me [...]?

▶ [...] *le'tse'ttañ te'che'lālah?* (to a masculine)

<...> ልትሰጠኝ ትችላለህ?

▶ [...] *le'te'sachiñ te'che'yālash?* (to a feminine)

<...> ልትሰጪኝ ትችያለሽ?

▶ [...] *le'te'sättüñ te'che'läläche'hu?* (plural)

<...> ልትሰጡኝ ትችላላችሁ?

■ Take a seat/Please take a seat

▶ *taqamatt/ebäke'h taqamatt* (to a masculine)

ተቀመጥ/እባክህ ተቀመጥ

▶ *taqamach/ebäke'sh taqamach* (to a feminine)

ተቀመጭ/እባክሽ ተቀመጭ

▶ *taqamattü/ebäkäche'hü taqamattü* (plural)

ተቀመጡ/እባካችሁ ተቀመጡ

■ Welcome

▶ *enkuan dahe'nä mattäh* (to a masculine)

እንኳን ደህና መጣህ

▶ *enkuan dahe'nä mattäsh* (to a feminine)

እንኳን ደህና መጣሽ

▶ *enkuan dahe'nä mattäche'hü* (plural)

እንኳን ደህና መጣችሁ

■ Bon voyage

▶ *malkäm güzo* (መልካም ጉዞ)

■ Happy holiday

▶ *malkäm baäl* (መልካም በዓል)

List of Related Words

Excuse me ~ *ye'qe'rtä* (ይቅርታ)

Please ~ *ebäke'h* (masculine) - እባክህ
ebäke'sh (feminine) - እባክሽ
ebäkäche'hü (plural) - እባካችሁ

Thank you ~ *ämasage'nälahü*
 አመሰግናለሁ

What? ~ *me'n?* (ምን?)

When? ~ *maché?* (መቼ?)

Where? ~ *yat?* (የት?)

Why? ~ *lame'n?* (ለምን?)

How? ~ *endét?* (እንዴት?)

Common Combiners

A Few Conjunctions

And ~ *enä* (እኛ)

Or ~ *waye'm* (ወይም)

So, Therefore ~ *se'lazih* (ስለዚህ)

Otherwise ~ *alabaläziä* (አለበለዚያ)

But ~ *ge'n* (ግን)

A Few Prepositions

■ From ~ *ka-* (ከ-)

▶ From Ethiopia ~ ***ka-ite'yope'ya*** (ከኢትዮጵያ)

■ To ~ *wada-* (ወደ-)

▶ Go to Ethiopia ~ ***wada-ite'yope'ya hid*** (masculine)

ወደ ኢትዮጵያ ሂድ

■ To ~ *la-* (ለ-)

▶ Give it to me ~ ***la-ené se'ttañ*** (ለኔ ስጠኝ)

- To ~ *e'ska-* (አስኩ-)
 - ▶ A to Z ~ *ka-A e'ska Z* (ከአ, አስኩ ዜደኝ)

- Of ~ *ya-* (የ-)
 - ▶ Language of Ethiopia ~ *ya-ite'yope'ya quanqua*
የኢትዮጵያ ቋንቋ

- In ~ [*ba*]..... *wüse'tt* (በ... ውስጥ)
 - ▶ It is in the box ~ *sätte'nü wüse'tt naw* (ሳጥኑ ውስጥ ነው)

- On ~ [*ba*]..... *läy* (በ... ላይ)
 - ▶ It is on the table ~ *tтарappézäw läy naw* (ጠረጴዛው ላይ ነው)

Proverbs

1. A disease that won't kill strengthens ~ *yamäygade'l bashe'tä yättanake'räl* (የማይገድል በሽታ ያጠነክራል)
2. አለባብሰው ቢያርሱ በአረም ይመለሱ
3. Little by little, an egg will walk ~ *qas baqas enqüläl bae'ge'rü ye'hédäl* (ቀስ በቀስ እንቁላል በእግሩ ይሄዳል)
4. One can not stop sleeping in fear of bad dreams ~ *he'le'm tafarto säytañä äye'tädare'm* (ሕልም ተፈርቶ ሳይተኛ አይታደርም)
5. One sent by a woman does not fear death ~ *sét yaläkaw mot ayfaräm* (ሴት የላከው ሞት አይፈራም)
6. Persistently asking is to learn mother's death ~ *äte'be'qo tayäqi yae'nätün mot yiradäl* (አጥብቆ ጠያቂ የእናቱን ሞት ይረዳል)
7. Unknown country couldn't be missed ~ *yamäyäwe'qüt agar äynäfe'kim* የማያውቁት አገር አይናፍቅም
8. spider webs united can tie up a lion ~ *de'r biyäbe'r änbassä yäse'r* (ድር ቢያበር አንበሳ ያስር)
9. She dropped what is in her armpit for what is on top. *የቆጠን አወርድ*

ብላ የብብረትን ጣለች

10. Name smells more than a **rotten meat**.... ስም ይጻፉልኛል ከሰብ

A Must Visit Places in Ethiopia

Ethiopia has contributed eight world heritages for UNESCO. These heritages are dated to more than 4 million years back including the most famous Lucy, our ancestor, the magnificent castles of King Fasiledes and the miraculous churches of King *Lalibela*. Many historians debate that the definition of “Seven Wonders of the World” has to be revised, if *Lalibela* churches are not among; it is said to be the eighth.

Ethiopian World Heritages

1. Simien National Park

Massive erosion over the years on the Ethiopian plateau has created one of the most spectacular landscapes in the world, with jagged mountain peaks, deep valleys and sharp precipices dropping some 1,500 m. The park is home to some extremely rare animals such as the Gelada baboon, the *Simien* fox and the Walia ibex, a goat found nowhere else in the world. *Simien* is pronounced as *samén* (ሰሜን), which means North.

2. Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela

The 11 medieval monolithic cave churches of this 13th-century 'New Jerusalem' are situated in a mountainous region in the heart of Ethiopia near a traditional village with circular-shaped dwellings. *Lalibela* is a high place of Ethiopian Christianity, still today a place of pilgrimage and devotion.

The rock-hewn churches (*wüqe'r äbiyäta ke're'stianat/ወቅር ኣቡያተ ክርስቲያናት*) of *Lalibela* are exceptionally fine examples of a long-established Ethiopian building tradition. There are 11 medieval monolithic cave churches in *Lalibela*.

3. Fasil Ghebbi, Gondar Region

In the 16th and 17th centuries, the fortress-city of *Fasil Ghebbi* (ፋሲል ግቢ, literally means Fasil compound) was the residence of the Ethiopian emperor Fasilides and his successors. Surrounded by a 900-m-long wall, the city contains palaces, churches, monasteries and unique public and

private buildings marked by Hindu and Arab influences, subsequently transformed by the Baroque style brought to Gondar by the Jesuit missionaries.

4. Aksum

The ruins of the ancient city of *Aksum* are found close to Ethiopia's northern border. They mark the location of the heart of ancient Ethiopia, when the Kingdom of Aksum was the most powerful state between the Eastern Roman Empire and Persia. The massive ruins, dating from between the 1st and the 13th century A.D., include monolithic obelisks, giant stelae, royal tombs and the ruins of ancient castles. Long after its political decline in the 10th century, Ethiopian emperors continued to be crowned in *Aksum*.

5. Lower Valley of the Awash

The Awash valley contains one of the most important groupings of palaeontological sites on the African continent. The remains found at the

site, the oldest of which date back at least 4 million years, provide evidence of human evolution which has modified our conception of the history of humankind. The most spectacular discovery came in 1974, when 52 fragments of a skeleton enabled the famous Lucy (locally known as *de'nqe'nash* /ድንቅ ነሽ/ which literally means 'you're amazing') to be reconstructed.

6. Lower Valley of the Omo

A prehistoric site near Lake Turkana, the lower valley of the Omo is renowned the world over. The discovery of many fossils there, especially of *Homo gracilis*, has been of fundamental importance in the study of human evolution. The discoveries of humanoid fossils in the valley include jaw bones, quantities of detached teeth, and fragments of australopithecines. Furthermore, evidence of the oldest-known humanoid technological activity has been found in this region, as well as stone objects attesting to an encampment of prehistoric human beings that is among the oldest known today.

7. Tiya

Tiya is among the most important of the roughly 160 archaeological sites discovered so far in the Soddo region, south of Addis Ababa. The site contains 36 monuments, including 32 carved stelae covered with symbols, most of which are difficult to decipher. They are the remains of an ancient Ethiopian culture whose age has not yet been precisely determined. However, they have been interpreted as having a funerary significance, as there are tombs scattered around the stelae.

8. Harar Jugol, the Fortified Historic Town

The fortified historic town of *Harar* is located in the eastern part of the country on a plateau with deep gorges surrounded by deserts and savannah. The walls surrounding this sacred Muslim city were built between the 13th and 16th centuries. *Harar Jugol*, said to be the fourth holiest city of Islam, numbers 82 mosques, three of which date from the 10th century, and 102 shrines, but the townhouses with their exceptional interior design constitute the most spectacular part of Harar's cultural

heritage. The impact of African and Islamic traditions on the development of the town's building types and urban layout make for its particular character and uniqueness.

9. Konso Cultural Landscape

Konso Cultural Landscape is a 55km² arid property of stone walled terraces and fortified settlements in the Konso highlands of Ethiopia. It constitutes a spectacular example of a living cultural tradition stretching back 21 generations (more than 400 years) adapted to its dry hostile environment. The landscape demonstrates the shared values, social cohesion and engineering knowledge of its communities. The site also features anthropomorphic wooden statues - grouped to represent respected members of their communities and particularly heroic events - which are an exceptional living testimony to funerary traditions that are on the verge of disappearing. Stone steles in the towns express a complex system of marking the passing of generations of leaders.

Source: UNESCO official website

A Must Know Ethiopian Traditions

Ethiopia has been isolated from the rest of the world for many years. Historians described it as 'Ethiopia slept for 1000 of years locked around by its religious enemies and busy in its internal challenges.' Moreover, the country has never been colonized in exception to other African countries. These factors gave Ethiopia its own strange cultures especially to westerners.

Marriage ~ *gäbe'chä/te'där* (ጋብቻ/ትዳር)

Traditionally marriage was arranged by the will of parents without the will or knowledge of parents. But this tradition now is replaced in allowing girls and boys to marry choices of their own. However, involvement of parents and some other practices still existed in general.

When a couple in love decided to get married, the parents of the male partner send go-betweeners (*she'mäge'lé/ሽማግሌ*) to ask the willingness of the female partner parents. Through this process both partners receive

blessings of their parents about the marriage. According to their agreement a wedding day will be decided and a huge wedding party (*sare'g /ሠርግ*) will be prepared. Usually a day before the wedding, the bridegroom sends via his best men a bag full of dowry (*te'losh/ጥሎሽ*), mostly of clothes and beauty supplies, to his bride. On the wedding day, the bridegroom comes to the bride's home accompanied by a crowd, receives blessing from her parents and takes his wife to his own place. Then after, honeymoon continues.

This is not the end of the common wedding ceremony. It goes on for about a week. Usually after three days of the wedding day, a return (*male's/መልስ*), another ceremony hosted by the bride's family is prepared. Finally, a union (*qe'le'qe'l/ቅልቅል*), probably the last party hosted by the new family is fisted to introduce the members of the two families united.

Mourning ~ *laqe'so/häzan* (ለቅሌ/ሐሰን)

Mourning times are one of the very serious periods at which social relationships of Ethiopians expressed. Ethiopians sit for mourning for at least three days after death of a family member. It is common that on the funeral of a person hundreds of people attend. However the third day (*säle'st* ~ ማለሰኛ) of the mourning period is considered as the official closing, the 7th, 12th, 40th, 80th days and, 1st and 7th years are memorial times of the dead.

Coffee Ceremony

Coffee (*bünnä/ቡና*) boosts special ceremony in its birth place, Ethiopia. A traditionally dressed woman makes coffee in a clay kettle called *jabannä* (ጃቡና), and pours into cups called *se'ni* (ሰኒ), specially made for the ceremony and distributes to the guests. With the coffee, it is also offered some cookies, transliterated as breakfast of coffee (*yabünna qüre's* ~ የቡና ቁርስ), to eat while drinking the coffee. Housewives do this every day to discuss each other different issues on the way.

Annex 1: Amharic Alphabets

| | <i>a</i> | <i>ü</i> | <i>i</i> | <i>ä</i> | <i>é</i> | <i>e'</i> | <i>o</i> | <i>ua</i> |
|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| <i>h</i> | ሀ | ሁ | ሂ | ሃ | ሄ | ህ | ሆ | |
| <i>l</i> | ለ | ሉ | ሊ | ላ | ሌ | ል | ሎ | ሏ |
| <i>h</i> | ሐ | ሑ | ሒ | ሓ | ሔ | ሕ | ሖ | |
| <i>m</i> | መ | ሙ | ሚ | ማ | ሜ | ም | ሞ | ሟ |
| <i>s</i> | ሠ | ሡ | ሢ | ሣ | ሤ | ሥ | ሦ | |
| <i>r</i> | ረ | ሩ | ሪ | ራ | ሪ | ር | ሮ | ሯ |
| <i>s</i> | ሰ | ሱ | ሲ | ሳ | ሴ | ስ | ሶ | ሷ |
| <i>sh</i> | ሸ | ሹ | ሺ | ሻ | ሼ | ሽ | ሾ | ሿ |
| <i>q</i> | ቀ | ቁ | ቂ | ቃ | ቄ | ቅ | ቆ | ቇ |
| <i>b</i> | በ | ቡ | ቢ | ባ | ቤ | ብ | ቦ | ቧ |
| <i>v</i> | ቨ | ቩ | ቪ | ቫ | ቬ | ቭ | ቮ | ቯ |
| <i>t</i> | ተ | ቱ | ቲ | ታ | ቲ | ት | ቶ | ቷ |
| <i>ch</i> | ቸ | ቹ | ቺ | ቻ | ቼ | ች | ቾ | ቿ |
| <i>h</i> | ኀ | ኁ | ኂ | ኃ | ኄ | ኅ | ኆ | ኇ |
| <i>n</i> | ነ | ኑ | ኒ | ና | ኔ | ን | ኖ | ኘ |
| <i>ñ</i> | ኘ | ኙ | ኚ | ኛ | ኜ | ኝ | ኞ | ኟ |
| <i>e</i> | አ | አ | አ | አ | ኤ | አ | አ | አ |
| <i>k</i> | ከ | ከ | ከ | ከ | ኬ | ከ | ኮ | ኩ |
| <i>h</i> | ኸ | ኸ | ኸ | ኸ | ኼ | ኸ | ኹ | |
| <i>w</i> | ወ | ወ | ወ | ወ | ወ | ወ | ወ | |
| <i>e</i> | ዐ | ዐ | ዐ | ዐ | ዐ | ዐ | ዐ | |
| <i>z</i> | ዘ | ዘ | ዘ | ዘ | ዘ | ዘ | ዘ | ዘ |

| | <i>a</i> | <i>ü</i> | <i>i</i> | <i>ä</i> | <i>é</i> | <i>e'</i> | <i>o</i> | <i>ua</i> |
|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| <i>jz</i> | ገሶ | ገቶ | ገረ | ገሶ | ገፎ | ገኾ | ገሶ | ገረ |
| <i>y</i> | የ | ዩ | ዩ | የ | ዩ | ይ | ዮ | |
| <i>d</i> | ደ | ዱ | ዲ | ዳ | ዶ | ድ | ደ | ዲ |
| <i>j</i> | ጀ | ጁ | ጂ | ጃ | ጆ | ጅ | ጆ | ጁ |
| <i>g</i> | ገ | ጉ | ጊ | ጋ | ጌ | ግ | ጎ | ጎ |
| <i>tt</i> | ጠ | ጡ | ጢ | ጣ | ጤ | ጥ | ጠ | ጢ |
| <i>ch</i> | ጨ | ጨኑ | ጨረ | ጨጌ | ጨፎ | ጨኾ | ጨሶ | ጨረ |
| <i>pp</i> | ጳ | ጴ | ጵ | ጶ | ጷ | ጸ | ጳ | ጴ |
| <i>ts</i> | ጸ | ጹ | ጺ | ጻ | ጼ | ጽ | ጸ | ጹ |
| <i>ts</i> | ፀ | ፁ | ፊ | ፋ | ፋ | ፅ | ፆ | |
| <i>f</i> | ፊ | ፋ | ፊ | ፋ | ፎ | ፍ | ፎ | ፋ |
| <i>p</i> | ፐ | ፑ | ፒ | ፓ | ፔ | ፕ | ፐ | |