Balkar X-marking: a change in progress

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What is X-marking?

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- Those scenarios: subjunctive conditionals

(2) a. If Mary knows the answer, then John will know the answer too.

b. If Mary knew the answer, then John would know the answer too.

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  grammatical means for grammar to mark certain scenarios
- Those scenarios: subjunctive conditionals, weak necessity
  modals

(3) a. He must do his homework (#but he is not obliged to)

   b. He should do his homework (but he is not obliged to)

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  grammatical means for grammar to mark certain scenarios
- Those scenarios: subjunctive conditionals, weak necessity
  modals, unattainable desires

(4)   a.   I want Mary to know the answer

      b.   I wish Mary knew the answer

What is X-marking?

- X-marking (proposed by von Fintel & Iatridou 2020) ≔ grammatical means to mark certain scenarios
- Those scenarios: subjunctive conditionals, weak necessity modals, unattainable desires
- English is a bad language to demonstrate this: the weak necessity modal and the unattainable desire attitude verb have independent lexical entries. Let's look elsewhere.
- NB: by X-marking I understand the grammatical means that *differentiate* X-marked conditionals/modals/desires from regular ones

(5) Subjunctive conditional

Ha	*János*	*tudná*	*a*	*választ,*	*Mari*	*is*	*tudná*
if	János	know-NA	the	answer-ACC	Mari	too	know-NA

a	*választ.*
the	answer-ACC

'If János knew the answer, then Mary would know the answer too.' (von Fintel & Iatridou 2020:10)

(6) unattainable desire

Szeretném   ha Marcsi tudná   a   választ.
like-NA-1SG if   Marcsi know-3SG-NA the answer-ACC

'I wish Marcsi knew the answer.' (von Fintel & Iatridou 2020:11)

(7) Weak necessity modal

Péter-nek el   kell-ene mosogat-ni-a az   edény-ek-et,
Péter-DAT part must-NA wash-INF-3SG the dish-PL-ACC

 de   senki   nem követeli   meg tőle.
 but no_one not   require-3SG.SUBJ-3.OBJ part 3.SG.ABL

'Peter should wash the dishes, but he is not obliged to.'
(von Fintel & Iatridou 2020:17)

(8) Subjunctive conditional

Si	*fuera*	*más*	*alto*	*sería*	*un*	*jugador*
if	be.3SG.PAST.SUBJ	more	tall	be.3SG.COND	a	player

de balconesto
of basketball

'If s/he were higher, s/he would be a basketball player.'
(von Fintel & Iatridou 2020:12)

(9) unattainable desire

Querría	*que*	*fuera*	*más*	*alto*	*de*	*lo*
want.3SG.COND	that	be.3SG.PAST.SUBJ	more	tall	that	it

que	*es*
that	be.3SG

'I wish s/he was taller than s/he is.' (von Fintel & Iatridou 2020:12)

(10) Weak necessity modal

Deberia	*limpiar*	*los*	*platos,*	*pero*	*no*	*estoy*
must.COND.1SG	clean	the	dishes,	but	not	am

obligado.
obliged

'I ought to do the dishes but I am not obliged'

- English: past tense marks both subjunctive clauses and embedded clauses of unattainable desire

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- Hungarian: *-nA* marks both subjunctive clauses and embedded clauses of unattainable desire
- Hungarian: *-nA-* also creates verbs of unattainable desire and weak necessity out of regular desire and necessity verbs: *must* + X-marking = *should*

English, Spanish, Hungarian

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- Hungarian: *-nA* marks both subjunctive clauses and embedded clauses of unattainable desire
- Hungarian: *-nA-* also creates verbs of unattainable desire and weak necessity out of regular desire and necessity verbs: *want* + X-marking = *wish*

- English: past tense marks both subjunctive clauses and embedded clauses of unattainable desire
- Hungarian: *-nA* marks both subjunctive clauses and embedded clauses of unattainable desire and also the verbs of unattainable desire and weak necessity themselves
- Spanish: past subjunctive on subjunctive antecedents and embedded clauses of unattainable desire
- Spanish: conditional marker on subjunctive consequents and the verbs of unattainable desire and weak necessity themselves

- X-marked conditional: If p, then q.
- unattainable desire: I wish p
- Weak necessity: I must NFIN

(11) Subjunctive conditional

Ha János tudná   a   választ,   Mari is   tudná
if   János know-NA the answer-ACC Mari too know-NA

a   választ.
the answer-ACC

'If János knew the answer, then Mary would know the answer too.' (von Fintel & Iatridou 2020:10)

(12)   unattainable desire

Szeretném   ha Marcsi tudná   a   választ.
like-NA-1SG if   Marcsi know-3SG-NA the answer-ACC

'I wish Marcsi knew the answer.'   (von Fintel & Iatridou
2020:11)

(13) Weak necessity modal

Péter-nek el   kell-ene mosogat-ni-a az edény-ek-et,
Péter-DAT part must-NA wash-INF-3SG the dish-PL-ACC

 de senki   nem követeli   meg tőle.
 but no_one not   require-3SG.SUBJ-3.OBJ part 3.SG.ABL

'Peter should wash the dishes, but he is not obliged to.'
(von Fintel & Iatridou 2020:17)

(14) Subjunctive conditional

Si fuera   más   alto   sería   un jugador
if be.3SG.PAST.SUBJ more tall   be.3SG.COND a   player

  de balconesto
  of   basketball

'If s/he were higher, s/he would be a basketball player.'
(von Fintel & Iatridou 2020:12)

(15)   unattainable desire

Querría   que fuera   más   alto   de   lo
want.3SG.COND that be.3SG.PAST.SUBJ more tall   that it

  que   es
  that be.3SG

'I wish s/he was taller than s/he is.' (von Fintel & Iatridou 2020:12)

(16) Weak necessity modal

Deberia	*limpiar*	*los*	*platos,*	*pero*	*no*	*estoy*
must.COND.1SG	clean	the	dishes,	but	not	am

obligado.
obliged

'I ought to do the dishes but I am not obliged'

Introducing Balkar

- Balkar (or Karachay-Balkar): a Turkic language spoken by ca. 310K people in Russia (2010 data)
- Balkar data was collected in August 2021 in village Verkhnyaya Balkariya (Kabardino-Balkaria republic, Russian Federation)

(17) Regular conditional

min   šorpa et-se-m   Kerim   quan-ɨrɨq-dɨ
I.NOM soup   make-COND-1SG Kerim.NOM be_happy-FUT2-3SG

'If I cook a soup, Kerim will be happy.'

Balkar conditionals ii

(18)   X-marked conditional

men   šorpa   et-se   e-di-m   Kerim
I.NOM   soup   make-COND   AUX-PST-1SG   Kerim.NOM

 quan-ɨrɨq   e-di
 be_happy-FUT2   AUX-PST

'If I cooked a soup, Kerim would be happy.' (but I didn't)

(19) Regular conditional

Kerim   xɨcɨn   aša-sa   meni züreg-im
Kerim.NOM khychin eat-COND.3SG I.GEN heart-POSS.1SG

  qɨjnal-lɨq-dɨ
  struggle-FUT2-3SG

'If Kerim eats the khychin, I will be sad.'

(20)   X-marked conditional

Kerim　　*xɨcɨn-nɨ*　　*aša-sa*　　*e-di,*　　*meni*
Kerim.NOM   khychin-ACC   eat-COND   AUX-PST   I.GEN

　züreg-im　　*qɨjnal-lɨq-dɨ*　*e-di*
　heart-POSS.1SG   struggle-FUT2   AUX-PST

'If Kerim ate the khychin, I would be sad.' (but he didn't)

- It appears that Balkar has an English-type situation in conditionals: past tense is used to mark both antecedents and consequents of X-marked conditionals
- There is, however, a problem

(21)   Agreement marker on the auxiliary

tünene   sen   xɨcɨn   aša-sa   e-di-ŋ,
yesterday you.NOM quesadilla eat-COND AUX-PST-2SG

   men   saŋa   uruš-uruq e-di-m
   I.NOM you.DAT scold-FUT2 AUX-PST-1SG

'If you had eaten the khychin yesterday, I would have scolded you'.

(22)   Agreement marker on the lexical verb, auxiliary is present

tünene   sen   xɨcɨn   aša-sa-ŋ   e-di,
yesterday you.NOM quesadilla eat-COND-2SG AUX-PST

  men   saŋa   uruš-uruq e-di-m
  I.NOM you.DAT scold-FUT2 AUX-PST-1SG

'If you had eaten the khychin yesterday, I would have scolded you'.

(23) Agreement marker on the lexical verb, auxiliary is absent

tünene   sen   xɨcɨn   aša-sa-ŋ,   men
yesterday you.NOM quesadilla eat-COND-2SG I.NOM

saŋa   uruš-uruq e-di-m
you.DAT scold-FUT2 AUX-PST-1SG

'If you had eaten the khychin yesterday, I would have scolded you'.

A generalization lost?

- It appears that Balkar has an English-type situation in conditionals: past tense is used to mark both antecedents and consequents of X-marked conditionals
- There is, however, a problem: agreement morphology
- It appears as if the past is optional. Is past?

(24)   Agreement marker on the auxiliary

tünene   sen   xɨcɨn   aša-sa   e-di-ŋ,
yesterday you.NOM quesadilla eat-COND AUX-PST-2SG

　men   saŋa   uruš-uruq   e-di-m
　I.NOM you.DAT scold-FUT2 AUX-PST-1SG

'If you had eaten the khychin yesterday, I would have scolded you'.

(25)   Agreement marker on the lexical verb, auxiliary is present

tünene   sen   xɨcɨn   aša-sa   e-di-ŋ,
yesterday you.NOM   quesadilla eat-COND   AUX-PST-2SG

men   saŋa   uruš-uruq-ma   e-di
I.NOM   you.DAT   scold-FUT2-1SG   AUX-PST

'If you had eaten the khychin yesterday, I would have scolded you'.

(26) Agreement marker on the lexical verb, auxiliary is absent

tünene   sen   xɨcɨn   aša-sa   e-di-ŋ,
yesterday you.NOM quesadilla eat-COND AUX-PST-2SG

  men   saŋa   uruš-uruq-ma
  I.NOM you.DAT scold-FUT2-1SG

'If you had eaten the khychin yesterday, I would have scolded you'.

- It appears that Balkar has an English-type situation in conditionals: past tense is used to mark both antecedents and consequents of X-marked conditionals
- There is, however, a problem: agreement morphology. It appears as if the past is optional.
- The behaviour of antecedents cannot be reduced to independent factors (as consequent data shows). What is up with antecedents? Let us examine weak necessity and unattainable desires.

(27) Regular necessity

Alim	*qol-lar-ɨ-n*	*zua-rʁa*	*kerek-di*
Alim.NOM	hand-PL-POSS.3SG-ACC	wash-INF	must-3SG

'Alim must wash his hands.'

(28) Weak necessity

> *Alim   qol-lar-ɨ-n   zua-rʁa   ķerek e-di*
> Alim.NOM hand-PL-POSS.3SG-ACC wash-INF must AUX-PST

'Alim should wash his hands (but it is not obligatory).'

(29) Regular desire

men   xɨcɨn   aša-rʁa süj-e-me
I.NOM khychin eat-INF   want-IPFV-1SG

'I want to eat a khychin.'

(30) unattainable desire

men   xɨcɨn   aša-rʁa süj-e   e-di-m
I.NOM khychin eat-INF want-IPFV AUX-PST-1SG

'I wish I ate a khychin.' (but I'm likely to be late, so none will be left)

(31) Regular desire

men Alim xɨcɨn aša-sa süj-me-j-me
I.NOM Alim.NOM khychin eat-COND want-NEG-IPFV-1SG

'I don't want Alim to eat a khychin.'

(32)   unattainable desire

men   Alim   xɨcɨn   aša-sa   süj-me-j
I.NOM Alim.NOM quesadilla eat-COND want-NEG-IPFV

  e-di-m
  AUX-PST-1SG

'I wish Alim didn't eat a khychin.' (but he likes them so much, there's no way)

- Consequent X-marking: fake past

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- Antecedent X-marking: null?

Desires and necessity

- Consequent X-marking: fake past
- Antecedent X-marking: null?
- If antecedent X-marking were null, it would make sense to hypothesize that there are two X-marking systems in Balkar simultaneously: one with fake past as antecedent X-marking, and one with null antecedent X-marking

- Suppose that there are two X-marking systems in Balkar, X1 and X2, and the Balkar grammar is undergoing a shift from X1 to X2

- Suppose that there are two X-marking systems in Balkar, X1 and X2, and the Balkar grammar is undergoing a shift from X1 to X2

- X1: fake past, fake past
  X2: null, fake past

- Suppose that there are two X-marking systems in Balkar, X1 and X2, and the Balkar grammar is undergoing a shift from X1 to X2

- X1: fake past, fake past
  X2: null, fake past

- The agreement data follows. Fake past is first left as a particle of sorts (hence, no agreement) and then disappears completely.

- It is rather weird to suggest that antecedent X-marking is null. Can we reformulate the point?
- Suggest that antecedent X-marking is actually the conditional marker itself. Thus, the conditional *-sA-* satisfies two requirements: it performs the function of X-marking and the marker of antecedent/embedded clause of desire

- Note, however, that the difference is purely in presentation. A more 'formal' way of presenting would be to say that there are two syntactic elements F_1 and F_2 that get spelled out together as -*sA*-, while F_1 does the semantic job of a conditional and F_2 does the semantics job of X-marking

Concluding

System X1 (subjunctive antecedent):

$$F_2P$$

$$F_2 \qquad F_1P$$
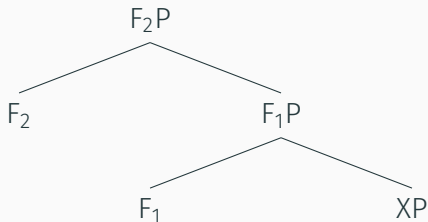
$$F_1 \qquad XP$$
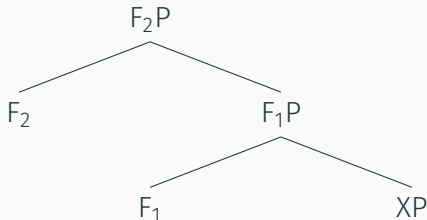
PF: F2 ↔ *-di-* (fake past, an auxiliary is inserted), F1 ↔ *-sA-* (conditional)

LF: F2 ↔ X-semantics, F1 ↔ conditional semantics
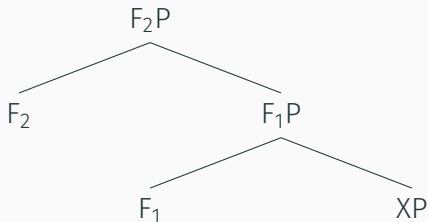
Concluding

System X1.5 (subjunctive antecedent):

F_2P

F_2 F_1P

              F_1 XP

PF: F2 ↔ *e-di* (treated as particle), F1 ↔ *-sA-* (conditional)
LF: F2 ↔ X-semantics, F1 ↔ conditional semantics

Concluding

System X2 (subjunctive antecedent):

PF: F2+F1 ↔ -*sA*- (conditional)
LF: F2 ↔ X-semantics, F1 ↔ conditional semantics

Conclusion

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- Balkar is undergoing a change wrt. X-marking, the antecedent X-marking is starting to be expressed cumulatively with conditional marker
- It is unclear what triggered this process
- Maybe another analysis is possible but any contender should be able to capture the variability in agreement wrt. auxiliary verb in subjunctive antecedents

Fin.

Thank you for your attention!

Bibliography

von Fintel, Kai & Sabine Iatridou. 2020. Prolegomena to a theory of X-marking. *Ms. under review for Linguistics and Philosophy.*