

## Chapter 32

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# Conditional Tenses: *-nge-*, *-ngali-* and *-ki-* Tenses and Their Negations

In this chapter, we will learn how to use conditional tenses: the *-nge-*, *-ngali-* and *-ki-* tenses. These tenses indicate a condition, hypothesis or an assumption. The *-nge-* tense shows a condition in the present tense eg: If I were to study, etc. while the *-ngali-* tense shows a condition in the past tense eg: If I had studied, etc. We will also discuss the *-ki-* tense which shows a condition in the present tense which has future implications eg: If I study, etc. Also, the word *kama* can be used with both the affirmative and negative conditional tenses to emphasize the conditionality. In addition, the *-ki-* tense can also be used as a present participle tense which will also be discussed in this chapter.

Note that in conditional clauses, past tense shows a present condition, a past perfect tense shows a past condition while a present tense shows a future condition.

### Section A: *-nge-* Tense

The *-nge-* tense is used to show a hypothesis in the present tense. Similar to other tense markers, sentences using *-nge-* tense markers are constructed in the following manner.

Subject Prefix + *-nge-* Tense Marker + Verb

Example:

*Ningesoma vizuri, ningefaulu.*

If I were to study well, I would pass.

As you can see from the example above, the *-nge-* tense is always followed by another conditional tense. The first *-nge-* is used as a condition, while the second *-nge-* is used more like a hypothesis. If the sentence includes the *-nge-* tense, it indicates a real condition i.e. the action has the possibility to occur.

Also note that all verbs whether Bantu, Arabic or Monosyllabic are treated in the same way when using *-nge-* and *-ngali-* tenses and their negations, with Monosyllabic verbs retaining their *-KU-* infinitive in both affirmative and negative sentences.

### Practice Exercise A

Translate the following sentences in Swahili.

1. If I were rich, I would marry you.
2. If he were honest, I would lend him my car.
3. If they were ready, we would travel at 8 am.
4. If we were to travel, we would go to Canada.
5. If I were chosen to choose a colour for the walls, I would choose white.

### Section B: *-ngali-* Tense

The *-ngali-* tense is used to show a hypothesis in the past tense. Similar to other tense markers, sentences using *-ngali-* tense markers are constructed in the following manner.

Subject Prefix + *-ngali-* Tense Marker + Verb

Example:

*Ningalisoma vizuri, ningalifaulu.*

If I had studied well, I would have passed.

As you can see from the example above, the *-ngali-* tense is always followed by another conditional tense. The first *-ngali-* is used as a condition, while the second *-ngali-* is used more like a hypothesis. If the sentence includes the *-ngali-* tense, it indicates an unreal condition i.e. the possibility of the action occurring has passed and it cannot occur.

## Practice Exercise B

Translate the following sentences in Swahili.

6. If I had been rich, I would have married you.
7. If he had been honest, I would have lent him my car.
8. If they had been ready, we would have travelled at 8 am.
9. If we had to travel, we would have gone to Canada.
10. If I had been chosen to choose a colour for the walls, I would have chosen white.

## Section C: Mixing of -nge- and -ngali- Tenses

It is possible to use both -nge- and -ngali- tenses in the same sentence. When we want to show that a past condition has an effect in the present, the first condition is denoted by

-ngali- and the second condition by -nge-.

Example:

*Ningalisoma vizuri, ningefaulu.*

If I had studied well, I would pass.

In some cases, when we want to show that a present condition could have had an effect in the past, the first condition is denoted by -nge- and the second condition by -ngali-.

Example:

*Ningekuwa daktari, ningalikutibu.*

If I were a doctor, I would have treated you.

## Practice Exercise C

Translate the following sentences in Swahili.

11. If I were eighteen years old, I would have joined the military.
12. If you had been a scientist, you would discover the cure for AIDS.
13. If we were friends, I would help her.
14. If I had been a potter, I would make clay vessels.
15. If she had studied hard, she would pass.

## Section D: Negation of *-nge-* and *-ngali-* Tenses

The most common way of negating *-nge-* and *-ngali-* tenses is by adding the infix *-si-* between the Subject Prefix and the *-nge-* or *-ngali-* Tense marker as shown below:

Subject Prefix + *-si-* + *-nge-* or *-ngali-* Tense Marker + Verb

Examples:

*Nisingesoma vizuri, nisingefaulu.*

If I were not to study well, I would not pass.

*Nisingekuwa daktari, nisingalikutibu.*

If I were not a doctor, I would not have treated you.

### Practice Exercise D

Translate the following sentences in Swahili.

16. If I had not been rich, I would not have married you.
17. If he had not been honest, I would have lent him my car.
18. If they had not been ready, we would not have travelled at 8 am.
19. If we were not to travel, we would have saved money.
20. If I had not been chosen to choose a colour for the walls, I would have been angry.

## Section E: *-ki-* tense and Negation

The *-ki-* tense can be used in two ways. It can be used as a conditional tense and a present participle tense. Similar to other tense markers, sentences using *-ki-* tense markers are constructed in the following manner.

Subject Prefix + *-ki-* Tense Marker + Verb

When used as a conditional tense, the *-ki-* tense is used to show a hypothesis in the present tense, similar to the *-nge-* tense. The only difference is that it is invariably followed by a future tense or an imperative which has a future implication. Also, when used as a conditional tense, the *-ki-* tense appears in the subordinate conditional clause.

Examples:

*Nikisoma vizuri, nitafaulu.*

If I study well, I will pass.

*Akija darasani, ataleta karatasi za mtihani.*

If he/she comes to class, he/she will bring the examination papers.

Also, as per the last example above, Monosyllabic verbs do not retain their *ku-* infinitive in affirmative sentences using the *-ki-* tense marker.

When used as a negative conditional tense, the *-ki-* tense can be negated in two ways:

1. By substituting the *-ki-* tense marker with the infix *-sipo-*. The Subject Prefix and the verb remain unchanged.

Examples:

*Nisiposoma vizuri, sitafaulu.*

If I do not study well, I will not pass.

*Asipokuja darasani, hataleta karatasi za mtihani.*

If he/she does not come to class, he/she will not bring the examination papers.

When negating the conditional tense sentences, one can negate the subordinate clause or the main clause or both clauses depending on the intent of the sentence. Also, as per the last example above, Monosyllabic verbs retain their *ku-* infinitive in negative sentences using the *-ki-* tense marker.

2. Use of *kama* with present tense negation.

Example:

*Kama sisomi vizuri, sitafaulu.*

If I do not study well, I will not pass.

In addition to being used as a conditional tense, the *-ki-* tense marker is also used as a present participle tense. When used as a present participle tense, it expresses a continuous or incomplete action. The English translation of the verb using the *-ki-* tense can be translated in two ways: the gerund form and the infinitive form. Also, when used as a present

participle tense, the *-ki-* tense can be replaced by the *-na-* present tense marker. In addition, instead of occurring in the first verb of the sentence, the *-ki-* tense marker is found in the subsequent verb.

Examples:

*Tuliwaona wakipika.*

We saw them cooking.

*Nilikuwa ninapenda kuona jua likichwa.*

I used to like to see the sun (to) set.

Also, as per the last example above, Monosyllabic verbs do not retain their *ku-* infinitive in affirmative sentences using the *-ki-* tense marker.

When used as a present participle tense, the *-ki-* tense can be negated in two ways:

1. By negating the first verb of the sentence and leaving *ki-* tense marker in the subsequent verb unchanged.

Example:

*Hatukuwaona wakipika.*

We did not see them cooking.

2. Use of present tense negation.

Example:

*Tuliwaona hawapiki.*

We saw them not cooking.

When negating the present participle sentences, one can negate either of the verbs depending on what the speaker wishes to convey.

## Practice Exercise E

Translate the following conditional sentences in Swahili.

21. If he/she converses on the phone while driving, he/she will get into an accident.
22. If the economy does not plummet, many people will have jobs.
23. If the computer does not work, I will use the typewriter.

24. If it rains heavily, the crops will not grow.  
 25. If I marry a rich man, he will not care about me.

Translate the following present participle sentences in Swahili.

26. I heard the frog croaking.  
 27. We did not expect to see them rushing.  
 28. We expected to see them not rushing.  
 29. She was carrying her grandmother's bags.  
 30. Her assistant did not continue to come on time.

## New Vocabulary

- azimia*: lend  
*dunduiza*: save up, accumulate  
*jeshi/ma-*: army(ies), military  
*karatasi*: paper(s)  
*koroma*: croak, snore  
*mashine ya/za chapa*: typewriter(s)  
*mfinyanzi/wa-*: potter(s)  
*msaidizi/wa-*: assistant(s)  
*mwaminifu/wa-*: honest person(s)  
*mwanasayansi/wa-*: scientist(s)  
*onzea*: converse, speak with  
*poromoka*: plummet, slip, slide  
*umri*: age(s)  
*unga (na)*: join (up), connect (with)

## Key to Exercises

### Answers to Practice Exercise A

1. *Ningekuwa tajiri, ningekuoa.*
2. *Angekuwa mwaminifu, ningemwazimia gari langu.*
3. *Wangukuwa tayari, tungesafiri saa mbili asubuhi.*
4. *Tungesafiri, tungekwenda Kanada.*
5. *Ningechaguliwa kuchagua rangi ya kuta, ningechagua nyeupe.*

### Answers to Practice Exercise B

6. *Ningalikuwa tajiri, ningalikuoa.*
7. *Angalikuwa mwaminifu, ningalimwazimia gari langu.*
8. *Wangalikuwa tayari, tungalisafiri saa mbili asubuhi.*
9. *Tungalisafiri, tungalikwenda Kanada.*
10. *Ningalichaguliwa kuchagua rangi ya kuta, ningalichagua nyeupe.*

### Answers to Practice Exercise C

11. *Ningekuwa na umri wa miaka kumi na nane, ningalijiunga na jeshi.*
12. *Ungalikuwa mwanasayansi, ungedundua tiba ya Ukimwi.*
13. *Tungalikuwa rafiki, ningemsaidia.*
14. *Ningalikuwa mfanyanzi, ningetengeneza vyombo vya udongo wa kinamu.*
15. *Angalisoma kwa bidii, angefaulu.*

### Answers to Practice Exercise D

16. *Nisingalikuwa tajiri, nisingalikuoa.*
17. *Asingalikuwa mwaminifu, ningalimwazimia gari langu.*
18. *Kama wasingalikuwa tayari, tusingalisafiri saa mbili asubuhi.*
19. *Tusingesafiri, tundeduiza pesa.*
20. *Nisingalichaguliwa kuchagua rangi ya kuta, ningalikasirika.*

### Answers to Practice Exercise E

21. *Akiongea kwenye simu wakati anaendesha gari, atapata ajali.*
22. *Uchumi usipoporomoka, watu wengi watapata kazi. OR  
Kama uchumi hauporomoki, watu wengi watapata kazi.*
23. *Kompyuta isipofanya kazi, nitatumia mashine ya chapa. OR  
Kama kompyuta haifanyi kazi, nitatumia mashine ya chapa.*
24. *Mvua ikinyesha kwa nguvu, mazao hayataota.*
25. *Nikiolewa na mwanaume tajiri, hatanijali.*
26. *Nilimsikia chura akikoroma.*
27. *Hatukutegemea kuwaona wakiharakisha.*
28. *Tulitegemea kuwaona hawaharakishi.*
29. *Alikuwa akibeba mifuko ya bibi yake.*
30. *Msaidizi wake hakuendelea kuja kwa wakati.*