

A Koorete Text: **ḍiik'ari ?aji ne jese? Frog, where are you?**

Binyam Sisay Mendisu
(Department of Linguistics, Addis Ababa University)

1 Introduction

This paper presents a recorded and transcribed text in Koorete. Koorete is an Omotic language spoken by 156,749 native speakers in Ethiopia (CSA 2007). Fleming (1976) writes that Koorete is genetically classified in the Eastern branch of the Omoto cluster within the Omotic language family. The speakers of the language call themselves *Koore* and their language *Koorete*. The great majority of the Koorete language speakers live in Amarro wereda of the newly formed *YeSegeen Akababi Hizboch* zone of the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPR). The study presents a text in Koorete.

The text is a Koorete narrative of the picture book ‘Frog, where are you?’ This picture book is a story of a boy, a dog and a frog. It tells a pictorial story about the adventures of the boy and the dog while trying to look for the missing frog. The Koorete story is narrated by a native language consultant¹ by looking at the pictures. Prior to the presentation of the Koorete text in Section 3, brief summary of the phonology of the language which is adopted from Theil (2011) is provided in the following section.

2 Phonology

Consonant Phonemes

Theil (2011) gives 23 consonant phonemes for the language. These are:

¹ The text is recorded with Mercha Melak, who is a native speaker of Koorete and I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to him. I also wish to thank Samuel Zenabu for editing the text.

<i>labial</i>	<i>coronal</i>			<i>dorsal</i>	<i>laryngeal</i>
	<i>alveolar</i>		<i>postalv.</i>		
<i>non-sibilant</i>		<i>sibilant</i>		<i>non-sibilant</i>	
p	t	s	ʃ	k	h
b	d	z	ʒ	g	
ɸ	ɗ	s'	ʃ'	k'	ʔ
m	n				
	r				
	l				
w				j	

Vowel Phonemes

Theil (2011) states that the following are the monophthong and diphthong vowel phonemes of the language:

<i>Monophthongs</i>		<i>Diphthongs</i>	
<i>Short</i>	<i>Long</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Long</i>
i	u	ui	uui
e	o	ei	oi
a	aa	ai	aai

3 Koorete Text

ɗiik'ari ʔaji ne jese? 'Frog, where are you?'

- (1) **mamako-i je-tʃa**
 tale-NOM exist-PAii

'There was a tale.'

- (2) **hajja**

'ok'

- (3) **bidzi zaw-aka kana-ni jele-ni ɗiik'ari-ni**
 one (a) house-LOC dog-INCL boy-INCL frog-INCL

hajdze ʔu je-tʃa
 three 3PL exist-PAii

'In a house, there were a dog, a boy and a frog.'

je-tfo **t'armusi-j-aka** **wor-g-ij-aka** **be** **k'ine**
 exist-PAii bottle-EPN-LOC search-IMF-LOC REF head

t'armusi-j-aka **gels-s-o**
 bottle-EPN-LOC enter-PF-PAi

‘Then, the boy started to look for the frog in his own shoes. And the dog put its head inside the bottle where the frog was staying yesterday in order to search for it.’

(8) **hinne-ko** **t'armusi-j-apa** **?i** **k'ine-i** **kana**
 then-AFOC:DEC bottle-EPN-ABL 3FS head-NOM dog

k'ine-i **kese** **kese** **deed-d-ine**
 head-NOM put out put out resist-PF-TEMP

wor-g-ij-aka **t'armuse** **kana-i** **wod-d-o**
 want-IMF-PROG-LOC bottle dog-NOM break-PF-PAi

‘Then, the dog found it difficult to put its head out of the bottle...while trying to get out the dog broke the bottle.’

(9) **hinne-ko** **jele-i** **be** **kofa** **wor-d-i** **be**
 then-FOC:DEC boy-NOM REF shoes search-PF-PFT REF

dee-d-o **geede be** **lam?-uke** **jele-ni** **kana-ni**
 lose-PF-PAi after REF two-both boy-INCL dog-INCL

je **diik'ar-i?-o** **wor-g-ija** **?u** **kes-s-o**
 that frog-DIM-ABS search-IMF-PROG 3PL get out-PF-PAi

‘The boy searched his shoes and failed to find the frog. Then, both of them went out to look for the missing frog.’

(10) **?u** **han-g-i-tfo-j-nne-ko** **wolla**
 3PL go-IMF-EPN-PAii-EPN-TEM-AFOC:DEC together

han-g-a **?u-j-tfo-j-nne-ko**
 go-IMF-DEP 3PL-exist-EPN-PAii-EPN-TEM-AFOC:DEC

ʔogi-j-aka	wula	bidzi	book-ij-o
road-EPN-LOC	ditch	one	ditch-DIM-ABS

deges-s-I	booku-w-aka	jell-i
meet-PF-PFT	ditch-EPN-LOC	boy:DEF-NOM

s'annaʔ-i-tʃa	kann-i	ʔassi
look through a hole-EPN-Paii	dog:DEF-NOM	again

han-g-i-tʃ-i-nne	maak'-o	gaagura
go-IMF-EPN-PAii-EPN-TEM	be/become-PAi	bee hive

mitsi	bakk-aka	bee-tta-j-d-i	je	gaagura
tree	on-LOC	see-DEP-exist-PF-PFT	that	bee hive

mitsi	bakk-aka	doon-g-i-tʃa
tree	on-LOC	jump-IMF-EPN-PAii

‘While the two were going together, on their way, the boy saw a ditch and he kneeled down to see if the frog is inside. At the same time, the dog saw a bee hive on a tree and he started jumping to catch the hive.’

(11) **hinne-ko** **je** **wulli-j-apa** **ʔereʃ'e-i**
 then-AFOC:DEC that ditch:DEF-EPN-ABL mouse-NOM

wos'-s'-i	kes-s-i	jell-i
run-PF-PFT	get out-PF-PFT	boy:DEF-NOM

leemo	kes-s-i	be	nuuna
shadow	get out-PF-PFT	REF	mouth

ʔajkk-i-tʃ-ine	maak'-o	wo-na	pede	mitsi	bakka
hold-EPN-PAii-TEMP	return-PAi	there above	other	tree	on

kapo	keetse	bee-tta-j-d-i-ko	jaha
bird	nest	see-DEP-say-PF-PFT-AFOC:DEC	there

pede	mitsi	bakka-aka	jell-i	ʃad-d-i
other	tree	on-LOC	boy:DEF-NOM	leave-PF-PFT

kes-s-o

got out-PF-PAi

‘Then, a mouse came out of the ditch and the boy got terrified and held his mouth. Then, he saw a bird cottage and he climbed up the tree.’

- (12) **hinne-ko** **jell-i** **wo-na** **mitsi** **bakk-aka**
then-AFOC:DEC boy:DEF-NOM there-above tree on-LOC

kapo **keetse** **bee-tta** **hi-d-i** **?i** **kes-s-o**
bird house see-DEP say-PF-PFT 3FS got out-PF-PAi

‘Then, having seen the bird cottage in the tree, the boy got on top of the tree.’

- (13) **hatte-ni** **kana-i** **yena** **yena-wo** **gaagura** **mitsi**
now-INCL dog-NOM yet yet-CFOC bee hive tree

bakk-aka **doom-ija** **je-tja**
on-LOC jump-PROG exist-PAii

‘The dog was jumping repeatedly trying to catch the bee hive.’

- (14) **hinne-ko** **kapp-indo-i** **je** **kapo** **najfi**
then-AFOC:DEC bird-mother-NOM that bird children

?indo-i **be** **pange** **budd-i** **joo-ne-ko**
woman-NOM REF wing stretch-PFT come-PRES-AFOC:DEC

jell-i **leemo-kessi** **mitsi** **bakka-pa** **?un-d-o**
boy:DEF-NOM scare tree on-from fell down-PF-PAi

‘Then, the bird’s mother stretched its wing and came towards the boy. The boy was scared of the bird and he fell down from the tree.’

- (15) **jell-i** **?un-d-i** **jesu-ne-ko** **hatte-ni**
boy:DEF-NOM fall-PF-PFT existit-PRES-AFOC:DEC now-INCL

?assi-wo **kana-i** **mitsi** **bakk-aka** **doon-d-i**
again-CFOC dog-NOM tree on-LOC jump-PF-PFT

gaagura **mitse** **ʔenʼus-i-tʃo-j-ne** **gaagura** **mitsi**
 bee hive tree move-EPN-PAii-EPN-TEMP hive tree

ʃiput-t-i **gaagura-i** **shiput-t-i** **ʔapa-pa** **ʔun-d-i**
 cut-PF-PFT hive-NOM cut-PF-PFT above-ABL fell-PF-PFT

hinne-ko **gaagura-pa** **kessa** **ziizo-i**
 then-AFOC:DEC hive-ABL get out bee-NOM

kann-i-wo **good-d-ine** **kann-i-ni** **katse**
 dog:DEF-CFOC chase-PF-TEMP dog:DEF-EPN-INCL breath

bur-d-i **wosʼ-sʼ-o** **jell-i-ni** **ʔassi** **be**
 cut-PF-PFT run-PF-PAi boy:DEF-EPN-INCL again REF

ʔun-d-o **gate** **ʔatt-o-j-d-i** **hinne-ko**
 fell down-PF-PAi place remain-PAi-say-PF-PFT then-AFOC:DEC

wola **ʔu** **hal-l-o**
 each other 3PL separate-PF-PAi

‘The boy fell down and the dog was still jumping to catch the hive. Finally the bee hive fell down and all the bees came out of it and they started chasing the dog.’

(16) **hinne-ko** **kapp-i** **hatte-ni** **be** **pange**
 then-AFOC:DEC bird:DEF-NOM now-INCL REF wing

bud-d-i **joo-ne** **jell-i** **dend-i**
 stretch-PF-PFT come-PRES boy:DEF-NOM raise up-PFT

ʃad-d-i **wosʼ-sʼ-i** **han-d-i** **wora-ka** **gel-a**
 leave-PF-PFT run-PF-PFT go-PF-PFT forest-LOC enter-DEP

wora **be** **gel-l-o** **geede** **mitse** **bija**
 forest REF enter-PF-PAi after tree himself

ʔe **biffi-ne** **mitsi** **be** **ʔufume** **bakk-aka**
 3SM look like-TEMP tree REF horn on-LOC

dagga	keen-g-e	gadansa	ʔufume
tool made of wood	have-IMPF-PRES	deer	horn

ʔajt-t-i	ʔe	bakka-ka	kes-o	ʔi	hi-d-o
hold-PF-PFT	3SM	on-LOC	get out:PF-PAi	3SF	say-PF-PAi

‘When the bird flies to the boy stretching its wings, the boy started to run to the forest. In the forest, he caught a horn of deer thinking that it is a branch of a tree. Then the deer got up slowly.’

(17) **hinne-ko** **gadansa-i** **be** **ʔufume** **bakka-ka**
 then-AFOC:DEC deer-NOM REF horn on-LOC

gad-d-i	wos'-ija-ka	yes-une	kann-i
put-PF-PFT	run-PROG-LOC	exist-TEMP	dog:DEF-NOM

bee-d-o
 see-PF-PAi

‘The deer then started running carrying the boy on its horns and the dog saw that.’

(18) **kann-i** **bee-ta** **hi-d-i-ko**
 dog:DEF-NOM see-DEP see-PF-PFT-AFOC:DEC

wolla	wos'-i-tfo-j-ne	maak'-o	je
together	run-EPN-PAii-EPN-TEMP	return-PAi	that

gadansa-i	jell-i-wo	pid-d-i	dap-o
deer-NOM	boy:DEF-CFOC	jump-PF-PFT	throw-DEP

hinne-ko	jell-i	ʔun-d-i-ne
then-AFOC:DEC	boy:DEF-NOM	fell down-PF-PFT-TEMP

han-d-i	ʔi	bakka-ka	kann-i	ʔi
go-PF-PFT	3SF	on-LOC	dog:DEF-NOM	3SF

ʔun-d-o
 fell down-PF-PAi

jell-eni	kann-eni	ɖad-d-i	hanke
boy:DEF-INCL	dog:DEF-INCL	leave-PF-PFT	that way
dot-o	hi-d-i-ko	ʔe	mamakutte
return:PF-PAi	say-PF-PFT-AFOC:DEC	3SM	narrated

‘Then, they started swimming in the water. They saw dolphin and then they found their own frog and they returned back home.’

List of Abbreviations

ABL	Ablative
ABS	Absolutive
AFOC:DEC	Assertive focus in declarative
AFOC:INT	Assertive focus in interrogative
AGRE	Agreement
CAS	Causative
CFOC	Contrastive focus
COM	Comitative
COMP	Complement
CONJ	Conjunction
DAT	Dative case
DEP	Dependent
DF	Definite
DIM	Diminutive
EPN	Epenthetic
GEN	Genitive
IMF	Imperfective
INCL	Inclusive
INST	Instrumental case
LOC	Locative
M	Masculine
NOM	Nominative
PAi	Past 1
PAii	Past 2
PAS	Passive
PF	Perfective

PFT	Perfect
PL	Plural
PRES	Present
PROG	Progressive
REF	Reflexive
TEMP	Temporal
1P	First person
1PL	First person plural
1SG	First person singular
2SG	Second person singular
3MS	Third person masculine singular
3FS	Third person feminine singular
3PL	Third person plural

Reference

- Binyam Sisay (2010) *Aspects of Koorete Morphology*. Cushitic and Omotic Studies 1. Rudiger Koppe Verlag. Koln.
- Fleming, Harold C (1976) Omotic Overview. In: Bender, M. Lionel (ed.), *The Non-Semitic Languages of Ethiopia*, 299-323. Michigan: African Studies Center.
- Mayer, Mercer (1969) *Frog, where are you?* New York: Dial Press.
- Theil, Rolf (2011) Koorete Segmental Phonology. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* 32: 275-306.