Kambaata children's songs and word games: Or what can we learn about the grammar of Kambaata by analysing marginal literature genres?

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Zusammenfassung
Der vorliegende Artikel untersucht Kinderlieder und Wortspiele aus der kuschitischen Sprache Kambaata und geht der Frage nach, ob dieses Textgenre nützliche Daten für eine grammatische Analyse dieser wenig bekannten Sprache liefern kann. Das Korpus von neun glossierten, übersetzten und annotierten Texten steht im Zentrum dieses Artikels. Tonaufnahmen der Texte werden bereit gestellt.

Abstract
The present article analyses children's songs and word games of the Cushitic language Kambaata and follows up on the question whether this text genre can contribute useful data for a grammatical analysis of this little known language. The corpus of nine texts, which are glossed, translated and annotated, constitute the core of this article. Recordings of the texts are made available.

1. Introduction

<1>
Soon after arriving in the field, linguists who start to work on the description and/or documentation of a little known language try to build up a corpus of texts on which to base their grammatical analysis and with which to extend the lexical database. In the African context, the text collection process usually starts with narrative texts (e.g. fairy tales, legends) and proverbs. It then typically proceeds to procedural texts (e.g. house building, food production) and is finally extended to natural conversations, which are often the most difficult texts to transcribe and analyse. Little attention is generally paid to oral genres that are specific to children. During one of my fieldtrips to Kambaata (South Ethiopia) in 2003, I collected children's songs and word games (*ooso shalata*). The collection was not planned, but came about due to the interest of my main consultant, Tessema Handiso, who wished to share his knowledge of songs (of all kinds) and encouraged me to record them.[1] The children's songs and word games are played (or have been played in the past) by Kambaata children when herding cattle or guarding the house. As elaborated further below, the songs turned out to contain valuable grammatical information that was barely evident in other texts of my corpus. Some verses of these songs have been used as illustrative material in earlier publications on Kambaata but the data has never been presented as a coherent whole.

<2>
This publication is intended to make the transcription, glosses and translations of these texts available to a wider public and to point out some interesting grammatical features. Apart from a number-learning poem in Treis (2007a), no glossed Kambaata texts have yet been published. The texts presented here are annotated in order to draw attention to noteworthy grammatical, lexical and pragmatic features. Mp3-recordings of the texts are provided for listening (click on the links to the sound files in the following sections). In order to make the texts

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1 Tessema Handiso also had a great repertoire of proverbs, riddles and narratives (some of his texts are found in Treis (ed.) 2008b).

accessible to the Kambaata community in Ethiopia (and in diaspora), the transcription follows the official orthography that is taught in primary schools in the Kambaata-speaking area.

\<3\>

The official orthography, as laid out in Maatewoos (1992), deviates from the IPA conventions in the following respects: \<ph\> = /*p'*/, \<x\> = /*t'*/, \<q\> = /*k'*/, \<j\> = /*dʒ*/, \<c\> = /*tʃ'*/, \<ch\> = /*tʃ*/, \<sh\> = /*ʃ*/, \<y\> = /*j*/ and \<'\> = /*ʔ*/.[2] Length is indicated by double letters, e.g. \<aa\> = /*a:*/, \<bb\> = /*b:*/, and \<shsh\> = /*ʃ:*/. By convention, the second consonant of a glottal stop-sonorant cluster is written as double, although the cluster only consists of two phonemes, e.g. \<'rr\> = /*ʔr*/, \<'ll\> = /*ʔl*/. Thus the digraphs \<'l\> and \<'r\> are free to be used to mark glottalised sonorants. Word-final unstressed /*i*/ does not occur orthographically, irrespective of its phonological status.[3]

\<4\>

Kambaata is a Highland East Cushitic language. It is spoken by more than 600,000 speakers (according to the 1998 population census) in the Kambaata-Xambaaro Zone of the Southern Region of Ethiopia.

2. Texts

\<5\>

The texts were recorded on 17 August 2003 in Garba, a village close to Duuraame, the administrative centre of the Kambaata-Xambaaro Zone. The recordings were organised and supported by Tessema Handiso. The singers and speakers were Almaz Handiso, Desalech Handiso, Muluneh Handiso, Tessema Handiso and Tereza Ergano. The recordings were staged and not spontaneously observed. A Kambaata-speaking audience was present during the recordings.

\<6\>

In the following sections, the texts are first given as a whole and then dealt with verse by verse. The orthographical transcription is presented in the first line. In the second line, the text is segmented into morphemes. The third line contains the interlinear morphemic translation. The fourth line provides an English translation. Grammatical, lexical, ethnolinguistic and cultural annotations are given at the end of each text. Where available, photos illustrate items mentioned in the text.

2.1. Lalee Lalee

\<7\>

Lalee Lalee is a well-known song among Kambaata children. It is a sequence of questions (presented by a leader) and answers (given by an individual or a group of children). The answer to each question, which is a single noun or a noun phrase, constitutes the trigger for the next question. The last answer (*tumaanchu* 'smith') is the prompt for the children to try to stab each other's eyes with a finger. The song is known in slightly different versions all over Kambaata. Apart from the version (A) presented below, two other versions were available to me: (i) one version (B) is found in the primer *Kambaatissata* (1989: vol. 1, p. 93) and (ii) I collected a third version (C) from Woldeselassie Abbute in 2002.[4]

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[2] The glottal stop is only written between identical vowels; see e.g. *yooba'a* 'there is not'.

[3] For more detailed information on the orthography see Treis (2008a: 74-79).

[4] In April/May 2002, I had the chance to work with Woldeselassie Abbute, a Kambaata native speaker in Göttingen (Germany), before I went for my first fieldtrip to Ethiopia.

<8>
The text is a good source for question pronouns (see the verses by the leader) and for an analysis of the Kambaata case marking system. Apart from the dative, all case forms for which Kambaata noun can inflect are attested in the text: nominative, accusative, genitive, instrumental-comitative-perlative, ablative, locative, and oblique.

	LEADER	ALL
1	*Lalee lalee!*	*Yee!*
2	*Lalu fanqashsh!*	*Gibboomm*
3	*Ay gib yee?*	*Womu*
4	*Womu ma illo?*	*Labbaa*
5	*Labbee su'mmu ayeet?*	*Mutaanoot*
6	*Mutaanu miin ichcho?*	*Mooqoon*
7	*Mooquta hakkanne suchcho?*	*Hiiloon*
8	*Hiiloochch mi fullo?*	*Wiliilit*
9	*Wiliilit hakkaba aaggoo?*	*Samaa*
10	*Sameechch mi fullo?*	*Xeenu*
11	*Xeenu ma leishsho?*	*Hixita*
12	*Hixita ay ichcho?*	*Booyyuu Ajaarii*
13	*Booyyonii Ajaarenii maan xuureemma?*	*Amannee adannee gobboo gereereen*
14	*Amannee adannee gobboo gereereechch maan fanqashsheemma?*	*Boosoon*
15	*Boosiichch mi fullo?*	*Buuru*
16	*Buuru ay ichcho?*	*Buggam*
17	*Buggamo miin qaseemma?*	*[Bagaziin]*
18	*Bagazu ay tummo?*	*Tumaanchu*

19 (ALL:) *Tummo tumaachi illitii kii illitii qomfo'll [yitu]!*

(1) *Lalee Lalee!*   –   *Yee!*

Lál-e   *Lál-e*   *yée*
L.-mOBL   L.-mOBL   INTJ
'Lalee Lalee!'   'Yes!'

Notes:

Lále is an address term that is based on the noun *lalú* 'cattle'; the term is here used to call the shepherd of the cows. Address forms are marked for the oblique case.

Yée is an interjection that is used as a response to a call (but not as an answer to a yes/ no-question). The use of *yée* indicates an intimate / non-formal relationship between the person calling and the person responding. It is commonly used among children but not in use among elderly people even if they are in an intimate relationship. The formal response to a call is *abée*; a less formal response among elderly people would be *hée*. (Deginet Wotango, personal communication, 2011)

In the second line, a strictly phonemic orthography is used. Stress is marked by an acute accent. Word-medial and word-final glottal stops are marked overtly (while they are mostly left unwritten in the first line according to the orthographic conventions of Kambaata).

3

(2) *Lalu fanqashsh!*   – *Gibboomm*

lal-ú	*fanqáshsh*		*gibb-óomm*
cattle-mACC	return.CS.2sIMP		refuse-1sPVO
'Bring the cattle back!'			'I refuse.'

Note:

The *o*-perfective verb form *gibbóomm* 'I refuse' (lit. "I have refused") is here used in a performative speech act. The *o*-perfective verb does here not indicate that the refusal has been completed prior to the speech situation but that the utterance itself is the refusal.

(3) *Ay gib yee?*   – *Womu*

áy	*gíb*	*y-ée'*		*wóm-u*
who.mNOM	refuse.2sIMP	say-3mPVE		king-mNOM
'Who told [you] to refuse?' (lit. "Who told 'Refuse!'")				'The king.'

Note:

In version B, the final verb in the question carries a 2nd person object pronoun: *y-ée-he* (say-3mPVE-2sO) '(s.o.) said to you'.

(4) *Womu ma illo?*   – *Labbaa*

wóm-u	*m-á*	*íll-o*		*labb-áa*
king-mNOM	what-mACC	become_father-3mPVO		boy-mACC
'Whose father is the king?'				'Of a boy.'

(Lit. "The king is the father of what?")

Note:

The verb *il-* 'give birth (of a woman), become father (of a man)' is a verb that can be used with female and male subjects. The child is encoded as the direct object. Compare verse 4 above (male subject) and verse 4 from version B of the song: *Womíbíit má iltóo'* 'What did the one (F) of the king [i.e. the wife of the king] give birth to?' (female subject).

(5) *Labbee su'mmu ayeet?*   – *Mutaanoot*

labb-ée	*sú'mm-u*	*áy-ee-t*		*Mutáan-oo-t*
boy-mGEN	name-mNOM	who-mNOM.VV-COP3		M-mPRED.VV-COP3
'What is the boy's name?'				'Mutaano.'

Notes:

Traditional Kambaata names, which are hardly ever given to children today, are based on common nouns and verbs (cf. Treis 2008a: 109f) and are usually semantically transparent. They often refer to the circumstances surrounding the birth of the person or the person's appearance and character. Unfortunately, the lexical base on which *Mutaanó* is based is not safely known to me. It is possibly segmentable into *Mut-aan-ó*, with the agentive morpheme *-aan* (Treis 2008a: 278-82) and the verbal stem *mut-* 'sprout'.

All personal names end in the vowels *-é, -ó* and (less so) *-á*. Names do not take gender suffixes but they are case-marked like common nouns. As non-verbal predicates (see verse 5 above), they require copula 3, VV-*t*. (Kambaata has three different copulas; for more information on their functions and their distribution see Treis (2007b).)

Verse 5 is not part of version B and C.

(6)   *Mutaanu miin ichcho?*   –   *Mooqoon*

Mutáan-u   *m-íin*   *íchch-o*   *mooq-óon*
M.-mNOM   what-mICP   eat-3mPVO   spoon-fICP
'With what did Mutaano eat?'   'With a spoon.'

Notes:

Version B of verses 4-6: The three verses are reduced to two, because the name of the son is not asked for; see verse 4: *Womíbíit má iltóo"?* 'What did the one (F) of the king [i.e. the wife of the king] give birth to?' – *Labbáa* 'A boy'; no verse 5; verse 6: *Labbóos míin íchcho*? 'With what did the boy eat?' – *Mooqóon* 'With a spoon'.

Version C of verses 4-6: The three verses are reduced to two, because the son of the king is not mentioned; see verse 4: *Wómu áyeet?* 'Who is the king?' – *Innám* 'Innamo'; no verse 5; verse 6: *Innám míin íchcho*? 'With what did Innamo eat?' – *Mooqóon* 'With a spoon'.

The lexical base of the name *Innamo* is not known to me.

(7)   *Mooquta hakkanne suchcho?*   –   *Hiiloon*

mooq-úta   *hakkánn-e*   *súchch-o*   *hiil-óon*
spoon-fACC   where-mOBL   put_in-3mPVO   area_btw_wall&roof-mLOC
'Where did he keep the spoon?'   'Where wall and roof meet.'

Notes:

Inside the house, in the area where the wall meets the roof, people keep tools and other household items.

Version B: The spoon is overtly marked as definite, i.e. $MOOQ\text{-}Ú\text{-}S$ (spoon-f.ACC-DEF) 'the spoon'.

(8)   *Hiiloochch mi fullo?*   –   *Wiliilit*

hiil-óochch   *m-í*   *fúll-o*   *wilíil-it*
area_btw_wall&roof-fABL   what-mNOM   leave-mPVO   smoke-fNOM
'What came out (from the gap) between wall and roof?'   'Smoke.'

(9)   *Wiliilit hakkaba aaggooi?*   –   *Samaa*

wilíil-it   *hakka=b-á*   *aag-góo'*   *sam-áa*
smoke-fNOM   which.mACC=PLACE-mACC   enter-3fPVO   sky-mACC
'Where (lit. "which place") did it enter?'   '(Into) the sky.'

Note:

Version B: The smoke is overtly marked as definite, i.e. *wilíil-i-s* (smoke-fNOM-DEF) 'the smoke'.

(10)   *Sameechch mi ubbo?*   –   *Xeenu*
sam-éechch   *m-í*   *úbb-o*   *xéen-u*
sky-mABL   what-mNOM   fall-3mPVO   rain-mNOM
'What fell from the sky?'   'Rain.'

Note:

Version A (question): In the first and second repetition of the song, the verb *fúllo* 'it left, came out' is used mistakenly in place of *úbbo* 'it fell'.

(11) *Xeenu ma leishsho?* — *Hixita*

xéen-u	*m-á*	*le'-íshsh-o*	*hix-íta*
rain-mNOM	what-mACC	grow-CS-3mPVO	grass-fACC

'What did the rain grow?' 'Grass.'

(12) *Hixita ay ichcho?* — *Booyyuu Ajaarii*

hix-íta	*áy*	*íchch-o*	*Bóoyy-uu*	*Ajáar-ii*
grass-fACC	who.mNOM	eat-3mPVO	B.-fNOM.CRD	A.-fNOM.CRD

'Who ate the grass?' 'Booyyo and Ajaare.'

Notes:

Booyyó and *Ajaaré* are cow names. In Kambaata, the name of cattle often refers to the colour / pattern of their hide (or, for instance, their character, the circumstances surrounding their birth or their acquisition). *Booyyó* is given as a name to a cow with a blaze (*booqimáta*) (cf. Photo 1). *Ajaaré* is the name of a cow with a light brown (beige) colour.

Version B (question): The grass is overtly marked as definite, i.e. *hix-í-s* (grass-fACC-DEF) 'the grass'.

Version C (question): The question word *áy* 'who?' is replaced by *mí* 'what?'

Version B and C (answer): The grass is only eaten by one cow and the answer is simply *Bóoyyu* 'Booyyo'.

Photo 1

A cow with a blaze is named *Booyyo*.
The spot itself is called *booqimáta*.
(Picture taken in the house of Meselech Qalbiso in Duuraame, 26/08/2008)

(13) *Booyyonii Ajaarenii maan xuureemma?*

Booyy-o-níi	*Ajaar-e-níi*	*m-áan*	*xuur-éemma*
B.-fACC-CRD	A.-fACC-CRD	what-mLOC	milk-3honPVE

'Into [i.e. with] what did one milk Booyyo and Ajaare?'

— *Amannee adannee gobboo gereereen*

ád-a-nnee	*gob-bóo*	*gereer-éen*
paternal_aunt-fNOM-1pPOSS.CRD	weave-3fPVO.REL	type_of_vessel-fLOC

'Into the *gereerita*-vessel which was woven by our mother and our paternal aunt.'

Notes:

The 3hon-verb form can be used with honorific subjects, i.e. third person subjects that refer to a respected person (e.g. one's parents), or without an implicit subject, in which case the verb is impersonal. The impersonal construction is most often appropriately translated with a passive in

English ('Into [i.e. with] what were Booyyo and Ajaare milked?'). Apart from the impersonal construction, which is very common when the agent of an action is irrelevant, unknown or a general agent, Kambaata can also make use of a passive construction with a passive-derived verb (-am PASS derivation).

The *gereeríta* is a traditional milking vessel which is no longer in use today.

Version B (question): Only one cow is mentioned, i.e. *Booyyó máan xuuréemma*? 'Who milked Booyyo?'

Version B (answer): 'Mother' is replaced by 'parents', i.e. *amánnunnee adánnee gobbóo gereeréen* 'into the *gereerita*-vessel that was woven by our parents and our paternal aunt'. (This alternative is probably an error, because men do not weave baskets in Kambaata.)

Version C verse 13 is broken up into two verses: *Bóoyyu má aassée"*? 'What did Booyyo give?' – *Azúta* 'Milk' – *Azúta máan xuuréemma*? 'Into what did one milk the milk?' – *Oroobóon* 'Into an *oroobu*-vessel'.

The *oroobú* is a traditional milking vessel similar yet bigger than the *gereeríta*. The vessels were not made of clay but of grass and leather. A woven grass basket was coated with leather and decorated with cowries. At first, fresh blood was filled into it; when the blood had dried, the vessel became leak-proof. Before they were used for milking, they were smoked (*qadiidú*).

(14) *Amannee adannee gobboo gereereechch maan fanqashsheemma?*

ám-a-nnee	*ád-a-nnee*	*gob-bóo*	*gereer-éechch*
mother-fNOM-1pPOSS.CRD	paternal_aunt-fNOM-1pPOSS.CRD	weave-3fPVO.REL	type_of_vessel-fLOC

m-áan	*fanqashsh-éemma*
what-mLOC	return-3honPVE

'Into what did one fill [the milk] from the gereerita-vessel which was woven by our mother and our paternal aunt?'

- *Boosoon*

  boos-óon
  clay_pot-mLOC
  'Into a boosu-pot.'

Notes:

The *boosú* is a large clay pot which can be used to store water, to carry water from the well or, if it has a small hole, to churn milk (cf. Photo 2).

Version B (question): Only the head noun of the answer in 13b is repeated in the question, i.e. *gereeréechch máan fanqahshséemma*? 'Into what did one fill [the milk] from the *gereerita*-vessel?'

Version C (question): Since *oroobú* 'oroobu-vessel' was used as answer in verse 13, verse 14 starts with *oroobíichch* (mABL) 'from the *oroobu*-vessel' and the question is *oroobíichch máan fanqashshéemma*? 'Into what did one fill [the milk] from the *oroobu*-vessel?'

Photo 2

Clay pot for churning milk (*azo boosu*)
(Picture taken in the house of Soodanne Haddaro
in Doo'anu,
18/07/2007).

(15) *Boosiichch mi fullo?*   – *Buuru*

     boos-íichch   *m-í*   *fúll-o*   *búur-u*
     clay_pot-mABL   what-mNOM   leave-3mPVO   butter-mNOM
     'What came out of the *boosu*-pot?'   'Butter.'

Note:

Milk is churned in *boosú*-pots.

(16) *Buuru ay ichcho?*   – *Buggam*

     buur-ú   *áy*   *íchch-o*   *Buggám*
     butter-mACC   who.mNOM   eat-3mPVO   B.mNOM
     'Who ate the butter?'   'Buggamo.'

Notes:

Buggamó is the name of a dog. The lexical source of the name is not known to me.

Version B: The butter is overtly marked as definite (with *-s* DEF) and a different question pronoun is used, i.e. *buurús mí íchcho?* 'What ate the butter?'

Version C (question): Instead of *áy* 'who?', the pronoun *mí* 'what?' is used.

(17) *Buggamo miin qaseemma?*   – *[Bagaziin]*
     Buggam-ó   *m-íin*   *qas-éemma*   *bagaz-íin*
     B.-mACC   what-mICP   stab-3honPVE   spear-mICP
     'With what did one stab Buggamo?'   'With a spear.'

Notes:

The answer in verse 17 above is put into brackets because the singers actually say *bagázu* (mNOM) on the record. The nominative case form is an error and was corrected by my consultant during the transcription; the ICP case form has to be used here.

Version B and C: *Buggamé mí qáshsho*? 'What stabbed Buggame? – *Bagázu* 'A spear.' – Note the slightly different name of the dog.

(18) *Bagazu ay tummo?*   – *Tumaanchu*

bagaz-ú	*áy*	*túmm-o*	*tum-áan-ch-u*
spear-mACC	who.mNOM	forge-3mPVO	forge-AA-SG-mNOM

'Who forged the spear?'   'A blacksmith.'

<u>Notes:</u>

The verb *tum-* is polysemous ('beat, hit, pound (of metal), forge (of metal)') and its use is not restricted to the work of a blacksmith. The root *tum-* is also found in the word for 'fist', *tuntummúta*.

The term for 'blacksmith', *tumaanchú*, is an agentive derivation (lit. "beater, pounder, forger") of the verb *tum-*.

(19) *Tummo tumaanchi illitii kii illitii qomfo'll [yitu]*

tumm-ó	*tum-aan-ch-í*	*íll-itii*
forge-3mPVO.REL	forge-AA-SG-mGEN	eye-fNOM.CRD

kíi	*íll-itii*	*qomfó'll*	*y-ítu*
2sGEN	eye-fNOM.CRD	be_dented	say-3fBEN

'The eyes of the smith and your eyes should be poked (lit. "dented")!'

<u>Notes:</u>

While the children utter this verse they try as quickly as possible to stab a finger into each other's eyes.

The utterance contains a short jussive ("benedictive") verb which is used in curses and wishes (here we are dealing with a curse). The final word occurs in brackets because it cannot be heard on the record; ideophones like *qomfó'll* require a support verb (*y-* 'say' or *a'-* 'do') and the support verb *yítu* is attested in version C of this verse. In version B, the support verb after the ideophone is also missing.

2.2. Aguddaant

<9>

Aguddaant is a competition in which two children insult or ridicule (*borooru*) each other in the most creative ways. The target of ridicule is the opponent's body. The framing verses, as given in §2.2.1, do not change in the course of the competition, only the insulting comparisons (§2.2.2) keep changing. The sound file of this word game contains only four different insults (see below); all additional examples listed in §2.2.2 were contributed by Tessema Handiso during and after the transcription of the record.[5]

<10>

For outsiders, it is often not immediately apparent why some of the comparisons are insulting; therefore, explanations given by my consultants are *provided* in the notes. The *aguddaant*-competition seems to be common in Kambaata and the comparisons are probably conentionalized to a certain extent.[6]

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[5] Some of these insults were mentioned by Tessema Handiso spontaneously; others were provided by him when I asked which comparisons could be used with body parts that had not been mentioned before.

[6] It remains to be investigated whether the comparisons made in the *aguddaant*-competition are also used in daily language.

2.2.1.Frame

<11>
The frame of the game is as follows:

(a)   Speaker A:

Aguddaant

agud-dáant
resemble-2sIPV
'You resemble [something].'

(b)   Speaker B:

Ma agudaamm?

m-á   agud-áamm
what-mACC   resemble-1sIPV
'What do I resemble?'

(c)   Speaker A:

[Insult from §2.2.2 to be inserted here]

(a') Speaker B
      asks in return:

Aguddaant

agud-dáant
resemble-2sIPV
'You resemble [something].'

(b') Speaker A:

Ma agudaamm?

m-á   agud-áamm
what-mACC   resemble-1sIPV
'What do I resemble?'

(c') Speaker B
      pays A back for the insult in (c):

[Insult from §2.2.2 to be inserted here]

2.2.2.Insults

<12>
The following verses 1-28 are to be inserted into lines c and c' above. The structure of all verses is identical: a subject noun phrase is in juxtaposition to an object noun phrase. Each subject consists of two coordinated noun phrases, i.e. one of the opponent's body parts and the second person pronoun (e.g. 'your ears and you'). Coordination in Kambaata is marked by lengthening the final vowel of a word.[7] The object is a noun phrase that contains an accusative head noun that is modified by a genitive noun. The verb of the sentence, which would be expected to occur sentence-finally, remains unexpressed but is understood from the context ('resemble').

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[7]   This coordination strategy is applied if the coordinated nouns function as heads of the noun phrase. Modifiers in a noun phrase are coordinated with the suffix *-na* (no example of this type of coordination occurs in the texts presented here).

(1) *Maccakkii atii maxari tumbeu*

mácc-a-kkii	*átii*	*maxar-í*	*tumbe'-ú*
ear-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD	2sNOM.CRD	newly_cleared_farmland-mGEN	tobacco-mACC

'Your ears and you [resemble] tobacco on newly cleared farmland.'

Notes:

The tobacco on newly cleared farmland grows quickly and develops particularly big leaves.

In the Kambaata language, edible leaves of plants are generally referred to as *maccáta* 'ear', whereas leaves which are not consumed are referred to as *bonxá* 'leaf' (e.g. leaves of the eucalyptus tree). Apart from tobacco, coffee leaves (*buní maccáta*), which are used for the preparation of 'leaf coffee' (*maccá buná*), and cabbage leaves (*hamiilí maccáta*) are also referred to as 'ears'.

The same insult is found in Kambaatissata (1989: vol. 1, p. 107).

(2) *Lokkakkii atii woraate gooffoo wonnichchuta*

lókk-a-kkii	*átii*	*woráat-e*	*goof-fóo*	*wonn-ichch-úta*
leg-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD	2sNOM.CRD	type_of_grass-mOBL	finish-3fPVO.REL	digging_stick-SG-fACC

'Your legs and you [resemble] a digging stick that was finished by *woraati*-grass.'

Note:

The opponent's legs are said to be thin and short and are compared to a digging stick (*wonnichchúta*), which is typically eroded (and thus made shorter) through use in the farming of land overgrown with a very hard grass type (*woraatí*). The *wonnichchúta* is a cultivation tool with a long wooden handle and an iron blade at the top. One of its uses is to break up soil before it can be farmed with oxen.

(3) *Illikkii atii idaayye moocinaanchuta*

íll-i-kkii	*átii*	*idaayy-é*	*moocinaanch-úta*
eye-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD	2sNOM.CRD	grandma-fGEN	type_of_bowl-fACC

'Your eyes and you [resemble] grandma's *moocinaanchuta*-bowl.'

Notes:

Idáayye is an address term for one's grandmother (*abbamáta* lit. "big mother"). In this verse, the term is used as a reference term.[8]

Ensete (*ensete ventricosum*), a plant related to and resembling the banana plant, is an important crop in Kambaata and elsewhere in Kambaata. Its pseudostem and underground bulb provides large quantities of food (see Brandt et al. 1997 for information on enset farming, harvesting, food production, etc.).

The *moocinaanchúta*-bowl is a wooden bowl in which the acidic liquid (*moocá*) of enset food is collected. Before the preparation of enset bread and other enset dishes, the fermented enset pulp (*waasá*) is wrapped into an old sack or a bunch of enset fibres. One end of this sack or fibre bunch is knotted around a strong wooden pole; the other end is wrapped around a short stick. The stick is then turned around and the acidic liquid is wrung out (*xuunshú*) of the enset pulp (see Photo 3). The liquid is whitish and contains solid fragments which are mostly fibrous. By comparing the opponent's eyes to the *moocinaanchúta*-bowl the speaker wants to express that the opponent's eyes are unwashed and dirty and that there is a white crust around or white remains in his/her eyes.

The same insult is found in Kambaatissata (1989: vol. 1, p. 170).

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[8] Information on the Kambaata kinship terminology is found in Treis (2005b).

Photo 3

Wringing the acidic liquid out of the fermented enset pulp
(Picture taken in the house of Lombeebo Woyyimo
in Denekka Bonaamu,
14/09/2003).

(4) (i) *Miinikkii atii gidaanchi bandaamu*

míin-i-kkii	*átii*	*gidaan-ch-í*	*band-aam-ú*
face-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD	2sNOM.CRD	baboon-SG-mGEN	bald_spot-PROP-mACC

'Your face and you [resemble] the bum of a baboon.'

(ii) *Gujjukkii atii gidaanchi banda(ta)*

gújj-u-kkii	*átii*	*gidaan-ch-í*	*band-á / -áta*
back-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD	2sNOM.CRD	baboon-SG-mGEN	bald_spot-m/fACC

'Your back and you [resemble] the bum of a baboon.'

Notes:

The first version (i) of this insult was provided by Tessema Handiso during the transcription of the recording. The second version (ii) is the insult as it was recorded (see sound file) and as it is found in Kambaatissata (1989: vol. 1, p. 170). The two versions differ in two respects: In (i) the opponent's face is compared to a baboon's bum; in (ii) the opponent's back (or rather backside) is the object of ridicule. In version (i), the final word, *band-aam-ú*, is a proprietive adjective derived from the noun *bandá(ta)*, which refers to a bald / hairless spot (e.g. on a person's head) that was burnt or wounded and thus grows no hair. *Bandá(ta)* and *bandaamú* 'the one with/having a bald spot' are euphemisms for the hairless rump of the baboon.

The final syllable of *bandá*(*ta*) occurs in brackets because the information on the gender of this noun is contradictory: In Kambaatissata (1989: vol. 1, 107) and on the record, it is given as masculine (*bandá*); my consultants, however, provided a feminine citation form (*bandáta*).

(5) *Miinikkii atii mixaadi shiinshaanchu*

míin-i-kkii	*átii*	*mixaad-í*	*shiinsh-aan-ch-ú*
face-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD	2sNOM.CRD	griddle-mGEN	wipe-AA-SG-mACC

'Your face and you [resemble] a griddle rag.'

Note:

The *mixaadú* is a flat clay griddle (Photo 4) which is used, among other purposes, for the baking of bread. Before baking, the griddle is oiled with a rag / piece of cloth. Over time the rag becomes black with soot.

Photo 4

Clay griddle (*mixaadú*)
(Picture taken in the house of Lombeebo
Woyyimo in Denekka Bonaamu,
14/09/2003).

(6)   *Sanukkii atii buuli funga*

sán-u-kkii   *átii*   *buul-í*   *fung-á*
nose-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   mule-mGEN   snout-mACC
'Your nose and you [resemble] the snout of a mule.'

(7)   *Yaburrakkii atii bashinqi xoroshu*

yabúr-r-a-kkii   *átii*   *bashinq-í*   *xorosh-ú*
lip-PL1-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   sorghum-mGEN   bread-mACC
'Your lips and you [resemble] sorghum bread.'

Notes:

Sorghum bread is thick and large.

The plurative morpheme on the transnumeral noun 'lip(s)' does not indicate plurality but indicates the large size of this body part and/or expresses the speaker's contempt.

(8)   *Inqaakkakkii atii zaneechchi girqa*

inq-áakk-a-kkii   *átii*   *zan-eechch-í*   *girq-á*
tooth-PL2-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   elephants-SG-mGEN-   tusk-mACC
'Your teeth and you [resemble] the tusks of an elephant.'

Notes:

The opponent's teeth are ridiculed as large and protruding.

The plurative morpheme on the transnumeral noun 'tooth/teeth' does not indicate plurality but indicates the large size of this body part and/or expresses the speaker's contempt.

(9)   *Inqaakkakkii atii fuuxichchi inquta*

inq-áakk-a-kkii   *átii*   *fuux-ichch-í*   *inq-úta*
tooth-PL2-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   moles-SG-mGEN   tooth-fACC
'Your teeth and you [resemble] the teeth of a mole.'

Notes:

The opponent's teeth are said to be dirty as moles' teeth.

The plurative morpheme on the transnumeral noun 'tooth/teeth' does not indicate plurality but indicates large size of this body part and/or expresses the speaker's contempt.

(10) *Godabbakkii atii fudi qarcaata*

godáb-b-a-kkii   *átii*   *fud-í*   *qarcaat-á*
belly-PL1-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   equine_dung-mGEN   basket-mACC
'Your belly and you [resemble] a basket for equine dung.'

Notes:

The opponent's belly is said to be big.

The plurative morpheme on the transnumeral noun 'belly/bellies' does not indicate plurality (the opponent obviously has but *one*!) but the plurative indicates the large size of this body part and/or expresses the speaker's contempt.

(11) *Godabukkii atii qalii hiirro lalu*

godáb-u-kkii   *átii*   *qal-íi*   *hiirr-ó*   *lal-ú*
belly-mNOM-   2sNOM.CRD   give_birth-mDAT   release-3mPVO.REL   cow-mACC
2sPOSS.CRD
'Your belly and you [resemble] a cow that is about to give birth.'

(12) *Gujjukkii atii gotiichchi nubaachchu*

gújj-u-kkii   *átii*   *got-iichch-í*   *nubaachch-ú*
back-mNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   hyenas-SG-mGEN   old_man.SG-mACC
'Your back and you [resemble] an old hyena.'

Note:

The opponent's back is said to be bent like the back of a hyena.

(13) *Mookikkii atii qadafari wojju*
móok-i-kkii   *átii*   *qadafar-í*   *wojj-ú*
cheek-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   lung-mGEN   white-mACC
'Your cheeks and you [resemble] "lung-white".'

Note:

Thin bulls are said to be "lung-white" (*qadafarí wojjú*). In analogy, the addressee's cheeks are said to be "lung-white", i.e. s/he has lost weight, become thin and pale and has a gaunt face.[9]

(14) *Dugukkii atii gidaanchi nubaachchu*

dúg-u-kkii   *átii*   *gidaan-ch-í*   *nubaachch-ú*
eyebrow-mNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   baboons-SG-mGEN   old_man.SG-mACC
'Your eyebrows and you [resemble] an old baboon.'

Note:

The opponent is said to frown critically, and never to laugh.

---

[9] This idiom was known to only one of my Kambaata consultants. Thus the translation and interpretation of this insult must be taken with due care.

(15) *Haamukkii atii haqqe xaxxarrata*

háam-u-kkii   *átii*   *haqq-é*   *xaxxarr-áta*
chest-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   wood-fGEN   firewood-fACC
'Your chest and you [resemble] firewood.'
<u>Note:</u>
The opponent is said to be very thin. His/her ribs are easily visible.

(16) *Goobukkii (~ goobbakkii) atii Shaalli zoobira*

góob-u-kkii ~ góob-b-a-kkii   *átii*   *Shaall-í*   *zoobir-á*
neck-mNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   Sh.-mGEN   vultures-mACC
~ neck-PL1-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD
'Your neck and you [resemble] Shaalla-vultures.'

<u>Note:</u>

Shaalla is a lake in the Rift valley in South Ethiopia.

The plurative morpheme on the transnumeral noun 'neck(s)' does not indicate plurality (the opponent obviously has but *one*!) but the plurative indicates the large size of this body part and/or expresses the speaker's contempt.

(17) *Unuunnakkii atii haqqe gagammata*

unúun-n-a-kkii   *átii*   *haqq-é*   *gagam-m-áta*
breast-PL1-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   wood-fGEN   stump-PL1-fACC
'Your breasts and you [resemble] tree stumps.'

<u>Notes:</u>

The opponent is said to have big breasts even though she hasn't married yet and/or become pregnant and given birth.

The plurative morpheme on the transnumeral noun 'breast(s)' does not indicate plurality but it indicates the large size of this body part and/or expresses the speaker's contempt.

(18) *Boqukkii atii harre bulla*

bóq-u-kkii   *átii*   *harr-é*   *bull-á*
head-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   donkeys-fGEN   grey-mACC
'Your head and you [resemble] the grey of donkeys.'

<u>Note:</u>

The opponent's hair is said to be dusty and louse-ridden, like the donkey's grey fur.

(19) *Boqukkii atii misaane gena*

bóq-u-kkii   *átii*   *misaan-é*   *gen-á*
head-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   axe-fGEN   upper_part-mACC
'Your head and you [resemble] the upper part of an axe.'

<u>Notes:</u>

The opponent's head is said to be big.

The wooden part of the *misaaníta*-axe has a head-shaped upper part into which the iron blade is inserted.

15

(20) *Xulungakkii atii adane ga'a*

xulúng-a-kkii   *átii*   *adan-é*   *ga'-á*
nail-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   cats-fGEN   wild_cats-mACC
'Your nails and you [resemble] wild cats.'

Note:

The opponent's fingernails are judged as long, like a wild cat's claws. The Kambaata word *xulungúta* can refer to a person's nails or an animal's claws.

(21) *Ereeddakkii atii oonnanni xijjaannu*

eréed-d-akkii   *átii*   *oonn-aann-í*   *xijj-aann-ú*
beard-PL1-fNOM-   2sNOM.CRD   mourning_cermony-AA-mGEN   mourn-AA-
2sPOSS.CRD   mACC
'Your beard and you [resemble] mourners.'

Notes:

The opponent's beard is judged as being unkempt. It is neither cut nor combed. In the old days, the male family members of a deceased did not cut, wash or comb their beards to indicate their grieving the death of a relative.

The head noun and the modifier of the object NP in (21) are both derived by the agentive morpheme *-aan* (SG *–aan-ch-ú(ta)*, PL *–aann-ú)*.

The plurative morpheme on the transnumeral noun 'beard(s)' expresses the speaker's contempt and/or the big size of this body part.

(22) *Muummukkii atii oonnanni xijjaannu*

múumm-akkii   *átii*   *oonn-aann-í*   *xijj-aannú*
hair-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   mourning_cermony-AA-mGEN   mourn-AA-mACC
'Your hair and you [resemble] mourners.'

Note:

The opponent's hair (of head) is said to be unkempt. In the old days, female family members of a deceased person did not dress their hair as an indication of their grieving.[10]

(23) *Arrabikkii atii borosi giirata*

arráb-i-kkii   *átii*   *boros-í*   *giir-áta*
tongue-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   overgrown_land-mGEN   fire-fACC
'Your tongue and you [resemble] a bush-fire.'

Note:

The opponent's tongue is compared to a bush-fire that rages through an area that is overgrown with high grass and trees (*borosú*). The opponent is said to be talkative and insulting.

(24) *Fagaar-r-akkii atii ha'mmichchi ge'ra*

fagáar-r-a-kkii   *átii*   *ha'mm-ichch-í*   *ge'r-á*
bum-PL1-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   enset_corms-SG-mGEN   stunted_enset-mACC
'Your bum and you [resemble] the corm of a stunted enset plant.'

---

[10] Some relatives of the deceased also shaved their heads to express their grief. It is not clear to me whether the same mourners shaved and then did not dress their hair, or whether some mourners shaved their heads and other did not dress their hair.

Notes:

An enset plant which did not grow properly and only developed a big corm (tuber) is called *ge'rá*. (For more information on the structure of an enset plant see Brandt et al. 1997.)

The plurative morpheme on the transnumeral noun 'bum(s)' indicates the large size of this body part and/or expresses the speaker's contempt.

(25) *Angaakkakkii atii weese mulu'lla*

ang-áakk-a-kkii   *átii*   *wees-é*   *mulu'll-á*
hand-PL2-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   enset-fGEN   growth_center-mACC
'Your hands and you [resemble] the growth centre of enset plants.'

Notes:

The soft white growth centre of an enset plant is found in the middle of the pseudo-stem. The flower and all new leaves emerge from this point.

In principle, the statement above could be interpreted positively or negatively. Interpreted positively, the hands of the addressee are admired as soft and beautiful like the soft growth centre of enset plants. Interpreted negatively, the addressee is criticised for his/her soft hands and for avoiding physical work. The negative interpretation seems here more likely as the transnumeral noun 'hand(s)' is plurative-marked (see notes to verses 21–24 above) and as the verse is uttered in an insulting competition.

(26) *Angaakkakkii atii haqqi hankatta*

ang-áakk-a-kkii   *átii*   *haqq-í*   *hankatt-á*
hand-PL2-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   tree-mGEN   rough_bark-mACC
'Your hands and you [resemble] the rough bark of a tree.'

Note:

As in verses 25 and 26, this could be interpreted negatively or positively, depending on whether the speaker criticises the addressee for having rough hands or whether the rough hands are interpreted as evidence of hard work. The negative interpretation seems more likely as the transnumeral noun 'hand(s)' is plurative-marked (see the notes to verses 21-25 above).

(27) *Quttakkii atii buddugga*

qútt-a-kkii   *átii*   *buddugg-á*
nape_of_neck-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   anteater-mACC
'Your neck and you [resemble] an anteater.'

Note:

The opponent's neck is said to be so fat that, like an anteater, s/he cannot turn his/her head.

(28) *Gennanukkii atii Gemmejji kinu*

gennán-u-kkii   *átii*   *Gemmejj-í*   *kin-ú*
shoulders-mNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   G.-mGEN   stone-mACC
'Your shoulders and you [resemble] the stones of Gemmejja.'

Notes:

Gemejja is a stone-strewn place in Kambaata.

The opponent is said to have shoulders like a stone, which means that s/he is a person who avoids others and doesn't want to talk to anybody.

<13>

The sound file *aguddaant* contains only some of the phrases given in the preceding section. The sequence of verses on the record is as follows (the letters (a, b, a', b') refer to the verses given in §2.2.1; the numbers (1-4) refer to the verses given in §2.2.2): (a)-(b)-(1) / (a')-(b')-(3) / (a)-(b)-(1) / (a')-(b')-(3) / (a)-(b)-(X*)[11] / (a')-(b')-(2) / (a)-(b)-(4-ii*)[12] / (a')-(b')-(3) / (a)-(b)-(X*) / (a')-(b')-(3) / (a)-(b)-(4-ii*) / (a')-(b')-(3) / (a)-(b)-(1*) / (a')-(b')-(3*).

2.3. Daanna Daanna

<14>

Daanna Daanna tells the obscure story of Dangise, a girl who is stabbed on a meadow in someone's front yard. The song is a reported dialog between Dangise's friends or witnesses of the crime (A) and a judge (*daanná*) (B). The circumstances of Dangise's death are odd: she is killed in the middle of an inhabited area (verse 4, 6); she is killed after she has told the Kambaata history or a Kambaata legend (verse 5); her killers are not named. After her death a filter (for beer) is turned upside down (verse 7), butter is put into (or melted in or brought in) a small clay dish (verse 8) and a dish of *bu'llá* (enset powder) is prepared (or brought) in a wooden bowl (verse 9).

<15>

The interpretation of the final three verses did not become clear in interviews with native speakers.[13] The ellipsis of verbs in the last two verses was one aspect that made the inter-pretation difficult; the relation between functionality and symbolism of the three household items (filter, clay dish, wooden bowl) was another aspect that could not be well explained. One interviewee assumed that the filter (in verse 7) was put over the head of Dangise to cover her eyes. Another interviewee interpreted the filter as a symbol of her death. The filter would never be used again and thus be turned upside down. *Wonshúta* 'filter' (verse 7), *xeqeetíta* 'small clay dish' (verse 8), *gabatá* 'wooden bowl' (verse 9) and other household items are gifts for a bride on her wedding day.

A	1	*Daanna, daanna yeemma*
	2	*Dangise qaseemma*
B	3	*Hakkanne qaseemma?*
A	4	*Heekko daqayyaan*
	5	*Heessa kultaniyan*
	6	*Wodeebi urroon*
	7	*Wonshuta gombiseen*
	8	*Buuru xeqeeteen*
	9	*Bu'lla gabataan*

---

[11] X* = *lókkakkii átii* […] *kaltá aguddáant* 'your feet and you resemble the axe [of X / which X-ed]'; the comparison is not clearly heard on the record; the modifier of the object noun is still to be determined.

[12] 4-ii*, 1* and 3*: The star (*) indicates that the speaker mistakenly adds the verb *aguddáant* 'you resemble' at the end of these verses. This word has been left unexpressed in all verses given above.

[13] According to one anonymous reviewer, butter and *bu'lla* are presented at funerals in the Gurage area. It is possible that the Kambaata have the same tradition (but this is yet to be verified).

<16>
Verses 1-2, 4-5, 6-7 and 8-9 start with the same syllable (alliteration); only the judge's question in verse 3 does not share the first syllable with a preceding or following verse. Verses 1-3 have 6 syllables each; verses 4-9 have five syllables each (NB: *kultaniyan* in verse 5 is counted as a three-syllable word, as the final *... niyan* is merged into *... neen*; *wonshuta* in verse 7 is counted as a two-syllable word, as the final vowel is devoiced).

(1) *Daanna, daanna yeemma*

    dáann-a   *dáann-a*   *y-éemma*
    judge-mOBL   judge-mOBL   say-3honPVE
    '"O judge, O judge!" it was said.'

    <u>Notes:</u>

    The Kambaata word *daanná* 'judge' is a loan from Amharic *dañña*.[14]

    The final verb form *yéemma* is an honorific-impersonal verb form that can be used when the subject is a respected person or, as in (1) above, when the subject is not relevant or not known.

(2) *Dangise qaseemma*

    Dangis-é   *qas-éemma*
    D.-fACC   stab-3honPVE
    'Dangise was stabbed.'

    <u>Note:</u>

    The female name *Dangisé* is based on the verb *dangis-* 'distract someone'. (Deginet Wotango, p.c., 2011)

(3) *Hakkanne qaseemma?*

    hakkánn-e   *qas-éemma*
    where-mOBL   stab-3honPVE
    'Where was she stabbed?'

(4) *Heekko daqayyaan*

    Heekk-ó   *daqayy-áan*
    H.-mGEN   meadow-mLOC
    'On the Heekko-meadow.'

    <u>Note:</u>

    The location of the *Heekko*-meadow could not be determined. It is possibly a fictive place. The common noun *heekkó* denotes a bird of prey species.

(5) *Heessa kultaniyan*

    heess-á   *kul-táni-yan*
    story-mACC   tell-2s/3fICO-DS
    'While narrating a (true) story.'

---

[14] Information on Amharic in this article is from Kane (1990).

Note:

In Kambaata, two different kinds of narratives are distinguished, "fictive" and "true" stories, *maa'úta* and *heessá*. The protagonists of "fictive" stories are usually animals, sometimes also things or persons. "True" stories are myths about the origin of clans, historical events and texts about problems (and their solutions) of people living together in society.

(6) *Wodeebi urroon*

  Wodeeb-í   urr-óon
  W.-mGEN   front_yard-mLOC
  'In Wodeebo's front yard'

  Notes:

  Wodeebó is a male personal name (the lexical base is not known to me).

  The front yard (*urrúta*) is a grassy area, often in the shade of big trees, in front of Kambaata houses (cf. Photo 5).

Photo 5

Kambaata house
(Picture taken in the compound of the
Handiso-family in Garba,
11/07/2007)

(7) *Wonshuta gombiseen*

  wonsh-úta   gombis-éen
  filter-fACC   turn_upside_down-3honPCO
  'A filter was turned upside down'

  Note:

  The *wonshúta* is a filter for beer (*seelú*).

(8) *Buuru xeqeeteen*

  buur-ú   xeqeet-éen
  butter-mACC   type_of_dish-fLOC
  'Butter [was put] into a *xeqeetita*-dish.'

  Note:

  The *xeqeetíta* is a small dish from clay and used to serve food.

(9) *Bu'lla gabataan*

  bu'll-á   gabat-áan
  enset_powder-mACC   type_of_bowl-mLOC
  'Enset powder [was put] in a big bowl.'

20

Notes:

The *bu'llá*-powder is the sediment of the water that is squeezed out of the pulp of an enset plant during and shortly after harvesting. The *bu'llá* powder is considered to be the most valuable product of an enset plant. It is used as an ingredient for various dishes (e.g. *muullá* 'porridge from enset powder', *muchchú* 'dish made of steamed enset powder').

The *gabata* (< Amh. *gäbäta*) is a large multi-purpose wooden bowl. (cf. Photo 6).

Photo 6

Large wooden bowl (*gabatá*)
(Picture taken in the house of Soodanne Haddaro
 in Doo'aanu,
18/07/2007)

2.4. Maddii Lamii

<16>

The text *Maddii Lamii* is a counting-out rhyme with no apparent translation (cf. record 4, presented by Tereza Ergano). The words could not be related to any other existing Kambaata words. Apart from the first two verses, all following pairs of verses start with the same consonant or syllable (alliteration).

> *Maddii*
> *Lamii*
> *Gantee*
> *Ganamoo*
> *Sooyyoo*
> *Sudugoo*
> *Taaboo*
> *Tinkirish*

The counting-out rhyme was remembered by an elderly woman, Tereza Ergano, from her childhood and may no longer be in use today. As she explained, the rhyme is (or was) used to select a child from a group in the preparation for a hide-and-seek game. All children presented their feet and with the intoning of *Maddii Lamii*, child after child is "counted out". The last remaining child is then asked for his/her food preferences, e.g. "Do you eat a lion?", "Do you eat a sheep?" The child rejects everything until s/he is finally asked: "Do you eat a human being?" S/he answers positively and covers his/her eyes while the other children hide quickly. Then s/he tries to find and catch them.

21

2.5. [Olee olee okkoonu yooba'a](#)

<17>

The song *Olee olee okkoonu yooba'a* is a song sung by children, e.g. when herding cattle. The song is usually accompanied by clapping and dancing.

1   *Olee Olee okkoonu yooba'a*
2   *Hagasoo lootut yooba'a*
3   *Harruuchchu finju yooba'a*

The three identically structured verses of the song are statements about who misses / lacks what. In these negative possessive constructions, the possessor is expressed by a dative-marked noun; the possessed noun functions as the subject of the construction. The defective verb *yoo-* is a copula used in existential, locative and possessive constructions.

(1)   *Olee Olee okkoonu yooba'a*

    Ol-ée   Ol-ée   okkóon-u   yóo-ba'a
    O.-mDAT   O.-mDAT   blanket-mNOM   COP1.3-NEG
    'Ole, Ole has no blanket.'

    <u>Note:</u>

    Olé is a male personal name which might be based on the noun *olá* 'battle'.

(2)   *Hagasoo lootut yooba'a*

    hagas-óo   lóot-ut   yóo-ba'a
    bird_species-mDAT   wattles-fNOM   COP1.3-NEG
    'A *hagaso*-bird has no wattles.'

    <u>Note:</u>

    The *hagasó* (cf. Photo 7) is a wattled ibis and verse 2 is actually a false statement; *hagaso*-birds do have wattles on their neck. In the Kambaata area, the *hagaso*-bird is often found in the enset gardens where it struts about looking for worms in the cow dung that is used as fertiliser in gardens.

Photo 7

Wattled ibis
(Picture taken in Laska, Basketo Special Woreda, 12/09/2008)

(3) *Harruuchchii finju yooba'a*

    harruuchch-íi   *fínj-u*   *yóo-ba'a*
    donkey.SG-mDAT   lip-mNOM   COP1.3-NEG
    'A donkey has no lips.'

    Note:

    Verse 3 is also an untrue statement, because donkeys do, of course, have lips.

2.6. Hattatta

<18>

The song *Hattatta* (cf. record 6, presented by Tereza Ergano) is a sequence of commands ('Disappear / get out!') that are addressed to different unpleasant figures and phenomena (e.g. a bad uncle, nasty weather). The verses are all structured identically (parallelism). The final imperative verb is always preceded by an address phrase. This address phrase consists of an oblique-marked adjective or noun (functioning as the head) and a preceding genitive noun (functioning as the modifier of the address phrase). The first two verses and the last three verses are in alliteration.

1   *Hattatta gida bai!*
2   *Hamilee shora bai!*
3   *Lankaanni hiila bai!*
4   *Landi kotima bai!*
5   *Laaddi bobira bai!*

(1) *Hattatta gida bai!15*

    Hattatt-á   *gíd-a*   *bá'*
    sound_of_shivering-mGEN   cold-mOBL   disappear.2sIMP
    'Disappear, O shivering cold.'

    Note:

    The noun *hattattáta* is an onomatopoeic word that alludes to the sound that people produce when they feel cold and shiver.

(2) *Hamilee shora bai!*

    hamil-ée   *shór-a*   *bá'*
    July-fGEN   overcast_rainy-mOBL   disappear.2sIMP
    'Disappear, O overcast and rainy July!'

    Note:

    July (*hamiléeta*) is in the middle of the rainy season in Kambaata, a time when it is very wet and cold.

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[15] According to the Kambaata official orthography, the phonemic glottal stop and word-final unvoiced *i* is not written. This leads to problems for the spelling of imperative forms (which end in an unvoiced *i*) of verbs with a stem-final glottal stop, e.g. *ba'-* 'disappear'. The last two phonemes of /baʔⁱ/ 'Disappear!' would not occur in writing if these conventions were applied strictly. For the benefit of readers, it was officially decided to write *bai* rather than *ba* for /baʔⁱ/.

(3) *Lankaanni hiila bai!*

lankaann-í   *híil-a*   *bá'*
paternal_uncle-mGEN   bad-mOBL   disappear.2sIMP
'Disappear, O bad uncle!'

Note:

The kinship term for the paternal uncle, *lankaanná*, is compound of *lankí* 'second' and *anná* 'father'.

(4) *Landi kotima bai!*

land-í   *kotím-a*   *bá'*
leather_skirt-mGEN   too_little-mOBL   disappear.2sIMP
'Disappear, O too short leather skirt!'

Note:

The *landá* is a traditional leather skirt that is no longer worn today.

(5) *Laaddi bobira bai!*

Laadd-í   *bobír-a*   *bá'*
L.-mGEN   wind-mOBL   disappear.2sIMP
'Disappear, O wind of Laadda!'

Note:

Laaddá is the name of a windy place in Kambaata.

2.7. [Handa Handaree](#)

<19>

The song [*Handa-Handaree*](#) (cf. record 7, presented by Almaz Handiso, Desalech Handiso, Muluneh Handiso and Tessema Handiso) is a sequence of requests for information, and answers. The addressee is conceived of as a dove (*handaríta*); the identity of the person asking and ordering is not revealed. The dove is looking for firewood. When asked what she intends to do with firewood, she explains that she wants to prepare a dish with roasted barley and butter. Then she realises that she has no water for cooking. Her interlocutor advises her to borrow water from people in the neighbourhood but she fears a biting dog, a kicking mare and a step over which she could stumble. At the song's completion, her water shortage problems remain unresolved.

1	*Handa Handaree!*	*Guugu*
2	*Hannuta martanii?*	*Guugu*
3	*Haqqe gimbahaa*	*Guugu*
4	*Haqqita hatt aii?*	*Guugu*
5	*Haatuta haatiihaa*	*Guugu*
6	*Haatuta hatt aii?*	*Guugu*
7	*Bullu sho'llihaa*	*Guugu*
8	*Buuru du'nniihaa*	*Guugu*
9	*Wounku yooba'aa*	*Guugu*
10	*Woro mini dagudii!*	*Guugu*

24

11	*Woshichchu ga'mmanoo*	*Guugu*
12	*Fadi mini dagudii!*	*Guugu*
13	*Faashshut kaddaaee*	*Guugu*
14	*Gate mini dagudii!*	*Guugu*
15	*Gardabbu qolanoo*	*Guugu*

<20>

Each verse in text 7 ends in *guugu*, which is an onomatopoeic word imitating the cooing of a dove. Alliteration is a crucial stylistic device in Kambaata songs, poems and proverbs and is also observed in text 7.[16] From lines 1 to 6, verses begin with the same syllable /ha/, while in verses 1, 4, 5 and 6 not only the first but also the second word starts with this syllable. Lines 7-8 start with the syllable /bu/, lines 9-11 with /wo/, lines 12-13 with /fa/ and lines 14-15 with /ga/. It is noteworthy that the location of the neighbouring houses (10: *woro* 'of the downside', 12: *fadi* 'of the area in front of the fence' and 14: *gate* 'of the backyard') rhymes with the dangers and obstacles that are found on the way to these houses (11: *woshichchu* 'a dog', 13: *faashshut* 'a mare', 15: *gardabbu* 'a step (over which one can stumble)').

(1) *Handa Handaree! – Guugu*

Handá *Handár-e*
REDUP dove-fOBL
'O dove!'

Note:

The address form *Handáre* 'O dove!' is the oblique-marked (= vocative) form of the common noun *handaríta* 'dove'. In verse 1 and in all verses given below, the final vowel of the final word is lengthened due to rhythmic reasons. The non-phonemic long vowels are not indicated in the second line of the analysis.

(2) *Hannuta martanii? – Guugu*

hann-úta *mar-tán*
where-fACC go-2s/3fICO
'Where are you going to?'

Note:

The imperfective converb form is used as the main verb in a yes/no-question, which is the only context in which converbs do not require a superordinate main verb form or a superordinate copula.

(3) *Haqqe gimbahaa – Guugu*

haqq-é *gimb-áha*
firewood-fGEN building[?]-mACC
(Dove:) 'To the firewood place.'

Note:

The word *gimbá(ha)* looks like a loan from Amharic (*gəmb* 'building') but the translation 'building' does not fit the translation of the verse, which was paraphrased as 'a place where firewood can be found easily'.

---

[16] See also the great importance of the first syllable of a word for the taboo register of married women (*ballishshata*) in Treis (2005a).

(4)   *Haqqita hatt aii? – Guugu*

    haqq-íta   *hátt*   *a'-íi*
    firewood-fACC   how   do-mDAT
    'To do what [lit. "how?"] with the firewood?'

    <u>Note:</u>

    The final two words make up a compound verb consisting of an invariant ideophonic part (*hátt* 'how') and an inflecting light verb (*a'-* 'do').

(5)   *Haatuta haatiihaa – Guugu*

    haat-úta   *haat-íiha*
    roasted_grain-fACC   roast-mDAT
    (Dove:) 'To roast grain.'

    <u>Note:</u>

    Roasted grain (e.g. barley, maize) is a snack that is taken together with coffee. Roasted grain and the flour of roasted grain are also ingredients of many Kambaata dishes (e.g. *bullú*: see notes to verse 7) and *seelú* 'beer'.

(6)   *Haatuta hatt aii? – Guugu*

    haat-úta   *hátt*   *a'-íi*
    roasted_grain-fACC   how   do-mDAT
    'To do what with the roasted grain?'

(7)   *Bullu sho'lliihaa – Guugu*

    bull-ú   *sho'll-íiha*
    type_of_dish-mACC   prepare.MID-mDAT
    (Dove:) 'To prepare a *bullu*-dish for my own benefit.'

    <u>Notes:</u>

    The middle derivation marks the autobenefactive in (7) and (8).

    Bullú is a dish made of the flour of roasted grain (*so'á* 'barley', *alasú* 'wheat', *boqqollá* 'maize') mixed with boiled potatoes (*denekkáta / dinichchá*), pumpkin (*lelléeta*) or red beans (*woká*). (Alternatively, it can be prepared from boiled potatoes only). Together with other traditional dishes (*atakaanú, bashakkúta, bilaanbilúta, muchchú* etc.), *bullú* belongs to the *zaabé ichcháta* (lit. "horizontal dishes/food"), i.e. dishes that require a good knowledge of the traditional cooking skills and dishes that are rarely prepared these days.

(8)   *Buuru du'nniihaa – Guugu*

    du'nn-íiha
    pour.MID-mDAT
    (Dove:) 'To pour butter [over it] for my own benefit.'

(9)   *Wounku yooba'aa – Guugu*

    wó'-unku   *yóo-ba'a*
    water-mNOM\<n\>   COP1.3-NEG
    (Dove:) '[But] there is no water.'

26

<u>Note:</u>

The *n*-morpheme in *wó'únku* is pragmatically determined. Its exact function requires further investigation.

(10) *Woro mini dagudii – Guugu*

wor-ó   *min-í*   *dagúd[-i]*
downside-mGEN   house-mACC   run-2sIMP
'Run to the house [of your neighbour] on the downhill side [of your house]!'

<u>Notes:</u>

The imperative form of a verb ends in an unvoiced *i*-vowel, which is only realised in careful speech and usually not written according to the orthographic conventions. In this song all final vowels are lengthened and the imperative is realised with a long *ii* (see *dagudii* 'Run!' in the first line).

The Kambaata area is hilly and surrounds the Hambarrichcho massif. Outside the towns, which have only developed in the last decades, the Kambaata houses are evenly dispersed across the country. Each house is surrounded by a garden and a field (cf. Photo 8).

Photo 8

Kambaata landscape
(Picture taken in Caacca,
view on Mishkida,
10/2002)

(11) *Woshichchu ga'mmanoo – Guugu*

wosh-íchch-u   *ga'mm-áno*
dogs-SG-mNOM   bite-3mIPV
'The dog will bite [me].'

(12) *Fadi mini dagudii – Guugu*

fad-í   *min-í*   *dagúd[-i]*
area_in_front_of_house-mGEN   house-mACC   run-2sIMP
'Run to the house [of your neighbour] in the front [of your house]!'

(13) *Faashshut kaddaaee – Guugu*

fáashsh-ut   *kad-dáa-'e*
horses.SG-fNOM   kick-3fIPV-1sO
'The mare will kick me.'

27

(14) *Gate mini dagudii – Guugu*

gat-é   min-í   dagúd[-i]
backyard-mGEN   house-mACC   run-2sIMP
'Run to the house [of your neighbour] at the back side [of your house]!'

(15) *Gardabbu qolanoo – Guugu*

gardább-u   qol-áno
step-mNOM   make_stumble-3mIPV
'The step will make [me] stumble.'

Notes:

In the front of every Kambaata house there is a circle which is cleared from grass (*qeeqqá*) (see the area covered with the split wood on Photo 9). Between this cleared circle and the grassy front yard, there is a step. The house and the cleared circle are situated below the level of the front yard. (See also Photo 5 above.)

The Kambaata word *gardabbá* is possibly a loan from Amharic (< *gädäb*).

Photo 9

Area cleared from grass in front of a Kambaata house. (Picture taken in the compound of the Handiso-family in Garba, 11/07/2011)

2.8. Timaatime

<21>

The song *Timaatime* (record 8, presented by Almaz Handiso) is a sequence of meaningless words (cf. text 4 *Maddii Lamii* above), although the words "sound" like real words in the Kambaata language, because they contain only sounds that are native to the language and they do not break the phonotactic rules of actual words. The song title is likely to be an affectionate form of the common noun *timaatimá* 'tomatoes'. The transcription and the word boundaries are tentative. Although the song lacks a translation, the record is made available here because it is part of the children's song corpus.

> *Timaatime takkale*
> *Tice mannaawo mannaa*
> *Hooshshoo*
> *Shangoo*
> *Keraaroo*
> *Kaajjoo*
> *Kappile*

2.9. Haate Haate Haate

<22>

The *Haate Haate Haate* song (record 9, presented by Almaz Handiso) is a sequence of phrases that are translatable but which do not make up a coherent text or story.

1   *Haate haate haate!*
2   *Haatichchuta maxxan gale*
3   *Deebiseen ashakkale*
4   *Deebiyaan godaana*
5   *Guummichchiin higaamba'a*
6   *Halangiin beeza*
7   *Salaame qonqonoon giirata bellecc!*

The initial verses of the song seem to address a poor woman who picks up grains from the ground. However, the identity of the speaker and the semantic/pragmatic relation between the verses 3-7 could not be determined in interviews with native speakers. It may well turn out in the future that some words were misinterpreted. This notwithstanding, a preliminary verse-by-verse analysis is presented in the following:

(1) *Haate haate haate!*

háat-e   *háat-e*   *háat-e*
roasted_grain-fOBL   roasted_grain-fOBL   roasted_grain-fOBL
'O little roasted grain, O little roasted grain, O little roasted grain!'

Note:

The address form *háate* is the oblique case form of *haaté* 'little roasted grain'. In Kambaata, common nouns like *haatúta* 'roasted grain (e.g. barley, maize)' can be converted into terms of the affectionate register by changing their declension. Terms of the affectionate language, e.g. *haaté* 'little roasted grain', are inflected in the feminine declension F2b (ending in ACC *-é*), irrespective of the declension of the base noun (which is declension F3a, ending in ACC *-úta*, for the common noun *haatúta* 'roasted grain'). More information on affectionate terms is found Treis (2008a: 113); an overview of the declensions are given in Treis (2008a: 103).

(2) *Haatichchuta maxxan gale*

haat-ichch-úta   *max-xán*   *gál-e*
roasted_grain-SG-fACC   pick-2s/3fICO   spend_the_night-fOBL
'O (you) who spend the night picking up roasted grains one by one.'
Note:

Verse 2 is a complex oblique-marked address phrase (cf. section 3). The verse seems to address a poor woman who picks up single grains that have fallen from someone's table.

(3) *Deebiseen ashakkale*

Deebis-éen   *ashakkál-e*
D.-fICP   be_restless-fOBL
'O (you) who are restless together with Deebise.'

Note:

Deebisé is a female personal name whose lexical base is unknown to me.

29

(4) *Deebiyaan godaana*

    Deebiy-áan   godáan-a
    D.-mLOC   wide_road-mOBL
    'In Deebiya, on the wide road.'

    <u>Notes:</u>

    Deebiyá is a fictitious place name (and in alliteration with the personal name *Deebisé* in verse 3).

    The Kambaata word *godaaná* 'wide road' is an Amharic loan (< $g^{W}ädana$).

(5) *Guummichchiin higaamba'a*
    guumm-ichch-iin   hig-áam-ba'a
    duikers-SG-mICP   pass-1sIPV-NEG
    'I won't pass a duiker.'

(6) *Halangiin beeza*
    halang-íin   béez-a
    whip-mICP   recompense-mOBL
    'Recompense with a whip.'

    <u>Note:</u>

    The noun *beezá* 'recompense' is a loan from Amharic (< *beza*). It is not clear what triggers the oblique case in verse 6.

(7) *Salaame qonqonoon giirata bellecc*

    Salaam-é   qonqon-óon   giir-áta   bellécc
    S.-fGEN   bamboo_hut_for_bride-mLOC   fire-fACC   light
    'Light a fire in Salaame's bridal hut!'

3. Noteworthy grammatical features of songs and word games

<23>

The following selected morphological and syntactic features make the Kambaata children's songs and word games a valuable part of my corpus:

3.1. Case marking

<24>

The texts presented above contain useful examples for the analysis of the Kambaata case inflection.[17] The song *Lalee Lalee* (text 1) may in fact be considered a didactic play for the case system (and for interrogative pronouns): examples of almost all case categories (nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, ablative, instrumental-comitative-perlative (ICP), locative and oblique) can be found in this song.[18] It is the nature of the song that a certain noun in syntactic function X and marked for case X is given as an answer in one line and taken up again in a question in the next following line, but then in syntactic function Y and marked for case Y. See, for instance, the noun *hiilúta* 'area between wall and roof' (from Text 1: 7 and 8) in ex.

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[17] For detailed information on case in Kambaata see Treis (2006) and (2008a: 102-126).

[18] There is no dative noun in text 1.

(1) and (2). In ex. (1), the noun functions as the locative-marked goal NP of *sut-* 'put in'; in ex. (2), it denotes the ablative-marked source NP of *ful-* 'leave'.

(1) *Mooquta hakkanne suchcho?*   − *Hiiloon*

     mooq-úta   *hakkánn-e*   *súchch-o*   *hiil-óon*
     spoon-fACC   where-mOBL   put_in-3mPVO   area_btw_wall&roof-mLOC
     'Where did Mutaano keep the spoon?'   'Where wall and roof meet.' (Text 1: 7)

(2) *Hiiloochch mi fullo?*   − *Wiliilit*

     hiil-óochch   *m-í*   *fúll-o*   *wilíil-it*
     area_btw_wall&roof-fABL   what-mNOM   leave-mPVO   smoke-fNOM
     'What came out (in the gap) between wall and roof?'   'Smoke.' (Text 1: 8)

<25>
The songs and word games are an especially rich source of examples for the use of oblique-marked nouns. The oblique case is a multifunctional case form in Kambaata. Its functions overlap with those of the locative and the ICP case, and is used, as they are, to encode locations (see e.g. *godáan-a* (text 9: 4) 'on the wide road'), companions and instruments (see e.g. *woráat-e* (text 2: 2) 'by *woraati*-grass'). The functions of the oblique also overlap with those of the accusative case because either case form can be used to mark the citation form of nouns. Apart from this, the oblique has a further function that cannot be expressed by another case form in Kambaata: it marks the address form (vocative). Unfortunately, attestations of oblique-marked nouns are difficult to collect for all declensions. In elicited data, locations are usually locative-marked and companions and instruments ICP-marked. Oblique-marked address forms are easy to collect only when the nouns refer to human beings (e.g. *mesel-éeta* ACC 'girl' → *mesel-ée* VOC '(hey) girl!', 'O girl!'; *adabeechch-ú* ACC 'boy' → *adabéechch-o* OBL '(hey) boy!', 'O boy!') but the elicitation of address forms for relatively uncommon addressees − namely non-domestic animals, things, and abstract notions − is extremely difficult or impossible. Thus the children's songs provide valuable, spontaneously produced evidence for the formation of obliques from common nouns that do not refer to humans; see the complex oblique noun phrases in text 6 *Hattatta* (verses 1-5) from which ex. (3) is taken.

(3) *Laaddi bobira bai!*

     Laadd-í   *bobír-a*   *bá'*
     L.-mGEN   wind-mOBL   disappear.2sIMP
     'Disappear, O wind of Laadda!' (Text 6: 5)

<26>
Text 9 *Haate Haate* also illustrates the nonce formation of address terms from verbal nouns − a phenomenon that is not attested in any other text of my corpus. Ex. (4) shows that a feminine oblique case morpheme (*´-e*) can simply be attached to a verbal stem to generate an address term. As the address term phrase has a verbal head (*gal-* 'spend the night'), it can become internally quite complex when the verb governs a dependent clause as in ex. (4).

(4) *Haatichchuta maxxan gale*

     ((haat-ichch-úta   *max-xán)*CONVERB CLAUSE   *gál)-e*
     roasted_grain-SG-fACC   pick-2s/3fICO   spend_the_night-fOBL
     'O (you) who spend the night picking up roasted grains one by one.' (Text 9: 2)

3.2. Number marking[19]

<28>

Kambaata nouns can be formally underived, singulative-marked or plurative-marked. Depending on the noun class, underived nouns can be used for singular or plural reference or have a transnumeral interpretation. Singulatives have primarily a singular-marking function, pluratives above all a plural-marking function.

<28>

Kambaata has two plurative morphemes, (i) *-C-á-ta* (glossed PL1) and (ii) *-aakk-á-ta* (glossed PL2). On nouns of a certain noun class (singular-inherent nouns), these plurative morphemes indicate plurality, i.e. reference to more than one entity; see e.g. *buul-á* 'mule' → *buul-l-á-ta* 'mules'; *mesel-ée-ta* 'girl' → *mesel-aakk-á-ta* 'girls'. On transnumeral nouns and plural-inherent nouns, however, the plurative morpheme does not indicate reference to more than one entity but it encodes reference to individuals in a group, plural of kinds, distributivity and large size or contempt. The last of these other functions of plurative morphemes can be exemplified in verses of the word game *Aguddaant* (text 2).

<29>

Body parts, e.g. *yabur-á* 'lip(s)' and *inq-ú-ta* 'tooth, teeth', are transnumeral nouns and used in reference to one or more entities. In ex. (5), the transnumeral noun *yaburú* 'lip(s)' is used in reference to one entity, in ex. (6) in reference to two entities.

(5)   *Yaburu ga'mmaqqeemmada "ayindo he'mmayyoe?" yeenno*

    yabur-ú   *ga'mm-aqq-eemmá=da*
    lip-mACC   bite-MID-3honPVE.REL=COND

    áy-i-ndo   *he'mm-áyyoo-'e*   *y-éenno*
    who-mNOM-Q   gossip-1s/3mPROG-1sO   say-3honIPV
    'If one bites one's lip [inadvertently], one says, "Who is gossiping about me?"'

(6)   *Yaburukk lenqeeqqissoot!*

    yabur-ú-kk   *lenqeeqq-is-sóot*
    lip-mACC-2sPOSS   move-CS-2sIMP.NEG
    'Don't move your lips (when you read in silence)!' (Kambaatissata 1989: vol. 6, 76)

<30>

Where body part nouns receive a plurative morpheme, the speaker emphasises and/or exaggerates the large size of a body part, while expressing contempt.[20] The insulting competition *Aguddaant* (text 2) is a source of such "contempt plurals", which are rarely attested in other text genres. See, for instance, ex. (7) in which the plurative morpheme shows the speakers contempt and/or indicates the largeness of the lips.

(7)   *Yaburrakkii atii bashinqi xoroshu*

    yabúr-r-a-kkii   *átii*   *bashinq-í*   *xorosh-ú*
    lip-PL1-fNOM-2sPOSS.CRD   2sNOM.CRD   sorghum-mGEN   bread-mACC
    'Your lips and you [resemble] sorghum bread.' (Text 2: 7)

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[19] For detailed information on number in Kambaata see Treis (2008a: 137-47).

[20] Plurative morphemes on body part nouns can also encode distributivity.

3.3. Reversal of dependency relations in the noun phrase

<31>
The texts presented above provided several examples for the reversal of heads and modifiers in the Kambaata noun phrase, which are seldom attested elsewhere.[21] In the Kambaata noun phrase, all modifiers precede the head noun, i.e. adjectives, numerals, demonstratives, genitive nouns, and relatives; cf. the bracketed modifiers in ex. (8) and (9).

(8) *(hiil-á)MODIFIER lankaann-á*

   bad-mACC   uncle-mACC
   'bad uncle'

(9) *(ám-a-nnee   ád-a-nnee   gob-bóo)MODIFIER   gereer-éen*

   mother-fNOM-   paternal_aunt-fNOM-   weave-3fPVO.REL   type_of_vessel-fLOC
   1pPOSS.CRD   1pPOSS.CRD
   'Into the *gereerita*-vessel which was woven by our mother and our paternal aunt.'
   (Text 1:13b)

<32>
Adjectives (but not other modifiers) can be foregrounded (emphasised) by reversing the dependency relation in the noun phrase. In this case, the syntactic and semantic head noun of an adjective is removed from its usual NP-final position and instead is added as a genitive modifier; compare ex. (8) with ex. (10) below. The adjective thus becomes the syntactic head of the NP; the head noun remains the semantic head of the NP.

(10) *lankaann-í   híil-a   bá'*

   paternal_uncle-mGEN   bad-mOBL   disappear.2sIMP
   'Disappear, O bad uncle (lit. "O bad one of an uncle")!' (Text 6: 3)

<33>
Examples of dependency reversal between adjectives and nouns are found in Text 2 (verse 13, 18) and Text 6 (verse 1, 2, 3, 4).[22]

3.4. Verbal morphology

<34>
The song texts and word games are of little relevance for the analysis of verbal morphology. In text 6 all verses have an identical verb, in text 2 the verb is left out altogether. In the other texts only a few very common main verb forms (e.g. imperatives, honorific/impersonal verbs) are found. Subordinate clauses and subordinate clause verbs are almost entirely absent from the texts. The only such exemplifications are the same subject and different subject converb forms in text 3 (verse 5 and 7) and text 9 (verse 2), and the dative verbal nouns in purpose clauses in text 7 (verse 4-8). All other verses are either main clauses or elliptical.

<35>
There is also little evidence of verbal derivational morphology. Passive morphemes are not attested at all; causative morphemes are found only in text 1 (verse 2 and 11). However, Text 7 contains two examples for the use of the middle derivation (verse 7-8). The middle derivation in Kambaata has two phonologically determined allomorphs, *-'* and *–akk'*. The glottal

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[21] For a typological study of dependency reversal see Malchukov (2000).

[22] Information on similar dependency reversals in the closely related language Alaaba can be found in Schneider-Blum (2007: 126).

stop allomorph is added, among others, to stem-final single sonorants, e.g. *dun-* 'pour' > *du'nn-* 'pour for oneself' and *shol-* 'prepare' > *sho'll-* 'prepare for oneself'. The most productive (or default) interpretation of middle-marked verbs is an autobenefactive interpretation, which is also visible in the examples in text 7.

<36>

The children's songs and word games are thus definitely of greater value for the analysis of nouns and nominal syntax than for the analysis of verbs.

4. Conclusion

<37>

Children's songs and word games are part of the oral literature of a speech community, and as much as other (more prestigious) genres of literature (e.g. legends, fairy tales and proverbs), they lend themselves to analyses in an anthropological, ethno-linguistic or literary perspective. They can also be used as a source of lexical data when working on a dictionary. The present article, however, has concentrated on the grammatical aspects of Kambaata children's songs and word games and had to leave all other analyses of this text genre aside for future research.

<38>

Songs and word games are tricky to analyse from a grammatical point of view. It is not uncommon that texts of this genre contain words and phrases that are no longer used in the everyday language and thus the interpretation of verses can remain obscure when central words are no longer interpretable by native speaker consultants. Texts of this genre may also consist of words that have no meaning at all but which function only as fillers or as carriers of the melody (cf. text 4 *Maddii Lamii* and text 8 *Timaatime*). These meaningless words can be analysed only with regard to their phonological and phonotactic properties. The grammatical analysis of songs and word games (and of other genres not discussed here, e.g. proverbs, riddles) can also be challenging when the verses are incomplete sentences and when verbs or noun phrases referring to central participants are elided. In spite of these complications, however, songs and word games can still be a useful source for a grammatical study of a language, because they may contain grammatical features that are rarely attested elsewhere or that can be elicited only with great difficulty. Hence also texts of marginal genres should be included in a corpus for the grammatical description of a little known language.

Abbreviations

AA	agent adjective
ABL	ablative
ACC	accusative
BEN	benedictive (verb form in blessings)
COND	conditional
COP1	copula 1 (existential / locative / possessive)
COP3	copula 3 (identifying)
CRD	coordination
CS	causative
DAT	dative
DS	different subject
GEN	genitive
hon	honorific/impersonal
ICO	imperfective converb
ICP	instrumental-comitative-perlative
IMP	imperative
INTJ	interjection
IPV	imperfective
LOC	locative
MID	middle
n	pragmatically determined morpheme (function still unknown)
NEG	negation
NOM	nominative
O	object
OBL	oblique
p	plural
PL1	plurative with –C-*áta*
PL2	plurative with –*aakk-áta*
POSS	possessive
PRED	predicate form
PROG	progressive
PROP	proprietive adjective
PVE	*e*-perfective
PVO	*o*-perfective
Q	question
REDUP	reduplication
REL	relativisation
s	singular
SG	singulative
VV	long vowel

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