

IN ALTRE LINGUE

Baskeet Story: Dog and Hyena

Collected by Yvonne Treis
(CNRS-LLACAN, Villejuif, France)

1. Introduction

Baskeet¹ (also known as Basketo) is an Omotic language spoken by about 80,000 speakers² in the Basketo Special Woreda and in the Melo Woreda of the Gamo-Gofa Zone in the Southern Region of Ethiopia. Baskeet (ISO 639-3 code: bst) belongs to the Ometo branch of North Omotic.

The story of Dog and Hyena was recorded from Kantso Kammo (see photo), who is the spiritual head of the *Kalmina*' clan and carries the title *Buzan Kaat*. The recording was made on 26 October 2008 in his home in the ward of Awra Soosta (Basketo Special Woreda). Subsequently, the native speakers Dutse Tamiru and Abraham Tacho assisted in the transcription and translation of the recording.

The original text is given below in a Latin-based orthography. Some graphemes do not correspond to their IPA values: <'> [ʔ], <c> [tʰ], <c'> [tʰʰ], <d'> [dʰ], <ng> [ŋ], <y> [j], <j> [ʒ]. Vowel and consonant length is marked by double letters. Baskeet is a tonal language. However, tone is not marked below, as the tonal analysis is still incomplete and the sandhi rules that determine the realisation of tone in an utterance are not yet entirely understood. The Baskeet text given below corresponds to the spoken version as it was recorded; the text was not edited.

A sound file with the recording of the text is available at:
www.ethnorema.it/pdf/numero%208/KantsoKammoLS100248.mp3
(or win.ethnorema.it/multimedia/numero%208/KantsoKammoLS100248.mp3).



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² According to the 2007 Ethiopian census, there are 78,284 members of the Baskeet ethnic group in Ethiopia (http://www.csa.gov.et/pdf/Cen2007_firstdraft.pdf; p. 84).

2. Baskeet text³

(¹) Na'aadoo, kanake godarske wol'a k'ootti keskari, godarsi kanak geyi: "An kanoo!" — (²) "Yoo." — (³) "Ne woydi gabipp yeera?" — (⁴) "Te gangarc'i gabipp yeershoa." — (⁵) "Gangarc'i gabi hattaab awaaji wozar geye?" — (⁶) "Awaajaada yii, ne a solaara?" (⁷) Min godarsi kani muirkar mooppo. (⁸) Godarsi kani lapbar zimm do'i aadd'o. (⁹) Zimm gaari godarsi kani lapbar ... kani godarsi lapbar yedd'o. (¹⁰) K'oti tami kashko. (¹¹) Tami keetts zhaago," yiz geyi awaajide. — (¹²) "Yiz geye?" — (¹³) "Aa." — (¹⁴) "Erakkaye," gaar, waattsinko hani yei yellazinbar, (¹⁵) i kani geda pe unkin bekk'i muttidor, gedi lukkazinbar, (¹⁶) waattsin garta bazi geyi, godarsi: (¹⁷) "Te waattsin muk' i ganasta⁴," yirkk gaazinbar, (¹⁸) peeb!, gangarc'ine, accinda. (¹⁹) "Yih! (²⁰) Te accin gangarc'inon," mastootipen i yetay waattsin garta peeni bekk'ar geyi: (²¹) "Te accin gangarc'inon, izi taani iissee? (²²) Te iy eed'akkay attabda! (²³) O awaajibe abza?!" (²⁴) Wottsibar sekay aadd'i-lukkar: (²⁵) "Kanoo, ne ekk'ine! (²⁶) Te neeni yerkk'igeyn lukkabe!" — (²⁷) "⊙ ⊙, yinni yers maakk'o," yiz geyn, (²⁸) "Ne ekk'ishe!" geyn, (²⁹) Wotts-wotts muttidon wotts-wotts muttidon indi pendi tulup, indi pendi tulup, hang yellazinbar, (³⁰) kana pe laatts aal keettsi yeyi, "geliire" gaazinbar, (³¹) ma karin yibts'indon, (³²) karinko hatt geirdor takk asshar wulli karinbar wots'ak gelazinbar, (³³) golssin, (³⁴) godarsi shawh ekkogon, domsak ekkogon, (³⁵) "ehee," keettsi gidda kekisar kani geyi: (³⁶) "Wuh wuuuuu, ne te waytts wad'ittsi ekkadibe, (³⁷) te siints siid'ittsi ekkiiye? (³⁸) te laatts kalti leepi gaddari, (³⁹) "Giyaab k'atts'iire, yentti k'atts'irre," geyn, (⁴⁰) oosa iyi yeltso geyn itts'in, (⁴¹) godo, ne izi domsak ekkaddok ne taana abz ekkii?"

3. English translation

(¹) My dear listeners, Dog and Hyena happened to meet each other on the way and Hyena said: "Hey, Dog!" — (²) (Dog:) "Yes." — (³) (Hyena:) "From which market do you come?" — (⁴) (Dog:) "I come from the Gangarc'a market." — (⁵) (Hyena:) "What was announced at the Gangarc'a market today?" — (⁶) (Dog:) "This announcement, what you say (about it)? (⁷) Hyenas have been eating dogs, but they should not eat them any longer. (⁸) The hyenas should simply go past the dogs. (⁹) The hyenas should simply (go) past the dogs ... the dogs should walk past the hyenas. (¹⁰) Butter should warm itself at the fire-place. (¹¹) Fire should thatch houses," it was announced in this way." — (¹²) (Hyena:) "It was said in this way?" — (¹³) (Dog:) "Yes." (¹⁴) "I wasn't aware of that," said (Hyena) and he came to the river over here, (¹⁵) (whereas) Dog was walking (away) over (to) there, looking back across his shoulder, (¹⁶) (and) the animal at the water, Hyena, said: (¹⁷) "Let me drink a little bit over water", he bent down, (¹⁸) and – see! – (his) teeth were interlocked. (¹⁹) (Hyena:) "Oh, my God! (²⁰) My interlocked teeth," he looked down into the water like (into) a mirror and said: (²¹) "My interlocked teeth, did they cause me to be insulted?" (²²) (Hyena:) "I will not let him (= Dog) get away. (²³) I don't care about the announcement!" (²⁴) He (= Hyena) ran (to) over there (and called:) (²⁵) "Dog, please wait (for me)! (²⁶) You can go after I have kissed you." — (²⁷) ⊙ ⊙ (= Dog throws two kisses at him from far) "This should be the kiss," he said. (²⁸) "I beg you, stop!" (Hyena) called, (²⁹) (but) Dog kept on running, running, over one

³ Abbreviation: ... = speaker interrupts and restructures/corrects the sentence.

⁴ The verb form *ganasta* 'I might drink' is an error here; the speaker should have used *ganasto* 'let me drink'.

⁵ The name of the market, *Gangarc'a*, and the verb *gangarc'*- (variant: *gangirc'*) 'be interlocked (of teeth, especially of dead animals)' sound very similar and Hyena is suddenly convinced that Dog has (indirectly) made fun of his (= Hyena's) teeth when he mentioned the market he came from.

mountain, over another mountain and ⁽³⁰⁾ he arrived at his master's house and wanted to enter ⁽³¹⁾ (but) the door was closed, ⁽³²⁾ he tried once (to open the door), then left it immediately and ran through the holes for liquid waste (into the barn), ⁽³³⁾ (but his) tail! ⁽³⁴⁾ Hyena snatched it, broke it off and took it. ⁽³⁵⁾ “*Ehee* (= laughter),” in the barn, Dog laughed and said: ⁽³⁶⁾ “*Wuh Wuuuuu*. Have you taken my ears (which I need) to listen or ⁽³⁷⁾ have you taken my nose (which I need) to smell?” ⁽³⁸⁾ “My master has (already) sharpened an axe and put it (aside), (saying:) ⁽³⁹⁾ ‘I will cut it (= the tail) off tomorrow, I will cut it off the day after tomorrow’, ⁽⁴⁰⁾ (but) he was busy working and didn't get around to doing it. ⁽⁴¹⁾ My lord (Hyena), you have (now) broken it off and taken it, (but) what have you (actually) taken?”⁶

⁶ In Basket, the tails of dogs are usually shortened by their owners due to aesthetic considerations.