

The Phonology of Mecha Oromo

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A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this thesis is to present a fuller analysis of the phonology of the Mecha dialect of Oromo. The paper has six sections. In the first section the relevant literature is reviewed in brief. The second section treats the description of the phonemes, their allophones and the distributions of the phonemes. The third section deals with the phonotactics and syllabification. A frequency count of phonemes based on the Swadesh Basic Vocabulary and on an original story in Oromo, k'amale:f ye:y:i: is also presented in this section.

The fourth section deals with the major suprasegmental phenomena such as length, stress, pitch and terminal contours. Lexical pitch and stress are non-phonemic but grammatically significant.

Morphophonemic processes involving assimilation of consonants, epenthesis, metathesis, deletion, vowel shortening and reduplication are dealt with in the fifth section.

The concluding section presents a summary of the findings of the analysis.

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Declaration

I, I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and that all sources of material used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis deals with the phonology of Oromo of the Mecha dialect, and its aim is to make an attempt toward an analysis of the phonology of Oromo of the Mecha dialect in the hope that it would contribute to the study of Oromo in particular and that of Cushitic Languages in general.

The available studies in the phonology of Oromo are rather sketchy and inadequate. The present study will attempt to present a fuller account of the sound system of the dialect of Mecha including phonotactics, syllabification, morphophonemic processes and suprasegmental phenomena.

The dialect of Mecha is spoken over a large territory including Jima, Limmu, Nonno, Guma, Gomma, Leka, Gimbi, Horro, Kellelem and Illubabor. The writer of the present thesis speaks the dialect of Mecha, particularly the variety spoken at Leka, around the town of Nekemte. Consequently most of the study is based on this variety.

The Oromo speaking people are called Oromo. Oromos are also called "Galla" by others, particularly by the Amharas. However, the term is not acceptable by the people themselves because of its pejorative connotation.

Previous investigators have used the term "Galla" to refer to the people and the language, but in this thesis the term Oromo is preferred for both the people and the language.

The number of Oromo speakers is not exactly known. However, Bender<sup>1</sup> estimates the figure to be about seven million in Ethiopia and according to Whitely<sup>2</sup> there are about 70,869 Oromo speakers in Kenya. The number of Oromos in Somalia and The Sudan has not been definitely determined.

The geographical boundaries of the dialects of Oromo in Ethiopia have not yet been determined. However, it is generally believed that there are about five dialects. 1. The Southern dialect - includes Arsi, Guji and Borena. 2. The Central dialect or Tulema - includes Karayou, Selale or Shoa Oromo in general. 3. Mecha dialect - the South Western Oromo of Kafa, Wollega, and Illubabor. 4. The Eastern dialect - Harar and Bale. 5. The Northern dialect - Raya and Wollo.<sup>3</sup>

#### Review of Related Literature

Relatively little has been written in Oromo and not very much on the language itself has been published. However, since the middle of the nineteenth century various works such as dictionaries, grammars, collections of proverbs, folk literature, religious tracts including the Bible have been published. Some of these publications are reviewed in general terms below.

The review is divided into two sections, the first dealing with dictionaries and the second with books and publications other than dictionaries.

### Oromo Dictionaries

The Dictionary of the Galla Language<sup>4</sup> compiled by Charles Tutschek, and published in 1844 by his brother Ludwig Tutschek is a trilingual dictionary consisting of Galla, English, German.

Tutschek has attempted to give some phonological account of the language in this work. He does not recognize diphthongs. However, initially he makes an exception of /wau/ /no' but even this, he says would perhaps be spelt with " w" rather than with " u".

Another statement of his concerns Oromo phonotactics. According to Tutschek no word ends with a consonant i.e. every Oromo word ends in an open syllable. This observation is, however, not correct and is in disagreement with the state of affairs in the writer's dialect.

The fact that Tutschek does not make use of a phonetic or phonemic transcriptions but the ordinary letters of the Latin alphabet, leaves a lot to be desired. In addition he does not account for the glottal stop / ʔ / and this contributes toward the inadequacy and incompleteness of his phonological treatment.

The dictionary is, however, a work of valuable importance in the study of Oromo.

Grammatica e dizionario della lingua Oromonica<sup>5</sup> was published in 1887 by F. Viterbo. This is a very short dictionary and has neither an introduction nor a pronunciation key.

Dizionario della lingua galla<sup>6</sup> by G. Da Thiene contains descriptions of the sounds of the language in the introductory part of the book. Consonants and vowels are treated separately. It also includes a pronunciation key.

The first part of the dictionary contains grammatical explanations followed by Galla - Italian and Italian - Galla lexicon.

It is well organized and above all it is the most useful of all the Oromo dictionaries compiled so far, and in general more scholarly than the works that have both preceded and followed it.

#### Other Books and Publications in Oromo

During the time between 1893 and 1899 Onesimus Nesiba, a native Oromo from Illubabor and who resided in Wollega during his final years, made the following great contributions.

kaku: ha:ra: (Oromo), The new Testament,<sup>7</sup>

ǃalk'aba barsi:sa (Oromo), The Galla Spelling Book,<sup>8</sup>

galata wa:k'ay:o go:fta: mac':a: (Oromo), Evangelical

songs and Psalms,<sup>9</sup>

mač'a:fa k'ulk'ul:u: (Oromo), The Holy Bible,<sup>10</sup>

gara:n nama: mana wa:k'ay:o: yo:ki:s ?id:o: se:t'ana:

(Oromo), Man's Heart,<sup>11</sup>

kateki:smos (Oromo), Luther's Catechesim,<sup>12</sup>

Dr. Barth's Bible Stories,<sup>13</sup>

Onesmus' works are great achievements of high ingenuity and tireless efforts. Of all the works in Oromo his are the most widely and effectively used.

jalk'aba barsi:sa: is a small primary reader in Oromo. It has a collection of lexical items meant for vocabulary exercises. The words are alphabetically arranged and classified according to the number of syllables they contain.

The book contains varieties of songs, proverbs, and riddles which are very interesting on their own.

The Holy Bible (in Oromo) is widely used where Oromo is predominantly spoken, particularly in Wollega. So are the evangelical songs and psalms.

The main weakness in Onesimus' works, as has been pointed out by several linguists and others is that the orthography does not distinguish between long and short vowels, on the one hand, and between long and short consonants, on the other.

An Elementary and Practical Grammar of the Galla or Oromo Language,<sup>14</sup> by Arnold Hodson and Craven Walker is a book intended for practical use. The authors' objective in writing the book was to help an individual to learn Oromo sufficiently enough to be able to communicate.

The phonetic symbols used in the book representing Oromo sounds are well described, though the writers have not attempted to be exhaustive in their phonological analysis of the language. In their transcription some confusions are made between the alveolar implosive / D / and the voiced plosive / d /.

Hodson and Walker claim that Oromo has diphthongs and moreover by comparing Oromo with Somali they maintain that Oromo has lost the glottal fricative / h / from word-final position.

An attempt has also been made to account for "the tonic accent" in Oromo (as the authors call it) in an incomplete manner.

M.M. Moreno's Grammatica Teorico Pratica della lingua Galla con esercizi<sup>15</sup> is another important book published in 1939. This book treats the phonology, the morphology and the syntax of the language scientifically, followed by practical exercises.

B.W. Andrzejewski has published two important articles on the Borana dialect of Oromo.

- a) "Some Preliminary Observations on the Borana Dialect of Galla".<sup>16</sup>
- b) "The Role of Tone in the Borana Dialect of Galla".<sup>17</sup>

In his "Some Preliminary Observations on the Borana Dialect of Galla," Andrzejewski has found twenty six consonant and five basic vowel phonemes with two degrees of length - (short and long). In his description of the phonemes Andrzejewski employs a phonemic transcription.

He has made an interesting observation of what he calls "vowel - coloured breaths," which, he maintains are phonemically distinct from the corresponding five basic vowels. These may perhaps be equated with the devoiced phonetic variants of the five basic vowels in the dialect treated in this thesis.

In his "The Role of Tone in the Borana Dialect of Galla" Andrzejewski has set up 4 classes of words which he further categorized into 3 tonal patterns on the basis of their phonological make-up and the kind of tone configuration.

He concludes that tone in Borana is grammatically significant but does not, however, distinguish lexical meanings. This is also true of all the Oromo dialects so far studied.

Andrzejewski's contributions toward our knowledge of Borana in particular and Oromo in general deserves to be given credit.

However, that further investigations and studies on other dialects of Oromo need to be done is obvious.

Gene Gragg's "Oromo of Wollega,"<sup>18</sup> deals with the phonology, the morphology and the syntax of the Oromo of Wollega.

The part dealing with phonology includes descriptions of consonants and vowels, their major allophones and the distributions of the phonemes. He devotes a short space to suprasegmentals and morphophonemics.

Morphology and syntax are dealt with in a rather detailed manner with sufficient illustrative examples.

In general, Gragg's investigation of the Oromo language is a more complete and systematic account than most studies in Oromo.

"Galla"<sup>19</sup> by M.L. Bender et.al. is an article on the Tulema dialect of Oromo. The writers' acknowledge that their work is based on Moreno.

The consonant and vowel phonemes are identified without, however, getting into a detailed discussion of such things as phonotactics, morphophonemics, etc.

The writers have not attempted to deal with suprasegmentals.

The studies so far made on the Oromo Language have undoubtedly contributed to our knowledge of the structure of the language, although somehow limited and inadequate. This thesis is an attempt to fill some of the gaps without claiming to be exhaustive.

## 2. THE SEGMENTAL PHONEMES OF OROMO

### 2.1 The Consonant Phonemes

Oromo of the Mecha dialect has twenty four consonant phonemes. The phonemes are established on the basis of the following minimal pairs or analogous contrasts.

p' :b	/ rip'u:/	/ ribu:/
	'to hide oneself'	'tendon'
p' :f	/ sifa /	/ sip'ate/
	'agreeability of food to	'sipped'
	to body'	
b :f	/Du:fe /	/Du:be /
	'I/he farted'	'Soaked'
t :d	/ mata:/	/ mada: /
	'head'	'wound (n)'
t' :d	/ t'i:l:o: /	/ di:l:o: /
	'grey'	'dead wood with branches
		put around a farm for
		protection'
t' :t	/ mit'i: /	/ miti: /
	'a kind of insect'	'Is it not'?
k' :k	/k'ara: /	/ kara: /
	'sharpening' (impv)	'road, way, street'
k :g	/ kara: /	/ gara: /
	'road, way, street'	'stomach'

k :h	/ kara: /	/ hara: /
	'	'Sweeping'
? :d	/ ?a:ra: /	/ ha:ra: /
	'smoking (int.v.)'	'new'
D :d	/Da:le /	/ da:le /
	' I/he inherited'	'whitish'
s :s	/ sa:ma: /	/ sa:ma: /
	'candle'	'scrambler'
j :c'	/ jira /	/ c'ira /
	'I/he is present'	'I/he clear/clears'
c' :c	/ k'ač'e /	/ dač'e /
	'whip'	'land, earth'
j :g	/ jala /	/ gala /
	'under'	'entry'
m :n	/ mana /	/ nama /
	'house'	'person'
ñ :n	/ ña:te /	/ nate /
	'he ate'	'she was frightened'
l :r	/ la:fu /	/ ra:fu: /
	'to loosen'	'cabbage'
w :y	/ ga:w:a: /	/ ga:y:a: /
	'dense forest'	'a large smoking pipe'

2.1.1 Consonant Phonemes, Their Allophones and Distribution

The consonant phonemes are presented in Table 1 below:

	Bila- bial	Labio- dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Ejectives Vls	p'		t'		k'	
Plosives Vls			t		k	ʔ
V d	b		d		g	
Implosive			D			
Fricatives Vls		f	s	ɕ		h
Affricates Vls				ɕ' c'		
V d				j		
Nasals	m		n	ɲ		
Lateral			l			
Flap			r			
Semi-vowels	ɸ			y		

Table 1: The Consonant Phonemes of Oromo

2.1.1.1 The Stops

There are ten stop phonemes in this dialect: The bilabial stops /p',b/ the alveolar stops /t',t,d,D/; the velar stops /k,k' ,g/ and the glottal stop /ʔ/.

2.1.1.1.1 The Bilabial Stops

/p'/ is a voiceless ejective bilabial stop and has the following allophones:

[p'] an unreleased ejective bilabial stop which occurs word finally.

e.g. [Dap' jeDe] 'stare at'

[p'] a released ejective bilabial stop in other environments;

e.g. [kop'e?] 'shoes'

/b/ is a voiced bilabial stop and has the following allophones;

[b] voiced, fricative, lenis, it occurs intervocally;

e.g. [dabala] 'additional'

[b'] voiced, lenis, unreleased, bilabial stop occurs word finally.

e.g. [gab' jeDe] 'kept quiet'

[b] voiced, lenis, released bilabial stop occurs in other environments.

e.g. [ba:la] 'leaf'

[k'albi:] 'memory or mind'

[?erbe?] 'a piece of cloth'

2.1.1.1.2 The Alveolar Stops

/t/ is a voiceless alveolar stop and has the following allophones;

[t<sup>h</sup>] a voiceless, fortis, aspirated, released alveolar stop occurring word initially before the high back rounded vowels.

[u], [u:];

e.g. [t<sup>h</sup>uri] 'wait or stay'

[t<sup>h</sup>u:l:a<sup>?</sup>] 'heap'

[t<sup>ʰ</sup>] voiceless, fortis, unaspirated, unreleased alveolar stop occurring word finally;

e.g. [sad:e:t<sup>ʰ</sup>] 'eight'

[t] voiceless, fortis, unaspirated, released; in other environments.

e.g.

[mata<sup>?</sup>] 'head'

[te:l:a<sup>?</sup>] 'later or behind'

[k<sub>ɔ</sub>'otisa] 'farmland'

/t'/ is a voiceless ejective alveolar stop and has the following allophones;

[t'<sup>h</sup>] fortis, aspirated, released occurring word initially before the high back rounded vowels

[u] and [u:].

e.g. [t<sup>h</sup>uri<sup>?</sup>] 'dirt'  
[t<sup>h</sup>uw:e<sup>?</sup>] 'pot'

/t' / voiceless, fortis, unaspirated, unreleased  
alveolar ejective occurring word finally;

e.g. [k'at'<sup>?</sup>jeDe] 'stopped (Vin.) suddenly'  
[hat'<sup>?</sup>jeDe] 'cut (Vin.) suddenly'

[t'] unaspirated released; in other environments;

e.g. [t'in:o<sup>?</sup>] 'small'  
[fi:t'e] 'stop'

/d/ is a voiced alveolar stop and has the following allophones;

[d<sup>?</sup>] voiced, lenis, unreleased; occurs in word final positions;

e.g. [gad<sup>?</sup>] 'down'

[d] voiced, lenis, released alveolar stop occurs elsewhere;

e.g. [de:ga] 'poverty'  
[wɪda<sup>?</sup>] 'world (n)'  
[wɪlda<sup>?</sup>] 'association'  
[farda] 'hcrce'

/D/ is a voiced alveolar implosive stop and is realized as

[D] everywhere.

2.1.1.1.3 The Velar Stops

/ k/ is a voiceless velar stop and has the following allophones;

[k̠] slightly backed, voiceless, non-ejective, fortis released, occurs before the back vowels.

[oɔ], [o:], [u] and [u:];

e.g.	[da:ku <sup>?</sup> ]	'powder or flour'
	[kuDan]	'ten'
	[kop'a:]	'alone'
	[ko:ra:]	'saddle'

[k̡] fronted, voiceless, non-ejective, fortis, released;

occurs before the front vowels [i], [i:]

[e] and [e:]:

e.g.	[milki <sup>?</sup> ]	'luck'
	[kiy:o]	'trap'
	[ken:i]	'give'
	[ke:s:a]	'inside'

[k̚] voiceless, non-ejective, non-backed, and non-fronted fortis, unreleased, occurs word finally;

e.g.	[kagak̚]	'finished'
	[suk̚suk̚]	'jog (v)'

[k] voiceless, fortis, released velar; it occurs in other environments.

<u>e.g.</u>	[da:kʰsise]	'He/I caused to grind'
	[be:kta]	'you know'
	[be:kna]	'we know'

/k'/ is a voiceless, ejective velar stop and has the following allophones;

[kʰ] backed, fortis ejective released; it occurs before the back vowels [o], [o:], [u], and [u:];

<u>e.g.</u>	[kʰotisa]	'farm'
	[kʰo:ŋkʰo]	'throat'
	[kʰabe]	'finger'
	[ku:fa]	'satisfaction'

[kʰ̟] fronted, fortis ejective, released; occurs before the front vowels [i], [i:], [e] and [e:];

<u>e.g.</u>	[kʰ̟it':eʰ]	'equal'
	[kʰ̟i:nt'iʰ]	'centre'
	[makʰe]	'he/I moved aside'
	[kʰ̟e:nsa]	'finger nail'

[kʰʰ] fortis, unreleased ejective velar; it occurs word finally;

<u>e.g.</u>	[sal:akʰʰ]	'exhaust'
	[maçʰakʰʰ]	'destroy'

[kʰ] fortis, released ejective velar; it occurs in other environments;

<u>e.g.</u>	[Dak't'a]	'you go'
	[hak'na]	'we clean'

/ g / is a voiced velar stop and has the following allophones;

[g] voiced, lenis, backed, released; it occurs before the back vowels [o], [o:], [u] and [u:].

e.g. [gola] 'an inner room'  
[gur:a] 'ear'  
[gu:tu?] 'full'

[g] voiced, lenis, fronted, released; it occurs before the front vowels [i], [i:], [e] and [e:].

e.g. [gita] 'peer'  
[gi:lo] 'black'  
[gel:o] 'a kind of song and dance'  
[?e:ge?] 'tail'

[g] voiced, fortis, non-backed, released; it occurs in other environments;

e.g. [dugda] 'back (of body)'  
[fi:gna] 'we run'

#### 2.1.1.4 The Glottal Stops

/ ? / is a voiceless glottal stop and is realized as [ʔ] everywhere.

e.g. [ʔada:daʔ] 'aunt'  
[ʔo?: aʔ] 'hot'  
[ʔaʔoʔ] 'jaw'  
[balʔaʔ] 'wide'

### 2.1.1.2 The Fricative

There are four fricative phonemes in the Mecha dialect of Oromo.

#### 2.1.1.2.1 The Labiodental Fricative

/f/ is a voiceless labio-dental fricative and is realized as [f] everywhere.

e.g.	[fu:la]	'face'
	[lafa]	'land or ground'
	[kolfu <sup>?</sup> ]	'to laugh'

#### 2.1.1.2.2 The Alveolar Fricative

/s/ is a voiceless groove alveolar fricative and is realized as [s] everywhere.

e.g.	[sadi: <sup>^</sup> ]	'three'
	[fa:rsa]	'song'
	[soba]	'false'

#### 2.1.1.2.3 The Palatal Fricative

/s̺/ is a voiceless palatal fricative and has the following allophones:

[s̺] voiceless, backed, fortis, palatal. It occurs before the back vowels [o], [o:], [u] and [u:].

e.g.	[s̺ore <sup>?</sup> ]	'ruffle (of skirt)'
	[s̺o:k:isu <sup>?</sup> ]	'to grind'
	[s̺ur:ub:a <sup>?</sup> ]	'braided hairdo'
	[s̺u:b:aru <sup>?</sup> ]	'to dance'

[š̥] voiceless, fronted, fortis, palatal. It occurs before the front vowels [i], [i:], [e], [e:].

e.g. [ʔabš̥ileʔ] 'unleavened bread used as an ingredient for making' farso', a home-made beer'

[ši:k' :ē] 'name of person'

[Daš̥:e] 'had a child'

[ʔišeʔ] 'she'

[š̥] voiceless, fortis, palatal fricative. It occurs in other environments.

e.g. [ʔaškuraʔ] 'beads'

[ʔaškutiʔ] 'a ceremonial porridge made and eaten at a woman's delivery of a baby'

#### 2.1.1.2.4 The Glottal Fricative

/h/ is a voiceless glottal fricative and is realized as

[h] everywhere.

e.g. [ha:Da] 'mother'

[harka] 'hand'

#### 2.1.1.3 The Affricates

There are three affricates in the Mecha dialect of Oromo.

/č̥/ is a voiceless palatal affricate and has the following allophones.

[č̣̌] voiceless, fortis, backed, released. It occurs before the back vowels [o], [o:], [u] and [u:].

e.g.	[bač̣̌:o]	'name of a place'
	[mač̣̌':o:ftu <sup>?</sup> ]	'drankard'
	[lač̣̌:u <sup>?</sup> ]	'both'
	[ʔač̣̌uma]	'there itself'

/č̣̌/ voiceless, fronted fortis, released. It occurs before the front vowels [i], [i:], [e] and [e:].

e.g.	[ʔač̣̌:i]	'there'
	[guč̣̌:i <sup>?</sup> ]	'Ostrich'
	[dače]	'land or earth'
	[mač̣̌:e:s:e]	'caused to get drunk'

/č̣̌'/ is an ejective palatal affricate and has the following allophones.

[č̣̌'] voiceless, fortis, backed, ejective. It occurs before the back vowels [o], [o:], [u] and [u:].

e.g.	[č̣̌'op'a]	'drop'
	[hañč̣̌':te <sup>?</sup> ]	'a kind of vegetable'
	[hañč̣̌':ufa]	'spit (n)'
	[ba:č̣̌'iu <sup>?</sup> ]	'to cherish'

[č̣̌'] voiceless, fortis, ejective, fronted. It occurs before the front vowels [i], [i:], [e] and [e:].

e.g.	[č̣̌'iru <sup>?</sup> ]	'to cut'
	[č̣̌'i:su <sup>?</sup> ]	'to sleep or lie down'
	[č̣̌'eyi]	'cross'

/  $\overset{v}{j}$  / is a voiced, palatal affricate and has the following allophones.

/  $\underset{v}{j}$  / voiced, lenis, backed, palatal. It occurs before the back vowels [o], [o:], [u] and [u:].

e.g.	[ $\overset{v}{j}og\text{e}$ ]	'vulture'
	[ $\overset{v}{j}o:re$ ]	'roam about'
	[ $\underset{v}{m}uj\underset{v}{j}u?$ ]	'inactive'
	[ $\underset{v}{?}abju?$ ]	'dream or night mare'

[ $\underset{v}{j}$ ] voiced, lenis, fronted palatal. It occurs before the front vowels [i], [i:], [e] and [e:].

e.g.	[ $\underset{v}{j}ira$ ]	'I, he, it is present' or available'
	[ $\underset{v}{j}i:Da?$ ]	'moist'
	[ $\underset{v}{j}eDe$ ]	'I, he said'
	[ $\underset{v}{k}aje:l:a?$ ]	'feel like doing something or having something.'

#### 2.1.1.4 The Nasals

There are three nasals in the Mecha dialect of Oromo.

/m/, /n/ and / $\bar{n}$ /.

/m/ is a bilabial and is realized as [m] everywhere.

e.g.	[mana]	'house'
	[nama]	'person'
	[lama]	'two'

/ n / is an alveolar nasal and has the following allophones.

[n̥] voiced, lenis, unreleased alveolar nasal. It occurs word finally.

[s̥an̥]	'five'
[kun̥]	'this'
[bi̥sa:n̥]	'water'

[n̥ɔ] voiced, lenis, released alveolar. It occurs before the velars.

e.g. [Dangaʔ]	'food'
[daŋk'uʔ]	'to be an obstacle'

[m̥] voiced, lenis, released, labio-dental nasal, It occurs before the labio-dental fricative [f].

e.g. [Du:mfaʔ]	'total possession'
[gomfuʔ]	'to decorate or give prize'

[n̥] voiced, lenis, released, alveolar. It occurs in other environments.

e.g. [nagaʔ]	'health or peace'
[buna]	'coffee'
[ʔana]	'I'

/ n̄ / is a palatal nasal and has the following allophones.

[n̄] voiced, lenis, released backed. It occurs before the back vowels [o:], [u] and [u:].

e.g.	[fũḥ: oʔ]	'rope'
	[ʔe: ḥ: u]	'who'
	[muḥ: u: k' i]	'move slowly'

[ḥ̣] voiced, lenis, fronted, released. It occurs before the front vowels [i], [i:], [e:].

e.g.	[go: ḥ̣: i]	'Proper Name'
	[saḥ̣: iʔ]	'seed'

[ḥ̄] voiced, lenis, non-fronted, non-backed, released. It occurs in other environments.

e.g.	[maḥ̄?eʔ]	'leg-bone'
	[x' ḥ̄?eʔ]	'a farm implement'

#### 2.1.1.5 The Lateral Phoneme

/ l / there is only one lateral phoneme / l/ in Oromo and has the following allophones.

[lʰ] voiced, lenis, unreleased, alveolar, It occurs word finally.

e.g.	[ʔolʰ]	'up'
	[ma: lʰ]	'what'

[l] voiced, lenis, released, alveolar.

e.g.	[lama]	'two'
	[galgala]	'evening'
	[ʔilma]	'son'
	[jirbiʔ]	'cotton'
	[jilba]	'knee'

### 2.1.1.6 The Flap Phoneme

/ r / is the only flap phoneme in Oromo and is realized as [r] everywhere.

e.g.	[ro:ba]	'rain'
	[ʔarba]	'elephant'
	[bor]	'tomorrow'

### 2.1.1.7 The Semi-Vowels

There are two semi-vowels / w / and / y / in Oromo.

/ w / is a voiced labio-velar semi-vowel and has the following allophones.

[w] consonantal, voiced, fortis. It occurs initially before vowels.

e.g.	[wa:kə]	'god'
	[wa:k:oʔ]	'mushroom'

[w̥] voiced, consonantal, lenis. It occurs intervocalically before the back rounded vowels [o:], [u] and [u:].

e.g.	[wa:wu]	'no'
	[bawuʔ]	'to get out'
	[Di woʔ]	'near'

/ y / is a voiced palatal semi-vowel and has the following allophones.

[y] voiced, consonantal, lenis, backed. It occurs before the back vowels [a:] and [o:].

e.g. [ya:lu<sup>?</sup>] 'to try'  
[yo:m] 'when'

[y] voiced, consonantal, lenis. It occurs intervocalically before front vowels [e], [e:], [i] and [i:].

e.g. [baye] 'he got out'  
[buša:ye:] 'common noun for sheep' or goat'  
[bay:] 'go out'  
[bayi<sup>?</sup>] 'public gathering'

## 2.2 Distribution of the Consonant Phonemes of Oromo

### 2.2.1 The Stops

All the stops occur word initially and word finally except for /p'/. /p'/' does not occur in the initial position except in loan words like /p'e:t'ro:s/, /p'a:wulo:s/ etc.. In the final position also all the stops occur except the alveolar /D/, the velar /g/ and the glottal /?/. Most of the stops that occur word finally are found in the first members of compound words. In the final position /t/ occurs only in the word /sad:e:t/ 'eight'.

<u>Phoneme</u>	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Distribution</u> <u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
/ p' /	-	/salp'a /	/lip'jeDe/
	-	'light(weight)	'appeared briefly'
/ b /	/be:d:e:/	/sirba/	/gab jeDe/
	'behind'	'song or dance'	'kept quiet'
/ t /	/tu:l:a:/	/mata: /	/sad:e:t /
	'a rifle'	'head'	'eight'
/ t' /	/t'uri: /	/lit'u: /	/hat'goDe /
	'dirt'	'to enter'	'cut(vt) suddenly'
/ d /	/duk:ana /	/soda: /	/ gad /
	'dark'	'fear'	'down'
/ D /	/De:bu: /	/ha:Da /	- - -
	'thirst'	'mother'	- - -
/ k /	/ke:s:a /	/maka: /	- - -
	'inside'	'mixture'	- - -
/ k' /	/k'abu: /	/lik'i: /	/ wa:k' /
	'to hold'	'loan'	'god'
/ g /	/gud:a: /	/dalga /	- - -
	'big'	'horizontal'	- - -
/ ? /	/ ?o?:a: /	/ mo?u: /	- - -
	'hot'	'to defeat'	- - -

2.2.2 The Fricatives

All the fricative phonemes occur word initially or word medially except for the glottal fricative /h/, which is restricted to initial position only. The fricatives /f/ and /s/ occur in all positions. /s/ does not occur word finally e.g.

<u>Phonemes</u>	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Distribution</u> <u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
/ f /	/ fu:Du: / 'to take'	/ dafk'a / 'sweat (n)'	/ ?of / 'self'
/ s /	/ sirba / 'song or dance'	/ Di:su: / 'to leave'	/ ?as / 'here'
/ s /	/ san / 'five'	/ ?ise: / 'she'	- - - - - -
/ h /	/ ha:Da / 'mother'	- - - -	- - - - - -

2.2.3 The Affricates

Of the three affricates the ejective and the voiced affricates / t͡ʃ' / and / d͡ʒ / occur initially or medially but not finally. The short / t͡ʃ / occurs only **medially either in cluster or long inter-syllabically.** The short / t͡ʃ / occurs only as the second member of consonant cluster in medial position.<sup>20</sup>

<u>Phonemes</u>	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Distribution</u> <u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
/č̣/	-	/ʔač̣:i /	-
	-	'there'	-
/č̣' /	/č̣'ab:i: /	/k'oč̣'a: /	-
	'snow'	'tortoise'	-
/j̣/	/j̣ala /	/ʔija /	-
	'under'	'eye'	-

#### 2.2.4 The Nasals

All the nasals occur initially, medially or finally except /ṇ̃ /, /ṇ̃' / does not occur finally.

e.g.

<u>Phonemes</u>	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Distribution</u> <u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
/m /	/ma:l/	/lama /	/yo:m/
	'what'	'two'	'when'
/n /	/nama /	/mana /	/ṣ̌an /
	'person'	'house'	'five'
/ṇ̃ /	/ṇ̃a:č̣:u:/	/ʔe:ṇ̃:u /	- - -
	'to eat'	'who'	- - -

#### 2.2.5 The Lateral

The lateral /l/ occurs initially, medially and finally.

<u>Phoneme</u>	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Distribution</u> <u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
/ l /	/ lama / 'two'	/ ja <sup>h</sup> la / 'under'	/ ʔol / 'up'

### 2.2.6 The Flap

The flap /r/ occurs initially, medially or finally.

<u>Phoneme</u>	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Distribution</u> <u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
/ r /	/ rafu: / 'to sleep'	/ gara: / 'stomach'	/ bor / 'tomorrow'

### 2.2.7 The Semi-Vowels

The semi-vowels / w / and / y / occur initially or medially only.

<u>Phoneme</u>	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Distribution</u> <u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
/ w /	/ wa:k'a / 'god'	/ Dawu: / 'to hit'	-
/ y /	/ yo:m / 'when'	/ wa:ye: / 'about'	-

## 2.3 The Vowel Phonemes of Oromo

There are five vowel phonemes in Oromo; two front vowel /i, e/ two back vowel / u, o/ one central /a/.

2.3.1 The Allophones of Oromo Vowels

The allophones of the vowel phonemes of Oromo have pattern congruity. Each vowel has a lax, devoiced allophone in word final position when cited in isolation, or in final position of the final constituent of sentences other than a question requiring a yes-or-no answer, and a voiced, tense allophone in other environments.

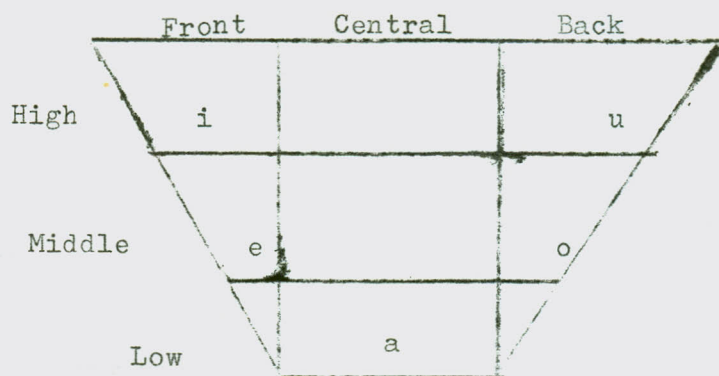


Table 2: The Vowel Phonemes of Oromo

2.3.2 The Front Vowels

/ i / is a high front, unrounded vowel and has the following allophones;

[i̥] high front, unrounded, lax, devoiced.

- e.g. [ta:ʔi̥] 'sit down'  
 [kuni̥] 'this (subj)'  
 [kanʔe:n̄;u:ti̥ kuni̥] 'whose is this'

[i] high, front, unrounded tense, voiced vowel.

e.g. [mirgə] 'right (side)'  
[ʔilma] 'son'  
[ʔati de:mi] 'you go'

/e/ is a mid front, open vowel and has the following allophones;

[e̥] mid front, lax, devoiced vowel.

e.g. [Dufe] 'I or he came'  
[Da:ba:n kale:s:a de:me] 'Daba went yesterday'

[e] mid front, tense, voiced.

e.g. [feDan] 'they wanted'  
[feʔuʔ] 'to saddle' or 'to load'  
[rag:a:sa:n hinkufe jeDe] 'he said Regasa fell down'

### 2.3.3 The Central Vowel

/a/ is a low central vowel and has the following allophones;

[ḁ] low central lax, open, devoiced.

e.g. [ʔad:ana] 'here'  
[kanke: ʔisa sana] 'yours is that one'

[a] central low, tense, open, voiced.

e.g. [gabaʔ] 'market'  
[dabala] 'additional'  
[dabala barab:d:a] 'Do you want more'

#### 2.3.4 The Back Vowels

/ u / is a high back vowel and has the following allophones.

[u̥] high back, rounded, lax, devoiced.

e.g. [hata: ?u̥] 'let him sit'

[hata: ?u jeDu] 'they say let it be'

/ u / high back, rounded, tense, voiced.

e.g. [kuta?] 'section'

[kot:u jeDe] 'he asked (someone)  
to come'

/ o / is a mid, back rounded vowel and has the following  
allophones;

[o̥] mid, back, lax, rounded, devoiced.

e.g. [t<sup>h</sup> o̥:k] 'one'

[man:i ke:n̄:a tok:o̥] 'our house is the same'

/ o / mid, back, rounded, tense, voiced.

e.g. [?ol] 'up'

[kotu?] 'to farm'

### 3. PHONOTACTICS AND SYLLABIFICATION

#### 3.1 Consonant Clusters and Their Cooccurrence Restrictions

Neither initial nor final consonant clusters are found in Oromo. Consonant clusters occur only in medial positions and the number of consonants forming a cluster is limited to two.

<u>e.g.</u>	Sirba	'song or dance'
	<sup>y</sup> jilba	'knee'
	?ilma	'son'

For ~~convenience~~ of description we will classify the consonant phonemes of Oromo into four groups.

- a) Those consonant phonemes that do not combine with any other consonant phonemes as first members to form clusters.  
These are:- /p', t, t', d, D, ʔ, s, č, č', j' /.
- b) Those consonant phonemes that do not combine with any other consonant phonemes as second members to form cluster.  
These are:- / l, n, r, y /.
- c) Those consonant phonemes that never combine with other consonant phonemes at all. These are:- / h, w /.
- d) Those consonant phonemes that combine with other consonants either as first or as second members to form clusters.  
These are:- / b, k, k', f, g, š, m, n /.

Table 4 shows the consonant clusters of Oromo. Examples of the clusters are exhaustively given in Appendix No. 1.

3.2 Consonant Clusters and Their Frequencies

Oromo consonant clusters with / n, r, l / as first members are more frequent than other clusters of consonants;

		Second Members of Clusters																								
		p'	b	t	t'	d	D	k	k'	g	?	f	s	s'	h	c	c'	j	m	n	n'	l	r	w	y	
First Members of Clusters	p'					+								+	+				+		+					
	b																									
	t																									
	t'																									
	d																									
	D																									
	k			+											+								+			
	k'				+																			+		
	g					+									+									+		
	f			+					+	+														+		
	s																									
	s'								+																	
	h																									
	c																									
	c'																									
	j																									
	m		+	+	+	+							+		+					+		+				
	n			+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+				+	+	+						
	n'																									
	l	+	+	+	+	+			+	+	+	+	+				+			+	+					
r	+	+	+	+	+			+	+	+	+	+						+	+	+						
w																										
y											+															

Table 3: The Medial Consonant Clusters of Oromo

+ Indicates the actual cluster and consonant clusters with /s, n, t, t', d,k/ as second members are relatively more frequent than others. There are no clusters formed by the combination of /s, h / as either first or second members.

### 3.3 Diphthongs

There are no diphthongs in the Mecha dialect of Oromo. According to the syllable structure of the language (as seen in section 3.4 below) there are the syllable structures, cv, cv:, cvc and cv:c. The words with semi-vowels also should fit into any one of these structures.

For instance:-	č'ey-	'cross (vb)'
	Day -	'hit'
	bay -	'get out'

are verb stems with the cvc type. When there are one vowel-suffixes affixed to such stems the semi-vowels at the final position of these words become syllable onset of the next syllable to be formed by the suffix-vowel as the nucleus. This is so, because the suffix-vowels have equal relative prominence and the syllable pattern becomes cv-cv instead of cvc-v for there is no syllable pattern -v- in the language.

<u>e.g.</u>	č'ey + u:	č'e-wu:	'to cross'
	CVC + V:	CV - CVI	
	Day + e	D a y e	'I, he hit'
	CVC + V	CV - CV	
	bay + i	b a y i	'get out (imp)'
	CVC + V	CV - CV	
	bo: y + e	bo:ye	'I, he cried'
	CV:C + V	CV:- CV	

If we, instead, treated the sequence of vowel and semi-vowel as a diphthong the type of syllable we find would be cvv - which is not found in the syllable structure of the language.

### 3.4 Syllabification

#### 3.4.1 The Structure of Syllables

The structure of Oromo syllables are of the following types:-

<u>Syllable Type</u>	<u>e.g.</u>	
CVC	<u>ʃ</u> an	'five'
CV	na: <u>ma</u>	'person'
CV:C	<u>de:m</u> -te	'she/you (sg) went'
CV:	<u>di:-ma</u>	'red'

#### 3.4.2 Syllables with Semi-Vowels

Syllables with the semi-vowels /w/ and /y/ are also classified under any of the syllable types given above in 3.4.1, since there is no other syllable pattern discovered with all the simple vowel syllables, semi-vowels are consonantal.

<u>e.g.</u>	CV-	<u>ye</u> -ro:	'time'
	CVC-	<u>yar</u> -tu:	'weak, or of low quality'
	CV:C	yo:m	'when'
	CV:-	<u>yo</u> :na	'at this time'
	CVC	<u>wal</u>	'each other'
	CV-CV:-CV	ha:bo:-wu	'let him cry'
	CV:-CV:	<u>wa</u> :- <u>ye</u> :	'about'
	CV:C-	<u>wa</u> :m-na	'we call'

### 3.4.3 The Syllabification of Words

Consonant clusters or long consonants in Oromo occur in word medial position. Because of the syllable structure of the language such consonant clusters or long consonants split up into two. The first member of the cluster coheres to the preceding vowel or the vocalic nucleus and forms a closed syllable; and the second member coheres to the following vocalic nucleus..

<u>e.g.</u>	?ilma	?il-ma	CVC-CV	'son'
	finč'a:n	fin-č'a:n	CVC-CV:C	'urine'
	balbala	bal-ba-la	CVC-CV-CV	'door or gate'

Such words cannot be syllabified otherwise. For instance if we syllabify the word /?ilma/ as /?ilm-a/ it forms the syllable structure type CVCC- and V, which

we do not find in the syllable structure of the language. or it wouldn't fit into any syllable structure of the language if we divided the word as /ʔi-lma /. This again would be like a /CCV syllable type which the language doesn't have.

Long consonants are also syllabified in the following ways:-

way:a	way-ya	CVC-CV	'clothe'
gan:a	gan-na	CVC-CV	'summer'
dal:a	dal-la:	CVC-CV:	'fence'

Syllabification of such words is also according to the syllable structure of the language.

#### Distribution of Phonemes within the Syllable

The Oromo phonemes are distributed within the syllable structures with the following restrictions.

There is no phoneme sequence beginning with the vowel because there is no syllable structure of VCC, VC or VCV in the language. This is a structural limitation.

The consonant phonemes /  $\bar{n}$ , p' / do not occur before the vowel phonemes / i /.

The consonant phonemes / b, t, k, s, č,  $\bar{n}$ , w / do not occur after the vowel phoneme / e /.

The consonant phonemes / w, j, ʔ / do not occur after the vowel phoneme /i/.

/ʔ/ does not occur before the vowel /i:/.

#### 3.4.4 Distribution of Syllables in Words

Different syllable types are distributed in words in the following ways:-

<u>Syllable Type</u>	<u>Initial</u>	<u>Medial</u>	<u>Final</u>
CV	na-ma 'person	ma/na/ko 'my house'	la/ma 'two'
CVC	bar-ba:di 'look for'	him-bar-te 'you(sg)knew'	fe-dan 'they wanted'
CVC	bo:-ke: 'mosquito'	je:ba:te 'became strong'	bi-ta: 'left(side)'
CVC	de:m:ne 'we went'	hin-de:m-na 'we are going'	biš-sa:n 'water'

#### 3.4.5 Phoneme Frequency

Table 4 below presents the frequency of phonemes in Oromo. The frequency counts are based on the Two Hundred Swadesh Basic Vocabulary and on an original Oromo story '/k'amale:f ye:y:i:/' "The Monkey and the Jakal". The frequency of each phoneme in the basic vocabulary is given in column 2a, and that in the story is given in column 2b.

The purpose of basing the frequency count on the two different data is to see how frequently the phonemes occur in the basic lexical items in the language (in isolation) and in a text in which grammatical morphemes (prefixes and suffixes) occur so frequently.

From the table, we understand that the phonemes / u, t, e, i / occur more frequently in the text than in the basic vocabulary. This is so, because most of Oromo suffixes are made up of these phonemes. The differences in the frequencies of the other phonemes may be attributed to the specific nature or genre of the text.

The Swadesh Two Hundred Basic Vocabulary and the story upon which the phoneme frequency counts below are made are given in Appendix no. 2a, 2b and 3.

Ser. No	The Phoneme	Frequency		Ser. No.	The Phoneme	Frequency	
		2a Basic Vocabulary	2b Text			2a Basic Vocabulary	2b Text
1	a	151	140	18	k'	23	11
2	a:	70	68	19	l	22	22
3	e	58	53	20	D	21	28
4	8	48	60	21	o	20	39
5	r	48	15	22	o:	20	13
6	a	45	27	23	u:	20	23
7	l	45	38	24	k	19	42
8	n	43	71	25	h	17	14
9	g	41	43	26	j	14	27
10	ʔ	40	36	27	ǧ'	7	10
11	t	35	71	28	y	7	25
12	f	33	38	29	č	6	1
13	e:	33	71	30	t'	5	3
14	b	32	30	31	n	5	1
15	d	31	13	32	s	2	18
16	m	29	34	33	w	2	4
17	s	29	39	34	p'	1	10

Table 4: The Frequency Count of Oromo Phonemes

#### 4. SUPRASEGMENTALS

The suprasegmental phenomena discussed in this thesis are consonantal length, vowel length, stress, pitch and terminal contours.

##### 4.1 Consonant Length

There are two degrees of consonant length (short and long). Consonant length is distinctive in Oromo. This can be illustrated by the following examples.

<u>e.g.</u>	Diba	'it lacks'	Dib:a	'hundred'
	soda:	'fear'	sod:a:	'male in-law'
	?aje:s:e	'I, he caused to stink'	?j:e:se	'killed'
	guba:	'burner'	gub:a:	'up there, on'

##### 4.2 Vowel Length

Vowel length is also distinctive as can be seen in the illustrative examples below.

<u>e.g.</u>	Diba	'it lacks'	'Di:ba	'I, he pushes'
	?ega:	'hence'	?e:ge:	'you(pl.) watch'
	gara	'side'	ga:ra	'hill or mountain'
	bod:e:	'dirty'	bo:d:e:	'behind, later'
	Dufu:	'to come'	Du:fu:	'fart (n)'

As can be seen from the above examples every Oromo basic vowel has a short and a long distinct qualities.

The phonemic length of vowel has a short glottalized allophone in the final position of words in isolation or in the final position of the last components of phrases or sentences other than question sentences requiring the answer yes or no. The phonemic length is symbolized / : / .

<u>e.g.</u>	<u>Phonemic</u>	<u>Phonetic</u>	
	/ De:ra: /	[De:raʔ]	'long or tall'
	/ simbo: /	[simboʔ]	'charm'
	/ ʔabju: /	[ʔabjuʔ]	'dream'
	/ jirbi: /	[jirbiʔ]	'cotton'
	/ sare: /	[sare:ʔ]	'dog'

#### 4.3 Stress and Pitch

There are three degrees of stress - primary, secondary and weak stress, and there are two levels of pitch - high and low in Mecha dialect.

It is difficult to treat stress and pitch separately, because the primary stress and high pitch occur inseparably on the same syllable and the secondary stress and the low pitch occur simultaneously on the same syllable in their respective patterns.

Stress and pitch are phonetic in the sense that they are predictable from their phonological environments. They

also have a grammatical status in the sense that they signal grammatical meanings. Stress and pitch, however, do not signal lexical meanings.

In this discussion the primary stress and or high pitch is symbolized by // / and the secondary stress and or low pitch is symbolized by / \ / and the weak stress is unmarked.

#### 4.3.1 Patterns of Stress and Pitch

There are three stress and or pitch patterns in the dialect of Mecha.<sup>21</sup>

Pattern One: A word ending in a short vowel has a primary stress and a high pitch on the penultimate and secondary stress and low pitch on a preceding syllable if there is any.

<u>e.g.</u> barba:de	'I or he wanted'
de:me	'I or he went'
nama	'person'
laga	'river'
?ad:an a ?ad:ana	'here'
galgal a	'evening'

Pattern Two: Any word ending in a consonant or in a long vowel has a primary stress and a high pitch on the ultimate syllable with a secondary stress and a low pitch on any preceding syllable.

<u>e.g.</u>	bìsá:n	'water'
	fíńé'a':n	'urine'
	?ínjira:n	'lice'
	barań	'they learned'
	maťa:	'head'
	kaťa:	'way'
	dè:mán	'they went'

Pattern Three: In any monosyllabic word, the syllable has a primary stress and a high pitch.

<u>e.g.</u>	śán	'five'
	yó:m	'when'
	?ás	'here'
	?ól	'up'

#### 4.3.2 Grammatical Status of Stress and Pitch

The grammatical status of stress and pitch are as follows. The grammatical meanings of words change when the words are uttered with a shift of stress and pitch from one syllable to the other.

For instance in the following examples;

- a. Verbal adjective is signalled when a word is uttered with a primary stress and a high pitch on the ultimate and penultimate syllable and with a secondary stress and a low pitch on any other syllables if any;

- b. A non-finite verb form is signalled if the word is uttered with a secondary stress and a low pitch on the penultimate syllable and a primary stress and a high pitch on the ultimate syllable;
- c. An imperative is signalled if the word is uttered with a primary stress and a high pitch on the penultimate syllable and a secondary stress and a low pitch on the ultimate syllable.

e.g.

Verbal	Non-finite	Imperative
<u>Adj.</u>	<u>Verb form</u>	<u>2P</u>
dé:ma:	dé:ma:	dé:ma:
'one who goes'	'while going'	'you go'
fí:gá:	fí:gá:	fí:ga:
'runner'	'while running'	'run'
ráfá:	ráfá:	ráfá:
'sleeper'	'while sleeping'	'sleep'
tá:ʔá:	tá:ʔá:	tá:ʔa:
'one who sits'	'while sitting'	'sit'
barbá:dá:	barbá:dá:	barbáda:
'searcher'	'while searching'	'search'
jarjára:	jarjára:	jarjára:
'fast'	'while in a hurry'	'be in a hurry'

An infinitive verb form has a primary stress and a high pitch on the ultimate and the penultimate syllable. If it is uttered with a secondary stress and a low pitch on the penultimate syllable, and a primary stress and a high pitch on the ultimate, a question is signalled.

e.g.

<u>Infinitive</u>		<u>Question</u>	
bàrbá:dú	'to look for'	bàrbà:dú:	'may I look for?'
gátú:	'to throw'	gátú	'may I throw?'
tá:ʔú:	'to sit'	tàʔú:	'may I sit?'
káʔú:	'to get up'	kàʔú:	'may I get up?'

A primary stress and a high pitch on the prefix, hin- signals an affirmative meaning. But a secondary stress and a low pitch on the same syllable signals the meaning "negative".

e.g.

hín-Dufáni	'they came'
hìn-Dufáni	'they do not come'

#### 4.4 Terminal Contours

There are three terminal contours in this dialect.

- a. A sustained high pitch signals that the utterance is not finished.

This is symbolized by / → /

- e.g. ?ani kanan beeku → sinDoksu:  
'what I know I will not conceal from you'  
kale:s:a Dufe: → har?a deema  
'he came yesterday, he will go to-day'

- b. A rising pitch which occurs at the end of a question sentence without question words signals a question and the end of an utterance.

This is symbolized /↑/

- e.g. hórí:k ábdá:↑ 'Do you have money?'  
bor Dufta:↑ 'Are you coming tomorrow?'  
?ín:i ?òb:ólé:s:a ké:tí:↑ 'Is he your brother?'

- c. A falling pitch which occurs at the end of a statement or a declarative sentence or at the end of question sentences with question words signals the end of an utterance.

- e.g. mánàkó: yó:m Dúfta ↓  
'when will you come to my house'  
?áni simbé:ku↓  
'I don't know you'  
gànáma kó:tu  
'come in the morning'

## 5. MORPHOPHONEMICS

Definition: Morphophonemics is a branch of study for the analysis of the particular areas of interplay between morphology and phonology - the way in which phonemes vary in the context of particular morphemes and the way in which phonemes are realized differently in particular phonological context.<sup>22</sup>

Morphophonemic changes in Oromo take place across both word and morpheme boundaries.

The most common phonological process in Oromo is assimilation of consonants. There are also other phonological processes like epenthesis, metathesis, reduplication, dissimilation and deletion.

### 5.1 Assimilation

Assimilation is a phonological process in which a phoneme changes to become more like other phonemes in its environment.<sup>23</sup>

Assimilatory processes take place in Oromo when prefix-morphemes ending in consonants are affixed to other morphemes beginning with consonants or when suffixes beginning with consonants are affixed to morphemes ending in consonants.

e.g.	<u>Prefix</u>	<u>Stem</u>	<u>Suffix</u>	<u>Combined Form</u>
	hin	ñat-	-nu	hiñ'a:n:u 'We don't eat'
	nan-	ɣ'i:s-	-a	nanc'i:sa 'I am sleeping'

Note the difference in the following cases:

<u>Prefix</u>	<u>Stem</u>	<u>Suffix</u>	<u>Combined Form</u>
hin-	-de:m-	-n-a	hin-de:mna 'we are going'
hin	-Dug-	-n-a	hinDugna hinDun:a 'we are drinking'

In these examples the /n/ of the prefix /hin-/ is regressively assimilated to the initial phoneme /n/ of the stem /n̄a:t-/ and the /n̄/ is lengthened, the last phoneme /t/ of the stem /n̄a:t-/ is also regressively assimilated to the initial phoneme /n/ of the suffix /-nu/ the /n̄/ being lengthened the resulting form becomes /hiñ:a:n:u/.

han-, kan-, nan-, hin-, yo:-, yo:n-, ha(:), ?ak:a- are the only verbal prefixes found in Cromo. Thus only /n/ is involved in the process of assimilation of consonants which takes place due to the combination of prefix morphemes and verb root or verb-stem morphemes.

e.g.	<u>Prefix</u>	<u>Verb-root or stem</u>	<u>Combined Form</u>
	kan-/han-	la:tu	kal:a:tu/hal:a:tu 'one who gives'
	nan-	lit'a	nal:it'a 'I enter'

Part of the prefixes which end in vowels do not undergo assimilation.

<u>e.g.</u>	<u>Prefix</u>	<u>Verb Stem</u>	<u>Combined Form</u>
	yo:-	lit'e	yo:lit'e 'if he enters'
	ha (:)	rafu	ha(:) rafu 'let him sleep'
	?ak:a	rafu	?ak:arafu 'so that he may sleep'

However prefixes which end in vowels affect the glottal stop /ʔ/ and the glottal fricative /h/ by deleting in the morphophonemic process across word boundary. This will be seen in section 5.53.

Most verbal suffixes consist of one consonant and are usually of the CV syllable structure type. There is only one suffix which is of the CV(:)C syllable type and that is -si(:)s. The suffixes which consist of only one consonant are /-t-/, /-n-/, /-s-/, /-d-/ which are in turn followed by a vowel which is a suffix itself or part of another suffix.

<u>e.g.</u>	<u>Verb-root or Stem</u>	<u>Suffixes</u>	<u>Combined Form</u>
	Duf-	-t-e-	Dufte 'you (sg), she came'
	Duf-	-n-e	Dufne 'we came'

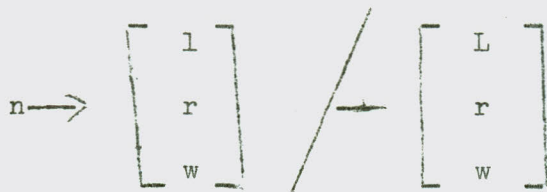
<u>Verb-root or Stem</u>	<u>Suffixes</u>	<u>Combined Form</u>
č'ab-	-s-e	č'abse 'I/he broke'
ba:t-	-D-e	ba:D:e 'I carried'
k'ab-	-si:s-e	k'absi:se 'I/he caused to hold'

Therefore the only consonants involved in the process of consonant assimilation which take place due to the combination of suffix-morphemes and verb roots or verb-stem morphemes are /t, n, s, D/. Assimilation of consonants involves both the point and the manner of articulation. The various processes of consonant assimilation are shown below in rules 1-11.

/ n / is progressively or regressively completely or partially assimilated to /l, r, w, m/.

Rule 1

1a.



1b.



1c.

n → m / -b

1d.

n → ñ / - palatals



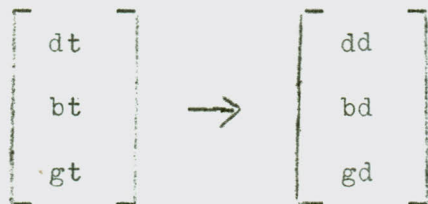
/ t' / and / k' / are regressively completely assimilated to / n /. When / t' / and / k' / are assimilated to / n / the resulting morphophoneme is glottalized and this is indicated by the symbol / n' /.

Rule 3



e.g. fit' + na → fit'na → fin':a 'we finish'  
 Dak' + na → Dak'na → Dan':a 'we go'  
 Dak'na

Rule 4

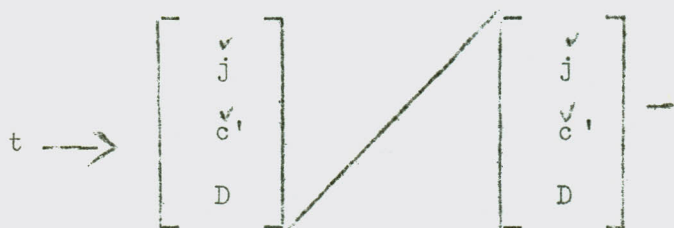


e.g.

<u>root</u>	<u>2s</u>	<u>3 fa</u>	<u>2p</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
ha:m-	ha:mta	ha:mti	ha:mtu	'shave'
bar-	bart <sub>a</sub>	barti	bartu	'learn'
hi:k-	hi:kta	hi:kti	hi:ktu	'unite'
k'ab-	k'abda	k'abdi	k'abdu	'have/hold'
bad-	bad:a	bad:i	bad:u	'get lost'
fi:g-	fi:gda	fi:gdi	fi:gdu	'run'

/ t / is progressively and completely assimilated to j, c, and D.

Rule 5



e.g. fajaj + ta → fajajta → fajajda → fajaj:a

'you become dazed'

mič' + ta → mi:č'ta → mi:č't'a → mi:č:a

'you wash'

/t/ is assimilated to /D/ before /D/.

ba:t + D + u → ba:tDu → ba:D:u

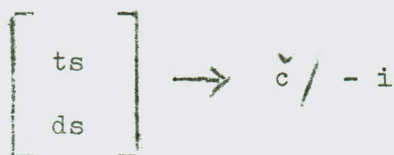
'you (sg.) carry'

jaba:t + D + a: → jaba:tDa → jaba:D:a:

'you (pl.) be strong'

Palatalization

Rule 6a



e.g. ba:t+si:s+e → ba:tsi:se → ba:tsise → ba:c:ise

'caused to carry'

ha:d+si:s+e → ha:dsi:se → ha:dsise → ha:c:ise

'cause to shave'

fajaj+s+e → fajajse --- fajáč:e  
 'cause to be dazed'

Rule 6b

t' +s --- č' (glottalization and  
 palatalization).

e.g. lit'+si:s+e --- lit'si:se --- lič':i:se --- lič':ise  
 'cause to enter'

When j or č' is combined with / n / a morphophoneme / ñ / is  
 formed. The morphophoneme thus formed is glottalized and this  
 is symbolized / ñʔ /.

Rule 6c

$$\begin{bmatrix} \check{j} \\ \check{c}' \end{bmatrix} + n \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \check{n} \\ \check{n}^{\text{ʔ}} \end{bmatrix}$$

e.g. fajaj+n+e      fajajne      fajañʔ:e

'we became dazed'

ba:č'+n+a      ba:č'na      ba:ñʔ:a

'we become opulent'

Devoicing

Voiced stops are devoiced before the voiceless fricative  
 alveolar / s /.



There are other types of assimilation, some of which are not easy to give a phonological explanation.

/ s / changes to / f / before a consonant or before / a / followed by consonant.

Rule 10

s → f / - (a) C

e.g. k'ab+si:s+ate      k'absi:sate      k'apsi:fate

'caused (someone) to hold for him'

ba:s+ate              ba:sate              ba:fate

'got (something) out for himself'

The following phonological process is of a different type of assimilation. It involves both consonants and vowels. The manner of articulation is involved in the process.

Rule 11

a) y → w / -u

b) a → o / -w (C)

c) w → f / - C

e.g.

be:lay+u: → be:layu: → be:lawu:      'to be hungry'

be:law+ne: → be:lawne → be:lowne

be:lowne → be:lofne      'we are hungry'



### 5.3 Metathesis

Definition: Metathesis is a phonological process in which, for variety of reasons, the order of adjacent segments is often removed.<sup>25</sup>

In Oromo the process of metathesis takes place when as a consequence of root and suffix combination an impermissible sequence of segments would occur. Such impermissible sequence would occur as a result of the process of deletion of a vowel in the morphophonemic change.

Hence Rule 13

gl → lg

fr → rf

e.g. -af:a: ordinal marker

?afur four

?afur+af:a → ?afuraf:a: → ?afraf:a: (vowel deletion)

?afraf:a: → ?arraf:a: (metathesis)

This rule metathesizes the clusters fr, gr, in medial positions.  
'fourth'

e.g. sagal+af:a → sagalaf:a → saglaf:a: (vowel deletion)

saglaf:a: → salgaf:a: (metathesis)

'ninth'

When the suffix /-af:a:/ is affixed to the base form /?afur/ or /sagal/ the primary stress on the final syllable of the stem shifts to the suffix. Thus the /u/ in /?afur/ and the /a/ of the second syllable in /sagal/ are weakened and

consequently deleted. Hence the sequences /fr/ and /gl/ would occur. Such sequences however, are not allowed in the language due to the cooccurrence restrictions of consonants of the language.

Compare the above examples with the following:

san		'five'
sanaf:a:	→ sanaf:a:	'fifth'
torba		'seven'
torbaf:a:	→ torbaf:a:	'seventh'

There is another type of metathesis in which the first consonant of the first syllable and the first consonant of the second syllable interchange. This type of metathesis is optional.

e.g.	dalje:s:a	→ jalde:s:a	'baboon'
	kamale:	→ k'alame:	'ape'

#### 5.4 Dissimilation

This is a process in which a long syllable of a suffix becomes short when affixed to a stem ending with a long syllable.

##### Rule 14

A long syllable of a suffix becomes short when affixed to a stem ending with a long syllable.

e.g. fi:g+si:se → fi:gsi:se → fi:gsise

'I/he caused (someone) to run'

di:m+e:s:e → di:me:s:e → di:mes:e

'I/he reddened'

?e:g+si:se → ?e:gsi:se → ?e:gsise

'I/he caused to wait'

ga:ngo:+o:ta → ga:ngo:ta → ga:ngota 'mule'

ǰa:rsa+o:ta → ǰa:rsota → ǰa:rsota 'old men'

But when the vowel of the last syllable of the root or stem is short, the long vowel of the syllable of the suffix remains unchanged.

e.g. nama 'person'

nam+o:ta → namo:ta → namo:tá 'persons'

č'ab+si:s+e → č'absi:se → č'apsi:se

'I, he cause to break'

## 5.5 Deletion

Definition: Deletion is a phonological process which removes a segment from a word or a morpheme.<sup>26</sup>

In Oromo deletion involves both vowels and consonants. It takes place across morpheme or word boundaries.

### 5.5.1 Deletion of Vowels within a morpheme

?afur 'four'

?afur+af:a: → ?afraf?a: → ?arfaf:a: 'fourth'

kuDan 'ten'

kuDan+af:a → kuDanaf:a: → kurnaf:a: 'tenth'

N.B. In these examples other processes i.e. metathesis and assimilation also take place as a consequence of the process of deletion.

5.5.2 Deletion of Vowels Across Word boundaries.

When a suffix beginning with / i / is affixed to a stem ending in any vowel the / i / is deleted.

<u>e.g.</u>	tok:o		'one'
	tok:o+il:e:	→ tok:ol:e:	'even one/at least one'
	k'ulk'ul:u:		'clean'
	k'ulk'ul:u+im:o:	→ k'uk'ul:u: <sup>!</sup> o:	'and or but the clean'
	sare:		'dog'
	sare+il:e:	→ sarel:e:	'even a dog'

All vowels are deleted from the final position of a stem when a suffix beginning with / u / or /e(:)/ is affixed to the former.

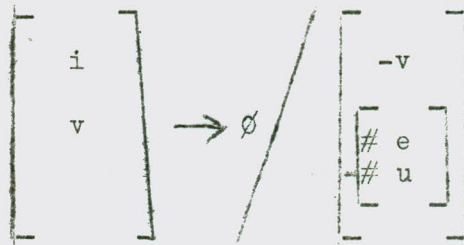
<u>e.g.</u>	kana		'this'
	kana+uma	→ kanuma	'only this or this itself'
	?iše		'she (obj)'
	?iše:+uma	→ ?išuma	'herself or only she/her'
	tok:o		'one'
	tok:o+uma	---- tok:uma	'only one'
	sadi		'three'
	sadi:+uma	--- saduma	'only three'

e.g.

$\check{v}$  jaba: 'strong'  
 $\check{v}$  jaba+e:s:e  $\rightarrow$   $\check{v}$  jabe:s:e 'made strong'  
t'in:o 'small or little or some'  
t'in:o+e:s:e  $\rightarrow$  t'in:e:s:e 'made small or little'  
k'ulk'ul:u: 'clean'  
k'ulk'ul:u+e:s:e k'ulk'ul:e:s:e 'made clean'  
sadi: 'three'  
sadi:+e:s:e  $\rightarrow$  sade:s:e 'made it three'

The deletion of vowels across morpheme boundaries as seen above can be summed up in rule 15.

Rule 15



5.5.3 Deletion of /D/, /?/ and /y/ Across Morpheme Boundaries

The consonants /D,?/ are deleted from a stem final position when a suffix beginning with a consonant is affixed to stems containing either /D/ or /?/. When /D/ or /?/ are deleted in such a process the preceding vowel becomes long.

Rule 16

$V \left\{ \begin{array}{c} ? \\ D \end{array} \right\} \rightarrow V \emptyset / -C$

$V \rightarrow V: / -C$

e.g.

ba?-		'get out'
ba?+t+e	$\rightarrow$ ba?te $\rightarrow$ ba:te	'you (sg.) she got out'
hoD-		'suck'
hoD+ne	$\rightarrow$ hoDne $\rightarrow$ ho:ne	'we sucked'

/ y / is deleted when it occurs between identical vowels.

Rule 17

$y \rightarrow \emptyset / v_1 \_ v_1$

e.g.

gay-		'reach (imp.) or be enough'
gay+a	$\rightarrow$ gaya $\rightarrow$ gaa	'enough'

5.5.4. Deletion of /?/ and /h/ Across Word Boundaries

The process of deletion involves the consonants /?/ and /h/ across word boundaries in normal or rapid speech; i.e. the speaker does not speak slowly and carefully.

Rule 18

/ʔ/ is deleted from word initial position across word boundary.

e.g. ʔas ʔade:mu dide

ʔasademu dide 'he refused to come to wards here'

ʔak:aʔin:i ʔas Dufe himbe:ku

ʔak:an:as Dufe himbe:ku 'I don't know that he came here'

It is noted that a vowel which follows the glottal stop that undergoes the process of deletion is also deleted if the preceding word ends in a vowel.

Rule 19

/h/ is deleted from word initial position across word boundary, if the preceding word ends in a syllable structure of CV(:)C type.

In both cases after /ʔ/ or /h/ is deleted the constituents from which they are deleted are encliticized into the preceding word in the sentence.

e.g. ma:li:f hara: barba:d:a

ma:li:fa:ra: barba:d:a

'Why do you want a new one?'

ʔas ham:ari

ʔasam:ari 'Scoop up towards here'

5.6 Reduplication

Definition: Reduplication is the repetition of all or part of a stem.<sup>27</sup>

Rule 20

In Oromo the first syllable of a stem is reduplicated to signal repetition of action in verbs or plurality in adjective.

In the process of reduplication the first consonant of the first syllable which is reduplicated becomes long. Long syllables become short when reduplicated.

e.g.

rukute		'I or he hit'
ru+rukute	rur:ukute	'I or he hit repeatedly'
re:bne		'we spanked'
re+re:bne	rer:e:bne	'We spanked repeatedly'
di:ma:		'red'
di+di:ma:	did:i:ma:	'red one's'

Exceptions

In the process of reduplication the first consonants of the syllables of the following do not become long.

t'in:o:	t'it'in:o:	'small ones'
guda	gugud:a:	'big ones'

## 6. C O N C L U S I O N

In this thesis, attempt has been made to present a fuller description of the sound system of the Mecha dialect of Oromo.

The findings of the analysis are briefly summarized below.

1. There are 24 consonant and 5 basic vowel phonemes - 9 stops, 4 fricatives, 3 palatal, 3 nasal, 1 lateral, 1 flap, 2 semi-vowels; and 2 front, 1 central, 2 back vowel phonemes.
2. Oromo words do not begin or end with consonant cluster. Oromo consonant clusters with /n, r, l/ as first members are more frequent than other clusters of consonants; and consonant clusters with /s, n, t, t', d, k/ as second members are relatively more frequent than other consonant clusters. There are no clusters formed by the combination of /h or w/ as either first or second members.

In the phoneme frequency count, the phonemes /n, t, e:, i/ have more frequency in the text than they do in the Swaddesh Basic Vocabulary. This is so, because most of the Oromo suffix morphemes are made up of these phonemes.

3. Oromo has the syllable structures of CV, CVC, Cv: and CV:C types.

4. The suprasegmental phenomena discussed in this thesis are consonant length, vowel length, stress and pitch, and terminal contours.

There are two degrees of length in this dialect (short and long), consonant length is phonemic and so is vowel length. The long vowel phonemes have short glottalized allophones in final position of a word in isolation or in a final constituent of a phrase or a sentence without question words. Length is represented by / :/.

Stress and pitch in this dialect or Oromo are inseparable. There are 3 degrees of stress - primary stress, secondary stress and the weak stress; and two levels of pitch-high and low. Primary stress and high pitch occur on the same syllable and the low level pitch occurs with the secondary stress.

Primary stress and high pitch are represented by / ˈ / and secondary stress and low pitch by / ˌ /. The weak stress is unmarked.

Stress and pitch are phonetic in the sense that they are predictable from their patterns of occurrence determined by phonological environment. They have, however, grammatical status. Stress and pitch do not signal lexical meaning.

There are three types of terminal contours.

- a. A sustained high pitch which signals that the utterance is not yet finished. This is symbolized by / → /.
  - b. A rising terminal pitch which signals the termination of a question sentence. This is represented by / ↗ /.
  - c. A falling pitch which signals the termination of a statement, a command or a question sentence with question word. This is symbolized / ↘ /.
5. Morphophonemic processes in this dialect involve assimilation of consonants, epenthesis, metathesis, deletion, vowel shortening and reduplication.

A P P E N D I X

Appendix 1: Examples of Consonant Clusters of Oromo

/ b / as first and second member

/ʔabdi: /	'hope'
/ʔobsa /	'patience'
/ ʔabšilo /	'unleavened bread for making 'tella'- a home made beer'
/ʔbʃi: /	'dream'
/ hamba: /	'leftover'
/ halbe: /	'-knife'
/ ʔarba /	'elephant'

/ k / as first and second member

/ makta /	'you mix'
/ hi:ksise /	'he, I caused someone to move'
/ be:kna /	'we know'
/ ho:fkalti: /	'good riddance'
/ hinko: /	'dues'
/ halkan /	'night'
/ harka /	'hand'

/ k' / as first and second member

/ ho:k't'o /	'itch (n)'
/ mak'na /	'we move aside'
/ dafk'a /	'sweat'

/ hank'u: /	'deficient'
/ holk'a /	'hollow'
/ mark'a: /	'soup'
/ f / as first and second member	
/ gi:fti: /	'mistress'
/ ho:fkalti: /	'good riddance'
/ dafk'a /	'sweat'
/ ?o:fna /	'we drive'
/ danfa /	'boiled'
/ balfa /	'despise vehemently'
/ š / as first and second member	
/ ?aškura: /	'beads'
/ ?abšilo: /	'unleavened bread for making tella'
/ m / as first and second member	
/ hamba: /	'leftover'
/ ha:ntu: /	'sickle'
/ gimt'o: /	'computation, calculation'
/ rom?a /	'shivers'
/ himna /	'force, power'
/ ?ilma /	'son'
/ harma /	'breast'

/ n / as first and second member

/ gantu: /	'quarrelsome'
/ ha:nt'a: /	'splinter of wood'
/ ganda /	'village'
/ DanDa /	'body'
/ kanko: /	'mine'
/ hank'a:k'u: /	'egg'
/ ?a:ngo: /	'force'
/ Du:nfa: /	'private ownership'
/ k'e:nsa /	'finger nail'
/ konč̣i: /	'Name of a place'
/ č'i:nč̣'a: /	'smell'
/ wanjō /	'trap'
/ Dabna /	'we lack'
/ dok'na /	'stingy'
/ fi:gna /	'we run'
/ ?o:fna /	'we drive'
/ gamna /	'tricky'

/ g / as first and second member

/ dugda /	'back (of body)'
/ fi:ḳsa /	'I, or he cause/causes to run'
/ lugna /	'coward'
/ Danga: /	'food'
/ dalga /	'horizontal'
/ ?argu: /	'to see'

/ p' /	as second member only	
	/ sulp'o: /	'light (weight)'
	/ hirp'a: /	'share'
/ t /	as second member only	
	/ go:fta: /	'lord or master'
	/ makti /	'she mixes'
	/ gamta: /	'cooperative'
	/ wanta: /	'something'
	/ bulti: /	'overnight, marital life'
	/ ?amarti: /	'ring'
/ t' /	as second member only	
	/ k'ilt'u: /	'sycamore'
	/ k'art'a:sa: /	'a kind of fly'
	/ ha:nt'a: /	'splinter of wood'
	/ gimt'o: /	'computation'
	/ ?akt'i /	'she goes'
/ d /	as second member only	
	/ ?abdi: /	'hope'
	/ dugda /	'back of body'
	/ hunda /	'all'
	/ wolda: /	'association'
	/ farda /	'horse'
/ D /	as second member only	
	/ hinDaD:e /	'I suspected'

/ n /	as second member	
	/milʔate /	'he had a glance at'
	/ hirʔu: /	'less'
/ š /	as first or second member	
	/ ʔabša:la /	'wise, clever'
/ č /	as second member only	
	/ konči: /	'name of a place'
	/ bulča: /	'administrator'
/ č' /	as second member only	
	/ wa:nč'a: /	'drinking horn'
	/ kirč'o: /	'basket'
/ j /	as second member only	
	/ ʔabju: /	'dream'
	/ gemji: /	'three stones on which a cooking pot rests above the fire.'
	/ jonjaʔa: /	'one who has become dizzy or confused'
	/ ʔarja: /	'generous'
/ l /	as first member only	
	/ ʔilma /	'son'
	/ sal'pa /	'light (weight)'
	/ jilba /	'knee'

/ k'ilt'u: /	'sycamore'
/ wolda: /	'association'
/ bal'a /	'wide'
/ ?ilka:n /	'teeth'
/ holk'a /	'hollow'
/ dalga /	'horizontal'
/ ?ulfa /	'pregnant'
/ gol <sup>v</sup> ja (: ) /	'name of a person'
/ n / as first member only	
/ man'e: /	'shinbone'
/ r / as first member only	
/ jirma /	'log'
/ hirp'a /	'share'
/ ?arba /	'elephant'
/ wi:rtu: /	'very top'
/ mart'o: /	'bringing the ( <sup>v</sup> semma) down ever the shoulder and tuck it around the waist as a sign of respect'
/ farda /	'horse'
/ harka /	'hand'
/ mark'a: /	'soup'
/ marga /	'grass'
/ har'a /	'to-day'
/ ?arfi: /	'fine edge'

/ Dirsa /

'husband'

/ marc'uma /

'three legged chair'

/ ?arja: /

'generous'

/ harma /

'breast'

Appendix 2a: The Text upon Which the Phoneme Frequency Count was Made

k'amale':f ye:y:i:

The Monkey and the Jackal

1. k'amale':f ye:y:i:n le:nc'a:f lolē: taʔu:f ʔit:i galan  
Moneye and Jackal lion for servant be-to to entered
2. k'amale:nis ye:y:i:nis ʔaka go:fta:sa:ni: birat:i  
Monkey also Jackal also like/as master their infront/near  
ja:l:atamu:f jeDani: go:fta:sa:ni:t:i wal hamac:ut:i  
appreciated be/to saying master their to eachother slander  
kaʔani - started
3. jalk'aba ye:y:i:n le:nc'a:n :ak:as jeDe  
first Jackal to lion like this said
4. go:fta:ko mali:f mi:l:a duw:a: de:mtu  
master-my why foot bare go-you
5. k'amale:n kop'e heD:u be:kti: ma:li:f hinhod:isi:faʔ  
monkey shoes make knows she why don't get made  
ani jeDe - you said-he
6. kana bo:d:e le:nc'i k'amale:t:i ʔa:re: ma:li:f ʔutu: k'op'e:  
this after lion monkey-to angry why while shoes  
hod:u: be:ktu: c'al:uma na:njet:e jeDe  
to make know you quiet me said-you said
7. ʔanm:a:f ʔam:at:i kop'e na:f ho:d:i jeDe: ʔajaʔe  
now and now shoes me for make said ordered

8. k'amale:n gara kop'e hod:u himbe:ktu turte  
monkey but shoes to make doesn't know she was
9. hata ?u male: mata:se: ba:su:f jete:e: tole go:fta:ko  
even though self her save to said alright lord my  
goga: yey:i:tu kop'e: baye:s:a ta?a:ti: goga: yey:i:  
skin of Jackl shoes good becomes skin jackal  
na:Diye:s:a: nanhod:a jete:e  
me bring I will make said she
10. le:nč'is toleka: kanatu gud:ate: jede: yey:i:  
lion also alright then this is difficult said jackal  
?aj'e:se: goga:sa: ?it:i ken:e kuno:ti hod:i jede:n  
killed skin its to gave here you make said he to he:
11. kana bo:de:e:s k'amale:n goga:n sun yo:goge kop'e:  
this after the monkey skin that unless dries shoes  
baye:s:a ta?a jet:e ?adu: ke:s:a ke:s:e gogsite  
good become said she sun in put she dried
12. gogna:nim:o: yo:ji:de male hinhod:amu jet:e  
dried when again unless gets wet will not be made said she  
Dak'e:n biša:n ke:s:a č'u:pá jet:e: ga:fat:e  
let me go water in soak said she lord my  
goga: sana biša:n ke:s:a bu:su:Da:f fud:at:e laga datš:e:  
skin that water in put to look to river went she

13. biša:n ke:s:a ?utu: č'u:p't'u: fak:e:s:a ga:did:u:še:  
water in while soaking image like her image  
biša:n kes:at:i ?argite: goga: sana biša:n ke:s:ati  
water inside saw she skin that water inside  
gat:e yam:u:suma wa:n tok:o ya:d:e:  
threw she immediately thing one thought she
14. sila: kop'e: hoD:u himbe:ktu: ?jaja go:fta:še:  
because shoes to make she doesn't know order of master her  
jala: ba?u:da:f malā malu:f yam:u:suma fi:gde gara  
from escape to tactic make a immediately ran she to  
go:fta:še: dak'te: ?ak:as jet:e  
master her went she like this said she
15. kuno: go:fta:ko goga: ?isin nat:i ken:itan biša:n  
there! master my the skin you to me gave water  
č'u:p'u:f ?ana: je@u: kan ?isin fak:a:tu tok:o  
soak I say one you like-like one  
biša:n ke:s:a: baye: naharkā: fu@ate  
water inside got out from my hand took
16. le:nč'is yam:u: kana @agawu: kan nafak:a:tum:o:  
the lion also tim this heard he which me look like  
?e:s:a baye jede ?uta:le baye: gara l@ga:t:i  
where come said he jumped out to river  
k'aje:le biša:n k'ark'ara yam:u: gawu: ?in:is  
went water bank when reached he he also

ga:d:id:u:sa      bi<sup>ˇ</sup>sa:n      ke:s:ati      ʔarge:      le:nč'a  
image his              water      inside      saw      the lion  
garabira:      ʔisat:i      fak:a:te  
another      to him      looked like

17. ʔa:re:      ʔit:i      ʔuta:le:      bi<sup>ˇ</sup>sa:n      ke:s:a      bu:na:n  
got angry      to it      jumped he      water      into      fell  
bi<sup>ˇ</sup>sa:n      ʔisa      ŋa:te      duʔe  
water      him      drowned      died

18. k'amalet:i:nis      di:naše:f      go:fta:še:  
monkey she that      enemy her      and master her  
ʔak:asit:i:n      bal:e:site      ʔofi      lub:u:še:      ʔo:s:ite  
like this      got rid of      herself      life her      saved she  
jedama.  
it is said.

Appendix 2b

Translation of the Story

"The Monkey and the Jackal"

A monkey and a jackal went to a lion to be employed as domestic servants. The lion employed them. After having served for sometime, both the monkey and the jackal wanted to win their master's favor. One day the jackal said to his master, the lion, "Why do you walk bare-footed while the monkey knows how to make shoes? Why don't you order her to make you one?" The lion was angry at the monkey because he thought she should have made him shoes without being asked, if she knew how to make one. And he ordered her to make shoes for him immediately. The monkey obeyed and said, "yes my lord, I will make a nice pair of shoes for you, but it is a jackal's skin that becomes nice shoes, so please get me that and I will make it for you".

The lion said that, that was quite simple and soon he killed the jackal and gave its skin to the monkey to get the shoes made for him. The monkey said, "It will make good shoes if the skin is dried." And she put it in the sunshine. When it was dry she again said to her master that the skin would not make good shoes unless it was soaked in water. So she asked permission and took it to a river.

As she was trying to soak the skin, she saw her own image in the water. Soon an idea came to her mind. She did not know

how to make shoes, she was only trying to save her life. So she threw the skin into the water and immediately ran back to her master and told him that a lion like himself got out of the water and took away the skin out of her hands. The lion got very angry and said, "what lion is there like me?" and soon ran into the river. As he reached the bank of the river and looked into the water he saw his own image. He thought it was really another lion that wanted to attack him. So he jumped into the water, which was very deep, and was drowned.

Thus the monkey got rid of her enemies and saved her life.

Appendix 3    Oromo Index to Swaddesh Basic Vocabulary

<u>No.</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Oromo</u>
1	All	hunda
2	Ashes	da:ra:
3	Bark (tree)	k'ola
4	Belly	gara:
5	Big	gud:a:
6	Bird	simbira (sinbirro)
7	Bite (vb)	č'ini:ne:
8	Black	gur:a:č:a
9	Blood	Di:ga
10	Bone	lafe:
11	Breast	harma
12	Burn (t.v.)	gube
13	Claw	K'e:nsa
14	Cloud	du:mes:a
15	Cold	Da:meč:a (k'orra)
16	Come	Dufe
17	Cut (vb)	Kute
18	Die	du?e
19	Dog	sare:
20	Drink (vb)	Duge
21	Dry	goga:
22	Ear	gur:a
23	Eat	ña:te

<u>No.</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Oromo</u>
24	Egg	hank'a:k'u:
25	Eye	?ija
26	Fat	furda:
27	Feather	ba:l:e:
28	Fire	?ibid:a
29	Fish	k'urt'um:i:
30	Fly (insect)	titi:sa
31	Foot	mi:l:a
32	Give	ken:e
33	Go	de:me
34	Good	bay:s:a (baye:ssa)
35	Grass	marga
36	Hair	rife:nsa
37	Hand	harka
38	Head	mata:
39	Hear	Dagaye
40	Heart	?on:e:
41	Horn (animal)	ga:fa
42	I	?ani
43	Kill (vb)	?aj'e:se
44	Knee	jilba
45	Know	be:ke
46	Leaf	ba:la
47	Liver	tiru:
48	Long	De:ra:

<u>No.</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Oromo</u>
49	Louse	?injira:n
50	Many	ba:y?e:
51	Meat (flesh)	fo:n
52	Moon	ji?a (ba:ti:)
53	Mountain (hill)	tul:u:
54	Mouth	?afa:n
55	Name	mog:a:se /mak'a:ba:se/
56	Neck	morma
57	New	ha:ra:
58	Night	halkan
59	Nose	fuñ:a:n
60	One	tok:o:
61	Other	kanbira:
62	Person	nama
63	Rain (n)	ro:bē
64	Red	di:ma:
65	Road (path)	kara
66	Root	hunde:/hid:a
67	Sand	č'ir:ač:a
68	Say	jeDe
69	see	?arge
70	Seed	sañ:i: (?ija)
71	Sit	ta:?e
72	Skin (human)	gog'a:
73	Sleep (vb)	rafe

<u>No.</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Oromo</u>
74	Small	tin:o:
75	Smoke (n)	?a:ra
76	Snake	bofa
77	Stand (i.v.)	Da:bate
78	Star	hur <sup>u</sup> ji:
79	Stone	Daga:
80	Sun	?adu: / bi:ftu:
81	Swim (vb)	Da:ke
82	Tail	?e:ge:
83	Thin (person)	k'al?a: (m) k'al?o: (Fem)
84	This	kuni (subj)/kana (obj)
85	Thou you, (sg)	?ati (sub) siyi (obj)
86	Three	sadi:
87	Tongue	?arba
88	Tooth	?ilka:n
89	Tree	muka
90	Two	lama
91	Warm	?o?:a:
92	Water	biša:n
93	We	nuy
94	Wet	ji:Da:
95	What?	ma:l ? / ma:lo:?
96	White	?adi:
97	Who?	?e:ʔu
98	Woman	dubarti:

<u>No.</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Oromo</u>
99	Work (vb)	hojjete
100	ye (you, pl)	?isin
101	Back (of body)	dugda
102	Bad	gaDe: (things)
103	Bed	sire:
104	Blow (vb)	?afu:fe
105	Boy	muč'a:Dira:
106	Breathe	?afu:ra ba:fa <sup>te</sup>
107	Bring	fide
108	Buttock	hud:u:
109	Catch (vb)	k'abe
110	Clean (adj)	k'ulk'ul:u:
111	Cow	sa?a
112	Crooked	ǰal:a: (m) ǰal:o: (fem)
113	Dig (vb)	k'ote
114	Dirty	tura:
115	Down (av)	gad
116	Earth (soil, ground)	lafa (biyo:o:/
117	Elbow	č'ik'ile:
118	Enter (go in)	lit'e
119	Exit (go out)	baye
120	Face (noun)	fu:la
121	Fall (vb)	kufe
122	Far	fago:

<u>No.</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Oromo</u>
123	Fat (thick)	yab:u:
124	Fear (vb)	soda:te
125	Feces	?uda:n
126	Five	šan
127	Four	?afur
128	Full	gu:tu:
129	Goat	re?e:
130	Gourd	wil:e:
131	Granary	go:tara:
132	Green	magarsu:
133	Hard (not soft)	˘jaba:
134	Hate (vb)	˘jib:e
135	Heavy	?ulfa:ta:
136	Here	?as
137	Hit (vb)	rukute
138	Honey	dam:a
139	House	man:i (subj) mana (obj)
140	How?	?at:am
141	How many?	me:k'a
142	Inside	ke:s:a
143	Jump (vb)	?uta:le
144	Laugh (vb)	kolfe
145	Left (hand)	bita:
146	Live, reside	ta:?e /˘jira:te

<u>No.</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Oromo</u>
147	Love	ja:l:ate
148	Man (Vin)	Di:ra
149	Milk (n)	?a:n:an
150	Near (adv)	<b>Diyo:</b>
151	Now	?am:a
152	Old	dulio:ma: (m) for person and dul:at:i: (f) animal mo:fa: (obj.)
153	Open (vb)	bane
154	Outside	?ala /du:ba
155	Penis	k'unt'ur:o: (k'u:nt'e:)
156	Pout	Dangala:se
157	Pull (vb)	harkise
158	Push (vb)	Di:be
159	Rainy season	gan:a
160	Rat	hantu:ta
161	Right	mirga
162	River	laga
163	Rope	fuñ:o:
164	Rotten	tortora:
165	Rub (wipe)	hat'a:ye
166	Run (vb)	fi:ge
167	Salt	so:gid:a
168	Scratch	ho:k'e

<u>No.</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Oromo</u>
169	Sew	hoD:e
170	Sharp	k'ara
171	Short	gaba:ba:
172	Shoulder	gati:t:i:
173	Shut (vb)	č'uŋe
174	Sky	wa:k'(sub) wa:k'a (obj)
175	Smell	fu:nfate
176	Smooth	lal:a:fa
177	Soft	la:fa:
178	Spear (n)	?e:bo:
179	Stick (n)	?ule:
180	Straight	sir:i:
181	Take (away)	fu:De
182	Ten	kuDan
183	That	sunī (subj) sana (obj)
184	There	?ač:i
185	Throw	darbate
186	Tie (vb)	hiDe
187	Tomorrow	bor
188	Turn (i.v.t.v)	galagale
189	Turtle (tortoise)	k'oč'a:
190	Up	?ol
191	Urine	finč'a:n
192	Vulva (vagina)	goč'a: fuč'i: buk'a:

<u>No.</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Oromo</u>
193	Want	feDe
194	When ?	yo:m
195	Where?	?e:s:a
196	Why ?	ma:li:f
197	Wind (n)	k'il:e:nsa
198	Woods (forest)	dag:ala
199	Yellow	dara:ra: ke:l:o
200	Yesterday	kale:s:a

FOOTNOTES

1. M.L. Bender, et.al (ed.) Language in Ethiopia, OUP, London, 1976, p. 15.
2. W.H. Whitely (ed.) Language in Kenya, OUP, Nairobi, 1974, p. 27.
3. M.L. Bender, et.al. (ed.) op.cit., p. 130
4. K. Tutschek, Dictionary of the Galla Language, Munich, 1844.
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16. B.W. Andizejewski, 'Some Preliminary Observations on the Borana Dialects of Galla,' BSO (A)S XIX 2, 1957.

17. \_\_\_\_\_, "The Role of Tone in the Borana Dialect of Galla," in Proceedings of the Third International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, 1960, A.A. 1970, v2, pp. 88-98.

18. Gene Gragg, "Oromo of Wollega" in The Non-Semitic Languages of Ethiopia, ed., Bender, M.L. 1976.

19. M.L. Bender, et.al., "Galla" in Language in Ethiopia, London, OUP, 1976, pp. 130-154.

20. Such a defective distribution of / ĉ / may indicate that / C / may be a morphophoneme historically derived from other phonemes. A thorough study of various Oromo dialects may reveal the derivation. For instance what is / s: / in Mecha is / ĉ: / in the dialect of Tulema in many cases. However, not every / s: / in Mecha is / C: / in Tulema.

<u>Mecha</u>	<u>Tulema</u>	
?e:s:a	?e:ĉ:a	'where'
baye:s:a	beye:ĉ:a	'good'
hire:s:a	hire:ĉ:a	'payment of tribute'

21. At this level of analysis it has been found <sup>that there is no</sup> separate stress or pitch. The general assumption is that primary stress cooccurs with the high pitch, the secondary stress with the low pitch and the weak stress with no pitch.

22. David Crystal, Linguistics, Penguins, 1971, p. 199.

23. Clarence Sloat, et.al., Introduction to Phonology, Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood, N.J., 1978, p. 24.

24. Ibid., pp. 118-119.

25. Ibid., p. 119.

26. Ibid., p. 144.

27. Ibid., p. 128.

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