‘Shinni ma Shomi kan Kerfotagha’, a Kushi story

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Abstract
Kushi is a minority Chadic language spoken in northeastern Nigeria. This article presents an oral text known as Shinni ma Shomi kan Kerfotagha (‘The story of Shomi and Kerfotagha’), a folktale depicting the adventures of Shomi, the Kushi trickster par excellence. The text is accompanied by word-by-word interlinear analysis and by an English translation.

Riasunto
Il kushi è una lingua ciadica minoritaria parlata nella Nigeria nordorientale. L’articolo presenta un testo orale conosciuto con il titolo di Shinni ma Shomi kan Kerfotagha (‘La storia di Shomi e Kerfotagha’), una storia della tradizione Kushi in cui vengono narrate le gesta di Shomi, l’astuto imbroglione per antonomasia. Il testo è accompagnato da un'analisi interlineare e da una traduzione in inglese.

Tsakure (Hausa)

1. Introduction
Kushi is a West Chadic language classified in the Tangale proper of the Bole-Tangale group (ISO 639-3 (kuh); Glottocode: kush1236). It is spoken by about 11,000 people (Lewis et al. 2015) living in the village area of Kushi and in a few hamlets nearby on the northern foothills of the Chonge-Mona range (Gombe State).¹

Figure 1 – Kushi and its neighbours

¹ A full account of the environment of the Kushi, Burak, and Bangwinji settlements can be found in Adelberger et al. (1993).
Kushi people refer to their language as ƙô Gôjî lit. ‘mouth (of) Kushi’. Several publications focusing on southern Bole-Tangale languages have appeared over the last three decades. A few of them dealt with punctual aspects of Kushi, mainly under a comparative perspective: Jungraithmayr and Leger (1993, 2006), Leger (1998, 2014).

No grammatical or lexical description of Kushi has ever been produced. The present contribution is the first output of an on-going project aiming at documenting, describing, and analysing the language as well as the oral tradition of the Kushi people.

2. The story of Shomi and Kerfotagha

2.1. Themes of the story

The story of Shomi and Kerfotagha (Shinni ma Shomi kan Kerfotagha) narrates how Shomi, the main character, succeeds in turning every threat posed to him into a beneficial opportunity. By means of an unscrupulous cunning led by the instinct for survival, Shomi represents a well-known character in West African oral literature: that of the ingenious hero whose display of deceit is aimed at protecting his own life as well as the life of his family.

The story can be divided into two parts, either part following the same scheme. In the first part, Kerfotagha visits his friend Shomi with the proposal to fight with him. If Shomi accepts, Kerfotagha will give him a he-goat. Since Kerfotagha is physically superior, Shomi is perfectly aware that his prospects of success are very limited and that playing by the rules would not be the best strategy in order to survive and keep the animal. Therefore, with the help of his sons Amurmulum and Tarangriwet, Shomi manages to fake the match, thus obtaining an otherwise improbable victory.

The second part is longer and, built upon the same blueprint, more articulated from the point of view of event sequence. This time the threat is represented by Viper. One day, Viper goes to Shomi’s house with a big rooster and, like Kerfotagha before, a proposal: if Shomi accepts to be bitten, then he will have the cock. Of course, Shomi accepts, but on one condition: Viper should come back in three days. Viper does as told, but when he is back Shomi finds an excuse (i.e. his children are not around and he does not want to die without having kissed them one last time) and asks Viper to postpone the biting. After three days and before the coming of Viper, Shomi instructs his wife Firit on what to say to Viper. Then, he transforms himself into a baby boy. So, when Viper comes, Firit tells him that her husband is not around. The successful trick played by Shomi revolves around his surrealistic disguise: Firit goes out to call Shomi and asks Viper to look after the baby (i.e. Shomi) in her absence, but then the baby disappears and when Shomi (once regained his normal appearance) shows up and realizes that his child is nowhere to be found, he gets angry and punishes Viper for not having taken care of the baby. Needless to say, Viper will be killed, cooked and eaten by Shomi and his family.

An interesting feature of the story is that both Kerfotagha and Viper do not represent an immediate threat. They go to visit Shomi and propose him a deal. Shomi could express his disinterest for their plans and send them away, instead he promptly accepts their proposals. If he acts like that, it is because he knows that, just by relying on his cleverness, he will be able to manipulate the situation in such a way to transform an accepted risk (i.e. fighting with someone stronger than he or agreeing to be bitten by a viper) into a sure victory.

It is clear that the cunning of Kerfotagha and Viper does not stand a chance against Shomi’s survival instinct. Their offer exists only because it contains the background assumption that the other party will die in the very fulfilment of the deal. This implicit conviction relies on some kind of physical power that both Kerfotagha and Viper possess, but strength alone can’t overwhelm the resourceful mind of Shomi. Interestingly enough, the two agonists (that is the initiators of the chain of events) offer the same kind of explanation for their aim to harm Shomi: Kerfotagha wants to fight and Vipers wants to bite because since they were born they have never had the chance to fight and bite.

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2 I am very much indebted to Dr Rudolf Leger for having granted me full access to the Kushi-related material collected under the framework of the Sonderforschungsbereich 268 (Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main).

3 One of the closest literary cognates of Shomi (and his partner-in-crime Firit) can be identified in Gizo and his wife Kokí, the tricksters of Hausa folklore.
respectively. This display of naivety, which is meant to mask the true intentions of the agonists, will set in motion the role play leading to the fatal resolution of the conflict.

### 2.2. Language and style

The style of the tale is quite linear. The events are narrated in logical order without making use of any special stylistic device, like for example the juxtaposition of (apparently) disconnected events that characterise the Kushi war song analysed by Leger (1993).

The text displays the following features:

- the narrator tends to introduce the actions of the characters as things that are said and not as things that are done. This is carried out throughout the text by making an extensive use of the verbal form \textit{yàa} ‘say, saying’;
- the preferred strategy to narrate the sequence of events is the use of the imperative form \textit{mòo} ‘let’ followed by the subjunctive form of the verb \textit{yù} ‘say, do’. The result is a chain of sentences, each of them introduced by the construction \textit{mòo} x \textit{yàa} ‘let x say/do’;
- when things are actually said (ex. ‘let x say/do (that) x \textit{says} y’), a logophoric pronoun is affixed to the verb \textit{yù} ‘say, do’;
- each sentence introduced by \textit{mòo} x \textit{yàa} ‘let x say/do’ may contain one or more subordinate clauses encoding the single action performed by x, i.e. the subject. These subordinate clauses need a subjunctive form, namely a subjunctive marker. In presence of a prenominal subject, the canonical subjunctive marker is an enclitic -\textit{n} attached to the subject pronoun (nè-n, khè-n, shì-n etc.). In absence of a prenominal subject (or when the order is VOS, in which case no enclitic marker can be affixed to the pronoun), the subjunctive marker is an initial ʔìn. Since the kind of subordinate clauses we are referring to tend to be subject-less (the subject being expressed once at the beginning of the sentence), it is this pre-verbal ʔìn that is recurrently found in the text to mark the subjunctive;

### 3. The text

The story has been collected by Malam Samson Waziri in the Kushi village area at the beginning of the ‘90s. The narrator is Malam Lapandi Babale, 33 years old.

Kushi is a tonal language distinguishing between two punctual tones – high and low. In the text presented below low tones are marked with a grave accent, while discrete high tones are left unmarked. High tones are marked only in contour tones (ex. tòò ‘well’). Vowel length is also indicated, with the tone marked on the first vowel (ex. ðèemò ‘he’). The voiced velar fricative (ɣ) is transcribed with gh, the aspirated velar (kh) with kh, and the voiceless palato-alveolar fricative (ʃ) with sh.

The following abbreviations are used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEF</th>
<th>OBJ</th>
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<tr>
<td>DIST</td>
<td>pl</td>
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<td>FUT</td>
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<td>m</td>
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<td>NEG</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEF</th>
<th>definite form</th>
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<tr>
<td>DIST</td>
<td>distance extension</td>
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<td>FUT</td>
<td>future marker</td>
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<td>GEN</td>
<td>genitive</td>
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<td>ICP</td>
<td>intransitive copy pronoun</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOG</td>
<td>logophoric pronoun</td>
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<td>m</td>
<td>masculine</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>negation</td>
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<td>OBJ</td>
<td>object pronoun</td>
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<td>pl</td>
<td>plural</td>
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<td>PERF</td>
<td>perfect</td>
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<tr>
<td>POS</td>
<td>possessive pronoun</td>
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<td>REL</td>
<td>relative</td>
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<td>S</td>
<td>subject pronoun</td>
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<td>SUJ</td>
<td>subjunctive</td>
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<td>VN</td>
<td>verbal noun</td>
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</table>
Mà Kèrfòtaghà kàn jèrè-ni tà Shòmì kǔttà mina-jù, s2pl Kerfotagha with friend-POS3m in Shomi sleep house-POS3pl Kerfotagha and his friend Shomi are staying at their homes.

One day, Kerfotagha leaves his house

Kerfotagha and his friend Shomi are staying at their homes.

Kerfotagha with friend -POS3m in Shomi sleep house -POS3pl

and goes to the house of his friend Shomi.

He tells him that he is looking for a person to fight with,

because since his mother gave birth to him he has never fought with anybody.

But now he got a big billy goat and whoever will fight with him will keep the animal.

Shomi tells his friend that he has seen the billy goat and that he should tie the animal. Kerfotagha ties the billy goat and

Shomi says that he will put time between now and the moment they will come and fight, so that he will come at that time.

Kerfotagha asks “When will it be?”.
(13) Shomi says that day three
Shomi replies that he should come after three days.

(14) Kerfotagha says yes say-LOG3m wait three say-LOG3m FUT come
“Very well” Kerfotagha says, and then he goes back home and waits for three days.

(15) Shomi says three wait
After three days, he comes back.

(16) Kerfotagha says yes say-LOG3m wait three say-LOG3m FUT come
“Very well” Kerfotagha says, and then he goes back home and waits for three days.

(17) They meet and start fighting.

(18) Kerfotagha takes Shomi and brings him down, and again and again.

(19) Because the children have not cleared the area.

(20) He tells his friend to go back home again and to come back in three days.

(21) Shomi asks him if he has come back and Kerfotagha says that he is back.

(22) Shomi asks him if he has come back and Kerfotagha says that he is back.
(23) ʔin per khù dami tā shini,  
Suj go head field in s3pl  
Then they go the field (and stand).

(24) Shòmì ʔin yàllò shik-ni huu huu, shii là-nò fôn-ni,  
Shomi suj shout body-POS3m huu huu s3m son-GEN father-POS3m  
shii là-nò là-nò gënnò-ni, shii là-nò nôn-ni,  
s3m son-GEN son-GEN uncle-POS3m s3m son-GEN mother-POS3m  
Shomi start shouting to himself, (saying that) he is the son of his father, he is the son of his uncle and of his mother,

(25) shini tā yàa kûkkuwà bwòy,  
S3pl fut do wrestling today and that today they are going to fight.

(26) ʔashee Shòmì shirinà wè-ni kagh,  
what! Shomi prepare thing-POS3m all  
But then, what a surprise! (Kerfotagha doesn’t know that) Shomi has played one of his tricks.

(27) yàa-nà mà ʔÀmùrmùlùm kàn Tàràngriwèt,  
call-DIST 2pl Amurmulum and Tarangriwet  
He has called Amurmulum and Tarangriwet (his sons),

(28) mà ʔÀmùrmùlùm kàn Tàràngriwèt wàrù ʔòppò jwal  
s2pl Amurmulum and Tarangriwet come dig hole  
ti khù dami kàn jòori on head field with depth and they came to dig a deep hole in the ground.

(29) ʔin shàrù shòják kàn shibo birò ʔin màrin ti fô jwal-i  
Suj take dry grass with children tree suj line on mouth hole-DEF  
They have brought waste grass, a small stick and a stone and placed these things near the hole,

(30) ʔin pàl bûk ʔin màn khù daidai kerero sai kàn  
Suj collect sand suj push on head exactly enough only with sai kàn fô bûk-i only with mouth sand-DEF  
then they have levelled the ground with some sand in the correct way.

(31) tòò daga yè yika yà nèy  
yes from rel started do fight  
When the two friends come to the field and start fighting.

(32) Shòmì ʔin yiw shènnù Kèrfòtaghà ti fô-r pirenna  
Shomi suj do push Kerfotagha on mouth-GEN there  
yè kàn fô jwal tèere, Kèrfòtaghà waa kòon ti tày karaw,  
rel with mouth hole there Kerfotagha want go on inside fall  
Shomi starts pushing Kerfotagha towards the edge of the hole so that, after a while, his friend falls into it.
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(33) dàgà yè kokan ti tay jwal
from REL fall on inside hole
When Kerfotagha falls into the hole,

Shomi SUJ immediately take stick-POS3m SUJ beat eye
quickly Shomi grabs his stick and beats his friend’s eye.

(35) ?àdòʔ in ?owò-do-ro,
eye SUJ swollen-ICP3f
Kerfotagha’s eyes swell,

(36) Shòmìʔ in tèw in kùman shàrʔ ànkwàràmì- nìʔ àɗin-ɓìrìnʔ àɗò.
Shomi SUJ tell eye-POS3m on inside hole-DEF
then Shomi asks what happens with his eyes.

(37) yàa dumà yúwaʔ àdò peemòn Kèrfòtaghà wènè yàa màa yúwa,
say that do.PERF eye LOG3m Kerfotagha what say when do.PERF
Shomi starts (mocking his friend) asking him what is happening to his face

(38) yàa peemè tà wàra gàsshà niyò kà fàra,
say LOG3m FUT go find.VN person with he goat
and saying that he will go to find another person with a he-goat to fight with.

(39) yàa mòo peemòn Kèrfòtaghà pè-rù-n ti tà jwal-i,
say let LOG3m Kerfotagha get out-DIST on in hole-DEF
Kerfotagha tell Shomi to let him come out from the hole

(40) màa yúwa, yàa peemò tà gàsshò ?àn nèy khù-nò
when do.PERF say LOG3m FUT find person fight head-GEN
peemò ka khù shiila
LOG3m like head stone
and that he will look for another fighter (because) his head is like a stone.

(41) yànzu màa yè peemò tà pèrání peemòn wàra gàsshù-rò fò pèru
now when REL LOG3m will go.out LOG3m go find-DIST mouth outside
Now he looks where to come out

(42) ?à wa koyo pèrù-m
NEG get way outside-NEG
but doesn’t find a way out,

(43) ?ìn mùrin ti fò tèerè.
suji die on mouth there
so he dies there in the hole.

(44) saʔannan dàrâŋ non dòk
after sun of some
After some time,

(45) ?Ànkarkensheyʔ in yi-rù gwé gokh-ni
Viper SUJ catch-DIST big rooster-POS3m
Viper catches a big rooster.
(46) tā wâra gâshhò mòo shii tā munin
   FUT go find let s3m FUT give
   He wants to find somebody to give the rooster to

(47) dum shii-n yèrì,
   because s3m-SUJ bite
   and then bite him,

(48) dun tun lookòci yè nòn-nò kàn fòn-nò pât-tà-nin
   because since time REL mother-GEN and father-GEN beget-OBJ s3m PERF
   because since he was born – from his father and his mother –

(49) shii tâfâ yèr niyò-m,
   s3m never bite PERF person-NEG
   he has never bitten anybody.

(50) âmâ màa mòo yïghù shii-n yèrì,
   but when let receive s3m-SUJ bite
   Hence, whoever will take the cock, he will bite him.

(51) sânnan ?in wàrin fô minâ-no Shûmì,
   after SUJ go mouth house-GEN Shomi
   He follows the road to Shomi’s house.

(52) mòo Shûmì yàa duma pëemmò wân-nà tòghnè ka tèy,
   let Shûmì say that log s3m come-DIST where like this
   Shomi asks Viper where he goes like that,

(53) yàa mòo ?Ankarkenshey yàa shii wàmma gâshhò mo tâ
   say let Viper say s3m come-DIST find who FUT
   yiw gbe gôkh-ni shii tèy.
   get big rooster-POS s3m 3m this
   and Viper says that he is looking for somebody
   willing to accept his big rooster,

(54) màa mòo yiwa shii-n yèri shii,
   when let get s3m-SUJ bite POS s3m
   since he will bite the person who gets the animal.

(55) mòo Shûmì bara paroy tèy yàa,
   let Shomi only talk this say
   Shomi asks if this is the only thing that has brought him there.

(56) mòo ?Ankarkenshey yàa Uuo! tòò
   let Viper say Uuo! well
   Viper says yes,

(57) Shûmì ?in yiwi gbe gôkh-i.
   Shomi SUJ get big cock-DEF
   then Shomi gets the rooster
(58) màa yùwa shàghlò tàat pèemòn shirù,
when do.PERF day three LOG3m return
and come back in three days

(59) mòo Shòmì yàa pèemòn ?Ankarkenshey mòo pèemò wànnò, pèemò,
let Shomi say LOG3m Viper let LOG3m go LOG3m
and tells Viper to go (home)

(60) pèemò màa pèemòn wàrù yèr-ni
LOG3m when LOG3m come bite-POS3m
to bite him.

(61) ?Ankarkenshey ?ìn kòoni
Viper SUJ go
So Viper leaves,

(62) ?ìn wàn-nì minà-nì,
Suj go-ICP3m house-POS3m
returns to his house

(63) ?ìn yù-rù shàghlò tàat
suj do-DIST day three
and, when three days have passed,

(64) ?ìn shirù, wàrù Shòmì wèey Shòmì ti minà-nì,
suj return come Shomi see Shomi on house-POS3m
he comes back to meet with Shomi in his house.

(65) yàa pèemò Shòmì, yà-ji fòn-nà waara yèr pèemò,
say LOG3m Shomi say-LOG3m reach-DIST go bite LOG3m
so he meets Shomi in the house) and says that he has returned to bite him.

(66) mòo Shòmì yàa shibò-ni wàrâa-ju dòọ̀,
let Shomi say children-POS3m go-ICP3P farm
hen Shomi tells him that his children have gone to farm,

(67) yàa mòo pèemò meno pèemò sai shàghlò tàat bìràŋ,
say let LOG3m go back LOG3m until day three again
so that it’s better if he comes back in three days.

(68) kàfin pèemò mara wàrù,
before LOG3m when come
when his children are back,

(69) shii-n tèw ti shibo-ni ?à rà war mànni piri-m,
s3m-Suj tell on children-POS3m NEG FUT go another place-NEG
he will tell them not to go anywhere that day,

(70) dun kawoo ghè fò mërrù-ni,
because bring looking mouth death-POS3m
ọ́ they will see the day of their father’s death.
(71) ?Ankarkenshey ?in mèri-ni mina biràŋ,
Viper return-ICP3m house again
\ /iper returns to his house

(72) shàghlò tàat ?in yàa, ?Ankarkenshey ?in kon mèyàa-ni
day three Viper SUJ leave return-ICP3m
and after three days (– as he was told –), he is back again.

(73) lookòci yè tà mèn,
time REL FUT return
\ the same day Viper is supposed to come,

(74) Shòmì ?in shìwò-ni là tòghmè ti kirà-no mànnà-ni tà Firit, tòò
Shomi SUJ turn child baby on hand-GEN wife-POS3m in Firit well
Shomi transforms himself into a baby boy on the hand of his wife Firit.

(75) yàa pèen mànnà-ni tà Firit
say LOG3f wife-POS3m in Firit
he tells his wife Firit to say to Viper,

(76) yàa màà fon-na,
say when reach-DIST
when he comes,

(77) yàa mòo pèe tèwò yà-ji wàrò-ni kauyè koo kuma shèki mina,
say let s3f tell say-LOG3m go-ICP3m village or also between house
that he has gone to the village or to his friend’s house.

(78) ?Ankarkenshey ?in fòn-tù
Viper SUJ reach-DIST
Viper comes (and asks for Shomi),

(79) mòo Firit yàa pèemò, yàa mànnà-ro wàràni sheki mina,
let Firit say LOG3m say husband-POS3f go.VN between house
then Firit tells him that her husband has gone to visit his friend.

(80) mòo pèemò yìw là-i,
let LOG3m get child-DEF
\et him have the baby boy (she says),

(81) mòo-rò wàr tèllù pèèi ti gùn birò fò nèsshò-ju,
let-POS3f go ask place on under tree mouth rest-POS3P
so she goes to check the baby under the tree where they usually rest.

(82) ?in mùnnì là-i ti kira-i, ?in kòó-ro wàra yè-rù mànnà-ro
SUJ give son-DEF on arm-DEF SUJ go-ICP3f go call-DIST husband-POS3f
he gives the baby boy to Viper and leaves to call her husband.

(83) shìmo Shòmì, yè Firit kônàa-ro wàra gàsshò birò mànànà-ro,
3m Shomi REL Firit leave-ICP3f go find tree husband-POS3f
as soon as Firit leaves to check on her husband,
(84) sai là-ì ?in yàa shappàn ti shik-nò ?Ankarkenshey, 
then suj do diarrhoea on body-gen Viper 
the baby discharges a flow of diarrhoea on Viper’s body.

(85) ?Ankarkenshey ?in ráshò wè-i téghlànì, 
Viper suj lack thing-def clean.vn
‘iper doesn’t have anything to clean (himself).

(86) yà-ji tégh làa tèèrè 
say-log3m clean stool that 
ventually he manages to clean his body,

(87) ?in yuwun manni biràŋ, Ankarkenshey ?in dàminà sòsai, 
suj do another again Viper suj worry very much 
then the child discharges another flow and Viper becomes really worried.

(88) ?in shàr là-ì ?in wà lí-rù ti khù fò shàghlò 
suj take child-def suj go put-dist on head mouth sleep 
o he takes the baby and puts him in a place for sleeping,

(89) ?in yà-ji tègh làa là-ì. 
suj come out-icp3m find thing-def clean stool child-def 
then he goes out to look for something to clean the stools discharged by the child.

(90) ?in pè-rù ?in gàsshìn à wèèy wè-i fò teghlònù-m 
suj come out-dist suj find neg find thing-def mouth clean-NEG 
itut when he goes out he doesn’t find anything

(91) ?in kòo mèn mina-i yà-ji méya tà mina-i 
suj go return house-def say-log3m return inside house-def 
and when he goes back inside

(92) ?à wèèy wè-i shik là-ì ti pèrè liya-ni-m ti fò shàghlò 
NEG find thing-def body child-def on where put-pos3m-NEG.PERF on mouth sleep. 
the child is not where he has left him, that is in the sleeping place.

(93) là-ì ?illì-nì ?in pèrè-nì fòn-nà, 
child-def stand-icp3m suj go out-icp3m reach out-dist 
he baby boy has stood up and gone out,

(94) ?in yìw gàsshò bi là-ì 
suj start find back child-def 
nd Viper keeps looking where he has gone,

(95) ?à wà-m, har Firit ?in mèrin ti yòl mànnà-rò-i, 
NEG get-NEG up to Firit suj return on call husband-pos3f-def 
but without success.

(96) yàa duma pèëmòn ?Ankarkenshey yàa là-ì tòghnè, 
say that log3m Viper say child-def where 
after a while Firit comes back home. She asks Viper where her child is.
Viper answers that he has put the child in the place for sleeping and cannot find him anywhere. But now he has just gone to see the baby and cannot find him anywhere.

Whilst Viper and Firit are looking for the baby boy, Shomi comes in and immediately asks if Viper has come. Yes, Viper says. He thanks (God) for his death today.

Then his wife tells him that his friend has come.
(110) ʔîn têl pin-no pêemô, tê-n têwôn
SUI ask place-GEN LOG3m S3f-SUI tell
and has asked for him and that she has told him

(111) tara pêemô wara-no pêemô sheki mina tên shâr là-i
that LOG3m go.off LOG3m between house tell take child-DEF
that he had gone to the village, so she has taken the child

(112) tèn mûnin tara mòo-rô wà yê-rù pêemô, yanzu tèn wârù.
tell give that let-OBJ3m go call-DIST LOG3m now tell come
and given him to Viper, and then she has left to call him. And now she is back.

(113) te wan là-i ti kira-m, kere waran là-i manni pirey
S3f find child-DEF on hand-NEG maybe go child-DEF another place
(But now) she doesn’t find the child, maybe he has gone somewhere,

(114) te peno-m, Firit ʔîn têl ?Ankarkenshey yàa duma là-i tôghnè,
S3f know-NEG Firit SUI ask Viper say that child-DEF where
Firit asks Viper where her child is.

(115) mòo ?Ankarkenshey yàa là-i mangha-ni làa ti shik-ni
let Viper say child-DEF pass to-POS3m stool on body-POS3m
Viper says that the baby has discharged a flow of diarrhoea over his body

(116) shii-n li là-i ti khû fô-r shâghlô,
S3m-SUI put child-DEF on head mouth-of sleep
and that he has put him in the sleeping place

(117) shiî-n wân-ni shiddô làa là-i,
S3m-SUI go-ICP3m clean stool child-DEF
and then he has gone out to clean himself,

(118) saja shii wan-na ʔadô là-i ti fô shâghlô-m.
before S3m come-DIST NEG child-DEF on mouth sleep-NEG
ut once he was back the child was not there.

(119) mòo Shômi yàa pêemô ?Ankarkenshey
let Shomi say LOG3m Viper
then Shomi tells Viper

(120) mòo pêemô gâsshû-rû-ni bi là-ni maza-maza
let LOG3m find-DIST-POS3m back child-POS3m quick-quick
to find his child quickly,

(121) nènà bwôy dårân múrô-ni yàa.
because today sun death-POS3m say
or today is the day of his death.

(122) ʔadô paro yê ?Ankarkenshey tà têwânî-m,
nothing talk REL Viper FUT tell.VN-NEG
Since Viper is not saying anything,
(123) mòo Shòmì mòo pèemòn ?Ànmùrùmùlùm shàrnì bàràmtám-ni maza
let Shomi let LOG3m Red.Lizard take-POS3m gariyo-POS3m quick
homi asks (his son) Anmurumulum to bring him his gariyo\(^4\) rapidly.

(124) ?Ànmùrùmùlùm wana ?in wà shàrin bàràmtám-ni
Red.Lizard go SUJ go bring gariyo-POS3m
SUY come.out on Shomi well Viper worry very much
Anmurumulum brings him his gariyo and now Viper is really worried:

(125) màa wàra fò she, ?in wàr fò she tà gàsshò
when go mouth here SUJ go mouth here in find
fò shòw khù-ni
mouth put head-POS3m
he goes right, he goes left, he looks for a way of escape,

(126) ?à rà wèeyàni-m, yà-ji wèeya gùn tèkki shiila
NEG FUT see.VN-NEG say-LOG3m see under line stone
ut he can’t find one. Then he finds a hole under a stone

(127) yà-ji tà shòwin khù-ni,
say-LOG3m FUT put head-POS3m
nd tries to put his head there.

Shomi SUJ take gariyo-POS3m SUJ cut head quick
homi takes his gariyo and quickly cuts Viper’s head.

(129) Shòmì ?in wàn-nì kàwak-nò ?Ankarkenshey
Shomi SUJ go-ICP3m abuse-GEN Viper
Shomi starts abusing Viper (for the foolishness he has done),

(130) yàa gbe gònò péemò ka luru shèl jàò.
say big stomach LOG3m like bag put beans
saying that his stomach is like a bag of beans,

(131) màa Firit yàa shùllàn fòk-nò péemò ka fò kuret tà dòo-i,
when Firit say pointed mouth-GEN LOG3m like mouth snake in water-DEF
while his wife Firit says that his mouth is like that of a water snake.

(132) ?ìn tòllù-rù kùmà-no ?Ankarkenshey
SUJ pull-DIST corpse-GEN Viper
Shomi pulls out the dead body of Viper

(133) ?ìn wàrùn pippino kàn dèet ?ìn linà tà telàŋ
SUY bring burn with fire SUJ put in pot
and brings it (home): he burns it with fire, cuts it, puts it in the pot,

\(^4\) Hausa word designating the double-bladed Barebari throwing-weapon (Abraham 1962).
and they all eat it together.

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