Specifiers as Focus and Other Markers in Koiari:

Their Forms, Distribution and Functions

Tom Dutton
Australian National University

1   Introduction

In order to be able to speak Koiari[1] properly, to tell stories and participate in conversations, one has to know how and when to use a certain set of morphemes that are suffixed to different constituents under certain conditions. Although the major function of these morphemes appears to be to focus attention on the constituents to which they are suffixed they have a number of other minor functions. For the time being and until such times as the functions of these morphemes is better understood they are referred to by the neutral term SPECIFIERS. It is the purpose of this paper to describe the forms of these morphemes, their distribution and their functions.

2   Specifiers: Forms

To explain more exactly what specifiers are let us begin with the following simple example.[2] If one were to ask a Koiari where he/she was going at a particular point in time and that person was going to the garden, the most likely answer that one would receive would be:

---

[1] Koiari is a small Papuan language spoken by about 1600 people living just inland of Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea - see map 9 in Wurm and Hattori (1981). This paper is based on material collected from a number of speakers in Kailakinumu village in the north-eastern sub-dialect (Dutton 1989). This village is an amalgam of speakers from several formerly small, scattered though socially interrelated, hamlets from the surrounding area who were drawn together after World War II for administrative and economic reasons. As a result there is considerable variation between speakers within this community. Some of this variation concerns specifiers and is noted in this paper. The principal informants used for this paper come from the Haveri and Hogeri "sections" (Williams 1932) or clans.

[2] Apart from the examples given herein to illustrate the points made, which are taken from recorded conversations and various other textual genre, the distribution and use of specifiers is further illustrated in the texts presented in the Appendix to this paper.

1) *Buru   uhu va-ge da otima.*
   garden in   to-<> I go
   'It's to the garden I'm going.'

Another possible, though much less likely, answer would be:

2) *Da buru   uhu va otima.*
   I   garden in   to going
   'I am going to the garden.'

These two answers are clearly different in structure. They are also subtly different in meaning as illustrated by the different accompanying free translations. However it is the structural difference that is of interest at this point: in (1) the locative phrase *buru uhu va* is in a different position relative to the subject pronoun *da* from that in (2) and is marked by the morpheme *ge*. This morpheme is one of a set of twenty or so that are referred to herein as 'specifiers' (indicated by the arrowhead brackets (<>) in examples).[3] Each specifier has singular and plural variants for declarative and question sentences. The complete set of forms is:

---

[3] In addition to this set there are two other morphemes which, although they replace specifiers in certain sentences, are not regarded as specifiers (because they do not meet the technical description of specifiers in some ways, e.g. they are not related to word class and do not have question and number variants). These are
(i) a general dubitative (DUB) morpheme *nabE* 'perhaps, maybe, probably', as in:

a) "*O, da horehe udi iniyare-re   da ekenani kare   fada nabe   da oko uvavanu,*" *tovonu.*
   oh I there lime was.eating-<> I just.now mustard stem perhaps I this bit   said
   '"Oh, I was eating lime and probably bit a mustard stem just now," he said.'

b) Q: *Oine-ne eke unu?*   A: *Meikana! Simbu   ata-nabo.*
     who-<> that BE   doubt   Chimbu man-<>
     Q: 'Who is that?'   A: 'I don't know. Probably a Chimbu.'

(ii) a replacive (or contrary to fact) morpheme *bene* as in:

c) Q: *A-yete-no?*
     you-POSS-<>
     'Is it **yours**?'

d) A: *Bebe, da-yete-bene.*
     no   I-POSS-<>
     'No, it's **not mine.**'

e) *Yavarere-bene da otegene, uma vaita-va-ge   da otima.*
   Yavarere-<>   I go   track another-by-<> I go
   'It's not to Yavarere I'm going, I'm going somewhere else.'

	Singular		Plural	
	Declarative	Question	Declarative	Question
	-rE[4]	*-nE*	*-yabE*	*-yanE*
	-varE	*-vanE*	*-yabE*	*-yanE*
	-vahE[5]	*-vahenE*	*-yabE*	*-yanE*
	-gE	*-genE*	*-yabE*	*-yanE*
	-ikE	*-ikenE*	*-ikE*	*-ikenE*

where *E* represents a morphophoneme which is realized as *e* sentence-internally and *o* sentence-finally. These specifiers are fairly consistently related to word class. Thus

i) *<rE>* occurs on nouns of up to two syllables, e.g.

  bi<rE>   'spear'
  ua<rE>   'grub'
  ata<rE>   'man'
  mavi<rE>   'woman'

proper names, e.g.

  Nanuka<rE>   'Nanuka'
  Aberorovo<rE>[6] 'Aberovo creek'

possessed nouns (including nominalised verb forms), e.g.

  da mame<rE>   'my father'
  Nanukayete<rE>[7] Nanuka's
  da \ uvuvare<rE> 'my thinking'

and on a few other descriptive words, e.g.

  vaita<rE>   'another'

---

[4] Note that there is some variation between speakers as to the form of some of these. Thus my chief informant from the Hogeri "section" sometimes uses *<varE>* for *<vahE>* and *<vahE>* for *<varE>* and *<rE >*, e.g. *Bokoravaniyarevahe* (*< -re*) *da miorovonu.* 'I brought the broken one.'; *Vaukiki youka kiyare atavahe* (*< -vare*) *eke oroima.* 'Here comes that busy worker.'; *Modoreta mabarevahe* (*< -re*) *uriaime*... 'The moderator's wife got up and...'; *inekare* (*< inekavahe*) 'mum'. This variation reflects differences in the social origin of the speakers.

[5] Speakers tend to 'drop' the *v* in this specifier when the element to which it is attached ends in *a*. When that happens the two *a* vowels that come together are articulated as a long vowel which then attracts stress. Thus the common form of greeting in Koiari is *Ane maitekáhene a ua?* How are you? (lit. you.<> good.<> you BE?) where *maitekáhene* 'good.<>' is derived from *maitekavahene* and '' marks the stressed syllable. Short forms of *<vahE>* and *<yabE>* are also used as adjectivalisers and plural markers, respectively (as, for example, in *komara-va* (*< komara-vahE*) 'bad one' and *to-ya* (*< to-yabE*) 'dogs').

[6] Note that *Aberovo* and similar geographical proper names may occur with the specifier *<gE>* when used as a location in sentences involving movement towards a place (i.e. when it is being used adverbially). Thus compare *Ekere Aberovoro!* 'That's Aberovo creek!' and *Aberovoge da otima* 'I'm going to Aberovo creek '. The assignment of *<gE>* to such geographical proper names derives from the fact that movement towards a place is generally indicated by the postposition *va<gE>*. Even though this postposition is not usually used with geographical proper names the specifier is still used.

[7] *-yete<rE>* is a predicative possessive (POSS) form, e.g. *Ekere ayetebene. Dayetero.* 'It's **not yours**. It's **mine**' where the words in bold are used in the English to show the force of the assertion.

keare<rE>	'big'
vehite<rE>	'no'

ii) *<varE>* occurs on nouns of more than two syllables, e.g.[6]

badai<varE>	'baby girl'
turai<varE>	'flute'
aena<varE>	'day off'
abua<varE>	'small wild betel nut'
toviriviri<varE>	'motor vehicle'

iii) *<vahE>* occurs on adjectives and partitively possessed nouns, e.g.

maiteka<vahE>	'good'
dubuka<vahE>	'black'
idi adaka<vahE>	'branch of tree'

iv) *<gE>* occurs on adverbs, postpositions, and certain numerals, e.g.

negetu<gE>	'now, today'
ekehe<gE>	'there'
sorekataha<gE>	'quickly'
vore<gE>	'with'
va<gE>	'to, from, with, by'
he<gE>	'at'
u<gE>	'because of'
nunuta<gE>	'all'

v) *<ikE>* occurs on pronouns, e.g.

daike	'I'
aike	'you'
ahuke	'he,she,it'
noike	'we'
yaike	'you (PL)'
yabuke	'they'

3   Specifiers: Distribution

The following observations about the distribution of specifiers are relevant:

---

[6] My chief informant also sometimes uses *<varE>* for *<rE>*, as in *bosi<varE>* 'cat' and *moni<varE>* 'money'. This unexpected variation is probably to be explained by the fact that the base forms of these words are shortened versions of, or loan substitutes for, fuller forms. Thus *bosi* is a short form of *bosikasi* and *moni* is a loan substitute for *damuna*, both of which take *<varE>*.

1) they occur on all kinds of constituents (under the right conditions) except for a number of specific cases;

2) they always attach to the last element of a constituent and take their form from that element;

3) they occur in all basic sentence types;

4) they occur on the questioned element in questions and on the corresponding element in the answer unless this is a pronoun;

5) they only occur on certain constituents in verbal sentences, their number and position depending on word order;

6) they always occur on certain constituents used for establishing temporal or consequential relationships between sentences in connected discourse;

7) they occur on various verb tense and aspect suffixes.

These observations are discussed and illustrated in the following subsections.

3.1 Specifiers occur on all kinds of constituents (under the right conditions) except for:

a) a small closed set of modal particles including:

bebe	'not'
nema	'then (next)'
ma	'already'
mabeta	'then, subsequently'
beu	'ability' (?)
inau	'perhaps'
hou	'still'[9]

b) nouns in vocative case and other incomplete sentences, e.g.

Nanuka!	'Nanuka!'
Meikana!	'Perhaps!'

c) short answers to questions, e.g. *Tomu* 'Tom' as the short answer to the question *Oinene orovima?* 'Who's coming?' even though the expected form is *Tomure* (if it were the contraction of the longer corresponding answer *Tomure orovima* 'Tom's coming').

d) the verb suffixes for imperative/hortative and obligatory aspect, which contrast with other verb tense and aspect suffixes which do have specifiers on them.

---

[9] *Hou* can occur with a specifier <gE> when it is being used as an adverb meaning 'not yet'. For example, *Bebe! Hougo!* 'No! Not yet!' is a common answer to questions asking if someone or something has come yet.

3.2 Specifiers always attach to the last element of a constituent and take their form from that element. Thus:

a) nominal compounds, phrases and clauses with constituent final nominal heads take *<varE>*. This is so because the last element in the constituent is a noun which, because of what has already been said, can only take the specifier *<varE>* if it is of more than two syllables. Since all nominal compounds, phrases and clauses are more than two syllables in length in Koiari they must take the specifier *<varE>*, e.g.

idi hana<varE>	'paper' (lit. 'tree leaf')
Ogotana ata<varE>	'(the) Ogotana man'
Ogotana orovoniyare ata<varE>	'the man who came from Ogotana'

b) descriptive phrases ending in an adjective or other descriptive word–adjectives and other descriptive words follow their heads in Koiari–take the specifier associated with that adjective or other descriptive word, e .g.

ata maiteka<vahE>	'(the) good man'
ata keare<re>[10]	'(the) big man'
ata be<rE>	'a (certain) man'
ata vaita<rE>	'another man'
kuku vehite<rE>	'no tobacco'
ata nunuta<gE>	'all the men'

c) personal possessive pharases always take *<rE>* and partitive possessive ones *<vahE>*,[11] e.g.

da tovirivirive<rE>	'my motor vehicle'
da vahike<rE>	'my leg'
idi hanaka<vahE>	'the leaf of the tree'
oho vahika<vahE>	'the pig's leg'

3.3 Specifiers occur in all basic sentence types, e.g.

a) in transitive sentences:

3) *To-re   soiso-vare ahu vohima.*
    dog-<> flea-<>   it   searching.for
    'The dog is searching for fleas.'

---

[10] Or *ata keare<vahE>* for those speakers who use *<vahE>* instead of *<rE>* with *keare*.

[11] Personal possession is indicated in Koiari by a suffix attached to the possessum or thing possessed. There are seven such suffixes and all of these take *<rE>*. For more details on these and other possessive structures in Koiari see Dutton (1993).

4) *Gabidahe-ge da seti bohivima.*
later-<>   I   shirt put.on
'I'll put a shirt on later.'

5) *Da ni-gene a   uhi   miorovonua?*
me for-<> you banana bring.P
'Is it for me you brought the bananas?'

6) *Ya-ne   a   vamima?*
sleep-<> you hitting
'Are you sleepy?' (lit. 'Is sleep hitting you?')

7) *O'e, ya-re   da vamima.*
yes sleep-<> me hitting
'Yes, I am.' (lit. 'Yes, sleep is hitting me.')

8) Q: *A-ne   ata   erevanua?*
You-<> man saw.him
'Did you see the man?'

9) A: *O'e, da ma   erevanu.*   (or *Ata-re da ma erevanu.*)
yes I   already saw.him
'Yes, I saw him (the man).'[12]

b)   in intransitive sentences:

10) Q: *Orehe-gene yabu otinua, toviriviri da.*
where-<>   they went   truck   on
'Where did they go, on the truck that is?'
A: *Subitana-ge yabu otinua.*
Subitana-<> they went
'It was to Subitana they went.'

11) *Da Mosbi   ota-rihe-ro.*
I   Moresby go-FUT-<>
'I'll go to Port Moresby.'

---

[12] Note that 3SG or 3PL pronoun objects are not expressed as free forms in Koiari, the information being carried in the verb. Koiari is a mixed nominative/accusative-absolutive/ergative language in which the number of the core arguments S and O is reflected in one part of the verb and that of S and A in another at the same time. Thus *erevanu* means '(someone) saw it/him/her', *eregeiyaheinu* means '(someone) saw them', *yavanu* 'I/he slept', and *yavohanua* 'we slept'. As will be shown later, for this and other reasons this means that statements like *Mavire ahu erevanu* can only mean 'He/she/it saw the woman' and not 'the woman saw him/her/it'.

c)   in third person singular non-verbal equative sentences:[13]

12)   *A-ike   Koiari   ata-varo.*
       you-<> Koiari   person-<>
       'You're a Koiari.'

13)   *Eburi-re   vuma-vore-go.*
       Eburi-<> axe-with-<>
       'Eburi has an axe.'

In transitive and intransitive sentences the subject (in traditional terms or S and A in modern terms) is generally marked by a specifier unless it is a pronoun whereas in equative sentences both topic and comment are marked by specifiers.

3.4   Specifiers occur on the questioned element in questions and on the corresponding element in the answer unless this is a pronoun. Compare, for instance, examples 6, 7, 8 and 9 above.

3.5   Specifiers only occur on certain constituents in verbal sentences, their number and position depending on word order. In unmarked order subjects precede objects and may be separated from each other and/or the verb by oblique arguments (such as time, manner, and location adverbs or adverbial phrases) and other constituents belonging to the small set of modal elements noted above as never occurring with specifiers. Oblique arguments may occur in any order relative to each other (although the statistically most frequent order is time before manner before location) and the other elements have particular, favoured locations. However, as these latter never occur with specifiers they may be ignored for present purposes. In marked order any constituent (other than the subject, naturally, although there is a special case discussed below) may occur in sentence initial position (or be left dislocated or fronted in transformational terms) provided:

---

[13] These are really special forms of verbal sentences in which the verb *UNU* 'be' is replaced by a specifier, a claim supported by such paradigms as the following:

Daike, Koiari atavare da unu.	I'm a Koiari.
Aike, Koiari atavare a ua.	You're a Koiari.
Ahuke, Koiari atavaro.	He/She's a Koiari.
Noike, Koiari atayabe no ua.	We're Koiari.
Yaike, Koiari atayabe ya ua.	You (PL) are Koiari.
Yabuke, Koiari atayaboua.	They're Koiari.

Note that these contrast with the following which uses a similar structure but in which there is no specifier: *Taravatu eke unu!* which means 'That's a prohibition (and don't you forget it)!'.

a)   it is not one of the small group of modal elements that do not occur with specifiers;

b)   it is not an object, unless the subject is a pronoun.

If the subject is a noun or nominal NP, fronting an object has the effect of promoting it to subject position, an obviously impossible move. If the subject is a pronoun and the object is fronted this has the effect of making the object appear before a recapitulatory subject pronoun (which in this case happens to be the same as the normal subject pronoun) and so be marked by a specifier, the common situation. Sentences (3-10) illustrate the various possibilities. Even verbs may be fronted with respect to subject pronouns with similar results, e.g.

14)   *Negetu-ge da Era otarihe-ro. > Negetu Era otarihe-re da unu.*
       today-◇ I Ela go.FUT-◇   today Ela go.FUT-◇ I BE
       'Today I'm going to go to Ela (Port Moresby).'

When fronted, any argument is marked by a specifier (except where, in the case of pronominal subjects, the verb is fronted with respect to it, as in the example just given) as in the following example derived from the first sentence of Text 1 in the Appendix:

15)   *Vararati-ge   oho-re Taubada yage   derive-he rovonu.*
       morning.at-◇ pig-◇ Taubada   house.POSS back.its-at came
       (< *Ohore vararati Taubada yage derivehe rovonu.*)
       'This morning the pig (we are talking about) came behind Taubada's house.'

Pronominal subjects are a special case. They are usually unmarked but they may be fronted for emphasis. In that case they are marked by the specifier <*ikE*> and are separated from the rest of the sentence by pause and intonational features (indicated by a comma in transcription). As such they act as extra-sentential constituents and do not affect the internal arrangement of elements in the rest of the sentence. Logically, however, they do require a recapitulatory subject pronoun to complete the sense of the sentence, e.g.

16)   Q: *Oinene a ua?*   'Who are you?'

17)   A: *Daike, Kailaki-ge da guramare-ro.*
            I.◇   Kailaki-◇ I sit-◇
            'I am the one who is living at Kailaki.'

Speakers use these pronouns to emphasise or focus attention on participants in discourse other than those that the addressee may be lead to expect at that point. In that case the conjunction *bane* 'but' is used in combination with the focussed forms to switch topics in texts. For example, in recounting how he went to a wedding at Ogotana, the speaker of a recorded text contrasts himself with those who have been mentioned in previous sentences by saying:

18) *Bane da-ike, Sande   vaubu-ge da orovonu.*
   but   I-<>   Sunday night-<> I   came
   'But as for ME I came back on Sunday night.'

Here the speaker uses *daike* to focus attention on himself, since up to this point he was relating what other people had been doing. In English the difference between focussed and non-focussed pronouns corresponding to the use of *<IkE>* is captured by using the marked sentence structure 'It is/was X...' versus the normal sentence structure as in the following example:

	Neutral form		Focussed form	
19)	*Da a mominu.*	>	*Aike da mominu.*	
	I you gave.it		you.<> I gave.it	
	'I gave it to you.'	>	'It was you I gave it to.'	

   In response to the question 'Who are you?' the order of the focussed pronoun (as topic) and the comment may be reversed as in the following:

20) Q: *Oinene a ua?*   'Who are you?'
21) A: *Imisi, daiko!*
       Imisi I.<>
       'It's me, Imisi.'

In any event, up to three specifiers may occur in verbal sentences (though in practice only two at most generally occur), one on any fronted element, one on the subject and one on any element immediately preceding a recapitulatory pronoun.[14] In sentences with unmarked word order only the subject may be marked, and generally is, although sometimes is not. In sentences with marked word order the subject outranks all other elements. That is, it will be marked (provided it is not a pronoun) if any other element (notably, a fronted element and/or an element immediately preceding a recapitulatory subject pronoun) is. The following show the range of possibilities:

22) *To-re   soiso-vare ahu vohima.*
   dog-<> flea-<>   it   searching.for
   'The dog is searching for fleas.'

---

[14] The recapitulatory pronoun may be omitted if it is clear from the context and structure that the same subject is doing the action, e.g., in Text 2 in the Appendix in which the dog is mentioned as eating various things the storyteller says

   Bane kare-re   iyavehitero.
   but   mustard-<> did.not.eat
   'But mustard he did not eat.'

in which the repeated topic *ahu* 'he' is omitted. Yet *kare-re* is marked by a specifier as though *ahu* were understood. Had the storyteller not wanted to focus on *kare* he could have said, and would have had to have said, *Bane ahu kare iyavehitero*. The fact that *kare* was being contrasted with other things the dog had eaten requires that it be marked. The only way of doing that in such a sentence is to have it fronted with respect to a recapitulatory subject pronoun.

23) *Oho-re vararati-ge   ahu Taubada yage   derive-he rovonu.*
     pig-<> morning-<> it   Taubada house.his back.its-at came
     'The pig (we are talking about) came behind Taubada's house this morning.'

24) *Vararati-ge oho-re Taubada yage   derive-he-ge ahu rovonu.*
     morning-<> pig-<> Taubada house.his back.its-at-<> it   came
     'The pig (we are talking about) came behind Taubada's house this morning.'

3.6 Specifiers always occur on the following constituents used for establishing temporal or consequential relationships between sentences in discourse:

a) *uhukeva<gE>* 'while, during' as in:

   25) *Ahu nivare uhukeva-ge mamaka-vahe rovonu.*
        he crying while-<>   father-<>   came
        'His father came while he was crying.'

b) *ekeda<gE>* 'subsequently' as in:

   26) *Ekeda-ge   ahu orovime yaga-va ogona ihava kime...*
        subsequently-<> he came.SS house-to clothes clean put.on.SS
        'After that he came to the house and put on clean clothes and...'

c) *eke<rE>* or *e<rE>* 'having done all that' (lit. 'that.and') as in:

   27) *Ekere ahu uriaimahu...*
        that<> he got.up.SS.he
        'Having done all that just related (lit. that.and) he got up and...'

This latter linkage is used in discourse as a tail-head linkage instead of repeating the last verb in switch reference form.[15]

Specifiers also always occur on:

a) the postposition *u<ge>* 'because, and so, consquently' (REA), e.g.

   28) *Dayeter-uge   mihama!*
        mine.<>-REA.<> take.not
        'Don't take it because it's mine.'

[15] Koiari uses *-Ege* and *-Ime* to indicate that the following subject is different from, or the same as, that in the preceding clause, respectively.

29) *Girina mabarer-uge   da bebe ihiroirihero.*
Girina   wife.<>-REA.<>   I   not   name.say.F
'I can't say her name because she's Girina's wife.'

30) *Igaug-uge   da varemenu.*
one.<>-REA<>   I   left.it
'I left it because there's only one there.'

31) *Maiteka(va)h-uge   da manu.*
good.<>-REA.<>   I   took.it
'I took it because it's good.'

Note that this postposition is not encliticised directly to an element but to an element plus specifier.[16]

b) the verbal suffixes *-yata<ge>* 'having done' (COMP), and *-are<re>* 'V-ing and' (DUR).

COMP

32) *Taubada-ne   vabahu iyata-ge   ahu otinu?*
Taubada-<Q>   food   eat.COMP-<>   he   went
'Did Taubada eat and then go?'

33) *Ipidi-vare da miyata   otinu.*
rifle-<>   I   got.COMP went
'I got the rifle and went.'

DUR

34) *Da bebe kevo voto be uhuiamarero. Kevore   votovima," tovonu.*
I   not   kevo voice a   hear.DUR.<>   kevo.<>   calling   said.he
'"I don't hear a kevo calling although a kevo is calling," he said.'

3.7 Specifiers also occur on various verb tense and aspect suffixes in Koiari. These are *-rihe<rE>* 'future' (FUT), *-niyare<rE>* 'imperfect' (IMP), *-gare<rE>* 'habitual' (HAB) or 'customary' (CUST), and *-yare<rE>* 'ability' (ABIL), e.g.

FUT

    35)   *Da vodohu-rihe-ro.*
           I   hold-FUT-<>
           'I'll hold it.'

IMP

    36)   *Da vodohu-niyare-ro.*
           I   hold-P-DUR-<>
           'I was holding it (yesterday, some time ago or a long time ago).'

HAB/CUST

    37)   *Da vodohu-gare-ro.*
           I   hold-REPET-<>
           'I hold it (regularly).'[17]

ABIL

    38)   *Da vodohu-yare-ro.*
           I   hold-ABIL-<>
           'I can hold it.'

Each of these forms has a corresponding alternative form in which the subject pronoun occurs after the verb suffix and is followed by the relevant variant of the auxiliary verb *UNU* 'be'.

    35')   *Vodohurihere da unu.*
    36')   *Vodohuniyarere da unu.*
    37')   *Vodohugarere da unu.*
    38')   *Vodohuyarere da unu.*

Two other verb tense forms (present and past) and one aspect form (desiderative) which do not end in specifiers also have corresponding alternative forms using a specifier and the auxiliary verb *VANU* 'do'. Thus the 'normal' past and present tense forms of Koiari verbs are those that end in *-nu* (for 1 and 3SG) or *-nua* (2SG, 1, 2, 3PL) and *-ma* or *-a* respectively, e.g.

    39)   *Da vodohu-ma.*
           I   hold-PRES
           'I'm holding it/I will hold it (now).'

---

[17] This form covers both past and present time. However, if past time is to be clearly indicated speakers use *subuta<gE>* 'before, long ago' to do so.

40)   *Da vodohu-nu.*
       I   hold-COMP
       'I held it.'

These have the following alternative forms in which *-yere* appears to be another specifier appearing before the subject pronoun:

39')   *Vodohuyere da vima.*
40')   *Vodohuyere da vanu.*

Similarly, desiderative aspect (DES) is indicated by *riheni + VANU* as in

41)   *Da Mosbi   ota-riheni-vima.*
       I   Moresby go-DES-do
       'I want to go to Port Moresby.'

This also has an alternative form in which the specifier *ge* appears:

42)   *Mosbi   ota-riheni-ge da vima.*
       Moresby go-DES-<>   I   do
       'I want to go to Port Moresby'

4   Specifiers: Functions

4.1   Introduction

It is clear from some of the above observations (for example, points 1, 4, and 5) and other evidence (such as elicited sentences) that specifiers have something to do with highlighting certain pieces of information, that is, with the pragmatics of communication. For example:

   – they mark fronted elements as well as the questioned elements of WH questions and their corresponding parts in the answers to those questions;
   – they generally mark subjects (unless they are pronouns) even though subjects do not need to be marked because they are identified by word order and are tracked by verbal agreement;
   – they figure prominently in connected discourse but are not always used in elicited sentences.[18]

---

[18] For example, few of them occur in elicited sentences collected by Dr A.Capell in the 1950s (Capell, field notes). The reason for this is presumably that elicited sentences do not belong to connected discourse where pragmatic aspects of communication become important.

There are two possibilities: they are either topic markers or focus markers. However, before attempting to choose between these two possibilities we need to clarify briefly what we mean by them. For present purposes I take Dik (1989) as my reference point because his account is, in my opinion, the most coherent and comprehensive available, although it is still not completely worked out (Dik 1989:278).

4.2   Topics

In his account Dik (1989:265) makes a distinction between clause-internal and clause-external topics. Clause external topics (which he calls "extra-clausal constituents" or ECCs) are not part of the clause proper, but are only loosely associated with it. Thus

- they may precede, interrupt, or follow the clause proper;
- they are typically "bracketted off" from the clause by pause-like inflections in the intonation pattern;
- they are not sensitive to the clause-internal grammatical rules, though they may entertain relations of coreference, parallelism (e.g. same case marking), or antithesis (e.g. negative tag with positive clause) with the clause they are associated with;
- they are not essential to the integrity of the internal structure of the clause; when they are left out, the remaining clause structure is complete and grammatical.[19]

They include such items as initiating elements (like 'well'), address elements (like 'ladies and gentlemen' and 'Peter'), modal elements (like 'so they say', 'in my opinion'), and tags (like 'isn't it').[20] They are not defined in terms of information structure but in terms of relevance, viz. presenting a domain or universe with respect to which it is relevant to pronounce the following predication. These ECCs have a quite different function in discourse from 'real' topics and statistically quite frequently do not refer to shared or old information at all.

---

[19] Compare these features with those suggested by Li and Thompson (1976) for distinguishing topics from subjects:
  a) topics only occur in initial position;
  b) the topic need not have any selectional relation with the verb;
  c) the topic cannot be predicted from the semantics of the verb;
  d) the topic cannot govern obligatory verb agreement;
  e) the topic plays no role in grammatical processes such as reflexivization, passivization, equi-NP deletion, verb serialisation etc;
  f) the topic is definite;
  g) the topic's function appears to be to limit the applicability of the main predication to a certain domain.

[20] This section of the theory is to be presented in greater detail in a second volume which is being prepared for publication (Dik 1989:265). Meanwhile, it is to be presumed that although they are not mentioned in this 1989 account, ECCs include those elements which set the scene for the rest of the sentence (like 'as for Paris' in 'As for Paris, the Eiffel Tower is fantastic') which Chafe (1976:50-51) regards as topics.

Dik's second type of topic, the clause-internal ones, are "those entities 'about' which information is provided or requested in the discourse" (p.265). Dik argues (pp.265-66) that

> S (the speaker) organises his linguistic expressions in accordance with $(P_A)_S$, his estimate of A (the addressee)'s pragmatic information at the moment of speaking. S's aim will in general be to cause A to effect some change in P_A, and in order to achieve this, S will typically start from some piece of information that A presumably already possesses, and then go on to build some information onto this, which he thinks is new to A and may thus lead to a modification of P_A. A linguistic expression will thus usually contain some *given* information and some *new* information. Both "given" and "new" should be interpreted as being mediated thorough S's estimate of P_A; given information is thus information which is contained in $(P_A)_S$, new information is information not contained in $(P_A)_S$. It may be that S's estimate is not fully correct, i.e. does not fully correspond to the actual structure of P_A. This may cause certain hitches in the communication process. But it is $(P_A)_S$ rather than P_A which determines the way in which S pragmatically organizes his expressions.

Generally it is contextual information that is adjusted when two or more speakers communicate. It is "information dervied from the linguistic expressions which are exchanged before or after any given point in the verbal interation" (p.6). Normally S and A share a great deal of general, situational and contextual information and the "point" of conversation, its relevance, is the adjustment of this information by adding to it, deleting parts of it, refining it. When speakers begin talking they do so with a certain topic of conversation in mind and that topic has to be introduced at some point. Such a first presentation of a topic is called a New Topic (NewTop). Thereafter it can be considered a Given Topic (GivTop). Sometimes "we may go on to talk about another Topic related to it 'as if' it had been introduced before. For example, once we have introduced a certain party as (a topic), we may go on to talk about 'the music' as if it were a GivTop, as in

> John gave <u>a party</u> last week, but <u>the music</u> was awful." (p.267)

This is called a Sub-Topic (SubTop). Finally, after a conversation has been going for some time it may be necessary to return to the original GivTop and to reestablish it as the GivTop. Such a topic is called a Resumed Topic (ResTop).

Topics (as "entities") must of necessity be nouns or their equivalents and in Koiari they must be subjects (as already defined). Moreover, because Koiari is an SOV language, topics naturally occur sentence initially in unmarked order, the universally most highly topical position (Givón 1990). As such, topics are usually introduced in Koiari by what Dik (1989:268) calls "an explicit meta-linguistic statement about what is going to be the topic of the ensuing discourse." This is particularly the case when Koiari are asked to tell traditional stories. This introduction is usually of the form "Now I'm going to tell the story about..." or "This is a story

about..." or "I'm going to tell a folktale." When the discourse topic is set by the addressee (as, for example, when an addressee asks the speaker to say what happened on a particular occasion, or to describe something) there is usually no such introduction–it is as unnecessary in Koiari as it is in English. In both cases the story proper begins with the introduction of the topic sentence initially. Its introduction in this position is done baldly–there is no special construction to do so as in other languages, e.g. by an "existential or locative-existential construction" like "Once upon a time there was...", or by placing it in "the object or second argument position," or by using "predicates which in some way or other designate a form of 'appearing on the scene'" as Dik (1989:268) has suggested are commmon ways of introducing new topics.

Once introduced, topics are re-established in Koiari by repeating the original topic. Thereafter topics are maintained either by using unstressed anaphoric pronouns or, for third person subjects, by zero anaphora. Topics are also tracked by the switch reference (SR) system. As already noted, Koiari has two suffixes -*Ime* and -*Ege* to show that the same or different topics (qua subjects) are being talked about respectively. If a pronominal topic is introduced after -*Ege* or a final verb phrase, this is signalled and emphasised by *bane* 'but' and the 'specified' form of the pronoun is used (e.g. *bane daike...* 'but as for me...') as also already noted in subsection 3.5.

Furthermore, unless specifically indicated otherwise, topics are taken to be definte in reference even though nouns are inherently ambiguous as to definteness in Koiari, i.e. they are not marked as being either definite or indefinite. Definiteness and indefiniteness can be specifically indicated if necessary, however, by using the distal demonstrative *eke* 'that (over there)' or *ye* 'the one being talked about', or the indefinite numeral *be* 'a, one' (e.g. *ata be* 'someone'), respectively.

Where there are several topics coordinated by intonational and pausal means in the one sentence all may be marked by specifiers as if each was the only topic, as, for example, in this sentence taken from Text 2 in the Appendix:

43) *Marubavare, tore,   ohore, iare   koakiha   otime*
     flying.fox.<> dog<> pig<> cassowary<> dance.in.order.to go.SS
     bouraruhanua.
     gathered.together.
     'The flying fox, dog, pig, and cassowary went and gathered together to dance.'

Topics are also to be distinguished from extra-clausal constituents in Koiari. The only such constituents so far found to occur in Koiari are attention getters like *se* 'heh', address forms like *Tomu*, and focussed pronouns (or those marked by <*IkE*>), as in the following examples:

44) *Se, Tomu, orehegene a ota?*   'Heh, where are you going Tom?'
45) Q: *Oinene a ua?*   'Who are you?'

46)   A: *Daike,   Kailakige da guramarero.*
        I.<FOC> Kailaki<> I   sit.CONT<>
        'Me, I'm the one who is living at Kailaki.'

In sentences in which these constituents occur the constituents are separated from the rest of the sentence by a pause and intonational bracketing indicated by a comma in written discourse.

4.3 Focus

In the view of Dik (1989:61), focal elements are those that signify "which constituents of the clause are communicatively the most important or 'salient', given the speaker's estimate of the pragmatic information of the addressee." They emphasise those constituents that are "presented as being in contrast with other pieces of information which are either explicitly mentioned in the context, or are to be understood from context." In contrast to topics, any part of a clause can be focussed upon. There are different types of focus determined by such parameters as scope (or the area or part of the structure being focussed on) and "the 'communicative point' of the focusing" (p.281). Focus may be expressed by one or a combination of means, including phonological or morphological marking, special word order, or constructions.

An important aspect of Dik's treatment of topicality and focality is the recognition that the two dimensions "have a certain area of overlap in that certain topical elements may at the same time be focal to the communication" (p.266).

4.4 Specifiers as Focus Markers

When the above definitions are applied to the question of what specifiers are the result is far from clearcut. While some of the data support a topic interpretaton–some specifiers mark subjects for example–and most of them support a focus interpretation (points 1, 3, 4, 5 in section 3, for example), a few of them do not sit well with either interpretaton (points 6, 7 in section 3, for example). However, allowing that there may be a "certain overlap" between topic and focus for certain elements, for example that topical elements may at the same time be focal to the communication (Dik 1989:266), the topic and focus marking aspects of specifiers in Koiari can both be accounted for at the same time by subsuming the topic marking aspect under the focus marking one. That then leaves the "few [data that] do not sit well with either interpretation." Since, however, it is not an a priori or necessary requirement that all the data be accounted for by a proposed hypothesis without exception (desirable as that may be) there are two possible

solutions to accommodate these data. One is to claim that specifiers are mainly focus markers but that they may also have other functions. The alternative is to claim that they are all focus markers (by appealing to the "universal morphology" concept of Haiman (1978), for example[21]) and to redefine focus in such a way that it includes all cases. For present purposes, and until such time as it can be tested against further data, I will opt for the former position. In adopting this position, however, it is to be noted that specifiers are not the only way of focussing attention on particular constituents in Koiari. Any constituent can be highlighted by phonological means, specifically by stressing it, as in (where the stressed element is indicated by the word in bold), e.g. *Da a erevanu* 'I saw you'. Right dislocated (or backed) elements are also focussed in Koiari, e.g. *Mandiva* in *Yabu otinua, Manideva* 'They went, on Monday that is'. This is equivalent to *Manidevage yabu otinua* in which *manideva* is focussed by fronting and marked as such by a specifier. Koiari speakers commonly back elements to focus on them when more than the normal number of elements occurs in a sentence. Generally there are no more than three or four constituents per (verbal) clause in Koiari, often only two, the required minimum (because Koiari verbs do not distinguish clearly between person-number combinations and so require at least a subject pronoun in addition to a verb). For example, a sentence such as *No manide vararati Sydney motele varehenua* 'We left the Sydney motel on Monday morning' may be restated as *Sydney motelevare no varehenua, Manide vararati* or *Manide vararatige no varehenua, Sydney motele*, depending on context, to focus on the time or the place being referred to. This flexibility enables more than one element to be focussed on at the same time.

4.5   Other functions of specifiers

Apart from their major function as focus markers, specifiers are also used for the following functions:

1)   to mark topic (TOP) and comment (COM) in third person non-verbal equative clauses:

47)   *Eke-re   toviriviri-varo.*
      TOP:that-◇ COM:truck-◇
      'That's a truck.'

2)   to express verb complementation as in:

[21] According to this notion "similarities of form are reflections of underlying similarities of meaning" (Haiman 1978:586).

48)   *Da vuvuvare-re gabidahe-ge ahu orovima.*
       my thinking-◇ later-◇   he   come
       'I think that he will come later.'

In this case the verb in the matrix clause is expressed as a possessed verbal noun in Koiari . As a result the sentence has the structure of an equative clause in which the TOP is *da vuvare-re* 'my thinking (is)' and the COM the verbal clause *gabidahe-ge ahu orovima* 'he will come later'.

    In addition to the above cases there are several others which cannot easily be categorised. These are two verb suffixes *(heni<gE>*and *-yata<gE>)*, the reason postpostion *u<gE>*, and the three free words noted in subsection 3.6 used for establishing temporal or consequential relations between clauses in discourse (*uhukeva<gE>*, *ekeda<gE>* and *eke<rE>*). It is not clear why these particular elements always occur with specifiers but some of them may be explained by the following:

    i)   with respect to the verbal suffixes:
There is a certain similarity between the structures in which these occur and that of the switch reference system in which pronominal subjects are very closely bound to SS/DS suffixes on medial verbs. These are the suffixes *-Ime* and *-Ege* that have already been introduced. These suffixes and the immediately following pronominal subjects are always said in one stress group without discernable pause or chest pulse between them. In other words they are pronounced as though the pronouns were cliticised to the SS/DSs. Indeed in the case of *ahu* 'he, she, it' the resulting combination becomes *-mahu/-gahu* according to normal morphophonemic rules. In any case the verbal suffixes *-heni<gE>* and *-yata<gE>* appear to be drawn along by analogical pressure of the DS/SS combinations just noted;

    ii)   with respect to the postposition *u<gE>* and two of the temporal connectives
           uhukeva<gE> and *ekeda<gE>*:
Apart from the first, which is a postpostion, the other two have postpositional enclitics *va* and *da* attached to them. Because these temporal connectives and elements to which *u<ge>* is attached are always followed by a subject of some sort, but usually a pronominal one, they are in a position similar to that of focussed elements immediately preceding a recapitulatory subject pronoun. As a result they are marked by specifiers. *Eke<rE>*, on the other hand, is a demonstrative used as a topic which also always has a specifier attached to it in that position. These various cases are thus parasitic on the more regular case of focussed elements, being marked by specifiers when followed by a recapitulatory subject pronoun.

5   Specifiers in Other Papuan Languages

Excluding Koiari's sister languages which have morphemes related in form and function to those in Koiari to varying degrees and to which we shall return below, a survey of the grammars of a number of other Papuan languages suggests that despite differences in nomenclature and form, some of them have morphological features strongly reminiscent of those just discussed for Koiari. The best three example languages I have found so far are Yagaria, Baruya and Yareba,[22] languages that belong to three linguistically mutually unrelated language families, or only extremely distantly related if they are related at all.

Yagaria is a member of the East-Central Family of the East New Guinea Highlands Stock (Wurm 1982). Of focus in this language Renck (1975:181) has this to say:

> "Focused phrases have two slots which can both be regarded as head slots. The first is usually occupied by a noun or noun phrase, the second one by a pronoun which puts the noun or noun phrase into focus... Focused phrases occur mainly in subject slots of clauses, occasionally in object slots, and also in locational, benefactive, and non-verbal predicate slots."

This is uncannily like Koiari even to the extent that a subject pronoun "puts the noun or noun phrase into focus."

Baruya, a member of the Angan Stock-level Family (Wurm 1982) bordering on the family to which Yagaria belongs, has, on the other hand, a number of what Lloyd (1989:37-38) calls "identificational declarative morphemes" and "identificational question morphemes" which occur "with subject, object, location, time, instrument, association, reference, source and similarity cases." These have the general form -$CEro$ where $C = s$ or y and $E = e$ or i, as, for example in

> A'mwe--r-ero.
> person--they.M-be
> 'They are men.'

The question form of these morphemes is -ako which occurs following WH-nouns in the same range of cases. Although Lloyd does not associate these with focus their distribution and form is again very suggestive of specifiers in Koiari.

---

[22] It is possible that other languages have similar features but as focus has not generally been given much attention in grammatical descriptions of Papuan languages to date it is not possible to tell. However, a number of languages (for example, Hua and Imonda) have been described as having morphologically marked topics that occur on a wide range of constituents (including different clause types). But the identification of topics in these cases depends on a particular definition of that concept which is different from that used in this description, notably that it is "an entity *whose existence* is agreed upon by the speaker and his audience. As such it constitutes the framework which has been selected for the following discourse" (Haiman 1978:585).

In the third language, Yareba, which is spoken some 100 kilometres east of Koiari as the crow flies, the morphemes -*ma* and -*na* are used to focus on constituents. According to Weimer and Weimer (1975:716-18) "focussing with -*ma* relates the tagmeme to the action. Only subject and instrument can coocur within the same clause thus marked. When instrument occurs it is obligatorily marked with one of the two focus markers." The morpheme -*na* on the other hand "intensifies the tagmeme thus marked and draws special attention to it. The -*na* focus may cooccur with any number of the optional tagmemes in a clause. However, the cooccurrence of more than two tagmemes thus marked is rare." For example,

> *Ewa fidi-na Ora-ma boro urinu.*
> this gun-◇ Oral-◇ pig killed
> 'This is the gun with which Ora killed the pig.'

Again the functions of these forms are reminiscent of Koiari specifiers although the forms are different.

Yet as suggestive as the features in these three languages are, languages which have forms bearing the closest similarity to those in Koiari are its sister languages of the Koiarian Family. There are six langauges in this familay, Koita, Koiari, Mountain Koiari, Barai, Ömie and Managalasi. Of these, Koita, Koiari and Mountain Koiari are the most closely related to one another and form the Koiaric sub-family. The remaining three also seem to be most closely related to each other and form the Baraic sub-family.[23] All of these have one or more morphemes related in form and function. Koiari and Koita have the most elaborate and closely related systems in terms of the number of forms and privileges of occurrence. The corresponding forms for each language (except Managalasi for which no adequate material is available) are:

Koita: -*ra*, -*vara*, -*gera*, -*ka*, and -*ki*. I called the first four of these "specifiers" and -*ki* a "focus marker" in my sketch grammar of the language in 1975. In that (Dutton 1975:293) I noted:

> "The subject of sentences seems to be always marked in some way–either by one of a set of clitics (e.g. -*ra*, -*vara*, -*ka*, -*gera*)…called specifiers, together optionally with a further enclitic -*ki*, herein called a Focus Marker, or in the case of pronouns by a Focus Marker without a specifier. In intransitive sentences the Subject always seems to be marked in this way whereas in transitive sentences there seems to be more freedom."

Koiari: -*rE*, -*varE*, -*gE*, -*vahE*, -*ikE* (as described herein);

Mountain Koiari: -*e*. This is termed a "modified noun marker" (mnm) in Garland and Garland (1975:469, fn.4)'s account. It is said to be obligatory when an adjective or a locational follows in a phrase, e.g.

---

[23] This is a tentative classification based on lexicostatistics and accepted until such time as it has been confirmed (or denied) by more traditional methods.

> ugu-e   vomo   boto-e   ovo
> bird-mnm   feather   bush-mnm pig
> 'bird's feather'   'bush pig'

Barai: *-re, -ne, -ge, -ve, -me*. These are called "classifying suffixes" by Olson (1975:484), defined as follows:

> "Many but not all non-human nouns take a kind of classifying suffix. It consists of various consonants followed by the vowel *-e*. When the non-human noun occurs in isolation the suffix always occurs with the stem. Generally in context, the suffix is retained when the following word begins with a vowel and is lost when that word begins with a consonant but this analysis is not entirely consistent. The following suffixes have been observed: *-ve, -ne, -ge, -me* and *-re*. In the case of *-re* only the consonant *r* is ever lost".

For example:

> *mave*   >   *ma boeje*
> pig.CL   pig many
> 'pig'   'many pigs'
> *are*   >   *ae   none*
> place.CL   house my
> 'place'   'my house'

Ömie: *-e*. Austing and Upia (1975:520) call this "a terminator". It is said to occur on non-human nouns in isolation or when following words beginning with a vowel. "*-e* is suffixed when the word or morpheme is considered independent of what follows. What is meant by independent differs according to the word or suffix class."

All these forms seem to be structure dependent, specifically in requiring something following, except in Ömie, where the word on which it occurs is said to be "independent of what follows."

6   Conclusion

In this paper I have described a set of morphemes whose major function appears to be to focus attention on different parts of a discourse. These morphemes have been referred to as specifiers until such time as they are better understood. It is hoped that the description will not only raise questions about the nature of topic and focus in other Papuan languages but will also encourage others working on those languages to report more on them in the future.

References

Austing, John and Randolph Upia. 1975. Highlights of Ömie morphology. In Dutton, 513-589.

Chafe, Wallace L. 1976. Givenness, contrastiveness, definiteness, subjects, topics and point of view. In *Subject and topic*, ed. Charles N. Li, 25-55. New York: Academic Press.

Dik, Simon C. 1989. *The theory of functional grammar*. Dordrecht: Foris.

Dutton, T. E. 1969. *The peopling of Central Papua: Some preliminary observations*. Pacific Linguistics B-9. Canberra: Australian National University.

_____. 1975. A Koita grammar sketch and vocabulary. In Dutton, 281-412.

_____ (ed.). 1975. *Studies in languages of Central and South-East Papua*. Pacific Linguistics C-29. Canberra: Australian National University.

_____. 1993. Possession in Koiari. *Language and Linguistics in Melanesia* 24:39-62.

Garland, Roger and Susan Garland. 1975. A grammar sketch of Mountain Koiali. In Dutton, 413-69.

Givón, Talmy. 1984. *Syntax: A functional-typological introduction*. Vol. I. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

_____. 1990. *Syntax: a functional-typological introduction*. Vol. II. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Haiman, John. 1978. Conditionals are topics. *Language* 54 (3): 564-89.

Lloyd, Richard. 1989. *Bound and minor words in Baruya*. Datapapers in Papua New Guinea Languages, Vol. 35. Ukarumpa, PNG: Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Olson, Mike. 1975. Barai grammar highlights. In Dutton, 471- 512.

Renck, G.L. 1975. *A grammar of Yagaria*. Pacific Linguistics B-40. Canberra: Australian National University.

Seiler, W. 1983. Topic marking in the Papuan language of Imonda. *Oceanic Linguistics* 22/23:151-73.

Weimer, Harry and Natalie Weimer. 1975. A short sketch of Yareba grammar. In Dutton, 667-729.

Williams, F.E. 1932. Sex affiliation and its implications. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 62:51-81.

Wurm, Stephen A. 1982. *Papuan languages of Oceania*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.

Wurm, S.A. and Shiro Hattori. 1981. *Language atlas of the Pacific area*. Pacific Linguistics C-66. Canberra: Australian National University.

Department of Linguistics
Research School of Pacific Studies
Australian National University
Canbera, ACT 0200
AUSTRALIA

Appendix: Two Short Illustrative Texts

(*Note*: In these texts the following symbols and abbreviations are used:

/-/	hesitation
COMP	completed action
DS	different subject following
FUT	future
NOM	nominaliser
P	past tense
POSS	possessive
SS	same subject following)

Text No. 1: "The Pig" by Auda Monahu, Haveri clan (1966)

1. *Oho-re vararati-ge ahu Taubada yage   derive-he   rovonu.*
   pig-<> morning-<> it   Taubada house.POSS back.POSS-at came
      'This morning the pig came behind Taubada's house.'

2. *To-re   yove-ge   mata-va otinu.*
   dog-<> chase-DS bush-to went
      'The dog chased it and it went into the bush.'

3. *Taubada-re oti-me vohi vohi-me varemi   orovonu-ge no ahu-vore-ge*
   Taubada-<> go-SS look look-SS leave.off came-DS   we he-with-<>
   no oti vohonua.
   we go looked.for.it
      'Taubada went and looked and looked for it and then came back and then we
      went with him and looked for it.'

4. *Mata-va otinu.*
   bush-to went
      'It went into the bush.'

5. *To-re   vahutovahe-ge.*
   dog-<> bark-DS
      'The dog barked and'

6. *E-ge   no vahenaka vadihi-me no orovi-me oko guahanua.*
   that-DS we steps   ascend-DS we come-SS here sat.down
      'And we came back upstairs and sat down here.'

Text No 2: "Maruba" by Tom Dumo, Hogeri clan (1966)

1.   *Ono/-/ Yome-re Oromunumu-da-ge ahu taru kinu.*
     what   rat-<>   Oromunumu-on-<> he feast made
     'The rat made a feast on Oromunumu mountain.'

2   *-ge ono/-/ maruba-vare, to-re,   oho-re, ia-re   ko/-/ koa*
     -DS what flying.fox-<> dog-<> pig-<> cassowary-<> sing singsing
     kiha oti-me bouravanua.[24]
     do.for go-SS gathered.together
     'And flying fox, dog, pig and cassowary went and gathered together to have a singsing.'

3.   *Oti   bouravi-me ahu*[25] *koa   ke-ge*[26]*/-/ e-ge   to   ihikava*
     go.SS gather-SS he   singsing do-DS   and-DS dog name
     Gugunakoeva.[27]
     Gugunakoeva
     'They went and gathered together and—were dancing and the dog's name was Gugunakoeva.'

4.   *Gugunakoeva gurami yave-ge   bane vabuta-vare koa   roi-me ahu*
     Gugunakoeva sit   sleep-DS but   magani-<> singsing say-SS he
     edoreiye-ge/-/ edoreiye-ge/-/ ateve-ge/-/   e-ge ahu uriami-me ahu
     jump.over-DS jump.over-DS do.like.that.DS DS he   got.up-SS he
     hava-ta   udi-ta   igau inu.
     betel.nut-and lime-and one ate
     'Gugunakoeva was sitting sleeping but magani[28] was singing and jumping over him and he kept doing that and he (the dog) got up and ate betel nut and lime.'

5.   *Bane kare-re*[29]   *iyavehitero.*
     but   mustard-<> eat.not
     'But mustard he didn't eat.'

[24] According to my principal present-day informant this should be *bouraruhanua.*

[25] *Ahu* is a substitute for *yabu* here. Substituting third person singular forms for their plural counterparts is a common feature of the two major lingue frache, Tok Pisin and Hiri (formerly Police) Motu in Papua New Guinea. This practice probably reflects similar tendencies in other languages spoken natively by Papua New Guineans.

[26] This is a contraction of the expected *kiyege.*

[27] According to my principal present-day informant this part of the sentence should have been *ege to ihikavahe Gugunakoevaro.*

[28] A *magani* is a grass wallaby and a *rovoni*, that occurs later in the text, a tree climbing kangaroo. I use these Koiari names in the interlinear and free translation lines to save space.

[29] *Kare* may be translated 'mustard' or 'pepper'.

6. *Eke-re   ahu uriami-me ahu varemi-me ahu otiniyare-re// uriami-me ahu*
   that-<>   he   got.up-SS he   leave-SS   he   go.P-<>   got.up-SS   he
   varemi-me ahu vabuta eke dadivi-yata ariravi   otinu.
   leave(-SS) he   magani that catch-COMP turn.aside went
   'Having done that (lit. that and) he got up and left and went he got up and left
   and grabbed that magani and left.'

7. *Vabuta eke dadi(vi)-yata arirai   otiniyare-re ita   moye-va ti-me*
   magani that grab-COMP   turn.aside go.P-<>   stream that-to   go-SS
   ahu uvaviyarei-me ahu evia-vahe morehe fadati-va   raminu.
   he   bite.finish-SS he   teeth-<>   there mustard.stem-in stood
   'He grabbed that magani and left and went down to that river and bit it (the
   magani) and his teeth stuck in the mustard stem.'

8. *Ege   bane/-/ ono/-/ ahu haba tohuniyare-re tavo   ereviyarei-me ahu*
   and.DS but   what   he spittle spit.P-<>   blood saw.finish-SS he
   ateki roinu, "Vadibe tavo-vane oko unu?" mabeta   vobaravi-me ahu
   thus said   what   blood-<> this BE   and.then turned-SS   he
   haba tohuniyare-re bane ono/-/ hava tavo   ereviyarei-me ahu, "O, da
   spit spit.P-<>   but what betel blood saw.finish-SS he   oh I
   horehe udi iniyare-re da ekenani kare   fada nabe   da oko
   there lime eat.P-<>   I just.now mustard stem perhaps I   this
   uvavanu," tovonu.
   bit   said
   'And—but— he spat out and he saw blood and said,"What's this blood?" and
   he turned around and when he spat and saw the betel nut blood[30] he said,"Oh,
   I was eating lime and probably bit mustard stem just now."'

9. *Tovi-me, "Beu[31] ekenani kare   fada eke inu."*
   say-SS   ?   just.now mustard vine that ate
   'And said,"Just now I ate that mustard vine."'

---

[30] Betel nut turns red like blood when chewed with lime.
[31] This should be *mabeta* according to my principal present-day informant.

10.   *Bane ono/-/ kohani-vare   kahida ono/-/ vada-vane eke   unu?/-/ kahida*
      but   what   porcupine-<> sister   what   what-<>   that BE   sister's
      to   vaha-ve   voiyavarei-me   ahu divorevi-me otiniyare
      dog tooth.headband-POSS put.on.finish-SS she waddle-SS   go-P
      igau-ge bane nigika-vahe rukaravanu-ge ahu voroma// gurami-me ahu
      one-<> but   skirt-<>   cut.P-DS   she go.down sit-SS   she
      ono/-/ voroma   guramaniyare bane to-ya   varahe-ge ahu uriami-me
      what   go.down sit.P   but   dog-PL   fight-DS   she got.up-SS
      oti-me ahu Arerovo edoravi-me   ahu vadimi-me ahu ono/-/
      go-SS she Arerovo jump.over-SS she go.up-SS   she what
      Vanoronumu-da   heremi-yata-ge ahu rovi-me   ahu Kohani muni-va
      Vanoro.mountain-on arrive-COMP-<> she come-SS he   Kohani stone-to
      munivava-va ariravanu.
      cave-in   went.in
      'But what?—porcupine's sister what-is-it?—what is that?—her sister put on
      her dog-tooth headband and waddled off by herself but her skirt broke and she
      went down—continued what?—went down but the dogs started fighting so
      she got up and went and jumped over Arerovo and went up ah—on to Vanoro
      mountain and arriving at the Kohani stone went into the cave.'

11.   *E-ge   to-ya   mi   orovi-me   yabu eke   vava-va   manehi-me vareheinua.*
      that-DS dog-PL get   come-SS   they that hole-in   drop-SS   left.them
      'And the dogs brought that rovoni and dropped it into the hole and left them.'

12.   *Bane rovoni-vare uriami-me ahu orovi-me ahu ono/-/ Gerebu vadimi-me*
      but   rovoni-<>   got.up-SS he   come-SS   it   what   Gerebu go.up-SS
      ahu/-/ Gerebu vadi   ariravi-me ahu/-/ heremi ariravi-me ahu/-/
      it   Gerebu go.up go.in-SS   it   arrive   go.in-SS   it
      vadimi-me orovi-me ahu/-/ ahu rovi   Vorivori vadimanu.
      go.up(-SS) come-SS it   it   come Vorivori went.up
      'But the rovoni got up and came and ah—went up Gerebu—climbed up
      Gerebu and went in—arrived and went in—went up and came and ah—and it
      came and climbed up Vorivori.'

13.   *Ege   to-ya   rovi-me   gagagagavi varehi-me voiraruhi-me otinua.*
      and.DS dog-PL come-SS look.up   leave-SS   turn-SS   went
      And the dogs came and looked up and then retuned.

14. *E-ge   ono/-/ vamiano-ya mabeta   voiraruhi-me rovi-me   yabu oti*
    that-DS what   child-PL   and.then turn-SS   come-SS they go
    maruba-ni   heduravanua.
    flying.fox-to talked
    'And ah—the children then turned around and came and went and spoke to
    the flying fox (and said),'

15. *"Se maruba, a-ne   ehe va?" ono/-/ "Ata-ya   ma   koa*
    heh flying.fox you-<> how DO   what   person-PL already singsing
    kiniyare-yaume ono/-/ koa-re   ma   vehitevoi-rihe-duaka-vaho"
    do.P-and   what   singsing-<> already finish-FUT-soon-<>
    tovonu-ge ahu otiniyare-re ahu vuma mi-me ahu teha-da
    said-DS   he go.P-<>   he axe get-SS he verandah-on
    betei-yata-ge   ahu/-/ ahu to   vaha   igau uvavi-yata
    put.on-COMP-<> he   he   dog   tooth.headband one bite-COMP
    uvavi-yata-ge ahu aea-he   igau mi-yata   mi-yata/-/ otiniyare
    bite-COMP-<> his drum-POSS one get-COMP get-COMP go.P
    ma   eke hore Oromunumu-da/-/ Oromunumu-da time   ahu koa/-/
    already that there Oromunumu-on   Oromunumu-on go.SS he sing
    koa   kare-he-ge   bane to-ya   varahege ahu uriami-me ahu
    singsing do.NOM-at-<> but dog-PL fight.DS he get-up-SS he
    vobarami-me ahu aea/-/ aea-he   vami-me ahu aea-ve³²
    turn-SS   he drum drum.POSS hit-SS his drum-POSS
    vami-yata-ge ahu voiravaniyare-re aea-vahe votomi-me ahu "Bo bo bo
    hit-COMP-<> he   turn.P-<>   drum-<> sound-SS it bo bo bo
    bo" votinu.
    bo sounded

    "'Heh, flying fox, what's up with you?" ah—the people have been dancing
    and so the dance will soon be over." And he went and got his axe and put it up
    on the verandah and (got) one of his dog-tooth headbands and held it in his
    mouth(because he didn't have time to put it on) and got a drum and went up
    there on to Oromunumu. He went up on to Oromunumu and while he was
    dancing the dogs fought and he got up and turned around and ah—hit his
    drum. He turned around and hit his drum and it went "Bo bo bo bo".'

---

³² Note that the speaker used two different POSS markers on *aea* in this story, viz. *-he* and *-ve*. This is a common
variation for Hogeri "section" speakers.

16. *Ahu eke uhi   bae iye-ge uhi   bae-da-ge ono-vare/-/ adaka-vahe*
    it   that banana ripe eat-DS banana ripe-on-<> what-<>   wing-<>
    votovi-me ahu eke "Bo bo bo bo" tovare   eke ahu igau-ge eke   unu.
    sound-SS it   that bo bo bo bo sound.NOM that it   one-<> that BE
    'And when that (flying-fox) eats ripe bananas —(lands?) on ripe bananas ah—
    its wings make a "Bo bo bo bo" noise and that's the only one that does.'

17. *Mai-go. Vehitevoiyare-re ahu ma   vanu, da vote-re.*
    okay-<> finish.NOM-<> it   already did my talk-<>
    'Okay, it's finished, my story that is.'

18. *Mai!*
    okay
    'Okay.'