

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
LITERATURE
(GRADUATE PROGRAM)**

**ANALYSIS OF LITERARY STYLE IN SOME
SELECTED AFAN OROMO NOVELS**



TAYE GUDETA

JUNE, 2009

ANALYSIS OF LITERARY STYLE IN SOME SELECTED AFAN OROMO NOVELS

**By
Taye Gudeta**



**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
Addis Ababa University**

**In partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Literature**

June, 2009

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

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Above all, I am extremely grateful to my heavenly Father, God, who is my foremost supporter that has helped me throughout my life, irrespective of time and place.

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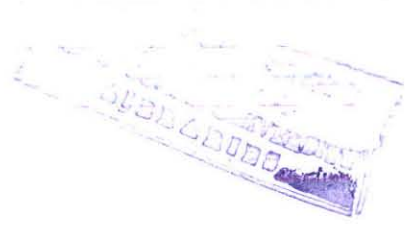


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ABSTRACT

Literary language is not spontaneous. It involves careful creation of words and arrangement for effective communication. Stylistics, as a twentieth century phenomenon, is the study of style used in literary texts and the effect a writer wishes to communicate to the reader. The analysis is often made for the purpose of commenting on quality and meaning in a text.

This thesis aims at analyzing the literary styles of four Afan Oromo novels: Kuusaa Gadoo, Dhaamsa Abbaa, Godaannisa, and Gurraacha Abbayaa. The first two novels are written by Gadisa Biru and the rest are written by Dhaba Woyessa. Each of them contributed two novels to Oromo prose writing. Hence, these novels are analyzed based on the major stylistic features they exhibit. It is hoped that this study serves as an input to Oromo written literature.

The researcher depends on literary and descriptive methods to undertake the analysis by employing a comparative approach. Besides, critical survey of library materials is made to build the related literature.

The thesis has four parts. The first chapter is the introductory part. It gives background information on the research. The second chapter is devoted to the theoretical part that deals with general consideration of stylistics. The third chapter is concerned with the major stylistic analysis and the last one presents the conclusion.

The analysis has revealed that simile and personification are dominant figures of speech. Dhaba used a total of 362 similes in both novels whereas Gadisa employed only 45. Dhaba is a writer whose preference for simile is so high. He prefers to use lexical repetition and parallelism. Rhetorical questions are also used as stylistic effects in the novels. The purposes of the similes in Gadisa's novels involve thematic preoccupations. Gadisa used 115 proverbs that serve various purposes and many foreign words are used in Kuusaa Gadoo.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In Africa there are approximately two thousand languages and Oromo language is considered one of the ten most extensively spoken languages (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000:27). It is also a native language for about 24 million Oromo people living in Ethiopia and a large number of people perhaps not less than two million use it as a second language (Gadaa, 1988:9).

Despite this fact much study was not undertaken on the Oromo language in general, and on its literature in particular. Johann Krapf wrote *An Imperfect Outline of the Elements of Oromo Language* in 1840. He also translated the Holy Scripture into Oromo language. In 1844, Lawrence Tuttscheke wrote *Dictionary of Oromo Language and A Grammar of Oromo Language*.

Apart from these scholars, an Oromo religious teacher, called Onesimos Nasib had made a great attempt to lay the foundation of Oromo literature. The major literary works of Onesimos include *Evangelical Songs and Psalms (1887)*, *The New Testament (1893)*, *The Oromo Spelling Book (1894)*, *Man's heart, either God's temple or Satan's Abode: For awakening and promoting Christian Faith (1899)*, *Catechismus (1899)*, *Bible Stories (1899)*, and *The Holy Bible (1899)* (Hylander, 1969:81-82). However, the then Ethiopian Emperor, Menelik II warned Onesimos even

not to teach the language to his children (Mekuria, 1994:96). During Haile Sellasie I regime, the only language allowed for official and religious purposes was Amharic. This was announced by proclamation (Negarit Gazeta, No.12, 1944). In relation to this the following is stated:

Except for the recognition of Tigrigna and Arabic in Eritrea, the central government has made no concessions to the other languages used in the country. It does not encourage the development of a system of writing or a literature for any of the indigenous, non-written languages. In Ethiopia proper, the use of Amharic is fostered through the school system as one of many means of unifying the country and spreading Amhara culture (Lipsky, 1962:54).

During the Dirgue regime, the use of local languages was given attention and some books on Oromo language were written in Sabean script. *Bariisaa* [Dawn] was one of such publications. Even if there were publications and radio programs in the language, their contents were confined to disseminating the then political propaganda of the country. Fictional works were discouraged (Teshome, 2004:15). Families and relatives who visit prisoners are expected to speak in Amharic. There was an instance in history when the prisoner's mother was forced to speak in the language she did not know. "I remember standing there watching elderly women who couldn't speak Amharic with tears in their eyes....Imagine speaking to your own son through a translator." (Hawani and Aneesa, 1996:32)

After the downfall of the Dirgue regime in 1991, dramatic changes appeared. Because respect for languages and cultures of nations and nationalities in Ethiopia has got recognition in the constitution of the country. For instance, Oromo language became the language of administration, court, and education in the Oromia region. Besides, Addis Ababa University has started offering major courses at

undergraduate and postgraduate programs. As a result of these opportunities, Oromo language and its literature have flourished. Therefore, the researcher believes that conducting research on the creative works is a highly inevitable task.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Language is the principal means of communication among human beings. This communication is primarily a spoken language. Writing is also one mechanism through which communication takes place. The language of literature seems to differ from the ordinary use of language in speech. Writers choose appropriate words and expressions to transmit their messages effectively. Concerning the language choice of a literary work, Chapman (1973: 4) states as follows:

Literary language has been chosen and manipulated by its user with greater care and complexity than the average language user either can or wishes to exercise. If this distinctive use is recognized, it may be possible to discuss intelligently a writer's individual 'style'.

As stated in the background, creative writers of Oromo language have been presenting their works of art to the people. These works can be approached from different angles and few studies have been conducted on some of the novels. All the studies conducted here at the university focused on the content of the novels. It is hoped that this study to some extent will bridge the existing research gap in Oromo written literature. Hence, it differs from them in that it attempts to analyze the major stylistic features of four Oromo novels. These are *Kuusaa Gadoo*, *Dhaamsa Abbaa*, *Godaannisa*, and *Gurraacha Abbayaa*. The selection criteria for the novels are time and their stylistic significance. *Kuusaa Gadoo* and *Godaannisa* were written in 1991 and 1992, respectively.

Gurraacha Abbayaa was written in 1996 and *Dhaamsa Abbaa* in 2002. That is, the novels are contemporary. (All years in this thesis are according to European Calendar). Besides, the novels are stylistically significant in the use of lexis, figures of speech and manner of expression.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The identification and description of the major features of style employed in the novels would help to understand the novels in a better manner. The study also helps to gain insight into stylistic comparison of the authors. Moreover, it creates awareness among the language writers to give attention to specific uses of language. Finally, the investigation is hopefully expected to provoke other students who would like to investigate further study in the area.

1.4 Methodology of the Study

This study is a research work based on texts. Most activities were undertaken in the library following the descriptive approach to stylistic analysis. Besides, the following procedures were followed. First, the researcher collected primary and secondary sources from various libraries and individuals. Then, relevant theories that are helpful to organize related literature and theoretical issues were identified. After the researcher has categorized and examined the dominant stylistic features observed in the novels, possible conclusion was drawn.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

Because of time and financial constraints this study is limited to examine some of the major stylistic features indicated in the novels. These are lexis, figures of speech, rhetorical questions, repetition and parallelism.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The aim of this chapter is to present the historical background of Oromo novels and scholarly works done in the area so far. The task starts by discussing the notion of style and various concepts and approaches in stylistic analysis.

2.1 Historical Overview of Oromo Novels

Afan Oromo has been a language of administration, education, and court in the Oromia region since the downfall of the Dirgue regime in 1991. As a result of this, encouraging creative works emerged both in quality and quantity. According to the survey the researcher made so far, at least twelve novels were written and published in Afan Oromo using Latin alphabet.

Kuusaa Gadoo (Cumulative Grief) is the first Afan Oromo novel written by Gadisa Biru in 1991. The writer is entitled to pioneer Oromo novel writing. The major themes of the novel include the misuse of power, corruption, and injustice that took place during the Dirgue regime. Another novel published by the same author in 2002 is entitled *Dhaamsa Abbaa* (Father's Message). This novel reveals sociopolitical conflicts that arise between Amhara and Oromo as a result of wealth and power. Moreover, exploitation and cultural values are also depicted. The author seems to sensitize the powerless and poor to struggle against exploitation and imbalance of power.

Godaannisa (The Scar) and *Gurraacha Abbayaa* (The Black Man of Blue Nile) novels were written by Dhaba Woyessa in 1992 and 1996, respectively. The former one emphasizes the cultural, political and social impacts brought upon the Oromo people by the past ruling classes. In *Gurraacha Abbayaa* the cultural values of the Gumuz people were presented and the author seems to protest the assimilation of these traditional values by the Amhara culture.

Isayas Hordofa has also contributed two novels to the Oromo Prose fiction. *Hawwii* (Dream) is his first novel which was first published in 1995. It assesses the ethnic issue, the outlook and the role of elites in the 1960s. *Yeroon Siif Haadhiistu* (May Time Forgive You) is Isayas's second novel written in 2008(9). The misuse of power by government officials, violation of human rights, morality (articulated by Protestant teachings) are the major issues discussed in the novel.

Suuraa Abdii (A Sign of Hope) is a novel written by Kumsa Burayu in 1993. In the novel the ethnic relationship of Ethiopia and its consequence was addressed. *Kabiir Wadoo Gadaa: Sabboonaa Oromoo* (Kabir Wado Gada: Oromo Nationalist) is a historical novel written by Said Muhammed Ali and it deals with the farmers' uprising in Bale and the struggle of Oromo Liberation Front.

Yaadani (Thoughtful) is a novel written in 1998 by Banti Olika. *Dirmammuu* (Bruise) is a novel by Tekle Kinati which was published in 1995. The first novel reveals how modernization conflicts with harmful cultural practices. Both these novels satirically condemn the ruling party of the Oromia Regional State.

Kudhaama Jaalalaa (Love's Amulate) is a novel written by Abraham Tesfaye in 2004. This novel depicts the miserable life of the people living in Oromia. Tolera Fikru wrote a novel entitled *Imimmaan Haadhaa* (Mother's Tear) in 2007. The theme of this novel revolves around the cruelty of the administration of the past regime, ethnic tolerance and the strength of unity to combat injustice in the society.

When it comes to local research works done in the area, attempts have been made to look at almost every undergraduate and post graduate papers done at Addis Ababa University. Unfortunately the area is less explored. Three research papers were carried out at postgraduate level. Teshome Egere (2004) treated Dhaba Woyessa's novels namely *Godaannisa* and *Gurraacha Abbayaa* in relation to the portrayal of women. Similarly, Zewde Tadesse (2004) conducted his study on gender issues in Gadisa Biru's novels-*Kuusaa Gadoo* and *Dhaamsa Abbaa*. Both researchers found out that most women characters as victims of patriarchy. Tilahun Telila (2006) studied patterns of post 1991 Oromo creative works. Tilahun made great attempt to analyze and categorize the major themes of post 1991 Oromo creative works. His works included ten novels, five plays, and two short stories.

Concerning the papers at undergraduate level, three studies were conducted. Lemma Tadesse (2003) and Habtamu Tesfaye (2003) did their research works on thematic analysis of *Suuraa Abdii* and *Dhaamsa Abbaa*, respectively. Temesgen Woyessa (2004) made analysis of figurative languages and major themes in *Godaannisa*. He found out that simile and personification are dominant figures of speech in the novel.

The presentation of the survey of the research works done at postgraduate and undergraduate levels clearly indicate that very few studies are conducted on Oromo novels.

2.2 The Concept of Stylistics

According to Lucas (1955:16) the word 'style' meant originally 'a writing implement.' However, the term 'stilus', in Classical Latin, was extended to mean two things. The first one was 'a man's way of writing' and the other more general meaning was the 'writer's way of expressing himself.' Here, the writer's self expression can be either in speech or writing. The concept of style is very wide that various scholars discussed it in different ways. To Plato what matters was logic and evidence while style was just 'empty words'. However, Aristotle, a pupil of Plato, paid attention to style. According to him, the major virtues of style are appropriateness and clarity (Brown, 2006:201). To Lucas (1955:49) style is "a means by which a human being gains contact with others; it is personality clothed in words, character embodied in speech." According to Murry (1949:4) style would cover the theory of criticism and the whole of literary aesthetics. To him "style means that personal idiosyncrasy of expression by which we recognize a writer."

In any language, there is no single way of speaking or writing the same message. There may be variation of language at the level of lexis, phonology, semantics, grammar or discourse. Writers follow different modes of writing in order to attain specific objectives. They have their own ways of perception, selection of dictions, and syntactic arrangements.

A French naturalist, George de Buffon, viewed that "The style is the man himself." This means the literary style of a writer reflects his or her personality. Jonathan Swift said of style, "Proper words in proper places make the true definition of style." According to this definition, style is quantifiable based on words, sentences, and length of paragraphs (Gordon and Kuehner, 1999:243). Flaubert defines style as "the writer's own way of thinking or seeing." Chekhov's words to Gorky which say, "You are an artist...When you describe a thing, you see and touch it with your hands. That is real writing" have the same sense with that of Flaubert (Murry, 1949:14).

Although different definitions of style exist, it is very difficult to find a single precise term that encompasses all the notions related to it as style is a relational concept. Based on the notions of style explained above one can state stylistics as a science that studies style of writing. Widdowson (1975:3) defines stylistics as "the study of literary discourse from the linguistics orientation." Technically speaking, stylistics is neither a subject nor a discipline and has no autonomous domain of its own. It essentially links two distinct disciplines namely literary criticism and linguistics. Cuddon (1992:922) also states that it is an analytical science that deals with all the expressive aspects of language. Leech and Short (1981:13) simply define stylistics "as the (linguistic) study of style" and the goal of literary stylistics is to explain the relation between linguistic description and its artistic function. According to these stylisticians, responding to the questions 'how' and 'why' is given due concern.

Even though it is difficult to determine exactly the period at which stylistics began, the term was introduced by Charles Bally, a student of Ferdinand de Saussure, in 1909 (Brown, 2006:213).

The role of a stylistician is not only to find the meaning of a text but also to discover the manner of organization of the meaning. Stylistics has great potential for literary study as it can help critical reading by emphasizing and describing linguistic structures of a given discourse. Since stylistics deals with the interpretation of texts by giving peculiar attention to various linguistic patterns and their effects on readers, the essential variations existing at the level of lexis, phonology, syntax, semantics or discourse are considered as bases for stylistics. The presupposition in stylistics is that "every linguistic feature in a text has potential significance." (ibid, p.213)

As its attention is more on texts, stylistics is sometimes taken as a branch of text linguistics. It could also be viewed as a branch of applied linguistics since it employs linguistic frameworks. Coulthard (1985:179), in favor of this idea, states, "Like all other branches of applied linguistics, stylistics depends on the tools provided by theoretical linguistics." Theoretical linguistics is the branch of linguistics that is most concerned with developing models of linguistic knowledge. Part of this endeavor involves the search for and explanation of linguistic universals, that is, properties all languages have in common. Phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics are fields that are generally considered the core of theoretical linguistics. Scholars like Roger Fowler used the term linguistic criticism for stylistics. The reason is that even if linguistic criticism reflects the primacy of language, its goal is not a simple and mechanical description of different features of texts. The aim of linguistic analysis is to explore evidences of linguistics for critical evaluation. This helps to produce verifiable analysis based on intuitions entirely based on texts. Hence, stylistics can be classified into various domains according to its

application. These include literary, cognitive, synchronic, diachronic, pedagogical, linguistic, discourse, and computational stylistics (Brown, 2006:218). Among these domains the concern of this study is literary stylistics, which is the systematic study of literary language and its style.

According to Simpson (1997) stylistics has many functions. To mention some of them, first stylistics uses textual analysis in the process of investigating the pattern and role of language and can be considered as one of the methods of applied linguistics. Secondly, it has great potential for literary study as it can help critical readings by emphasizing and describing linguistic structures of a given discourse. Short (1996:9) also supports this function as follows:

Stylistic analysis, besides helping you to acquire an explicit and rational basis for deciding between interpretations should also help you to become more consciously aware of the process of interpretation which you use in order to grips with the texts you read.

Stylistics has also a specific linguistic function in that it lays a good background for the development and investigation of linguistic theories. Lastly, stylistics plays a facilitating role in comparing various genres of a language.

Both literary criticism and linguistics are important for the successful analysis of a text. In relation to this Coulthard (1985:179) states as follows:

Literature is the art form realized through language and, although evaluation and interpretation is the province of a literary critic, it is reasonable to suggest that a detailed analysis of authorial technique and stylistic features can be more successfully achieved within a rigorous linguistic framework.



It is believed that a literary text can never have a single interpretation. The genres of the text, the context of communication and readers' different experiences are the major factors that affect text interpretation (Brown, 2006:203). Hence, the ability of interpreting a literary text from various angles increases the value of stylistics. Although various ways of interpretation exist in stylistics, there are systematic models and procedures that allow the readers to arrive at agreement concerning the meaning of the text. In relation to this, Short (1996:6) states, "The most interesting thing is that *in spite of these differences* there is a remarkable amount of agreement among readers over what particular texts mean." This makes stylistics an interdisciplinary tool among different subjects.

The separation of style from content has been a controversial issue among literary critics and it can be viewed from three different approaches: monism, dualism, and pluralism. Monism assumes that form and content are inseparable. Gustave Flaubert supports this view stating, "it is like body and soul: form and content to me are one" (Leech and Short, 1981:15). Because of the presence of literary devices such as irony, metaphor, and multivalued meanings, stylistic monism has the strongest ground in poetry. The New Critics like I.A Richards, Cleanth Brooks, and Robert Penn Warren strongly disagree on the dichotomy of form and content (Volpe et al, 1967:4). The famous literary critic David Lodge also adopted a monist view. To him there is no essential difference between prose and verse as far as a reader gains access to the imaginary world only through language (Leech and Short, 1981:35).

Dualism restricts literary style to choices of manner rather than matter. It assumes that the text can be paraphrased and in the meanwhile one separates the choice of language made by the writer from what he/she

intended to mean. Richard Ohmann was a modern dualist who concentrated on the grammatical rather than the lexical aspect of style. Phrase Structure Rules and Transformational Rules are the two main kinds of rules he postulated and he argued that the later rules are important to determine style. Charles Bally, a French stylistician, considered style as expressive linguistic element that is added to the content whereas Roland Barthes, a French writer, postulated the ideal concept which states "writing at degree zero". Leech and Short strongly argue that there is no text without style (ibid, p.18-19). This harmonious nature of style and content is further stated as follows:

Content and style...are still frequently being discussed in terms of two separate entities, which creates the paradox of simultaneously postulating a oneness and 'twoness.' ...This paradoxical thinking has provided considerable scope for creativity in that it has become an evaluative tool in the hands of literary critics as well as a source of inspiration for poets and writers (Brown, 2006:204).

Stylistic pluralism is the analysis of style in terms of different functions of language. The prominent figure in this school of thought was M.A.K Halliday. His view is that "all linguistic choices are meaningful and all linguistic choices are stylistic." Pluralists can indicate the interrelationship of choices of language within a chain of different fictional choices of language (Leech and Short, 1981:18).

The six-level model of linguistic structure and discourse is the basic model in order to distinguish different numbers of linguistic levels. These six levels that are regarded as stylistic markers are graphology, lexis, phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. All these levels are interdependent and interconnected. Typography, punctuation, type face, et cetera are included in graphological features. Sounds, rhythm, and

rhyme are phonological in nature and are usually common in poetry than in prose. Syntax is concerned with a grammar of a language (Brown, 2006:203). Both pragmatics and semantics are concerned with meaning. Abstract and relatively stable meanings in the language are dealt by semantics whereas variable elements of meaning which are extended from utterances and contextual use of linguistic system are the concerns of pragmatists (ibid, p.232).

Although there is no satisfactory theory and methodology to undertake stylistic analysis of prose writing, linguistics would be very helpful. This does not mean that it is considered as an objective and mechanical technique of analysis. As regards to this Leech and Short (1981:5) stated the following:

One major concern of stylistics is to check or validate intuitions by detailed analysis, but stylistics is also a dialogue between literary reader and linguistic observer, in which insight, not mere objectivity, is the goal. Linguistic analysis does not replace the reader's intuition...but it may prompt, direct, and shape it into an understanding.

More recent theories support the argument that there is no text without style and stylistic analysis can be applied to both literary and non-literary texts. An appropriate interpretation is effective when the linguistic features are combined with the contextual and general knowledge of the reader. There could be many kinds of style within a single work of literature and, hence, it is important to become selective by giving focus to the prominent features of a text. Short (1996) emphasizes that linguistic deviation is one of the most important concepts in stylistic analysis. Deviation is common in poetry even though it exists in other types of writing. Writer's use of deviation as a technique has a power of creating psychological effect on the part of the audience and this is

termed foregrounding. Writers foreground the linguistic feature of their works through phonological, graphological, morphological, lexical, grammatical, semantic and discursal deviations. Even though every work of art is significant, the foregrounded elements are more significant than the rest. As Short states, "Foregrounded features are the parts of the text which the author consciously or unconsciously is signalling as crucial to our understanding of what he has written" (ibid, p.36).

As attempted to address some various scholarly works above, applying a system of categorization is a typical way to do stylistic analysis. One is expected to include general qualities such as imagery, repetition, diction, sentence structure, coherence and management of ideas while doing stylistic analysis of a certain literary text. The language of poetry is usually said to be difficult to understand. However, it is believed that stylistic analysis of a novel is the most difficult activity because of its large size and complexity of the discursal structure of the genre. Consequently, stylisticians can only analyze significant and representative excerpts taken from the novel (Short, 1996:265).

The reader's knowledge of the language system is not adequate in order to analyse a literary work. According to Widdowson (1975:33) there are two kinds of meaning. The first one is that which inheres in linguistic items as elements of the code. The second kind is that which linguistic items assume when they appear in contexts of use. Therefore, the analysis of a literary work involves the association of these two kinds of meaning.

Stylistic analysis can be seen as looking at the text in great detail, observing what the parts are, and stating the functions they perform in the context of the text. Stylistic analysis of a literary work is often made

for the purpose of commenting on quality and meaning in a text. Doing this basically involves close examination of the linguistic particularities of a text and related meaning and effect on the reader. Analysis of the patterns of lexis, phonology, grammatical organization, and foregrounded features is relevant to the meaning of a particular text (Short, 1996:344). Writers foreground their meaning by establishing patterns of word choice, of repetitive grammatical structure, of rhythm and alliteration. Analysis is much concerned with the discovery of such patterns by describing textual features and explains their intended effects. Leech and Short (1981:75) suggest a useful method on how linguistic description can be used to analyze the style of a prose text. They designed a check list of linguistic and stylistic categories under four general headings. These include lexical, grammatical, figures of speech, and cohesion and context. The answers given to a list of questions under each of the headings will help the analyzer to examine the literary effect of the text.

It is with these theoretical principles that the researcher made an attempt to analyze the major literary styles of four Oromo novels.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF LITERARY STYLE IN FOUR AFAN OROMO NOVELS

Gadisa Biru and Dhaba Woyesssa have so far contributed two novels each to the development of Oromo literature. Gadisa's first novel, *Kuusaa Gadoo* [Cumulative Grief] was published in August 1991 and he is pioneer to Oromo novel writing. His second novel, *Dhaamsa Abbaa* [Father's Message] was published in 2002. The novels of Dhaba Woyessa, on the other hand, are entitled *Godaannisa* [The Scar] and *Gurraacha Abbayaa* [The Black Man of Blue Nile]. They were published in 1992 and 1996, respectively.

These novels are framed by artistically selected stylistic devices that highlight the preoccupations of the writers. The authors' creative utilization of their language and the chosen devices disclose the lives and roles of their characters so that readers are stimulated to view the phenomena existing in the society.

This section presents analyses of the most recurrent and outstanding stylistic features of the novels. These include figures of speech, lexis, rhetorical questions, repetition and parallelism.

3.1 Figures of Speech

Writers employ many devices to share their ideas. They select appropriate linguistic elements in order to address their readers effectively and aesthetically. Figures of speech are one such literary device used by writers. According to Shaw (1972:160), figures of speech are “expressive use of language in which words are used in other than their literal senses so as to suggest and produce pictures or images in a reader’s (hearer’s) mind.” Some of the examples of figures of speech are simile, personification, metaphor, hyperbole, irony, synecdoche, etc. Even though other figures of speech exist in minor numbers in the novels, simile and personification are the dominant figures of speech which are found in the creative works of both Oromo novelists. Compared to Gadisa, Dhaba is a writer whose preference for simile is so high.

3.1.1 Simile

Simile is a figure of speech by which comparison of two different things can be made in such a way that common characteristics can be sorted out. In simile, “one thing is likened to another, in such a way as to clarify and enhance an image.” (Cuddon, 1992: 880) Simile is common in prose and verse and its explicit comparison is recognizable by the use of words ‘like’ or ‘as’. In the analysis of simile, “tenor” and “vehicle” are two coined terms used by I.A Richards (ibid. p.959). By tenor he simply meant the original idea and vehicle is the image that embodies the tenor.

In Oromo language, similarity is introduced by the following connective words:

“akka”, meaning like, as
 “fakkaata”, meaning seem

“Hamma” is a special similarity indicator when the comparison entirely refers to size as illustrated in the following example.

Dabbasaan ishee hamma fe’umaati dheerata.
 Her hair is long as a strap of leather.

The researcher has made an attempt to identify the total number of similes in the four novels in line with their indicative words. Accordingly, there are 229 similes in *Gurraacha Abbayaa* and 133 similes in *Godaannisa*. Out of a total of 362 similes, only 56 (15.47%) are indicated by the word “fakkaata” (seem). Among these 35 are in *Gurraacha Abbayaa* and the rest are in *Godaannisa*. These figures depict that “akka” (like/as) is a peculiar stylistic feature of Dhaba Woyessa. Considering Gadisa’s novels, the researcher found out 45 similes out of which only 7 are illustrated by the word “fakkaata” (seem), the distribution being 3 in *Kuusaa Gadoo* and 4 in *Dhaamsa Abbaa*. Hence, it could be concluded that Gadisa prefers “akka” to “fakkaata” for his stylistic effect.

The following table shows the types and number of similes the novelists used.

Table1: Type and number of similes

Type	Novels			
	<i>Gurraacha Abbayaa</i>	<i>Godaannisa</i>	<i>Kuusaa Gadoo</i>	<i>Dhaamsa Abbaa</i>
Concrete-to-concrete	132	101	28	12
Concrete-to-abstract	20	8	-	1
Abstract-to-concrete	47	12	1	2
Abstract-to-abstract	30	12	1	-

As indicated in the above table, Dhaba and Gadisa tremendously used concrete-to-concrete comparison. This accounts for 64.36% of the total similes used by Dhaba and 93.33% of the similes used by Gadisa. The abstract-to-concrete is 59 (16.3%), the abstract-to-abstract 42 (11.6%) and the concrete-to-abstract 28 (7.7%) in Dhaba's novels. The above quantitative data enable the researcher to conclude that both writers prefer the concrete-to-concrete type of comparison.

It is important to cite some of the instances in the novels that show various types of comparisons.

I. Concrete-to-concrete

- Dhagni koo furdaa akka okkotee yookan qallaa akka leemmanaa osoo hintanee giddu galeessa (Dhaba, 1992:3).

My body is neither fat like a pot nor thin like a ladle. It is medium.

- Hidhiii ishee fufurdaan timaatima bilchate fakkaatu (ibid. p, 12).

Her thick lips look like a ripen tomato.

- Akka saree eegee firfirsee abbaa biriifatuu ... (Gadisa, 1991:31).

Like a dog wagging its tail to its master...

- Awwaara...uffannee antuuta daakuu keessaa baate fakkaannaabar (ibid.2002:29).

We look like a mouse that comes out of flour.

The above examples involve concrete elements in both the tenor and the vehicle. In the first example, the body of a human being is compared to household objects which make the size of the body easily recognizable. In the case of the second example, the beauty of the lips of one of the characters, Woinshet, stands out vividly by comparing them with a ripen tomato. When a tomato ripens, its color is changed from green to red

which heralds people for consumption. Likewise, the thick and attractive lips of Woinshet sensitized the sexual feeling of Abdisa and consequently he fell in love with her. The simile in the second example shows an effort made by Asfaw, a villain in *Kuusaa Gadoo*, in order to handle those individuals in power. Lastly, human beings are compared with a mouse that comes out of flour. This indicates that the passengers traveled on a dusty road.

II. Abstract-to-concrete

- Yaada sammuu koo keessaa akka tafkii na nyaatu... (Dhaba, 1992:3).

The idea in my mind bites me like a flea.

- Abdiin keessa isaatti ijarames, akka godoo gubate sanaa, daaraa tahuu isaa yaade (ibid.2005:126).

He thought that the hope developed in him would vanish like that of a burnt house.

- Yaada akka hoomecha...aannan...(Gadisa, 1991: 131)

Idea like bubbles of milk...

- Hameenyi obboleetti isaatirratti hojjetames akka madaa quba isaa gube (ibid. 2002:103).

The wicked acts done on his sister is aching him like a wounded finger.

The tenors of the similes under this category are abstract and the vehicles are concrete things. In the first and third examples, the tenor is idea whereas in the second one it is hope. In the last example, wickedness is tenor. The vehicle in the first and second example is an insect. In the third and fourth examples, the vehicle is food substance and part of a body, respectively. Most of the time writers use abstract-to-concrete type of comparison in order to magnify abstract things.

III. Concrete-to-abstract

- Godaansni adda isaatirraa calaqqisu bakkalcha reefu bawu fakkaata (Gadisa, 2002:13).

The scar that shines from his forehead looks like a new moon.

- Fuulli ishee, akka ji'a dumeessa keessa dhokattee baatee...(Dhaba, 1992:70).

Her face, like a moon emerged out of fog.

- Otuu hinse'iin fuula isaa akka biiftuu ganamaa ibse (ibid. 2005:90).

Unconsciously, his face shines like a morning sun.

- Akka jinnii halkan narratti iyyaa bulta (ibid.p.238)

You trouble me the night crying like evil spirit.

It is not common to find concrete-to-abstract comparisons in large quantities. Almost this type of comparison is not used by Gadisa. Relatively, few of them (7.7%) have been employed by Dhaba. As cited in the above instances, the abstraction of the vehicle is to illustrate the original idea by comparing it with nature like moon and sun.

IV. Abstract-to-abstract

- O'inni nafa isaa yoo dafqa nafa isaatirraa aarsuu, lafa...jiin irraa aaru fakkaata (Gadisa, 1991:108-109).

The steam coming out of his hot body looks like evaporation.

- Miirri keessa isaa akka qilleensa Onkoloolessaa... buubbise (Dhaba, 2005:17).

His internal feeling moves like the wind of October.

- Abdii xiqqoon, akka ifa qal'oo cuuroo keenyaa manaan seentuu, keessa isaa seente (ibid. p.27).

He felt little hope like a ray of the sun coming into the house through the hole of the wall.

Like the type of comparison in the third category, it is difficult to use abstract things to express other abstract ideas. The first example is from Gadisa's novel, *Kuusaa Gadoo*. Dechasa, a major character of the story has a wife and a son at Bekoji. After he joined Addis Ababa University, he met a new girl friend named Genet. She was born and brought up in Addis Ababa and she did not know that he had his own family. The first example artistically presents Dechasa's mental and physical trouble when he has got Genet and his son, Gezehagn, in his home few days after he was employed at Ethiopian Mapping Agency.

Dhaba, in particular, made an attempt to reveal relatively complex ideas with less abstract ones as mentioned in the third and fourth examples. October is a month known for its strong wind especially in northern and central highlands of Ethiopia. The strength of the internal feeling of Teto, a major character in *Gurraacha Abbayaa*, is compared to the October wind since he was extremely attracted by culturally dressed beautiful Gumuz girls who sing and work in cotton plantation. In the third example, a little amount of hope that arose in Teto's father to attack his enemies is compared with a single ray of the sun.

It is also important to present sample analyses of the similes in the novels from the perspective of the purposes they serve.

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3.1.1.1 Purpose of similes in *Kuusaa Gadoo* and *Dhaamsa Abbaa*

The following few instances reveal the purposes of similes used by Gadisa.

Fuunduraan akka dubartii jiin ishii galee moora jiksee
mormarraan akka korma qanbara seenee hinbeeknee lum'ee
baase (Gadisa, 1991:31).

His belly is very large like a pregnant woman of nine months
and the nape of his neck grew like a bull never yoked for
farming.

In this simile, the physical appearance of Asfaw Haile is presented in artistic manner. Asfaw is one of the major characters in *Kuusaa Gadoo*. He is a civil servant at Bekoji Municipality. Every body who wants to have land either for residence or business in that town should give him a bribe. The stomach of a pregnant woman of nine months is very large as the fetus reaches its maturity and ready for delivery. Almost all farming in Ethiopia is animal driven particularly by pair of oxen yoked together. Because of this and other benefits, rural inhabitants have strong attachment with cattle. In Oromia, one of the regional states of Ethiopia, especially in Arsi, Bale, and Borena zones the possession of large number of cattle is considered as a sign of prestige. Because of this one can find many bulls in a single family. The bulls are not used for farming and they are rather kept in a good grazing land for effective mating purposes. Asfaw's large belly and well-built nape came from the wealth of the people. Like the idle bulls, which do not involve in farming, he is not hard worker and honest. He uses the position he held in government office for his prosperity. Gadisa, through the above simile, therefore, discloses the misuse of power and bribery practiced in some areas of Oromia.

Similar instances are also depicted in Gadisa's second novel, *Dhaamsa Abbaa*.

Akka jabbii nama mana hidhaatti naquun rakkoo jira jedhamuuf furmaata ta'aa? (Gadisa, 2002:54)

Is imprisoning people like a calf be a solution for the existing problems?

Here, the author compared imprisoned persons with calves. These two different things are stylistically tied up together. Calves are kept at home isolated from their mothers and other matured cattle due to two basic reasons. The first one is that they are young and can easily be gored by bigger animals. They do not know except sucking milk and gamboling. They gradually learn grazing in the field which is not far away from home. The second reason is that the family would not get milk when the calves accompany their mothers the whole day. In the country side, both the calf and the family get milk in the morning and in evening. Like the calves tied with a rope and kept at home, the majority of the peoples were imprisoned without committing any crime. Every suspected person is sent to prison in Sire town, where the story is set. This action of the governing body is to exploit the public just like a family ties a calf at home to milk their cows. The author, implicitly, satirizes the economic exploitation and violation of human rights being undertaken in the society through the use of the simile. Such severe oppression is further stated as follows:

Hidhamtoonni dugda isaanii kan akka maxaanaa fe'aan itti hammaatee qunca'e uffata mulqatanii agarsiifatan (ibid.p.172)

The prisoners took off their clothes and showed their backbones which were peeled off like a beast of burden wounded on its back due to continuous heavy load.

In the simile, the injured body of the prisoners is compared to a wounded back of a donkey or a mule. Naturally, beasts of burden are animals primarily used for carrying loads. Their backs are wounded when they are loaded heavily and become restless. Prisoners from every corner of the region were taken to the place named Melka Wakena. Their families do not know where they are and many of them were killed here. The rest were tormented by electric current and other means. This was recognized when the neutral committee which was set up at the regional level made a visit to the area. Gadisa's stylistic preference has contributed to the intensification of the agony of the prisoners.

Gadisa is also wise in employing similes that reveal the internal feeling of his characters as shown in the following paragraph.

Duraanillee kan garaa kiyya jiru gadi liqimsee akka ulfa
seexanaa kanan wajjin ture isin...fixu jedhee sodaadhetan
(ibid.p.102).

Formerly, I kept the matter secretly like the pregnancy of
Satan since I thought that they will kill you.

These are words of Woizero Beshadu, the mother of three sons and a daughter. Her husband, Aredo, was a tenant killed when his children were at early ages. Balambaras Getaneh was a landlord during a feudal system of government in Ethiopia. Getaneh ordered Aredo together with other tenants to maintain the fence of the prison situated at Jeju town for three days. In the absence of her husband, she was raped by the landlord. Lately, he killed her husband with a rifle. She never disclosed this story including her husband's message that his children should take revenge when they are grown old. Except Megersa, who is a member of the ruling party, one of her sons was killed by police officers and the other was in prison. Keneni, her single daughter, was raped by the land

lord's son, Habtamu Getaneh. Also she became a victim of HIV/AIDS. These multitude oppressions urged their mother to disclose the secret. It is this secret which lasted for a generation that Gadisa stylistically compared it with the pregnancy of a Satan. Satan is a spirit and by any means reproduction is not its characteristics. It is foolishness to expect a pregnant Satan. The comparison is made to emphasize the extent to which the issue is complex and stayed hidden. Moreover, the simile involves thematically significant idea that the Oromo people were oppressed and exploited by minority Amhara ruling classes for a long period of time.

3.1.1.2 Purpose of similes in *Godaannisa* and *Gurraacha Abbayaa*

Simile is the most frequently used figures of speech in Dhaba's novels. The similes are used to describe nature, to reveal physical appearance and emotional feelings of his characters. An attempt has been made to analyze only few of them.

Halkan tokko utuun wa'ee nama barreessuu yaaduu walaloon waraqaa qabsiise kun yeroo hunduma akka bilbilaa sammuu kootti kililsa (Dhaba, 1992:5).

One night while I was thinking of an author, the poem which I once wrote on the paper always rings in my mind like a bell.

In the above simile, an abstract thought is compared to a concrete object. The major character in *Godaannisa*, Abdisa Solan, has a strong ambition to become a writer. He reads many literatures related to writing and wants to follow the philosophies of the renowned writers. However, he found some of these ideas discouraging. That is why he found it difficult to finalize even a single poem he has once started. A bell is an awakening device and when it rings everybody's attention is geared towards a

particular matter. Similarly, Abdisa's mind was preoccupied with the idea of becoming a writer and his poem alerts him as a ring of bell. The author's use of this simile made the abstract thought to be visualized through the concrete object, bell.

The following simile also brings an abstract idea into vision.

Sammuun koo akka cittuu foonii, saroonna irratti walga'anii
gamaafi gamanatti harkisanii, utuu dhisamu barnootni
waggaa sanaa xumurame (ibid.p.30).

My first year education was completed while I was oscillating
among various ideas like a piece of meat snatched here and
there by a group of dogs.

Abdisa has suffered a lot during his childhood. He was born at Bila, a small town in Wollega. He was eight years old when his father died. Manalew Belay, an Amhara national, misled Abdisa's mother and married her in a pretext of helping her. Formerly, he came from Merehabete to this area to make his living by picking coffee. Since their mother get married to him, Abdisa and his sister, Kulani, grew in their uncle's home. Later on, when his sister went to Nedgo town to visit her mother, she was raped by her step father. When this news was heard among Kulani's relatives, they decided to kill Manalew. However, he collected all his properties and abandoned the area. Abdisa's mother has got four children from Manalew and all the family responsibilities fall on her shoulder. She was obliged to make clay pots and brew 'areke' (traditionally distilled liquor) to lead life. Kulani became a prostitute in Jima. Abdisa completed his high school education and joined the then Haramaya University of Agriculture. In the university, he fell in sight love with Woinshet. Besides, university education is difficult and requires close attention. All these overwhelming ideas put Abdisa's mind in stress. The novelist presented Abdisa's stress in artistically visualized manner by

the use of a simile. This stylistic device can make readers to view various ideas that made Abdisa's mind restless. Dogs are carnivorous animals and meat is the most important food for them. They quarrel and struggle on a piece of meat as much as they can to take the largest share. The author compared Abdisa's restless mind with a piece of meat thrown to a group of dogs. Hence, the style of the author in describing an emotional instance is so significant.

The author describes the beauty of his characters using simile as in the example below.

Fayyaa keetii...jetteeti, akka abaaboo reefuu dhohee fuula
bareedaa natti agarsiifte (ibid.p.51).

When she greeted me, her face is charming like a freshly
bloomed flower.

Telile, one of the major characters in *Godaannisa*, is a freshman student who came from Bedele. Abdisa acquainted with her while they were traveling to Haramaya University. He promised to help her in freshman courses. Later on, their friendship developed to love. Abdisa's appreciation of Telile's beauty is visualized through the use of the above simile. The blooming of flowers is interesting to the eye of the observer. Human beings, birds and other insects feel a very nice smell when flowers bloom; most people cut and put a vase of flower in their homes. It is also exchanged as present since it is a symbol of love. Other animals like bees make honey out of it. The simile could help to imagine to what extent Abdisa is attracted by the beauty of Telile. He wanted to make a 'love's honey'. Accordingly, he fulfilled his wish in one of the hotels at Dire Dawa.

Dhaba has also used similes that depict the emotional feelings of his characters as cited in the following instance.

Gaawaanii sirna eebbaaf uffatamu...akka uffata gaddaattan of irratti ilaala (ibid.p.106).

I considered the gown I wore for my graduation as a mourning cloth.

People have their different ways of expressing their happiness and sorrow. One of these is clothing. According to Ethiopian culture, white cloth is worn during feasts and annual holidays. When a completely dark cloth is worn, it is often associated with a death of the member of the family or a relative. It is clear that a graduation gown is dark in color and worn as a sign of success. Abdisa felt sad because he is guilty of betraying his lover. Telile conceived the first day she passed the night with Abdisa. When she told this happening, he did not believe her. Even though she made great attempts to avoid the pregnancy with traditional means, she was not successful. Finally, she left the campus. Till then, Abdisa does not have any information about her. He remembers her on his graduation day. He felt guilty and cruel; he is a cause for Telile to be dismissed from the university. He shattered her hope to learn and to help her poor family. Above all, he betrayed her when she became pregnant and lost his life partner. Therefore, the author employed simile of concrete objects to reveal the emotional feeling of Abdisa.

In the following simile, Dhaba criticizes a woman who lost her language and identity.

Yommuu dubbattu, cabaqni ishee mucaa afaan baraa jirtu fakkaata (ibid.p.144).

When she stammers, she seems a child that learns a language.

Meron and Abdisa were born in the same town, Bila. She was his school mate. After he got job in Addis Ababa, one day he suddenly met her in

one of the cafeterias around Bole. He was surprised by her current name and way of speaking. She changed her name from Weje to Meron. Besides, she does not want to speak Oromo language and pronounces some of the words with great difficulty as if she had forgotten her mother tongue. The author compares Meron's stammering with a small child who wrongly pronounces words. Therefore, through the use of the simile, the manner of speaking of the character becomes explicit to the reader. Moreover, the author coined one of his major themes in the simile. He advises those Amharized Oromos like Meron to regain their lost language, culture, and identity.

The life of the poor around Raguel Church is depicted in the following simile.

Isaan xinnoo fooyyee qaban, plaastikii fi keeshaa akka godoo
simbiraa walitti suphanii keessa qubatu (ibid.p. 132).

Those who are in a better condition shelter themselves in
plastics and sacks patched together like a nest.

Abdisa lives around Gojjam Berenda. This is the area where the largest open market exists. Business men, daily laborers, thieves, beggars, prostitutes, travelers and all kinds of people exist. Above all the poor dwelling around Raguel Church caught Abdisa's attention. He always sees them on his way to office and back to home. All of them have either physical or psychological problems and lead a miserable life. In the above simile, the author compared their shelters with a nest. Birds make their nests from different interwoven twigs of plants and feathers. The making of nests increases especially during the rainy season. Birds awake early in the morning and herald the dawn to creatures. They fly here and there in search of their food; they do not seem to worry for what to eat the next day. As mentioned above, the life of birds and the poor resembles each

other in many ways. Like birds, the poor make their shelter from pieces of worn out clothes, plastics, sacks, etc patched together. Similarly, they give emphasis to make shelters during rainy season. Besides, they awake early to beg alms from church goers and other passers-by. There is no food that they accumulate for the forthcoming days. Hence, Dhaba's use of the simile is so stylistic that it enables the readers visualize the instance.

Among the four novels selected for analysis, Dhaba's second novel (*Gurraacha Abbayaa*) is the largest in volume constituting 273 pages. The novelist employed 229 similes with a purpose of illustrating the appearance, activities, and emotional conditions of his characters. The following paragraphs are devoted to the analyses of few of these similes.

Qaamowwan gugurraan oyruu jirbii san keessa wasan immoo hoomaa goondaa huccuu adii irra yaa'u fakkaatu (Dhaba, 2005:16).

The black people, who are gathering cotton from the farm, look like a swarm of ants bumping on the white garment.

The Gumuz people are one of the nationalities in Ethiopia who have their own culture and language. They have strong tradition of working, eating, dancing, and combating their enemies in groups. The skin of most Ethiopians is dark brown in color. However, the Gumuz are completely dark. It is during a cropping season that the cotton comes out of its shell and the field turns white. Hence, those black people working in teams are easily visible in the cotton field. The novelist is very artistic in bringing into vision the color of the Gumuz by comparing it with a swarm of ants bumping on the white garment. He did not use common types of expressing skin color. Dhaba illustrates the phenomena with careful

selection of words and expressions that are memorable to the mind. This is his stylistic choice.

One can also find a similar way of expression in the following simile.

Maddiileen fuula isaanii gama-gamanaa daaddoo guduruu rifeensa isaanii irraa gad yaa'u dibatanii, samii gurraacha qarri boruu-diimaa irra buufate fakkaatu (ibid.p.17)

They anointed 'dado' [traditional lotion] on their plaited hairs. When it flows on both sides of their faces, they look like a dark sky on which a rainbow is seen.

Dado is a cultural ointment of hair used by Gumuz women. When the temperature is hot it melts and flows from their hairs. It is prepared from finely ground red stone and castor-oil. A mixture of these two colors forms some parts of a rainbow. Among the seven colors of the spectrum that are dispersed by prism, red is the most visible one. The author illustrates the black skin of the Gumuz by comparing it with a dark sky. Rainbow is usually seen during rainy seasons and when the sky is covered by thick clouds. Dhaba brings into vision the flow of the cultural ointment on the faces of the Gumuz women.

The simile below reveals the tone of a voice artistically.

Yeroo geeraru, sagaleen isaa akka muka qilleensi sochoosuu kufee ka'a (ibid.p. 22).

While he is singing, the tone of his voice falls and raises like a tree moving up and down by the wind.

The man who is singing is Gebru Tefera, a minor character in *Gurraacha Abbayaa*. Gebru is an Amhara national whose family came to the land of Gumuz from Wollo. His parents exploited and oppressed the Gumuz and Oromo peoples of western Ethiopia. Like his forefathers, Gebru undermines the Gumuz. He boasts of his ethnicity and calls them "shankella" which means Negro. He used to have sexual intercourse with

hopeless. Once he heard people talking about a competition that rewards much wealth. The groups of people were joking because no body wants to be eaten by the crocodile. Since Teto is so ambitious to marry a girl, he entered into the Blue Nile to cut and bring a tail of a crocodile. He was awarded expensive weapons and other materials. Besides, he became famous and respectable in the village. Unfortunately, the girl he loved was given to another person who has a female relative. Teto killed her brother to marry her by giving expensive dowry. Again his plan failed. The author stylistically presents this hopeless heart of Teto by comparing it with an empty beehive. He lost many things-his parents, his sister, his lover, his concubine. Love is sweet like honey; he lost the one who sweets his life. Hence, the style of Dhaba enables readers to view vividly the hopeless life of a character through simple physical objects around them. There is also another example which reveals the stress of the same character.

Yaadni isaa akka haroo ulaa ittiin ba'ee yaa'uu dhabee, asii-
achi danbali'a (ibid.p.202)

Many ideas flow in his mind like a drainage of water that does
not have a tube to flow through.

Teto is a strong ideal person. When one of his ideas fails, he tries another. He faced many challenges. The one who officially married his lover understood that his wife conceived from Teto. Teto was accused and stood before old men in the village. Since he came to this village, all sorts of ideas have been occupying his mind. This is artistically expressed by the author through the use of the simile. Dhaba magnified abstract ideas by comparing it with a concrete object. Drainage of water without tube is accumulated in one space and finally flows over the object that blocked

it. The author expressed in artistic manner the extent to which the character is in confusion and his ideas left without solution.

Both writers used various similes as stylistic devices to describe physical and emotional conditions of their characters. Most of the similes employed by Gadisa involve the depiction of the major and minor themes. Dhaba's similes on the other hand, are endowed with entertaining and memorable expressions. Unlike Gadisa, his similes hardly involve thematic preoccupations.

3.1.2 Personification

According to Shaw (1972:288) personification is "a figure of speech in which abstractions, animals, ideas, and inanimate objects are endowed with human form, character, traits, or sensibilities." Through the use of personification, writers attribute human qualities to inanimate objects. It appears to be very frequent especially in poetry.

The researcher made an attempt to identify the quantitative distribution of this stylistic device in the four novels selected for analysis. Accordingly, Gadisa used only five personifications in *Kuusaa Gadoo* and three in his second novel, *Dhaamsa Abbaa*. Dhaba, on the other hand, used thirty three in *Godaannisa* and nine in *Gurraacha Abbayaa*. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that personification as a stylistic device is not a choice of Gadisa. Dhaba used this device in many instances especially in his first novel. Some of the personifications employed in both novels are analyzed below.

Yeroon...eerga kudha lama guuteen booda ariifata keecha darbee farda fe'atee ka'e (Gadisa, 1991:16).

The time is so running fast after it passed six o'clock. Besides, it saddled its horse to run faster.

In the above example, the abstract thing, time, is given a quality of a human being. Dechasa fell in love with Genet. He dated her for the first time in Kennedy Library at six o'clock in the evening. The time, which became late before six, became fast after six. Dechasa waited for her until seven thirty in the evening and she did not come. Time is endowed a characteristic of human being as if it uses a horse as a means of transportation. Putting a saddle on the back of a horse and then galloping are activities that belong to a human being. However, the author endowed those qualities to time. One gallops a horse to arrive at its destination within a short time. Moreover, the person would not be exhausted. Similarly, Dechasa was in a hurry to know the kind of response Genet will give him. His heart exhausted due to love affair he began with her. Upon the arrival of Genet on the appointment, he hoped to relief his heart. The author gave this particular time a quality of a human being in order to reveal the internal feelings of his character. This quality of a human being forces the reader to visualize the instance imaginatively. The use of personification contributed to the style of the text.

The next instance also presents human characters given to abstract thing, spirit.

Abdaariin biyya Boqojjii nagumaan nu simattee nu hammatte, amma garuu waan baleechine moojii dugda ishii nutti garagalchaati jirti (ibid.p.45).

The guardian spirit of Bekoji welcomed and embraced us peacefully. We do not know what mistake we committed; it is turning us its back now.



'Abdar' is believed to be manifested via worshipped trees and big stones. People make coffee and slaughter cattle around these physical objects so that they are kept from harm, get rain and good harvest. This spirit is given qualities of a human being as if it has hands, mouth, and a backbone. One welcomes the other by a word of mouth or a handshake. Besides, there will be front side when there is back. The author gave these qualities to the spirit for effective expression. Dechasa and his elder brother, Guta, originally came to Bekoji from Selale (North Shewa) as a result of homicide Guta committed in their village. When they came, they do not have any relatives or acquaintances. The two brothers have lived in peace until Dechasa's wife is taken by an officer working at Bekoji Municipality while Dechasa was pursuing his study at Addis Ababa University. The personification also foreshadows the challenge the two brothers will face.

Gadisa also endowed activities of human beings to nature as in the following two examples.

Kaakkaaf Inqoolo gamaa gamana taa'anii isa ilaalanii waan funyaan walitti butanii itti kolfan...itti fakkaate (ibid.p. 161).

He felt that Kaka and Enkolo [mountains], which sat side by side, are looking and laughing at him winking at each other.

Kaka and Enkolo are mountains found around Bekoji town. Even though they are inanimate objects, the author attributed human qualities to them. Human beings can move towards every direction. They wink at each other, chat, laugh, etc. As mountains are immovable natural resources, sitting, watching, laughing, and winking do not belong to them. The personification represents the internal stress of Dechasa when he attempted to kill Asfaw in the night. During the night, except few wild animals, all living creatures are sheltered from darkness. The author

endowed these qualities to mountains since there were no living things around Dechasa that watch his struggle. The use of personification presents the scene in artistic way. Similar instance is also presented below.

Gaarri Gaalamaa nyaara guuree, rooba dorrobee, bubbeen
inni baddaa gadi ergu...kan urufatti uffata nama irraa baafatu
caalaa qorri isaa gurra nama irraa mura (ibid.p.163)

Mt Galema, with its horrible face, is left with few days for
delivery. The wind that blows from it takes off ones cloth in a
field; its frost cuts off ones ears.

Through the artistic expression of the natural scenery of the area, the reader can recognize that Bekoji is a town in the highland area surrounded by a range of mountains. Mt Galema is personified as if it has a face. Besides, it makes its face horrible when feels unhappy. Pregnancy and delivery, which are qualities of female beings, are attributed to it. The wind is endowed a power to take off clothes and cut ears as if it has hands and a cutter. The author gave all these qualities of a human being to nature in order to create imagery concerning the natural phenomena being undertaken as a result of the presence of the mountain. Its horrible face symbolizes thick clouds whereas delivery reveals torrential rain. The blowing wind and its coldness indicate the harshness of the climate in the surrounding area. Hence, Gadisa is so artistic that he describes instances pictorially and imbeds in the reader's mind.

Relative to Gadisa, Dhaba has used many personifications as literary devices. The following few extracts are selected for analysis.

Gaaf tokko immoo, yaadichi koo utaalee, dubbiin hiriya koo irraa dhaga'erra bu'e (Dhaba, 1992:7).

One day, my idea jumped on to the news that I heard from my friend.

Jumping, which is one of the human attributes, is given to an abstract concept in the above example. It is normally associated with legs and this is a quality of a human being. The personification is used by the author deliberately that the ambition of Abdisa to be a writer is not yet determined. He has two contradictory ideas within himself. Sometimes he become hopeless as a result of his reading various books which strongly argue that there is nothing new in this world to write about. The other idea which is encouraging was the advice he got from his friend. His friend advised him not to be hopeless in order to become a winner. The personification is used to show shift of thought from hopelessness to restoring a hope to become a writer. Abdisa's failure to determine what to do is visualized through the use of personification.

Miirri lamaan keenya iyyuu qooqa walii isaanitti malee nama kaaniitti hindhaga'amneen haasa'an (ibid.p. 59).

Both of our feelings are talking with their own language which is not recognizable to others.

Here also 'feeling', an abstract concept, is endowed a human quality. It is presented as if it has a language and talks. Language is uniquely a system of human communication. The personification is intended to show the irrepressible condition of Dechasa and Telile when they passed the night in love at Dire Dawa. Their feelings are endowed special language which is only known to them.

'Afaan dhukkubsataa du'aa jiru kun...yoom hakiima argata laata?' Jedheen yaada (ibid.p. 144).

I thought, 'When shall this language, which is sick and going to die, get a doctor?'

In this example, language is given human attributes like sickness and death. Besides, it is presented as if it is treated by a physician. The personification is meant to reveal one of the major themes of the novel. Weje, a minor character in *Godaannisa*, is an Oromo. However, she changed her name to Meron. She does not want to speak in Oromo language. Her friends are Amharas. Speaking Oromo language and being called by Oromo name is a sign of backwardness to her. She considers Amharic as a language of modernization. Therefore, the novelist reveals how some Oromos have hatred for their own language due to social and political impacts. The personification involves the theme of the suffering and a hope for the renaissance of Oromo language and self identity.

Apart from the above abstract concepts, there are also personifications that involve the endowment of human attributes to nature.

Mukooliin walfaana asii fi achi socho'an, kan nagaaf harka nu fuudhan - kan nu eebbisuuf ragadan natti fakkaate (ibid.p. 43).

The trees, which are moving together here and there, seem as if they are shaking our hands for greeting. They look as if they are dancing and blessing us.

Here, the human attributes such as greeting, dancing, and blessing are endowed to the trees. This reveals how much the two lovers, Abdisa and Telile, are pleased during their picnic on the 'love street' of the university compound. Besides, the personification reveals Abdisa's ambition to have a long term love relationship with Telile. The moving trees, which seem

Abbayas lafa wajjin huccuu gurraacha...uffatee jira (ibid.p. 172).

The Blue Nile wore a black garment together with the earth.

Clothing is a quality of a human being. Other living and non-living things do not wear clothes. However, the author endowed dressing of clothes to the earth and the river in order to describe the darkness of the night. When peoples sleep in their homes, Teto is in the jungle like a wild animal. His hopeless life is pictorially presented through the use of personification.

There is also an instance where the qualities of a human being are given to abstract concept as in the following example.

...jireenyi harka itti hiixatti. Yeroo inni harka ishee qabachuuf hiixatu, harka ishee irraa butatti. Ija tokko jaamsitee...itti kolfiti. Yeroo inni itti sesseequ, fuula itti gudduunfiti (ibid.p.202).

Life stretches its hands to him. When he wants to hold them, it folds her hands. It blinks one of its eyes and laughed at him. When he smiles at it, it makes its face horrible.

Life is an abstract thing. In the above example, it was given qualities of a human being as though it possesses hands, eyes, face, and mouth. These parts of a human body are artistically personified so as to create mental images in the reader's mind.

Because of the imagery, one can visualize life when it stretches and folds its hands, blinks its eye, and make its face horrible. So, the author presented the ups and downs of the major character in a more vivid manner.

3.2 Lexis

Lexis refers to a writer's choice of words. The words chosen can be described as specific or general, formal or informal, concrete or abstract, common or jargon, etc. whatever the choice, the writer's choice of words needs to be appropriate and clear in order to communicate effectively his/her unique experiences in life (Myszor and Baker, 2000:102).

The two novelists made attempts to select appropriate words for effective communication. Detail analysis in relation to the grouping of words according to their classes and deducing the dominant class of words is beyond the level of this study. This is attributed to two basic reasons. The first one is that the use of the mechanical method (counting and categorizing) is a routine, tiresome, and unmanageable activity particularly in voluminous literary genres like a novel. The second reason is that the application of computational stylistics (a domain of stylistics that applies computer software) is not practiced in our country. Hence, the researcher is limited to examine prominent metaphorical expressions and idioms. Even though these are not directly stylistic categories, they give impressive qualities to the novelists' mode of expression.

3.2.1 Metaphorical Expressions

Both Dhaba and Gadisa employed different words that can be understood metaphorically. Some of the instances are presented as follow.

Asfaawu tuffii keecha darbee nama gumaa xaafiitit lakkaawu
waan jaalatuuf...(Gadisa, 1991:147)

Asfaw looks down everyone; he likes to equate with a grain of
'teff'.

In the above extract, the author expresses the idea of his character. Asfaw is an officer in government institution who is known for his corruption. He does not have respect for the people he is supposed to serve. The way the author expressed him is metaphorical. 'Teff' is an indigenous grain that grows in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Its seed is among the smallest seeds of other field crops. The writer pictorially expressed how Asfaw treats others as inferior.

Dachaasaan amma gaafa mindaa isaa dugda dha'anitti
dhugaa itti hinfakkaanne (ibid.p. 143)

Dechasa did not believe it to be true until they beat his
salary's backbone.

When Asfaw was imprisoned, Yadeshi faced a problem and became a prostitute. Once, a lawyer who visited her to satisfy his sexual desire advised Yadeshi so that she accuses Dechasa and thereby gets maintenance money. The way the author described the putting into effect of the order of the court is unique. He preferred to use words like 'beat' and 'backbone'. The verb 'beat' is an action verb and indicates that the decision was passed by authoritative body and cannot be violated. 'Backbone', on the other hand, reveals that the amount of money he was charged is very large relative to his salary.

The following extract shows how the author expressed waiting ones for a long period of time.

Gannat kana hunda titiisni itti go'aa balbalarra teechee
haa'eegdu malee...akka itti dubbistu...dadhabdeeti inni ol
seennan kaatee faana seente (ibid.p. 56).

Although Genet waited for Dechasa being hovered by flies at the doorway, she did not know how to talk to him. Then, she followed him when he enters into the library.

The expression 'hovered by flies' is metaphorical in nature. When food substance stays for longer periods, it loses its freshness and converted to filthy matter. Consequently, flies and other insects invade it. Hence, the metaphorical expression is to indicate that Genet has waited Dechasa for longer hours at the gate of Kennedy Library. In actual sense, there might not be a single fly on her face. Genet is absorbed in the idea that she intended to talk Dechasa and became enthusiastic to know his feedback. The expression cannot be understood by mere literal translation.

Similar expressions are also used in Gadisa's second novel, *Dhaamsa* ^{Abbaa}.

Qananiin midhagduu miti, garuu hireen ishii karaa lootarii kanaan argatteefi nama baratte ta'uun ishii fedhii Habtaamuu baay'ee qirqirse (Gadisa, 2002:32-33).

Keneni is not beautiful. However she is educated and won the lottery [DV]. This tickled Habtamu's interest very much.

Keneni is a graduate of Addis Ababa University in Political Science and International Relations. She won a Diversity Visa lottery. It is because of these two matters that Habtamu wants her. The way the writer expressed Habtamu's interest is metaphorical. When a person is tickled, he falls in laughter. The word 'tickle' enables the reader to imagine to what extent Habtamu's interest is inspired.

Dhabs also expresses interrelated activities metaphorically as cited in the following example.

[B]alleessaa kiyya narratti beeku jettee haasodaattuu hinbeekamuu afuura baafachuu didde...Magarsaan firri hunduu waan funyaan isa qabateef namiinu quba wal hinqaban...haala kanaan dhiigni Qanani dhiiga saree ta'ee dhangala'ee hafe...Adaanachis adda Qanani badaa baaftee garaa waan of geesseef wayee ishii humaa hinyaanne (ibid.p. 68).

She [Keneni] kept silent since she thought that they know her fault. Megersa does not meet his relatives as they hated him. It is in this manner that Keneni's blood spilled over as the blood of a dog. Adanech also thought nothing about the matter since she cracked Keneni's forehead.

Since literal translation does not give sense for the above types of expressions, it is important to present the manner in which they are stated. Sentences or phrases like 'afuura baafachuu didde' (she kept silent), 'waan funyaan isa qabateef' (they hated him), 'dhiiga saree ta'ee dhangala'ee' (spilled over as the blood of dog), and 'adda badaa baafte' (cracked forehead) are expressed metaphorically in the source language. Habtamu raped Keneni when they came to Addis Ababa to fulfill the DV requirements. She never told this story to her family until her blood test indicated HIV/AIDS positive. Her silence is expressed by the author as, 'Keneni stopped breathing'. In its literal sense this means 'she died'. However, this is not the case in the expression. 'She kept the matter in secret' is the meaning of the metaphoric expression.

Megersa, who is a party member, is Keneni's brother. He did not visit his family even when they face critical problems since he fears the criticism of party leaders. The author expressed his family's dislike as, 'they held their noses'. One holds its nose when there is a feeling of unpleasant smell. In the eyes of his family and relatives, Megersa was considered as dirt, which metaphorically means a useless person.

Adanech is Habtamu's fiancée. She bitterly beat Keneni when she understood that they have sexual relationship. The way she was beaten was metaphorically expressed by the author as, 'she ploughs her forehead like a virgin land'. The ploughed virgin land cannot easily be dashed to bits. Likewise, Keneni's wound is serious and cannot be healed easily.

The following quotation indicates how the author describes the manner of one of his minor characters.

Garoo waanuma afaan isaa xaafii akaawuf malee...kana muuduun seeraa miti (ibid.p.130).

It is illegal to appoint him only for 'his mouth roasts teff'.

Even though Amde was born in Oromia, Huruta town, he is not an Oromo. He bitterly beat Keneni's family when he was a cadre. He was appointed not for his knowledge; the writer expressed the reason as, 'for his mouth roasts teff'. This expression is metaphorical. Teff is the field crop whose seed is the smallest in size. Unlike other grains, teff is not roasted. Hence, the metaphorical meaning is that Amde is appointed because of his talkative behavior. A talkative person tries to convince others as if he can do everything. The author reveals his theme by using the above metaphorical expression. The theme is that there are some officials that are appointed without having any ability. Moreover, regional governments have full right to administer themselves. However, some individuals from other nationalities, like Amde, are appointed only for they are talkative and speak the working language of the region. The writer seems to indicate that power in the Oromia region is not fully in the hands of the Oromos and there is invisible oppression and exploitation in some areas.

There are also many instances in Dhaba's novels in which words are used metaphorically.

Kennaa jaalalaa harka isaatti dhufe gammachuudhaan ammaarachuudha (Dhaba, 1992: 19).

It is to take a handful of 'love's gift' happily.



novelist expressed artistically the satisfaction Teto gained by kissing Edans. The word 'soak' helps the author to state the event as if Teto was immersed in her saliva.

3.2.2 Idioms

Idioms are distinctive and often colorful expressions whose meaning cannot be understood from the combined meanings of its individual words (Brown, 2006: 518).

Both Gadisa and Dhaba used idioms in their novels. But they are few in numbers. The following are sample analyses of the meanings of the idiomatic expressions. The sentences given next to the source language are literal translations.

Waraabessi si nyaate yuusuu dide (Gadisa, 1991:41).

The hyena which has eaten you did not cry.

Yadashi, a character in *Kuusaa Gadoo*, used this expression since Asfaw did not come to her house for two consecutive days. It is unthinkable to get an animal which was eaten by a hyena. Though the idiomatic meaning has no relationship with the cry of the hyena, it means that Asfaw disappeared from Yadashi's house for two days.

Guutaan...taa'etan fincaa'a jedheeti dhaadata jedhan (ibid. 48)

It is said that Guta is daunting to urinate by sitting on the ground.

Males discharge their urine standing. They are females who sit on the ground to urinate. Usually this idiom is quoted by males and it indicates the inferiority of females as though they are lacking courage. Guta is Dechasa's elder brother who is very annoyed at Asfaw since he has taken

his brother's wife. 'Daunting to urinate by sitting' indicates Guta's courageous motive to attack Asfaw.

Intala koo qoree dhoqqee keechaa Rabbi si haa'oolchu (ibid. 55).

My daughter, may God keep you from the thorn in the mud.

Thorns in the mud are not seen. When a person goes barefooted on a muddy road, they can easily penetrate his feet. This is the literal meaning of the idiom. Its idiomatic meaning is to be kept from unknown enemy. Woizero Kabbane is an old woman who is believed to forecast future happenings. She blessed Yadeshi after she conjured magic tricks. The unknown enemy of Yadeshi who later attacked her was Asfaw's wife.

...booldha tokkotti hagnu malee jechuu qaban (ibid.p. 117).

They say, "We should excrete in the same pit at a time."

The above idiomatic expression is used to explain the strong friendship that exists between Asfaw and Tullu, the police officer. Their friendship is based on mutual benefit. Therefore, 'to excrete in the same pit at a time' shows that there is no secret matter between the two individuals.

The following idiomatic expression is used by Tufa, a minor character in *Dhaamsa Abbaa*, reveals the social relationship existing between Amhara and Oromo.

Sanyii akkamiitti heerumtee lafee nu cabsite (Gadisa, 2002:49).

She spoilt the purity of our ancestors because of marrying another ethnic group.

The above extract is idiomatic as a result of the phrase 'lafee nu cabsite'. The literal meaning of this idiom is 'she broke our bones'. The one whose bones are broken lacks some part of his body and considered as

'incomplete'. Girazmatch Woldegiorgis (an Amhara) had many hectares of land during the feudal system. His niece, Aberash, married Tufa (an Oromo). He characterizes Tufa as a lower rate citizen. For Girazmatch such kind of person spoils the purity of their breed. Aberash refused to accept his racist idea and continued to live with her husband. The idiom signifies that some of the Amharas were used to consider the Oromo people 'impure' and not eligible for marriage.

Maqaa isaa qeesiin haadhawuu...bahaa gala na dhoowwe
(ibid. 87-88).

Let his soul burns in hell, he disturbed me a lot.

'Maqaa isaa qeesiin haadhawuu' makes the above statement idiomatic. Literally it means, 'let the priest calls his name'. Balambaras Getaneh was a wicked person who killed Woizero Beshadu's husband. When she told the story of his death to her children, she curses Balambaras. Priests call the name of a dead person during funeral ceremony and memorial feasts so that God rests the soul of a dead person in peace. According to Woizero Beshadu, the priest's pray is a curse for individuals like Balambaras. Even though he died long ago, she still wants him die many times. The idiomatic expression reveals that she was very much annoyed to Balambaras as he killed her husband in an injustice manner.

Compared to Gadisa, Dhaba did not prefer to use idiomatic expressions in his novels.

It is also important to cite the use of foreign words as one aspect of diction. One can come across foreign words in the four novels. Gadisa, for instance, has used 137 Amharic and 23 English words in *Kuusaa Gadoo*. Similarly, there are 29 Amharic and 20 English words in his second novel, *Dhaamsa Abbaa*. Dhaba has also used 31 Amharic and 27 English

terms in *Godaannisa*. In *Gurraacha Abbayaa*, there are 24 Amharic and only 3 English words.

It is normal that languages borrow words from one other. The authors employed these foreign words to communicate their readers effectively. Gadisa's *Kuusaa Gadoo* has a relatively large number of Amharic words. As the author pointed out in the introductory part, the book was written during the Dergue regime. When he asked the then concerned government body for publication, he was told to translate it into Amharic. However, the author refused to accept this idea and the book left unpublished until the Oromo people get the right to read and write in their own language. That is why he published his novel within three months after the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front came to power in 1991. At that time finding such a literary work is great contribution in the history of Oromo fiction writing.

3.3 Rhetorical Question

Rhetorical question is a very common device in public speaking. A question asked is used primarily for stylistic effect and it does not require a reply. The answer is more or less self-evident. The purpose of such a question is often to make a deeper intuition upon the audience (Cuddon, 1992:795 and Shaw, 1972:323).

This kind of question is found in the four novels selected for analysis. Dhaba's first novel and Gadisa's second novel have relatively large number of rhetorical questions. The following are few examples.

Inni bulchaa waradaatimoo hirtuu lafaati? Maaliif waldaa dargaggoottatti qabata? Jaalallee tiyyaafan 'bunnaa beetii' irratti bana hinjedhu?... 'Naamiifuu hinkeniin' jedhaammoo! 'Aadde Assallafachyis hinkennu' odoon jedheenii maal jedha laata? (Gadisa, 1991:91)

Is he the woreda administrator or land provider? Why does he use the youth association as a pretext? Why doesn't he say 'I will open a grocery' for my mistress? He said, 'Do not give it to any one!' What does he say if I respond, 'I will not give it to Woizero Aselefetch'?

Here, Asfaw's disappointment is presented by the use of rhetoric. He wants the land to give it to people who in turn will give him bribes. The woreda administrator, on the other hand, wants the land to be given to his mistress, Aselefetch. This stylistic device reveals the corruptive nature of these two civil servants.

The following paragraph presents the resistance by few nationalities against using Afan Oromo as a language of education and work.

Gaaffiin akkanaa ka'uu kan danda'u naannoodhuma keenya kana qofatimoo Naannoo Amaaraa, Tigreefi kkf keessatis ka'eera? Naannoo Tigree fi Amaaraa keessa kan jiraatu dhibbaa dhibbatti Tigree fi Amaaraa qofaa? ...Isin eenyutu isin dirqe?...Akkuma afaan keessan barachaa turre isinis afaan keenya fedhii qabaattanii barannaan hojii mootummaa ittiin hojjechuu ni dandeessu. Kun maaliif gadoo ta'a? (Gadisa, 2002:9-10)

Is this type of question raised in regions like Tigray, Amhara, etc or only in Oromia? Are the inhabitants of Tigray and Amhara regions only Tigres and Amharas? Who obliged you? As we learnt your language in the past, you can learn our language with interest and become employs of the region. Why is this considered as sin?

In the dialogue made between keneneni and Adanech, Keneni tries to convince her on the language policy of the region. In the early 1990s few Amharas living in the Oromia region were not interested to learn and work in Oromo language. The Oromo people have got the right to use

their own language in education and work. Keneni tells Adanech that there are options for other nationalities that live in Oromia. They can learn Oromo language or set up their own schools where the medium of instruction is Amharic. The last option is to leave the region. Therefore, the author's use of rhetorical questions as a stylistic feature is effective in transmitting his views and experiences to the readers.

Egaa atiiifi fakkoowwan kee warra akkanaa waan taataniif akkamiin amantu?...Erga dhuguma kan najaalatu ta'ee hanga hardhaatti eessa dhaqxe? Jaalalleen tee Adaanach miti? ... Adaanach naaf hiriya dhiwoo mitii?...Ati abdii koo asumatti gabaabsitaa? Seenaa biyyanaa keessatti sabas ta'ee nama mirga ofiitiif dubbatu kam jaalatanii beektu? (ibid. 35)

Since you and those who like you are such kind of persons, how do you believe? If you truly love me, where have you been till now? Is Adanech not your lover? Is Adanech not my close friend? Do you want my hope left unfulfilled? Whom have you liked, whether an individual or a race, among those who speak for their right in the history of this country?

The above rhetorical questions are addressed to Habtamu Getaneh. Keneni is the speaker and she does not want answer for them. She expressed her anger. The questions can make a deeper impression upon the reader than a direct statement. Habtamu is an opportunistic person who wants Keneni for she had only won the DV lottery. Even though he has his own fiancée (Adanech), he wanted to trap Keneni for his sexual desire when they came to Addis Ababa for the DV process. The rhetorical questions indicate Keneni's argument to convince Habtamu. Because of her anger, she raised issues related to ethnicity, human right and social norm.

The following three extracts are taken from Dhaba's novels. Unlike Gadisa, it seems that he is not interested in using rhetorical questions for stylistic purpose.

Maalifan hin booyu?! Imimmaan natti baay'atee?! Booyuun natti guddatee?! Eenyuttan obsa?! (Dhaba, 1992:77)

Why do not I weep?! Are my tears too much for me?! Is weeping a challenge to me now?! For whom I will be patient?!

The rhetorical questions stated above indicate Telile's emotional feeling. Since she conceived, she is weeping bitterly. These questions were used the instance Abdisa showed no concern to the matter. She was presenting a series of questions for which she did not require the answers.

The following rhetorical questions are used to give a piece of advice to Abdisa. The extract is part of the speech an old man delivered to Abdisa through dream.

Of wallaaluun maali? Maaliif of wallaalta? Maaliif amma of wallaaltutti dhukkubsatta? Eenyuti of si wallaachise? Eenyutu as si fide? (ibid. 113)

What is to forget oneself? Why do you forget yourself? Why are you disturbed until you forget yourself? Who made you to forget yourself? Who brought you here?

Abdisa was disturbed because Woinshet refused to accept his question of love. She told him that she does not have time to love and to be loved. He was very surprised by her answer. The dream involves advice that Abdisa should come to the right way. He associated the dream with bad luck and finally decided to forget Woinshet.

Utuu akka wal hammanne kanatti Abbayatti seennee eenyutu nu arga? Eenyutu gargar nu baasaa? Eenyutu...nu wajjin seennee achi kessatti nu qaba?! (ibid. 2005:144)

Who will see us if we enter into the Blue Nile just as we embrace each other? Who will separate us from each other? Who will enter in and catch us in that river?

Teto and Yenche, in *Gurraacha Abbayaa*, frequently meet at the edge of Blue Nile to exercise love secretly. The above rhetorical questions reveal

Teto's ambition and feeling. The two lovers do not want to be separated. However, Yenche's family agreed so that she can marry another person. It is very difficult for her to violate this cultural norm. Teto is in trouble feeling that one day he will lose her. He wished to live in Blue Nile like aquatic animals. Hence, the rhetorical questions the author employed have contribution to the stylistic effect of the text.

3.4 Repetition and Parallelism

Repetition and parallelism, as a literary device, are interrelated. Authors repeat syllables, words, phrases and rarely the whole sentence in their works for various purposes. Repetition may indicate emphasis or continuity of an action. Parallelism, on the other hand, is balanced construction of words, phrases, clauses or sentences that invite readers to look for meaning connections between the parallel parts. Both Dhaba and Gadisa employed these literary devices in their novels. However, the frequency of occurrence is low. Relatively, Dhaba employed them better than Gadisa. The use of these stylistic devices is examined in the following few examples.

Namni baay'een gaaffii gaafatanii deebiin kennameef. Gaaffii cimaa, gaaffii yaraa, gaaffii aarsaa, gaaffii boonsaa...gaafatan (Gadisa, 2002:45).

Many people asked questions and got response. They asked difficult questions, silly questions, annoying questions, and interesting questions.

Here, the word 'questions' is repeatedly used in the paragraph. This repetition reveals that 'question' is the major idea and the author repeated it for emphasis. One day there was a meeting at Sire town and the meeting was chaired by Megersa, a member of a political party. He

explained the current government policies to the people. The author gave attention to various kinds of questions raised during the meeting.

Similar lexical repetition is also used in the following paragraph for the purpose of giving emphasis to the word.

Iccitii ta'uu isaa bareera. Iccitii waan ta'eefiyyuu mitii kan warri Siree himuu didan. Iccitii iccitii jetta, wanta iccitii jedhame hunda wajjumaan hojjechaa baaneeti hardha...na dhoksitu? Iccitii kan caaluu nuy waliin hinhojjennee? (ibid. 154)

We knew that it is secret. The Sire officials said nothing because they new that it is secret. You say secret, secret. However, we have done together all that is regarded as secret. Have not we done something secret than this?

The word 'secret' is repeated six times in the above instance. The writer used the term for emphasis. The point that became secret is that the place where the prisoners of Sire district were taken is not known. Most of the prisoners were taken to jail without any crime. They are also moved from one district to another; they are not visited by their families and other humanitarian institutions. Hence, the lexical repetition is used to emphasize the injustice of the prisoners.

Dhaba used the following repetition in order to reveal the emotional state of his character.

Fedhii how'aa, fedhii jabaataa, fedhii qabbannaa'uu hindandeenyetu keessa kootti uumamee dhaabbii fi taa'umsa na dhorke (Dhaba, 1996:11).

Hot feeling, strong feeling, feeling that cannot be cooled is inside me. It made me restless.

Here the word 'feeling' is repeated. When Abdisa joined Haramaya University, he was very much attracted by female students. He was

dreaming to fulfill his sexual desire on one of those female students. The repetition, hence, shows the emotional attitude of Abdisa.

This emotional state of Abdisa is also indicated in the following extract.

Ishees haadhakoo wajjiin walitti arrabsuu – walitti rukutuu – walitti dhiituu jalqabe (ibid. 8).

He began to insult her together, beat together, and kick together with my mother.

The word 'together' is repeated three times. Kulani is Abdisa's little sister. Her mother married another husband, Manalew. He insults and beats her together with her mother. Finally, he raped her. This living condition of his sister disturbed Abdisa a lot.

Dhaba also used repetition of the whole sentence as presented in the following example.

Yeencheenis amantee jirti...Yeencheenis amantee jirti (Dhaba, 2005:257).

Yenche has also believed it...Yenche has also believed it.

This sentence repetition is what came to Teto's mind while he was walking at the edge of Blue Nile. He was accused and punished for he made sexual intercourse with Yenche. She conceived. It is this conception that Yenche confirmed before the elder men. The repetition emphasizes the stress of Teto. Still he is expected to give rifles, spears, and cattle to settle the case peacefully. The words of the elders echoed in his mind and disturbed him.

Parallel constructions are also used by both writers as shown in the following examples.

Wanti hunduu nama sodaachisa. Dubbachuun nama sodaachisa, barreessuun nama sodaachisa, jiruun nama sodaachisa, jibbi nama sodaachisa, jaalalli nama sodaachisa, fayyaa dhabiisni nama sodaachisa, Eedsiin nama sodaachisa, beelli nama sodaachisa, wanti hunduu nama sodaachisa (Gadisa, 2002:55).

All things are frightening. Speaking is frightening, writing is frightening, life is frightening, love is frightening, hatred is frightening, illness is frightening, AIDS is frightening, hunger is frightening. All things are frightening.

The first sentence is entirely repeated in the last line. In between the first and the last line, there are eight parallel sentences that form balanced construction. The verb 'frighten' is given emphasis. Balcha, a minor character in *Dhaamsa Abbaa*, is Megersa's friend. Megersa is a party member whereas Balcha is not a member. Balcha is telling his friend that there are many problems in the society which did not get due attention by the government. Theoretically, the right to express idea freely by means of speech and writing is supported by law. The practical condition is different. People are sent to prison without committing any crime. Since there are not enough health institutions and trained personnel in the field, the prevalence of diseases is becoming a threat to the people. The parallel construction of the sentences makes the central theme to be visualized.

The following are additional instances that indicate parallelism.

Hunduma dura of ilaali...Hunduma dura of dubbisi (ibid. 1992:1).

First of all look at yourself; First of all read yourself.

Namni isaas lafti isaas ni bareeda, Namni isaas lafti isaas si gammachiisa (ibid. 37).

Its people and its land are beautiful; Its people and its land are interesting.

The following onomatopoeic expressions present repetitions that indicate continuity of actions in Dhaba's novels.

Sagaleen dibbee rukkutamaa jiru... 'diwu, diwu, diwu, diwu'
jedha (Dhaba, 2005:185)

The drum sounds, 'diw, diw, diw, diw'.

Qawuu-qacci!, qawuu-qacci, qawuu-qacci, sagaleen jedhu
natti dhaga'ame (Dhaba, 1992:185)

I heard a sound, which is made as a result of walking with
hilly shoes.

As the above instances indicate the novelists made attempts to employ various syntactic features that contributed to the style of the novels.

3.5 The use of proverbs for aesthetic effect

A proverb is one domain of oral literature. Among the two novelists Gadisa Biru used many proverbs in his novels. Although it is very difficult to give the exact definition of the term, the following is the general agreement as to what it constitutes.

It is a saying in more or less fixed form marked by 'shortness, sense, and salt' and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed in it (Finnegan, 1998:393)

Proverbs are different from other ordinary speeches since they involve the figurative use of language. They are rich in imagery, allusion and simile. Because of these qualities, proverbs can have many meanings, and often the meanings differ from one area to the other based on the context of use. Hence, knowledge of occasions and purposes of their actual use are crucially important for the full understanding of the proverb. Proverbs occur almost in all African countries and many African cultures make use of them in order to advise, rebuke, and show their philosophies (ibid. 404, 410).

The culture of the Oromo people is also rich in proverbs. It is common for Oromo elders to begin and conclude their speeches with proverbs. Even though few indigenous writers made efforts to collect and record Oromo proverbs, Cotter (1992) is believed to be the voluminous record of the proverbs. The book contains 4670 Oromo proverbs. So far 4000 proverbs have been published in Rundi (Finnegan, 1998:389). Hence, with these current data, it could be concluded that, in Africa, the Oromo culture is the richest in proverbs.

Some African writers like Achebe use proverbs in their novels. Proverbs enrich and give elegance to written literature. Achebe witnessed this aesthetic function of a proverb by stating it as “the palm oil by which words are eaten.” (Nwabueze, 2000:163) The researcher found out that Gadisa employed a total of 115 different proverbs in his two novels. Its distribution is 59 in *Kuusaa Gadoo* and 56 in *Dhaamsa Abbaa*. Moreover, few of these proverbs are repeatedly used in each of the novels. Dhaba, on the other hand, used 7 proverbs in *Godaannisa* and 2 in *Gurraacha Abbayaa*. Therefore, Gadisa employed many proverbs than Dhaba. The writer deliberately employed them primarily for the aesthetic effect of expression and secondly to help the Oromo people preserve and understand their cultural wisdom.

As analyzing these proverbs in relation to their context is beyond the objectives of this study, the researcher is limited to present few instances with their English translations and intended meanings. The second line is the proverb’s literal translation whereas the third line is its meaning.

- Ganna dhufuuf malee kan darbee mana hinhijaaratani (Gadisa, 1991:22).
They build a house for the next rainy season; not for the past.
People work for the future, not the past.
- Du'a dhoksanii awwala ee chan ga'an? (ibid. 46)
If one hides death where will they take the body of the deceased?
One should not try to hide something that cannot be hidden.
- Kan afaanii baatee fi kan muchaa bate hindeebitu (ibid. 37).
That which came out from the mouth and the teat does not return.
What one has said cannot be recalled.
- Karaan daldeechaa allayyaa nama geechaa (ibid. 134).
The way of the baboon brings a person to a precipice.
Be aware of false friends and false leaders.
- Jiran jiruu hintuffatan du'an ishiidhaa dhaban (ibid, 2002:96).
Life should not be despised, even that could be lost by death.
Be grateful for life.
- Mee dura kurupheen foon haa taatu (ibid, 2002:66).
Let first the duiker be meat.
Get it in hand one thing first.
- Waan Waaqaa hinbeekanii haadha Waaqoo naan jedha jette jaartiin (ibid, 2002: 137).
The old woman said, 'Call me, 'Mother of God' since the things of God are not known.'
People associate with big people hoping to derive benefit from the association.
- Abiddi daaraa dhalcha (ibid, 2002:177).
Fire gives birth to ashes.
A brave father gives birth to a frightened son.
- Obsaan silga goromsaa dhuga (Dhaba, 1992:41).
The patient person will drink milk of the heifer.
Be patient and good things will come to you.
- Kan Rabbi qocaaf kaa'ee allaattiin hinfudhattu (ibid, 2005:132).
What God reserved for the tortoise is not taken by a vulture.
Your belongings are predetermined by God.

When the above proverbs are used in appropriate contexts, they make communication interesting. The authors' use of the proverbs indicates that they have greater exposure to the culture and philosophy of the Oromo society. Moreover, the proverbs contributed to the stylistic effects of the novels.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

In this study an attempt is made to investigate some of the major literary styles employed in four Oromo novels. The researcher is limited to the analyses of figures of speech, lexis, rhetorical questions, repetition and parallelism. The researcher believes that other researchers would carry out specific analysis on the stylistic features that are not addressed in this study.

Evaluation of a literary work is a continuous process as the language of literature can be approached from various directions by different individuals. Cluysenaar (1976:18) pointed out, "stylistics can bring not only descriptive tools but eventually...important concepts drawn from both linguistics and perceptual psychology." The description of linguistic elements is primarily the duty of applied linguists. However, these linguistic elements are also important in the analysis of the style of a writer.

As style is a manner of expression of the writer, the two Oromo novelists namely Gadisa Biru and Dhaba Woyessa have employed different stylistic devices in their creative works. Among the figures of speech, simile and personification are the major literary devices in all the novels. Dhaba is a writer who is inclined to use simile in his works. Evidently, he employed a total of 362 similes in *Godaannisa* and *Gurraacha Abbayaa*. Gadisa, on the other hand, used a total of 45 similes in both novels. Both writers used largely concrete-to-concrete type of similes. As presented in the analysis part, the similes used by Gadisa artistically depict the major and

minor themes of the author. Metaphorical and idiomatic expressions are the major components of the choice of words used in the novels. The novelists also borrowed few foreign words. Large number of Amharic words is used by Gadisa. He wrote his first novel, *Kuusaa Gadoo*, during the Dirgue period. At that time no literary work was carried out using the Latin alphabet. Rhetorical questions, parallelism and repetition are also used as stylistic devices by both writers. Hence, it could be concluded that both writers made great attempts to present their messages effectively in the Oromo language despite its written literature has been banned for a long period of time.

Both writers seem to have wider exposure to the social, cultural and political affairs of the Oromia region. They emphasize the identity, cultural and linguistic reconstruction of the Oromo people. Besides, the novels depict violation of human rights, ethnic conflict over resources in Oromia, and corruption as thematic points. Dhaba's second novel, *Gurraacha Abbayaa*, differs from the rest in that it presents the tradition of Gumuz nationalities.

Unlike Dhaba, Gadisa employed proverbs in his expressions. A total of 115 proverbs are used in his novels. These witty and short statements contributed to the expression of the themes of the novels.

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all source of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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